

Having it Both Ways: Towards Recognition of the Kurna Language Movement Within the Community and Within the University Sector

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Abstract

Kurna, the language of the Adelaide Plains in South Australia, was ‘sleeping’ until its reclamation and re-introduction in the 1990s. Most likely it ceased being spoken on a daily basis in the 1860s, but is now being revived on the basis of nineteenth century written documentation in the absence of sound recordings. The Kurna language movement is unusual in the Australian context in that it is driven by a long-standing, but poorly defined partnership embodied in Kurna Warra Pintyanthi (KWP), a committee with no legal standing, which operates between the Kurna community and the tertiary sector. This partnership has hinged on the relationship of Kurna community members with Amery, an academic at the University of Adelaide, and his involvement in many aspects of Kurna language revitalisation. Recently, with Commonwealth government funding, key Kurna people, Buckskin and Steve Gadlabarti Goldsmith, have been employed by the University to consolidate Kurna language revival. KWP is now seeking to clarify and formalise its relationship with the University through a Memorandum of Agreement, whilst the Kurna language movement is establishing a community-based incorporated body to support KWP in order to make the Kurna language movement sustainable over the long term.

Résumé

Kurna, la langue des plaines d’Adélaïde en Australie du Sud, était dormante jusqu’à sa ré-introduction dans les années 1990. Elle a sans doute cessé d’être parlée quotidiennement dans les années 1860, mais elle est maintenant en train de renaître sur la base de la documentation écrite au dix-neuvième siècle et en l’absence d’enregistrements sonores. Le mouvement de la langue kurna est inhabituel dans le contexte australien en ce qu’il est mené par un partenariat à long terme, mais mal défini, entre Kurna Warra Pintyanthi (KWP), un comité sans aucun statut juridique, qui sert de lien entre la communauté kurna et le secteur tertiaire. Ce partenariat a articulé la relation de membres de la communauté kurna avec Amery, un universitaire de l’Université d’Adélaïde, et son implication dans de nombreux aspects de la revitalisation du kurna. Récemment, avec le financement du gouvernement du Commonwealth, les personnes clés kurna, Buckskin and Steve Gadlabarti Goldsmith, ont été employés par l’Université pour consolider la renaissance du kurna. KWP cherche maintenant à préciser et à officialiser sa relation avec l’Université par un mémorandum d’accord, tandis que le mouvement de la langue kurna met en place une structure légale communautaire pour soutenir KWP dans afin de rendre le mouvement de la langue kurna durable à court et à long terme.

Introduction

The importance of collaborative research and language work between linguists and language communities is now increasingly recognized. There has been a significant movement away from the linguist-focused model (Czaykowska-Higgins, 2009: 20) where Indigenous peoples have served as subjects for academic linguists towards approaches which are more inclusive. Gerds’ (2010) detailed discussion of the role of the linguist in language revitalization programs from her experience in British Columbia resonates with our experience in Adelaide. Rice (2010) also gives an excellent overview of the issues.

Language reclamation, by its very nature, makes no sense without collaboration. Otherwise it would be a meaningless academic exercise. Kurna language reclamation began more than two decades ago as a collaboration between non-Indigenous linguists and musicians working alongside Kurna people. As we shall see below, teamwork has been a constant, and considerable efforts have been made towards empowering Kurna people to teach their own language

(Amery & Buckskin, 2012) and to develop their own Kurna language resources.

The Kurna Language Movement

The Kurna language movement is undoubtedly the best documented and longest running case of the revival of a ‘sleeping’ language in Australia. It began in earnest in 1990 with the composition of several Kurna songs in a songwriting workshop for Kurna, Ngarrindjeri and Narungga, local to Adelaide and surrounding districts. Kurna is an awakening language, most likely not having been spoken on a daily basis since the 1860s. It is now being reclaimed on the basis of written historical documentation, there being no extant sound recordings of the language as it was spoken in the 19th century. See Amery (2000) for a comprehensive study of the origins of the Kurna language movement during the 1990s.

The Partnership

In a previous Foundation for Endangered Languages (FEL) conference we introduced the partnership established between Kurna people, linguists and other

researchers through Kurna Warra Pintyanthi (KWP) (Amery & Rigney, 2007). This paper builds on the previous presentation covering developments that have taken place over the last six years and focusing specifically on the relationship between the University of Adelaide and KWP. We will need to revisit some matters discussed in Amery & Rigney (2007) but that previous paper provides a more complete picture of the origins of KWP and its projects.

Kurna in the Tertiary Sector

The Kurna language has an expanding place within the tertiary sector through it being the subject of teaching, research and community service through KWP. It also plays a role through naming of units, buildings and policies within the institution. Many of these requests have been addressed by KWP. A Kurna version of the University's Reconciliation Statement appeared in 2003 and two successive Vice Chancellors have made use of the Kurna language in addressing audiences¹⁴.

The Teaching of Kurna and Kurna Linguistics

Towards the end of Amery's PhD, he introduced a tertiary level course: Kurna Language & Language Ecology at the University of Adelaide in 1997, teaching, Kurna linguistics, sociolinguistics and the language itself. In preparation for the teaching of the course a series of 13 weekly language lessons were scripted and recorded by Amery together with Cherie Warrara Watkins and Lester Irabinna Rigney. This immediately raised the issue of ownership of the language material. In the normal course of events, a university would have no problem in selling such a course to another institution if there was a market, but Amery felt it important that Kurna people be in control of their language. The issue remained unresolved at that time. However, the course was launched by the Vice Chancellor of the University of Adelaide, Prof. Mary O'Kane, the Chief Executive Officer of the Department of Education and Children's Services Dennis Ralph and Kurna Elders, Dr Alitya Wallara Rigney, Dr Lewis Yerloburka O'Brien and Senior Woman Georgina Yambo Williams. A panel discussion with six Elders was organized on the first day of the course, Cherie Warrara Watkins was employed as Tutor and several guest lectures from Kurna people were organized. Every time the course was taught in subsequent years, Kurna people have continued to contribute to the course. For many students, hearing first-hand from Kurna people, who are otherwise relatively unseen in a large metropolitan city, is the highlight of the course.

In 2000 Amery was awarded a small University Research Grant which funded a series of workshops to develop words and expressions for parents and

caregivers to use with babies and young children. These workshops brought a number of Kurna people together and it was from these workshops, named Kurna Warra Pintyandi, that KWP was born as a committee.

The tertiary-level Kurna course has evolved over the years since it was first introduced to keep pace with developments over the last 15 years (see Amery, 2013). Kurna language proficiency is no longer a primary course aim. Rather, students wishing to speak and understand Kurna are referred to Buckskin's School of Languages senior secondary courses. However, the university-level Kurna course maintains its focus on Kurna linguistics and sociolinguistics.

Community Service

Another aspect of the role of the academic, though not quantified in the workload model, is community service. As an academic who specializes in Kurna linguistics, there is a constant flow of requests for information about the language, assistance with selection of Kurna names, and translation tasks or composition of Kurna texts. Since the early 2000s close to 1,000 such requests have come from schools, government departments, city councils, organisations, businesses, clubs and the general public, as well as Kurna people themselves.

Research

The tertiary sector is also the site of intensive research into the Kurna language, Kurna placenames and sociolinguistics. Archival research is ongoing and there is a second major action research focus pioneering efforts to re-introduce a sleeping language that is undertaken together with the Kurna community. The university is also the site for the development of a range of Kurna language resources. Various Kurna language projects are outlined in Amery & Rigney (2007: 24–25). Since then, a Kurna Dictionary project is nearing completion (Morley, forthcoming) and a range of audio and visual language resources are in preparation. These are discussed in more detail below.

¹⁴ Prof. James McWha opened the Indigenous Languages Conference in 2007, whilst Prof. Warren Bebbington addressed the Reconciliation Awards in May 2013.

Name	Refers to	Date
Wilto Yerlo ¹⁵ 'sea eagle'	Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Education unit	1995
Mattanya Housing	Aboriginal student housing	1996
Yaitya Purruna 'Indigenous health'	Indigenous Health Unit	2000
Kaurna Warra Pintyandi 'creating Kaurna language'	Workshops funded by a small University Research Grant	2000
Kaurna Warra Pintyanthi 'creating Kaurna language'	Kaurna language committee (KWP)	2002
Bakkadla Pinde 'frost pit'	Frost chamber located at Waite Research Institute	2005
Kauwungatta 'water rat'	New Kaurna word for 'water rat'	2005
Pilyapilyangga 'butterfly place'	Butterfly Garden, Waite Campus Children's Centre	2008
Ingakarni Wardli ¹⁶ 'place of inquiry'	Building: Faculty of Engineering, Computer & Mathematical Sciences	2012
Tarrkarri Turrka 'future learning'	Indigenous Education Strategy	2012

Table 1: Some Kaurna Names in Use at the University of Adelaide

Consolidating Kaurna Language Revival project (CKLR)

In 2012 a significant amount of funding was obtained from the Commonwealth government over three years which enabled the employment of several part-time employees. Kaurna man, Jack Kanya Buckskin filled the position of Kaurna Language Coordinator 0.4 Full-Time Equivalent (FTE) complementing his employment elsewhere as a teacher of Kaurna language. Kaurna man Steve Gadlabarti Goldsmith was recruited as Kaurna Media Production Officer 0.4 FTE mentored by Paul

¹⁵ http://www.adelaide.edu.au/wilto_yerlo/

¹⁶

<http://www.adelaide.edu.au/adelaidean/issues/54101/news54148.html>

Finlay (also 0.4 FTE), and Gerhard Rüdiger, Kaurna Administration Coordinator (0.4 FTE).

This grant radically changed the situation because it brought two key Kaurna individuals into the University as employees and significantly expanded the KW team. Both Buckskin and Goldsmith are accomplished performers with Kaurna dance troupes of their own. Goldsmith is the host of the *Nunga Wangga* program about Aboriginal issues on Radio Adelaide 5UV. Buckskin is the main teacher of Kaurna in schools, and features in the film *Buckskin* soon to be released. Altogether there are now three part-time Kaurna employees working alongside three non-Indigenous employees/mentors and another three researchers. KWP staff work at the direction of the project manager (Amery) on a day-to-day basis, but ultimately, Amery and others work at the direction of the KWP committee.

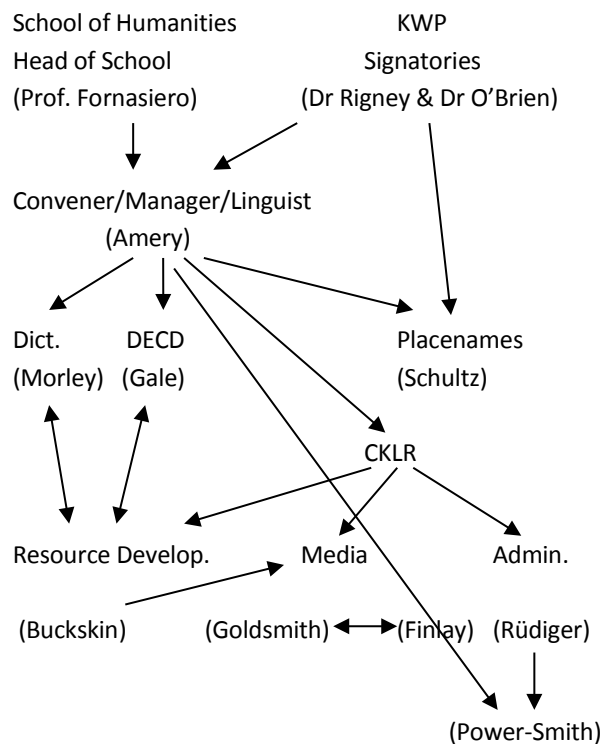


Figure 1: Organisational structure

Current Collaborations at the 'Coalface'

Kaurna language work at the University of Adelaide is now characterized by intense collaboration on many projects and tasks:

- Kaurna man Steve Gadlabarti Goldsmith is being mentored by non-Indigenous man Paul Finlay with many years media experience. They have formed a close working relationship planning, filming and editing video clips and sound recordings together for teaching purposes. Goldsmith works both in front and behind the camera. Other Kaurna people including Buckskin, Taylor Power-Smith, Lewis Yerloburka O'Brien and others, contribute to the filming,

- The Kurna Dictionary is being produced by non-Indigenous PhD student Jasmin Morley. The dictionary will be in print, on CD and on-line. Jack Kanya Buckskin is checking entries, especially spellings, and is recording sound files for all Kurna words included whilst Jasmin is teaching young Kurna Administrative Assistant Taylor Power-Smith how to edit the sound files. Another non-Indigenous linguist in Sydney, James McElvenny, is providing technical assistance at a distance. Amery is providing linguistic advice in relation to spelling, morphological analysis, glossing etc and overall management of the project.
- Non-Indigenous man Chester Schultz is carrying out detailed and meticulous research into Kurna placenames. He has been searching for a young Kurna person to mentor and to take on this research task in the future, but none have yet stepped forward. However, Chester's work is regularly disseminated and discussed at KWP meetings. Amery provides some linguistic advice in between meetings, whilst Rüdiger is assisting with modifications to the Kurna Placenames website.
- Non-Indigenous linguist and educator Mary-Anne Gale is mentoring Buckskin and Power-Smith through their Certificate IV course 'Teaching an Endangered Aboriginal Language (Kurna)'. At the same time Gale and Corina Kuoni, an InDesign specialist, are working alongside Buckskin to update and re-design Kurna language resources, such as the *Kurna Alphabet Book* (Buckskin & Gale, forthcoming).
- On the administration side, Power-Smith works closely with Rüdiger and Amery in day-to-day KWP administrative tasks.

Partnerships Between KWP and Others

KWP has entered into various small research contracts and consultancy agreements over the years, such as place-naming proposals and translation tasks. Below we discuss two more substantial projects which involve formal partnership agreements.

The Southern Kurna Placenames Project initiated with Commonwealth Government funding by the City of Onkaparinga through the Kurna Tappa Iri Regional Agreement in 2005, worked to research Kurna place names and to map them on GoogleEarth (see <http://www.kurnaplacenames.com>). It resulted in a formal partnership agreement between the Kurna Heritage Board and the four southern councils (local government entities), the City of Onkaparinga, City of Marion, City of Holdfast Bay and Yankalilla District Council, together with the South Australian state government Geographical Names Unit and KWP.

Kurna Community Language and Culture Partnership The South Australian Department of

Education and Child Development (DECD) adopted a policy of forming partnerships with Aboriginal community organisations in 2011 with funding attached, to facilitate the teaching of Aboriginal languages, professional development of teachers of Aboriginal languages and development of resources to support the teaching of these languages. In the case of the Kurna language, KWP has been identified by DECD as the most suitable body through which it can provide support for its teaching.

In 2011 a partnership agreement was drawn up between the then DECS, the University of Adelaide and KWP. This partnership agreement was renewed in 2012, with additional resources flowing to KWP for the 2012-2013 financial year.

This funding is being used to complement Commonwealth Indigenous Languages Support (ILS) funding, but primarily to engage Mary-Anne Gale to work with Buckskin and Power-Smith as outlined above, to facilitate the TAFE Certificate III course, which produced eight Kurna graduates, and to develop Kurna language curriculum.

Support from within the University

The University of Adelaide has hosted KWP and its projects since 2004. With Amery's return from the University of South Australia to the University of Adelaide a KWP account was established. A range of grant applications in the name of KWP have been lodged through the School of Humanities at the University of Adelaide. Various research consultancies have also been run through the School. See Amery & Rigney (2007) for a summary of these projects up until that time.

Whilst the University of Adelaide has hosted KWP and the KWP webpages, making available meeting rooms and the use of University infrastructure (telephones, computing, photocopying, mail etc) it has never contributed financially to the activities of KWP. Rather, the University levies a 20% overhead from all grant income received, which in the case of the latest triennium Consolidating Kurna Language Revival grant amounts to the sum of \$84,000. Furthermore, KWP receives no interest from donations or funds held within KWP accounts.

A thorough cost-benefit analysis of Kurna language reclamation from its inception in 1989 up until 2005 was conducted, showing the various sources of income and expenditure (Amery & Mühlhäusler, 2005). According to our calculations \$723,626 was outlaid over a 17-year period representing an average cost of \$42,566 per annum (less than a full-time teacher's salary) (Amery & Mühlhäusler, 2005: 16). This figure includes the cost of Amery's PhD and teaching salaries. Outcomes over this period in terms of language knowledge and proficiency, resources, academic publications, the use of Kurna language in the public domain and increased public awareness have been significant. A snapshot of KWP finances and progress

since 2005 is included in the KWP Business Plan as part of the 2012 ILS application and in 2013, in the Memorandum of Application for recognition of separate KWP logo and branding. KWP functions on the basis of research grants, royalties, donations, fees for translating and naming services and a large voluntary contribution.

KWP has been largely invisible, both within the University and in the public domain. It does not appear in the University A-Z Directory and upper echelons at the University seemed to have no knowledge of its existence. However, KWP has been asked from time to time by various units and researchers in the University for assistance in the naming of buildings, programs and other entities related to their research (see Table 1 introduced previously). KWP was recently built into Tarrkarri Tarrka, the University's Indigenous Education Strategy adopted by University Council on 5th June 2013. Within Recommendation 20 the strategy stipulates the initiative to "Establish formal relationships with Kurna Elders through the Kurna Warra Pintyandi Committee" (University of Adelaide, 2013: 26). Radio Adelaide (101.5 FM), a University initiative, broadcasts trailers recognizing Kurna people, and is now putting a series of Kurna language radio shows to air. The Kurna and other related language revival programs within the Discipline of Linguistics are reasonably well-known amongst University staff.

However, like the community itself, KWP is driven by a small group of Kurna community members and supporters. Its vulnerability, both in capacity and status led to a rather low public profile. This is also a reason to establish a registered legal entity to support the Kurna language movement from outside the University structures.

On the other hand, the profile of the Kurna language has been raised dramatically over the last 20 years, not least through the Adelaide City Council Kurna placenaming initiative¹⁷. Adelaide has become the city in Australia with the most visible representation and recognition of Aboriginal (Kurna) culture. The effects of the Kurna language revival movement are becoming noticeable in the national census results with an increasing number of people claiming to speak Kurna at home.

It is fair to say that the University has found it hard to understand the nature and structure of KWP, and to know how to respond to it. A recent discussion between KWP and the University of Adelaide concerning the continued use of the KWP logo and branding of its work are symptomatic of this lack of understanding of the specific situation of the Kurna language program. Comparisons are immediately drawn with Wilto Yerlo¹⁸ but Wilto Yerlo is a creation of the University to recruit

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<http://www.adelaidecitycouncil.com/community/reconciliation/kurna/place-naming/> (Accessed 8 July 2013)

¹⁸ http://www.adelaide.edu.au/wilto_yerlo/

and support Indigenous students studying at the University. Parallels are also drawn with the Mobile Language Team (MLT)¹⁹ and sometimes people assume that KWP and the MLT are the same entity. Again, the MLT was created with Commonwealth ILS funding as a University body to support language work carried out by other community-based programs.

By contrast KWP is, as mentioned above, a genuine University-community collaboration more than 15 years in the making recognized locally and internationally. KWP university-based staff support a single Aboriginal community in the reclamation of its language. The research on which this language revival is based, on the other hand, feeds into the linguistic teaching at the University with resultant international recognition as a centre for the revival of endangered languages.

KWP, thus, has an existence partly independent of the University while at the same time maintaining a symbiotic relationship. It has one foot inside the University of Adelaide and the other outside in the Kurna and wider city community.

A Memorandum of Understanding/ Memorandum of Agreement

In 2001 when Amery moved from the University of Adelaide to the University of South Australia (UniSA), taking the course with him, he successfully negotiated a Memorandum of Agreement signed by the UniSA Pro Vice Chancellor International, Kurna Elders Lewis O'Brien and Alitya Rigney and Amery himself. The case was relatively simple, because none of the intellectual work in developing the Kurna course had been undertaken at UniSA.

On return to the University of Adelaide, Amery and Kurna Elders approached University lawyers to negotiate a similar Memorandum of Understanding there. A document was drafted in 2004 and revisited in 2006 and 2009, but for reasons never disclosed, the document was never signed.

The matter was raised again in 2013 in relation to the KWP logo and branding. Following discussions with the acting Head of School, Dean of Faculty, Dean of Indigenous Education and Vice Chancellor and input from Legal and Risk, Business Engagement and Adelaide Research and Innovation, the Vice Chancellor communicated his willingness to sign a Memorandum of Understanding with Kurna Elders.

This is a real milestone. No other universities in Australia have a memorandum of agreement in place with owners/custodians in relation to language courses and language work. Similar agreements have been signed internationally. For example, the Miami Tribe of Oklahoma signed a Memorandum of Understanding with Miami University, Oxford, Ohio in March 2006 (Burke, 2007: 1). In this case, the Miami Tribe had an

¹⁹ <http://www.mobilelanguageteam.com.au>

ongoing relationship with Miami University since the 1970s.

Kaurna Language Within the Community

Prior to language reclamation efforts, Kaurna was a true 'sleeping' language. A handful of Kaurna words were used within Nunga English, but people knew these words as Narungga, Ngarrindjeri or some other language, not Kaurna. And there were numerous Kaurna placenames in use, but few if any knew the meaning of these names. See Amery (2000: 179-205) for an overview of the use of Kaurna language by 1997. The use of Kaurna language within the community today is still restricted or limited. Kaurna people use their language to give speeches of welcome to Kaurna country and non-Kaurna people are encouraged to make statements of acknowledgement of Kaurna country at conferences and gatherings and this use is on the increase. Kaurna language is being used more and more in public performance, with three Kaurna dance troupes, all with Kaurna names: *Paitya* 'deadly', *Taikurtinna* 'family' and *Kuma Kaaru* 'one blood'. The use of Kaurna in casual conversations and in the home is also increasing, but this is where the use of Kaurna language is most restricted. Buckskin, however, is raising his daughter speaking Kaurna, and as a two and a half year old, she has already acquired a repertoire of dozens of commonly used Kaurna words and expressions and just produced her first two-word sentence in Kaurna, though English is clearly her dominant language.

Incorporation

Over the years people have suggested that KWP incorporate. But KWP is a small body with limited finances is limited and has not had the capacity in the past to manage as an incorporated entity.

The application to the Commonwealth Indigenous Languages Support (ILS) program for triennial funding (2012-2015) required the preparation of a business plan. Incorporation at the end of the triennium was identified as a key tenet of the business plan. Indigenisation is also a high priority for the funding body.

This triennial grant is our window of opportunity. After initial research by Gerhard Rüdiger, as KWP administration officer, KWP opted to form a community-based organization to operate in tandem with KWP which will remain where it is, as a committee based at the University of Adelaide.

Incorporation will be sought through the Office of the Registrar of Indigenous Corporations (ORIC) which stipulates, advises and supports the establishment and running of Indigenous corporations in Australia. KWP agreed to submit a "Rule Book", based on that of Kaurna Yerta, the Kaurna native title claimant group in Adelaide, under the proposed name Miyurna Warra Karrpanthi (MWK) 'Supporting Kaurna Language'.

For a number of reasons, the inaugural meeting scheduled for 24th April 2013 had to be postponed. A

key point of discussion was the use of "Miyurna" in the proposed name of the corporation and throughout the draft of the "Rule Book". Community members discussed the origins and merits of using this name in several meetings and opted to retain "Kaurna" as the name of the language and people.

"Kaurna" has become well-known as the name for the people of the Adelaide Plains. There is clear evidence, however, that this name, popularized by Norman B. Tindale, a South Australian Museum ethnologist, in the early 20th century, derives from *kornar* 'people' in the neighbouring Ngarrindjeri/Ramindjeri language. The equivalent term in the language of the Adelaide Plains people is "Miyurna". However, an entire generation has grown up identifying as "Kaurna", and this name has become widespread in educational resources, the public domain and the Native Title claim. For these reasons, "Kaurna" will be used in the foreseeable future.

This discussion helped to raise awareness of a key question in Kaurna culture (self-naming). The inaugural meeting to incorporate the KWP sister organization, with name yet to be determined, will be held in due course, perhaps after the publication of the learner's guide (Amery & Simpson, in press).

Challenges and Tensions

Community demands, expectations and priorities are often different to those of the tertiary institution. As an academic at the University of Adelaide, one is expected to devote roughly 40% of one's time engaged in teaching-related activity, 40% research and 20% administration. Of course, this is a rough guide only. The workloads of some staff, for example many language lecturers, are more heavily engaged in teaching while others may bear a heavier administrative load. The administrative load for junior staff may be relatively light compared with senior staff. On top of this, all staff members are expected to engage in community service, though this is not quantified in the workload model. As an academic engaged in Kaurna language work, this aspect of the role is especially onerous. And likewise, for a Kaurna Language Coordinator, responsibilities to the community are huge.

Academic research is expected to be oriented towards scholarly refereed publications in high-ranking journals or reputable international academic publishers. But such publications put this work out of the reach of most Kaurna people, most of whom are not academics. We are currently publishing our Kaurna learner's guide (Amery & Simpson, in press) with an Adelaide-based publisher, Wakefield Press, with an excellent local reputation for publishing South Australian history and creative works. However, as academics we are being discouraged by the university from publishing even there. Kaurna language resources, such as our Kaurna funeral protocols (Amery & Rigney, 2006) have a limited market because the Kaurna community is small and language-specific publications like this have limited appeal beyond the community. Whilst these kinds of

Kaurna language resources entail a significant amount of research, these publications do not count as academic publications. Therefore, much of our research activity, because it is conducted with and for community, is not recognized, which has funding implications for the University as a whole.

The community expects KWP staff to be out there in the community and to engage on their own terms. However, community members often operate with different notions of time. For instance, the last meeting of the Kaurna Heritage Board to which Amery was invited to address, discussed internal matters which delayed the requested presentation. The time needed for community consultation is a widespread issue, recognized for instance by Gerds (2010: 185-6).

KWP has been criticized recently for an insufficient community consultation process in relation to the adoption of a revised spelling system in 2010. These revisions were discussed at several KWP meetings to which all Kaurna people are welcome and they were workshopped with staff and parents at Kaurna Plains School. Some refinements were adopted as a result of these discussions. They were utilized during the recording and production of Kaurna radio shows in 2010 and 2011 (broadcast in July 2013) and gone into in depth during the TAFE (adult education) workshops held throughout 2012 and early 2013. Buckskin utilized the new spellings since 2010 in his teaching of Kaurna to adults and teenagers and they were used by Amery & Buckskin in the teaching of the Kaurna summer school at the University of Adelaide in 2013. We thus saw first-hand how easily new learners and even those who were already used to the old Teichelmann & Schürmann (1840) spellings were able to work with the new spellings. The first publications in new spellings are about to appear in 2013 (Amery & Simpson, in press; Morley, forthcoming).

Discussion

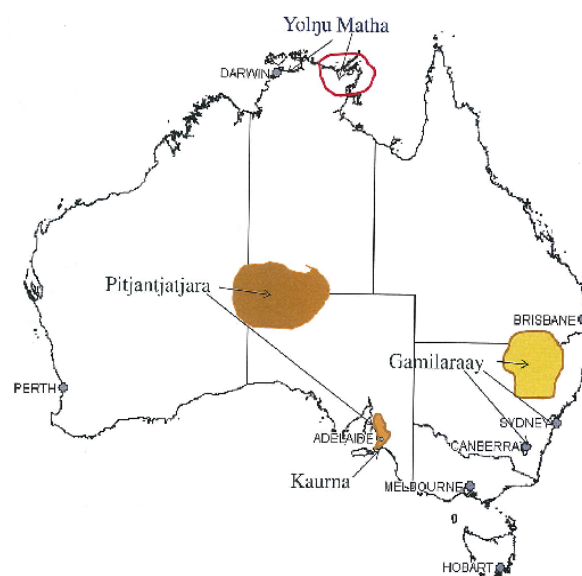
KWP is unique within the Australian context, with Kaurna being the only Australian Aboriginal language taught in a tertiary institution on-country. Few Aboriginal languages are taught in Australian universities, just Pitjantjatjara at UniSA, Yolŋu Matha at Charles Darwin University and Gamilaraay at Sydney University and the Australian National University (ANU) (see Purdie et al, 2008: 99-110; Giaccon & Simpson, 2012 and Amery, 2007). But none of these languages are actually taught in tertiary institutions located on-country²⁰. Pitjantjatjara is taught in Adelaide, but the Pitjantjatjara-Yankunytjatjara lands are located more than 1,000 km away in the far northwest of South Australia and across into the southwest of the Northern Territory. The Yolŋu lands are located in northeast

²⁰ Interestingly, the Yolŋu Matha lessons now are live-streamed from the home communities of the Yolŋu lecturers though in the beginning, and for many years, they were taught from the university in Darwin (Dhanjal & Greatorex, 2013).

Arnhem Land, some 400-650 km east of Darwin. Darwin itself is in Larrakiya country. Gamilaraay country is 400 to 650 km from Sydney in north-central New South Wales and across into southern Queensland. The Iyora/Dharuk people are the traditional owners of Sydney and the Ngunnawal for Canberra. In introducing these languages off-country, the traditional owners have been consulted. The Larrakiya were asked for permission prior to the introduction of the Yolŋu program in Darwin as were the Kaurna with the introduction of the Pitjantjatjara in Adelaide.

Language programs are mainly based in community-controlled language centres or with community councils or other community-based organisations. Whilst there have been many Kaurna organisations over the years, their primary concerns have been land and heritage issues.

KWP has become the interface between Kaurna community, the University of Adelaide and the wider public with the mandate to support the Kaurna language. KWP is often approached by members of the public, schools and education providers, government entities, all kinds of organisations and groups, as well as members of Kaurna community organizations.



Map 1: Aboriginal Languages Taught in the Tertiary Sector

It is important for KWP employees to be able to demonstrate association with the University and to position themselves as working for a community-based organization. Being affiliated with the University accords KWP and KWP-sponsored research academic status and credibility. As a community-based project, KWP is well-recognised and widely accepted by the Kaurna people for its work.

Conclusions

The Kaurna language movement is characterized by a long-running partnership between Kaurna people and non-Indigenous linguists, educators, musicians and others since its inception in 1989-90. Good

understandings and collaborative work practices have been established between key people involved in the activities of KWP, though much needs to be done to build and strengthen relationships with the Kaurna community beyond KWP. The relationship between KWP and the University is, at the time of writing, being clarified and formalized through a Memorandum of Understanding, whilst the formation of a community-based sister organization to support KWP through a legally independent entity is in progress.

KWP is actively seeking ways to make the Kaurna language movement sustainable over the long-term using the window of opportunity we have now that has been opened with triennial commonwealth government funding, to set these structures in place. The survival of the Kaurna language movement depends heavily on a small number of committed individuals. This is an inescapable reality. But having supportive structures and agreements in place can help to make the language movement less dependent on individuals and solidify their place within the university and the community.

Acknowledgements

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