

Taking to the airwaves

A strategy for language revival

Rob Amery

University of Adelaide and Kurna Warra Pintyandi

rob.amery@adelaide.edu.au

Abstract. The re-introduction of an Indigenous language into an English-speaking community presents an enormous challenge. School programs, workshops and songwriting projects have typically been the starting point for language reclamation with small numbers of participants involved. Increasingly, reclaimed languages are being used in public to give speeches of “Welcome to Country” or by choirs in the singing of songs. At the same time, reclaimed languages are appearing in signage and works of art. However, the opportunity to hear reclaimed languages spoken is rare. Radio and associated podcasts and downloads offer a means of reaching a wider audience. This paper will discuss a project to develop and broadcast two-hour-long radio programs in and about the Kurna language, the original language of the Adelaide Plains, which is being reclaimed on the basis of 19th century written records (see Amery, 2000). Strategies have been developed to engage with an English-speaking audience in a way that makes the Kurna language interesting and accessible. This may serve as a model for other languages in similar situations to follow.

Keywords. Kurna, language revival, radio, media, code-switching

1. Introduction¹

Indigenous peoples in many different parts of the world have produced their own radio and television programs, and set up their own media organisations and radio and television stations. Not surprisingly, they have broadcast programs in Indigenous languages to inform and to entertain in the first language of communities of listeners. Perhaps less well-known is the fact that many programs have been produced and many radio and television stations have been established for the prime purpose of maintaining, promoting and reviving languages. In some cases funding has been allocated specifically to support language revival by means of radio and television.

1.1 Radio and television for maintaining, promoting and reviving Indigenous languages

Raidió na Gaeltachta, broadcasting in Irish, was established in 1972, explicitly to “support revival of the language” (Cotter, 2001:305). Cotter goes on to claim that it was “the only station in the world broadcasting to ethnic minorities at the time”. This claim is somewhat overstated, as broadcasting in Māori language dates back to the 1930s and a 15-minute weekly news bulletin in Māori was aired during World War II on the activities of the Māori battalion. However, it is true that it was not until 1978 that Te Reo O Aotearoa, Radio New Zealand’s Māori and Pacific Islands’ Broadcasting Unit was established (te Ua, n.d.).

Māori radio and television are quite explicit in their primary purpose being to revitalise the Māori language. The Māori TV Homepage begins:

The Māori language is the cornerstone of Māori culture. It provides a platform for Māori cultural development and supports a unique New Zealand identity within a global society. It is a *taonga* (treasure), at the

¹ Thanks to participants in the Kaurua radio shows: Jack Kanya Buckskin, Jamie Ngungana Goldsmith, Stave Gadlabarti Goldsmith, Kauwanu Lewis O’Brien, Katrina Karlapina Power, Taylor Power-Smith and Ngarrpadla Alitya Rigney for the use of their material. Thanks also to Christine Brown, producer of the *Kaurua Warra Ngayirda Wingkurila* “Kaurua language on the airwaves” radio shows. Work underpinning this paper has been supported through the Indigenous Languages Support (ILS) program funded through the Office of the Arts, Department of Regional Australia, Local Government, Arts & Sport. I thank the two anonymous reviewers for their helpful comments.

very heart of Māori culture and identity, and for that reason alone it must be preserved and fostered.

New Zealand's national indigenous broadcaster, Māori Television, has been established as one of a number of important initiatives to promote and revitalise the Māori language. The aim of our channel is to play a major role in revitalising language and culture that is the birthright of every Māori and the heritage of every New Zealander.²

In 1993 the New Zealand government established Te Māngai Pāho under the Broadcasting Amendment Act to allocate funds specifically to promote radio and television broadcasts in Māori. According to the Statement of Intent 2011–2016, the agency currently manages over \$52 million³ in funding contracts (Te Māngai Pāho, 2011:7) with 21 *imi* (tribal) radio stations to deliver eight hours of Māori language content each day; the Māori Television Service for in-house productions; and independent Māori language productions for radio, television and music CDs.⁴

Hoopa Valley Radio was reportedly established in 1980 with the express aim of promoting the Hupa language. Joseph Orozco, Station Manager and founder of KIDE 91.3 FM broadcasting in the Hoopa Valley in northern California said: “we started looking into it as part of the Hoopa Tribal Education committee, as a way to promote the Hupa language” (Walters, 2005:1). A weekly program was broadcast including bingo games, Hoopa cultural history and reviews and previews of vocabulary in the community language class (Bennett, 2003:66).

Media has been used in various ways within language revival. In Israel radio was used to promote purist pronunciation norms for Israeli, including the alveolar trill /r/ and pharyngeal consonants which are not pronounced by most Israelis

² <http://www.maoritelevision.com/Default.aspx?tabid=227>.

³ This compares with funding allocated by the Commonwealth Government of Australia in the last round of grants of \$15.4 million to the Indigenous Broadcasting Program (IBP), \$15.2 million to National Indigenous Television (NITV), \$3.3 million to the Indigenous Remote Radio Replacement Program (IRRRP) and \$9.6 million to the Indigenous Languages Support (ILS) program, from which the Kurna radio shows are funded. However, much of the funding to support Indigenous broadcasting in Australia supports programs produced in English, whilst only a small fraction of ILS funds are allocated to the production of radio and television in Indigenous languages (<http://www.arts.gov.au/indigenous>; <http://www.dbcde.gov.au/radio/indigenous>)

⁴ <http://www.tmp.govt.nz/about.html>

(Ghil'ad Zuckermann, pers. comm., June 2012) and to promote neologisms (see Zuckermann, 2003:85; 2008:146). Israeli was already well-established before the introduction of radio and television, so it was not necessary to use radio and television to give exposure to the language *per se*.

Though there is no established standard Navajo, radio broadcasts have promoted conservative prestige forms of the language and, as a result, have been criticised for being unappealing to youth (Peterson, 1997:216).

By contrast, in the Māori case the main thrust has been to increase exposure to the Māori language by presenting a full range of high quality programming from sports coverage, news, soap operas, fitness shows, game shows, children's programs etc. in direct competition with mainstream radio and TV (personal observations, 2009). This is in addition of course to programming with Māori-specific cultural content. Shows, such as *Haa*, described as “a high-energy info-tainment magazine programme for young teenagers brought to you by our funky presenters Poutama Paki and Te Uira Paki”⁵ are designed specifically for youth. The government funding body provides the following rationale for their support of broadcasting:

One way to strengthen te reo Māori and tikanga Māori is by enabling it to be seen and heard in more homes and places in New Zealand. Radio and television broadcasting, and increasingly the Internet, provide cost effective ways of taking te reo Māori to all New Zealanders. (Te Māngai Pāho, 2011:23)

The Irish language movement used broadcast media to build up an archive of recordings of interviews, stories, and traditional music and to expand the vocabulary to accommodate contemporary topics such as AIDS and technological advances (Cotter, 2001:305).

The use of radio programs in the language classroom increases the amount and quality of language used by students. Radio programs “generate an increase in

⁵ <http://nz.entertainment.yahoo.com/tv-guide/search/Haa/>

language and promote the use of quality language in propelling students to be aware of an audience of listeners” (Bennett, 2003:60).

The Kaurna initiative described in this paper is miniscule by comparison with the use of media to support the revival of Hebrew, Māori, Hawai’ian, Navajo, Hupa, Irish, Manx and other minority languages of Europe. The Kaurna are a very small group and the Kaurna language is in a much more compromised state by comparison with the aforementioned languages which, with the exception of Manx, all have numbers of native speakers remaining. Even Manx has numbers of fluent speakers, some of whom were learning Manx before Ned Madrell, the “last” native speaker died in 1974. A new generation of first language Manx speakers is now emerging from Manx homes aided by the Bunscoil Ghaelgagh language immersion school in the town of St Johns on the Isle of Man (personal observations and conversations with Adrian Cain, Manx Language Officer, Isle of Man Nov. 2010). However, the Kaurna case is interesting because it illustrates some novel strategies for working with a severely attenuated language, known only from historical sources, that is associated with a small disenfranchised minority living in a large urban city.

1.2 Radio and television in Aboriginal Australia

Radio has been a part of the Aboriginal languages landscape, since not long after the first Aboriginal broadcasts in Adelaide and Townsville in 1972. The Central Australian Aboriginal Media Association (CAAMA) was established in Alice Springs in 1980 and began broadcasting in local Central Australian languages. Yolngu Radio, operating out of Nhulunbuy, is an effective medium of communication broadcasting to communities throughout northeast Arnhemland, Darwin and beyond via the Internet⁶. *Nganampa Wangka*, hosted by Karina Lester from the Mobile Language Team at the University of Adelaide, has been broadcast on a weekly basis through Radio Adelaide 5UV since 2010 and has included an on-air Yankunytjatjara lesson between Karina and her daughter Jesse. In mid-2011 Paper Tracker went on the air at Radio Adelaide in a weekly show hosted by Rose Lester, Jonathan Nichols and Peter McDonald. This show is

⁶ See www.ards.com.au/radio.htm.

broadcast in Yankunytjatjara and English “making it easier for Anangu to understand what governments are saying and doing in their communities”⁷.

TV has also been introduced to Aboriginal communities since the establishment of the Warlpiri Media Association in 1985⁸ and EVTV (which subsequently became PY Media) at Ernabella around the same time. These were preceded by local video productions since 1979. The Broadcasting in Remote Aboriginal Communities Scheme (BRACS) was established in 1987, enabling remote Aboriginal communities to broadcast their own local television productions within their own communities. By 2008 there were 29 BRACS units operating in the Northern Territory⁹.

Certainly media has an important role to play in maintaining Aboriginal languages. Almost invariably it has been the stronger, more viable languages that have appeared in the media. One exception to this is *Waabiny Time*, a thirteen-episode TV series launched on the 5 April 2011 in Perth. This show introduces Nyungar language to young children. There are also developments afoot to produce Nyungar radio programs with language capsules and lessons currently being recorded ready for broadcast in 2012. One hundred 30–40 sec. capsules are planned. These will be assembled into language lessons with sentences, statements and possibly a conversation¹⁰. Nyungar is a language undergoing revival, but it is in a very different state to Kurna, the topic of this paper. Much more of the Nyungar language is still remembered within the community, has a higher level of diversity of language forms, and Nyungar people are spread across a wider area, though like Kurna, this includes a major capital city, Perth.

Another exception is Gary Williams’ Gumbaynggir language learning segment in a breakfast show each Wednesday morning. He teaches a series of useful phrases and expressions through conversation with radio presenter Fiona Poole, including

⁷ http://www.papertracker.com.au/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=269&Itemid=88

⁸ See <http://www.pawmedia.com.au/about-us/history>.

⁹ Refer to the Indigenous Community Television Limited webpages for a brief history (<http://www.ictv.net.au/10-the-ictv-history.html> accessed 24/11/2011).

¹⁰ e-mail Wayne Bynder, Station Manager, Noongar Radio, 17 Nov. 2011.

a good laugh over “See you later alligator” (which Williams encodes as “toothy type”)¹¹.

A case most similar to Kurna is that of Awabakal, from the Lake Macquarie and Newcastle area of New South Wales. In the mid-1980s, Perce Haslam, Convocation Research Fellow at the University of Newcastle, broadcast weekly language lessons in a program called *Awabakal Voices* on Newcastle community radio station 2NURFM,¹² prior to his untimely death in 1987.

The Kurna language has featured on television only in a minimal way to date with a song performed by Ngarrpadla Alitya Rigney on *The Bookplace* program on Channel 7 in 1992 (Amery, 2000:188) and Jack Kanya Buckskin appearing in a Reconciliation Week promo on Channel 10 in May 2009. The Kurna Warra Ngayirda Wingkurila radio shows described here are exploring new territory, not only for Kurna but for “sleeping” languages undergoing revival in general.

1.3 Kurna language revival

Like many other Aboriginal languages, Kurna is an awakening language. Being the language of the Adelaide Plains, it was the first South Australian language to bear the brunt of colonisation and declined exceedingly fast. It was probably last spoken on an everyday basis in the early 1860s, less than 30 years after colonisation in 1836. Fortunately, Kurna was reasonably well documented by German missionaries and others when it was still a vibrant language in the mid-19th century.

The revival of the Kurna language began in 1989-1990, in the wake of previous work on Ngarrindjeri and Narungga (see Amery, 2000). Kurna language reclamation efforts commenced with the writing and recording of Kurna songs (Ngarrindjeri, Narrunga and Kurna Languages Project, 1990). The following year in a workshop specifically for early childhood education workers, we translated various nursery rhymes including *Hickory Dickory Dock*, *Baa Baa Black Sheep*, *Twinkle Twinkle Little Star*, *A Sailor Went to Sea* and *Open Shut Them*. These were

¹¹ The mp3 files are downloadable from the web at <http://www.abc.net.au/local/stories/2010/07/02/2943206.htm>

¹² See <http://www.newcastle.edu.au/school/hss/research/publications/awaba/people/percy-haslam.html>

subsequently recorded and eventually published in *Kaurna Paltinna – A Kaurna Songbook* (Schultz *et al.*, 1999). Songs are a great stand-alone resource for learning and re-introducing a language.

Kaurna was introduced as a subject to Kaurna Plains School in 1992 and has been taught there ever since. It has been introduced to a number of other schools at kindergarten, primary and secondary levels and in adult programs through the School of Languages. The School of Languages¹³ is an initiative of the Department of Education and Child Development (DECD) to provide a range of languages, including minority languages such as Dinka, in after hours programs to increase accessibility of languages education. Indigenous languages programs (Pitjantjatjara and Kaurna) are open to community members as well as students enrolled within the South Australian Certificate of Education (SACE).

From a position of total obscurity some 30 years ago, the Kaurna language has now gained a significant public profile. It is being used to name places, buildings, organisations, programs, people, pets and other entities (including a tram, a solar bus, a wheat variety, a frost chamber, a range of chocolates, an allele¹⁴ and an emergency beacon). One of the main functions of the language today is in the giving of “Welcome to Country” and “Recognition of Country” speeches. Examples of these can be found on the Kaurna Warra Pintyandi (KWP) webpages¹⁵, Adelaide City Council website and elsewhere. Apart from speeches of “Welcome to Kaurna Country” at many public events (including high profile events such as the Festival of Adelaide) and the use made of Kaurna language by three Kaurna cultural performance troupes (*Paitya* “deadly”, *Taikurtinna* “family” and *Kuma Kaaru* “one blood”), there are few opportunities to hear the Kaurna language spoken. And there are probably more opportunities for the most proficient Kaurna users to write Kaurna than to speak it thanks to e-mail and SMS messaging.

To support the learning of Kaurna, various audio resources have been produced to accompany other language resources. Songs were originally made available on a cassette tape to accompany the first songbook (Ngarrindjeri, Narrunga & Kaurna

¹³ See <http://www.schooloflanguages.sa.edu.au/>.

¹⁴ Alleles are alternative forms of a gene located at identical loci of homologous chromosomes.

¹⁵ See www.adelaide.edu.au/kwp.

Songs, 1990). With advances in technology, for the next project Kaurna songs were produced on a CD (Schultz *et al.*, 1999). A PowerPoint show with embedded sound files was also included on a CD with the Kaurna Alphabet Book (Watkins & Gale, 2006) and a CD of audio recordings with the Kaurna Funeral Protocols book (Amery & Rigney, 2006). The audio resource contains hymns plus prayers, liturgy and salient vocabulary as it appears in the accompanying book. Similarly for the forthcoming Kaurna Learner's Guide (Amery *et al.*, forthcoming) a series of 16 PowerPoints with embedded sound files have been prepared.

In 2007, a Kaurna Placenames website was launched. A sound file for each Kaurna placename was recorded and posted on the web. For the last few years, whenever anyone makes a request for a Kaurna name or translation a sound file is recorded and e-mailed to the one making the request so they can listen to it, post it on their website or circulate it amongst their staff. These requests are being compiled in a database together with other Kaurna names and texts being used in the public domain and are being mapped on GoogleEarth in a similar fashion to the Kaurna placenames website (see Amery, 2010). Sound files are included in this database.

In 2011 KWP obtained Commonwealth funding to produce a Kaurna Dictionary and we intend to include a sound file with each and every dictionary entry. Some of this recording work has already been done. In 2008, James McElvenny and Aidan Wilson worked on a Kaurna phonology project at the direction of Jane Simpson, in consultation with myself and KWP. Jack Kanya Buckskin recorded a number of sound files for this project, though many are yet to be recorded. McElvenny and Wilson developed an application for mobile phones (McElvenny, 2008). So for some entries one can hear the associated sound file on the phone dictionary, as recorded by Buckskin, giving the recommended pronunciation of the word.

Despite all these sound resources that had been produced over the years, there is still little by way of recordings of everyday conversations or casual speech to listen to and there is little opportunity to hear Kaurna language spoken casually. At this stage in the development of the Kaurna language, it is vital that more of these kinds of resources are produced.

2. Kurna radio and download project

In 2010 we embarked on a project to record two-hour-long Kurna radio shows in order to begin to address the need for more conversational audio resources. Timing seemed to be right, with several young Kurna men and others willing to be involved. Workshops were held to devise the script.

2.1 Show #1: Kurna land, language and identity

Issues around land, language and identity became a central theme for the first radio show. The show explores early linguistic evidence for Kurna occupation of the Fleurieu Peninsula, south of Adelaide, presented in the context of a kitchen table chat between Kurna people of varying ages. Younger Kurna voices enquire about the extent of Kurna country. Their questions are answered through the recounting of stories by Kurna Elders about Sally and Harry, the source(s) of the earliest known Kurna wordlist recorded by Gaimard in 1826 and published in 1833 (see also Amery, 1998); the Kurna speakers contracted by Colonel Light at Rapid Bay in 1836 (Jacob, 1837; see also Amery, 1998); and of Kalloongoo, the source of Robinson's (n.d.) Kurna wordlist collected in 1837. Kalloongoo was abducted from the Yankalilla/Rapid Bay area in the early 1820s (Plomley, 1987:445-447; see also Amery, 1996).

The theme of Kurna placenames is also addressed in the first show. A number of placenames have always been in use across the Adelaide Plains and Fleurieu Peninsula. Prominent examples include Noarlunga, Aldinga, Yankalilla, Willunga, Onkaparinga, Myponga and Waitpinga. These are all names with which every Adelaidean can identify, though many listeners may never have thought about their Kurna origins or have any idea of their meanings. Another important subtheme was addressing the difference between a welcome or greeting to Kurna land, appropriately delivered by a Kurna person, and an acknowledgement of Kurna land which is deemed appropriate for a non-Kurna person to deliver in the Kurna language (see also Gale, 2012:34).

Framing the first show in this manner indicates a strong desire to educate members of the Kurna community and to raise awareness within the community at large about Kurna country and Kurna protocols. Few people in the Kurna community, let alone the community at large, have much knowledge of the

Kaurna language, so there was no point in producing radio shows that were 100% in the Kaurna language, even though this would be possible. Of course the production of an hour-long radio show entirely in Kaurna language would take much, much longer to produce, with additional rehearsal time required. Rather, we identified segments where the use of the Kaurna language was able to be introduced naturally and appropriately for an English-speaking audience.

We devised an introductory Kaurna language lesson with Jack Kanya Buckskin as the teacher, as he is in real life. We tried to re-create the atmosphere of a real-life Kaurna language class beginning with the Kaurna Plains School song sung in Kaurna by students from the school. Jack calls the class to order and then interacts with students in the class teaching them greetings and expressions for where the students are from and where they are living. This entire segment is initially in Kaurna and only Kaurna. After a first run through, Jack goes through the lesson for a second time with short segments replayed from the original lesson followed by Jack's explanations of what people said. Here is the script of the second run-through with explanations:

JB Now let's go through it again, looking at some of the phrases and expressions we just heard.

JB *Niina marni? Kauwanu?*

LO'B *Marni'ai.*

JB *Niina marni* is a greeting "are you good?". And I addressed Uncle Lewis as Kauwanu, "Uncle". He replied *Marni'ai* "I'm good". Another way of saying this would be *Ngai marni*, but with *Marni'ai*, a short form of *ngai* "I" is tacked on to the end of *marni* "good". Then I ask Steve the same thing, but this time I address him as ***Yunga*** "older brother".

JB ***Niina marni? Yunga?***

S ***Nii! Marni.***

JB And he answers ***Nii! Marni*** "yes, good". I ask other students in turn, addressing them with the appropriate kin term that expresses the relationship I have with each. And they respond in various ways; ***Yaku***

marni “not good” etc. Then I started asking students for their names, starting with Katrina, my *Yakana* “older sister”:

JB *Ngana niina nari?* (fast) *Yakana?*

KP *Muinmu wangka!*

JB And she replied *Muinmu wangka!* “say again”. So I repeated it and gave her the example *Ngai nari Jack Kanya Buckskin*, “my name is Jack Kanya Buckskin”. Then she caught on:

KP *Ku! Ngai nari Katrina Karlapina Kartanya.*

JB Which means “OK. My name is *Katrina Karlapina* (inclined to fire) *Kartanya* (first born and female). I asked the others in turn for their names. Then I asked students where they were from:

JB *Wathangku niina? Kauwanu?*

L.O’B *Ngaintya?*

JB *Wathangku niina? Ngai Wamanangku. Wathangku niina?*

L.O’B *Ngai Yartapuulti-anangku.*

JB I just asked Uncle Lewis where he was from and he pretended to not understand saying *Ngaintya?* “What?” So I asked him again and gave him the example *Ngai Wamanangku* “I come from *Womma* (which means “plain”)”. Then he said *Ngai Yartapuultinangku* “I’m from Port Adelaide”. *Yartapuulti* is the Kurna name for Port Adelaide. It means “land of sleep or death”.

I asked the others where they were from. Steve said he was from the Adelaide Plains (*Wama Tarntanyanangku*) so I asked him where he lived. (*Waa niina tikanthi?*) and he replied *Kauwantila* which means “at Cowandilla”. It also means “in the north”. *Kauwanta* is the Kurna word for “north”.

So that’s basically what the lesson was about: greetings, what’s your name?, where are you from? With a few other very useful words like *Pidna* “hang on!” *Muinmu wangka!* “say it again” *Warrarti!* “be quiet!” etc., thrown in.

We also scripted banter and jokes between Jack Buckskin and his mate Jamie Goldsmith. The script for this banter was devised in a workshop in which Buckskin and Goldsmith participated. It mirrors to some extent the ways in which they do actually use Kaurna amongst themselves. To make this banter and joking intelligible to the listening audience we scripted Buckskin talking in Kaurna with Katrina Power and later Kauwanu Lewis O’Brien, with Goldsmith in the scenario having some knowledge of Kaurna, enough to partially understand and misunderstand what is said. His lack of knowledge and understanding leads him to seek clarification in English. This forces Buckskin to explain to Goldsmith in English about the double meanings in some Kaurna expressions. Consider this segment of the script:

JB ***Madlala!Madlala! Waa Madlala?***

K ***Yuritina pa!***

JG What? You saying he’s got no ears?

JB Yeh, ***yuritina*** literally means “no ears” but it also means “deaf”.

JG What?

JB ***Yuritina*** does mean “no ears” but it also means “deaf”.

[Pappa comes in.]

L ***Madlantarla***, you’re finally here.

JB ***Nii! Niina marni?***

JG What? You saying he’s fat?

JB Well, ***marni*** means “fat”, but it also means “good”. It’s our greeting.
Niina marni? ‘Are you good?’

JG What did you just call us?

L ***Madlantarla***.

JG What’s that? Our name?

L No! That’s your relationship. You are my ***madlanta***, my son’s son. I’m your ***madlala***, your father’s father.

Consider the following excerpt where Goldsmith and Buckskin are discussing the validity of learning Kaurna, where they are willing to have a laugh at themselves.

This time Taylor Power-Smith plays the role of being able to partially follow the conversation but responding in English. Code-switching is used as a deliberate strategy in the script to make the conversation intelligible to an English-speaking audience. In this conversation Goldsmith and Buckskin are making a joke at the expense of non-Aboriginal people, but are also laughing at themselves at the same time. The translation of the Kurna appears in brackets following the utterance. This Kurna translation is not broadcast, though it will appear in print in the language learning resources to accompany the recordings:

JB ***Pinti miyurna wangkanthi “Kurna warra tirkkanthi yama. Kurna warra mapa warra. Pinti miyurnarlul Kurna Warra pintyathi. Nganaitya kuma Warra yaku tirkkanthi?***

(These white fullas say that re-learning Kurna language is a waste of time. That it’s a fabricated language. Why not learn another language?)

T What? Those whitefellas are saying that re-learning Kurna is stupid? That Kurna’s a rubbish language? and that whitefullas created it. Why should we learn a foreign language?

JG ***Nii! Kuk’ai. Parna pardirna manta wangkanthi. Parna yailtyanthi purrutyi pulyuna miyurna namutanaintyanthi. Parna purrutyi ngathaitya namutanaintyanthi. Tiyati?***

(Yeh! I am sick of these white maggots talking crap they think all blackfellas are the same. They [whitefellas] all look the same to me anyway!)

T Yeh! Those white fellas are talking crap. They all look the same to me too.

JB ***Wai! Ninthu pinti miyurna muiyu kapanthi.***

(Hey you’re racist)

JG ***Ngai pintimiyurnapina. Ngathu pinti miyurla ngaityu wardlingka.***

(I am not racist. I had two whitefellas in my house.)

T What? Just because you had two whitefellas in your house, doesn’t mean you’re not racist.

JB ***Purla tulyarla. Purla piipa kaitya.***

(Those two were police. They had a search warrant.)

T Yeh. You had no choice. They had a search warrant.

JG ***Puru ngaityu wardli!***

(But it's still my house!)

T Oh, you two are stupid. [Laughter.]

2.2 Show #2: Intergenerational transmission

The second radio show proceeded with a similar format: introductions in Kaurna, conversations in Kaurna made accessible by means of code-switching into English, interviews, a language learning segment interspersed with Kaurna songs and announcements.

For the second show the theme of intergenerational transmission came to the fore. Back in 2000 we held a workshop to devise Kaurna expressions for talking with babies and young children. We workshopped and developed a range of expressions for interacting with young children in a range of situations and for a range of purposes (see Amery & Gale, 2000). However no sound recordings were made at that time. The theme of intergenerational transmission was continued for one of the chapters in the learner's guide (Amery & Simpson with KWP, 2007). This time a PowerPoint presentation with embedded sound files was produced. This PowerPoint show contains a range of useful expressions (there are 92 embedded sound files in all), but there are no conversations. It is this gap that we are trying to address through the radio show.

There are now a number of young Kaurna parents who are giving their children Kaurna names and attempting to use Kaurna language with their children. In August-September 2010 when we began working on the radio shows Katrina Power persuaded her daughter, Taylor Power-Smith to get involved. At the time, Taylor had a young baby daughter, Tiyana-Kaye, so it was a perfect opportunity to feature conversation in Kaurna across three generations. For the *Ngartu-ityangka Wangkanthi* "talking with babies" segment, a conversation was scripted for Taylor, Katrina and Ngarrpadla Alitya (see §1.2) interacting with Taylor's baby Tiyana-Kaye. Here it was possible to naturally introduce a range of very useful expressions for talking with babies. Consider the following:

- A ***Munara parni katinthu! Munara Taapathu!***
 (Give her here before she goes. I want a kiss first.)
- K ***Munara martathu!***
 (And I want a cuddle first.)
- T Give her a kiss then.
- A ***Ngathu niina mutatha, miitungartu.***
 (I could eat you up, sleepyhead.)
- T You're not eating my little sleepyhead.
- A ***Miitu wanti! Ngathu niina muiyu mankunthi.***
 (Go to sleep. I love you.)
- T Yeh! Goodnight Nanna. We love you too.
- [Chatter.]
- K ***Nauwi pikirna?***
 (How many months?)
- T ***Yarapura.*** She's 4 months now.
- K ***Puru ngamingka? Mai mutanthi?***
 (Is she still on the titty? Is she eating vegetables?)
- T Yeh, I'm still feeding her, but she's started solids.
- A ***Tiya pudni?***
 ([Have her] teeth come through yet?)
- T Not yet. But we've got Bonjela on hand.
- K Yeh! Watch out when her teeth do come through.
- A ***Arturtu! Pinyatalya!***
 (Baby [babytalk]! Dear sweetie!)

Recordings were also made of other young Kurna parents interacting with their children. These include Jack Kanya Buckskin and his young daughter Mahleah (Kudlyu Kartanya), Jamie Ngungana Goldsmith and his children, and others.

The “talking with babies” segment was further reinforced with interviews with a number of Kurna parents and grandmothers on the topic of raising their children speaking in Kurna, and the importance of intergenerational

transmission. The language learning segment stressed the use of birth-order names, kinship relationships and naming practices in Kaurna. In this way it was able to follow on naturally from the language learning segment in the previous show, whilst at the same time complement the other segments on intergenerational transmission and talking with babies. Consider the following short segment taken from when Jack Kanya Buckskin unpacks the lesson he has just introduced:

JB Then I asked Katrina about her relationship to Taylor and her daughter Tiyana-Kaye:

JB ***Karlapina. Ngaintya Taylor ninku?*** Karlapina. What is Taylor to you?

JB She replied:

KP ***Pa ngaityu tukuparrka.*** She's my daughter. ***Padlu ngayi ngaityayi tarrkanthi.*** She calls me ***ngaityayi.***

JB ***Waamina Tiyana-Kaye?*** What about Tiyana-Kaye?

JB Katrina replied:

KP ***Pa ngaityu kamilya.*** She's my granddaughter. ***Pa ngaityu tukuparrkaku tukuparrka.*** She's my daughter's daughter. ***Tiyana Kayerlu ngai kamami tarrkanthi.*** Tiyana Kaye calls me ***kamami.*** ***Taylor ngaityayi tarrkanthi.*** Taylor calls me ***ngaityayi***

JB After that I asked Katrina why she was called Karlapina:

JB ***Karlapina. Nganaitya niina Karlapina tarrkanthi?***

JB And she replied:

KP ***Ngai karla muyu mankunthi.*** I love the fire. ***Tudnu karlampi.*** I always want fire.

2.3 Aims and outcomes

As mentioned earlier, the main motivation in producing Kurna radio shows has been to make available audio resources of conversational Kurna to a wide audience. The intended audience is first and foremost members of the Kurna community, but we also have within our sights the broader Adelaide population—anyone living in Kurna country. As a result, a major secondary concern has been to raise awareness in the population at large of the existence of the Kurna language and its relationship to the people of the Adelaide Plains (who do still exist!) and the land upon which Adelaide became established. The first show therefore delves into history and placenames in the hope of connecting with the audience and the little knowledge they may possess, unbeknown to most, of the Kurna language.

The language learning segments assume no prior knowledge whatsoever. Listeners are exposed to useful expressions and together with accompanying notes and downloads, are exposed to the writing system and spelling conventions. The downloads and booklet are intended as a resource for Kurna teaching programs in schools and elsewhere. Likewise, the Gumbaynggir breakfast show presented by Gary Williams and the Noongah language capsules similarly introduce useful expressions in a context which assumes no prior knowledge. Manx Radio airs similar introductory lessons. No doubt there are similar language learning segments aired in numerous minority languages being revived throughout the world.

Whilst propagating a standard form of a language is often a primary concern for broadcasting revived languages (e.g. Hebrew), presenting a good model of pronunciation of Kurna words is a secondary concern after making the language more readily available. At this stage in the development of the Kurna language, pronunciation is not always perfect. At times, r-sounds should be rolled when they are not, stress may not always be placed on the first syllable as it should etc. Whilst we strive to present a good model of pronunciation, being overly obsessive and overbearing about it at this stage can interfere with fluency and interrupt the flow and engagement with the material. And it is especially difficult to correct pronunciations in the middle of an interview or monologue that is primarily in English. However, we have, I believe, produced a version of the Kurna language

which is very close to what it should be and at this point in time, does serve as a model and a point of reference for correct pronunciation. We have also taken some pains to present the original forms of Kurna placenames which in some cases are very different to the forms that were adopted into English in the nineteenth century. Take for example Ngangkiparingga vs Onkaparinga, Ngaltingga vs Aldinga or Maitpangga vs Myponga.

In designing the Kurna radio shows we appeal to all age groups. The shows themselves involve Kurna Elders, middle-aged people, youth, children and even babies. Unlike Navajo radio, as reported by Peterson (1997:216), segments were created that talk directly to youth in ways in which they regularly communicate with each other (somewhat similar to the *Haa* program, referred to earlier, broadcast on Māori TV). A range of different song styles are incorporated, including songs sung by children at Kurna Plains School, recreated “traditional”-style music (*Ngadluoko Palti*) and songs about place (*Karrawirraparri* River Torrens).

The process of producing the Kurna radio shows in and of itself serves to increase knowledge of and proficiency in the Kurna language. It creates one of the few contexts for use of Kurna in conversation by bringing some of the most fluent Kurna speakers together. An unintended and unanticipated positive outcome was the recruitment of a young Kurna woman and mother, Taylor Power-Smith, to the Kurna language movement. As Taylor says :

I first got involved when I was tricked into being part of the Kurna radio shows. I was told I would be needed for a few hours and that was it. I quickly learned that it was a much bigger project than mum explained! [...] After the radio shows, I started doing part-time work for KWP, working with Rob and I love it! Each day I am slowly learning more but I have a long way to go. [...] To hear the language being spoken and to read it is just so cool! I want to learn Language, I want to teach Language, I want my daughter to grow up familiar, if not speaking Kurna. I want to give other kids the chance to understand and speak their own language. (Taylor Power-Smith in Amery & Simpson, forthcoming: xxviii).

3. Conclusion

Radio is a valuable and important medium whereby a “sleeping”/“awakening” or “reclaimed” language can be introduced to an English-speaking audience. Radio has the potential to reach a wide audience, and is especially useful, as in the case of Kurna, where people and learners are dispersed across a wide area and have few opportunities to hear the language spoken. Podcasting via the Internet serves to further increase availability. When accompanied by a CD and print and Internet-based resources, this will further enhance its utility to support programs in schools and elsewhere, and serious learners of Kurna at home.

One of the main innovations in the design of the Kurna radio shows is the use of code-switching with English as a deliberate strategy to engage with an English-speaking audience, in contrast to the Navajo case where English borrowing and code-switching is an unintended and perhaps unwanted consequence of speaking Navajo within the medium of radio. The Kurna shows have also deliberately exploited ambiguity in the Kurna language to create humour and, as a result, make words and expressions and their meanings memorable.

The radio shows have also been an attractive medium through which to directly engage Kurna youth in the Kurna language movement. Being an oral-aural medium which does not depend on literacy skills, some members of the community who have had limited education opportunities are more willing to engage with this medium. Certainly, radio taps into an entirely different set of skills to those needed in the classroom or language workshop.

With more than 130 Aboriginal radio stations around the nation, including a number in urban areas and “settled” Australia, combined with the ready availability of the web, radio offers a powerful medium for increasing public exposure of languages under revival right across the country. KWP has just received additional Commonwealth funding to continue producing Kurna radio and Youtube clips over the next triennium.

References

- Amery R 1996 'Kaurna in Tasmania: a case of mistaken identity' *Aboriginal History* 20:24-50.
- 1998 'Sally and Harry: Insights into early Kaurna contact history' in J Simpson & L Hercus (eds) *History in Portraits: Biographies of Nineteenth Century South Australian Aboriginal People* Canberra: Aboriginal History monograph. Pp. 49-87.
- 2000 *Warrabarna Kaurna! Reclaiming an Australian Language* Lisse: Swets & Zeitlinger.
- 2010 'Monitoring the use of Kaurna, the Language of the Adelaide Plains' in J Hobson, K Lowe, S Poetsch & M Walsh (eds) *Re-awakening Languages: Theory and Practice in the Revitalization of Australia's Indigenous Languages* Sydney: Sydney University Press. Pp. 56-66.
- & A Rigney with N Varcoe, C Schultz and Kaurna Warra Pintyandi 2006 *Kaurna Palti Wonga – Kaurna Funeral Protocols* (book, CD & sympathy cards) Adelaide: Kaurna Warra Pintyandi.
- & J Simpson with T Wanganeen, V Buckskin, J Goldsmith & Kaurna Warra Pintyandi 2007 *Kulluru Marni Ngattaitya – Sounds Good to Me. A Kaurna Learner's Guide. Draft Prototype Version* (book, CD of PowerPoint presentations with embedded sound files) Adelaide: Kaurna Warra Pintyandi.
- & J Simpson with T Wanganeen, V Buckskin, J Goldsmith & Kaurna Warra Pintyandi forthcoming *Kulluru Marni Ngattaitya – Sounds Good to Me. A Kaurna Learner's Guide* (book, CD of PowerPoint presentations with embedded sound files) Kent Town: Wakefield Press.
- Bennett R 2003 'Saving a language with computers, tape recorders, and radio' in J Reyhner, O Trujillo, RL Carrasco & L Lockard (eds) *Nurturing Native Languages* Flagstaff: Northern Arizona University. Pp. 59-77.
- Cotter C 2001 'Continuity and vitality: Expanding domains through Irish-language radio' in L Hinton & K Hale (eds) *The Green Book of Language Revitalization in Practice* San Diego: Academic Press. Pp. 301-311.
- Gaimard M 1833 'Vocabulaire de la langue des habitants du Golfe Saint-Vincent' in MJ Dumont D'Urville *Voyage de découvertes de L'Astrolabe 1826-1827-1828-1829: Philologie* Paris: Ministère de la marine.
- Gale M 2012 *Summary*. TAFE Certificate III Learning an Endangered Aboriginal Language. Kaurna language. University of Adelaide 10–14 April & 25 April 2012.
- Jacob W 1837 Journal entry of 17th January 1837 Unpublished manuscript Adelaide: Mortlock Library. Referred to in Amery (1998).
- McElvenny J 2008 Mobile phone dictionaries, blogpost, Endangered Languages and Cultures blog, posted 17 July 2008. <http://www.paradisec.org.au/blog/2008/07/mobile-phone-dictionaries/>
- Ngarrindjeri, Narrunga and Kaurna Languages Project 1990 *Narrunga, Kaurna & Ngarrindjeri Songs (Songbook and tape)* Collaborative production by K Gale, J Agius, R Amery, C Schultz, L Newton, NG Varcoe & C Crothers.
- Ninno A 1999 Radios in the classroom: Curriculum integration and communication skills. Report # EDO-IR-99-03. Access #ED 426693. Washington, DC: ERCI Digest. Pp. 1-4.
- Peterson LC 1997 'Tuning in to Navajo: The role of radio in native language maintenance' in J Reyner (ed) *Teaching Indigenous Languages* Flagstaff: Centre for Excellence in Education. Pp. 214-221.

- Plomley NJB 1987 *Weep in Silence: A History of the Flinders Island Aboriginal Settlement* Hobart: Blubber Head Press.
- Robinson GA n.d. Papers held in Mitchell Library, Sydney. A7085(6). Rpt. Amery (1996).
- Schultz C, NG Varcoe & R Amery 1999 *Kaurna Paltinna: A Kaurna Songbook* (with accompanying CD). Elizabeth: Kaurna Plains School. (Reprinted 2004.)
- Te Māngai Pāho, 2011 Te Māngai Pāho Statement of Intent 2011–2016 Tauākī Whakamaunga Atu. Te Māngai Pāho Māori Broadcasting Funding Agency. Download from <http://www.tmp.govt.nz/about.html>
- te Ua, HR n.d. A brief history of Māori radio broadcasting. <http://www.irirangi.net/rooputaotoko/history/whakaaro-ake.aspx>
- Walters H 2005 11 questions for Joseph Orozco *North Coast Journal* 15 Dec. 2005. <http://www.northcoastjournal.com/121505/QA1215.html>
- Watkins C & M Gale 2006 *Kaurna Alphabet Book with an Introduction to the Kaurna Language* (with accompanying CD Elizabeth: Kaurna Plains School.
- Zuckermann G 2003 *Language Contact and Lexical Enrichment in Israeli Hebrew* London-New York: Palgrave Macmillan.
- 2008 “Realistic prescriptivism”: The Academy of the Hebrew Language, its campaign of “good grammar” and Lexpionage, and native Israeli speakers’ *Israel Studies in Language and Society* 1(1):135-154.