

Indigenous language and social identity: papers in honour of Michael Walsh

edited by
Brett Baker,
Ilana Mushin,
Mark Harvey
and Rod Gardner



Pacific Linguistics
College of Asia and the Pacific
The Australian National University

Published by Pacific Linguistics
School of Culture, History and Language
College of Asia and the Pacific
The Australian National University
Canberra ACT 0200
Australia

Copyright in this edition is vested with Pacific Linguistics
First published 2010

National Library of Australia Cataloguing-in-Publication entry:

Title: Indigenous language and social identity : papers in honour of Michael Walsh / edited by Brett Baker... [et al.]
ISBN: 9780858836181 (pbk.)
Notes: Includes bibliographical references.
Subjects: Festschriften--Australia. Aboriginal Australians--Languages. Aboriginal Australians--Languages--Social aspects. Language and culture--Australia Group identity--Australia
Other Authors/ Contributors: Walsh, Michael, 1948- Baker, Brett J. (Brett Joseph), 1967- Australian National University. College of Asia and the Pacific.
Dewey Number: 306.440994

Ku Thithay Sugarbag Dreaming by Lawrence Kolumboort.

The people left the place Mawurt because two women drowned as they tried to recover their dilly bags of cycad nuts that they had been soaking. The cycad nuts are poisonous if they are not prepared and cooked properly.

The ancestors travelled throughout the country forming hills, creeks and waterholes. The ancestors settled in different places.

Ku Thithay (Native Bee) and Ku Nguluyguy (Echidna) continued to the hill known as Bathuk and they settled there.

Nguluyguy said, "I am going up to the top of the hill and I will stay there."

Thithay said, "I am too tired and my legs are too short for me to climb up there, I will stay here at the bottom."

Ku Thithay stays in the stone arrangement at the base of the hill.

Copypedited by the editors and formatted by Andrea Kittila

Cover art: Ku Thithay Sugarbag Dreaming by Lawrence Kolumboort.

© Collection of Kanamkek Yile-Ngala Museum, Wadeye Northern Territory,
commissioned in 1995. Courtesy the artist's family

Printed and bound by Addcolour Digital Pty Ltd, Fyshwick, Canberra

Table of contents

Acknowledgements	ix
List of contributors	x
List of maps and figures	xii
Language maps	xiii
1 <i>Introduction</i>	1
ROD GARDNER, MARK HARVEY, ILANA MUSHIN and BRETT BAKER	
2 <i>Michael Walsh: a personal reflection</i>	13
ROS FRASER	
Language, identity and country	
3 <i>Place and property at Yintjingga/Port Stewart under Aboriginal Law and Queensland Law</i>	31
BRUCE RIGSBY and DIANE HAFNER	
4 <i>Linguistic identities in the eastern Western Desert: the Tindale evidence</i>	43
PETER SUTTON	
5 <i>Juwaliny: dialectal variation and ethnolinguistic identity in the Great Sandy Desert</i>	67
SALLY DIXON	
6 <i>Who were the ‘Yukul’? And who are they now?</i>	79
BRETT BAKER	
7 <i>Colonisation and Aboriginal concepts of land tenure in the Darwin Region</i>	105
MARK HARVEY	
8 <i>Aboriginal languages and social groups in the Canberra Region: interpreting the historical documentation</i>	123
HAROLD KOCH	
9 <i>The Kuringgai puzzle: languages and dialects on the NSW Mid Coast</i>	145
JIM WAFER and AMANDA LISSARRAGUE	

10	<i>Dawes' Law generalised: cluster simplification in the coastal dialect of the Sydney Language</i>	159
	DAVID NASH	
11	<i>Space, time and environment in Kala Lagaw Ya</i>	179
	LESLEY STIRLING	

Language, identity and social action

12	<i>Turn management in Garrwa mixed-language conversations</i>	207
	ILANA MUSHIN and ROD GARDNER	
13	<i>Laughter is the best medicine: roles for prosody in a Murriny Patha conversational narrative</i>	223
	JOE BLYTHE	
14	<i>Collaborative narration and cross-speaker repetition in Umpila and Kuuku Ya'u</i>	237
	CLAIR HILL	
15	<i>Co-narration of a Koko-Bera story: giants in Cape York Peninsula</i>	261
	PAUL BLACK	
16	<i>A tale of many tongues: documenting polyglot narrative in north Australian oral traditions</i>	275
	NICHOLAS EVANS	
17	<i>Trading in terms: linguistic affiliation in Arandic songs and alternate registers</i>	297
	MYFANY TURPIN and JENNY GREEN	
18	<i>Social identity and recurrent themes in the Djanba repertory</i>	319
	NICHOLAS REID	
19	<i>Encounters with genre: apprehending cultural frontiers</i>	333
	J. R. MARTIN and DAVID ROSE	
20	<i>Language disguise in OT: reversing and truncating</i>	347
	TONI BOROWSKY	
21	<i>Sense individuation and syntactic optionality</i>	365
	NICK RIEMER	
22	<i>Maintaining languages, maintaining identities: what bilingual education offers</i>	385
	JANE SIMPSON, JO CAFFERY and PATRICK McCONVELL	

9

The Kuringgai puzzle: languages and dialects on the NSW Mid Coast

JIM WAFER and AMANDA LISSARRAGUE

9.1 Introduction

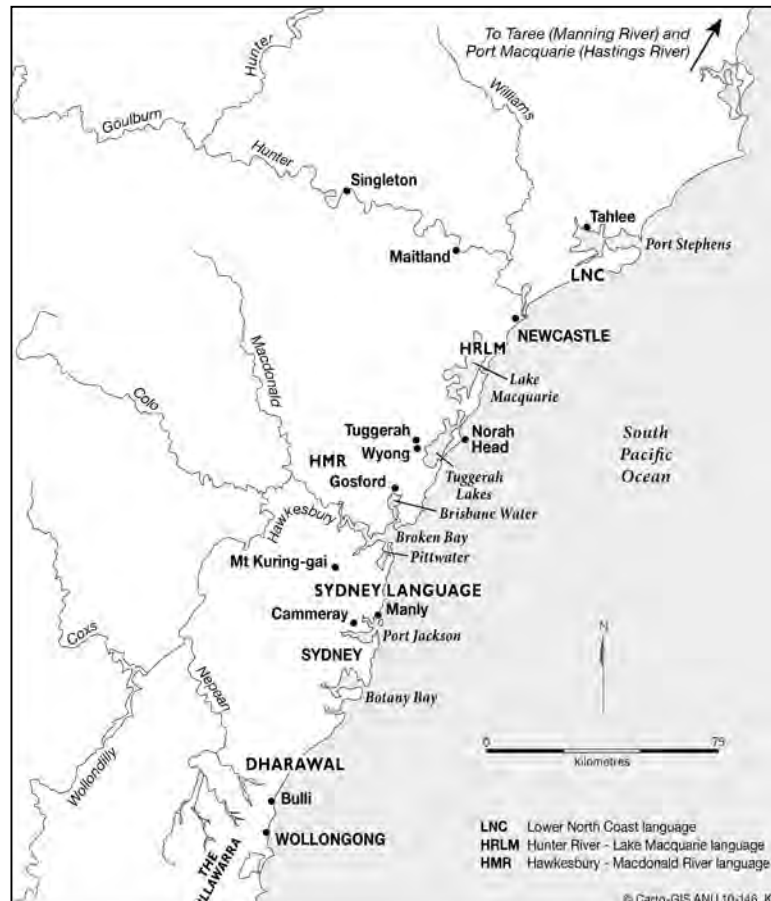
In 1981 Michael Walsh published a ‘Language map of south-eastern Australia and Tasmania’ (Walsh 1981), which synthesised the state of knowledge at that time concerning the locations of and relationships between the language varieties of NSW and neighbouring areas of the south-east of the continent. It was a product of Michael’s interest, which has been long-standing and ongoing, in the interdisciplinary enterprise that combines linguistics with geography, anthropology and history in order to understand better the language situation in Australia before its disruption by the effects of colonisation.¹

The present essay builds on the work of Michael Walsh and others, to present a new synthesis of the currently available information about the languages of a particular area of NSW. These languages were all spoken in the area that appears on John Fraser’s map of 1892 under the name ‘Kuringgai’.

9.2 Origins of ‘Kuringgai’

Today the term ‘Kuring-gai’ (with a hyphen) is probably best known as the name of a mountain to the north of Sydney, in the vicinity of Hornsby. The name (also spelt as ‘Ku-ring-gai’) has been applied as well to a number of other geographical features in that region. In about 1842, the surveyor J. F. Mann (n.d.:1) had used a similar word to illustrate the use of a suffix of place. ‘Gar, Gâi, Gâlie, Galla or alla refer to pleasant camping places, as “Kuringa Gai”’ (cf. Smith 2004:23). Mann gives no indication as to the meaning of the first of the two components of this name, nor as to the location of the place it designates. But it is quite possible that this word, however it may be analysed, is associated with the origins of ‘Kuring-gai’ as a placename.

¹ Michael Walsh has made significant contributions to the study and revitalisation of Aboriginal languages over a wide area of Australia. But here we want to recognise in particular the work he has devoted to the languages of New South Wales (Walsh 2001, 2002a, 2002b, 2003, 2005a, 2005b, Walsh & Lowe 2009, Palmer 2000). We are especially grateful for the support and encouragement Michael has given to our own work in this area (Wafer & Lissarrague 2008).



Map 9.1 Languages and places in the area covered by Fraser's 'Kuringgai'

'Kuringgai' has also been used as the name of a language, or group of languages, on the NSW mid coast, and the evidence suggests that, in this usage, the term was invented by Maitland schoolmaster John Fraser² in the late 19th century. Fraser uses the spellings 'Kuriḡgai' and 'Kuriḡ-gai' on p. v and the frontispiece map of his compilation of the works of Lancelot Threlkeld and others (Fraser 1892), and 'Kuringgai' and 'Kurringgai' in his notes on this map (p. ix). The dotted *g* (*ḡ*) is the symbol Fraser used to represent *ŋ*. According to James Kohen (1993:14), Fraser invented the name by using R. H. Mathews's Dharruk grammar (1901) to form the possessive case of the word *kuri* or 'man', so it means literally 'belonging to the (Aboriginal) men' (cf. Fraser 1892:x).

Fraser used this term as a superordinate name to refer to 'one great tribe' (1892:v) that purportedly extended from just north of Port Macquarie as far south as Bulli. North of the Hunter, its territory goes inland as far as the headwaters of the Manning and Williams Rivers. South of the Hunter, its inland extent includes the headwaters of the McDonald, Hawkesbury and Cooks Rivers. On the Hunter it extends inland only as far as Singleton,

² Revd Dr John Fraser (1834–1904) migrated to Australia from Scotland and lived in Maitland, where he established a high school at Sauchie House (subsequently Maitland Boys High School). He was also an ethnologist, linguist and advocate of Christian missions. Today he is best remembered for his work *An Australian language* (1892), which was a compilation of published and unpublished language material by L. E. Threlkeld and others. (Extracted from the brief biography of Fraser by David Roberts at <http://www.newcastle.edu.au/school/hss/research/publications/awaba/people/reverend-john-fraser.html>.)

where it meets the ‘Kamalarai’ tribe (Fraser 1892:map, ix). In other words, Kuringgai country is supposed to include a very large area of coastal NSW in which a number of distinct Aboriginal languages, and groups of languages, have since been recognised. Fraser’s ‘Kuringgai’ has caused considerable confusion in the century and a bit since it was first invented (e.g. Enright 1932:75, Capell 1970:21, Tindale 1974:191), and the purpose of the present essay is to clarify the varying usages of the term.

Linguistically, the term has been used with two distinct meanings. In the first usage, which is quite close to Fraser’s, it refers to a kind of ‘super-language’ on the NSW mid coast. In the second usage, which originated with Arthur Capell (1970), it refers to a language supposedly spoken from the Central Coast to Sydney’s north shore. We will deal with each of these usages in turn.

9.3 Super-languages

As we have observed, Fraser regarded the inhabitants of the area from the Hastings River to Bulli as members of ‘one great tribe’, which he calls ‘Kuringgai’. It’s also clear that he regarded them as speakers of a number of varieties of a single language. For example, he says that the ‘Awabakal dialect’ was ‘essentially the same as that spoken by the sub-tribes occupying the land where Sydney now stands, and ... they all formed parts of one great tribe, the Kuriḡgai’ (1892:v).

We believe that there were five languages in the area supposedly occupied by this super-tribe. The southernmost, spoken in the Illawarra, was Dharawal (Eades 1976). The next language to the north is perhaps most commonly known today by the name ‘the Sydney language’, although its coastal and inland dialects have often been called ‘Eora’ and ‘Dharug’, respectively (Troy 1994:9). It was probably spoken from the north side of Botany Bay to the southern bank of the Hawkesbury River and Broken Bay (Smith 2004:21).

The three languages that were spoken to the north of the Sydney language have often been called by names that were originally used for particular dialects of those languages, namely, Darrkinyung, Awabakal and Gathang. Since there is no evidence that any of these languages had a superordinate Indigenous name, we have preferred to give them geographically based names, rather than privilege the name of one particular dialect over others. We call them ‘the Hawkesbury-MacDonald River language’, ‘the Hunter River-Lake Macquarie language’, and ‘the Lower North Coast language’, and sometimes use the abbreviations HMR, HRLM and LNC.

Recent research suggests the following picture of the dialectology of these languages. The Hawkesbury-MacDonald River language had two varieties: an unnamed coastal variety, spoken on the north side of Broken Bay to the west of Brisbane Water, and along adjacent areas of the Hawkesbury River; and an inland variety called Darrkinyung (cf. Wilkins & Nash 2008:500-502).

The Hunter River-Lake Macquarie language also had coastal and inland varieties. The coastal varieties were divided into a southern variety, sometimes called ‘Kuringgai’, and a northern variety, usually called ‘Awabakal’.³ There were also two inland varieties, but the geographical distinction between them is less clear. These were called Wanarruwa (Wonnaruah) and Kayawaykal (Geawegal).

³ We use quotation marks to indicate that these were not Indigenous names for the language varieties in question. Both names were invented by John Fraser. He acknowledges his invention of the name ‘Awabakal’ on p. v of his *An Australian language* (1892).

As for the Lower North Coast language: the main dialectological division appears to have been between a northern variety, called Birrbay, and a cluster of southern varieties, which were not unified by a single name. Among the southern varieties, one, sometimes called Gathang (Kattang), was spoken along, and probably to the south of, the Manning River. Further south, there was a coastal variety, now usually called Warrimay, and an inland variety called Guringay (Gringai).⁴ There may have been more dialects of these languages than the ones we have listed. But, as far as we can tell at the present time, these are the only ones that have left a trace in the historical record.

Most recent linguistic work has recognised the five languages in question (Dharawal, the Sydney language, the Hawkesbury-MacDonald River language, the Hunter River-Lake Macquarie language and the Lower North Coast language), with variations in the nomenclature. Nonetheless, there is still some confusion about the distinction between the Hunter River-Lake Macquarie language and the Lower North Coast language. As recently as 1974, N. B. Tindale (1974:193, 201) was able to assert that Threlkeld's 1834 grammar of the Hunter River-Lake Macquarie language pertained to a variety of 'Worimi' (that is, the Lower North Coast language). The implication is clearly that HRLM and LNC are the same language, with a number of local varieties.

Even more recently, Luke Godwin has produced tree diagrams of the relationship between languages in north-eastern NSW that would suggest a similar view (1990:91 [Fig. 5.1]; 1997:303 [Fig. 17.4]). His prose accounts do not refer specifically to the languages with which we are dealing here, but the conventions used in his diagrams appear to indicate that he regards Awabakal (HRLM), Warrimay (LNC) and Birrbay (LNC) as varieties of the same language. Unfortunately, he provides no evidence in support of the relationships that the diagrams are intended to portray.

The view that Tindale and Godwin seem to be repeating here (that HRLM and LNC are not distinct languages, but varieties of the same language) had some currency earlier in the 20th century. The confusion about this matter probably arose for two separate but related reasons, which we will deal with in turn in the next two sections. The first of these is that a number of writers seem to have modified Fraser's 'super-language' concept to include just these two languages (HRLM and LNC). The second is that there is evidence that speakers of HRLM and LNC were in fact able to understand each other.

9.3.1 Modifications of the 'super-language' concept

There was a fairly large quantity of good linguistic material about the Hunter River-Lake Macquarie language from an early date. Threlkeld's *Specimens of a dialect of the Aborigines of New South Wales* appeared in 1827, and was followed by a series of other publications (Threlkeld 1834, 1836, 1850). As far as we are aware, the earliest published material about the Lower North Coast language did not appear until 60 years later, in the form of the Hastings and Manning wordlists in Curr's third volume of *The Australian Race*, of 1887.⁵ This means that, for most of the 19th century, the observations about the relationship between the Hunter River-Lake Macquarie language and the Lower North

⁴ This name bears a phonological similarity to 'Kuringgai', the subject of this paper. The differences between the two names (and their referents) will be discussed below.

⁵ Listed in our references under the authors, 'Branch', and 'Bench of Magistrates, Wingham'.

Coast language were based on greater familiarity with HRLM. Consequently, these accounts are sometimes read as implying that LNC was a dialect of HRLM.

This changed in the 20th century, by which time HRLM was extinct. With the publication of more material about LNC, which continued to be spoken till at least mid-century, formulations of the converse view began to appear. In 1932 W. J. Enright published what is probably the earliest statement of the proposition that HRLM is a dialect of LNC. Enright believed that ‘the Awabakal spoke Kattang’ (1932:76). Moreover, he implies that the super-language Fraser had called Kuringgai was the same language that Enright himself called Kattang. Admittedly, he modifies the boundaries somewhat, placing the northern boundary at the Manning, so as to exclude Birrbay, and the probable southern boundary at the Hawkesbury River (1932:75-76, cf. Enright 1933:161). In other words, both Fraser and Enright treated HRLM and LNC as constituents of a super-language to which they gave different names. Fraser called it Kuringgai, and Enright called it Kattang.

As late as 1966 another work appeared that supported the notion of a super-language that included HRLM and LNC. In that year Nils Holmer published the first volume of his research into LNC, which he calls by the name Kattang. In the introduction to this study, he tells us that one of his informants (Fred Bugg) believed that ‘Kattang country extended at one time from Telegraph Point or Port Macquarie, in the north, to the Hawkesbury river in the south, or almost as far as Sydney’ (Holmer 1966:1). Thus, Kattang territory is supposed to take in not only the country of the speakers of Birrbay (excluded by Enright), but also the country associated with HRLM.

9.4 Mutual intelligibility of HRLM and LNC

There is reasonably good evidence that the speakers of the Hunter River-Lake Macquarie language and the Lower North Coast language were able to understand each other. But mutual intelligibility does not necessarily mean that two language varieties are dialects of the same language. Bi- or multilingualism is common in Aboriginal Australia, and this is particularly true where the languages in question are neighbours and/or closely related (cf. Sutton 1991:52-55 and ff.).

As noted above, most of what we know about the Hunter River-Lake Macquarie language comes from the work of the early missionary linguist Lancelot Threlkeld. Threlkeld evidently learned to speak this language with some fluency. He himself said that ‘the natives of Port Stephen [sic] use a dialect a little different, but not so much as to prevent our understanding each other’ (Gunson 1974:vol. 2, 271). Likewise, he once referred to ‘the natives from Port Stephens, ... of a slightly different dialect to our tribes’ (Gunson 1974:vol. 1, 56, Turner & Blyton 1995:24). It is also recorded that Threlkeld ‘preached to about fifty blacks at Tahlee on Port Stephens in their own language, and was listened to attentively’ (Elkin 1932:359, cf. Enright 1932:76). The language spoken at Port Stephens is what we here call Lower North Coast.

It’s possible that the ‘Tahlee blacks’ were a captive audience, whose attentiveness does not necessarily indicate comprehension. Still, Threlkeld was generally a careful writer, so when he says that he and the Port Stephens Aborigines were able to understand each other, this is probably a fairly good indicator that the two languages were indeed, to some extent, mutually comprehensible. But Threlkeld does not draw from this fact a conclusion that the two languages were the same – indeed, quite the contrary. When he outlines the boundaries of the Lake Macquarie ‘dialect’, he speaks of ‘those tribes occupying the limits bounded

by the North Head of Port Jackson,⁶ on the south, and Hunter's River on the north, and extending inland about sixty miles, all of which speak the same dialect' (in Gunson 1974:vol. 2, 271).

Threlkeld is evidently using 'dialect' here in the same way that we use the term 'language' – that is, as a speech form that is capable of containing a number of local variations. We know that the varieties of HRLM spoken to the south (which Capell called 'Kuringgai') and to the west (which we here call Wanarruwa) had a number of demonstrable differences from the Lake Macquarie variety ('Awabakal') that Threlkeld spoke and recorded. Threlkeld obviously does not regard these differences as sufficient reason to exclude these regions from his account of the boundaries of his own 'dialect'. But Port Stephens, which lies to the north of the Hunter, *is excluded, in spite of the fact that Threlkeld and the speakers of the Port Stephens language were able to understand each other.*⁷

There is similar evidence of mutual intelligibility from the perspective of speakers of the Lower North Coast language. W. J. Enright cites the opinion of Becky Johnson, born in 1858, that 'Kattang [LNC] was the language as far as the Manning River, and ... the language of the Singleton natives was similar. The Aborigines of Newcastle also spoke the same language, but "a little harder"' (1933:161). Enright draws the conclusion that 'Kattang' extended 'from the Manning as far south as Norah Head and possibly to the Hawkesbury' (1933:161). A. P. Elkin was in communication with Enright and held a similar view of the matter. He treats the names of two HRLM dialects (Awabakal and Geawegal) as 'local subdivisions' of the Kattang (1932:359).

The major classificatory studies of Australian languages in the last four decades (O'Grady, Voegelin & Voegelin 1966, Oates 1975, Dixon 2002) have all recognised HRLM and LNC as distinct languages. Our own research (e.g. Lissarrague 2006, 2010, Wafer & Lissarrague 2008) supports this view.⁸ In other words, we believe that both the 'super-language' construct and the view that HRLM and LNC are the same language are very misleading, and should be abandoned.

As noted above, we recognise Awabakal, Wanarruwa (Wonnaruah), Kayawaykal (Geawegal) and 'Kuringgai' (which we call 'Karikal') as dialects of the Hunter River-Lake Macquarie language, and Warrimay (Worimi), Birrbay (Birpai/Biripi), Gathang (Kattang) and Guringay (Gringai) as dialects of the Lower North Coast language. More detail about the dialectology of these two languages can be found in Wafer and Lissarrague (2008:ch. 6). But we take the opportunity here to focus on one particular dialect of HRLM that is immediately relevant to this paper, namely, the dialect that has been called 'Kuringgai'.

⁶ We leave out of consideration at this point the question of why Threlkeld placed the southern boundary of HRLM so much further south than we would locate it. A little later in this paper we discuss evidence to suggest that there was a colony of speakers of HRLM that migrated to the north shore of Port Jackson in the early 19th century. This has led to some confusion about the language that was spoken on Sydney's north shore, which we attempt to clarify.

⁷ Threlkeld preached at Tahlee in 1833 and gave his report on the boundaries of HRLM in 1838. In other words, it is clear that he was aware of the degree of mutual comprehensibility of HRLM and LNC at the time he excluded LNC from his account of the territory in which HRLM was spoken.

⁸ A comparison of the verb and pronoun paradigms of HRLM and LNC provides enough evidence to define two separate languages. R. M. W. Dixon (2002:356-357) has some interesting observations about 'borrowing of pronominal forms and possible merging of paradigms' in the two languages, but notes that these changes are unlikely ever to be fully recovered.

9.5 ‘Kuringgai’ as a dialect of the Hunter River-Lake Macquarie language

First, we need to make a distinction between two phonologically similar but distinct dialect names. Guringay (‘Gringai’), which, as we have just mentioned, is a dialect of the Lower North Coast language, is distinguished from ‘Kuringgai’ by the absence of a velar stop after the velar nasal (that is, there is no *g* after the *ng*). The origins of ‘Kuringgai’, as with the name ‘Awabakal’, are, as we have observed above, probably attributable to John Fraser. Fraser mentions it in his 1892 compilation of the works of Threlkeld, and, as we have seen, makes extravagant claims for its geographical range.

Some 80 years after Fraser’s invention of the term, Arthur Capell decided to adopt it and give it a new meaning. Capell discovered manuscripts by Threlkeld (n.d.) and J. F. Mann (n.d.) in the Mitchell Library ‘which were found to agree’ (Capell 1970:23), and which he found ‘convenient to call Kuringgai’ (1970:21). Capell’s interests in the article he wrote subsequently are predominantly with language boundaries. His speculations in this regard seem to us to be supported by only the barest minimum of evidence (1970:23-24).

Capell attempts to assemble better documentation for his linguistic claims – for example, his classing of Kuringgai ‘as a language separate from Awaba’ (1970:24). But the evidence is unconvincing. That they are distinct dialects is clear from Capell’s vocabulary comparisons, where the Kuringgai vocabulary contains a number of items different from Awabakal and sometimes clearly cognate with words from the Sydney language or the Hawkesbury-MacDonald River language. But that Kuringgai and Awabakal are dialects of the same language is evident from Capell’s three example sentences in Kuringgai. As Capell himself points out, every single morpheme in these sentences occurs also in Awabakal (1970:26-27).

In 1993 James Kohen published a ‘Dictionary of the Kuringgai Language’ (Kohen 1993:245-253), based on the same manuscripts by Threlkeld and Mann. This vocabulary also contains all the items in James Larmer’s ‘native vocabulary’ from ‘Brisbane Water and Tuggerah Beach Lakes’, and ‘Hunter’s River, Brisbane Water and Newcastle’ (Larmer 1898:224-225). The heading of the article in which Larmer’s vocabulary was published indicates that he collected the data in 1834.

It appears that the three sources – that is, Threlkeld, Mann and Larmer – pertain to a dialect of the Hunter River-Lake Macquarie language spoken to the south of ‘Awabakal’. According to Kohen, Mann’s vocabulary ‘was probably collected in the early 1840s in the Gosford area’ (1993:245). Keith Smith is even more specific. He says ‘there is plenty of evidence that Mann collected [the material in his manuscript] from Boio⁹ when he first met him in 1842 while surveying at Brisbane Water’ (pers. comm. 29/09/2004).¹⁰ In other words, Larmer’s and Mann’s data were collected independently in the same area and in roughly the same period. Moreover, linguistic analysis shows them both to pertain to a dialect of HRLM. This provides fairly strong evidence that a southern variety of HRLM was spoken on the Central Coast in the first half of the 19th century.¹¹

⁹ Boio, or Long Dick, was a son of Bungaree.

¹⁰ In his thesis on Eora clans, Smith writes as follows: J. F. Mann, ‘whose brother Gother Kerr Mann was police magistrate at Gosford, first met Cora Gooseberry Bungaree (Queen Gooseberry) and her son Boio while surveying at Brisbane Water in 1842 ... As Mann did not mention any subsequent meetings with Boio, he presumably obtained the vocabulary from him in 1842’ (2004:19-20).

¹¹ This is likely to have been the longest surviving of the dialects of HRLM, since it was undoubtedly the one spoken by ‘Queen Margaret’, who died in 1894, and was survived by her children and grandchildren. She was born at Wyong in about 1827 (Turner & Blyton 1995:45, 47) and ‘did not belong to the Lake Macquarie tribe but to the Brisbane Water tribe’ (Turner & Blyton 1995:47).

It is more difficult to trace the geographical origin of the material in the manuscript attributed to Threlkeld,¹² which also clearly pertains to a dialect of HRLM. The author entitled it ‘Specimens of the Language of the Aborigines of New South Wales to the Northward of Sydney’, followed by the word ‘Karr,eē’ in brackets (cf. Capell 1970:23, Kohen 1993:245). It seems likely that this word is Threlkeld’s transcription of the name of the language variety in question. We are unable to attribute any other definite meaning to it.¹³

Capell (1970:23) links Threlkeld’s ‘Karr,eē’ to the term ‘Carigal’, which was used by John Hunter as the name for a Broken Bay tribe ‘to which the “stranger” belonged who speared Governor Phillip at Manly in February, 1791’ (Capell 1970:23). Capell is probably right to suggest a connection between these two terms. The dialect name ‘Karr,eē’ could be transcribed, in the orthography we use for HRLM, as *kari*; and the ‘tribal’ name ‘Carigal’ could be transcribed as *kari-kal*, where the suffix *-kal* has gentilic and possibly associative functions. In other words, the Karikal are the people associated with the term ‘Kari’.

This interpretation of the data fits with the information we have about the location of this language variety and its speakers. The Carigal were a Broken Bay tribe, and Karr,eē was, we have argued above, the dialect spoken at Brisbane Water, which is the northernmost of the large geographical ‘breaks’ that make up Broken Bay. There is some debate about how far south this dialect extended. But our contention is that the present state of research does not provide unambiguous support for the notion that it reached further than Brisbane Water.

Capell gives no other justification for calling this dialect ‘Kuringgai’ than the fact that it was ‘convenient’. We suggest that this nomenclature has several major weaknesses. The name appears to have been invented by John Fraser, using morphemes from the Sydney language. There is no evidence that it was ever used by the speakers of the language variety to which the name was applied by Capell, or by their neighbours. And its original use, as the name of a super-language of the central NSW coastal belt, makes it ambiguous. To avoid ongoing confusion about the referents of this term, we suggest dropping it as a name for the southern dialect of HRLM.

There are two obvious alternative names that would probably have a degree of authenticity: Kari and Karikal (spelt here in the orthography Lissarrague has developed for language revival in HRLM). We have decided to adopt the latter as a more appropriate name for the southern dialect of HRLM than ‘Kuringgai’ (cf. Smith 2004:93).

9.6 Locating Karikal

Helen Brayshaw’s *Aborigines of the Hunter Valley* (1986) contains the most recent study of ‘tribal distribution and affiliations’ in the Hunter River-Lake Macquarie area (ch.

¹² Keith Smith makes a good case (2004:20-21) that this vocabulary comes from the pen of Threlkeld, and that Threlkeld’s informant may have been Bungaree or his son Boio (Long Dick).

¹³ It would be tempting to interpret it as the word for ‘[Aboriginal] man’, since this word is *kari* in the neighbouring Wanarruwa dialect – that is, if our interpretations of the Wanarruwa source forms *kurri* (Miller 1887:356) and *kurry* (Fawcett 1898:181) are correct. But in the manuscript in question, Threlkeld writes the word for ‘blackfellow’ as *kōōreē*, which is presumably his rendition of the same word that would be spelt as *kuri* in the Awabakal dialect. Keith Smith (2004:23) interprets the term *Karr,eē* at the head of Threlkeld’s manuscript as the word for ‘no’. We have been unable to substantiate this in our attempts to trace the source Smith cites, and, as far as we have been able to ascertain, there are no HRLM data that would support an interpretation of *kari* as the word for ‘no’.

3). Brayshaw applies Fraser's term 'Kuringgai' to the people who occupied the country south of the 'Awabakal', but omits them from her map of 'major tribal groups in the Hunter region' (1986:39, Fig. 3). This implies a lack of social and linguistic connection with the groups speaking other dialects of the Hunter River-Lake Macquarie language. On the basis of the evidence already cited, we suggest that the speakers of the southern (or Central Coast) dialect of HRLM (which Brayshaw calls 'Kuringgai' and we call 'Karikal') were indeed a distinct social and linguistic group. But we note that their dialect was so closely related to the other varieties of HRLM that they should be included in any study of the Hunter Valley peoples and their languages.

Brayshaw avers that the Kuringgai lived 'both north and south of Broken Bay' (1986:40). She provides no supporting evidence for this assertion, but it seems likely that the idea came from Capell. In his article of 1970, Capell claimed that Kuringgai extended across the Hawkesbury. Our own view is that the coastal dialect of the Hawkesbury-MacDonald River language (of which the inland dialect was Darrkinyung) was probably spoken in the area of Broken Bay that lies south and west of Brisbane Water. There is at least good evidence that it extended further inland along the northern shore of the Hawkesbury River (cf. Wilkins & Nash 2008:500-502). It seems to us unlikely that Kuringgai could find its way across this dialect, or the intervening geographical obstacles, to be spoken on the opposite shore of Broken Bay. So let us examine Capell's evidence for this assertion.

Capell bases his case largely on the title of the manuscript by Threlkeld and the first few lines of the manuscript by J. F. Mann. As discussed above, Capell (1970:23) located 'Kuringgai' at Broken Bay on the basis of the connection he perceived between Threlkeld's term 'Karr,eē' and John Hunter's term 'Carigal'. But his main evidence for proposing that this dialect was spoken all the way from Broken Bay to the north side of Sydney Harbour comes from Mann.

The first couple of lines of Mann's manuscript read as follows: 'Australian Aborigines – A few notes on their language etc. Information obtained from Long Dick an influential native of the Cammeray tribe, a son of Bungaree and Queen Gooseberry'. Capell does not explicitly mention Long Dick's supposed origins in the Cammeray Tribe, but it seems clear that he used this information as part of his argument that 'Kuringgai' extended as far as the northern shores of Port Jackson.

Let us consider his case in detail. Capell tells us that Mann got his vocabulary from Long Dick, son of Boongarie. He then goes on to quote Governor Macquarie, who wrote of 'Boongarie and his tribe of the Pittwater tribes'. On the basis of this slender evidence, Capell concludes that the language recorded in the manuscripts by Threlkeld and Mann 'is the language of the Pittwater people, and included the well-known Cammeraygal on the extreme south, along the northern shores of Port Jackson' (Capell 1970:24). There is nothing else to corroborate this argument, unless it be the reference in Mann's manuscript to Long Dick's membership of the Cammeray tribe.

Capell's conclusion is disputed by historian Keith Smith, in his thesis on Eora clans (2004). Smith makes a persuasive case that the language that Capell called 'Kuringgai'¹⁴ was 'brought to the north shore of Port Jackson by Bungaree and his people from Broken Bay, 35 km north of Port Jackson', some time after 1800 (Smith pers. comm. 29/09/2004).

¹⁴ Smith himself calls this language variety 'Caregal' (2004:93 and *passim*) and 'Gari-Gari' (2004:23 and *passim*).

‘Evidently Bungaree brought his Karr,ee (Gari-Gari) language to Sydney about 1800, when ... he “came with the remnants of his Broken Bay group to settle in Sydney”’ (2004:23).¹⁵

In other words, Bungaree and his people, including presumably his son Long Dick (‘Boio’), appear to have created a colony of speakers of the southern dialect of HRLM (Capell’s ‘Kuringgai’) on the north shore of Port Jackson, at a place which is otherwise usually associated with the name ‘Cammeray’.¹⁶ They were not long-standing residents of this area, and came originally from Broken Bay. It is worth specifying that the region with which they were originally associated stretched from Brisbane Water to the north along the Central Coast. We have found no evidence to support the view that their territory extended further west or south on Broken Bay.

The existence of a colony of speakers of the Hunter River-Lake Macquarie language on the north shore of Sydney has led to considerable confusion. Capell would have been right in his assertion that ‘a dialect of Awabakal’ was spoken on the northern side of Sydney Harbour (cited in Wurm 1972:137, n.7) if he had specified that the speakers were immigrants, and that ‘Awabakal’ was not the traditional language of this area. But his statement has been read to imply that HRLM extended from the Hunter River to Sydney’s north side, and, as we have tried to demonstrate here, that is clearly wrong.

9.7 Conclusion

We propose the following (hypothetical) picture of the dialectology of the region attributed by Capell to ‘Kuringgai’. The language of Brisbane Water, extending north through Tuggerah Lakes, was the southern dialect of HRLM (Karikal), and the language of the north shore of Broken Bay, to the west of Brisbane Water, was the coastal dialect of the Hawkesbury-MacDonald River language.¹⁷ The language of the south shore of Broken Bay was the Sydney language. Broken Bay appears to have been the area where the three languages converged, and was thus probably a linguistic transitional zone.

The three languages in question here (the Hunter River-Lake Macquarie language, the Hawkesbury-MacDonald River language and the Sydney language) are the central members of the supposed ‘super-language’ for which Fraser invented the name ‘Kuringgai’. But contemporary research distinguishes as well another language to the north, which we call the ‘Lower North Coast’ language, and another to the south, called ‘Dharawal’. There

¹⁵ The words in double quotation marks are from F. D. McCarthy (1966:177). The evidence seems quite unambiguous. Bungaree was born at Brisbane Water, and his move to Sydney’s north shore is abundantly attested in the historical records. More detail is provided by Smith in his thesis (2004:16-24, 135-151).

¹⁶ The original occupants of this place appear to have been called *camaragal* (or something similar). It seems more likely that they had already died or been driven out than that they were displaced by this incursion from the north (cf. Smith 2004:20, 23, 137).

¹⁷ We call this dialect ‘coastal’ to distinguish it from the inland dialect (Darrkinyung) rather than to imply that it reached as far as the sea shore. At the mouth of the Hawkesbury the coast is, of course, interrupted by Broken Bay, and thus reaches inland for some considerable distance. How far east the ‘coastal’ dialect of HMR extended along the north shore of Broken Bay is, at this point, unclear. We know from Wilkins and Nash’s analysis (2008) of the data from the 1791 government expedition that it was spoken on the lower reaches of the Hawkesbury. But the only evidence we have that it was spoken further east along Broken Bay is the name given to it by Tuckerman (1897; cf. Tuckerman 1887): ‘the Hawkesbury River and Broken Bay Aboriginal language’.

were thus five languages spoken in the area attributed by Fraser to ‘Kuringgai’; moreover, comparative research suggests that they belong to three distinct language groups.¹⁸ In other words, there appear to be no grounds whatever for grouping them under the single term ‘Kuringgai’.¹⁹

References

- Bench of Magistrates, Wingham. 1887. No. 187: The Manning River. In Edward M. Curr (Ed.), *The Australian race: Its origin, languages, customs, place of landing in Australia, and the routes by which it spread itself over that continent* (Vol. 3, pp. 350-351). Melbourne: John Ferres, Government Printer.
- Branch, John. 1887. No. 186: Port Macquarie. In Edward M. Curr (Ed.), *The Australian race: Its origin, languages, customs, place of landing in Australia, and the routes by which it spread itself over that continent* (Vol. 3, pp. 338-350). Melbourne: John Ferres, Government Printer.
- Brayshaw, Helen. 1986. *Aborigines of the Hunter Valley: A study of colonial records*. Scone, NSW: Scone & Upper Hunter Historical Society.
- Capell, Arthur. 1970. Aboriginal languages in the south central coast, New South Wales: Fresh discoveries. *Oceania*, 41(1), 20-27.
- Curr, Edward M. (Ed.). 1886-87. *The Australian race: Its origin, languages, customs, place of landing in Australia, and the routes by which it spread itself over that continent*. (Vols 1-2, 1886; vols 3-4, 1887). Melbourne: John Ferres, Government Printer.
- Dixon, Robert M.W. 2002. *Australian languages: Their nature and development*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Eades, Diana K. 1976. *The Dharawal and Dhurga languages of the New South Wales south coast* (Research and Regional Studies No. 8). Canberra: Australian Institute of Aboriginal Studies.
- Elkin, Adolphus Peter. 1932. Notes on the social organization of the Worimi, a Kattang-speaking people. *Oceania*, 2(3), 359-363.
- Enright, Walter John. 1932. The Kattang (Kutthung) or Worimi: An Aboriginal tribe. *Mankind*, 1(4), 75-77.
- Enright, Walter John. 1933. Further notes on the Worimi. *Mankind*, 1(7), 161-162.
- Fawcett, J.W. 1898. Customs of the Wannah-Ruah tribe, and their dialect or vocabulary (part II). *Science of Man*, 1(8), 180-181.
- Fraser, John (Ed.). 1892. *An Australian language as spoken by the Awabakal, the people of Awaba or Lake Macquarie*. Sydney: Charles Potter, Government Printer.

¹⁸ LNC and HRLM are grouped together, as are HMR and the Sydney language. Dharawal belongs to a separate grouping. See Dixon (2002:xxxiv-xxxv), and Wafer and Lissarrague (2008:102-105, 140, 158-159).

¹⁹ It is beyond the scope of the present article to enter into a discussion of Wilhelm Schmidt’s ‘Yuin-Kuri Gruppe’ (1919:93), which included not only the five languages of Fraser’s ‘Kuringgai’, but, as well, other NSW coastal languages to the north and south. Suffice it to say that Schmidt was not attempting to make a case that these are dialects of a single language, but rather, that they are distinct but historically related languages.

- Godwin, Luke. 1990. Inside information: Settlement and alliance in the late Holocene of northeastern New South Wales. PhD thesis, University of New England, Armidale.
- Godwin, Luke. 1997. Little big men: Alliance and schism in northeastern New South Wales. In Patrick McConvell & Nicholas Evans (Eds.), *Archaeology and linguistics: Aboriginal Australia in global perspective* (pp. 297-309). Melbourne: Oxford University Press.
- Gunson, Niel (Ed.). 1974. *Australian reminiscences and papers of L. E. Threlkeld, missionary to the Aborigines, 1824–1859* (2 volumes). Canberra: Australian Institute of Aboriginal Studies.
- Holmer, Nils Magnus. 1966. *An attempt towards a comparative grammar of two Australian languages* (Australian Aboriginal Studies 5, Linguistics Series 3, Part 1). Canberra: Australian Institute of Aboriginal Studies.
- Kohen, James. 1993. *The Darug and their neighbours: The traditional Aboriginal owners of the Sydney region*. Blacktown, NSW: Darug Link in association with Blacktown and District Historical Society.
- Larmer, James. 1898. Native vocabulary of miscellaneous New South Wales objects. *Journal of the Royal Society of New South Wales*, 32, 223-29. [‘Brisbane Water and Tuggerah Beach Lakes’ and ‘Hunter’s River’ vocabularies on p. 224, ‘Hunter’s River, Brisbane Water and Newcastle’ vocabulary on pp. 224-225.]
- Lissarrague, Amanda. 2006. *A salvage grammar and wordlist of the language from the Hunter River & Lake Macquarie*. Nambucca Heads, NSW: Muurrbay Aboriginal Language and Culture Co-operative.
- Lissarrague, Amanda. 2010. *A grammar and dictionary of Gathang: The language of the Birrbay, Gurringay and Warrimay*. Nambucca Heads, NSW: Muurrbay Aboriginal Language and Culture Co-operative.
- Mann, John Frederick. n.d. (ca. 1842). Aboriginal names. Unpublished manuscript, catalogued as ‘Aboriginal names and words of the Cammaray Tribe’. Mitchell Library, State Library of NSW, Sydney. (ML Am1/1-2. CY reel 2355, frames 172-203.)
- Matthews, Robert H. 1901. The Dharruk language and vocabulary. *Journal of the Royal Society of NSW*, 35, 155-160.
- McCarthy, Frederick D. 1966. Bungaree. In *Australian dictionary of biography* (Vol. 1, p. 177). Melbourne: Melbourne University Press.
- Miller, Robert. 1887. No. 188: The Hunter River: The Wonnarua tribe and language. In E.M. Curr (Ed.), *The Australian race: Its origin, languages, customs, place of landing in Australia, and the routes by which it spread itself over that continent* (Vol. 3, pp. 352-359). Melbourne: John Ferres, Government Printer.
- Oates, Lynette F. 1975. *The 1973 supplement to a revised linguistic survey of Australia* (in two volumes). Armidale, NSW: Armidale Christian Book Centre.
- O’Grady, Geoffrey N., Carl F. Voegelin & Florence M. Voegelin. 1966. Languages of the world: Indo-Pacific fascicle six (with an appendix by Kenneth L. Hale). *Anthropological linguistics*, 8(2).
- Palmer, Kingsley (Ed.). 2000. *Strong language strong culture. New South Wales strategic language study. Final report and strategic action plan*. Prepared for the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Commission by the Australian Institute of Aboriginal and

- Torres Strait Islander Studies, Canberra. With the collaboration of D.F. Hosking, T.J. Lonsdale, J.F. Troy and M.J. Walsh.
- Schmidt, Wilhelm. 1919. *Die Gliederung der australischen Sprachen: geographische, bibliographische, linguistische Grundzüge der Erforschung der australischen Sprachen*. Vienna: Mechitharisten Buchdruckerei.
- Smith, Keith V. 2004. Eora clans: A history of Indigenous social organisation in coastal Sydney, 1770-1890. Unpublished MA thesis, Macquarie University, Sydney.
- Sutton, Peter 1991. Language in Aboriginal Australia: Social dialects in a geographic idiom. In Suzanne Romaine (Ed.), *Language in Australia* (pp. 49-66). Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Threlkeld, Lancelot Edward. n.d. Specimens of the language of the Aborigines of New South Wales to the northward of Sydney. Unpublished manuscript, Mitchell Library, State Library of NSW, Sydney. Threlkeld papers 1815–1862. (ML A 382. CY reel 820, frames 129-138.)
- Threlkeld, Lancelot Edward. 1827. *Specimens of a dialect of the Aborigines of New South Wales: Being the first attempt to form their speech into a written language*. Sydney: Government Printer.
- Threlkeld, Lancelot Edward. 1834. *An Australian grammar comprehending the principles and natural rules of the language, as spoken by the Aborigines, in the vicinity of Hunter's River, Lake Macquarie, &c. New South Wales*. Sydney: Stephens and Stokes, Herald Office.
- Threlkeld, Lancelot Edward. 1836. *An Australian spelling book in the language as spoken by the Aborigines in the vicinity of Hunter's River, Lake Macquarie, New South Wales*. Sydney: Stephens and Stokes, Herald Office.
- Threlkeld, Lancelot Edward. 1850. *A key to the structure of the Aboriginal language being an analysis of the particles used as affixes, to form the various modifications of the verbs; shewing the essential powers, abstract roots, and other peculiarities of the language spoken by the Aborigines in the vicinity of Hunter River, Lake Macquarie, etc, New South Wales: together with comparisons of Polynesian and other dialects*. Sydney: Kemp and Fairfax.
- Tindale, Norman B. 1974. *Tribal boundaries in Aboriginal Australia*. Berkeley/Canberra: University of California Press/ANU Press.
- Troy, Jakelin F. 1994. *The Sydney language*. Canberra: Author (with the assistance of the Australian Dictionaries Project and AIATSIS).
- Tuckerman, J. 1887. No. 189: Hawkesbury River and Broken Bay. In Edward M. Curr (Ed.), *The Australian race: Its origin, languages, customs, place of landing in Australia, and the routes by which it spread itself over that continent* (Vol. 3, pp. 358-359). Melbourne: John Ferres, Government Printer.
- Tuckerman, J. 1897, March 20. The Hawkesbury River and Broken Bay Aboriginal language. *Windsor and Richmond Gazette*, p. 9.
- Turner, John & Greg Blyton. 1995. *The Aborigines of Lake Macquarie: A brief history*. (The History of Lake Macquarie Series). Lake Macquarie: Lake Macquarie City Council.
- Wafer, Jim & Amanda Lissarrague. 2008. *A handbook of Aboriginal languages of New South Wales and the Australian Capital Territory*. Nambucca Heads, NSW: Muurrbay Aboriginal Language and Culture Co-operative.

- Walsh, Michael. 1981. Language map of south-eastern Australia and Tasmania. In Stephen A. Wurm & Shiro Hattori (Eds.), *Language atlas of the Pacific area. Pt 1: New Guinea area, Oceania, Australia; Pt 2: Japan area, Taiwan (Formosa), Philippines, Mainland and Insular South-East Asia*. [Includes 4 maps of Aboriginal languages, with index.] Canberra: Australian Academy of the Humanities.
- Walsh, Michael. 2001. A case of language revitalisation in 'settled' Australia. *Current Issues in Language Planning*, 2(2&3), 251-258.
- Walsh, Michael. 2002a. Language ownership: A key issue for Native Title. In John Henderson & David Nash (Eds.), *Language in Native Title* (pp. 231-244). Canberra: Aboriginal Studies Press.
- Walsh, Michael. 2002b. Teaching NSW's Indigenous languages: Lessons from elsewhere. Prepared for the Aboriginal Curriculum Unit of the NSW Board of Studies, Sydney.
- Walsh, Michael. 2003. Raising Babel: language revitalisation in New South Wales, Australia. In Joe Blythe & R. McKenna Brown (Eds.), *Maintaining the links: Language, identity and the land: Proceedings of the Seventh Conference of the Foundation of Endangered Languages* (pp. 113-117). Bath: Foundation for Endangered Languages.
- Walsh, Michael. 2005a. Indigenous languages in southeast Australia: Revitalization and the role of education. *Australian Review of Applied Linguistics*, 26(2), 1-14.
- Walsh, Michael. 2005b. Learning while revitalizing: Aboriginal languages in New South Wales, Australia. In S. May, M. Franken & R. Barnard (Eds.), *LED2003: Refereed Conference Proceedings of the 1st International Conference on Language, Education and Diversity*. Hamilton: Wilf Malcolm Institute of Educational Research, University of Waikato.
- Walsh, Michael & Kevin Lowe. 2009. California down under: Indigenous language revitalization in New South Wales, Australia. In Wesley Y. Leonard & Stelómethet Ethel B. Gardner (Eds.), *Language is Life. Proceedings of the 11th Annual Stabilizing Indigenous Languages Conference* (pp. 100-115). Berkeley: Survey of California and Other Indian Languages.
- Wilkins, David P. & David Nash. 2008. The European 'discovery' of a multilingual Australia: The linguistic and ethnographic successes of a failed expedition. In William B. McGregor (Ed.), *Encountering Aboriginal languages: Studies in the history of Australian linguistics* (pp. 485-507). Canberra: Pacific Linguistics.
- Wurm, Stephen A. 1972. *Languages of Australia and Tasmania*. The Hague: Mouton.