Language Recovery of the New South Wales South Coast Aboriginal Languages

Part A
Analysis and Philology

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A thesis submitted for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy of The Australian National University.

Submitted January 2012
Revised May 2013
Chapter A.1 Languages and Sources

This chapter introduces the various historic materials that comprise the New South Wales South Coast languages (SCLs hereon) and provides background information on SCLs, their geographical areas and linguistic type.

As with many parts of south-eastern Australia, there are increasing desire and requests by Aboriginal communities to reclaim their traditional culture, identity, languages and also land that was taken from them following the arrival of Europeans in the late 1700s. However, this study’s aim is not to support or dispute any land or native title claims, but to provide a linguistic analysis of the historic material that was collected on these languages, in order to assist current and future language work and teaching projects. (See also Chapter A.8 (Conclusion and Further Implications) for a discussion on the contribution of this analysis to language reclamation on the South Coast.) I have therefore refrained from proposing linguistic or socio-geographic boundaries, as it is not the purpose of this study to provide boundaries that may well have been non-static over the many years that the Aboriginal people of the South Coast inhabited their lands.

A.1.1 Language names and location

The SCLs collectively cover the area from the southern suburbs of Sydney, along the coast down to the Victorian border. The languages/dialects covered in this analysis are (ranging from the northern SCL going southwards) Dharrawal, Dharumba, Dhurga and Djirringanj (in the orthography used in this study). The language corpus for the most
southern language, Dhaawa, is limited to wordlists and therefore very little grammatical information is available on this language. From the available data it also seems that Dhaawa shares more features with the Victorian languages and is therefore largely omitted in this study of the SCLs, but has been part of research on the inland languages of south-east NSW (see Koch (2011) and (2008)).

For the purpose of this study, I present the SCLs as five separate languages, rather than the four languages (Dharrawal, Dhurga, Djirringanj and Dhaawa) proposed by Eades (1976). Wodi Wodi is listed as a language name by Ridley (1875); but Wodi Wodi is actually the name of the social group from around the Illawarra area, Wollongong down to Jervis Bay. Their language is a southern dialect of Dharrawal. Dharumba and Dhurga are treated as two separate languages in this study, although I would not necessarily formally classify them as such. Dharumba and Dhurga share form of pronouns and many other grammatical aspects, but lexically, Dharumba shares a lot of Dharrawal words. It is therefore safer to say that both are dialects of the same language. The reason for presenting the two as separate entities is because of the vastly differing nature and quantity of the available language material. Mathews provided his usual wordlists and elicited sentences in both Dhurga and Dharumba, but we have Mackenzie’s collected texts and stories in Dharumba that supply vocabulary, morphological and grammatical information that is not found in Mathews’ elicited sentences. These two corpora are therefore somewhat incompatible, as little material can be compared between the two.

Amongst the individual languages are noticeable dialectical differences. The material collected in the southern parts of Dharrawal speaking country differs lexically and morphologically somewhat from the Dharrawal spoken in the northern part. Chapter A.2 (Methodology) will look into this further from a methodological point of view and how to categorise/label the data accordingly.
Mackenzie’s alternative name for Dharumba, <Mudthung> seems to be the same <Muddhang> that Mathews refers to. “[T]he Muddhang and Ngarrugu occupy the country to the west” of the Djirringanj speaking people, but the geographical references differ between the two.

The further south down the coast, the more difficult it becomes to determine which language was spoken where. Even recent statements such as “Thawa is distinguished from Jeringan [Djirringanj] but Jeringan and Thoorga [Dhurga] are closely related and are variants of a single language” (Biamanga Gulaga Final Report, 2005) cannot be confirmed based on the language analysis presented in this study. In fact, Djirringanj and Dhurga vary remarkably in their lexical inventory as well as grammatical aspects (as is shown in the following language analysis chapters), sufficiently so to identify them as individual languages.

Although Eades (1976) and other researchers assign the Djirringanj language to Bega, the available language material makes this difficult to confirm or deny. Robinson’s <Biggah> wordlist shows too many discrepancies in salient words such as ‘child’ and ‘man’; they are Dhurga words in Robinson’s list and do not correlate with Mathews’ Djirringanj words. However, Howitt’s ‘Bega Charlie’ wordlist shares some of the most frequently found words such as bayil ‘man’ and nguga ‘water’ with Mathews’ Djirringanj. (See also Koch’s (2008) and (2011a) discussion on the most southern SCLs and source material).

Inland reference points are not as commonly found. Table 1 shows the variant spellings of language names and historical reference points given by the language collectors of the SCLs, as well as names and/or origin of informants and other relevant information, where available.
Table 1. Original spellings of South Coast languages names and places of reference

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Language</th>
<th>Original Spellings</th>
<th>Place of Reference</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Dharrwal</td>
<td>&lt;Turwul&gt; (Ridley)</td>
<td>Port Jackson and Botany Bay</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>&lt;Turawal&gt; (Ridley)</td>
<td>Port Jackson to Wollongong</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>&lt;Thurawal&gt; (Mackenzie)</td>
<td>Port Jackson to Wollongong</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>&lt;Thurāwal&gt; (Mackenzie)</td>
<td>Wollongong to banks of the Lower Shoalhaven inclusive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>&lt;Thurrwal&gt; (Mathews)</td>
<td>south-east coast of NSW from Port Jackson to Jervis Bay</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>south-east NSW coast, between Hawkesbury River and the Victorian boundary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>south-east coast of New South Wales from Port Hacking to Jervis Bay, and extended inland for a considerable distance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Thurrawal-speaking people adjoin the Tharumba (Shoalhaven to Ulladulla) on the north</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wodi Wodi</td>
<td>&lt;Wodi Wodi&gt; (Ridley)</td>
<td>Illawarra, Wollongong to the Shoalhaven, spoken by the Illawarra people</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>&lt;Wodiwodi&gt; (Ridley)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dharumba</td>
<td>&lt;Mudthung&gt; or &lt;Tharumba&gt; (Mackenzie)</td>
<td>Braidwood, Ulladulla, Moruya, Jervis Bay</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>&lt;Tharumba&gt; (Mathews)</td>
<td>Shoalhaven River by the Wandandian tribe</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>&lt;Tharoom'ba&gt; (Mathews)</td>
<td>coast of New South Wales between the Shoalhaven River and Ulladulla, reaching inland to the Dividing Range</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>&lt;Thoortumba&gt; (Mathews)</td>
<td>Araluen, Braidwood and Reidsdale</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dhurga</td>
<td>&lt;Türka&gt; (Howitt)</td>
<td>Moruya</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>&lt;Tho'ga&gt; or &lt;Thur'-ga&gt; (Mathews)</td>
<td>spoken by the aborigines scattered along the coast of New South Wales from Bermagui to Jervis Bay</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>&lt;Thoorga&gt; (Mathews)</td>
<td>spoken by the natives of the Tuross, Clyde, Moruya, and other rivers, situated partly in each of the counties St. Vincent and Dampier, New South Wales</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Djiiringang</td>
<td>&lt;Jiringal&gt; (Howitt)</td>
<td>Bega</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>&lt;Dyirringa&gt;, &lt;Jiringa&gt; (Mathews)</td>
<td>northern half of the county of Auckland, on the south-east coast of New South Wales</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The source material, as well as existing community knowledge, supplies references to a number of identified languages and dialects. In some cases there is some confusion as to dialect/language names actually being social group names, such as in the case of Wodi Wodi. However, inconsistencies about linguistic and/or social group boundaries are also found within the historic material, even by the same early researcher.

There are also conflicting views amongst Aboriginal SCL communities as to whether the SCLs are just one language spoken by the ‘Yuin Nation’. This term is
used by some contemporary Aboriginal community members, but is detested by many others. In many instances it is easy to trace where disputed ideas of the languages and status originated from. A lot of times it is misinterpretation of the same historic material that is used in this study. One such example is the pronunciation of Norman Tindale’s (1938/39) letter \( j \) in his spelling system. For individuals coming from an English speaking background, the natural interpretation of this letter would be the affricates /ʤ/ and /ʧ/, but we can find amongst his notebooks and diary collection in the SA Museum, that his \( j \) is the phonetic symbol for the initial consonant as in the word ‘yard’. This has caused some confusion about the pronunciation of the collective word for the SC Aboriginal people *Yuin*, and proposed *Djuin/Djuwin* instead. There is not a single instance or reference in any of the sources that this alternation was found anywhere, and *yuinj* is one of the most transcribed words in the whole SCLs corpus.

Presenting the different social groups of the South Coast communities is a delicate task. Although there are historical records that list names and places, they have in some cases been disputed by some communities or individuals. I am not aware of any research findings that have been unanimously welcomed by all communities. Delving into these waters is therefore beyond the scope and aim of this study and requires a team of historians, anthropologists and consultation to work with all South Coast communities.

**A.1.2 Source material and previous language work**

Although SCLs data were also collected between the 1950s and 1970s, the data sources used for the purpose of this study were restricted predominantly to material collected and/or published until 1903, in order to produce a reconstitution of the
language spoken as closely to pre-European contact as possible. (See also introduction in this chapter for discussion on why this decision was made.) However, language reclamation projects vary remarkably in what source material community members decide to use for their reclamation purposes. See Chapter A.8 (Conclusion and Further Implications) for more details on use of sources in language reclamation.

The quantity of each of the language material from various collectors ranges from very short wordlists to a selection of stories/texts as well as grammatical notes, both unpublished and published. This variation of material adds a relatively rich corpus of language sources of the SCLs.

The historic sources presented here are placed in chronological order (as far as possible) and are separated into unpublished and published material and contain a brief annotation with information about which language the material was presented as, possible information about informants, place of collection and a summary of the material contained in the item. Sample pages from selected material are included to provide the reader with an idea of the differences between the sources.

I do not assign language names to the sources but label them according to the place where they were collected and by language name only, if place of collection is not known. This is for two reasons. Firstly, this labelling allows community members to target words and lists that were specifically collected in their area. This is based on the numerous requests I had from community members who wanted words only from their town/area. Secondly, assigning places to languages would imply that I assigned language borders. This is a matter for communities and not purpose of this study.

The sources listed after the historic material, contain published/unpublished material collected by linguistic researchers between the 1930s (Tindale manuscript) and 1976 (Eades’ phonetic and grammatical description). However, Tindale’s material
lies somewhat between the historical and contemporary category. See Chapter A.2 (Methodology) for further discussion on the source material.

A.1.2.1 Unpublished historic language material


Larmer was a surveyor who worked extensively in the south-east of New South Wales. He was part of the team that surveyed the road from Nerriga to Jervis Bay/Vincentia. During his travels he collected wordlists in Braidwood (23 words), Batemans Bay (70 words) and Ulladulla (19 words), but he did not mention language names. Larmer’s wordlists were also published later in Journal and Proceedings of the Royal Society of New South Wales volume 32. Curiously the number of lexical entries in the published versions is greater than the unpublished lists.
George Augustus Robinson was appointed the first Chief Protector for Aborigines in the Port Phillip District in 1839, and travelled extensively through Victoria and collected wordlists from many places, including Murumbidgee, Yass, Limestone Plains, Omeo and <Biggah> ‘Bega’. This particular table of 32 words from these places, and some others not mentioned here because they do not relate to this study.

This is a comparative wordlist, but does not seem to be a final draft, due to the different handwriting and less neat appearance than the following item by Robinson. It includes a 32 wordlist (as the following Robinson item) but also shows a column
labelled Cape Howe and Twofold Bay, which were labelled a '<Malokolong-mittang>' and '<Nullicer>' respectively.

Figure 3. Robinson comparative wordlist rough draft

3. Robinson, George Augustus 1843 ‘Specimen of the several Dialects spoken by the Aborigines’ *G A Robinson Manuscript Collection A 7085-A 7086* Mitchell Library, Sydney (B-R)

This manuscript looks like it may have been a final pre-publication draft of the previous item, as it is written in copperplate script.¹ Language names are not given for

¹ See Chapter A.2 (Methodology) for further discussion on working from handwritten manuscripts and the philology of the archival material utilized in this research study.
any of the wordlists, only placenames. Robinson’s wordlist shares more words with Dhurga vocabulary than with either Howitt’s Bega list, or Mathews’ Djirringanj vocabulary. This is particularly remarkable because ‘man’, ‘woman’ and ‘child’ in this Bega list are shared with Dhurga and not with Mathews’ and Howitt’s Djirringanj.

4. Howitt, Alfred ca 1880 ‘Jiringal language at Bega’ Howitt Collection
State Library of Victoria, Melbourne (B-AH)

The Informant is given as “Bega Charlie” and the list consists of 27 words. Note that the language name is given here as <Jiringal>, which is intriguing in that it shows the suffix -(n)gal/-wal ‘-belonging’. This may imply that <Jirin> or <Jiring> is a reference to a place or the country in the area. This wordlist shares more words with Mathews’ Djirringanj vocabulary than with Robinson’s <Biggah> wordlist.

This comparative list contains words for various kinterms (paternal, fraternal and filial) in 11 languages, amongst them the list that Howitt labels Yuin. The sentences are labelled as Yuin and reference is possibly made to a mythological story in the reference: ‘[illegible] made when coming in his boat from Wallaga Lake to the mouth of the Bega River’.
6. Howitt, Alfred n.d. ‘In the Türka language spoken by the Yűin of Moruya N.S.W.’ Howitt Collection State Library of Victoria, Melbourne (Y-AH.2)

This one-page wordlist contains 26 lexical entries that correlate with Mathews’ Dhurga words.
Figure 7. Howitt In the Türkka language spoken by the Yuin of Moruya N.S.W.

7. Howitt, Alfred n.d. ‘Pieces of Information on the tribe of Aborigines inhabiting the country between Mallagoota Inlet & Shoalhaven N.S.W.’ Howitt Collection State Library of Victoria, Melbourne 2 pages (AH.2)

Howitt collected information on the different social groups in south-east News South Wales. His findings were published as The native tribes of south-east Australia (see Howitt, 1996 for a later published version). The “subtribes” Howitt mentioned are:

- Güyangal (from Güyaar = South) Mallagoota, Jaderamanji (Bega), Bürgelimanji (Moruya)
- Bimeringal (from Bimerrig = West) Braidwood
- Kärial (?)from Kari= South) Bürilmanji (Ulladulla), Bürüngatimanji (Shoalhaven)

The Güyangal and Kärial also exchanged women for wives with the Bemeringal of Maneroo and the Katängal northward of the Shoalhaven River.
To date I have not been able to locate Mackenzie’s collection in any collection, and the only handwritten material I have been able to view is the texts as published in Illert’s article. In this publication are copies of two handwritten texts that seem to be transcribed stories in blocks of both Dharrawal and English translation, which is the

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Ilert did not reference the source of Mackenzie’s handwritten texts, and enquiries to Ilert as to where he may obtained this material were unsuccessful.
format they are also published in. There are no discrepancies between these handwritten and the typeset versions. The pictures of the handwritten texts can be found in Figures 9, 11 in Chapter B.1 (Dharrawal Texts).

![Handwritten excerpt of letter](image)

**Figure 9. Mackenzie - Handwritten excerpt of letter**

9. **Queen Rosie 1890 ‘Words given to Mr John Brown of Brownsville by Queen Rosie in 1890’ Capell’s material supplied by Rev. Dr John Harris, Canberra (ILL-QR)**

This wordlist of 113 lexical entries is a copy of Capell’s transcription of Queen Rosie’s words. No language name or reference to place is given, or whether this wordlist had previously been published. Queen Rosie (Rose Russell) was part of the Illawarra tribe and married King Mickey Johnston from Port Stephens near Newcastle on the mid-north coast of NSW.

Two stories “The Moon - Dyed’-dyüng” and “Bullidya Wullidya” told in English only; the first story is most likely another version of the Bundoola story (see Part B for the texts). A scribbled note by Mathews states that “Huggany knows this” second story. <Huggany> was one of Mathews’ Dhurga language informants and may also have been the same “Hugany, aboriginal of the Wandandian Tribe” who told
Mackenzie the story of <i>Tūtawa, Pūlūngūl</i> around 30 years earlier (Mackenzie, 1877:273).

This section of the notebook contains further cultural knowledge and has a note “ask at La Perouse”, and “Mrs Timbery or others the making of young women”, and “any jargon or mother-in-law”. Mathews worked with Mrs Emma Timbery on his visits to La Perouse (Thomas, 2011) and she was most likely the source of the stories and cultural information given at least for this part of his Dharrawal notes and language.

This two-page section of this notebook contains a collection of words with more detailed descriptions and reference to cultural knowledge about the natural environment. The informant is not given, but it may have been Mrs Timbery as with the previously recorded cultural notes on Dharrawal mythologies and practices.


These two pages contain a list of botanic names and more cultural knowledge such as “children must look at rainbow or their mother would die”, and “cannot drink water in any hole where people swim” (p.59).

Figure 12. Mathews Thurrawal Criterion Hotel notebook p. 59
Mathews Collection MS 8006 National Library of Australia (A-M.2.2), (U-M.2.2), (DJ-M.2.2)

The notebook contains 201 pages of language material in predominantly Djirringanj and Dhurga, as well as some Dharrawal and Dhaawa. For Dharrawal, Mrs Timbery, Mrs Fanning, Harry Walker; Mrs Longbottom; Mrs Saunders, Mrs Jetson and Andy are given as informants. Dhurga informants listed were Walker, Annie Wood, Bill Chapman and James Walker; and Huggany. Huggany was also the name of one of the informants for Mackenzie (see text 5 in B.2, and item 9 in this chapter). Djirringanj (informant Annie Wood at 8th January 1901); and <Thâwa> material was collected from <Merriman>. A reference to a date is made in one of the entries dating it to 8th January 1901.

Figure 13. Mathews Thurga and Jirringany Notebook. Pp.43-44

On page 98 <Thurrawal>, Mathews notes “Mrs Fanning – checked by Harry Matthews”, which suggests that he may have checked at least some of his collected material with other language speakers for verification. On page 124 Mathews scribbled
that “Mrs Timbery best of all”, assumedly referring to her status as a language informant. Page 153 contains “Annie’s Songs”, three short versed song lyrics.

This notebook also contains the information collected on the <Pir’-rim’birr – Revenge> that was published later in Mathews (1904a) Ethnological Notes of the Aboriginal Tribes of New South Wales and Victoria. It lists <Kooringal> songs, <Brâ’birr> Language; <Gundungurma> language and <Wongibon> language notes. People and informants are listed with their totems:

Annie Benson – “Bunna” – Jewfish – her ngul’lay (totem)
James Walker Dhun-am’boran, Redbill (his boodjan (totem)
Zechariah Ngîeeñ – Bandicoot, mirreejugga

On page 1, Mathews assigns <Tharoom’ba> to the places Araluen, Braidwood and Reidsdale.


This section of notebook 2 contains <Jirringañ> collected from Annie Walker. An alternative spelling of the name is listed as <Dyirringan>. Some of the pages had been pre-prepared by Mathews with verb paradigms to be elicited, sentences such as ‘I must beat him’ and ‘They are not beating each other’, with the underlined word indicating what he was trying to elicit. However, not all examples were translated.

These four pages contain Dharrawal language. The informant is not given. Contains a verb paradigm and a collection of words for bodyparts, specifically female and male genitalia and sexually related words. Also contains a diagram with kinship information.
Notebook 2 Mathews Collection MS 8006 National Library of Australia, Pp. 52-59 (A-M.2.1)

Apart from stories and cultural food practices, ‘Forbidden foods’, this section contains eight place names in Dharrawal. Places referred to are Chippendale, Wall Street to Waterworks, Bunmarong, Bumbrose, Yarra, Camp at La Perouse, area between Bunnerong and Botany and “Cook’s River Bridge & thereabouts” (p. 59).

This section lists paradigms eliciting possessive, object and subject bound pronouns, and tense marking on verbs. The informant is given as Mrs Timbery, who was located at La Perouse.

Figure 16. Mathews Thurrawal Mrs Timbery Notebook 3 p.45


The informant is not listed for this elicitation; the material consists of elicited sentences.

The content of this section of notebook 4 contains the two biblical stories The Parable of the Sower and The Prodigal Son, and the story of <Gwai’-a-miñ>. The biblical texts are presented in blocks of long sentences, with blocks of bible translations. See
Text 4 - Text 9 in Chapter B.1 (Dharrawal Texts) for scans of Mathews’ transcriptions.


No informant is given and the first page was headed with <Thoorga> language, which was then crossed out and <Thoorūmba> scribbled over it, but it is labelled <Tharumba> in the following pages. The language material contains sentences and paradigms showing object bound pronouns.

Figure 18. Mathews Tharumba Notebook 4 p.28

Two pages in this notebook show Dharrawal language material. One page contains a paradigm eliciting for bound pronouns on the verb ‘talk’; the other page lists free pronouns and demonstratives.


Amongst the Mathews Collection held at the NLA are a number of his printed grammars of various languages that show handwritten corrections, additions and notes
added by Mathews. These were likely to assist with further publications on the same languages. In some cases Mathews used a copy of a printed wordlist taken from one of his publications and crossed out the language name and used this as a template to add a vocabulary of another language. This particular <Thurawal> paper consists of a print of his published article *The Thurrawal Language* (1901b) with added linguistic information that did not make it into any future publication on the Dharrawal language.

Figure 20. Mathews Thurrawal grammar print off with written notes

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3 I would like to thank Stephen Morey for generously giving me copies of these
For example in his scribbles he added to his spelling and pronunciation guide, he refers to retroflex consonants and possibly pre-stopped nasals (see Chapter A.3 (Phonology) on more discussion of these features), which he does not include in his published Dharrawal inventory.

23. Capell, Arthur 1974 *Phonemicised transcriptions of R H Mathews’ Dhurga words* Copied and supplied by Rev. Dr John Harris, Canberra

This material was graciously handed over to me by Rev. Dr Harris at a late point in this study. It contains Harris’ handwritten copies of Capell’s phonetic transcriptions of Mathews’ Dhurga words compiled in alphabetical order in a notebook labelled “commenced 1974 February, Mathews vocab list (as transcribed by Capell)”. It is not known whether Capell consulted a Dhurga speaker on pronunciation and verification of Mathews’ lists. This material has to date not been included into the SCLs dictionary (presented as Appendix I in Part B of this thesis) but will be added to the corpus in the near future.

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I am at liberty to reveal here that Arthur Capell was Rev. Dr Harris’ godfather and it is due to that reason that Harris obtained some of Capell’s notes on the South Coast languages. Rev. Harris has worked on language reclamation within the Aboriginal church community in Batemans Bay since the 1960s. See also Chapter A.8 (Conclusion and Further Implications) for reference to his work with Dhurga speaking communities. I am greatly indebted to Rev. Dr Harris for his generosity and ever willingness to share his knowledge and this material with me.
A.1.2.2 Published historic language material


Gaimard was a naturalist who travelled on the French ship L’Astrolabe under the command of Jules Dumont D’Urville. This exploratory voyage covered a large part of the Pacific Ocean, and mapped parts of New Zealand’s South Island, explored the

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5 The German Poet and writer Johann Wolfgang Goethe met Gaimard briefly in 1831. “Paul Gaimard, ein kleiner, schwarzköpfiger, zusammengenommener, nicht unangenehmer Mann; er hatte die Expedition mitgemacht, um die Reste von La Peyrouse aufzusuchen, erzählte kürzlich was sie für Überreste gefunden hatten und von den unberechenbaren Gefahren der Corallenriffe.” (Goethe, Diary entry June 1831, http://www.zeno.org/Literatur/M/Goethe,+Johann+Wolfgang/Tagebücher/1831/Juni)
coast of New Guinea, visited Tonga and Fiji, and stopped in Jervis Bay where Gaimard collected words from local indigenous person(s). The informant is not given.

Gaimard’s wordlist consists of 157 words, with some reduplication such as ‘blue’ and ‘circle’ and contains many lexical items that are not found in any of the remaining SCLs corpus. Gaimard’s elicitation focussed on area specific items and animals, particularly on shellfish, fish and bird names, which remarkably enrich the SCLs dictionary. However, phonemicisation of his words is more difficult due to lack of comparative material in other wordlists. Words that are also found in other collections indicate that the language he transcribed was Dharrawal.

Figure 22. Gaimard Jervis Bay wordlist 1834:11
Hale was a member of the United States Exploring Expeditions, which visited New South Wales in 1839-40. This publication includes a section on the ‘The Australian languages’ containing grammatical notes and wordlists for two central NSW languages <Wiradurei> (Wiradjuri) and <Kamilaroi> (Gamilaraay) (but the latter turned out to be Awabakal). The accompanying comparative wordlist contains, along with entries from languages spoken at Sydney, Liverpool, Peel River, Mudgee, Wellington, Bathurst, Moreton Bay and Lake Maquarie, 17 lexical items collected at <Muruya> (Moruya). About the methodology of collecting the language material, Hale noted that it was “obtained directly from the natives, in most cases from a single individual, without the opportunity of a revision, which may have enabled us to detect some errors, and supply deficiencies” (p. 479).
This publication is also of importance for the philological analysis because it offers a spelling system that “comprises all the elementary sounds that occur in the Australian dialects, so far our observation has extended” (p. 482). Hale also notes that the grammatical information on <Kāmilarai> and <Wiradurei> given in this publication is only the second description of an Australian language to be made public, after Threlkeld’s (1827) <Kamilaroi> [Awabakal] grammar.
26. Lau, Hermann in John Fletcher 1991 *Herman Lau and his sojourns (1845-1859) Sydney, Goulburn, Braidwood, Araluen, Moruya and Shoalhaven* Sydney: Book Collectors’ Society of Australia (ILL-HL)

Lau ventured from Germany to Australia in 1854 after the failure of his small business in Hamburg in order to “restore my financial standing or to settle there permanently” (p.1). But after arriving he failed to find suitable employment “in a shop or business”.

Trade was bad, I didn’t know English, and I was also swindled of much of the capital I had brought with me from Hamburg.

I was advised by friends to exploit my admittedly moderate musical talents and for four years I travelled about, near and on the South Coast of New South Wales. For my family I kept at all times a true record of the various things that happened to me. (Lau in Fletcher, 1991:Introduction)

During his travels, Lau collected some language material, including a wordlist of 44 entries containing 5 small phrases like ‘stay here’ and ‘where are you going?’. Some, or all, of his translations are presented in Fletcher’s book as a string of the same word in two different dialects/languages. This makes sense as he visited Shoalhaven, where the southern dialect of Dharrawal would have been spoken, and as far south as Moruya – Dhurga speaking country and Braidwood where Dharumba was spoken.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>devil</th>
<th>goin</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>sun</td>
<td>wooreebucaring</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>moon</td>
<td>yodjutauerang</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>man</td>
<td>dallingmarregin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>animal</td>
<td>nanongwarriganan</td>
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<tr>
<td>love</td>
<td>wagelindannegra</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>to pinch</td>
<td>gainyanjujuniga</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Figure 24. Lau Wordlist in Fletcher 1991:31

For example, ‘sun’, translated as *wooreebucaring*, is a combination of *wuri* ‘sun/heat’ in Dharrawal and *bagaranj* ‘sun’ in Dhurga; ‘moon’ *yodjutauerang* consists of *djadju(ng)* ‘moon’ in Dharrawal and *dhawara* ‘cold/night’ in Dharumba and Dhurga.
Note that the spelling of the words in this publication has not been checked for discrepancies with Lau’s original handwritten notes because at the time of writing Lau’s manuscripts had not been located/obtained.


This wordlist consists of 14 words and three sentences in what might expected to be Dhaawa, the language traditionally spoken at Twofold Bay, but was authoritatively identified by Eades (1976) as Dhurga.

The three short sentences listed are in a religious context, such as ‘I will forgive him’, and translations for the concepts, ‘sin’ and ‘God’ are given. See also part of this wordlist published in Curr (1887), listed further below.
28. Ridley, William 1866 ‘Turuwul and Wodi Wodi’ *Kamilaroi, Dippil, and Turrubul – languages spoken by the Australian Aborigines*

Ridley’s three-page Dharrawal wordlist in this publication was also partly reproduced in Curr’s (1887) Botany Bay wordlist no. 192 and Wollongong, Illawarra, and Shoalhaven list no. 193. Informant for these words in Dharrawal is given as Mrs Lizzy Malone. The words were “learnt by her from her husband, John Malone, a half-caste, whose mother was of that tribe” (p. 99). The list is broken into semantic domains and contains 51 lexical entries and 21 phrases and sentences. The wordlist contains words that are not found in other historic Dharrawal language sources or words collected in
Botany Bay. Wodi Wodi is not a language name, but the name of the social group living in the Illawarra region. The Wodi Wodi speak a southern dialect of Dharrawal.

The words and phrases in the four-page Wodi Wodi list were also “taken from Lizzy (half-caste); daughter of a woman of the Illawarra tribe, and wife of John Malone” (p.111). The Wodi Wodi list contains 122 words and 10 phrases.

Figure 26. Ridley Turuwul 1875:99

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6 However, these words are identified by the La Perouse community to be their language and they are used by the community. (Ray Ingrey, pc)

Ridley added some of Mackenzie’s collected stories in this publication, explaining that the stories were “supplied to the Government by Mr Andrew Mackenzie, of the Shoalhaven District, for transmission to Professor Max Müller” (p.143). The stories presented are <Tutawa, Pulugul>, <Wunbula, Nadjijajong, Murrumbůl, Műndtha> in Dharumba; and <Yirrama Karwēr>, <Mullimūla> and <Jerra Bundūla> in Dharrawal. Ridley’s information about the geographical area covered by different language/dialect speaking groups is likely to be a combination of his and Mackenzie’s knowledge.

Tharumba is spoken on the Shoalhaven River, in the south-eastern part of this Colony, by the Wandandian Tribe, Thurawal in another part of the same district, south of Illawarra where Wodi-wodi is spoken. (p.143)


The language material in this excerpt was collected by Mackenzie and handed to the Earl of Kimberley who directed Ridley to pass the material forward to the Institute. See Introduction in Part 2 – Texts for an account of the communication between the Mackenzie, representatives of the institute, and Ridley.

This reference presents 10 complex sentences and a ‘go’ yana- verb paradigm in “Mudthung or Tharumba, spoken by the aborigines of Braidwood, Ulladulla, Moruya and Jervis Bay” (p. 248).

The same volume also contains “specimens of the Thurawal dialect” given as the “vernacular of the aborigines occupying the country from Wollongong to the banks of the Lower Shoalhaven inclusive” (1874:250). The Dharrawal texts are <Yirrama
Karwēr; <Mēgaalālī Wurragul> (English translation given as a rhyming poem), <Mullimūlā Thurawaldtheri Kurialla>, and two versions of ‘The Story of Bundoola’ “in the language of Ulladulla” (including one longer English version of Bundoola “done into English by Bimmoon, aboriginal of the Ulladulla tribe”). Dharumba text are <Jakwila, Bombi, yanilla Didthullo>, which were published along with sentences and texts in Thurawal. One of these English transcribed stories The Nut Gatherers, is one of the handwritten texts published in Illert’s (2003) article.

Figure 27. Mackenzie Specimen of Mudthung or Thurumba 1874:248
This publication contains language collected from “Lizzie, a half-caste, whose mother was a Shoalhaven aboriginal, and who is now the wife of John Malone” (p. 263) and it places Wodi Wodi as having been spoken from Wollongong to the Shoalhaven River (p. 263).

This article contains a wordlist with 121 words and 16 short phrases. The list of pronouns, not showing a dual/plural or exclusive/inclusive distinction, and 16 short sentences such as ‘give me a drink’ and ‘he stayed a long time’.

| Tongue, tallum. | Pleides, mulamullub. |
| Threat, kîrî. | Pesa, parrwôn, or kaî. |
| Head, wollar or wullar. | Rain, buma, or yîwî. |
| Forehead, guha (same in Kani-lert). | Foot, dunn. |
| Eyes, molabû or mër. | Ema, bîrribain. |
| Nose, naggû. | Top-knot pigeon, gîrulgu. |
| Mouth, kommi. | Laughing jackass, kul SKU. |
| Child, kudjag. | Pudymelon, biduwa. |
| Boy, muddâr. | Black cockatoo, goâr. |
| Shoulder, kôr. | Horse, yarâm. |
| Arm, murrup. | Dead-elder, najjuwîch. |
| Hand, marramur. (This root all over the east of Australia.) | Native companion, guradwûk. |
| Thigh, turra. (A still extended root in the durna, durunp, &c.) | Pigeon, wangawanga. |
| Nails, bûrri or bûrûng. | Smako, kurranguru. |
| Knee, garuma. | Canon, yurnerta or madyari. |
| Leg (calf), nûri. | More, tee, kîndû. |
| Kangaroo, bûrrû. | Forms bark, kuniola. |
| Opossum, kuruma. | Book. |
| Black-snake, mündû. | Tee tree bark, gurrindur. |
| Cockatoo, yarrabulla. | Hut, kundi, or ërrû. |
| Dog, murrup. | Road, yo-wump. |
| Diamond-snake, moûka. | Spear, mawûng. |
| Pelican, kurrupûk. | Fish-spear, kûr. |
| Ignma, gindarla. | Boomerang, wurra. |
| Lizard (small), dillup. | Tea tree, bunun. |
| Fish, dûn. | Iron-bark tree, bûrûndû. |

ADJECTIVES.

| Good, wëldây. | Six, wawulli bo wowulli. |
| Bad, bullin. | Seven, wowulli bo wowulli mittup. |
| Large, kairup. | White, taoern or jirup. |
| Small, murrumullub or murrug. | Black, pandur. |
| Alive, nurungulla (mûrûn or murrum in Kani-lert). | Blue, pandur. |
| Dead, buller or bullyar. | Red, wûnûngûrûg or gûngûngûrûg. |
| Awake, baitha. | Green, nurunguru. |
| Asleep, nuggun. | Grey, yerungur. |
| One, mittûg, or middug. | Hot, bukarun. |
| Two, bûlêr. | Cold, maup. |

Figure 28. Ridley Wodi Wodi wordlist 1877:264

This Dharumba language material was published via Ridley. It contains the mythological stories <Guayamin> “version by Noleman, aboriginal of the Wandandian Tribe”; <Tūtawa, Pūlūngūl> “version by Hugany, aboriginal of the Wandandian Tribe”; and <Wunbula – Nadjajong, Murrumbul, Mūndtha> “version by Noleman, aboriginal of the Wandandian Tribe”. All texts are in the Dharumba language, labelled as such with <Jerra Tharumba>.

The format of the presentation of these stories is equal to those in other published and unpublished versions of Mackenzie’s collected texts. The story is given first in a block of the applicable language, followed by a block of text with the English translation. See Chapter B.2 for all scans of Mackenzie’s Dharumba texts.

33. Curr, Edward 1887 The Australian Race - its origin, languages, customs, place of landing in Australia, and the routes by which it spread itself over that continent Melbourne: John Ferrer, Government Printer (C)

Part 3 of this of this four-volume publication contains wordlists from all parts of Australia, including from south-eastern NSW. Wordlists were submitted to Curr from a variety of individuals. The wordlists relevant to this study are listed in ‘Book the Seventeenth’ of that volume, and are lexical items collected in no. 192 – Botany Bay (Ridley), no. 193 – Wollongong, Illawarra and Shoalhaven (Ridley), no. 194 – From Jervis Bay to Mount Dromedary (Dawsey), and no. 198 – Twofold Bay (Ridley). Page 541 in ‘Book the Eighteenth’ contains a comparative wordlist with lexical items from Moruya, Illawarra, Cow Pastures (Gandangara) and Sydney Cove (most likely Eora). The following references are taken from Curr’s publication.
34. Ridley, William 1887 ‘No. 192. – Botany Bay’ in Curr 1887:3, Pp. 413-416 (BoB-WR-1887)

This vocabulary was taken from Ridley’s *Kamilaroi* grammar. Curr noted in his introduction to this vocabulary that:

> Mr. Ridley states that Tururwu l was spoken both at Botany Bay and Port Jackson. The several vocabularies of Port Jackson (or Sydney Harbour) tribe, however, make it clear that there were two languages, and that Turuwul was confined to Botany Bay. From Lieutenant-Colonel Collins’ Account of New South Wales….we learn that the name of Botany Bay tribe was Gweagal. In studying the aboriginal phrases preserved by Mr. Ridley, who obtained them from a half-caste of those parts, it is clear that their translations are free and not literal. (p. 413)

Most of the words in this list are shared with other Dharrawal sources, even in the southern Dharrawal dialect that Mackenzie recorded. Some of the words are shared with the Sydney language(s) Eora and Dharug, but are not found in the southern dialect of Dharrawal, i.e. the word <batoɔ> ‘water’ in this list is *ngadju(ng)* in the other Dharrawal language sources. The Dharrawal language as spoken at Botany Bay shared numerous words with the Sydney language.

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7 In a contemporary context, *ngadjung* is known as ‘fresh water’ and *badjung* as ‘salt water’ by La Perouse communities.

8 This has been confirmed to me by La Perouse Elders and can also be observed on the audio recordings from Janet Mathews, who recorded speakers from La Perouse in the 1960s.
As with Ridley’s Botany Bay wordlist in this volume, this wordlist of 55 lexical items is also taken from Ridley’s Kamilaroi as Wodi Wodi language material. In the introduction to this wordlist, Curr notes the various semantics of particular words.

A hut was often spoken of as a camp, and huts were almost always made of bark in the southern portion of the continent, and hence two objects were expressed by one word. In some of our languages a man will talk of his tree or his wood, meaning his spear; a form of speech which has something of the grand as well as of the rude about it. (p. 417)
The introduction of this vocabulary of 110 lexical entries states that this language-speaking group “divides themselves into two classes […] Piindri or tree-climbers, and Kathoongal or fishermen”⁹. The wordlist is given in two parts; a second part is titled ‘additional words’ and contains 66 items. Curr adds that the speakers of this language call policeman tchingar = star-fish, as they say both seize and detain. These tribes still retain few of their old customs, for they scar the person and knock out their teeth. Every remarkable hill, waterhole, and rock, says Mr Dawsey, has its native name. It will be noticed that sun, light, heat, day, and to-day are all translated by the word nowa, and probably correctly so. (p. 420)

This wordlist contains lexical items that correlate with Mathews’ Dhurga language.

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⁹ See also Howitt’s (1996) observation on the division of the ‘Yuin tribes’ into the ‘Tree-climbers’, ‘Mountaineers’ and ‘Sea-coasters’.
37. Ridley, William 1887 ‘No.198 – Twofold Bay’ in Curr 1887:3, P. 434 (TB-WR)

This wordlists consists of only four words that were “extracted from Ridley’s Kamilaroi” grammar (Ridley, 1966). In regards to Ridley’s translation of the word <mamung> as a proper name for a sister, Curr states:

I have no doubt that Mr. Ridley was in error when he took the word down as a proper name. This is strong evidence of the tribe being of Sydney descent; otherwise the first three of the four words given above are too common in root throughout Australia to help us to any conclusion on the subject. We know, however, that the Twofold Bay Blacks themselves were always in alliance with those about Mount Dromedary and to the northward of that point, and at war with the Gippsland and Snowy River tribes.

38. unknown author 1896 ‘Message Sticks’ Australasian Anthropological Journal Vol 1:2, P. 10

This short article mentions an “aboriginal from Braidwood district” and lists several words regarding message sticks.


This collection of wordlists from several places within NSW also contains wordlist relative to this study from Braidwood (24 items), Batemans Bay (86 items) and Ulladulla (19 items). Larmer’s correlating handwritten notes were shown in the previous section.
40. Brown, John 1899 ‘Illawarra District, per favour of J. Brown’


Contains 33 words of the southern dialect of Dharrawal. This is evident in the difference of words such as <mobera> ‘eye’ which is not used in the northern Sydney dialect, but the use of <megar> ‘woman’, which is a Dharrawal word and not used in any of the other SCLs.

This is a comparative table of about 150 words from several languages, amongst them words from Braidwood, Ulladulla, and Batemans Bay.

42. Micky Munnima 1899 ‘Aboriginal words and their meanings’ in *Science of Man* and *Journal of the Royal Anthropological Society of Australasia* Vol 2:8 (ILL-MM-1899)

This wordlist with 43 entries was recorded by “Miss Brown and her brother, Mr G.W. Brown of Brownsville about 1863 from full blood of Illawarra district known as
Micky Munnima”. The recorders were two siblings of John Brown who also submitted some wordlists collected in Brownsville (which was named after their father George Brown, a successful entrepreneur in the Wollongong and Dapto region). The picture shown here is the handwritten draft of the published list.

Figures 33. Wordlist collected by M A Brown from Micky Munnima

The remarkable aspect about this list, as well as Queen Rosie’s wordlists collected by John Brown, is the difference in words compared to the usual wordlists. It contains a number of non-native foods and items such as ‘tea’, ‘sugar’, ‘peaches’ and ‘candles’.
This list of collected placenames from all over the eastern parts of NSW contains a few placenames with translation from the Nowra and Eden area.

Figure 34. Science of Man Vol 3 1900:95

44. unknown author 1901 ‘Aboriginal names of places etc with their meaning’.in Science of Man and Journal of the Royal Anthropological Society of Australasia Vol 4:2, Pp. 28-29 (SoM-1901)

This journal has many of these lists of placenames that were sent to the Australasian Anthropological Institute by individuals from different parts around Australia. This particular list contains a couple of names from the Wollongong district.
45. unknown author 1901 ‘Aboriginal names of places etc with their meaning’ in Science of Man and Journal of the Royal Anthropological Society of Australasia Vol 4:3 Pp. 45-46 (SoM-1901)

This article contains a wordlist like the previous reference, but has about three identified words from the “Eden district” and other words that are recognisable as South Coast languages items, but the origin is not given.


According to the description, this list of placenames and words was given to John Brown by a Mr Fairweather from Wollongong. However, the majority of words seem to be from further north, i.e. Walgett and Newcastle. The article is also of interest due to the final remark that the “"U" is pronounced as “oo”".

This list of placenames has a few entries placed in County Auckland, around Eden.


This is Mathews’ first published SCL grammar; it is also the most elaborate one of all of his SCLs papers. This article also contains some notes on the <Gundungurra> language. It contains his adopted spelling system and information about pronunciation.
of the sounds found in the language, information on case and number marking on nouns, possessive pronouns and extensive paradigms demonstrating tense and person marking on verbs and ‘adjectives’ and further observations of the function of the language.

This paper claims to enlarge, in some degree, the circle of Australian ethnology. Exhibiting the general structure of any native tongue must be valuable to philologists, in enabling them to compare our aboriginal languages with each other, and also with those of the people of Polynesia and the east Indian Archipelago, whence the primitive inhabitants of this continent are supposed by several writers to have come...(Pp. 127-128)
This article also contains a small introduction and wordlist with Dharruk words,


49. Mathews, Robert Hamilton 1901 ‘The Thoorga Language’
Proceedings and transactions of the Royal Geographical Society of
Australasia, Queensland 17 Brisbane : Outridge Printing, Pp. 49-73
(U-M.1.1)

As with the previously listed Dharrawal grammar, this Dhurga grammar is remarkably
more elaborate than Mathews’ subsequent published articles on this language and
demonstrates that Mathews was in the process of understanding the complexity of the
language. The material contains pronoun and verb paradigms, and a wordlist of 467
lexical entries. This is the largest published wordlist of all of the SCLs.

Figure 37. Mathews The Thoorga Language 1901:49
Mathews reveals in this grammar that he collected at least some part of this material in Wallaga Lake (p. 51).

Every word in this paper has been taken down by myself from the lips of several old men and women of the Thoorga tribe on different occasions, according as opportunities offered to make special journeys among them. (Mathews, 1901:49)

This publication also contains the transcriptions of songs with the accompanying musical scores. These include short ‘chants’ sung by men and by women. The transcribed words could not be identified based on the existing SCLs corpus, which Mathews commented on.

It may be mentioned that the words of these chants possess no meaning to the present natives, having been handed down from one generation to another. They were probably in the language of conquering tribes in the past. They are considered sacred, and are never used except at the initiation ceremonies, of which they constitute an important essential. (p. 68)

50. Mathews, Robert Hamilton 1901 *Thurrawal Grammar – Part I*  
Federal Printing Works: Parramatta (A-M.1.7)

This self-contained publication contains Mathews’ other published grammatical notes on Dharrawal. In this article he does not give information on spelling system and pronunciation. Mathews notes that the language was “spoken by a number of aboriginal tribes on the south-east coast of New South Wales, between the Hawkesbury River and the Victorian boundary”. (Mathews may here have been describing the area covered by what is sometimes referred to as the “Yuin Nation”. See Chapter A.8 for further discussion on this term.)

The article also contains a section at the end ‘Directions of Obtaining Information’, a kind of field guide for language collectors on how to elicit language material.
Mathews' only other grammar of Dhurga is in his usual presentation style, and it does not contain a wordlist. It contains his usual spelling and pronunciation key at the beginning of the article. There is no added grammatical content in this article.

For many years I have been studying the languages of the Australian Aborigines, and now submit an outline of the grammatical structure of the Thoorga tongue, which is spoken by the natives of the Tuross, Clyde, Moruya, and other rivers situated partly in each of the counties St.Vincent and Dampier, respectively, New South Wales.
From a philological point, Mathews made a very interesting statement regarding his ‘adjectives’. In all other grammars he wrote about verbs and nouns, and that adjectives can be inflected like nouns or verbs.

It might be preferable to include these predicative adjectives among the verbs, but I have thought it best to exemplify it under the present heading, to keep all the adjectives together.

This article also contains a small final introductory section on the Dharrawal language, for the purpose of “showing its affinity to the Thoorga tongue”.

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Figure 39. Mathews The Thoorga Language 1902:101
Dyirringany on Pp.160-167 (DJ-M.1.5)

This article contains several language descriptions, i.e. <Yualeai>, <Pikumbil>, <Kawambarai>, <Wongai bon>, <Kūrmū>, <Tyakeč> or Mystic Language, <Dyirringany>, <Yorta Yorta> and <Bureba>. The Djirringanj (pp.160-1667) grammar consists of mainly verb paradigms to demonstrate tense, aspect, mood, and person marking. No vocabulary is given.

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The possessive case is represented by a suffix to the name of the property as well as to that of the owner. Bailla mirrigangwa, a man’s dog. Mirriga wingalingwa, a dog’s puppies. Anything over which possession can be exercised is subject to inflexion for number and person:

- 1st Person My camp (camp my) Badhlaya
- 2nd Thy camp Badhlayi
- 3rd His camp Badhlaya

and so on through the dual and plural numbers.

Instrumental.—Wannungala yerrabandya warrangaadu, who throw at me a boomerang. The accusative is the same as the nominative. Dative.—Ngurani, to a camp.

Ablative.—Nguradyan, from a camp.

Adjectives follow the nouns they qualify, and take the same declensions for number and case. They are compared as under: Jummaga nyana—dhaanat nyanya, good this, bad that. Jummagumma nyanya, this is very good.

When an adjective is used as a predicate, it can, by applying the proper postfixes, be converted into a verb, as in the word mündur, strong:

- 1st Per, I am strong, Mündur-giannumanga
- 2nd Thou art strong, Mündur-galadyanung
- 3rd He is strong, Mündur-galadyana

This inflexion extends to all the persons of the dual and plural, and to the past and future tenses.

Pronouns.

There is a distinctive form of the first person of the dual and plural, according as the individual spoken to is included or excluded:

- 1st Person I, Ngaia
- 2nd Thou, Indigal
- 3rd He, Waralu

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Figure 40. Mathews Djirringanj 1902:162
About the geography and relationship between the local languages/dialects of the area covered by this language, Mathews notes that:

The remnants of the Dyirringañ tribe occupy the northern half of the county of Auckland, on the south-east coast of New South Wales. They are bounded on the north by the Thoorga-speaking people…on the south are the Thāwa and other tribes, whilst the Muddhang and Ngarrugu occupy the country to the west. Stretching southerly along the sea-coast from the Dyirringañ territory to Cape Howe, and onward into Victoria as far as Anderson’s Inlet, into which the Tarwin River emotes, in the county of Buln Buln, all the languages are similar in grammatical structure to the Dyirringañ, although some of them differ considerably in the vocabulary. I have also observed here, as in other districts, that two dialects differ widely in intonation, although the changes in vocabulary are comparatively slight, which gives the superficial observer the impression that they are altogether unlike.


Here Mathews presents grammatical information on <Burranbinya>, <Wuttyabullak> and <Tharumba>, but the Dharumba description is not accompanied by a wordlist.

The Tharumba language is spoken on the coast of New South Wales between the Shoalhaven River and Ulladulla, reaching inland to the Dividing Range. The tongue is a dialect of the Thoorga, spoken to the south of Ulladulla…The Thurrawal-speaking people adjoin the Tharumba to the north. (p.58)

Mathews gives information on the nominative, causative, instrumental, genitive, dative and ablative case marking on nouns, ‘adjectives’ and an unusual complete list of free pronouns, as well as possessive pronouns. He comments on similarities and dissimilarities between Dhurga and Dharumba throughout the article.

…The exclamations, conjunctions, and numerals are likewise almost identical with the Thoorga. But some of the words in every part of speech are quite different; some are more or less dissimilar, whilst others are so nearly alike in both dialects that their meaning can be recognized at once. (p.61)

Mathews furthermore states that all language material presented in this paper “was carefully gathered by myself, without assistance of any person in the camps of
the several tribes whose languages are herein dealt with - a task involving considerable expenditure of time, labour, and money” (p. 57).

54. Mathews, Robert Hamilton 1903 ‘Languages of the Kamilaroi and Other Aboriginal Tribes of New South Wales’ Journal of the Anthropological Institute of Great Britain and Ireland Vol 33, Pp. 259-283 (A-M.1.3)

Apart from Gamilaraay grammatical information, a wordlist and small phrases of <Yauan, or the Mystic Language>, and <Wallerai>, <Wirraiarai> and <Guinbrai> Dialects, this article also includes a Dharrwal wordlist with 417 entries.

As part of the introduction Mathews mentions his previous work and publications on <Thurrawal>, <Gundungurra> and <Dharrruk>, which he then assigns into a
category of the “Thurrawal type” based on “several peculiarities of grammatical structure not previously reported in any Australian tongue” (p. 259).

Figure 42. Mathews Dharrwal wordlist 1903:276

This wordlist also gives some interesting information on existing native wildlife. Galah (parrot) and shingleback (lizard) are listed with the note “None in the district” (pp.277 and 278).


This material contains a wordlist with 24 lexical entries as well as a reference to a placename.

“Windang” I understand is the Aboriginal name of the Island [at the entrance to Lake Illawarra].
This large paper includes grammatical notes on <Thangatti>, and <Ngeumba>, but the bulk of the article describes cultural practices and ceremonies of Aboriginal groups throughout various parts of NSW and Victoria. Amongst this information is a song noted down with lyrics/words and accompanying common musical notation that was sung at a <Pirrimbir>, or ‘avenging expedition’ (p. 239). The lyrics of the song could not be analysed based on the rest of the SCL corpus.

A.1.2.3 Contemporary work on the South Coast Languages

The term contemporary is chosen here to distinguish pre 1902 language work to that from 1930s onwards. The reason is that the language work (starting with Tindale in the 1930s) was conducted by trained linguists/anthropologists, compared to the earlier collectors, who did this without formal training (and approach perhaps).

Contemporary work on the SCLs includes audio recording of language material as well as some published and unpublished analyses on one or some of the SCLs. The term ‘contemporary’ is used loosely here as I have included Tindale’s collected words from Wallaga Lake in the 1930s. It also includes Arthur Capell’s unpublished Dharrawal grammatical notes that he compiled sometime during the 1960s. Luise Hercus and Janet Mathews10 respectively recorded Dharrawal and Dhurga language speakers/rememberers in the early and mid 1960s.

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10 Janet Mathews was the grand-daughter-in-law of Robert Hamilton Mathews, the main contributor to the SCLs corpus.
57. Tindale, Norman 1938 Comparative wordlist *Tindale Collection AA338/08 South Australian Museum (WL-T.75)*

Norman Tindale’s collection is held at the South Australian Museum. Tindale travelled along the NSW South Coast and collected cultural as well as linguistic information.

Tindale created this table of a comparative wordlist of 7 languages, amongst them 87 words headed *<Juinj = Taua 31 Dec 1938>*. Tindale collected this material at Wallaga Lake, the wordlist being number 75 in his database. The words in the list correlate with Mathews’ collected Dhurga words, so I am not altogether convinced that the language he collected is Dhaawa, as it was spoken in Twofold Bay. Wallaga Lake Mission was at that time one of the few ‘reserves’ in south-eastern New South Wales where Aboriginal people were moved to from various areas.

Figure 43. Tindale Vocabulary excerpt Tindale manuscripts
This part of Tindale’s diary covers his time spent on the NSW South Coast from 28th December 1938 (arriving in Wollongong coming from Sydney) until the 4th January (when he left Bega for Lake Tyers in Gippsland, Victoria). The diary entries contain information about cultural artefacts, knowledge and information about location of various social groups.

Saturday Dec 31 1938 - Measured three subjects & made a good start with the genealogies.
Sunday 2 Jan 1939 - Among the folk measured today was N. 1507, a fb of mixed Taug and ‘Wiradjuri’ origin. Traces of a pygmoid type are [manifest?] here & [were?] [refused?] to the other natives at lake Tyers who have the same strain which appears to belong to the country.
south of Bega & west of Lake Tyers among the ‘Bidjever tribe…The Tàua range along the coast from Eden north to Narooma where they meet the ‘Walbanga. The western boundary is in the mountains, but information was scant; apparently it was not much visited in the olden days; other people lived there, principally the ‘Jarigo, about Bombala. Once ‘Wiradjuri men came to Tilba Tilba on a visit & this even is still remembered, they were [unreadable] feared, for their reputation as powerful fighters had reached the coast, long before the warriors came.

North of Ulladulla was ‘Wandandian country & beyond Jervis Bay were the ‘Wodi ‘Wodi, but little information was forthcoming about them. All these people on the coast were Junij, which is evidently an agglomerate of tribes like the Kurnai & the so called Narrinjeri in S. Aust.

Tuesday 3c Jan - At Wallaga Lake….little of the language is remembered & none is used. Some of the natives from inland speak ‘Wiradjurai, Bermagui was the meeting place of people, for Junij peoples & also a boundary. According to today’s informant the Junij people went as far as Orbost. They had met the Wiradjuri who were, at the beginning of white settlement, fighting their way across the mountains towards the coast.

Further diary entries tell of three accounts of informants having seen the “[black] wallaby being called [‘ba’dalam]…standing about four feet or high”; and information on burial rituals and traditional knowledge about their natural environment. Tindale also recorded the lyrics to a song and noted “the meanings of the words is unknown” (p.774).

59. Capell, Arthur 1955 *King of the Sea* Audio recording as told by Les Bundle in Nowra Capell Collection, AIATSIS

This recording of the Dharrawal speaker, Les Bundle who was noted as one of the last fluent speakers of Dharrawal, is held in the Arthur Capell collection at the Australian Institute for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies (AIATSIS). The quality of this recording is described by the institute as ‘poor, almost inaudible’ and Eades commented:

> It is most unfortunate that the tape […] seems to be impossible to understand. The speaker was obviously very fluent, but his recording is simply too fast to be understood. (Eades, 1976:13)

After consultation with experts regarding manipulating this recording to a standard that would allow analysis, it became obvious that this is a future project for a study that ought to be conducted by a phonetician that is familiar with spoken AALs.
However, this recording has already been proven to be invaluable to this study as it clarified a rhotic distinction just from listening to the speaker in the current quality of the recording.

For the transcription of the English translation, also given by Les Bundle, see Text 10 in Chapter B.1 (Dharrawal Texts).


Capell’s unpublished grammar consists of typed pages with some handwritten notes that Professor R.M.W. Dixon identified as Diana Eades’ handwriting. Capell’s analysis was based predominantly on Mathews’ material, but he also consulted remaining language speakers to assist him.

…it was possible to find some years ago a few speakers of the language. I met one such speaker, a half-caste, then over 80 of age, at La Perouse, near Sydney, about 1950 & was able to do phonetic study with him which permitted an understanding of the systems of spelling followed by early authors.

About 1956 Dr SA Wurm & and I were able to locate another speaker, full-blood, at Nowra & carry the study further by means of wire recordings.

This last speaker Capell referred to is Les Bundle, who told the Dharrawal story of the \textit{King of the Sea}, the audio recording listed amongst the audio material in this chapter. Although Capell did not work on other SCLs, he refers to the similarity between Dharrawal and Dhurga.

Immediately to the south of Thurrawal came Thurga (\textit{ḏu:rga}) which agrees in most features with Thurrawal. Southwards of Thurga information is lacking.

\textsuperscript{11} I would like to thank Professor Dixon for copying and sending me this material.
Figure 45. Capell handwritten excerpt of his unpublished Dharrawal grammar, 1950s
According to Eades (1976:13), Capell’s unpublished grammar on Dharrawal is largely a rewriting of Mathews’ grammar in terms of Immediate Constituent Analysis. He was unable to gain any new grammatical information from his brief fieldwork in the 1950s, and much of the confusion in Mathews’ grammar is still evident.

61. Hercus, Luise 1960s Recordings of elicitation sessions with South Coast Languages Speakers/rememberers 16 CD set AIATSIS.

62. Mathews, Janet 1960s Recording of elicitation sessions with South Coast Languages Speakers/rememberers 16 CD set AIATSIS.
63. **Eades, Diana 1970s Recording of elicitation sessions with South Coast Languages Speakers/rememberers 16 CD set AIATSIS.**

AIATSIS compiled all of Hercus’, Janet Mathews’, and Diana Eades’ recordings on a 16-piece CD set labelled *Dharawal and Dhurga*. The recordings consist of elicitation sessions that Luise Hercus and Janet Mathews held with various individuals in Aboriginal communities on the South Coast. None of the speakers were fluent and the language and the language material collected is mainly wordlists with some grammatical information encoded in small phrases. The AIATSIS library holds a partial transcript of these tapes and information about informants.

Diana Eades based her phonological analysis in her SCLs grammar (1976) on these (and her own) recordings.

Although these recordings play a major role in language reclamation projects, they have been omitted from historical corpus for the purpose of this study, but will be included in future in order to expand the database presented here. Reasons for this decision were presented in the introduction of this chapter.

64. **Eades, Diana 1976 The Dharawal and Dhurga Languages of the New South Wales South Coast AIAS: Canberra**

Eades’ published Honours thesis provides a basic phonological and morphological outline of the SCLs, and has been an enormous contribution to language reclamation on the South Coast. Her emphasis seemed to be on the phonetic and phonological analysis of the recordings produced by Luise Hercus and Janet Mathews in the 1960s.

Eades excluded data in the early grammars and wordlists that she only found in single instances and therefore dismissed them as unreliable. Eades also omitted the texts and stories collected by Mackenzie and Mathews, which ultimately proved to be the most valuable contributions to the SCLs corpus for the analysis presented here. As Breen (1980) pointed out in his review of Eades’ grammar:
This book is a useful contribution to the literature on Dharawal and Dhurga (and is refreshingly free of annoying misprints that plague the readers of many early grammars of Australian languages) but the definite study of these languages has yet to be written.

There is no doubt that Eades’ study was an invaluable contribution to both comparative studies as well as to appropriate Aboriginal communities at the time. Her work had thus far been the only available grammatical description of the SCLs and has extensively been utilised by Aboriginal communities in the past. It is hoped that the more comprehensive study presented in this thesis will allow communities to take their language reclamation further than had previously been possible.

A.1.3 Language type and classification

In the early twentieth century Schmidt (1919) undertook the first attempt to classify AALs. His classification was based on interlingual commonalities found within his selected data on personal pronouns, interrogative pronouns, numerals, lexical cognates and phonotactics. Based on his criteria, one of his established language groups is the Yuin-Kuri group; yuin and kuri being the respective words for ‘man’ in the southern and northern languages of this group. The Kuri languages make up the northern geographical area of this group and consist of what are now mostly referred to Dharug, the Sydney language(s), Darkinyung, the Hunter River-Lake Macquarie languages, Gathang and Birrbay. The Yuin languages comprise the languages spoken from the southern parts of Sydney down to the Victorian Border as well as neighbouring inland languages. Schmidt further split the Yuin subgroup into coastal and inland Yuin, based on lexical sharedness, or lack of, and further splits the coastal Yuin into northern and southern Yuin.

12 See Koch (2004) for a more detailed account on early classifications of AALs.
13 See also Chapter 4 and ‘Group 4 Wordlists’ in the Handbook of Aboriginal Languages of New South Wales and the Australian Capital Territory (Wafer and Lissarrague, 2008) for more language names and reference to language and dialect names in the discussed area.
Schmidt classified and labelled the *Yuin-Kuri* group based on the lack of word-initial /l/ and /r/, and pointed to the occurrence of word-final ‘explosives’ (stops/plosives) in the *Yuin* group, which are less commonly found in the *Kuri* languages. This feature is shared with Victorian AALs. Curiously, Schmidt grouped Gandangara (Gundungurra) into the *Kuri* languages subgroup, even though possession is marked as in other *Yuin* languages, and not as in *Kuri* languages. Koch reclassified Gandangara as a *Yuin* language, based on this and other linguistic aspects (see Koch, 2009).

Similarities between adjoining languages along the coast and adjoining inland *Yuin* languages show a continuum, which is not uncommon in language situations. The Dharrawal spoken in Botany Bay shares a lot of its salient words with the Sydney language; the Dharrawal spoken further south shares with Dharumba and Dhurga; Dhurga collected in Wallaga Lake shares a larger number of words with Djirringanj and so on. This ‘cycle of lects’ was captured in the following diagram (reproduced here from Wafer et al, 2008:105).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dialect Cycle of the Yuin Languages (Wafer and Lissarrague, 2008:105)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Coastal</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Northern</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dhurga</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Southern</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Perhaps previous researchers expected clearly defined linguistic boundaries segregating languages more so than there perhaps were. Considering that each linguistic or social group covered relatively small geographical areas (compared to central NSW languages, for example) there should be little surprise that the languages are similar. Capell (1970), for example, pointed to a mistake Ridley made in labelling
two of his wordlists. Ridley published a wordlist each in <Wodi-wodi> and in <Turuwul>. Both come from the same informant: “Lizzie (half-caste) daughter of a woman of the Illawarra tribe [Wodi Wodi], and wife of John Malone.” The language is “the language of the Illawarra from Wollongong to the Shoalhaven River”. Ridley’s <Turuwul> might be expected to be <Dharawa:l>. It is not, but his <Wodi-widu> is <Dharawa:l>. The other is “the language spoken by the now extinct tribe of Port Jackson”. The inference would be that Lizzie Malone learned the language of her husband as a second language, and this would seem to be the case. However the vocabulary is neither Sydney, nor <Dharawa:l>, and it would therefore seem to be Gweagal recorded in Botany Bay.

Gweagal is the name of one of the social groups residing in the northern arm of Botany Bay (around La Perouse) and they identify as being a part of the Dharrawal language group (Ray Ingrey, pc). They acknowledge that their dialect differs to the Dharrawal as it is spoken further south the coast, and that it shares many lexical items with the Sydney language(s).14

Capell “knew better than the sources” in this instance15, and he was therefore wrong to assume that Ridley’s informant erroneously slipped between languages.

Dharawal (Thurrawal) and the languages south of it, right round into Victoria, either belonged to or at least were strongly influenced by the languages formerly called the “Western Desert”, now better called by the structural designation “Affix-transferring”.

The Hawkesbury River would be the northern boundary of the Dharruk; southwards it extended to the Burragorang Valley area, where it impinged on Gundungurra. On the east it met Dharawal along some line yet to be worked out.

On the south of Sydney, Thurrawal reached practically to the southern shore of Botany Bay, possibly limited by the George’s River. Early writers speak of the people about this area as the

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14 Gweagal is possibly a variant spelling of guya-gal ‘south-belong’, i.e. ‘southerners’ of the Kurnell Peninsula. The name for Botany Bay is Kamay or Gamay (Ray Ingrey, pc) ‘spear’ and the local name for La Perouse is gurival, the name of a native pigeon hat used to breed in the area.

15 This quote “knowing better than the sources” by Harold Koch (pc) has probably become a catch phrase throughout this study. It has become increasingly obvious that we as researchers of archival material sometimes show tendencies to overanalyse data or information given in historic material.
“Gweagal”, which may be interpreted as Gwiyagal. Their speech is probably a dialect form of Thurrawal, having a distinct vocabulary. (Capell, unpublished Dharawal grammar)

The SCLs have a commonly occurring phoneme inventory within AALs, although some phonemes in this study are presented with a sense of caution (see Chapter A.3 (Phonology)). Consonants have six places of articulation, which include a laminal and an apical contrast, at least in nasals and stops. There are two rhotics, although, apart from one example pointed out by Capell (n.d.) it is not clear whether they are in phonemic contrast. There are three vowels, and vowel length distinction, but the evidence is not convincing enough to hypothesise on whether the length difference is phonemic or phonetic.

In having the laminal and apical contrasts the SCLs show more commonality with the Victorian languages such as Pallanganmiddang (Blake and Reid, 1999) and Wemba Wemba (Hercus, 1992), rather than with other NSW languages such as Gathang (Lissarrague, 2010), Anawain (Reid, 1995) and Dhanggati (Lissarrague, 2007).

Pronouns show a singular/dual/plural distinction as well as having an inclusive/exclusive in first person non-singular pronouns. Persons can be expressed by freestanding pronouns or by means of bound pronouns. The use of the latter is commonly found in the source material, whereas freestanding pronouns are less frequently found in elicited sentence and rarely in text/story material.

The SCLs are suffixing languages. Nouns (and noun-modifiers/adjectives) can be inflected for number and case, and form the base for various derived forms (see Chapter A.4 (Nominal Morphology). Verbs as well as modifiers can be inflected for tense/aspect/mood and generally show subject and object marking, as well as utilising a range of derivational suffixes and a few identified clitics. For discussion on verb morphology, see Chapter A.5 (Verb Morphology).
Core syntactic roles follow the ergative/absolute case marking system; this applies to all nouns and subcategories like personal pronouns, interrogative pronouns, deictics and kin nouns. Chapters A.4 and A.6 look at case marking and syntax respectively.

The languages contain a number of particles that do not seem to be inflected in any way; these have adverbial, temporal, spatial, negating and modal functions. Narratives also show discourse markers that are not found in elicited sentences and that have the function of linking the utterance sequentially to the previous one; very much like the English ‘(and) then…’. These particles and other discourse features are presented in Chapter A.6 (Syntax) and Chapter A.7 (Discourse and Narrative).

Possession is marked on both possessor by means of the genitive case suffix, and on the possessed noun with a bound possessive pronoun marking person and number or the possessor. This is also found in some other NSW AALs such as Gandangara (Besold, 2003) and Victorian languages such as the Kulin languages and Warrnambool (Blake, 2003b). This feature, however, is not commonly found in the Kuri languages or most other NSW languages. See Chapter A.4 (Nominal Morphology) and Chapter A.6 (Syntax) on possession marking and syntax of possessive phrases.

A.1.4 Aims of the project

In 2004 I was approached by the New South Wales Board of Studies (BOS hereon) to act as the supporting linguist on the development of Dhurga language teaching materials and programs at two schools on the South Coast. The initial idea was that the teaching material was to be developed from the analysis presented by Eades (1976).

Having worked with R H Mathews’ manuscripts and publications on the neighbouring language Gandangara (Besold, 2003), I was aware that the quantity and quality of the language material he collected on the SCLs, including Dhurga, would
allow for a more comprehensive description than Eades (1976) had been able to offer. The primary aim of this study has therefore been to provide detailed language descriptions that will allow the languages to be taught to a higher proficiency level than had previously been possible. (See also Chapter A.8 (Conclusion and Further Implications.)

This study also intends to provide South Coast Aboriginal communities and researchers with a summary of the available archival material on the SCLs and a collective South Coast languages dictionary.

Apart from a few repeated paradigms in Mathews’ publications, all language material found in the archival sources is presented in either the dictionary or analysed and glossed in Part B (Language Material). The material presented there acts as an initial database onto which individuals and communities can add their existing knowledge, and expand or revise the dictionary to their own needs.

The recent years have witnessed an enormous productivity in language recovery work on traditional NSW languages across the state, based purely or predominantly on archival material. The analyses presented in this study aim to fill the geographical gap of these recently produced language descriptions on NSW Aboriginal languages and to add to the overall corpus of Australian Aboriginal languages descriptions. The analyses in this study refer frequently to other recently re-analysed NSW languages, and the findings in this study will feed back into the continuing language work of other NSW languages.

Finally, it is hoped that this thesis will take the reader on a journey through the stages and processes encountered when working from purely archival material. Chapter A.2 (Methodology) is meant to provide a glimpse into the complexities of working with this source material and hopes to invite further open discussion on this aspect of language work.
Chapter A.2 Methodology

Working from/with archival material has been a neglected topic for public discussion amongst linguists within the Australian Aboriginal Languages (AALs hereon) context. Although there has been an increasing corpus of literature on the early collectors and their language collections\textsuperscript{16}, very little has been published on methodology and approach of working from this material in language recovery. Even though numerous linguists work extensively from archival language material during their language research, there is little public sharing of experience and methodologies on how individuals approach the archival source material.

Some of the earliest elaborate studies on south-eastern AALs incorporate some of the methodologies employed, particularly the methods used in order to produce phonemic representations. Blake’s (1991) grammatical description of the Melbourne language Woiwurrung, and Bowe and Morey’s (1999) grammar of the Victorian language Yorta Yorta cover some methodologies the authors employed for their analyses. The latter publication includes, for example, a discussion on the symbolic representation of palatal stops as digraphs $dy$ in the archival sources.

Within personal communications, many researchers are happy to reveal accounts of methodology failure based on their own experiences, but the processes and experiences of working with historic material is rarely documented and made publicly available. Without sharing the experiences and mistakes that are part of working within this domain, linguists working from/with archival material seem to go through

the same obstacles and breakdowns of methodology, and it therefore feels like a case of ‘reinventing the puncture’.

To date, the only Australian publication that is dedicated solely to matters arising from working with/from historical handwritten sources is *Paper and Talk* (Thieberger, 1995); a compilation of selected articles written by linguists who have had experience with the problems and issues arising during work with handwritten manuscripts of early language researchers who had little or no linguistic training.

Linguistic researchers who work with archival material know that this is not a one-dimensional approach of merely extracting the data for an analysis, but that requires some knowledge about the individual language collectors, their background and education, as well as what other material was made available on AALs at the time when language collectors transcribed their material, in order to authoritatively interpret the transcriptions.

This chapter aims to take the reader ‘behind the scenes’ of this analytical work, i.e. it talks about successful methodologies employed during the course of his research study. It also hopes to act as a ‘conversation starter’ and encourage other and future researchers who work with archival material, to discuss and share their methodologies and approaches.

### A.2.1 The basics

The most basic and possibly best advice was given to me by Professor Blake when I started to work with archival material on Gandangara, a neighbouring inland language of Dharrawal. As part of structuring a reading course in Aboriginal languages for me, he decided to make me “do something useful” rather than just general studies; and I was fortunate to get access to Professor Dixon’s Aboriginal languages collection and copy material he had collected on the Ngunawal and Gandangara languages. Once I
was in possession of a pile of copies of published and unpublished language material on varying sizes of paper and formats, Professor Blake gave me probably one of the simplest and yet most useful advice I have received in regards to working with historic material. He told me to take all the copies and label, sort and arrange them neatly in a ring-bound folder with numbered dividers and an introductory inventory. Although this does not sound like ground breaking advice, it alerted me to the fact that there is a need for systematic storing and archiving of the material so it would be easily retrievable when needed.

This part of the chapter looks at the different processes and stages involved in working from archival written material; and it offers an account of methodologies that may assist in establishing a solid database from which to work with for a different purposes.

**A.2.1.1 Gathering material**

Collecting the material is the initial stage, and the easiest, although there are challenges that present themselves when authorisation from depositors and collectors is needed in order to not only copy but also to access collections. This was the case with a then unindexed collection of unpublished language material by Arthur Capell that is held at the Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander studies (AIATSIS). At one stage, two emails and one letter were sent by me to the depositor and at least two requests by AIATSIS collection staff which remained unanswered until another attempt to contact the depositor two years later.

Even though this may seem a straightforward task of searching catalogues of libraries and archives, the reality is not always as accommodating. I encountered several obstacles in trying to obtain material. My request to access John Bulmer’s, Alfred William Howitt’s, and George Augustus Robinson’s collection held at the
Melbourne Museum was hindered for different reasons this time. The response I received from the collection officer was unsettling:

Thank you for your email requesting access to these Archives. The Indigenous Cultures Department is not presently sufficiently staffed to facilitate access requests to the Ethnohistory Collection. Department managers are working towards resolving this resource deficit with the recruitment of an additional staff member. Until the staff member is employed and briefed, we are unable to respond to your request. (Name withheld) personal email from 6th October 2005

In my reply to this email I tried to get across some sense of urgency and the possible negative implications for my research and consequently to the applicable communities which would be caused by having no access to collections that might provide some additional material (language of cultural) that would assist their language reclamation efforts.

I received a reply to this letter within days and I was assured that a new ‘Collection Officer – Access’ was expected to be appointed in early December and would be able to process the requests then. I never heard back from them.

However, not all experiences are as cumbersome as in these two instances; most staff in archives and special collection go out of their way to accommodate requests and are happy to share their knowledge about the material in question.

A.2.1.2 Metadata

With the increase of digital language material being produced in the realms of language documentation, the need for record keeping and compiling metadata of the material being created has been a growing topic of discussion amongst linguists and archivists. Although working purely from archival material, also called legacy material, does not quite fall into this category, this approach teaches us a lot about record keeping when working in this domain.
Rather than establishing the metadata from the onset of data collection (as would be the case if establishing our own language corpus from speakers) we need to appropriate the sequence of processes and work our way back from the data to the collector. This requires in some cases some research in itself. For example, in order to find out where Mathews collected his Dharrawal material we need to carefully scan his notebook entries and diaries held at the Mathews Collection (MS 8006, National Library of Australia) for any information on who he collected from and places of reference. Once we gathered as much information about the place of collection and the informant we need to store this information in an easily retrievable way and format with the actual language material.

In order to have this information readily available when looking at Mathews’ (or any of the other collectors’) language material, it is useful to develop a referencing system that will encode the important information. The material can then be labelled with these codes. In the example of the current research presented in this study, I have chosen the referencing key to contain the following information where available:

1. Name of place of collection preferably, if not available name of language name given in the sources
2. Name of language collector
3. Whether the material is in unpublished or published format
4. Year of publication, if applicable
5. Page number, if not given they can be assigned
6. Name of informant
7. Name of social group informant belongs to

Each entry in the dictionary and transcribed sentence in my database is then marked with the individual code. Three such codes encode the following information for example:
There are multiple reasons for using a code that contains all this information. One reason becomes quite clear when searching for words and their variant spellings in the dictionary, for example. Working with communities, I often get asked for words in language during conversations or workshops. Knowing the background of my querent, I can quickly target examples that were collected in the place of origin that person.

A.2.1.3 Storing of materials

It is a good idea to digitise paper material if only to have a backup of resources. Legacy material is increasingly being digitised by archives and institutes; some sources are available at no cost direct from library collections and can be easily downloaded. For example, James Larmer’s material “Native Vocabularies” (http://www.sl.nsw.gov.au/discover_collections/history_nation/indigenous/vocabularies/larmer/index.html) is available from the State Library of New South Wales. The
The advantage of getting digitised versions of the material from a library or archive site is that the quality is often much better than home-scanned copies. The digital files should then be labelled and filed as orderly as the paper manuscript material.

A.2.1.4 Finding convention that allows to transcribe the material showing all scribbles and notes

It is imperative that the transcription of the source material is as truthful to the original as possible. This not only includes use of diacritics on vowels and consonants, but also records any scribbles, notes and corrections that the collector added to their transcription. This applies to unpublished source material, such as Mathews’ notebook entries. In order to replicate his transcription with all subsequent alterations, my own convention looks as follows.

![Image](http://example.com/image1)

**Figure 47.** Mathews Jirringan Notebook 2 excerpt p.12

(1) *Bagama*(sitting) *goomirra*(hole) *bieel*(man)

baga-ma gunirr-a bayil
sit-PRST hole-LOC man
a man is (sitting) in the hole. (DJ-M.2.3-12)

![Image](http://example.com/image2)

**Figure 48.** Mathews Thoorga Notebook 2 excerpt p.14
War’rang-‘aŋ(boomerang) bi-eel-a-ga(I hit) Koong-arara(possum)warrangañ bieelaga įeeñ
warranganj bayi-la-ga gungara-ra warranganj bayi-la-ga njiiñj
boomerang hit-PST-1s possum boomerang hit-PST-1s this

*I killed a possum with a boomerang (U-M.2.2-14)*

Here Mathews’ glossing scribbled above the sentences is captured within (brackets) that are attached to the word that it applies to. The crossed out *is* is left in the original translation line. Additional comments by me that elaborate on aspects of the transcription are given in [square brackets], are seen in the example below.

17 The words wallunhunggo and dyurwamaidha were swapped according to Mathews’ notes; originally the sequence was reversed.

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Figure 49. Mathews *The Parable of the Sower* Notebook 4 excerpt p.17

The representation of this information provides important information such as change in the representation of word order, or alternative translations or lexemes that often assist in solving an analytical puzzle. It is also more convenient to have this information ready to access in the database rather than having to refer back to the original source frequently.
Note that some of the conventions shown here were developed at the commencement of this research study, whereas others have evolved over the course of time to suit the specific needs of this study. There are many ways to capture the original transcription, and it is recommended that individuals develop their own that will be most user friendly for them.

**A.2.1.5 Developing a database**

The researcher faces the challenge of interpreting the original source material. Issues such as deciphering handwriting in unpublished material can be a laborious task and some researchers go to great length to combat this issue. One linguist that worked extensively on historic material decided to take a course in palaeography to enable herself to read old European manuscripts.\(^{18}\)

Although none of the handwriting in the SCLs sources required me to do so, the issues of misinterpretation of handwriting present themselves still after nine years of working with Mathews’ material. What I had initially and confidently read as one letter for years all of a sudden revealed itself to be another after revisiting the sources. This has been an ongoing concern and demands constant revision of the dictionary and sometimes forms of morphemes.

**A.2.1.6 Establishing a database**

Once the preliminary aspects have been arranged and the source material is labelled appropriately, the actual language database can be established. There are several options to produce a database. These may be in form of dictionary making software programs such as Toolbox/Shoebox, KirrKirr or LexiquePro, or in a very basic

\(^{18}\) Thanks to Jennifer Hendriks for sharing her recollections of frustration and understanding of working from archival material.
spreadsheet in Excel, for example. The choice of this very much depends on personal preference as well as requirements and future plans concerning the language work.

The bottom line is to establish a sound and tidy database of all language material that is found in the sources; wordlists, sentences, paradigms and words in language found within otherwise English (or in other languages according to origin of collector) texts.

**A.2.1.7 The danger of overgeneralisation**

Researchers working from archival material are not exempt from making bad judgements in their own interpretation and the material to be analysed. Finding regular patterns in a new set of data is the goal of the language research, but it is important to treat each source as an individual source and look for the patterns within each source first, rather than across sources.

Wordlists collected from various places within the same language area may show dialectical differences that need to be accounted for. Here we might find a word transcribed with a dental nasal in one wordlist, but with an apico-alveolar nasal in another. Although we know that dental nasals are one of the most difficult consonants to distinguish (especially for collectors who may have never knowingly encountered them) we cannot automatically assume that the transcriptions without the dental nasal are wrong. They *may* be, but they not necessarily are. Instances like these need to be continually assessed and require careful investigation.

To assist with the phonemicisation of words, comparison with cognates from other neighbouring and closely related languages is important, but, again, there is a danger of assuming that the phonetics of the word in another language is identical. There were numerous instances within the SCLs where sound differences where consistently transcribed between languages/dialects. Additionally, working on
languages in geographical areas where there are no, or very little, phonetic analyses/transcriptions available in any of the related languages, this is not necessarily a reliable methodology to determine the phonemic transcriptions of words.

My approach and discussion on phonemicisation of the SCLs words are discussed throughout the sections on different phonemes in Chapter A.3 (Phonology).

**A.2.2 Conclusion**

This chapter only gave a brief insight into the processes and methodologies I employed during the course of this study. There were many setbacks and cases of trial and error and a continuous revision of methodology and referencing system. Over the years, the approach to working with this legacy material became a more confident one, but at all stages did I regret that so little information and guidance was available that would have avoided the struggles and mistakes encountered in the beginning stages of this research study.

This chapter was written in order to demonstrate what methodology worked for me, and raise the awareness that there are numerous factors that need to be considered when commencing on this kind of work; and to invite future researchers to record their own processes, successful approaches, as well as the mistakes, so that we can all learn from them.