1. INTRODUCTION

O'Grady (1971:779) began his landmark review of lexicography on Australian Aboriginal languages with the rueful observation that in terms of quantity "lexicographic output...has shown a falling off since the turn of the century". He further observed that if the term 'dictionary' were to be confined to compendia of 5,000-plus richly detailed lexical entries, then "the state of lexicographic research on Australian (and Tasmanian) languages...can be stated very simply: no such work yet exists". Even after lowering his sights to extend the term to reasonably sophisticated assemblages of 1,000-plus lexical entries, O'Grady could list no more than eight published dictionaries of Aboriginal languages.

In other words, as of 1968 (the final year considered in O'Grady's article) the vast bulk of lexicographic research done in the twentieth century remained unpublished. In his paper O'Grady sought to sketch the history of lexicographic research on Australian languages, to evaluate the principal contributions, and to highlight research opportunities in the hope of helping "break the stalemate" in the making and, especially, the publishing of Australian Aboriginal language dictionaries.

What then is the state of Australian Aboriginal language lexicography now, some twenty-five years later? How have changes in linguistic research techniques and in the sociopolitical landscape affected the making of dictionaries of Aboriginal languages? What are the prospects as the twentieth century draws to a close? In this paper, we will address these questions following, with some elaboration, the organization of O'Grady's original article: §2 will update the history of lexicographic research and publishing; §3 will evaluate aspects of the new works, considering orthographic issues, scope and organisation, and questions to do with definition; and §4 will briefly look to the future of lexicography on Australian Aboriginal languages.

We adopt the following terminology, which differs somewhat from that of O'Grady. By 'wordlist' we mean any list of Aboriginal language words with brief translation equivalents, often consisting of a single English word. Wordlists may be of any length, though most have fewer than 1,000 Aboriginal words. We reserve the term 'dictionary' for a compendium of 2,000 or more lexical entries which includes detailed semantic information (either as specified 'senses' or implicitly in the form of varied examples of usage), and information on

---

1 We would like to thank Peter Austin, Gavan Breen, Carolyn Coleman, Bob Dixon, Nicholas Evans, John Henderson, Robert Hooperstra, Mary Laughead, David Nash, Nick Reid, Julie Waddy, Anna Wierzbicka and David Wilkins for information and comments which helped improve an earlier version of this paper. The remaining errors are of course our own responsibility.

---

Dixon, R.M.W. and Barry J. Blake, eds Handbook of Australian languages, vol.3, 430–
525. Canberra: Australian National University Press.
Moore, George F., 1844, Diary of an early settler in Western Australia 1830–1841, and a vocabulary of the language of the Aborigines. Sydney: Sewyn.
O'Grady, Geoffrey N., 1979, Pama-Nyungan: *-j- and *-k-. In O'Grady and Tryon, eds 1980:79–103.
the derivational relationships between words. Once a certain threshold size is reached, in other words, the distinguishing characteristic of a dictionary, as we see it, is the sophistication of the information it contains. 2 Dictionaries, thus defined, usually also give at least basic grammatical information about individual words, along with facts about their dialectal affinities, pronunciation variants, etymology and cultural significance, and include illustrative phrases or sentences.

We use the expression ‘small dictionary’ as an intermediate category between wordlist and dictionary proper: that is, for assemblages of dictionary-standard, or near dictionary-standard, information on fewer than 2,000 lexical entries. Most small dictionaries have between 1,000 and 2,000 entries, but they may be smaller if they are for a specialised purpose, for example, for primary school use, or for a single domain such as botany.

One type of modern lexicographic compendium escapes the terminology laid out so far, namely, lexical files on computer. Due largely to the AIAS National Lexicography Project (Nash & Simpson 1989) there are many of these which, though unpublished, are in the public domain through having been deposited in the AIATSIS Aboriginal Studies Electronic Data Archive (ASEDA). 3 They will be referred to, in the current jargon, as ‘electronic data files’.

2. DEVELOPMENTS IN ABORIGINAL LANGUAGE LEXICOGRAPHY 1968–1993

Diverse purposes have motivated the production of Aboriginal dictionaries over the past twenty-five years, some quite different to those which animated earlier generations of Aboriginal language lexicographers. Since the nature of a dictionary is partly dictated by its purposes, it can be expected that recent dictionaries and wordlists differ considerably from their predecessors (as well as from each other). Before moving to these matters, it will be helpful to step back and take an overview of some factors which have brought changes in almost all the component aspects of Aboriginal language lexicography, including the kind of people doing it, their aims, their methods, and the sources of support available to them.

2.1 TRENDS AND INFLUENCES

One significant development has been the rise of linguistics as an academic discipline and its expansion in Australian universities. This is not the place to relate this history, but notable turning points would include the establishment of the first Department of Linguistics in 1965 at Monash University, and the arrival at the Australian National University in 1970 of R.M.W. (Bob) Dixon, who was to become a dynamic force in Australian linguistics. Most

---

2 Actually, it is no simple matter to index the size of a dictionary. Should one count the number of headwords, the total number of lexical entries, or the number of dictionary senses identified?

3 Abbreviations used in this paper are as follows: AIAS, Australian Institute of Aboriginal Studies; AIATSIS, Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies; ALS, Australian Linguistic Society; ANU, Australian National University; Australasian Languages Database; ATSIIP, Australian and Torres Strait Islander Languages Initiatives Programme; IADB, Institute for Aboriginal Development; Alice Springs; MIT, Massachusetts Institute of Technology; NT, Northern Territory; PTL, Pacific Linguistics; SA, South Australia; SIL, Summer Institute of Linguistics; SIAA, School of Language and Applied Linguistics; SAA, School of Languages and Applied Linguistics; SAAI, School of Languages and Applied Linguistics; Sil-AAB, Summer Institute of Linguistics; Sil-AAB, School of Languages and Applied Linguistics; St. Andrew's College, ABC, Australian Broadcasting Corporation; WA, Western Australia.

4 Research into the particular needs of different types of users in different situations is now beginning to inform dictionary design, cf. Henderson and Laughren (1991).
Linguistics (SIL-AAIB). Overseas institutions, such as the US National Science Foundation and Systems Development Foundation, have helped support the work on Warlpiri by the Strait Islanders Languages Initiatives Programme (ATSILIP) which has assisted the establishment of language centres, most of which do some lexicographic work. On the other hand, it can be said that Aboriginal dictionary making is appallingly underfunded.

2.2 OUTPUT

Coming to the published output of the past twenty-five years, we can observe at once that Heath (1982:ix) could still fairly remark "...the number of published dictionaries is a single published dictionary which makes any pretensions of being comprehensive. The hundred words in a wordlist at the end.

Over the 1980s, this situation improved. An increasing number of small dictionaries and wordlists were being produced, and a wealth of work became accessible as manuscript or electronic data files. A substantial, but not exhaustive, annotated list of such materials appears as Appendices 1 and 2. Much of it reflects a trend, made possible by the availability and additions later, and to make work-in-progress available in small print runs or in O'Grady (1971:785ff.) as then in progress, with comments on their current state. Nevertheless, it would be fair to say, with Austin (1991), that dictionary making largely remained the 'poor cousin of grammatical description'.

It was not until the 1990s that reasonably large and comprehensive dictionaries of Aboriginal languages began to appear in any numbers. Table 1 below lists all such materials available or in press at the time of writing. From a publishing point of view, one notable house is the University of Queensland Press and Mouton de Gruyter. Otherwise, dictionaries and wordlists were published mainly by universities, schools, SIL-AAIB, AIAS, Aboriginal Language Centres, and by the publishing house of the Institute for Aboriginal Development (IAD).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TABLE 1: DICTIONARIES PUBLISHED SINCE 1968</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

---

5 Aside from Hansen and Hansen (first edition 1974), mentioned above, the main exception is Heath's (1982) Nunggubuyu dictionary, in which every word is indexed against a large published text corpus.

---


The IAD, an Aboriginal-controlled educational institute in Alice Springs, deserves special mention. Not only has it consistently published quality dictionaries and wordlists over the last twenty years, it has provided a sophisticated base for lexicographic projects in Central Australia for over a decade. The Pijinjatjara/Yankunyijatjara to English dictionary (Goddard 1992), the Warlpiri Dictionary Project and the Arandic Languages Dictionaries Program have all been based at IAD, and a host of smaller wordlists have also issued from there (see Appendix 1).

Some impression of the diversity in nature and purposes to be found in recent lexicographic output can be gained by some quick, and necessarily highly-selective, comparisons. At the smaller end of the spectrum, there are picture vocabularies, and learner's wordlists such as A learner's wordlist of Eastern and Central Arrente (Henderson 1991). The latter contains about 750 words and is intended as a reference for students learning the language and to assist literate Arrente people in spelling. Other examples of this genre are
the wordlists of Pilbara languages produced by Wangkaya Maja (1989–90). Such products represent a change from the earlier academic work which was not designed for use by the speakers of the language or by the general public.

Of medium size are the recently published dictionaries listed in Table 1. These contain between 2,000 and 5,000 lexical entries, with reasonably detailed semantic, grammatical and serving language learners, Aboriginal schoolchildren in bilingual education, Aboriginal Yoront dictionary has perhaps the broadest scope of the published works listed in Table 1, including information about etymology, language variety (respect vocabulary) and totemic affiliation in addition to semantic information, example sentences, and so on. The only large dictionary which has been published at the time of writing is the Eastern Central Arrernte to English dictionary (Henderson & Dobson 1994) though the Warlpiri-very rich exemplification and encyclopedic information. The Warlpiri Dictionary Project (cf. Laughrin & Nash 1983) is truly remarkable for its scope, longevity and ambitiousness, as brought to bear upon it. Its primary purpose is scientific, viz. the most complete possible abridged versions are planned to serve the needs of bilingual education and Warlpiri adult scope, and attempts to combine scientific and practical purposes. Even so, the publication is so large (almost 800 pages) that an abridged ‘junior’ edition is envisaged for schools.

A trend in recent years has been the renewed interest in the collation and reworking of and Barry Blake (1991) have reconstituted parts of the vocabulary of Kaurna (Adelaide) and Wurrungwarr (Melbourne) from historical sources (cf. Simpson 1993; see also Troy 1994). no longer speak their ancestral languages and with the increasing availability of funding, recent, but relatively inaccessible, work into practical wordlists or dictionaries. For instance, electronic data file, and the Kimberley Languages Resource Centre (Halls Creek) is keyboarding Tasak Tsumoda’s large Jaru wordlist.

Finally, it should be noted that there is evidence that in various Language Centres, schools and community council offices, Aboriginal people are increasingly doing lexicographic work were said to be able to read and write Wurrungwarr. One young woman (Doreen Noonan), 1974). This dictionary has since gone missing.

---

6 In general, published Aboriginal language dictionaries tend not to include any great detail on etymologies the practical relevance to Aboriginal users, the partial or speculative nature of the information and the data files, if not in published ‘hard copy’ dictionaries.

---

LEXICOGRAPHIC RESEARCH ON AUSTRALIAN ABORIGINAL LANGUAGES 1968–1993

Such work is easily lost because the Aboriginal people doing it often do not know how to take it past the collection stage. For example, Robert Hoogenraad (pers. comm. and forthcoming) found some 150 pages of handwritten wordlists on the floor of the Garungu (Elliott) Council office. There were mostly parallel lists in Mudburra, Jingulu and Wambaya for plants and animals, body parts, and meteorological terms, entered onto locally designed photocopied forms with ruled columns for each language. The Mudburra material has since been entered into a lexical database and checked against the existing Mudburra dictionary file: it contained over 500 entries, 280 of them not previously in the database. Mary Laughrin (pers. comm.) reports having found spontaneous Warlpiri lexicography, usually in notebooks left in school ‘language rooms’ or literature production centres. Examples include lists of kin terms organised according to Warlpiri classificatory principles like senior versus junior/same generation, and lists of plant names, giving their parts and products.

More sophisticated work is also being done, as Aboriginal people become more involved in collecting wordlists and in writing definitions, both English and vernacular. In 1985, for example, Paddy Patrick Jangala began writing monolingual Warlpiri definitions for use by pupils in the upper grades of the bilingual program at Lajamanu School. Jangala’s work (see Jangala 1986) was supported by the Warlpiri Dictionary Project and incorporated into the project’s data files. Perhaps the most accomplished Aboriginal lexicographer is Veronica Dobson, co-author of the Eastern Central Arrernte to English dictionary, to which she has devoted five years full-time work. Also of note is Jeannie Bell’s work on historical materials on Gubbi Gubbi and Butchulla (Batjala), the languages spoken by her grandparents.

2.3 New Methods and Techniques

The new methods and techniques used by lexicographers over the past twenty-five years fall under two broad headings: new ways of gathering data and new ways of manipulating data. At the time of O’Grady’s 1971 review, the most widely used data gathering method was elicitation, assisted by standard wordlists. O’Grady mentions Capell’s use in the 1930s of a 600-item lexical list to compile information on over ninety languages of northern Australia (cf. Capell 1945), his own use of a 100-item list in the northern part of Western Australia in the 1950s, and Stephen Wurm’s work in eastern Australia at about the same time (cf. Wurm 1967), among others. All this was essentially survey work, with a comparative orientation. Later, AIAS published its own widely used standard elicitation wordlist organised by semantic fields (AIAS & Capell n.d.; Sutton & Walsh 1979, 1987). Usually the elicitation would be done through (Aboriginal) English, a variety of Kriol, or sometimes through a traditional Aboriginal lingua franca. In any case, there are obvious limitations on the richness of the information which can be obtained by elicitation.

More substantial recent dictionary work has relied on methods better suited to producing in-depth data on individual languages. These include intensive language-learning by the linguist, participant observation, extensive use of tape-recorded and transcribed texts, and, increasingly, collaboration with literate Aboriginal speakers of the language in question.

For the purposes of data manipulation and analysis, lexicography is today unthinkable without the computer. In place of boxes of file-slips, lexical information is now stored in some kind of structured database, which can be manipulated to produce different types of
formatted dictionary (e.g. alphabetically ordered, thesaurus, special purpose). The computer allows much greater speed, accuracy and consistency. Increasingly, vernacular source making it possible for the lexicographer to compile textual examples using 'concordance' software.

The earliest computer-aided lexicography, such as O'Grady's 1966 comparison of wordlists of Australian languages, the Research dictionary of the Western Desert language of Australia (Raa & Wocen 1970–1973), and the comparative Pilbara Dictionaries Project (cf. almost all contemporary projects use personal computers and existing software. Current formatting and data management, Free Text, Micro-OCF, Shoebox, TACT, and Conc (text-browsers and concordancers), and MacLex (dedicated dictionary maker).

Much day-to-day lexicography is done without special purpose software, however. Instead, data is compiled as structured text within a standard word-processor, using declarative mark-up to make the structure of the information explicit. Marked information can later be processed and formatted using special purpose programs 'macros', as described below. The most widely used mark-up system is based on conventions developed by SIL and promoted by the AIAL Lexicography Project (cf. Nash & Simpson 1989) and its successor ASED A. It employs a backslash followed by a letter-code to identify different types (or 'fields') of information within the lexical entry. This is known as a 'field-oriented standard format' or FOSF file. The key advantage of a mark-up format is that it frees the text to be current within an entire research community. In future, we can expect to be using SGML, for which software and conventions for use in dictionary construction are now available.

Database programs, such as Paradox or FileMaker, are also popular as a means of entering data in a structured framework, allowing it to be exported as tab-delimited text files of languages, as in the use of Oracle by Peter Austin for storing and locating data from a number of Pilbara languages.

To give something of the flavour of current, computer-assisted lexicography, we will work through some of the stages involved in transforming a lexical database into final text to prepare the second edition of the Pitjantjatjara/TUNKANYJUTJURA to English dictionary. The 'sensitive language', a definition, a dialect or style (e.g. 'slang'), Layering of definitions and examples is provided for by numerical codes which identify the field which they precede. Thus a preceding a field definition indicates that this is the

---

7 It should be noted that FOSF has been criticised as a violation of certain principles of dictionarylinguistic knowledge encapsulated within it rather than being designed for processing convenience; they (i) on) are integral to the dictionary, so too should they be integral to the design and computer representation.

---

The schema shown in Figure 1 has various defects. For instance, having the example glosses appear within the \u field, identified by framing in single inverted commas, led to problems in subsequent processing, as did the many inconsistencies in punctuation. But although it is impossible to achieve fully automatic conversion from data files to final formatted text, a great deal of the re-formatting can be done automatically.

At IAD the initial re-formatting is done within the Nirus word processor, using the regular expression (GREP) and macro facilities, which allow users to write customised programs for manipulating text. Figure 2 shows part of such a macro devised by John Henderson. Current IAD practice is to use macros to convert an edited version of underlying database into 'style-tagged text' in which unique symbols enclose every stretch of characters destined for a particular final style (font/size/face combination). As well as tagging each field with the appropriate styling information, it adds any text or symbols needed to introduce the field in the published version.
eagle: white breasted eagle
kangaroo: ornate kangaroo tick
ornate kangaroo tick: ornate kangaroo tick
white breasted eagle

Whether working on FOSF files or from a database, it is important to design and use automatic reversal procedures carefully (cf. Nathan & Austin 1992) otherwise the resulting lists can be bizarre and impractical. An unfortunate example of this is the find/replace in the third edition of the Pinupit/Luritja dictionary (Hansen & Hansen 1992:222), in which, for instance, the following series of 15 entries appears under the English word ‘did’:

did here, did miracles, did not bury, did not eat (it), did not forget, did not inform another, did not win, did nothing, did signs and wonders, did supernatural things or acts, did that which was displeasing, did there, did up hell.

Reversals can be converted, by extensive editing, into English-Aboriginal language ‘finderlists’, but it is advisable to check any finderlist against a suitably sized list of common English vocabulary. This is because a finderlist serves a person who wishes to find Aboriginal equivalents for English words, but many common English words will not have found their way into the definitions for Aboriginal language words in the main dictionary. Such lists are available in electronic form from ASEA.

3. ISSUES IN LEXICOGRAPHIC PRACTICE

3.1 ORTHOGRAPHY

When O’Grady (1971:792) wrote, it was still feasible for him to call for a standardisation of orthographic symbols, primarily to avoid “a major and unnecessary burden to the comparativeist.” For the stop series, O’Grady himself favoured [p, t, t’, t, s, k], and for the nasals [m, n, n’, n, n, n]. These suggestions have been overtaken by the times. It is now generally accepted that an Aboriginal language dictionary must employ a ‘practical orthography’ based on Roman alphabet letters, and bearing as straightforward a relationship as possible to the English spelling system. This is for the convenience of non-linguists, Aboriginal and others, who are now recognised as the primary users of the dictionaries.

Even the principle of phonemic spelling is no longer sacrosanct if, for one reason or another, it conflicts sharply with the priorities of the Aboriginal community. After all, a mild amount of under-differentiation in the spelling system presents no problems for native speakers. Sometimes, too, a community already literate in English may prefer an orthography closely based on English, even at the cost of a less than maximally efficient system. For example, the Yiyiy community has adopted an orthography in which the name of their language is spell Goomyiandi, rather than Kuninyangu as it would have been in the standard ‘linguist’s notation’: this system both under- and over-differentiates phonemes (McGregor 1986, 1990:25-28). Less commonly, local tradition has sanctioned the retention of letter symbols alien to the typewriter keyboard. This is the case with the hooked ‘g’ symbol of the Yolngu languages of north-eastern Arnhem Land, which also employ ă to indicate the long vowel usually shown as aa.
Some of the trickiest orthographic decisions have arisen in places where two kinds of complicating factors coexist, viz. the Aboriginal language has unusual phonologival Arandic languages of Central Australia. Dictionary makers must sometimes come to grips to represent, can be a decision with political dimensions.

3.2 ORGANISATION

Most published Aboriginal language dictionaries employ listing by alphabetical sequence of lexical stems, sometimes supplemented with an English 'findelist'. The sequence is based either on the initial letter, as is done in English dictionaries, or, more commonly, on the initial 'orthographic symbol' where digraphs (i.e. sequences of two letters standing for a single phoneme) are regarded as single symbols. An example of the latter ordering principle is shown below from the "Pintupi/Luritja dictionary."

a, i, k, l, ly, n, b, ng, ny, p, t, l, tj, w, y

The rationale is to make it easier for Aboriginal users to locate words, assuming that they will do so directly on a phonemic basis. A listing like the one shown above prevents words beginning with 'n', 'ng', and 'ny' becoming interspersed.

The argument in favour of the competing letter-based sequence is that almost all Aboriginal users today go or have gone to school, where they learn the conventional digraphs. It can also be argued that experienced readers tend not to operate on a direct phonemic basis, but to 'see' words in a graphic form (so that a word like ngunytja, for instance, is seen as beginning with the letter 'n'). Research is needed into the relative merits of the two competing systems.

A less common alternative to alphabetical listing is thesaurus-style organisation, either as the primary format, as in McKeown (1989), Dixon (1991), and Groote Elyndt Linguistics issue with thesaurus formats is the selection of the classification system, and in particular to English. Many Aboriginal languages have explicit classifier (or 'generic noun') systems for people, living things and artefacts, making it relatively simple to organise at least some of the nominal vocabulary into an 'ethno-thesaurus'. But the semantic organisation of other lexical domains may be obscure even to native speakers, and require detailed analytical work. Aside from the work of Dixon (1982) on the semantic implications of Dyrriibal 'mother-in-law language', there has been little published on this, though some practising lexicographers have devised quite elaborate semantically based schemes to help with collecting lexical data. Nonetheless, it would be fair to say that semantically organised dictionaries continue to rely in large measure on categories derived from European lexicography.

---

8 Amongst dictionaries which list by initial digraph, there is variation as to whether the same ordering for instance, pungu 'bit' comes after pungu 'tree'. Most others, such as the Kaurna dictionary and thesaurus (Evans 1992), use conventional alphabetical order inside the word.

---

Like most writing on Aboriginal language lexicography, the discussion above has been biased in assuming that the typical Australian language is of the agglutinative, predominantly suffixed, Pama–Nyungan type. In fact, perhaps one-third of all Australian languages still spoken today are non-Pama–Nyungan (nonPN). Just as the complex and diverse nonPN tongues—generally prefixing and tending toward polysynthesis—pose special problems for grammatical analysis, so do they for lexicography. No more than a handful of nonPN language dictionaries have appeared (e.g. Heath 1982; Merlan 1982; Kimberley Language Resource Centre and Gedda Akilf 1993; Groote Elyndt Linguistics 1994).

Identifying a citation form may be no easier matter in a prefixing language, where most verbs may never appear without an appropriate person-number prefix. Even if it is possible to isolate an underlying root, it will often be the case that its initial segment is modified in most surface forms. In some nonPN languages, nominals also bear obligatory prefixes showing noun-class. Another common problem is widespread suppletion in verbal paradigms, which calls for extensive and complex cross-referencing. The problems that linguistic features like these create for practical lexicography can be illustrated by the case of Njiŋeŋiba (Kunibidji), on which dictionary work has been ongoing for over 15 years.

McKay (1983) relates that in the early 1980s the then newly-literate Kunibidji speakers would not accept verbal roots as citation forms. The decision was therefore made to cite verbs with a third person singular masculine subject prefix, although this had the effect that almost all verbs appeared under the letter 'k' in an alphabetical listing. The situation with verbs was further complicated by the existence of numerous semi-productive derivational prefixes. Literate speakers originally expressed a preference for verb stems derived in this way to be listed as separate lexemes, rather than grouping them under the root.

Over fifteen years, however, the literate community has matured in its skills and its understanding of language matters. The linguist currently working on the project, Carolyn Coleman, reports (pers. comm.) that Njiŋeŋiba consultants now accept the verbal root as citation form. The third person singular masculine prefix is retained, but with the root highlighted in bold within the inflected word, the main entries for verbs appear in alphabetical order according to the first segment of the highlighted root (a similar convention is used in the alphabetical sections of the draft Anindilyakwa–English dictionary). This is a typographical 'solution' which was not practical prior to the advent of computer-assisted desktop publishing. As well, the consultants now want the main entries for the derivational variants to be listed along with the 'head word' (head root), provided the derived forms are listed separately with a cross-reference to the main entry. This example shows that the optimal organisation of a practical dictionary is not determined solely by linguistic facts.

Green and Reid (1993) discuss the severe problems which arise with languages of the Daly River region, such as Ngnengmerri and Marrithiel. These are 'verb-classifying' languages. That is, verbs normally occur bearing one of a set of prefixal auxiliary elements which classify the nature of the activity being depicted. For instance, one set of auxiliary prefixes classifies transitive actions according to the manner in and/or type of instrument with which they are carried out, another set classifies according to the active involvement of certain part of the body, such as the hands, feet and mouth. Often the auxiliaries occur as portmanteau forms incorporating person and number marking of the subject. Alphabetical listing by initial segment is not a practical proposition for these languages, and the complex cross-referencing that seems to be required will create great difficulties for newly literate users. Green and Reid are developing a computerised dictionary using FileMaker Pro which...
should be more practical for community use. Lexical information will be accessible by initial segment of verb root, by auxiliary, or by thesaurus classification. The FileMaker Pro format ‘backslash code’ system.

Regardless of the organisational framework, example sentences or phrases are an important part of any bilingual dictionary, though their role can be construed in various complex examples can be a vehicle for implicit grammatical information. Example sentences may also contain ethno-encyclopaedic information, or take the form of vernacular definitions.

Some dictionary makers insist that ‘naturally occurring text’ is the only or ideal source for example sentences, even though this may mean that many are grammatically complex and highly context-embedded. Others prefer text-based material but allow that it may be edited for sentences; so long as they are written by experienced Aboriginal language workers. In any case, one difficulty to be faced is that tape-recorded text corpora are almost always unrepresentative of ordinary speech, because they tend to be dominated by monologues (especially narrative).

3.3 DEFINITIONAL PRACTICE

Questions of definition are at the heart of dictionary making. In 1971, O’Grady (1971: 795) remarked of the then published dictionaries: “[Their] definitions leave much to be desired. There would be no point, however, in deriding the earlier works...[The] compilers operated within the limitations imposed by the state of lexicography of their respective eras”.

It is not clear that the future will be able to judge contemporary practice in the same charitable light. The problem, which we hasten to point out is not confined to the Australian Aboriginal arena, is that there is a wide gulch between semantic theory and lexicographic practice. Comparatively few Australian lexicographers over the past twenty years have been well trained in semantics, and most have developed their definitions on a fairly ad hoc basis. This is particularly noticeable in two respects: first, descriptive inadequacy and inexplicitness; second, lack of criteria for distinguishing between polysemy and semantic generality.

On the issue of semantic adequacy, we can observe that most Australian language dictionaries make little effort to explicitly capture the precise meaning of the words being defined. Rather than attempt a precise explanatory paraphrase, they more commonly list a series of possible English translation equivalents, as in the examples below, which come from the Alyawarr to English dictionary (Green 1992:219), an early draft of the Warlpiri dictionary (cited in Wierzbicka 1983:141), and the Pitjantatjara/Yankunytjatjara to English dictionary (Goddard 1992:112), respectively.

riwayeyal, Iwayeyal
nyurunnyu-rurrmi
pitjatjarra
pick out, sort, choose
to hate him, despise him, be jealous of, disapprove of
sick, ill, wounded, injured

Listing possible translation equivalents does not meet one of the prime requirements of a good lexicographic definition, namely, that it should make the meaning fully explicit. The reader may fairly assume that the meaning being defined contains some components in common with each of the English words offered, while not being completely identical with any of them, so it would be wrong to reject the listing approach as wholly uninformative. But the listing simply leaves to the reader not only does not belong to the lexicographer, that is, of that of the lexical meaning and specifying it in a testable form. This is a particularly unfortunate failing when it concerns culturally important words which lack close equivalents in English.

Of course, most dictionaries do at times attempt explicit explanatory paraphrases, in addition to listing translation equivalents. The examples below are from the same three dictionaries as cited above (Green 1992:146; Warlpiri Lexicography Group 1986a:63; Goddard 1992:43). It would be good if this practice were to become more consistent.

Ilpertilieleyel be confused, become mixed up, go off your head, not think straight, be in a flurry, be unable to think of something

mirurna(pa) very rapid involuntary movements of the body; shaking, shaking, trembling, twitching, shivering

kunta respectful, embarrassed, ‘shame’. Discomfort at being observed by someone because of the type of person they are, because of worrying that you might do something on account of which they might think badly of you

Australian lexicographic practice could also improve its handling of the distinction between a lexical unit having several distinct but-related senses, as opposed to it having a single general meaning—that is, the distinction between polysemy and semantic generality. Many Australian lexicographers seem to think this distinction is arbitrary or unimportant, giving an unstructured string of glosses where others would identify separate (polysemic) senses. The entries below exemplify the contrast in approach: they deal with the same verb nyina-

(a) nyina- vi. sit, to sit, to live, to be, to exist, to stay

[An introductory dictionary of the Western Desert language (Douglas 1988:55)]

(b) nyinanyi intensitative verb (G)

1. sit, be sitting. 2. live, stay: Nyinama kuta ngama nganya nyinanyi? Where is your big brother staying/living? 3. be in a place: Tiplinga nyinanyi? Is the Old Fella around? 4. be in, have or hold a temporary condition: Ngaraka pukulpa nyinanyi. We were contented. 5. (with serial verb, in the ‘way of life’ construction) do something generally, customarily, as a way of life: Kuna nganya nganka kathina nyina? Why do you bring your wife with you?

[Pitjantatjara/Yankunytjatjara to English dictionary (Goddard 1992:97)]

Australian dictionary makers would do well to draw on criteria identified by semantic and lexicographic theorists (e.g. Apreanjan 1972, 1992 [1974]; Melčuk 1988; Wierzbicka 1992-1993) for establishing polysemy, such as the putative distinct meanings having different syntactic properties, or different antonyms, or only one of the senses participating in a derivational process. Importantly, whether for a generality analysis or a polysemic analysis the putative sense or senses must be staphable in explicit and testable formulations.
Even dictionaries which recognise the polysemy versus generality distinction seldom implement it with consistency or supply any explicit discussion of their criteria (an exception is Alpher 1991). Some examples of apparent inconsistency are given below. We assume that separating senses by numbers or semicolons is intended to indicate polysemy, while a unitary sense is indicated by glosses separated by commas.

(a) maalhan (1) settle someone down after they have been angry or wild (2) tame or subdue someone or an animal
nga’anathan hide (something or yourself); put inside (something)
ngyan listen, understand, hear (and obey)

Dictionary and source book of the Wik-Mungkan language (Kilham et al. 1986:144, 142)

(b) wurd 1. Corner, curve. 2. Small point on coastline
yiwiwa Lie down, sleep, camp the night

Kayardild dictionary and thesaurus (Evans 1992:143, 179)

Most modern practical dictionaries frame their definitions in terms of relatively simple, common English words, if only to maximise their intelligibility for Aboriginal users. One of the few exceptions is the main version of the Warpiri dictionary (i.e. the version intended for linguistic, rather than for general, use), which employs a rather technical, semi-standardised metalanguage. This has been the subject of one of the very few theoretically-oriented exchanges in the scant literature about Aboriginal language lexicography. The exchange, in Austin, ed. (1983), occurred between Anna Wierzbicka and Mary Laughren, and is sufficiently interesting to review here.

Wierzbicka (1983:136–137) criticised the style of definition shown below.
paka-riti — ‘xERG produces concussion of surface of yABS, by coming into contact with y’
lirri-mi — ‘yABS increases in size, typically to assume abnormal dimensions’

Such definitions, she said, violated the requirement that a sound definition “must reduce what is complex to what is simple, what is obscure to what is clear, what is conceptually ‘posterior’ to what is conceptually ‘prior’”. The rather learned style of language used was an unnecessary barrier to understanding. Wierzbicka also claimed that by using the complex defining language one runs the risk of committing the lexicographic sin of circularity, if only in a hidden form. For instance, if a word close in meaning to ‘hit’ is defined in terms of ‘concussion’, there is implicit circularity because we understand the word ‘concussion’ in terms of ‘hitting’.

Laughren (1983) defended the form of the definitions on the grounds that they bring out the natural semantic classes to be found in Warpiri. She explained that the first of the definitions cited above is formulated so as to show that paka-riti falls into the class of ‘contact/effect’ verbs, whose core meaning is defined as ‘xERG produces an effect on yABS by some entity coming into contact with y’. The other details of the definition distinguish paka-riti from other verbs of the same class (e.g. panti-mi ‘pierce, poke, stick into, spear’, yipi-mi ‘squeeze out’, palji-mi ‘wash’). The differences are captured by specifications of the nature of the effect (e.g. concussion, pressure, cleaning, etc.), the nature of the entity (sharp pointed, hands, water, etc.) and the nature of the contact. Laughren also pointed out that the apparent simplicity of English words such as ‘hit’ may be misleading. For instance, there are several different senses for ‘hit’, only one of which could be translated using Warpiri paka-

4. THE FUTURE FOR ABORIGINAL LANGUAGE LEXICOGRAPHY

Until recently, makers of Aboriginal language dictionaries have largely worked in isolation from one another. It is greatly to be hoped that the future will see more debate, discussion and exchange on theory and methodology as well as on data management.

9 Work within Wierzbicka’s Natural Semantic Metalanguage (NSM) framework posits the existence of some 60 or so “semantic primitives”, hypothesised to have lexical exponents (i.e. precise translation equivalents) in all languages (Wierzbicka 1996). Evans (1994), Goddard (1994) and Hanks and Wilkins (1994) investigate the translatability of 36 of these into the Aboriginal languages Kayardild and Arrernte. Semantic research of this kind has obvious value for the definitional side of lexicography.

10 A further distinction could (and arguably should) be made between knowledge which is linguistically encoded, as evidenced by lexical collocations, metaphorical interpretations and so on, and specialist encyclopedic knowledge possessed only by the experts of the culture (cf. Aprejan 1992 [1974], Wierzbicka in press, Wilkins this volume).

11 The main exception to this statement was the 1982 ALS Workshop on Australian Aboriginal Lexicography convened by Peter Austin (cf. Austin ed. 1983).
techniques. There is an important role here for AUSTRALEX (the Australasian Association for Lexicography), formed in 1990.

In terms of language coverage, the main focus for future lexicography in Australian languages, which, as mentioned, have scarcely been lexicalised in comparison with the languages of the Pama-Nyungan grouping. Non-Pama-challenge languages, whose exploration will bear on many of the questions of interest to general linguistic theory.

A more radical departure from current practice, and one therefore less likely to eventuate, except of bilingual dictionary are the 'Aboriginal vernacular–English' style lexicography in this direction is indicative of the dominant status of the target language. Dictionaries for use in schools, such as Paddy Patrick Jangala's monolingual Warlpiri-English Aboriginal vernacular bilingual dictionary (1986), but as far as we are aware, there has been no serious attempt to develop an.

Advances in computer and video technology mean that dictionaries of the future will not necessarily take the form of books. Already, integrated 'multimedia' packages (e.g., sequences, and graphic displays, as well as printed matter. Such media offer to overcome the limitations of print dictionaries, such as these, important of the time. It becomes possible to 'navigate' through a richly structured information space, different levels or modes of data without needing advanced literary skills. Aside from placing multimedia dictionaries calls for new personnel and new types of collaboration on the.

The next twenty years will undoubtedly see far greater input into lexicographic projects from dictionary workers who are themselves native speakers. Likewise, there will be even quite new uses are in language revivals (as with the Kaurna people of Adelaide and the Aboriginal languages (to be implemented from 1994 as a Higher School Certificate subject).

Linguists too will be looking to Aboriginal language lexicography for new purposes; for example, to study semantic change and diffusion (cf. Wilkins 1996), pursuits which call for representing over 200 Australian languages, there is sufficient data to construct a pan-Australian dictionary, a project warranting serious consideration in the near future. Interestingly, one of the preoccupations of the nineteenth century, namely, reconstructing the shadows for many years (cf. O'Grady 1979; McColl and Evans in press). Also, general linguistic theory is increasingly interested in the detailed structuring of the lexicon, in

APPENDICES: LEXICOGRAPHIC OUTPUT ON AUSTRALIAN ABORIGINAL LANGUAGES 1968–1993

Note that dictionaries with more than 2,000 entries and detailed semantic information are listed separately, in Table 1 (§2.2).

The following lists have been compiled from the AIATSIS library catalogue, on keywords 'dictonial wordlist/wordlist'. supplemented where omissions are apparent. Note that this is not a complete list of such work. Where a manuscript has been superseded by a published or more substantial edition only the later edition is included here. If an electronic data file has entries marked by topic and coded for reversal, it is marked in this list as being a topical list with a findfile.

APPENDIX 1: PUBLISHED WORDLISTS AND SMALL DICTIONARIES

Lists under 200 words are not included, except for illustrated wordlists or collections of comparative lists.

CODES

\( r \) = available from ASEDAs as electronic data file
\( \triangleright \) = includes findfile
\( k \) = reconstituted from historical materials
\( \triangleright \) = illustrated
\( W \) = topical list
\( S \) = includes sentence examples
\( \Rightarrow \) = work in progress
\( # \) = unseen/unknown to be coded fully

\( r \Rightarrow kW \) Amery, Rob and Jane Simpson, 1994, Kaurna. In Nick Thieberger and William McGregor, eds Macquarie Aboriri wordlist: a dictionary of words from Australian Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander languages, 144–172. Sydney: Macquarie Library.
\( r \Rightarrow \) Austin, Peter, 1992, A dictionary of Jiwarrl, Western Australia. Bundoora, Vic.: Dept of Linguistics, La Trobe University.

---

12 The largest English–Aboriginal vernacular list, not of the 'finderlist' variety, would be in McKelson (1989).


Eades, Diana, 1976, The Dharawal and Dhurga languages of the New South Wales south coast. Canberra: AIAS.


Eames, Diana, 1976, The Dharawal and Dhurga languages of the New South Wales south coast. Canberra: AIAS.


Holmer, Nils M., 1988, Notes on some Queensland languages. PL, D–79.

Hosking, Dianne and Sally McNicol, 1993, Wiradjuri. Canberra: The authors.


IAD, 1987, English to Pitjantjatjarra/Yankunytjatjara to English learner’s wordlist. Alice Springs, NT: IAD.

IAD, n.d., Western Ananguyeri word-list. Alice Springs, NT: IAD.


Kerr, Nora Fields, n.d., A comparative word-list: Nyigina and neighbouring languages. MS.


Osborne, Charles Roland, 1974, *The Tiwi language: grammar, myths and dictionary of the Tiwi language spoken on Melville and Bathurst Islands, northern Australia*. Canberra: AIAS.


Sharp, Margaret, 1992, *Dictionary of Western Bundjalung, including Githabal and Tabulam Bundjalung*. Armidale, NSW: Margaret Sharp.


Stanham, Janet, 1972, *Notes on the grammar of Alyawara, including a small dictionary* (Murray Downs Area). Darwin: SIL–AAB.


Waddy, Julie, 1988, *Classification of plants & animals from a Groot Eylanda Aboriginal point of view*. Darwin: North Australia Research Unit, ANU.


Wangka Maya, Pitjara Aboriginal Language Centre, Bruce Thomas, Frank Thomas and Brian Gyettenbeek, 1989–90, *Aboriginal languages of the Pilbara: Nyangumarta*. Port Hedland, WA: Wangka Maya, Pitjara Aboriginal Language Centre.

APPENDIX 2: UNPUBLISHED WORLDS AND DICTIONARIES AVAILABLE AS MANUSCRIPT OR AS ELECTRONIC DATA FILE

CODES

r = available from ASEDAM as electronic data file
r = includes finderlist
k = reconstituted from historical materials
? = illustrated
W = topical list
? = work in progress

Anderson, Bruce, Yindjibarndi dictionary.
Andrews, Avery, Anmatyerre wordlist.
Anonymous and Nicholas Thiéberger, [Ngarru vocabulary].

LEXICOGRAPHIC RESEARCH ON AUSTRALIAN ABORIGINAL LANGUAGES 1968-1993
Evans, Nicholas, **Mayali vocabulary.**
Florey, Margaret and Janie Winder, **Wangka Maya, Pilbara Aboriginal Language Centre, Mulkana.**
Florey, Margaret and Mabel Tommyn, **Yinhawangka wordlist.**
Furby, E.S. and C.F. Furby, **Garawa dictionary.**
Furby, E.S., C.F. Furby, A. Rogers and L. Rogers, **Garawa/Wanyi wordlist.**
Gaede, Murray, **Kunwinjku (Eastern Kunwinjku) vocabulary and texts.**
Green, Ian, **Daly lexicon.**
Green, Thomas, 1988, **Ngurdaitj wordlist (with preliminary grammatical notes and text).**
**Djabugay wordlist.**
**Jwarliyin.**
Hale, Kenneth and G.N. O'Grady, **Bayungu wordlist.**
Hale, Kenneth, Geoffrey O'Grady and E. Curr, **Nhanta wordlist.**
Hale, Kenneth, Barbara Sayers and Chris Kihm, **Wik Mungkan wordlist.**
Hanlelsmann, Robert, **Towards a description of Amurdak: a language of Northern Australia.**
Harvey, Mark, 1990, A provisional Gamu-Englsih dictionary.
1990, **Provisional Mangele-English vocabulary.**
Gagudju dictionary.
Gunginjgus papers.
Waray grammar. Warany dictionary, bibliography, Waray verbs.
Havlidin, John, **Gungadjirr vocabulary.**
Heath, Jeffrey, 1973, **Dhayyi (Dharwongu) texts and vocabulary.**
1975, **Annedhinyawka (Euhindiwawga) language materials.**
1975, **YurluYa vocabulary, mostly flora-fauna.**
Hercur, Luise, **Gippa Island dictionary.**
Madjanggo-Wadjagai vocabulary.
Southern Ngirga vocabulary.
Werogaia vocabulary I.
Yorlajandji vocabulary.
Machine-readable files of Arnhemland and Wangkanguru vocabulary.
Hercur, Luise and Nicholas Thieberger, 1993, **Murring vocaularies.**
Hewett, Heather, Anne Dinze, David Tainsby and Robin Field, **Mung dictionary project.**
Hore, Michael, **Ngungubuyu dictionary.**
Hosokawa, Komei, 1988, **Classified Yawuru dictionary.**
Howell, Robyn, 1987, **Kamilaroi language - words/phrases/terms.**
Hughes, Earl James, 1970, **Ngungubuyu legends: more tales of the Ngungubuyu tribe.**
Jangala, Paddy Patrick, 1986, **Lajamunu words list: Warlpiri monolingual dictionary.**
Johnson, Edward, **Karajarri Sketch Grammar.**
Johnson, Steve, **Ngarrindjeri wordlist.**
Johnson, Steve and Amanda Lissarrague, **Yaygir vocabulary.**
Johnson, Steve and Ian Smith, **Kugu Nganchura.**
Kimberley Language Resource Centre, **Tsunoda's Jarju.**
Kirton, Jean, **Yanyuwa.**
Klokeid, Terry, **Nyamarl wordlist.**
**Tharrgari (D) wordlist.**
Koch, Harold, **Machine readable files of "Kaytetye texts" and "Kaytetye dictionary.**
Latz, Peter, 1981, **Alkuyawa, Annajirra and western Aranda plant names.**
1981, **Pintupi, Pitjantjatjara and Wopkiri plant names.**
Laughren, Mary et al., 1994, **Warlpiri dictionary.**
Laurie, Benjamin, 1985, **Walmajarri picture dictionary.**
Laves, Gerhard, **Auyamarla wordlist.**
Lissarrague, Amanda, Steve Johnson and Leeton Smith, **Dhangadi dictionary.**
Lowe, Beula, Velma J. Leeding and M.J. Christie, **Gupapaynu dictionary: Milangimbi commonet.**
Lyentje Aputje Literature Production Centre, 1992, **Angkentye Atyabheerme, Lyentje Aputje (Santa Teresa).**
Marribank conference, Nick Thieberger and others, **Nyungar wordlists.**
Marsh, Jim and E. Lindgren, **Garndjirra wordlist.**
Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Mary Napaljarri Laughren and Warlpiri Dictionary Project, 1975, **Warlpiri dictionary card files.**
McConnell, Patrick, 1993, **Garindji dictionary.**
McConnell, Patrick and Francis Kofod, **Kija dictionary.**
McConnell, Patrick and David Nash, **Mudburra wordlist.**
McGregor, William, 1992, **Handbook of Kimberley languages, volume 2: Word lists (first draft).**
McKelson, Fr Kevin R., **Karajarri wordlist.**
Mangala wordlist.
**Yalpara.**
McKay, Graham, 1981, **Glossary of Nganjambina (Kunibidi) adverbials and glossary of miscellaneous Nganjambina (Kunibidi) words: preliminary version.**
Maningrida, NT.
1981, **Glossary of Nganjambina (Kunibidi) nouns: preliminary version.**
Maningrida, NT.
1982, **Glossary of Nganjambina (Kunibidi) verbs: preliminary version.**
Darwin.
McNair, Norm and Helen McNair, **Garindji dictionary.**
Meier, A., 1977, **Vocabulary of the Dieri tribe.**
Merlan, Francesca, 1982, **Ngalakan dictionary.**
Sydney.
Wardaman vocabulary.
Merlan, Francesca, Amy Dim.gayg, Lulu Jillimbirnga, Jessie Roberts, Rita Morgan and others of Jilimir,gan and Barunga, 1990, **Mangarrayi vocabulary.**
Mirranda Language Centre and Frances Kofod, **Mirriwoong dictionary (back up).**
Moore, George F., Waduk wordlist.
Moorhouse, Matthew and Jane Simpson, **Ngayawang vocabulary.**
REVIEWS
Thieberger, Nicholas and Alice Smith, Yinawangkga wordlist.
Thieberger, Nicholas, Manny Lockyer, Bernie Lockyer and Sam Clifton, Kariyura wordlist.
Thompson, David A., "Sand beach" language: an outline of Kunku Ya'u and Umpla.
Thorley, Peter, Walungurru curriculum database.
Tindale, Norman Barnett, Parallel vocabularies in 160 Australian languages.
Trimmer, Kathy, 1990, Wangaati language material.
Troy, Jakelin, 1990, Australian Aboriginal contact with the English language in New South Wales: 1788 to 1845. PL, B-103.
Tsunoda, Tasaka, 1971-72, Warngu vocabulary.
University of Adelaide, 1969, Angararinja/English word list.
Vasszolyi, Eric Gisbrel, c.1972, Mangala vocabulary.
Walker, Alan, [Collective date files].
Wangka Maya, Pilbara Aboriginal Language Centre, Nicholas Thieberger, Desmond Taylor, Pijuka Edwoun, Minyawu Miller, Desmond Taylor, Muski Taylor and Waka Taylor, Warman wordlist.
Wartipi Dictionary Project and others, Wartipi dictionary.
West, La Mont, Daban semik dictionary.
Wrigley, Matthew and Kimberley Language Resource Centre, Wongkaunga wordlist.
Wungmurra, Djarranyay, Dharwirangu dictionary.
Yamaji Language Centre and Doug Marnion, Wajarri dictionary.

APPENDIX 3: WORKS-IN-PROGRESS MENTIONED IN O'GRADY (1971)

The following is a summary of information about work mentioned in O'Grady (1971): 782-787 which has subsequently appeared, been deposited at AIATSIS, or been reworked.

The order of presentation, and the references, are as used by O'Grady.

Various Tasmanian vocabularies have been compiled and published in Piombey (1976). A larger version of Teichelmann and Schürmann's work on Pankaria and Kaura was found in Cape Town and has been keyboarded by Jane Simpson. Taplin's Narriyari was keyboarded by Steve Johnson and Jane Simpson. Curr's vocabularies have been widely quoted and incorporated into other works. They have now been keyboarded, but it should be noted that the printed version apparently differs from the manuscript, copies of which are in the possession of R.W. Dixon.

Moore's (1884) dictionary of Wadjuk is subsumed into an encyclopaedic Nyungar dictionary by Alan Dench, as is the work of Lyon (1833), Nind (1831) and Salvado (1854).

H. Hale's (1846) Gamilaraay and Wiradjuri have been reworked by Peter Austin, and Sally Mc Nicol and Dianne Hosking, respectively. Rideley's (1875) Gamilaraay has been reworked by Peter Austin. Brough-Smyth's (1878) vocabularies appear in Barry Blake's keyboarding of Victorian languages.

Some of Bates (1904) 5,000 typescipt pages of vocabularies have been keyboarded; those representing the south-east of Western Australia by Luise Hercus and Nicholas
Thieberger (1993), and those from the Kimberley by McGregor (1992). Black’s (1920) vocabularies have been incorporated into Jane Simpson’s South Australian data.

Capell’s 600-item wordlist in 40 Arnhem Land languages has been keyboarded and is held at the AIATSIS library. T.G.H. Strehlow’s 80,000 word dictionary has not appeared, though a typescript copy of around 6,700 entries is held at AIATSIS. Nekes and Worms work is being keyboarded by Bill McGregor.

O’Grady’s Nyangumarta, Yulparija, Walmajarri, Payungu, Umpila dictionaries, and his 100-item lexical list of 142 communals were keyboarded as part of O’Grady’s University of Hawaii project (1966-67). An electronic data file is available in ASED.


Kenneth Hale’s data have been reproduced or incorporated into later work. In particular, the Wambaya material has been checked and used by Nordlinger (1993), and the Yanyuru (Yanyuwa) material is in Bradley et al. (1992). The Gunwinggu material is being incorporated into a comparative Gunwinggu dictionary in preparation by Nicholas Evans.

Peters’ Nyangumarta dictionary is in Germany; efforts are being made to have copies available in Australia. Von Brandenstein’s 10,000-entry Ngarluwa dictionary is now in AIATSIS files. Shebeek’s Murgin lexical work has not appeared, but he has produced a text-based dictionary of Adnyamathanha. Dixon’s work on Dyirbal and Yidny is now well known.

La Mont West’s Dabawt dictionary typescript is in the AIATSIS collection. Unsure about the Kuku Ya’o and Umpila material. Coote has material on several Kimberley languages (Coote & Elkin 1974). Holmér’s work on Dangal has been incorporated into Lissarrague (1994). His survey of south-eastern Queensland (1983) has also been incorporated into Jeanie Bell’s work; unsure about the Gadang material.

The Table in O’Grady (1971:786) lists AIAS grantees of the time. Work by the following is listed in Appendix 1 or Appendix 2 of the present paper: J. B. Blake; J. Bolt; N. Chadwick; M. C. Cunningham (now Sharpe); A. H. Hall; L. Hercus; Charles Osborne; C. Yalley; J. de Zwaan.

Alpher’s Yir-Yoront dictionary is now available. Flint’s material on Wanyi and Yiddindji (Yidny) has been deposited at AIATSIS. Other work mentioned in O’Grady (1971:787) which has subsequently appeared is that of E. Hughes (Nunggubuyu); A. Peile (Kukatja); L. Reeces (Warlpiri); J. Stakes (Anindilyakwa); B. Low (Guppayinyu); K. McKelson (Nyangumarta, Yulparija, Mangala, Karajarri); B. and H. Gurenbeck (Gidabal); B. Sommer (Kunjen); B. Sayers and C. Kilham (Wik-Mungkan); H. and R. Hershberger and L. and W. Oates (Kuku-Yalanji); J. Kirton (Yanyuwa/Yanyuwa); K. and D. Glassow (Burarrwa); H. Hinch (Maung); J. and M. Marsh (Gardudjarr/Martu Wangka); K. and L. Hantze (Pintupu); J. Hudson and E. Richards (Walmajarri).

O’Grady (1971) does not mention William Dawes’s information on Dharuk/Eora, the language of Sydney (which has been reworked by Jacklin Troy), nor Gerhardt Laves, who produced extensive lexical and grammatical information about Nyungu languages of the south-west of Western Australia, the area around La Grange (Karajarri). These works are available at AIATSIS.

REFERENCES

Not including dictionaries cited. These can be found in Table 1 (§2.2), in Appendix I or in Appendix 2.


Capell, Arthur, 1945, Methods and materials for fieldworkers in Australia. Sydney: Oceanica.

Crowley, Terry, 1985, Bilingual dictionaries. LLD23 Dictionary-Making (Unit Two, Topic Two), 105-118. University of the South Pacific.


Hoeper, Robert, forthcoming, They care about the language: Aboriginal lexicographers in Central Australia.


Some twenty-five years ago, in the context of his general program of documenting the lexical and grammatical wealth of Pama-Nyungan, Geoff O’Grady invited me to work with him in Honolulu during June 1968. This was just one of the many times we worked together on aspects of Pama-Nyungan linguistics, always to my great benefit and delight. On this particular occasion, I promised Geoff that I would assemble some of the Pama-Nyungan vocabularies I had in my fieldnotes, including the short Linngithigh vocabulary which I now deliver, somewhat shamefacedly, a full quarter century after making my promise.

Linngithigh is a Northern Paman, initial-dropping language originally spoken in the vicinity of the Hey and Embly Rivers, in a region referred to as Winduwinda by the speaker whom I worked. This is north of the Watson River, in western Cape York Peninsula, North Queensland. The anthropological literature (with which I am personally familiar, at least) leaves rather ambiguous the precise location of the original Linngithigh territory, due perhaps to certain characteristics inherent in the Aboriginal practices favoured in designating local communities in the area, practices which sometimes result in the circumstance that distinct groups have very similar names (e.g. Linngithigh and Laynghith, Ndra'ngith and Ndrwa'ngith). Thomson (1972) places the Linngithigh territory north of Pera Head, west of the Hey and south-west of the Embly, a region according reasonably well with my understanding of the location of Winduwinda.

The lexical items set out below were taken down in 1960, during a period of approximately two weeks, at Aurukun, an important centre in the Wik linguistic area south of the Watson. The items were given to me by the late Sam Kerendun, who, though himself fully fluent in Linngithigh, was one of the very last speakers of the language. He was a man of many and varied talents, with correspondingly many responsibilities at Aurukun, and I was extremely fortunate to be able to work with him, if only for a fortnight. I would like to dedicate this brief vocabulary both to Geoff O’Grady and to the memory of Sam Kerendun.

A brief sketch of the phonology and morphosyntax of Linngithigh is to be found in O’Grady, Voegelin and Voegelin (1966), and a number of observations on the language are offered in Capell (1956). An excellent report on the grammar and lexicon of a closely related Northern Paman language is found in Crowley (1981).

A LINNGITHIGH VOCABULARY

KEN HALE

Minerva Access is the Institutional Repository of The University of Melbourne

Author/s:
Goddard, C; Thieberger, N

Title:
Lexicographic research on Australian Aboriginal languages 1968–1993

Date:
1997

Citation:

Publication Status:
Published

Persistent Link:
http://hdl.handle.net/11343/29017

File Description:
Lexicographic research on Australian Aboriginal languages 1968–1993

Terms and Conditions:
Terms and Conditions: Copyright in works deposited in Minerva Access is retained by the copyright owner. The work may not be altered without permission from the copyright owner. Readers may only download, print and save electronic copies of whole works for their own personal non-commercial use. Any use that exceeds these limits requires permission from the copyright owner. Attribution is essential when quoting or paraphrasing from these works.