Encountering Aboriginal languages
Studies in the history of Australian linguistics

edited by William B. McGregor
This edited volume represents the first book-length study of the history of research on Australian Aboriginal languages, and collects together 18 original papers on a wide variety of topics, spanning the period from first settlement to the present day.

The introduction sets the scene for the book by presenting an overview of the history of histories of research on the languages of Australia, and identifying some of the major issues in Aboriginal linguistic historiography as well as directions for future investigations. Part 1 presents three detailed investigations of the history of work on particular languages and regions. The eight papers of Part 2 study and re-evaluate the contributions of particular individuals, most of whom are somewhat marginal or have been marginalised in Aboriginal linguistics. Part 3 consists of six studies of specific linguistic topics: sign language research, language revival, pidgins and creoles, fieldwork, Fr. Schmidt's work on personal pronouns, and the discovery that Australia was a multilingual continent.

Overall, the volume presents two major challenges to Australianist orthodoxy. First, the papers challenge the typically anachronistic approaches to the history of Aboriginal linguistics, and reveal the need to examine previous research in the context of their times — and the advantages of doing so to contemporary understanding and language documentation. Second, the widespread presumption that the period 1910-1960 represented the 'dark ages' of Aboriginal linguistics, characterised by virtually no linguistic work, is refuted by a number of studies in the present volume.

William B. McGregor is Professor of Linguistics at Aarhus University, Denmark. His primary research focus is on the languages of the Kimberley region, far north-west Western Australia, on which he has been working for over two decades. He has published grammars and sketch grammars, as well as books on various themes, including Verb classification in Australian languages (Mouton de Gruyter, 2002), The languages of the Kimberley, Western Australia (Routledge Curzon, 2004), and numerous articles on topics such as grammar, semantics, typology, and discourse organisation. He maintains a strong interest in the history of linguistics, and has published many articles on missionary linguistics in the Kimberley, and has recently published an edited and annotated version of Frs. Nekes and Worms 1953 Australian languages.

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Encountering Aboriginal languages: studies in the history of Australian linguistics

edited by

William B. McGregor
Pacific Linguistics is a publisher specialising in grammars and linguistic descriptions, dictionaries and other materials on languages of the Pacific, Taiwan, the Philippines, Indonesia, East Timor, southeast and south Asia, and Australia.

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Australian linguistics

edited by
William B. McGregor

Pacific Linguistics
Research School of Pacific and Asian Studies
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This book contains photographs of, and mentions the names of, some now deceased Aboriginal people. Readers should be aware that in some communities seeing photographs and/or hearing the names of dead people may cause distress, especially to close relatives. Before using this book in Aboriginal communities, the reader should determine the wishes of senior members and take their advice on safeguards.
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Preface

This volume, like so many edited volumes, has an all too lengthy history, much longer than either the contributors or the editor would have wished. Its initial impetus traces back to the Fourth International Workshop on Australian Linguistics: History of research on Australian languages, held in Aarhus University on 24–25 June 2002. Six of the papers in this volume were presented at that workshop, namely those presented in Chapters 1–3, 5, 8, and 17. This represents all of the contributions to the workshop dealing with the historical topic, with a single exception, my own paper on the work of Frs Hermann Nekes and Ernest Worms, which appeared in a reconstituted form in the editorial introduction to their magnum opus, Australian languages (2006, Mouton de Gruyter).

The workshop participants agreed that it would be a good idea to publish an edited volume containing these contributions; the conference organiser, myself, was duly dobbed in as editor. However, it was also felt that these six contributions needed to be augmented by additional papers in order to expand the treatment in depth and comprehensiveness. In particular, one of the major gaps was felt to be the lack of contributions by Aboriginal people themselves. Regrettably, despite attempts to obtain such contributions, none eventuated; this is acknowledged as one of the main weaknesses of the present volume.

It of course took time to solicit and receive additional contributions, and it took some three years before revised versions of all of the contributions were received, and an initial draft of the entire work took shape. (Regrettably, not all solicited papers were forthcoming, leaving gaps that I would rather have seen plugged—see also my 'Introduction'.) Editorial intervention turned this draft into a more coherent work, and in January 2006 a version of the book was submitted to Pacific Linguistics for evaluation.

I was fortunate to receive the referee reports during a two month period as visiting scholar in the Department of Linguistics, Research School of Pacific and Asian Studies, The Australian National University, in mid-2006. This greatly facilitated initial publication negotiations and planning. I thank John Bowden, general editor of Pacific Linguistics, and Julie Manley, for their prompt, cheerful, and helpful responses to my endless queries concerning formatting and other editorial matters. For their insightful and useful comments on the manuscript thanks also go to the 'anonymous' referees, whose identity (as is so often the case) could hardly remain concealed, thanks to intertextuality, Hilary Carey and Peter Sutton. All of the contributors have benefited greatly from their advice. Many other people contributed significantly to the book; they are identified in the individual contributions, as are photograph credits. Last but not least, thanks go to Margaret Blake, whose copy-editor’s eye caught all too many inconsistencies, syntactic infelicities, and omissions before it was too late.

William B. McGregor
Århus, December 2007
I could have saved you linguists a lot of time and trouble: 180 years of research and documentation of South Australia’s Indigenous languages, 1826–2006

JANE SIMPSON, ROB AMERY AND MARY-ANNE GALE

It’s sad I never had a chance to learn to read and write, because I could have written all this down for you folks and saved you a lot of trouble. (May Wilton, Adnyamathanha woman, early 1970s, talking to the linguists Luise Hercus and Isobel White, cited in Hercus and White 1973b:49)

1. Introduction

In Western Australia (WA) in 1826 a man ‘from the continent opposite Kangaroo Island’ taught some words of his language to Joseph Gaimard, a zoologist who accompanied Jules Dumont d’Urville on his voyage to Australia (Dumont d’Urville and Rosenman 1987:34). The man’s name is unrecorded; his English name was probably Harry (Amery 1998). The words that he provided were published as ‘Vocabularie de la langue des habitans du Golfe Saint Vincent’ (Gaimard 1830–1834), and are clearly Kaulna words, from the language of the Adelaide Plains, bordering Gulf St Vincent. They are the first words recorded in print of a language spoken in what became South Australia (SA) ten years later.

How Harry came to be living on an island in King George Sound (now Albany), at a sealers’ camp, we are unsure, but we do know that he arrived in the region in 1825, along with Sally, a Kaulna woman, on two sealing ships (Amery 1998:55). Abduction of Aboriginal people by the sealers in the early 1800s was a common occurrence, as their hunting skills were needed in the sealing camps. The women were targeted by the sealers in search of female companions, and were often brutally treated.

Kangaroo Island, off the tip of Fleurieu Peninsula in South Australia, became a sanctuary for the sealers, who abducted Kaulna and Ramindjeri women from the mainland, knowing

1 We thank Gavan Breen, Bill Edwards, Cliff Goddard, Luise Hercus, John McEntee, Bill McGregor, David Moore, Guy Tunstall, Greg Wilson and two anonymous referees for discussion and helpful comments on earlier drafts, and for saving us from some bad mistakes.

they could not easily escape their island prison (Clarke 1996, 1998). Thus linguistic communities were established, and sealers learnt some of the local Indigenous languages spoken by their captives, who in turn learnt some English. And so, when the first colonists arrived at Holdfast Bay on the mainland in 1836, to establish the official colony of South Australia, there were already Europeans in the area with some knowledge of the local Indigenous languages.

The first colonists encountered an Indigenous language ecology, characterised by stable multilingualism, where neighbouring groups knew each other’s languages, even though people’s lives had already been badly disturbed by the many deaths from the epidemics raging in from the east. Through participation in ceremonies and trade, individuals came to acquire elements of more languages. Multilingualism was the norm, particularly because in many areas marriage systems were exogamous, with clan groups marrying into other clan groups, each with their own distinct language or dialect. English would have been viewed by the local Indigenous people as yet another language to learn among their repertoire.

Although there is no evidence that Indigenous lingua francas existed in Australia before colonisation, an English-based contact language developed among the sealers and whalers, which incorporated words from Tasmanian, New South Wales and local Indigenous languages (Dineen and Mühlhäusler 1996; Simpson 1996; Foster et al. 2003). Indigenous people who had lived in the sealing camps were later sought as interpreters for the colonists, as were the sealers themselves.

At the time of colonisation, some forty to fifty languages were spoken in the country that became South Australia. These languages are related, but they can be divided into five major groups. In the west and northwest of the state, there are several varieties of the Western Desert languages, including Pitjantjatjara, Yankunytjatjara, Antikirinya and Kukata. These languages are mostly mutually intelligible with the Western Desert varieties that are spoken across the border in the Northern Territory (NT) and Western Australia (WA).

The second group are the Thura-Yura languages (Kuyani, Adnyamathanha, Barngarla, Nauo, Kaurna, Narungga, Nukunu, Ngadjuri, and the closely related Wirangu), which extend northeast from the Adelaide Plains to the Flinders Ranges in the mid-north of the state, and west to the Nullarbor Plain. The third group are the Karnic languages, which include among others Arabana, Wangkangurru, Diyari (also spelt Dieri and Dieyerie), Yarluandyi, Pirlatapa and Yandruwandha, all in the northeast of the state. The Thura-Yura languages are related more closely to the Karnic languages than they are to Western Desert languages to the northwest. The fourth group are the Yarli languages in the east and north-east of the state, which include Malyangapa, Wadikali and Yardiyawara (Hercus and Austin 2004). Finally, the languages of the south east and the Riverland are actually linguistically more closely allied with the languages of New South Wales and Victoria than other languages of South Australia. Their exact genetic relations remain to be analysed. In fact, there is a major linguistic divide in South Australia running along the Mount Lofty Ranges. Kaurna on the Adelaide Plains shows a greater affinity with Noongar (Nyungar) in the southwest of WA than it does with the neighbouring Ngarrindjeri languages from the Lower Murray and Coorong region. The

2 Teichelmann and Schürmann (1840:34) provide evidence of smallpox, or a disease leaving similar marks, in the Adelaide area around 1830:

Nguya, s. pustule; the disease of smallpox from which the aborigines suffered before the Colony was founded. They universally assert that it came from the east, or the Murray tribes, so that it is not at all improbable that the disease was at first brought among the natives by European settlers on the eastern coast. They have not suffered from it for some years; but about a decadennium ago it was, according to their statement, universal; when it diminished their numbers considerably, and on many left the marks of its ravages, to be seen at this day.
Ngarrindjeri (also Narrinyeri) languages are a group of closely related dialects whose names often include -kald meaning ‘language’. Among them are Ramindjeri, Yaralde, Tanganekald and Potawolin (Berndt et al 1993).

Two remaining languages belong in other language subgroups that cross the state borders: Mirniny, which straddles the WA–SA border on the Nullarbor Plain, is more closely related linguistically to languages in WA. Southern Arrernte in the far north of the state straddles the SA–NT border, and is in the Arandic subgroup of languages of Central Australia.

Although linguists categorise languages and dialects according to linguistic commonalities, and Indigenous people may do this too, the social and cultural ties between groups are more important to Indigenous people than linguistic similarities and differences. Through
trade and ceremonial dealings different Indigenous groups came together, and learnt to speak and understand each other’s languages. One such important ceremonial tie was the Urumbula song cycle which links the Nukunu of Port Augusta with the An premise of the Alice Springs region and other language groups all the way up to the Gulf of Carpentaria (Hercus 1992:13–15).

In SA, most of the multilingual Indigenous societies of pre-colonial days have become societies in which varieties of English are the main codes in use. The onslaught of colonisation, particularly in the coastal and fertile areas of the state resulted in rapid Indigenous population decline and severe language loss. These losses were due primarily to introduced diseases, dispersal and relocation of peoples away from their country, a series of repressive policies, practices and attitudes, and the rise of English as the language of government, business and education. Some people may have deliberately withheld their languages from the younger generations, perhaps believing that learning English would help the children cope with the new world (better access to education and work, less chance of being taken away by welfare agencies), or perhaps because they thought that withholding knowledge would protect it from exploitation by outsiders (see O’Brien, 1990: 110). The result has been the loss of most of South Australia’s Indigenous languages as primary vehicles of communication. Only varieties of the Western Desert language (Pitjantjatjara, Yankunytjatjara and Antikirinya) in the northwest are still being learned by children as everyday languages. Another handful of languages still have native speakers or semi-speakers, including Adnyamathanha, Arabana, Kukata and Wirangu.

For the remaining languages, most people only remember individual words and perhaps a few phrases, although they often use words from Indigenous languages when talking English. Languages in this category include Ngarrindjeri, and its many dialects, and Narungga. For other languages, such as Kaurna, very little is remembered from the early days. However, attempts are now being made to revive languages across the state (see Amery and Gale, this volume), and nine languages are currently being taught in school programs. Much of this language teaching and revival work is possible because of the language documentation that has occurred over the last 180 years of colonisation.

Below, we discuss the history of the documentation of South Australia’s languages, focusing on nineteenth century and early twentieth century work and provide some insights into the nature of these records. After providing a chronological overview, we address the topics of: collection of vocabularies, analysis of sound systems, writing of grammars, collection of texts, interpreting and translation work, and finally sociolinguistic work. We identify strengths and weaknesses in the historical records under each of these categories, and conclude by discussing directions for further work and research.

2. Chronological overview of the last 180 years

The documentation of South Australia’s Indigenous languages has been patchy. Some surprisingly sophisticated work was carried out at the time of colonisation by Lutheran missionaries with a firm grounding in classical languages, particularly by Christian Gottlob Teichelmann (1807-1888)3 (Keebone 2005a),4 Clamor Wilhelm Schürmann (1815–1893) (Schur-
mann 1987:208, 255), and Heinrich Meyer (1813–1862), on Kaurna, Barngarla and Ngarrindjeri (Gale 2005). Since the development of linguistics as a modern discipline in the mid twentieth century, intensive research has been carried out by linguists, beginning with Geoffrey O’Grady’s work with Leslie Moore and other speakers at Ooldea in 1959 on Wirangu, Mirminy and Kukata (O’Grady 1959), and in 1965 with the start of Luise Hercus’s work recording threatened languages. Cliff Goddard, Paul Eckert, Heather Bowe, David Rose and others have been able to work with first language speakers of the strong languages Pitjantjatjara, Antikirinya and Yankunytjatjara to produce good quality dictionaries and other language materials. But sadly modern linguistics arrived too late for proper documentation of the majority of South Australia’s Indigenous languages. Appendix 1 provides a chronological summary of language work conducted in SA; this work is discussed in more detail below.

2.1 Early nineteenth century

For most of the first settlers in Adelaide, Kaurna speakers were the first Indigenous people they encountered. The initial interest of settlers and government workers in recording the language have left us with more than twenty wordlists of Kaurna (Amery 2000). The first vocabulary to be published in South Australia was by William Williams of the Colonial Store Department (Williams 1839). It was reprinted in the South Australian Colonist in 1840, prefaced with the remark:

The utility to the colonists of a knowledge of the language is obvious; but we doubt whether it will reward any attempts to reduce it to a grammatical form, and we could venture to recommend that the English language be taught to the natives, as the easiest and best means of promoting their civilization.

Despite the emphasis on the use of English, government authorities did acknowledge the value of learning some of the local languages. Thus in the first few years of the colony, the Protectors of Aborigines followed official instructions from England to learn something of the local languages in order to carry out their duties (Jones 1996, 2000b). However, the language of administration was English, and the learning of local Indigenous languages by missionaries and colonists was viewed as a means to an end—and that was to civilise the ‘natives’.

In 1838 the second colonial governor, George Gawler (1795–1869), addressed Aborigines in Adelaide, concluding with the instruction ‘Learn to speak English’, which was then interpreted into Kaurna by the Protector of Aborigines, William Wyatt (1804–1886) (Rendell 1967, Foster and Mühlhäusler 1996). Gawler was exceptional for his time in having his speeches addressed to the Kaurna people translated into the local language, and in also promoting the use of existing Indigenous place-names, instead of bestowing new European-derived names (Hawker 1975:41). But even then, when Indigenous languages were still thriving, there was no question of giving them official status. Justice was administered in English, even to Aborigines who did not understand the proceedings, unless a judge protested and requested an interpreter.6

5 ‘It is exceedingly desirable that the protector should as soon as possible, learn the language of the natives, so as to be able to freely and familiarly converse with them.’ [Glenelg, Duties of Protector of Aborigines January 1838]

6 On January 21 1843 Matthew Moorhouse, the Protector of Aborigines wrote that: ‘His Honor the Judge refuses to have natives put upon their trial unless an interpreter who will engage to translate the main facts of the evidence to the accused, can be produced’ (Moorhouse 1840–1857).
The first missionaries to the Aborigines of South Australia, Clamor Schürmann and Christian Teichelmann, travelled to the new colony in 1838 on the same ship as Governor Gawler. During their journey they discussed their plans with Gawler to learn the local language and to instruct their charges in their own tongue (Schurmann 1987). On arrival, they subsequently learned the Kaurna language, and translated the Ten Commandments and some hymns into Kaurna.

In 1839 they began teaching at Piltawodli in the Native Location School for Kaurna children, and with the help of a Kaurna man, Ityamaitpinna, taught the children to read and write in their language (Foster 1990; Gale 1992; Hunt 1971; Scrimgeour 2007). The German missionaries were soon ridiculed by some of the colonists:

Some of the well-meaning gentlemen who have taken upon themselves to instruct their dark brethren, on finding a total absence of words in the language to express new ideas, have actually introduced them from the Greek and Hebrew, thus adding one absurdity to another. Surely coining a barbarous jargon like this for the mere sake of perpetuating a dialect limited to a few hundred square miles of country is ridiculous in the extreme; more especially when it is the rising generation who attend the schools, and who, by and by would greatly feel the want of a common language in their intercourse with the settlers. (R.G. Thomas, quoted in Wilkinson 1848:364)

They also faced opposition in their school work from Gawler’s successor, Governor George Grey (1812–1898) (see Moore, this volume-a). Paradoxically, despite his interest in collecting vocabulary lists from Indigenous groups and his support for the missionaries in their linguistic work, Governor Grey insisted on only English being taught in the local Aboriginal school. In 1845 the Native Location School at Piltawodli was closed, and the children were moved into the English-only Native School Establishment on Kintore Avenue, which was also attended by the students from the ‘Big Murray Tribe’ who spoke a different language.

After spending some time learning the language of Encounter Bay, south of Adelaide, Clamor Schürmann moved to Eyre Peninsula, and started to learn and document the local Barngarla language. He soon started a school, where he again provided instruction in the local language. At the same time, another classically trained Lutheran missionary, Heinrich Meyer, had arrived in the colony and moved to Encounter Bay, near Victor Harbor. There he began learning the local Ramindjeri language, the south-westernmost dialect of the group of languages now known as Ngarrindjeri. He too was a skilled language worker, so began documenting the language, and before long opened a school where he provided instruction in the local language. The three missionaries also worked closely with the Protector of Aborigines, Matthew Moorhouse (1813–1876) (Anonymous 1974). He was an English doctor, who wrote a description of Ngaiawang, a Lower Murray language (spoken upstream from Ngarrindjeri).

This early linguistic work was much assisted by several things. First, by virtue of their work, they had long-term friendly access to the people whose languages they wanted to document. Second, they were well acquainted with other languages, Latin, Greek and German,

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7 Meyer (1846) later referred to this ‘tribe’ as the ‘Encounter Bay’ or ‘Raminjear’ (plural form for ‘Ramindjeri’) who spoke a dialect of the same language spoken by others of the ‘Lower Banks of the Murray’. Taplin (1879a, 1879b) spelt it ‘Raminjeri’. Today the preferred spelling is Ramindjeri. Taplin (1879a, 1879b) referred to the collective group of all the ‘tribes’ of the Lower Murray and Lakes region as the ‘Narrinyeri’ (cf. Meyer 1843 narr-inyeri ‘Australian native; mankind’). The preferred spelling today is Ngarrindjeri. This may relate to the Yaraldi clan name Ngararindjera, ‘from the place-name Ngararang (Narrung Station)’ (Berndt et al. 1993:308).
and Teichelmann at least was familiar with Hebrew. Third, they worked collaboratively and built on previous language work by Lancelot Threlkeld (1788–1859), on the Awabakal language spoken north of Sydney (Threlkeld 1834), and Grey’s work on Noongar in Western Australia (Grey 1840). They had the active interest and support of two successive governors, George Gawler and George Grey. Having worked on Noongar (see Moore, this volume-a), Grey was interested in the origin of Australian languages and was keen to make the study of Australian languages efficient. He was also an avid book collector, who requested the publication of Moorhouse’s and Meyer’s wordlists and grammars, paid for the publication of Schürmann’s Barngarla wordlist and grammar, and finally solicited Teichelmann’s revised 1857 dictionary of Kaurna (Simpson 1992).

Finally, these early language documentors were concerned about the authenticity of what they wrote. Meyer notes that he reviewed all the words in the dictionary twice ‘with different natives, so that the meaning assigned to the words may be relied upon as correct’ (Meyer 1843:vii). In 1858 Teichelmann writes of his work: ‘my phrases, all of which are written down from the mouth of the Aborigines, none [were] formed by myself’ (Teichelmann 1858).

Despite this concern for accuracy, the early language documentors do not seem to have regarded their language work as a collaborative effort with Aboriginal people. They comment on the difficulty of learning the languages (what they mean by ‘unfavourable situation’ is not clear):

> all information must be gleaned from casual and trivial conversation. To this must be added, the uncommon rapidity, abbreviation, and carelessness with which the Aborigines speak; their extreme reluctance for a long time, to inform the inquirer; their natural inability to answer grammatical questions; together with their unfavourable situation for the study of the language. (Teichelmann and Schürmann 1840:v)

They generally do not name their consultants, although at the back of Teichelmann and Schürmann’s grammar are examples of sentences spoken by named people, Mullawirraburka ‘King John’ (c. 1811–1845) (Gara 1998), and Kadlitpinna ‘Captain Jack’. Moorhouse says that he obtained his material with ‘the aid of an interpreter who knows the Adelaide and Murray dialects’ (Moorhouse 1846:v), but does not name him. The other grammars and vocabularies do not give the names of their teachers, although Schürmann’s diaries list the names of many Aboriginal people who he met and talked with in Adelaide, Encounter Bay and Port Lincoln.

Unfortunately their mission ventures, language work and schools soon ceased, largely due to lack of funds and the demise of the groups they were serving. The linguistic legacy of these capable people is five substantial wordlists in the respective Indigenous languages (Teichelmann and Schürmann 1840; Meyer 1843; Schürmann 1844; Moorhouse 1846; Teichelmann 1857), and some remarkably insightful grammars.

### 2.2 Mid to late nineteenth century

By 1858 Christian Teichelmann, who had continued to work on Kaurna after Schürmann moved to Port Lincoln, declared that the Kaurna had ‘ceased to be’, and his work on the language also ceased—although not before producing in manuscript revised notes on the verb, and a bigger dictionary (Letter to George Grey, 18 January 1858). By this time a number of

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8 Teichelmann compares Kaurna with Hebrew in the lack of relative pronouns (entry for nga, Teichelmann 1857).

9 However, they were also concerned to correct misapprehensions about Aboriginal languages lacking a regular grammatical system—Schürmann (1844:v) comments on this with respect to George Fletcher Moore’s vocabulary (Moore 1842; and see also Moore, this volume-a).
Kaurna had been moved to Poonindie mission, established in 1850 north of Port Lincoln. As their population declined, colonists in the city of Adelaide had much less to do with local Aborigines, and were therefore less often confronted with the need to make themselves understood. From this period on, any new missions that were established were placed in the more remote areas of South Australia, particularly on land considered less arable. George Taplin (1831–1879) (Jenkin 1976, 1979) established the Point McLeay mission on Lake Alexandrina in 1859, and began documenting further dialects of the Ngarrindjeri language, largely building on Meyer’s work (Taplin 1879a, 1879b). He also translated parts of the Bible into the Yaralde dialect (Taplin 1864a, 1878). He was particularly helped in his linguistic work by James Ngunaitponi (ca. 1832–1907), a speaker of the Potawolin dialect of Ngarrindjeri (Berndt et al. 1993), and father of David Unaipon (1872–1967) (Jones 1990), one of the first Indigenous writers to publish work in his own language.

In 1866 Lutheran missionaries established Killalpaninna mission in the north-east of SA, leading to serious work on Diyari, a Kamic language. Several missionaries worked on Diyari, supported by the South Australian Lutheran community and the Hermannsburg Mission Institute of Hanover. They began with Ernst Homann and Wilhelm Koch (Stevens 1994; Kneebone and Rathjen 1996:31–32; Kneebone 2005b). Successive missionaries built on the work of their predecessors. Johannes Flierl (1858–1947) drew on Homann and Koch (Flierl 1879), and his own work was used by Carl Schoknecht (1841–1905) (Schoknecht and Schoknecht 1997; Schoknecht 1873, ca. 1873). The missionaries were diligent and skilled language workers in their analysis of Diyari, and provided extensive documentation of the language, particularly vocabulary, as well as scriptural translations and rich observations on the ethnography of speaking. This work culminated in the massive thirteen volume work (Reuther 1981) of Johann (J.G.) Reuther (1861–1914), as well as the work of several others, such as Otto Siebert (Siebert 1896–1901). The extraordinary map of 2,468 place-names in arid north-eastern South Australia prepared by Henry Hillier (1875–1958) also comes out of this mission (Hillier 1904); it has been discussed and reproduced in part in Jones (2002).

In 1877 Hermannsburg mission was established in the NT by missionaries moving on from Killalpaninna, which led to major work on Western Arramta (or Aranda)10—one of the Arandic languages. After work on Diyari, Carl Strehlow (1871–1922), the father of the renowned linguist and anthropologist Theodor (T.G.H.) Strehlow (1908–1978) (Moore, this volume-b), produced much work in Western Arramta, including ethnography (Strehlow et al. 1907–1913), a dictionary (Strehlow n.d.) (about 223 pages of typescript), and translations of scriptures and other religious material (Strehlow 1904, 1925). In general the Lutherans were aware of each other’s work, and built on each other’s knowledge.

The missionaries, however, were not the only language enthusiasts working on Indigenous languages. One such enthusiast was Christina (Mrs James) Smith (ca. 1809–1893) (McGillivray 2005) whose book on the Buwandik (or Booandik) language of the Mount Gambier region was published in 1880 (Smith 1880). It contains language material from her son Duncan Stewart (1833–1913) who had learned the language as a teenager, and who was appointed as an interpreter in the south-east in 1853 (Blake 2003). While Mrs Smith corresponded with the ethnographer Alfred Howitt (1830–1908), there is little evidence that she and her son made use of previous linguistic work.

The late nineteenth century also saw the reprinting of earlier material (e.g. Stephens 1889), and the collection of anthologies of language material, both nationally (Curr 1886–1887) and locally. The results of Taplin’s 48 question survey on ‘Aboriginal Folklore’, and aspects of the languages spoken by South Australian Aborigines, were published in 1879.

10 It was then spelt Aranda, and is now spelt two ways: Eastern Arrernte and Western Arrarnta.
I could have saved you linguists a lot of time and trouble

(Taplin 1879b). In the same year James Dominick Woods published an anthology of material on South Australian languages (Woods 1879) which included Taplin’s work on the ‘Narrinyeri’ and the police trooper Samuel Gason’s work on the ‘Dieyerie Tribe’, and reprinted earlier material (e.g. William Wyatt’s material on ‘The Adelaide and Encounter Bay Tribes’ and ethnographic work by Schürmann and Meyer).

2.3 Early twentieth century

The early twentieth century saw the start of serious survey work by researchers, beginning with Daisy Bates (1859–1951), who did major ethnographic survey work in western South Australia (Bates 1985). These vocabularies are only now beginning to receive proper attention (Nash 2002). A hallmark of Daisy Bates’ work was her careful attention to naming the Indigenous consultants she worked with, and the place with which they were associated. Bates started the first large-scale investigation of Miriny, on the west coast (which forms a dialect chain with languages in southern Western Australia), and Western Desert languages, spoken in the northwest and west of the state. In 1901 a mission was set up at Koonibba on the West Coast, and later the Reverend August Hoff (1886–1971) recorded vocabularies there, although they remained unpublished until 2004 (Hoff and Hoff 2004).

Another researcher of this period was John McConnell Black (1855–1951) (Andrew and Clissold 1986), a botanist who prepared short wordlists of Kaurna, Narungga, Nukunu, Ngarrindjeri, Kukata and Wirangu (Black 1917, 1920). He seems to have been one of the first researchers to apply modern phonetic transcription techniques to Australian languages, identifying retroflex and some interdental consonant sounds, as well as a wide range of phonetic vowels.

The use of phonetic transcription in recording Indigenous languages was further promoted by John Aloysius FitzHerbert (1892–1970), Professor of Classics at the University of Adelaide, who established a Language Committee in 1930–1931 (see further Monaghan, this volume). The committee included the geologist and explorer Charles Chewings (1859–1937), (who compiled and translated Carl Strehlow’s Aranda vocabulary in collaboration with FitzHerbert), and the South Australian Museum representative, Norman B. Tindale (1900–1993) (Jones 1993, 1995). They designed a phonetic system based on that of the International Phonetic Association (IPA), but using symbols that were easy to read and reproduce, given the availability of printer’s type in South Australia. For example they italicised or made bold the different vowel symbols <a>, <i>, <e>, <o> and <u> to represent the variation in different vowel sounds, and as with the IPA, they used the colon symbol : to mark length for both consonants and vowels. The committee’s choices were also influenced by the desire to preserve ‘legibility for general workers, who may desire to obtain a readable account, without concerning themselves with the finer shades of pronunciation.’ (Tindale 1935:262). One missed opportunity was the chance to learn from Gerhardt Laves (1906–1993), a student of Edward Sapir, who briefly met with members of the Language Committee in 1931 (Nash 2001a), but whose knowledge of Sapir’s phonemic analysis and fieldwork techniques appear to have made no impact on their work.

The committee’s work had several important outcomes. FitzHerbert encouraged the young Theodor (T.G.H.) Strehlow to work on Arrernte (Western Arrarnta) and helped him obtain funding, leading to his MA thesis on the phonetics and grammar of Arrernte, which was later published (Strehlow 1944) (see Moore, this volume-b). Several members were also associated with the Board for Anthropological Research, which conducted several field trips with teams of scientists and ethnographers to document information about Aborigines in SA and the NT. They produced careful documentation, including correct identifications of names
for plants and animals, ways of writing kin-terms, and colour terms, as well as recordings of songs from Koonibba, Macumba, Alice Springs, Hermannsburg by the musicologist E. Harold Davies (1867–1947) (Davies 1927, 1932; Ellis 1981). But perhaps the most important linguistic result was the survey work of Norman Tindale, an entomologist by profession, who recorded vocabularies from many Aboriginal groups (Nash 2003; South Australian Museum n.d.; Tindale 1938–1963), including many South Australian languages, as part of survey work for the South Australian Museum. Tindale’s survey of what was known of the language, land and culture of the speakers (Tindale 1974) remains an important reference work. (See Monaghan, this volume for a fuller assessment of Tindale’s contribution.)

With the rise of anthropology as a discipline, and with support from the South Australian Museum, several anthropologists documented language as part of their work. Charles P. Mountford (1890–1977) (Jones 2000a) documented some Ngadjuri and Adnyamathanha. Important language documentation was done by Ronald M. Berndt (1916–1990) (Stanton 1990) and his wife Catherine H. Berndt (1918–1994) (Stanton 1994). Ronald Berndt received informal linguistic training from FitzHerbert, and both Berndts later learned more formally from the linguist Arthur Capell (Berndt et al. 1993:10). In 1939 Berndt, then honorary ethnologist at the South Australian Museum, went on his first anthropological fieldtrip, to Murray Bridge, where he started documenting Ngarrindjeri people’s lives and practices, working in particular with Albert Karloan (1864–1943), but also with Pinkie Mack (ca.1869-1954) and Mark Thalrum Wilson (ca. 1868–1940). Catherine Berndt later worked with them too, and their work resulted in the posthumous publication *A world that was* (Berndt et al. 1993). This volume contains a large collection of texts and songs, glossed interlinearly, parts of which have been analysed linguistically (Cerin 1994; Bannister 2004). Berndt documented fragments of other languages, including Western Desert varieties. Unsurprisingly the documentation is often weighted towards his anthropological interests, for example the vocabulary of Ngadjuri (Berndt and Vogelsang 1941) contains the words for ‘adam’s apple’, and the parts of a fire drill, but not the word for ‘foot’ or ‘leg’.

A significant event, in terms of language use, was the Presbyterian Church’s decision to set up Emabella Mission in 1937 in the far north-west for the Pitjantjatjara people. The Moderator of the Presbyterian Church, Dr Charles Duguid (1884—1986), insisted on a mission policy of respecting the language, and an expectation that all mission staff would learn Pitjantjatjara. This resulted in a concerted effort by various mission staff to document the language, in particular the Reverend J.R.B. Love (1889–1947) (Love 1986) and Ronald M. Trudinger (Love n.d. ca. 1938; Trudinger 1943; Love 1951), to translate the Bible and to produce practical language resources (Gale 1997; Nicholls forthcoming). Other missions were set up in Pitjantjatjara country with the same approach.

### 2.4 Late twentieth century work—post World War II

After World War II, the discipline of linguistics began to take shape. At the Anthropology Department of the University of Sydney, the first Australian linguist to receive a doctorate in linguistics, Arthur Capell (1902–1986) (Walsh 1987), was appointed Reader in Oceanic Linguistics in 1949. He encouraged linguists to work on Australian languages, including his stu-

11 In the 1990s, Luise Hercus played back the Davies recordings to people linked to Koonibba, and identified the language of several of the songs (Hercus n.d.e).
12 Biographical information from Berndt et al. (1993) and Horton et al. (1994).
I could have saved you linguists a lot of time and trouble

dents, the South Australian Geoffrey O’Grady (Tryon and Walsh 1997), and Wilfred Douglas (1917–2004) (Glass 2004), who in 1955 published the first work on the phonology of an Australian language (the Western Desert language spoken at Ooldea) (Douglas 1955). Incidentally he appears to have been the first person to give the name ‘Western Desert language’ to the varieties spoken over much of central and western Australia (Cliff Goddard, pers.comm. to Jane Simpson 2004). In 1954 Capell was joined by Stephen Wurm (1922–2001) (Hercus et al. 2001), who had received his doctorate from the University of Vienna (Laycock 1987). Wurm carried out salvage work on many languages, and, in 1957, worked on the Yarli language Malyangapa (Wurm 1957/1976). Among the people who Capell encouraged was Kenneth Hale (1934–2001) (Nash 2001b), who had been trained in anthropological linguistics at Indiana University. Hale and O’Grady went on a field-trip together in 1960 during which they recorded Lower Arrernte from Tom Bagot, Wangkangurru from Mick McLean (who later worked with Luise Hercus), Antikirinya from Barney Lennon, Diyari from Joe Shaw, Nukunu from Gilbert Bramfield, Wirangu from Mrs Harry Miller, Murriny from Pom Pom, Adnyamathanha from Malcom McKenzie, and 78 words of Barngarla from Harry Crawford [Croft] (Nash and O’Grady 2001). Not long after, from 1966 to 1967, Bernhard Schebeck, who was trained at the Sorbonne, worked with the Adnyamathanha, especially Andrew Coulthard (d. 1970), and published an important collection of texts with a sketch grammar (Schebeck 1974).

In 1956 Capell and Wurm founded the series *Oceania Linguistic Monographs* to publish linguistic work on languages of Australia and the Pacific. The first monograph in the series was written by Capell (1956) on Australian languages, and the clarity and interest of his hypotheses helped linguists to see the languages they were working on in a wider perspective. In this monograph he also re-examined earlier material on Ngarrindjeri, using material from discussions with Ronald Berndt. He encouraged Colin Yallop’s reconstruction work on Ngarrindjeri in the light of Luise Hercus’ and Catherine Ellis’ later recordings (Yallop 1975). The fourth monograph was a grammar of the Western Desert language by Wilfrid Douglas (Douglas 1957/1958).

In Adelaide, T.G.H. Strehlow was appointed senior research fellow in Australian Linguistics at the University of Adelaide in 1946 (Hill 2002). From his department in the 1960s, the linguist Luise Hercus (White 1990), who had obtained first-class honours in both Romance languages and Oriental Studies (Sanskrit and Prakrit) at Oxford University, made several trips together with the ethnomusicologist Catherine Ellis (1935–1996) (Kartomi 1997) and later the anthropologist Isobel White (1912–1998) (McBryde 1997) and others in Ellis’ Group Project on Andagarinja (Antikirinya) Women (Barwick 1996). They documented music, songs, myths, places and language for a number of groups. The combination of skills al-

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14 An anonymous referee points out that the term ‘Western Desert’ was used for this region as early as 1936 (Tindale and Cleland 1936), and draws our attention to H.H. Finlayson’s recognition of commonalities between people in the region:

The word Luritja, [...], is an Arunta one, meaning ‘stranger’, and though the term is now also used in a more restricted sense for a group of people in the Western MacDonnell and James ranges, who are the immediate western neighbours of the Aruntas, it is here employed in a general way for all the ‘desert’ people who extend west of the Larapinta Country, over a vast territory, reaching almost to the Western Australian coastal belts. In that part of this area now under consideration, the bulk of the aboriginal population speak of themselves as Pitxenturras. Other names are used to distinguish other small groups; but all appear to be racially homogenous, and speak with little modification a common Wongapitcha tongue. (Finlayson 1945 [1935]:58–59)

lowed for more informed fieldwork, and the fact that they were all women helped them document women’s songs and rituals. Luise Hercus continued the work, which has resulted in grammars of Arabana (Hercus 1994) and Wirangu (Hercus 1999), salvage work on Nukunu (Hercus 1992), the last recording of Pirlatapa from Fred Johnson (Hercus in Austin 1990), and field notes on other languages including Yardliyawara, Malyangapa and Kuyani (Hercus n.d.b, n.d.c, n.d.d). During this period, the South Australian State Library started producing facsimiles of early works on South Australian languages, such as the works of Meyer, Teichelmann and Schürmann, which were to prove useful to later researchers.

The establishment of a department of linguistics at Monash University in Victoria in 1965 led to John Platt’s work on Kukata (Platt 1972) and Wirangu, and also to the documentary linguistics work of Gavan Breen, who carried out salvage work on languages in the north-east such as Ngamini and Yandruwandha (Breen 1976, 2004a, 2004b).

When Robert (R.M.W.) Dixon took up a chair in linguistics at the Australian National University (ANU) in 1970, he and Luise Hercus, (by then teaching Sanskrit at ANU), encouraged several students to carry out work on South Australian languages. This resulted in Maryalyce McDonald’s work on the Ngarrindjeri dialect Yaralde. (McDonald 2002), Peter Austin’s grammar of Diyari (Austin 1981), Cliff Goddard’s work on Pitjantjatjara and Yankunytjatjara (Goddard 1985, 1996) and Dorothy Tunbridge’s popular books on aspects of Adnyamathanha culture (Tunbridge 1988; Tunbridge et al. 1988). Dixon’s keenness to fill gaps in the knowledge of Indigenous languages across the country resulted in his unearthing important works on South Australian languages, such as the manuscript dictionary of Kaurna (Teichelmann 1857), found in South Africa among George Grey’s collection of papers.

Work by other linguists includes studies of Pitjantjatjara grammar (Bowe 1990; Rose 2001), and other work on Western Desert languages undertaken in the Northern Territory and Western Australia, as well as Barry Blake and his students’ work on the languages of Victoria and South Australia, (Blake 2003; Horgen 2004). Adnyamathanha vocabulary has been documented through the long-term collaboration between the Adnyamathanha speakers May Wilton (nee Demcll, ca.1897, 1899–07 April 1978), Pearl McKenzie (nee Wilton 10 June 1922–01 October 1996) and John McKenzie (23 September 1918–October 1986), and the pastoralist John McEntee (McEntee 1976; McEntee, McKenzie and McKenzie 1986; McEntee and McKenzie 1988, 1992). Major work has arisen from efforts to make language materials accessible to speakers, and is discussed in §8. Recent work by Peter Mühlhäuser, his students and colleagues at the University of Adelaide is discussed in §10.1.

Below we discuss in more detail six different aspects of language work: collecting wordlists and vocabularies, analysing sound systems, writing grammars, collecting and analysing texts, interpreting and translation work and sociolinguistic work.

3. Collecting wordlists and vocabularies

South Australia has languages at all points on the spectrum of documentation, ranging from none to extensive. One lost language is Peramangk, the language of the group of people that lived between the Kaurna and the Ngarrindjeri people, along the southern Mount Lofty Ranges, and referred to in colonial records as the ‘Mount Barker tribe’. Although no words were recorded specifically from this group, Tindale assembled a short card file under their name, now held at the South Australian Museum. Inspection suggests that they are all words from speakers of neighbouring languages used in reference to the Peramangk people, or placenames from that portion of the map thought to be Peramangk territory. It seems none of

16 Biographical details from John McEntee, e-mail to Jane Simpson 17 January 2007.
the Peramangk words originated from the mouths of Peramangk people themselves. At the other end of the spectrum is Pitjantjatjara, which is still spoken and learnt by children today, and for which there is a comprehensive modern dictionary that has gone into several editions (Goddard 1996). The remainder of the state’s languages lie somewhere between these two extremes.

3.1 The first wordlists

The first extant wordlist of a South Australian language, Gaimard’s wordlist, of 168 words was the product of deliberate linguistic research (Amery 1998). He compiled a volume of wordlists from across the Pacific, New Guinea and Eastern Indonesia, together with three Australian languages. Gaimard came with a well-formed agenda which included trying to elicit a word for ‘God’ and numerals including 10 and 20. These concepts are often hard to translate into Indigenous languages. Not surprisingly, he obtained some strange results for Kaurna. He transcribed the word for ‘God’ as meio?, which is probably meyu, the Kaurna word for ‘man’, although his question mark indicates he was uncertain of this. His recording of tenndo for ‘dix’, ‘ten’, is perhaps a borrowing from English, though it may be the Kaurna word tindo ‘sun, day, time, clock’. Another Kaurna wordlist was recorded on Flinders Island in Tasmania in 1837 by George Augustus Robinson (1791–1866), or possibly his son Charles, from a Kaurna woman kidnapped by sealers from the southern Fleurieu Peninsula some years earlier. This wordlist has only recently been identified as Kaurna (Amery 1996).

Most early wordlists tended to reflect the interests of their collectors. The early Kaurna wordlists (Amery 2000) include a number of specialised wordlists. William A. Cawthorne (Cawthorne 1926) specialised in terms for artefacts, illustrating them and recording several otherwise unrecorded terms. Edward Stephens recorded 36 terms for birds, which he attached to specimens that were sent to London (Stephens 1838). Some wordlists complemented the work of others. For instance, Louis Piesse (Piesse 1840) noticed some gaps in William Williams’ (1839) Kaurna wordlist and compiled a list of additional terms, mostly place-names and terms for fauna, using Williams’ style of hyphenated and Anglicised spellings. The most extensive vocabularies collected in SA in the very early colonial period were those collected by the three German missionaries Schürmann, Teichelmann and Meyer. Schürmann and Teichelmann published a Kaurna vocabulary of about 2,000 words, along with a sketch grammar, in 1840. Teichelmann continued to work on the language, sending a more extensive vocabulary to George Grey in South Africa in 1857. All together, some 3,000 to 3,500 Kaurna words were documented. Schürmann published a vocabulary of about 3,000 words in Barngarla in 1844 (Schürmann 1844). Meyer published a wordlist of about 1800 words, in 1843, along with a detailed grammar which includes further words and grammatical affixes of Ramindjeri in a large number of example phrases and sentences (Meyer 1843).

It is also fortunate that Schürmann, Teichelmann and Meyer were trained in philology. Their records, whilst not perfect, were considerably better than most other nineteenth century observers. Some areas of vocabulary, such as body parts and verbs of speaking in Kaurna were well documented, as shown by terms such as pillupilluna ‘the ensiform cartilage’, meya ‘anterior fontanelle’, yärtpandi ‘seems to express speaking the language and pronouncing the words in their full form without the usual, customary and therefore necessary abbreviations and contractions’, and perkendi ‘to crepitate; make a noise, sound etc. (of birds hatching from the egg; of a boil bursting and pus coming out)’. For Ramindjeri, Meyer recorded many

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17 Even the name ‘Peramangk’ is probably a Yaralde label for these people which includes the Yaralde locative suffix -angk. This term bears some similarity to the Tanganekald label ‘Peramama’. In Kaurna the name given for these people may have been Mari Meyunna ‘east people’ (Schürmann 1987).
verbs, particularly describing specific cultural practices, such as *kenmin* 'putting coals together for roasting on a fire'; *gaiwyuun* 'making an incision'; *kerun* 'catching fish with a net' and *dāmin* 'placing a dead body in a tree'. Another area covered comprehensively by Meyer were the many words for fish and shellfish species with at least 30 terms recorded, which doubtless reflects the staple diet of the Ramindjeri people. This contrasts with the lack of fish species terms recorded in Kaurna.

Other reasonably comprehensive wordlists compiled for languages in this early period included Moorhouse, Scott’s and Weatherstone’s wordlists for Ngaiawang (Moorhouse 1846; Scott n.d.; Weatherstone 1843). Then later in the nineteenth century, the English to Ngarrindjeri (Narriyieri) wordlist of the missionary George Taplin, who worked with speakers of the southern dialects of Ngarrindjeri, at Point McLeay mission, was published (Taplin 1879a). The German missionaries working with the Diyari people (also spelt Dieri and Dieyerie) produced comprehensive wordlists (Kneebone and Rathjen 1996; Reuther 1981; Schoknecht 1873).

### 3.2 Recent documentation of vocabulary

In the twentieth century, the Western Desert language Pitjantjatjara-Yankunytjatjara is the only South Australian language to have a good published dictionary (Goddard 1987, 1992a, 1996). However, there are substantial unpublished or self-published vocabularies for several other languages: Tanganeukal, the southernmost dialect of Ngarrindjeri, and possibly closer to a separate language (Tindale n.d.); Añyamathanha in the mid north in the Flinders Ranges region (McEntee and McKenzie 1992; Schebeek 2000); Arabana to the north of Adnyamathanha but south of Diyari (Hercus n.d.a) and Wirangu on the west coast (Hercus 1999). A number of these wordlists have been made available for communities working on these languages, particularly in schools.

The following table summarises the current extent and variation of vocabulary documentation for the different languages of SA. More contemporary lists, compiled from old sources, have not been included.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Language</th>
<th>Size of vocabulary</th>
<th>Main sources</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Adnyamathanha</td>
<td>2,529 head entries</td>
<td>Schebeck (2000)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Antikirinya</td>
<td>several hundred</td>
<td>See Pitjantjatjara/Yankunytjatjara. Douglas (n.d.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arabana–Wangkanguru</td>
<td>2,485 entries</td>
<td>Hercus (n.d.a)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lower Arrerrente</td>
<td>over 2,000 entries</td>
<td>Breen (forthcoming)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Barngarla</td>
<td>2,779</td>
<td>Schürmann (1844)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bunganditj/Boandik</td>
<td>~ 500</td>
<td>Smith (1880)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Diyari</td>
<td>4,183 head entries</td>
<td>Reuther (1981)(^a)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kaurna</td>
<td>3,000–3,500</td>
<td>Teichelmann and Schürmann (1840)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Teichelmann (1857, 1858)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kukata</td>
<td>uncertain</td>
<td>Platt (1972)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Language</td>
<td>Size of vocabulary</td>
<td>Main sources</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------------------------</td>
<td>--------------------</td>
<td>-------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kuyani</td>
<td>uncertain</td>
<td>Hercus (n.d.b)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Malyangapa-Wadigali</td>
<td>281</td>
<td>Hercus (n.d.c)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mirminy</td>
<td>509</td>
<td>O’Grady (n.d.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nawu</td>
<td>13 definite forms</td>
<td>Schürmann (1844)(^b)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ngarrindjeri (Narrinyeri) &amp; Ramindjeri</td>
<td>1000</td>
<td>Taplin (1879a)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1769</td>
<td>Meyer (1843)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>100</td>
<td>Black (1917)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>108</td>
<td>Black (1920)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>27</td>
<td>Johnson <em>et al.</em> (1986)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>580(^c)</td>
<td>Yallop (1975)(^d)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ngadjuri</td>
<td>343</td>
<td>Berndt and Vogelsang (1941)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ngamini</td>
<td>several hundred words</td>
<td>Breen (1967)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ngaiawang</td>
<td>1293</td>
<td>Moorhouse (1846)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>369</td>
<td>Scott (n.d.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nukunu</td>
<td>428</td>
<td>Hercus (1992)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peramangk</td>
<td>nil (possibly a few)</td>
<td>Tindale</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pirlatapa</td>
<td>less than 100</td>
<td>Reuther (1981), Schoknecht (1947), Hercus fieldtape NS22 in Austin (1990)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pitjantjatjara/ Yankunytjatjara</td>
<td>ca. 3,000 head entries</td>
<td>Goddard (1992a, 1996)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wirangu</td>
<td>? entries 84 kB</td>
<td>Hercus (n.d.g)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yandruwandha</td>
<td>ca. 1750 head entries</td>
<td>Breen (2004b)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yardliyawara</td>
<td>97</td>
<td>W.M. Green in Curr (1886–1887)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yarluyandi</td>
<td>850</td>
<td>Hercus (n.d.f)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\(^a\) See Kneebone (2005b) for an assessment of the early Diyari sources.

\(^b\) Nawu sources are assessed in Hercus and Simpson (2001).

\(^c\) About a third of the words cited by Yallop came from James Kartinyeri. The remainder are drawn from Taplin.
Many additional Ngarrindjeri words are included in the oral texts recorded in Berndt et al. (1993), and McDonald (2002) which draws on the unpublished materials of Catherine Ellis and Luise Hercus who worked with speakers in 1963–1964 such as James Brooksie Kartinyeri.

3.3 Neologisms and borrowings

Most attempts to document wordlists in languages have focussed on words in the traditional language, rather than on words that have been adopted into the language from English. Thus Hercus’ Nukunu vocabulary (Hercus 1992) has no English borrowings, since it was compiled to retrieve what was still known of the traditional language at a time when the language was no longer actively spoken. Linguists have mostly documented terms used traditionally, rather than the everyday language of the present time, which would conceivably contain many English borrowings and possibly code-mixing.

The early recorders include a handful of English borrowings. Teichelmann and Schürmann list one form mutyerta ‘clothing’ as a borrowing—from ‘my shirt’; other borrowings appear in their example sentences and phraseology section, including monni and mani ‘money’, tammeaku ‘hatchet’ (from ‘tommyhawk’), buketti ‘bucket’, and paper ‘letter’. Thus there were probably many more English words used in Kaurna in the 1830s and 1840s than existing documentation reveals. Whilst few borrowings appear in the Kaurna vocabularies, in excess of 100 terms for new concepts, including semantic extensions, derivations, compounds and reduplicated forms, were documented (Amery 1993). A similar approach was adopted by Meyer for Ramindjeri, Schürmann for Barngarla and Moorhouse for Ngaiawang with examples such as: Barngarla bokirri ‘anything to rest the feet upon, shoe’, Ramindjeri, turninyeri ‘shoe, boot’ (from ‘foot’ + ‘belonging to’), Ngaiawang tudngarru ‘that which belongs to the foot, shoe’, Barngarla katta ‘club, gun’, Ramindjeri pandappure ‘gun, musket’ (found also in Kaurna as parndapure ‘ball, bullet, gun’ possibly involving Kaurna pure ‘stone’ and parnda ‘limestone’), Ramindjeri ngarro-watyeri ‘ship’ (from ‘manufactured wood’ + -waityeri ‘full of’), Barngarla warri-yoko ‘ship’ (from ‘wind’ + yoko not attested in Barngarla, but attested as ‘ship’ in Kaurna). Probably the presence of these terms reflects the lexicographers’ intent to make the dictionaries useful for communication.

Although the avoidance of borrowings and neologisms is common in contemporary dictionaries, some English borrowings do appear in the Pitjantjatjara/Yankunytjatjara dictionary (Goddard 1996), for example aapa ‘part’ (from English ‘half’), ritetwana ‘red’ (from English ‘red one’), kiripiti ‘grapes’, kita ‘guitar; rock music, rock concert’, kilina ‘clean’ and kilinananyi ‘to clean’ (with a verbaliser). However, it seems that only a small fraction of English borrowings in Pitjantjatjara, all of which have been regularly used over a long period of time, actually appear in the dictionary. For instance raitamilani ‘to write’ does not appear, though it is frequently used in contemporary Pitjantjatjara.

4. Analysing sound systems

The German speaking missionaries used <i>, <u>, and <a> for high front, high back and low vowels respectively, as is normal in German. However, at the start Teichelmann and Schürmann felt the need to justify the decision, perhaps because they met some resistance from Matthew Moorhouse, Protector of Aborigines. They did so by referring first to the

18 Schürmann wrote in his diary: ‘I was extremely pleased that he [Governor George Gawler] informed the Protector [Moorhouse] that the English style of writing could not be applied to the language of the natives, because its variations confused not only the aborigines, but would also leave five out of six Europeans in doubt as to the correct pronunciation.’ (Schürmann 1838–1853).
practical reason (avoiding confusion), and then by pointing to Threlkeld’s use of the same system. Meyer and Schürmann used the same system in their grammars. In a paper printed in the Journal of the Royal Geographical Society, their patron, George Grey, argued for this orthography to be used generally, even though it differed from what he had used for Noongar (Grey 1845). Moorhouse then used this system in his own vocabulary, and refers to this argument when justifying his spelling conventions:

The orthography here adopted is that which has been recommended by the Royal Geographical Society, and in which most of the Polynesian and New Holland languages are recorded. (Moorhouse 1846:vii)

Elsewhere, he and the missionaries argued for the practical usefulness of their chosen spelling system:

The system of education that has hitherto been adopted has been almost entirely carried on in the native language. The advantage of this plan over the English is, that the characters used for spelling native words have a fixed and invariable sound, and that the children, according to an undeviating rule, in a short time spell and pronounce the word. (Report upon the state of education amongst the Aborigines, 03 March 1843, cited by Hunt 1971:39.)

All the early recorders, however, tended to make further height distinctions, sometimes writing /u/ and /i/ as &lt;o&gt; and &lt;e&gt;,

19 most often word-finally, or preceding retroflex consonants. They also often wrote diphthongs for high front and low vowels preceding lamino-palatal consonants. Teichelmann and Schürmann (1840:3) recognised the word-final alternation in Kaurna:

If a word end in o, and an affix or termination is added, then o regularly is changed into u;
if in e, then e is changed into i.

Meyer built on Teichelmann and Schürmann’s initial work, and described the phonetics of Ramindjeri in more detail. He systematically recorded phonetic alternations in vowels and consonants, and proposed regular phonological rules, to account for alternations such as elision or change of stem-final vowels before a following affix.

Places of articulation of consonants provided more problems. Retroflex consonants were noted as though they were merely a variant of the corresponding alveolar consonant. In Kaurna, for example Teichelmann and Schürmann noted (without comment on articulation):

It is necessary to mention a few letters which are frequently changed or omitted, even amongst one and the same tribe […]

R is changed with l or d; as kurlana, kullana; garla, gadla; murla, mulla.
R omitted before n; as, marnkutye, mankutye; marngandi, mangandi; nurnti, nulti.
R before t, changed into t; as, ngartendi, ngattendi; narta, natta. (Teichelmann and Schürmann 1840:3)

Lamino-dental consonants were not recognised in the early published grammars, although occasional words were written with &lt;th&gt;, which probably represents a lamino-dental stop or fricative. Later, Taplin also recognised interdentals in Ngarrindjeri (McDonald 2002). Moorhouse makes a distinction word-initially between &lt;dI&gt;, &lt;l&gt; and &lt;l&gt; which presumably reflects a contrast between initial lateral consonants, although exactly what the contrast is is not clear.

Problems with determining manner of articulation arose with voicing. Voicing is distinctive in English, French and German. It is not distinctive word-initially in the Thura Yura languages, although there is an apparent voicing alternation following the stressed syllable,

19 McDonald (1977, 2002) argues that Yaralde (Ngarrindjeri) does in fact have a five vowel system.
probably depending on whether the stressed vowel is long or not. Early recorders attempted to find voicing distinctions. However Teichelmann and Schürmann recognised that something was going on in Kaurna: ‘B is confounded with p; d with t; and g with k.’ (Teichelmann and Schürmann 1840:3). Meyer added the suggestion that ‘an intermediate sound’ might be used, and provided a rule for a voicing alternation in Ramindjeri:

‘D,’ ‘g,’ and ‘b’ become ‘t,’ ‘k,’ and ‘p’ before an affix commencing with a vowel, as, yarnde, spear; yamt-il, by (a) spear. (Meyer 1843:12)

Problems also arose with the rhotic sounds—the Thura Yura languages generally have three, distinguished by place and manner. Teichelmann and Schürmann recognised at least two sounds, but did not systematically mark the difference orthographically between the rhotics:

r sometimes sounds as r in English, sometimes rather softer, as birri, marra, gurtendi, &c. (Teichelmann and Schürmann 1840:1).

R has generally the same power as in English, but sometimes it has a very capricious sound which it is difficult to imitate. To approach the native pronunciation, put the tip of the tongue to the roof of the mouth and then pronounce r dwelling some time upon it (Schürmann 1844:1).

5. Writing grammars

Australian languages presented unexpected analytical problems to the early missionaries and language recorders, who were all coming fresh from European languages. But a willingness to consider new solutions to describing these problems is seen in the four early grammars of South Australian languages (Meyer 1843; Moorhouse 1846; Schürmann 1844; Teichelmann and Schürmann 1840).

5.1 Noun morphology

In terms of noun morphology, the ergative-absolutive case system is the most striking difference between Australian languages and the European languages with which the grammarians were familiar. Following Threlkeld (1834), Teichelmann and Schürmann called the ergative ‘active’, and linked the active case to ‘active, or transitive’ verbs. Schürmann and Moorhouse both contrasted ‘active nominative’ with ‘nominative’, which Schürmann at least linked to verb class, defining active verbs as those that have active nominative subjects. Teichelmann and Schürmann also called the ergative ‘ablative’, a usage Meyer chose for Ramindjeri. Meyer has a careful discussion of the reasons for his choice (1843:12, 38–42).

5.2 Verb morphology

In terms of verb morphology, all authors examined verbs from different angles. They each looked at verbs in two ways, classifying verb stems, and classifying the tense, mood and aspect forms of verbs. They each divided verb stems into different verb ‘genera’ (Teichelmann and Schürmann), ‘conjugations’ (Schürmann) or kinds (Moorhouse). They all recognised the importance of the basic division between transitive and intransitive verbs, and recognised verbs derived from these types. The similarity of the categories they chose, and the ways in which they defined those categories show how they built on each other’s understandings, and their knowledge of the categories of classical grammar. (See Appendix 3.)
Meyer diverged from the others in his analysis of the verbs, partly as a result of a peculiar case-assigning property of Ramindjeri middle verbs. He noticed that many verbs had two forms, which seem to express similar meanings (Meyer 1843:38).

(1) a. Ngāte-yan lakk-in
   ‘I spear him’

   b. Ngāp-il laggl-in <sic>
   ‘I spear him’

(2) a. Korn-il lakk-in mām-
   ‘The man spears the fish’

   b. Korne laggel-in mām-il
   ‘The man spears the fish’

Meyer glosses (2a) as ‘There is a spearing the fish by the man’, and (2b) as ‘The man spearing is with the fish’. He gives a detailed analysis of the alternation, which in some ways prefigures the antipassive analysis of modern grammarians (McDonald 1977, 2002; Bannis­ter 2004). Following Threlkeld (1834), he proposes grouping those apparent verbs, which take nominative subjects, with nouns and adjectives (which would also have nominative subjects), as ‘participles or adjectives’. He goes beyond Threlkeld in proposing that those apparent verbs which take ergative subjects are ‘verbal substantives, or gerunds, or the mere names of the actions, without reference to anything else, like the Greek infinitive with the article’ (Meyer 1843:40). Finally he allows that some verbs which take either nominative or ergative subjects can be compared with English words ending in -ing, i.e. they act sometimes as participles and sometimes as gerunds.

What drives him to this analysis is that when the verb ‘spear’ has the -el affix, if the thing speared appears at all, it often has a case-marker homophonous with the ergative, as in (2b). This ending -il can appear in sentences with intransitive verbs to denote the cause of an event, e.g.

(3) Wir-in-ap yarnt-il
    sick-am-I spear-from
    ‘I am sick from a spear wound’

In order to provide a uniform account of the functions of the case suffix -il and the pronoun ngāte, Meyer proposes that the common function is Ablative, and thus that in (1a) and (2a) the sentences are actually like passives, the agent being expressed with the Ablative.

The others did not adopt Meyer’s proposal specifically, although Moorhouse writes that: ‘The English passive voice is not expressed by an inflection of the verb, but the application of the active nominative case’ (Moorhouse 1846:24). There is an indirect allusion to the participle analysis in Teichelmann when he writes:

‘Whether you look upon the verb as a primitive verb, or whether you consider it as a verbal noun matters very little, the only difference I have observed is, that considering it as a verbal noun it assists you some times materially to ascertain the real meaning of the verb.

(Teichelmann 1858)

The second way of looking at verbs concerns the tense, mood and aspect system of the languages. The authors have clearly recognised important categories in Pama-Nyungan languages, such as the use of special endings for negative imperatives, the optative, the use of a

20 -ap is the nominative form of the first person singular pronoun, distinct from the accusative -an and the ergative -at.
non-past tense, and irrealis endings, as shown in Appendix 4. A third angle concerns person-number agreement. Teichelmann and Schürmann have what look like bound pronouns as part of verb endings for particular Kurna and Barngarla tense, aspect and mood combinations, although they do recognise that pronouns can be attached to verbs. Meyer distinguishes bound pronouns quite clearly for Ramindjeri, and this is adopted by Moorhouse for Ngaiawang. Meyer writes:

The verb undergoes no change on account of number and person, which are expressed by the subject of the proposition. The pronouns separable and inseparable stand before or are affixed to the verb or some other word in the sentence … (Meyer 1843:43)

5.3 Word order

The four early grammarians all had some acquaintance with Latin, which has fairly free word order. Since three of them were German speakers, it is probable that this made it easy for them to recognise that information structure, rather than grammatical function was a major determinant of word order. However, only Teichelmann and Schürmann explicitly comment on this:

A general rule is, that that part of a sentence which is of more importance in the idea of the speaker, and upon which he will draw the attention of the hearer, is put first; therefore, also, the accusative is put before the verb […] (Teichelmann and Schürmann 1840:24)

5.4 Classifying languages—historical origins

Perhaps owing to George Grey’s enthusiasm (Grey 1845), the relationship of languages in Australia was a topic of interest to several of the early grammarians. Teichelmann and Schürmann led the way by saying that their experience supported Grey’s and Threlkeld’s conjecture ‘that all the Australian languages are derived from one root’ (Teichelmann and Schürmann 1840:vi). They also suggest that the Adelaide language is more similar to those in the west than to the east. Schürmann asserts that the languages from New South Wales to Swan River ‘constitute only one language’ (Schürmann 1844:v). Moorhouse takes issue with the strong claim that they are one language, but agrees with the claim of ultimate relatedness:

The term ‘dialect’ is scarcely applicable to the languages of New Holland. They differ in root more than the English, French, and German languages differ from each other. Not one-twentieth part of the words agree in root; and yet there is evidence sufficient to satisfy any one that they belong to one family, and had their origin from one common source. (Moorhouse 1846:vi)

In the early twentieth century the first large-scale systematic classification of Australian languages appeared, compiled by a Viennese linguist, Wilhelm Schmidt (1868–1954), based on a careful reading of the sources (Schmidt 1919). While some of the materials he used have been superseded or found to be unreliable (Dixon 1980:15), many of his proposed groupings have held up, including, with some modifications, his recognition of language groups in South Australia. Since then Schmidt’s proposals have been refined, first in the large-scale

21 For example, Moorhouse wrote a letter to George Grey in 1843 in which he makes a detailed comparison of grammatical points in Grey’s description of the Swan River language with the Adelaide and Encounter Bay languages (Moorhouse 1843). The reason he gives for writing the letter is:

These points are important to us, who are in contact with the Adelaide dialect, for if the observation[s] contained in the Grammar of Western Australia are found, upon extended investigation, to be correct there is a wider difference in the principles of the language than we imagine[d] to exist.
surveys of O'Grady et al. (1966), Oates and Oates (1970), and Dixon (1980), and the maps in Wurm et al. (1981), and then in detailed reconstruction work on individual families: in South Australia the Kamic languages (Austin 1990; Bowern 2001), the Thura Yura languages (Simpson and Hercus 2004), and the Yarli languages (Hercus and Austin 2004).

6. Collecting texts and analysing discourse

Few South Australian languages are supported by an extensive body of recorded texts. Some early observers, especially those who compiled grammars, recorded illustrative sentences in the languages they were studying. Notable amongst these are hundreds of examples of phrases and sentences recorded in Kaurna (Teichelmann and Schürmann 1840; Teichelmann 1857), Barngarla (Schürmann 1844), and Ramindjeri (Meyer 1843). However, very few longer texts were recorded. The missionary Samuel Klose preserved letters in Kaurna, including ones that were sent to Germany in 1843 by two Kaurna boys, Pitpauw'e and Walt-yee (see Amery 2000:99–100), a short note penned in 1845 by a young girl, Jtya Maii, preserved in Grey’s collection in South Africa (see Amery 2000:100), and an earlier protest letter/petition housed in the SA State Library. In the early years of the twentieth century, Diyari people wrote letters to missionaries in Diyari, and perhaps to each other, over a period of 60 years (Austin 1986; Gale 1997:62–64).

Perhaps the first Dreaming narrative to be recorded in the vernacular was the Monana story of just 33 words in Kaurna, told by Kadlitpinna (‘Captain Jack’). It was recorded by William Wyatt probably between 1837 and 1839, but only published in 1879 (Woods 1879: 25). Similarly, Taplin recorded a short version (42 words) of the Pelican and Magpie story in Ngarrindjeri, which was later published (Taplin 1879a:39), as well as a song (Taplin 1879b: 39). In 1924 David Unaipon published with the help of the Aborigines’ Friends’ Association (AFA) a booklet of his writings which included a short poem ‘Ngarrindjeri saying’ in Ngarrindjeri and English.

Of note is the writing down as well as dictation of Diyari ‘legends’ by Dintibana Kinjimalana (Sam) in the early 1930s for the ethnographer and doctor Henry Kenneth (H.K.) Fry (1886–1959) (Fry 1937:271; Austin 1986:178; Gale 1997:64–65), and the recording of the Waiyungari (Wajungari) story, as told by Frank Blackmoor and written down by an unknown young literate Ngarrindjeri man in 1934 (Tindale 1935).

As mentioned earlier, Ronald and Catherine Berndt recorded a large collection of texts in Ngarrindjeri, a total of 163 between 1939 and 1942 (Berndt et al. 1993).22 These are supplied with an ‘interlinear translation’, though there is no morphemic analysis and the interlinear glosses supplied are inconsistent, with the same word being glossed in different ways. For instance, in the first Ngarrindjeri text a is glossed variously as ‘those’, ‘that’ and ‘and’, whilst numerous other Ngarrindjeri words (and suffixes), including an, itjuk, itjan, itjanin, itjanan, itji, il, ila, i-ana, ina and ku-inyi, are all glossed simply as ‘that’ (Berndt et al. 1993: 332–333). However, -il is the 3rd person ergative bound pronoun suffix, as well as an ergative nominal suffix (Cerin 1994). Norman Tindale also recorded a number of texts in Ngarrindjeri and other South Australian languages in his journals. Some of these have been published, but like the Berndts’ work, they need thorough linguistic analysis (see Monaghan 2003, and this volume).

With the establishment of linguistics as a discipline of study in the modern era, efforts were made by field linguists to record and analyse long texts, wherever this was still possible.

22 Many of these texts are ethnographic explanations to the Berndts of different cultural traditions of the Ngarrindjeri, while others are Dreaming narratives or ‘myths’. 
This work could not have been done without the willing and selfless involvement of their language teachers. Such a man was Andrew Coulthard, to whose memory Bernhard Sehebeck dedicated the first major volume of Adnyamathanha texts, writing that Coulthard ‘was guided by the idea that soon the day will come where the Adnyamathanha children can be taught their language at school, just as they are taught English’ (Sehebeck 1973:x). This book consists of thirteen Adnyamathanha texts collected in the late 1960s with good interlinear translations and comprehensive grammatical notes.

Similarly, Mick McLean Irinjili (1888–1977) (Horton et al. 1994), Tim Strangways, Topsie McLean, Arthur McLean and others taught Luise Hercus Arabana and Wangka-ngurru. Texts from them, collected from 1965 onwards, are published in her grammar (Hercus 1994:297–318) and in _Aboriginal History_ (Hercus 1977, 1981), and further volumes of texts of traditional myths and songs, with maps and photographs by Vlad Potezny and others, are archived at the South Australian Museum, the Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies (AIATSIS) and the Strehlow Research Centre. The Diyari speaker Ben Murray (Parlku-nguyu-thangkayiwaru) (1893–1994) (Hercus 1995) and Peter Austin published eighteen Diyari texts (Murray and Austin 1981, 1986a, 1986b; Austin 1981; Austin, Hercus and Jones 1988). Bennie Kerwin (c.1890–1976)23 provided Gavan Breen with texts in Yandruwandha (Hercus and Sutton 1986; Breen 1990, 2004b). Annie Coulthard (Yadandhanha) (1908–1986)24 among others provided Adnyamathanha texts to Dorothy Tunbridge. They remain unpublished, although English translations have been published (Tunbridge et al. 1988).

Many spoken texts in Western Desert languages have been recorded and transcribed. Andy Tjilari, Jacky Tjupuru, Billy Punytjunku, Nganyintja, Charlie Ilyatjari, Kukika, Annanari and others provided Pitjantjatjara texts to Bill Edwards (Puntjunyku 1971; Tjilari 1971a, 1971b; Tjupuru and Edwards 1994; Edwards 1994). Yami Lester and his father Kanytji, Murika, Tommy Tjampu, William Wangkati and Pompi Everard provided the eleven analysed texts given in Cliff Goddard’s (1985) _Yankunytjatjara_ grammar, and thirty five texts appear in Goddard and Kalotas’s book on _Yankunytjatjara_ plant use (Goddard and Kalotas 1985, 2002). Heather Bowe compiled _Pitjantjatjara_ children’s stories (Bowe 1986). Scattered through David Rose’s grammar of Pitjantjatjara (Rose 2001) are about ten transcribed spoken texts, one attributed to Nganyintja, and as an appendix Rose gives a transcription of Ivan Baker’s account of the Pitjantjatjara Land Rights movement (Baker 2001). Numerous oral texts have been archived by Ernabella’s Video and Television service (EVTv) and Ara Irititja, an electronic archive of historical material compiled by John Dallwitz, Ron Lister and others (Social History Unit of the Pitjantjatjara Council 2005). Additional Western Desert texts also appear in language learning course materials and vernacular materials produced for the bilingual programs operating in Pitjantjatjara schools. Anangu started recording, transcribing and translating texts when studying through the Anangu Tertiary Education Programme (AgTEP) (begun at Ernabella in 1984). A significant product of the school bilingual education era was the production of secular vernacular material that goes beyond scriptural translations, and educational functions; examples include the Pitjantjatjara story-writing competition (Goddard 1994), and a community newspaper that flourished at Amata in the mid 1980s, because it was meeting a significant social function in the community (Goddard 1990a; McConvell 1989).

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23 Biographical information from Horton et al. (1994).

24 Biographical information from Horton et al. (1994).
7. Sociolinguistics and the ethnography of speaking

As well as providing grammars and dictionaries, several of the early writers documented ways in which Aboriginal people used language. In 1846, for example, both Schürmann and Meyer published ethnographic accounts in which they documented various speech practices, including naming bestowal, avoidance, and enchantments (Meyer 1846; Schürmann 1846). Meyer’s booklet is particularly rich in descriptions of ceremonies and songs of the Ramindjeri, including the observation that ‘the songs are frequently in a different language, taken from some different tribes’ (Meyer 1846:13). He gives a myth of the origin of the languages, which features the Ramindjerar as the first speakers, then the speakers of the languages to the east, and finally the speakers of the languages to the north (Meyer 1846:14).

Schürmann makes many interesting observations about the Barngarla, about what were considered insults, how the dead were alluded to, multilingual conversations, and generally about how Aboriginal people interacted with each other:

> All grown-up men are perfectly equal; and this is so well understood, that none ever attempt to assume any command over their fellows, but whatever wishes they may entertain with regard to the conduct and actions of others, they must be expressed in the shape of entreaty or persuasion. (Schürmann 1846:12)

Schürmann was one of the first observers to document the use of sign language in Australia (see Kendon, this volume).

Few studies of the ethnography of speaking, as such, have been conducted in SA, and most of these are in relation to the north west of the state, including studies on Pitjantjatjara (Goddard 1992b; Liberman 1982, 1985; Naessan 2000) as well as Naessan’s current study of language use at Coober Pedy (Naessan, in progress) and the northwest and Yuhiko Fujiwara’s sociolinguistic study of language use in Port Augusta (Fujiwara, in progress). Langlois’ study of teenage Pitjantjatjara (albeit in the Northern Territory) is an important first in understanding language change (Langlois 2004). The Desert Schools project (NLLIA 1996) whilst focused on the use of English, does discuss the linguistic ecology of northwest communities in some detail. The state-wide language needs survey conducted for the Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait islander Studies (AIATSIS) in 2001–2002 (McConvell et al. 2002) contains many sociolinguistic observations. Schebeck, Hercus and White have worked on Adnyamathanha kinship and its realisation in the grammar of the language (Hercus and White 1973a, 1973b; Schebeck 1973). Several papers on Indigenous placenames in South Australia have also appeared (Hercus et al. 2002). Other studies in relation to language revival (see Amery and Gale, this volume) necessarily make many observations about the use of Aboriginal languages in contemporary society.

In recent years there have been studies of the new languages that developed from first contact onwards (see Mühlhäusler, this volume), from the development of pidgins (Foster et al. 2003; Simpson 1996; Monaghan 1998) to the rise of ‘Nunga English’ (the dialect of English spoken by Nungas, who include Aboriginal people of Ngarrindjeri, Kaurna and Narungga descent, among others). Peter Sutton investigated the retention of post-vocalic /r/ in a variety of this dialect (Sutton 1989). A vocabulary of Nuna English has been compiled by Philip Clarke (Clarke 1994), and Gregory Wilson has carried out a sociolinguistic study (Wilson 1995).
8. Language and education

In the 1960s people such as the Reverend W. H. (Bill) Edwards and the Reverend James (Jim) Downing, working in the Aboriginal communities in the north of South Australia, became aware of the need to provide training for Indigenous people and to teach non-Indigenous Australians the Indigenous languages. They produced materials such as vocabularies for health workers (Downing 1968). Edwards argued vigorously in favour of bilingual education (Edwards 1967). In 1969 the Uniting Church’s establishment of the Institute for Aboriginal Development (IAD) in Alice Springs led to a range of language work on Central Australian languages including Pitjantjatjara and Yankunytjatjara.

This work owed a great deal to Downing, the first director, and his colleague, the Yankunytjatjara man Yami Lester. With Greg Wilson, they started the training of Indigenous people, pioneering interpreter and translator training in 1979. They developed the teaching of Pitjantjatjara and Yankunytjatjara to Europeans, and they encouraged the production of language materials accessible to speakers, including Learners’ Guides (e.g. Goddard 1981). They encouraged grammatical and lexicographic work, such as Goddard’s work. Since then, IAD has become the major publisher of dictionaries of Australian languages, including the first pocket dictionary of an Australian language (Goddard general ed. 1997).

Increasingly, community language projects are acknowledging the significant role that linguists have played in the past in documenting their languages, and are now calling on linguists to help them interpret and expand on the language materials now resurfacing from the archives. These materials are now proving to be invaluable as communities strive to revive or maintain their languages for future generations.

One of the hubs of this community language work has been schools. There has been a growing interest shown by schools in the teaching of Indigenous languages, particularly in schools with high Indigenous student populations. With the Commonwealth initiative in the late 1980s to introduce compulsory second language learning in schools, Indigenous parents started to demand their children be given the opportunity to learn their own languages, rather than those of overseas countries. The aim for SA schools was for every student to study a second language, at some stage during their compulsory schooling, by 1995 (Lo Bianco 1987).

However, at the instigation of some Anangu community members, the state-run bilingual programmes in the schools on the Anangu Pitjantjatjara Yankunytjatjara (APY) Lands were closed down in 1990 in favour of English-medium programmes. A swan-song publication was the Pitjantjatjara Language Curriculum (Brown and EDSA 1990). Not until 14 years later were support materials once again published for L1 Pitjantjatjara language education on the APY Lands (e.g. Brumby et al. 2005) (Guy Tunstill e-mail to Jane Simpson, 16 January 2007). The closure of the bilingual program was greeted enthusiastically by proponents of English literacy based approaches such as ‘Two Way Schooling’ (Rose 2001). However, some Pitjantjatjara language work continued in the classroom, particularly at Fregon, through the Anangu teachers, many of whom (75 by the end of 2004) had studied in AnTEP, which included units that involved Pitjantjatjara language and literacy.25 But by 2006 some Anangu educators, alarmed at the continuing poor education levels of their children despite the English-medium programmes, were calling for a return to bilingual, bicultural education: ‘We want an education that helps us strengthen our identity, not weaken it.’ (Katrina Tjitayi, cited in Eickelkamp 2006).

In the 1980s, the southward movement of Anangu families led to the teaching of Pitjantjatjara in Port Augusta, with Chris Warren’s help, and in Adelaide with Greg Wilson’s help. L2

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programmes for Pitjantjatjara in schools off the APY Lands have been supported through regular curriculum development since then. The demand for language maintenance and revival programs led to the teaching of Arabana and Adnyamathanha in Port Augusta (again with Chris Warren’s help) and Adnyamathanha at Nepabunna (with Dorothy Tunbridge’s help). Further south, work began on the production of language learning kits by Brian Kirke for both the Ngarrindjeri and Narungga languages (Kirke et al., ca. 1986, 1988). In 1999 there were 39 sites offering 49 Aboriginal language programs to 2,000 students. By 2004 there were 54 sites offering 64 Aboriginal language programs to 4,326 students with over 100 teaching team members. By 2004, 6% of South Australian state schools were offering Aboriginal language programs (SA Department of Education and Children’s Services statistics compiled by Guy Tunstill and Greg Wilson, pers.comm. 2005). There is increasing demand for curriculum materials to be written and for resources to be produced to teach these languages, as well as a demand for trained teachers to teach them.

9. Interpreting and translation work

9.1 Interpreting

When the colony of South Australia was established, the sealers and their Aboriginal women had already learnt enough of each others’ languages to act as interpreters, with their knowledge of Kaurna, Ramindjeri (spoken to the south of Kaurna country) and English. For example, at the trial of two sailors charged with theft in 1837, the sealer George Cooper was engaged to interpret for the Aboriginal plaintiffs (Amery 2000:52).

The early Protectors were expected to learn and document the local Indigenous language(s) and were also expected to make use of Indigenous interpreters:

> You are recommended to endeavour to attach one or two of the most docile and intelligent of the natives particularly to your person, who should habitually accompany you in your excursions. ... Your interpreter will explain to them that the laws protecting the whites extend also to them, and he should make it his business to assist you, who are appointed to be their guardian, in preventing any aggression or outrage being committed by the settlers upon their persons, property or rights, and when committed, in bringing the perpetrators to justice. ... (Robert Gouger, Colonial Secretary in South Australian Gazette and Colonial Register, 12 August 1837:1)

Efforts were made to use Indigenous languages in the justice system, but often unsuccessfully. Thus in 1849 Matthew Moorhouse, then the Protector of Aborigines, put on record his objections to the convictions of four Barngarla men, based on admissions they had allegedly made to a police officer:

> Corporal Geharty spoke professedly in the native tongue and a very unsatisfactory speaking it was to anyone acquainted with the language—a substantive was used for a verb and a possessive for a personal pronoun ... I would with seriousness say they [the Aboriginal defendants] could not understand such broken phraseology and yet the Corporal gave in evidence what he considered to be the answers to his broken unintelligible questions. Mr Schürmann said in court that the natives could not understand the phrases. (Letter to the Colonial Secretary 08 October 1849, Moorhouse 1840–1857:242–244)

The skills of Aboriginal interpreters were well recognised by the colonists, and consequently they were often called in to interpret: ‘One of them who has lived with Wallend, the chief sealer on the island, speaks a little English and understands more so he is a good interpreter’ (Woodforde 1836–1837: October 1836). Others among the Kaurna and Ngarrindjeri with similar language skills included Encounter Bay Bob, Peter, Pangki Pangki and Charley.
They were mostly called upon to deal with disputes and court cases. But the need for interpreters and translators within Adelaide itself quickly dissipated as the local Kaurna population rapidly declined and the remaining Kaurna learned English.

On the frontier, however, the skills of Aboriginal interpreters were much needed and still sought. Unfortunately, recognition of the importance of using Aboriginal interpreters didn’t last. English soon became the only language of the justice system, resulting in questionable outcomes.

The establishment of interpreter training at IAD, as mentioned in section 8, helped increase the number of trained interpreters, but it was still difficult to get institutions to recognise the importance of using them. Even as late as the 1970s and 1980s many Indigenous patients with serious illnesses were evacuated from the north of SA, and from the Northern Territory, to Adelaide, but without any provision for interpreting. This reduced the chances of effective treatment (Donald Simpson, pers.comm. to J. Simpson).

The services of interpreters of Western Desert languages are still needed and called upon, primarily within health and the law courts. For the period 2002–2003 the two Adelaide-based Pitjantjatjara interpreters, Mona Tur and Bill Edwards, were called upon on 180 separate occasions by the three major hospitals in Adelaide and dozens of times by the courts (Bill Edwards, pers.comm.). However, only once was an interpreter called upon by the South Australian Police during this period (based on Interpreting and Translation Centre (ITC) figures).

Only a little has been written about interpreting issues in South Australian contexts (Edwards 1984, 1990; Liberman 1978, 1981). But much of what has been written about interpreting in Central Australia is relevant in northern South Australia (Goldflam 1995). There is still a large unmet demand for interpreters in SA, and no training programs are in place to impart the skills to younger interpreters, apart from those available in Alice Springs. Furthermore, there is a need for intensive language development and discussion of complex medical and legal concepts in order to work out how these might be adequately explained in Indigenous languages. This will entail the development of new terminology and finding metaphors and explanations that make sense within an Anangu cultural framework.

### 9.2 Translation work

Within days of the arrival of George Gawler in November 1838, the first translation into a South Australian language appeared in print. Gawler’s speech to the assembled Indigenous peoples in Adelaide was translated by the then Protector William Wyatt, and published in *The Register*. In May 1840, another of Gawler’s speeches was published on the occasion of the Queen’s Birthday celebrations, along with Schürmann’s translation of the Ten Commandments. Other religious texts, including hymns, prayers, and Bible stories, were translated into Kaurna between 1840 and 1843, although only the hymns seem to have survived.

In the following years, other missionaries working in more remote parts of the colony/state conducted religious translation work in a variety of Indigenous languages. These included the Reverend George Taplin’s work on Ngarrindjeri at Point McLeay mission, Flierl, Reuther and Carl Strehlow’s work on Diyari at Killalpaninna mission in the north, and the translation of the Lord’s Prayer into Waar in 1941. Intensive Bible translation work in Pitjantjatjara began at Ernabella in 1941. A translation undertaken by J.R.B. Love, Ronald Trudinger and ‘several Aboriginal co-translators’ of the Gospel of St Mark was published by the Bible Society in 1949 and a New Testament was published in 1969. Paul and Ann Eckert,
working with a team of Anangu co-translators, have undertaken a complete translation of the New Testament and major portions of the Old Testament into Pitjantjatjara (Pitjantjatjara Bible Translation Project 2002). This work is summarised in Appendix 2; and is further discussed in Gale (1997).

Some translation work was also conducted within schools in an effort to increase the amount of reading material in Pitjantjatjara available to students in bilingual education programs in the north west of the state between 1940 and the early 1990s. This was particularly the case in the 1980s when bilingual education was at its peak in Northern Territory schools, and staff in bilingual programs cooperated with each other in sharing resources in an effort to ‘flood their schools with literature’ in the hope of inspiring children to read.

One notable translation into Pitjantjatjara is *Alitjinyi ngitra tjukurtjarangka: Alitji in the Dreamtime*, a translation of Lewis Carroll’s *Alice in Wonderland* undertaken by Nancy Sheppard and Yanyi Baker and illustrated by B.S. Sewell. It was first published in 1975, and was later republished in 1992 as a picture book with new illustrations by Donna Leslie (Sheppard 1975, 1992). This is probably the first translation into an Aboriginal language of a literary classic (see Gale 1997:109). Since Carroll’s original makes heavy use of English language play and puns, the translation was an especially demanding task for the translators. Shepherd and Baker incorporated many cultural adaptations in the translation, with the White Rabbit with gloves and fan becoming a Kangaroo with dilly-bag and digging stick, etc. Gale notes that ‘an attempt is made in the Pitjantjatjara translation to incorporate the same language play and use of puns that are typical of Carroll’s English original’ (Gale 1997:109), an intellectually challenging exercise.

Despite the pronouncements of early colonial administrations, there have been surprisingly few official translations undertaken. State and Commonwealth legislation have never been translated into a South Australian language, although the titles for the Maralinga Tjarutja and Anangu Pitjantjantjaraku land grants under the Pitjantjatjara Land Rights Act were translated (Edwards 1984, 1988). Even the most basic information sheets or brochures promoting government services have seldom been produced in Indigenous languages, despite appearing in a range of migrant languages.

10. Current directions in language work

10.1 Research through universities

The first Indigenous language to be taught at a university in Australia was Pitjantjatjara at the University of Adelaide (e.g. the lecture notes and tapes prepared in 1968 by Wilfrid Douglas and Henk Siliakus). Since 1975, it has been taught in the institutions which have become the University of South Australia. Ngitji Ngitji Mona Tur has been teaching the course along with Bill Edwards for many years, and she is probably the first Indigenous tertiary-level language teacher in Australia. After the retirement of T.G.H. Strehlow from the University of Adelaide in 1974, most research on South Australian languages was conducted by linguists from interstate, except for the continuing language work in the north of South Australia, and work associated with Catherine Ellis at the Centre for Aboriginal Studies in Music which she co-founded at the University of Adelaide (and incidentally where Tur studied ethnomusicology).

26 Including Raymond Tjilya, Peter Nyaningu, Ewin Cooper, Douglas Baker, Roderick Munti, Alec Minutjakur, Graham Kulyuru, Mile Williams, Roy O’Toole, Anmanari Alice, Kanytjupayi Armstrong, Margaret Dagg, Muyuru O’Toole, Tjunkaya Tapaya, and Imuna Kenta.
Not until 1993 did this change, with the appointment of Peter Mühlhäusler to the chair of linguistics at Adelaide University. Mühlhäusler had a background in pidgins and creoles and was formulating his ideas about language ecology and ecological approaches to linguistic research (Mühlhäusler 1996). He set about attracting postgraduate students to work on South Australian languages with a particular focus on early German mission records. In the thirteen years since the establishment of the Linguistics Discipline at Adelaide University 16 projects on or related to South Australian languages have been undertaken, either as honours, masters or doctoral research. They cover a wide range of topics and a wide spread of languages. While some lexical and grammatical documentation of traditional languages is being done (Guy Tunstill on Adnyamathanha), there is a move to newer areas such as language reclamation (Amery 2000; Watts 2003), reconstructing aspects of traditional languages from historical sources (Kneebone 2005b; Houston 1999; Robins 2003), language contact and contact languages (Naessan 2000; Monaghan 2003), and language attitudes (Sapinsky 1997).

Additional research has been carried out by researchers in Adelaide on Koeler’s Kaurna wordlist (Koeler 1842; Amery and Mühlhäusler 2006), South Australian Pidgin (Foster et al. 2003), and ecological factors in language revival (Mühlhäusler et al. 2004). There is now a community of linguistic researchers in Adelaide with links across the three universities and good cross-disciplinary links to the South Australian Museum, and scholars of history, anthropology, environmental studies and other disciplines.

The close relationship between school programs and linguistic research, beginning with the early work of Teichelmann and Schürmann (1840) and continued through the bilingual programs on the Anangu Pitjantjatjara lands, continues today. Greg Wilson worked at Pukatja (Ermabella) school from 1975, and in 1979 began development of the Institute for Aboriginal Development’s Interpreter Training Program. In 1981 from an Education Department base in Adelaide, he supported school programs on the Pitjantjatjara-Yankunytjatjara Lands, and then in 1986 began teaching Pitjantjatjara between five Adelaide schools, which led to him publishing second-language Pitjantjatjara and Yankunytjatjara teaching courses/programs. He went on to study linguistics through the University of New England, writing a thesis on Nunga English (Wilson 1995). Subsequently he shifted over to a position coordinating Aboriginal language programs in schools across South Australia. As part of that job, he is researching Arabana, working with Luise Hercus’s materials together with members of the Arabana community, in particular with the late Laurie Stuart (1912–2005),27 Jean Wood, Millie Warren, Pauline Thompson, Syd Strangways, and the late Rex Stuart. Together, they have produced a comprehensive teaching framework R-10 (12) on Arabana, an associated CD and teachers’ guide (Wilson and DECS 2004, 2005). Wilson has recently commenced working on Diyari.

Meanwhile, Guy Tunstill, who had studied ethnomusicology and Pitjantjatjara music under Catherine Ellis, moved into language teaching, and taught Pitjantjatjara at Alberton Primary School in the mid–1990s for four years before taking up the job as Aboriginal Languages Project Officer alongside Greg Wilson. Tunstill is now researching Adnyamathanha, combining his Adnyamathanha curriculum-writing job for schools with doctoral study at the University of Adelaide. Tunstill is working closely with Bernhard Schebeck and building on his earlier work, as well as with Lil Neville and Buck McKenzie, and a wider group of Adnyamathanha people, which has also resulted in a comprehensive teaching framework R-10, CD and teacher’s guide (Tunstill and DECS 2004, 2005).

27 Luise Hercus, e-mail to Simpson, 09 January 2007.
Amery's linguistic work on Kaurna grew out of his work with Kaurna Plains School. His longitudinal study (Amery 2000) on the Kaurna reclamation movement is the first of its kind. (See Amery and Gale, this volume.)

Gale, having previously investigated the history of writing in Aboriginal languages (Gale 1992, 1997), and published Dreaming narratives (Gale 2000), is now working with a cluster of schools in Murray Bridge running Ngarrindjeri language programs. She is currently compiling a Ngarrindjeri dictionary, writing a pedagogical grammar, a Ngarrindjeri language curriculum and preparing teaching materials.

Linguists have produced a range of materials and resources to support the teaching of Indigenous languages in schools and the community. In addition to dictionaries, grammars, translations and curricula, other resources have been produced ranging from language courses (Amery et al. 1997; Kirke 1984), pedagogical grammars and learner's guides (Eckert and Hudson 1988; Goddard 1993) to songbooks (Schultz et al. 1999).

10.2 Indigenous linguists

More Indigenous people are working on their families' languages. At first, formal language and linguistics study was mostly undertaken through the School of Australian Linguistics (SAL) (now the Centre for Australian Languages and Linguistics at the Batchelor Institute of Indigenous Tertiary Education, Northern Territory), or through the Pitjantjatjara courses first at the University of Adelaide, and later the University of South Australia. In 1984 Patrick McConvell ran an SAL linguistics/vernacular literacy course for Pitjantjatjara speakers at Ernabella (Black and Breen 2001), and in the 1980s two groups of Ngarrindjeri students went to Batchelor, some to work with Steve Johnson (1944–1990) (Evans 1992) at SAL.

Since the 1980s, other Indigenous people have undertaken Kaurna language study at the University of Adelaide, as well as formal linguistics study, both interstate and in Adelaide (Dennis O'Brien, grandson of the Kaurna Elder Lewis O'Brien, undertook undergraduate linguistics study at the University of Adelaide, and Rebecca Bear-Wingfield started work on Kukata there). Many have been involved in research projects. Dennis O'Brien, Trent Wanganee, Vincent (Jack) Buckskin, and Jamie Goldsmith have been working with Amery on Kaurna research projects at the direction of the Kaurna Warra Pintyandi group, led by Lewis O'Brien and Alice Rigney. Dorothy French, along with Syd Sparrow, Sharon Gollan, Howie Sumner, Maria Lane and Kizzie Rankine (Ngarrindjeri staff members at the University of South Australia) have been working with Gale to provide Ngarrindjeri language materials in an understandable form to the community.

Lester-Irabinna Rigney and Simone Ulalka Tur at Yunggorendi First Nations Centre for Higher Education and Research, Flinders University, have worked alongside linguists in various projects, especially for the Needs Survey (McConvell et al. 2002). Rigney has taken a strong advocacy role for Indigenous languages and has a particular interest in language rights (Rigney 2003). Other Indigenous people have gained linguistic skills to varying extents through participation in language revival workshops or through engaging in collaborative work with linguists. However, many more training opportunities are needed, as was evident in the Needs Survey (McConvell et al. 2002).

10.3 Community-based language projects

Aside from the work done in the Anangu Pitjantjatjara Lands through the schools, the church, and the Institute for Aboriginal Development, the Commonwealth Government has begun to fund language work. The National Aboriginal Languages Program (NALP) provided Com-
monwealth government funding for the first time for community-based language projects from 1987 to 1990. In 1989–1990 the Ngarrindjeri, Narungga, and Kaurna languages project was funded through this program to employ Kathryn Gale, who had worked as a teacher linguist in NT schools and in the bilingual education program at Ernabella, and Rob Amery, who had previously done linguistic research in the Northern Territory to work with local Nungas, including Josie Agius, Nelson Varcoe and Liz Rigney.

In 1993, Yaitya Warra Wodli (YWW), the South Australian Indigenous language centre, was established to distribute funds from the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission (ATSIC) to community groups proposing language projects across SA. Community projects funded by YWW have sometimes engaged or invited linguists to work with them. In 2001, for example, the Narungga Languages Project administered by the Narungga Aboriginal Progress Association (NAPA) engaged a linguist, Christina Eira, to assess and compile the extant Narungga material making it accessible for language reconstruction (Wanganeen et al. 2006; Narungga Aboriginal Progress Association 2006).

In 2005, the Commonwealth Government funding arrangements for work on Indigenous languages shifted to the Department of Communication, Information Technology and the Arts (DCITA). DCITA funds obtained by researchers at the University of Adelaide have been used to: compile a guide to South Australian Aboriginal language resources, support further work on Wirangu, document language histories, survey attitudes to language maintenance and revival, undertake a cost-benefit analysis of Kaurna language reclamation following on from previous work by Mühlhäusler and Damania (2004), work on Meyer’s Encounter Bay materials and Koeler’s Kaurna wordlist. Current projects include the development of Kukata teaching materials, recording of Ngarrindjeri Elders to produce an electronic and written alphabet book and picture dictionary, a Kaurna learner’s guide, database of Kaurna requests, Ngadjuri picture dictionary, Antikirinya picture dictionary, a training program for Ngarrindjeri language teachers and an Indigenous languages conference. Further funds will be sought to produce Kaurna radio programs in collaboration with Radio Adelaide and to produce a series of greeting cards in Kaurna. A Ngarrindjeri learner’s guide will be produced by Mary-Anne Gale and Dorothy French with DCITA funds obtained by the University of South Australia.

11. Directions for future language work

Pitjantjatjara and Yankunytjatjara continue to be spoken by children, and must be counted as some of the ‘strongest’ Indigenous languages in Australia. As such, they provide scope for deep semantic and syntactic studies of the kind only possible when native speakers are involved. A start has been made on this with Goddard’s investigation of emotions and semantic primitives in these languages (Goddard 1990b, 1991a, 1991b).

Elsewhere, there is diminishing scope for basic linguistic description of SA languages, although urgent work is still needed to record the last rememberers of Kukata and Mirminy on the west coast. The focus of research is shifting from linguistic description to applied areas including language teaching in the education sector and language revival. There is significant interest from Indigenous communities in language revival and there is much room for linguistic research in this emerging field (see Amery and Gale, this volume). There is a need for good dictionaries, pedagogical grammars and other language learning materials. There is also a need for intensive language development and language planning in these contexts (see Amery 2001).
Sociolinguistic studies have been relatively rare in SA, as mentioned earlier, and, along with language change are fruitful areas for further research. What is the impact of English on South Australia’s remaining languages, in terms of phonology, vocabulary, syntax, morphology, semantics, pragmatics and the sociology of language? Those of us working on Aboriginal language revival and Indigenous language teaching in the education sector are aware of some of this influence and language change; however no detailed investigations have yet been undertaken. Likewise, as mentioned earlier, interpreting and translation is a much under-researched area. There is a need to investigate communication issues in Indigenous health and for further studies of language and the law and languages in the media. These are not simply topics of academic interest. They are issues of life and death and quality of life for many Indigenous peoples, be they speakers of traditional languages or Aboriginal English.

12. Conclusion

The documentation of South Australia’s languages began before colonisation in 1836. Then there was a flurry of activity in the early years of the colony when a knowledge of Indigenous languages was a valuable and sought after commodity. However, this interest soon waned as Indigenous peoples learned English and linguistic groups diminished rapidly, largely as a result of introduced diseases. Unfortunately modern linguistic description and recording techniques arrived too late for good documentation of the majority of South Australia’s Indigenous languages. As a result, detailed knowledge of many languages has been lost forever.

Several people stand out in the history of linguistic research in South Australia. The missionaries Teichelmann, Schürmann and Meyer, as well as the Protector Moorhouse, were exemplary for their pioneering efforts in documenting Kaurna, Barngarla, Ramindjeri and Ngaiaawang, and for producing the first grammars of South Australian languages. Their work laid the foundation for others. Reuther, building on the Diyari language work of the earlier Hermannsburg Mission Institute missionaries, compiled perhaps the largest vocabulary of a South Australian language, and also carried out fairly extensive comparative work with neighbouring languages in the Lake Eyre region, giving us some knowledge of a number of otherwise little known languages. Norman Tindale assembled extensive vocabularies and some texts of numerous languages from across the state (and interstate), but little grammatical analysis. Luise Hercus (this volume) applied modern linguistic description to a range of languages in varying states of attrition. Had she not done so, our knowledge of South Australian languages would be much diminished. The Reverend Jim Downing, the Reverend Bill Edwards and Yami Lester were pioneers in establishing applied linguistic work which has not only helped document Pitjantjatjara and Yankunytjatjara and keep them strong, but has led the way for speakers of many languages to gain access to material in their languages. Peter Mühlhäusler at the University of Adelaide has inspired postgraduate students to study South Australian Indigenous languages and language issues.

There have been periods of activity when much linguistic work has been produced and periods of relative inactivity. Of course the most productive work came out of intensive times spent by skilled recorders working with fluent speakers of the language. Such comprehensive linguistic documentation required the cooperation of speakers, as well as an understanding of anthropology, ethnomusicology and the physical world on the part of the recorder. Although most early observers primarily collected wordlists, we are fortunate that some missionaries and a few others compiled grammars, and recorded example sentences to illustrate different points of grammar. Some even moved to the next stage of their evangelical work of translating portions of the Scriptures.
By contrast, contemporary linguistic reclamation work, which draws on these early historical materials, requires a knowledge of history, philology, orthographic conventions, handwriting and foreign languages (especially German in South Australia). Locating early sources is a tedious, time-consuming and often hit-and-miss exercise. But again, success is achieved in such language revival activities by working in happy collaboration with the Indigenous owners of the languages being revived.

The nature of linguistic work in SA has changed over the years, just as the science of linguistics has developed and diversified, and as our understanding and knowledge of language and language function deepen. By necessity, work being conducted on Indigenous languages has also had to change in response to the changes in the status of Indigenous languages. The flurry of documentation by recorders, before languages were lost, has now enabled work to intensify on language reclamation. But most importantly, those working on Indigenous languages today are taking direction from the Indigenous owners of the languages, and are responding to demands for help from the community and schools. The future of language work in SA is one of cooperative collaboration between all interested people.

Appendix 1: Timeline on SA Indigenous languages and key events

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Documentation¹</th>
<th>Use of Indigenous languages</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1826</td>
<td>First known recording of a South Australian language, at King George Sound (Albany), WA.</td>
<td>Sealers living with Aborigines learn and use Aboriginal languages, including Kaurna.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1833</td>
<td>First words published of a South Australian language (Gaimard 1830–34).</td>
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<tr>
<td>1836</td>
<td></td>
<td>British officially invade Kaurna land, Adelaide Plains.</td>
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<tr>
<td>1838</td>
<td></td>
<td>Governor’s speech urging Aborigines to speak English is translated into Kaurna.</td>
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<tr>
<td>1839</td>
<td></td>
<td>C. Teichelmann and C. Schürmann start a school for Aborigines in Adelaide adopting bilingual principles.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1840</td>
<td>First substantial grammar and vocabulary of Kaurna published, by the authors (Teichelmann and Schürmann 1840).</td>
<td>Publication of the translation of the Ten Commandments in Kaurna (South Australian Gazette and Colonial Register, Friday May 26 1840).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1843</td>
<td>First substantial grammar and vocabulary of Ramindjeri published in Adelaide (Meyer 1843).</td>
<td>Klose sends Kaurna translations of six German hymns back to Germany.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year</td>
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<td>Use of Indigenous languages</td>
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<tr>
<td>1844</td>
<td>First substantial grammar and vocabulary of Barngarla published in Adelaide by George Dehane (Schürmann 1844).</td>
<td>Governor George Grey revokes the bilingual education policy in favour of English-only education for Aboriginal children.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1845</td>
<td>Hypothesis published on the relatedness of South Australian languages to other Australian languages (Grey 1845).</td>
<td>Indigenous children forcibly relocated to an English-only school, from Piltawodli, a bilingual school. Within weeks Klose observes children using English amongst themselves. Grey forbids Teichelmann from preaching in Kaurna.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1846</td>
<td>First substantial vocabulary and grammatical notes of Ngaiawang published in Adelaide (Moorhouse 1846).</td>
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<tr>
<td>1850</td>
<td></td>
<td>Poonindie Mission founded near Port Lincoln on Barngarla land, bringing Aborigines together whose only common language was English (Brock and Kartinyeri 1989).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1864</td>
<td>First publication of Bible selections in Ngarrindjeri (Taplin 1864a), perhaps the first publication of part of the Bible in an Indigenous Australian language.</td>
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<tr>
<td>1866–1915</td>
<td>Missionaries at Killalpaninna document Diyari (Homan, Schoknecht, Flierl, Siebert, Reuther, Carl Strehlow, Reidel).</td>
<td>Kopperamanna and Killalpaninna Missions founded near Cooper’s Creek on Diyari land. Killalpaninna adopts bilingual and then trilingual education policy (Stevens 1994).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1878</td>
<td>Publication of Ngarrindjeri grammar (Taplin 1878).</td>
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<tr>
<td>1879</td>
<td>George Taplin and J.D. Woods publish edited collections of material on South Australian languages (Taplin 1879b; Woods 1879).</td>
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<tr>
<td>Year</td>
<td>Documentation</td>
<td>Use of Indigenous languages</td>
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<tr>
<td>1880</td>
<td>First vocabulary and grammatical notes on Buwandik published (Smith 1880).</td>
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<tr>
<td>1897</td>
<td></td>
<td>Koonibba mission founded near Denial Bay on Wirangu land (Evangelical Lutheran Church of Australia 1926).</td>
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<td>1901</td>
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<tr>
<td>1917–1920</td>
<td>John Black publishes vocabularies of South Australian languages using modified phonetic alphabet.</td>
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<tr>
<td>1918–1931</td>
<td>Norman Tindale starts documenting Australian languages and customs based in the South Australian Museum.</td>
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<tr>
<td>1918</td>
<td>Daisy Bates starts documenting languages of the west, initially based at Ooldea in Kukata, Ngalia, Wirangu and Mirkiny country.</td>
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<tr>
<td>1920</td>
<td>C. Hoff becomes superintendent of Koonibba mission and records some West Coast language material.</td>
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<tr>
<td>1924</td>
<td></td>
<td>David Unaipon, a Ngarrindjeri man, publishes <em>Ngarrindjeri Legends</em> (Unaipon 1927).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1926</td>
<td>Founding of the Board for Anthropological Research, South Australia (Tindale 1974)</td>
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<tr>
<td>1930–1931</td>
<td>Language Committee at Adelaide University (instigated by J.A. FitzHerbert) promoted phonetic transcription of Aboriginal languages.</td>
<td>By 1932 the United Aborigines’ Mission had missionaries at Swan Reach, Ooldea, Finnis Springs, Nepabunna and Quorn (Kwan 1987).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year</td>
<td>Documentation</td>
<td>Use of Indigenous languages</td>
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<tr>
<td>1935—</td>
<td>Tindale publishes wordlists, texts and notes on Kaurna, Ngadjuri, Yaralde and Narrunga.</td>
<td>Urmeewarra Mission and Davenport Station founded near Port Augusta in Nukunu and Barngarla country.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1938—</td>
<td>Harvard-Adelaide Universities Anthropological Expedition led by Tindale and Joseph Birdsell</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>1939</td>
<td>Ronald Berndt starts documenting Ngarrindjeri (Yaralde) life and language, later with Catherine Berndt’s help (Berndt et al. 1993).</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>1943</td>
<td>Ronald Trudinger publishes the first grammar of Pitjantjatjara (Trudinger 1943)</td>
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<tr>
<td>1946</td>
<td>T.G.H. Strehlow becomes Senior Research Fellow in Australian Linguistics at the University of Adelaide.</td>
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<tr>
<td>1947</td>
<td>Schoknecht’s grammar of Diyari is translated (Schoknecht 1947).</td>
<td>Yalata Aboriginal Reserve proclaimed in Wirangu country.</td>
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<td>1954</td>
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<tr>
<td>1955</td>
<td>Wilfrid Douglas publishes the first article on the phonology of an Australian language (Western Desert) (Douglas 1955)</td>
<td>Country of the Kukata and their neighbours contaminated with radioactive waste.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1956</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>1965—</td>
<td>Luise Hercus starts documenting South Australian languages.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year</td>
<td>Documentation*</td>
<td>Use of Indigenous languages</td>
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<tr>
<td>1966</td>
<td>Pitjantjatjara language course introduced in the University of Adelaide. Moved to Torrens College of Advanced Education. Still taught at the University of South Australia.</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>1969</td>
<td>South Australian Education Department agreed to educate children in remote Aboriginal communities.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>1981</td>
<td></td>
<td>First test transmission of EVTV, TV broadcasting by Pitjantjatjara from Ernabella (PY Media 2004).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1984</td>
<td>By 1984 the S.A. Ethnic Affairs Commission is providing interpreting services in indigenous languages.</td>
<td>By 1984 the S.A. Ethnic Affairs Commission is providing interpreting services in indigenous languages.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1985–</td>
<td></td>
<td>Ngarrindjeri people go to the School of Australian Linguistics, Batchelor, Northern Territory to study linguistics.</td>
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<tr>
<td>1986</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>ca. 1986 Ngarrindjeri Learner’s Kit produced.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(Kirke et al. ca. 1986)</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Year</td>
<td>Documentation*</td>
<td>Use of Indigenous languages</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>1988</td>
<td>First modern learners’ guide to Pitjantjatjara published (Eckert and Hudson 1988).</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1988</td>
<td>Narungga Learner's Kit produced (Kirke et al. 1988).</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>1990</td>
<td>First published grammar of Arabana (Hercus 1994).</td>
<td>The Pitjantjatjara/Yankunytjatjara Education Committee recommends moving away from bilingual education to an English-only approach (Rose 2001:5; Gray and Cowey 2000).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1994</td>
<td>First published grammar of Wirangu (Hercus 1999).</td>
<td>Kaurna, Pitjantjatjara and Antikirinya among the first Indigenous languages to be taught in accredited programs at senior secondary level in Australian schools.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1997</td>
<td>Kaurna linguistics course introduced at the University of Adelaide.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Year | Documentation | Use of Indigenous languages
--- | --- | ---
2004–2006 | Publication of the Hoff vocabularies from the West Coast (Hoff 2004). Publication of the Yandruwandha grammar, texts and dictionary (Breen 2004a, b) Publication of Narungga material (Wanganeen et al. 2006; Narungga Aboriginal Progress Association 2006) | SA Government Interpreting and Translating Centre offered interpreting in Antikirinya, Arrernte, Luritja and Pitjantjatjara, and translating only in Pitjantjatjara.\(^b\)

\(^a\) Sources for this timeline also include Kwan’s useful timelines (Kwan 1987).


**Appendix 2: Nineteenth century religious translations in SA Indigenous languages**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Language</th>
<th>Translation</th>
<th>By Whom</th>
<th>Publication</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1840</td>
<td>Kaurna</td>
<td>Ten Commandments</td>
<td>C.G. Teichelmann &amp; C.W. Schürmann</td>
<td><em>The Register</em>, Adelaide, May 1840</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1839–1843</td>
<td>Kaurna</td>
<td>6 German Hymns</td>
<td>2 by C.W. Schürmann 4 by C.G. Teichelmann</td>
<td>Included in a letter sent to Germany by S. Klose 1843.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Possibly Ngaiawang Lord’s Prayer</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| 1864 | Yaraldi (Ngarrindjeri) | Bible extracts | G. Taplin | *Tungarar Jehovald*: *Yarildewallin*: 
| 1864 | Yaraldi (Ngarrindjeri) | Lessons, hymns and prayers | G. Taplin | Aborigines’ Friends Association, Adelaide. |
I could have saved you linguists a lot of time and trouble

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Language</th>
<th>Translation</th>
<th>By Whom</th>
<th>Publication</th>
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</table>

### Appendix 3. Verb classes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Kaurna 1840</th>
<th>Kaurna 1857</th>
<th>Ramindjeri 1843</th>
<th>Barngarla 1844</th>
<th>Ngaiaawang 1846</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>neuter, intransitive</td>
<td>neuter, intransitive</td>
<td>neuter, intransitive</td>
<td>simple verb: neuter</td>
<td>‘neuter, intransitive, or those which describe the state or condition of a subject; or an action which has no effect on any external object’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>active, transitive</td>
<td>active, transitive</td>
<td>active, transitive</td>
<td>simple verb: active</td>
<td>‘Active or transitive, or those which describe an act which passes from an agent to some external object’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>causative and permissive</td>
<td>causative and permissive, formed by the active verb wappendi</td>
<td></td>
<td>causative</td>
<td>‘causative 1st, those which require personal effort to produce the effect on the object; or 2nd which cause an agent to produce the effect’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kaurna 1840</td>
<td>Kaurna 1857</td>
<td>Ramindjeri 1844</td>
<td>Barngarla 1844</td>
<td>Ngaiawang 1846</td>
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<td>inchoative</td>
<td>inchoative</td>
<td>inchoative,</td>
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<td>'which de-</td>
<td>verbs,</td>
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<td>note that a</td>
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<td>person or</td>
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<td>object is</td>
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<td>exist in a</td>
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<td>least, under</td>
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<td>condition, or</td>
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<td>'medial and rec-</td>
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<td>reflective and</td>
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<td>ending in</td>
<td>reciprocal,</td>
<td>iprocal conjuga-</td>
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<td>reciprocal</td>
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<td>-rendi</td>
<td>medial, pas-</td>
<td>tion, signify-</td>
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<td>sive verbs,</td>
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<td>verb has no</td>
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<td>any particu-</td>
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<td>reduplicative</td>
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<td>the verb</td>
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<td>verbs,</td>
<td>continuative</td>
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<td>continuative.</td>
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<td>formed by</td>
<td>'which denote</td>
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<td>going on'</td>
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<td>going on'</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Kaurna 1840</th>
<th>Kaurna 1857</th>
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<th>Barngarla 1844</th>
<th>Ngaiawang 1846</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

‘verba spontanea’

*biltendi*, to cut off;

*biltilaendi*, to fly off (as sparks) by itself

Verb+ *nturrutu*

[not glossed]

**Appendix 4: On verbal categories**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Kaurna 1840</th>
<th>Ramindjeri 1843</th>
<th>Barngarla 1844</th>
<th>Ngaiawang 1846</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

**Mood**

- **Subjunctive**
  - Subjunctive, for, that may
  - Subjunctive negative, for not, that may not

- **Imperative**
  - Imperative [‘root infinitive’]

- **Prohibitive**
  - Prohibitive

Under ‘Infinitive mood’ is given an ending denoting intention

- **Optative**
  - Optative as respects the speaker
  - Optative as respects the subject of the verb

- **Negative optative (preventative)**
- **Conditional, potential**

Optative as respects the speaker

Optative and imperative

Optative

Preventative or negative optative

Conditional
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Kaurna 1840</th>
<th>Ramindjeri 1843</th>
<th>Barngarla 1844</th>
<th>Ngaiawang 1846</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Infinitive mood</td>
<td>Infinitive</td>
<td>Infinitive</td>
<td>Infinitive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>see ‘intention’, and another ending denoting ‘what a person presupposed or believed to be the case’</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Indicative**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Tense</th>
<th>Present</th>
<th>Present and future</th>
<th>Present</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Preterite/Aorist</td>
<td>Preterite (remote time)</td>
<td>Imperfect or preterite ‘relates to past events’</td>
<td>Imperfect and perfect aorist—one form for neuter verbs, separate for active verbs</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Future</th>
<th>Future</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

**Aspect**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Perfect</th>
<th>Perfect</th>
<th>Perfect ‘when speaking of an action as completed’</th>
<th>Perfect aorist (active verbs) ‘struck, or have struck’</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Imperfect</td>
<td>handwritten notes: Pluperfect</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Participles**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>gerund (various forms) of active and neuter verb</th>
<th>past participle</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>possible passive participle</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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