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National Indigenous Languages
Collections Strategy
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FIRST
LANGUAGES
AUSTRALIA



Australian Government
Indigenous Languages Support



Cover art

Nyidbarriya by Phyllis Thomas

120 x 90 cm, Natural ochre and pigment on linen

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In July of 2014, Phyllis visited the hill called *Nyidbarriya* which lies on her traditional country of *Boornoolooloo* (Purnululu) with a group of senior Gija women. There is no road leading to the place and it was Phyllis who navigated the party of vehicles through the scrub to the foot of *Nyidbarriya* and her brother *Goorlawoony*. On arriving, Phyllis sang some 'legs' or sections of a haunting and beautiful *joonba* that concerns that place. *Joonbas* are song and dance cycles often given by spirits to living people as they dream.

This *joonba* was gifted to Phyllis's mother this way, who passed it on to her. One 'leg' concerns *Gawarre*, the specific area in *Boornoolooloo* where *Nyidbarriya* stands up as a hill, with her faced turned towards the sky.

Nyidbarriya is a hill of *Nyawana* who is the promised wife of *Garnkiny*, the man who became the moon.

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First Languages Australia would like to advise readers that this report may contain images or names of people who have since passed away.

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Executive summary

This Strategy addresses key points contained in the National Indigenous Languages Policy, these noting the role of national collecting institutions in preserving and making accessible Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander languages materials. The overarching recommendations are:

Auditing and identification of resources –

A national awareness campaign to investigate the location of materials concerning Indigenous language and knowledges, and to maximise Indigenous ownership, access to and intellectual property rights over this material. A central information database established for community people to locate their own materials. Partnerships should be established between Indigenous communities, libraries, universities and museums, with grants provided for Indigenous community research.

Access to collections –

The ultimate purpose of this project is to bring both the historical and contemporary records that are kept in collection institutions to the notice of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. This will be done in a format that allows maximum access and engagement by language researchers. Access can be contentious, and it is critical to consider how language knowledge can be protected until decisions are made about the materials and the knowledge that it contains.

Indigenous knowledge –

It is vital that Indigenous ownership of our knowledge and languages be fully recognised and reflected in a robust set of uniform national guidelines for the use of and access to Indigenous knowledge.

Growing collections –

Current collection policies and library practices have not supported Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities to effectively access services and resources. Collection agencies can grow collections with historic and contemporary resources that hold language information. The ever-changing models of collection impact on the range of materials held as well as how they are made accessible. We must establish a national framework, based on existing infrastructures.

The report outlines the history of this document and the associated forums that lead to it. The movement toward a Strategy is detailed under the headings:

- Institutional policy
- “Audit, Discover, Locate”
- Implementation
- Information sharing
- Digitization

Case studies of libraries currently running Indigenous language programs are provided in appendices.

History

The Eastern States Aboriginal languages Group coordinated the National Indigenous Languages Collections Forum (the Forum) to address key points contained in the National Indigenous Languages Policy, these noting the role of national collecting institutions in preserving and making accessible materials relevant to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander languages. The National Indigenous Languages Policy is attached as Appendix A.

The Forum brought together representatives of major national, state and territory collecting institutions to recommend strategies relevant to national Indigenous language materials collections. The aim was to initiate discussions toward the effective and appropriate management of language materials into the future. A list of forum participants is included at Appendix B.

Participants were asked to draft a set of issues for consideration and discussion related to the four key areas they identified – auditing and identification of resources, access to collections, Indigenous knowledge and growing collections. Each set of issues was then summarised into statements to guide future action.

This Forum was a catalysing force in the Indigenous languages environment. There are three notable developments:

1. The issues, statements and ensuing strategies and actions were distilled into the Indigenous Languages Collections – Issues and Actions Paper (Summary of Outcomes attached as Appendix B). Following further consultation and incorporating ongoing discussions, the material was then refined into this document - the Strategy .
2. Concurrent to the development of this Strategy , the Mitchell Library and Rio Tinto engaged Michael Walsh to “locate and identify any resources held by the Mitchell Library relevant to Australian languages”. This project, championed by Mitchell Librarian Mr. Richard Neville, and prioritising as it does the audit of Indigenous language materials held by the Mitchell Library, represents a significant departure point from the “traditional” approach of Australian Government agencies and collections institutions. As Michael Walsh has indicated, the materials that he has identified and located have had a significant impact on Indigenous language communities (for more information see Appendix D).
3. State and Territory Indigenous language representatives have endorsed First Languages Australia as a national advocacy body which will act as a voice for Indigenous communities in progressing this strategy.

Why is this important?

Language is the key to Indigenous wellbeing in Australia. Australia will be a much better place when Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander language communities are strong and healthy and have the power to control their own destiny.

Language bridges the dark space between tangible and intangible cultural heritage. It is most tangible at the intersection between things. It is an interface for a people to connect with the world around them, with other people within their own language community, and with people from other language communities.

But language is also undeniably an interface within community, within an individual, and within a culture.

This Strategy document recognizes that there is an important nexus here between the past and the future, between the tangible material culture of diverse groups of people and nations and the customs and ways of the ancestors of the same people and nations, between the colonial past and present and an unknown future.

Little contemporary material representing the lives, knowledge and cultures of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people is being collected within many of the key collection agencies.

Agencies and institutions must move beyond their “traditional” views of First Australians and their “artefacts”, to a contemporary understanding of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities. It is imperative for the agencies and institutions to understand that some of the materials they currently hold, *belong* to Indigenous communities, in a way that can be described as inalienable, and in ways that are often opaque to outsiders. The agencies and institutions must come to know the communities as dynamic, knowledgeable, aspirational and having particular needs in respect to their access to materials being collected.

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**Social Justice Report 2009,
Australian Human Rights Commission**

Why preserve Indigenous languages?

- (a) Promotes resilience
- (b) Improved health
- (c) Improved cognitive functioning
- (d) Increased employment options
- (e) Costs and compensation
- (f) Intrinsic value

Language and culture are interdependent. It has long been understood that language is the verbal expression of culture. It is the medium through which culture is carried and transferred. Stories, songs and the nuanced meaning of words contain the key to understanding one's world and one's part within it. Strong culture gives the individual a sense of belonging to people and places. For this reason, language and culture are deeply interconnected and core parts of one's identity.

There is now a significant body of evidence which demonstrates a range of benefits for Indigenous peoples and minority groups when they maintain strong connections with their languages and culture. Having one's mother tongue bestows various social, emotional, employment, cognitive and health advantages. Bilingualism provides yet another layer of advantage for minority language speakers. Keeping the mother tongue and then mastering English for example, provides minority language speakers with the advantage of being able to operate in different contexts. This in turn increases one's life chances and employment options.

Whose material is it?

Central to the quest of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities to maintain or re-discover their language heritage is the insight that this provides into lives, relationships, beliefs and cultures – those things that define them as unique peoples. It is broadly acknowledged that the reclamation of language provides an exceptional view and unlocks deeply embedded Indigenous knowledge and ways of viewing the world that they and their ancestors inhabit and interact with. This very fact drives community interest in working to reclaim their near lost languages, as each word, phrase, narrative and story in the language of traditional owners brings deeply held knowledge back to those who have inherited their Country. In the same way it drives Indigenous language speaking communities to pass on language, and associated culture, in the face of immense pressure from English and the Australian education system to do otherwise.

In respect to the collection of language materials, agencies must collaborate with those Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people working closely with language reclamation and maintenance programs to develop innovative and sustainable collection policies. These may include extensive oral histories incorporating local language, and other “ephemeral” materials that often hold significant local knowledge and stories.

More broadly, Institutions need to establish a wide network of “experts” who can provide advice on the significance of the materials that are located.

The establishment of Indigenous reference groups is a cornerstone of the Strategy . Indigenous reference groups will be in a position to inform agencies about the future needs of communities and will facilitate broader partnerships between Indigenous organisations and collection institutions. One of the tasks of these groups will be to recommend new resources and activities that can include significant language knowledge.

In recognising the need for flexibility and the diversity of language communities in Australia, the Strategy proposes two kinds of Indigenous reference groups: the first kind would be created in partnership with the national advocacy group First Languages Australia; and the second kind would be a reference group that the collections institutions created directly with an Indigenous language community – more or less independent of First Languages Australia. Some libraries may have an existing Indigenous reference group to whom they can refer. If an existing group requires assistance with regard to the specifics of traditional languages, First Languages Australia can provide support to the group as a whole or by recommending a language expert from that region to sit on the reference group.

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First Languages Australia now invites strategic partnerships from the major collections institutions.

To be considered for a FLA Libraries Partnership, the institutions must have a clear organisation-wide Policy Statement and Strategy that articulates their:

- recognition that language, culture, land, and people are different expressions of the same concept for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people;
- commitment to move beyond their “traditional” views of Indigenous Australians and their “artefacts”, to a contemporary understanding of the Indigenous communities;
- responsibilities in supporting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities to re-discover their language heritage;
- investment in the partnership; and
- willingness to engage meaningfully and genuinely with those Indigenous people working closely with language reclamation and maintenance programs to develop innovative and sustainable collection policies. This means the terms of engagement and the nature of the collaboration must be appropriate to and determined by the Indigenous people.

Principles for a new era of engagement

Jonathan Haidt identifies respect as one of five fundamental moral values shared to a greater or lesser degree by different societies. It starts with respect.

“The languages of Aboriginal people and Torres Strait Islanders are recognised as the cornerstone of Indigenous cultural heritage, but suffer under pressures felt by many other threatened linguistic groups around the world. Of an original number of over 500 known Australian Indigenous languages and dialects, only 145 are still spoken and the vast majority of these, approximately 110, are in the severely and critically endangered categories” (excerpt from the State Library of Queensland, Queensland Indigenous languages Policy Statement). The fundamental absence of respect in colonial relations and the lack of awareness of the power dynamics at play are part of the “pressures” currently felt by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander language communities.

It is time to decolonise the language collections - *liberating language*, perhaps. This implies a more proactive form of collection that is evaluated on the access and delivery of content in appropriate forms and media to the community at large, but with particular reference to the people to whom the language belongs. “Decolonising language collections” necessitates engagement that is conscious of the power and politics at play and the privilege that exists for the colonising entity and its attendant ideologies.

Fundamentally, there must be at least a two-way engagement between the language-speaking community and the institution whereby there is more space, time, and awareness of the fact that voice and story have completely different modes and forms than are recognised by European ideologies. Ultimately there is a multi-lateral dynamic at play whereby there is constant feedback from community to inform the cataloguing and archiving and curating of collections in partnership with communities, for the ultimate improvement of contemporary Australian society and culture.

This leads to a need for more mutually meaningful liaison between the community and the collection institutions.

Language facilitates, and in many ways mediates, the connection of people to the views of their ancestors and in particular to their worldviews. Consequently, the reclamation of ancestral languages has been found to have immeasurably lifted the profile of the culture, and positively impacted on the personal and public identities of those linked to it. In the Australian context the esteem that comes from being able to speak ones traditional languages has been found to improve community well being, and to strengthen community capacity and resilience.

Key recommendations

The key recommendations that underpin this Strategy are that the peak national and state collection institutions:

1. develop, in collaboration with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities, an overarching policy with the clear intention of making Indigenous language and cultural resources accessible;
2. develop strategic plans of action for work to commence on providing high quality access to language and materials, and a national strategy to locate items and improve access for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to resources currently held by institutions;
3. develop and adopt –
 - protocols to provide advice on the collection and management of current and future materials;
 - procedures to engage Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities in full consultation to ensure appropriate storage and access to collections
 - appropriate and sensitive cataloguing standards for cultural items held in collections;
4. establish a central database of materials held across all major institutions in Australia;
5. develop strategies to discover, describe and undertake initial linguistic investigation of materials that are held within collections; and
6. develop strategies to monitor emerging technologies and the impact that these will have on the management of cultural materials.

Strategy

The Strategy is framed as a collaborative, ongoing project – a project that is owned by the Indigenous language communities in partnership with their collecting institutions. This consciously locates the Indigenous language communities at the locus of control of the project. This is important for providing an appropriate and safe place for the communities to engage with the colonial collections institutions and agencies.

The Strategy has five target areas:

1. **Institutional policy** – intended to provide strategic organisation-wide guidance for agencies and institutions looking to engage more meaningfully with Indigenous language communities;
2. **Implementation activities** – practical tools and projects for ensuring that the “Policies” are relevant to the interaction between street level bureaucrats and interested individuals of Indigenous language communities;
3. **“Audit, Discover, Locate”** – a national awareness campaign to identify Indigenous language materials within existing collections;
4. **Information sharing** – use of an online catalogue, intended to be a hub of knowledge so that the ongoing project of Indigenous language heritage is coordinated, organised, and democratically accessible; and
5. **Technology** – that affects the form, mediation and archiving of materials (Information Technology) and the legal environment, particularly in relation to intellectual property law.

Outline of the Strategy

Institutional policy

Major collections institutions align themselves with the requirements of the First Languages Australia Language Partnership –

- Statement of Commitment, and
- Indigenous Language Strategy.

Implementation activities

- (a) Small working groups report to First Languages Australia.
- (b) First Languages Australia coordinates regular Indigenous Language Collections Forums with all First Languages Australia Partners to develop:
 - cataloguing standards
 - protocols for delivering access to materials
 - protocols for engaging with Indigenous language communities
 - procedures for navigating the protocols
 - procedures for repatriation of materials to Indigenous language communities – community engagement, access and delivery of materials in appropriate and relevant formats.

“Audit, Discover, Locate”

- (a) Locate Indigenous language materials within an institution.
- (b) Conduct linguistic investigation.
- (c) Develop community engagement, access and delivery of materials in appropriate and relevant formats.

Information sharing

- (a) Establish a central database of materials held across all major institutions in Australia.
- (b) Improve access for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to resources currently held by institutions.

Technology

Initiate and maintain –

- (a) ongoing analysis of implications of emerging technologies in relation to the form, mediation, and archival of materials;
- (b) ongoing analysis of the developments in the legal environment particularly in relation to intellectual property law, the rights of Indigenous people over their own cultural “artefacts”.

Detailed view of the Strategy

Institutional policy

Through the Institutional Policy section, the Strategy provides strategic organisation-wide guidance for agencies and institutions looking to engage more meaningfully with Indigenous language communities. Fundamentally, it promotes Indigenous ownership of Indigenous knowledge. Specific outcomes include:

- Key national and state collection agencies will develop policies and cultures that support the collection of born digital material.
- Collection agencies to have professionally trained Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander staff and advisory bodies that will be empowered to make recommendations to senior agency management.
- Policy and protocols documents are meeting the needs of both the collections agencies and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities.

Major collections institutions align themselves with the requirements of the First Languages Australia Libraries Partnership with –

Statement of commitment outlining the intention of each of the institutions to work with First Languages Australia and other Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, through the process of discovering and making accessible existing and future language resources.

Indigenous Languages Strategy embedding Indigenous languages as a priority part of the institution's work and outlining how the institution will direct its attention in this regard.

First Languages Australia encourages collecting institutions to commit to a partnership through which the organisations will continue to work together to the benefit of the Indigenous language resources held in collections and the language communities to whom they belong. This long term commitment will help collecting bodies, First Languages Australia and language communities to stay abreast of the latest developments in areas such as: collection preservation and access, digitization, funding opportunities.

The First Languages Australia Libraries Partnership will:

- have ongoing brief to oversight the work of key state and national collections agencies, focused by not limited to those organisations with formal commitment to the partnership
- inform agencies about current language activities within each jurisdiction
- keep abreast of potential funding opportunities and share this information with participating institutions

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- keep in close contact with National and State Libraries Australasia Indigenous Library Services and Collections Working Group, and other NSLA working groups as appropriate, so as to utilise their expertise to the full and to prevent overlap of service and/or research activities.

Embedding an Indigenous Language Strategy within a collecting institution will support the organisation and its staff in the implementation of a diverse range of Indigenous language projects.

The State Library of Queensland has been a National leader in this regard implementing such a Language Strategy in 2007. The Strategy had guided SLQ's Queensland Indigenous Languages Project since that time. Details of the SLQ strategy and the project are included in the SLQ Case study attached as Appendix C.

A strategy of this type empowers the library and its staff by showing a firm commitment to Indigenous language work. Moreover it embeds Indigenous languages as part of the work of the organisation and encourages strong and positive relationships with language communities and individual Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander public. It is also envisaged that the strategies will encourage collecting institutions to work more closely with senior Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander academics to develop a clear outline of issues related to the place of Indigenous knowledge and collection policies – and strategies to address them.

In order to implement a local Indigenous Languages Strategy, collecting institutions will need to gain an understanding of:

- the range of users for Indigenous language materials in the collection
- which groups or individuals will be given access to specific language resources, or how decisions will be made in this regard
- those who may wish to access the materials and for what purpose, and
- mechanisms that will encourage a range of uses to appropriately engage with newly-identified materials.

First Languages Australia will be able to provide guidance in this regard, working closely with Indigenous and heritage collections within each institution.

Implementation

The Implementation section of this Strategy is fundamentally about **engagement**.

The ultimate goal of this section is to facilitate effective and meaningful engagement between Indigenous language communities and collections agencies and institutions. Given the power differential and the alienation of materials and language from their customary owners, the onus is largely on the institutions to come from a place of respect. But effective engagement is predicated on the willingness of all parties to be actively involved in the process.

This section outlines some practical steps towards laying the groundwork for a new relationship based on respect. It provides various mechanisms for communication and feedback – and it provides for checks and balances in the processes to provide some space for Indigenous language communities and individuals within them to negotiate priorities, meanings, and understanding .

This section also provides guidance and support for the institutions that are committed to working with communities by outlining the interrelationship between protocols, processes and procedures for engaging with Indigenous communities. Additionally, it provides some guidance for navigating the, at times, complex web of obligations that inform these protocols.

Small working groups report to First Languages Australia and to Indigenous language communities

It is vital that Indigenous ownership of knowledge and languages be fully recognised and reflected in a robust set of uniform national guidelines for the use of and access to Indigenous knowledge.

These implementation strategies will allow for immediate attention to the development and adoption of a set of protocols that will provide advice on the future collection of materials to be acquired by collection agencies. These must ensure that those depositing resources with collection agencies guarantee future access for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander community members. These protocols will also aid in the development of MOUs and funding agreements with third party agencies so that access is given a high priority in future agency activity in this area.

This work is in no way intended to usurp or undermine work of NSLA and its various working groups. Rather First Languages Australia hopes to develop a close relationship with NSLA and relevant working groups so as to maximise the use of the limited resources available.

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First Languages Australia consults with Partners to develop a national set of –

Cataloguing standards – Consultation is carried out with stakeholders to establish a set of cataloguing standards for Aboriginal language items held in collections. This standard should be then applied to future acquisitions and to new materials as they come to light. This would allow materials, which are in state (or regional) collections to be easily accessible through the adoption of terms that are readily understood by language researchers and ensure consistency of access across Australia. The requirements of Libraries Australia must be considered in this regard so that materials, and their meta-data, are able to then be shared nationally and linked to services such as Trove. Libraries Australia is a membership-based resource sharing service managed by the National Library of Australia for Australian libraries and their users. Its key missions are to support the workflows of Australian libraries and provide data to underpin the Trove discovery service.

Protocols for delivering access to materials – The initial discussions must address issues such as physical access, delivery methods and appropriate use. The various delivery methods should be demonstrated along with a discussion on the strengths of different systems, such as Trove. This may include online tutorials on how best to access materials and how they may be used. Problems can arise when information in the collections has been acquired without the permission of the knowledge holders. Access is not a model of “one size fits all”, but a negotiated relationship between rights holders, content and users. Access regimes must be localised for each community environment. The protocols must acknowledge that communities will be at different stages of language development. This may necessitate some variation in the application of the protocols. Initial access issues need to be addressed within the level and description of the resources in the home catalogue.

Protocols for engaging with Indigenous language communities – It is essential for the major collection agencies to develop and actively adopt protocols defined by best practice community collaboration. Protocols define the various relationships between institutions and Indigenous communities and knowledge holders, linguists working with communities, and between collection institutions. The functionality of the protocols is to facilitate effective community consultation and collaboration. This will assist collection institutions in identifying those who have a vested interest in language reclamation. This may include individuals, local/regional institutions (such as lands councils) and, language centres where appropriate.

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Procedures for navigating the protocols – The implementation of the Strategy must support agency commitments to establish and maintain respectful relationships between Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities and collecting institutions. This work is inherently collaborative and the institutions need support in the process of coming to know and understand the nature of Indigenous language communities. Protocols and procedures are important for engaging with Indigenous people, but they are neither definitive nor absolute. The protocols and procedures are signposts that help people frame their interactions in a paradigm of respect. Institutional staff who are committed to engaging meaningfully with Indigenous communities will be working at the “coalface” of decolonisation – their institutions may not always have the flexibility to support their engagement in line with the protocols and procedures, and so it is necessary for the respect to flow multilaterally.

Procedures for repatriation of materials to Indigenous language communities – The development of effective protocols must ensure that due respect is paid to local community desires for the language materials to be available. Central to this is an acknowledgement that language and the knowledge it holds belongs to a particular language community.

The strength of the overall endeavour will be gauged by the authenticity of the partnerships established between the Institutions and the appropriate Indigenous organisations and individuals.

These professional relationships will add invaluable to the strength of the protocols; assist in developing effective access strategies; and provide a reciprocal transfer of knowledge between institutions and communities.

“Audit, Discover, Locate”

Aims

The aim of “Audit, Discover, Locate” is to develop a national campaign to locate items and improve access to Indigenous resources that are already held in major collecting institutions.

A comprehensive audit of catalogued materials to obtain a better understanding of the range of language resources currently held by each organization must be undertaken as a matter of urgency. Other organisations that must be invited to participate in this work include state, regional and local language centres. Further research will need to include the highly ephemeral materials placed on websites. A critical outcome from the development of this broader project will be application of protocols that will assist in the discovery, access and treatment of materials that hold significant traditional knowledge. In making this material available, collection agencies will have developed sound processes that are built on community approval of materials.

A working group lead by an Indigenous language researcher will be established to “Audit, Discover, Locate” Indigenous language materials within institutions. The Working Group will be a coordinated work team involving the collections agencies, language communities, the First Languages Australia and Indigenous researchers and language workers. The Working Group will be tasked with developing a plan for the rediscovery of language materials in collections.

The “Audit, Discover, Locate” program is intended to be a local (within an institution) project, and a national project – with an integrated and coordinated approach. Each institution can immediately begin to implement this program and, in fact, some already have (Mitchell, SLQ). A cornerstone element to the Strategy is the upscaling of these projects to the national level and the development of a national campaign to identify and locate Indigenous language materials that are uncatalogued.

The State Library of NSW, Mitchell Library has been a leader in this regard.

Locate Indigenous language materials within an institution

Extensive quantities of archival material relating to Indigenous languages are held by a wide variety of organisations throughout Australia, but it is unknown exactly how much rests in archives and collections out of the public view. Institutions have a bulk of material that is yet to be effectively catalogued. This problem is further exacerbated by the fact that the original cataloguing systems were unable to cope with an increasing backlog of material – as well as the fact that it was not a priority to classify linguistic and language-related material, as such. As a result there is poor understanding of what information is held and in what location.

Rediscovering Indigenous Languages project, Mitchell Library

The Mitchell Library is in the second year of a three year project “Rediscovering Indigenous languages”. Mitchell Library staff developed the project and approached Rio Tinto to partner in, and fund, the activities. The project aims to locate and identify all resources relevant to Australian languages within its manuscript collections. The project is being carried out in three overlapping stages:

- identification of language content, its provenance and language community
- discussions with the community and provisions of copies to the community for their own use
- appropriate publishing of the material and the development of associated contextualising information and resources for key resources.

Further details of this project and its implementation are contained in the State Library of NSW Case study, attached as Appendix D.

While state and national libraries and museums are chief repositories, a plethora of local organisations including local historical societies also hold relevant materials. University collections, which have been supported by research projects and endowments over a long period of time, are also rich sources of language knowledge that will need to be brought into the broader discovery project. It is essential that materials are identified and recorded within their collections using the same standards that had been adopted by the major collection agencies.

Conduct linguistic investigation

In many cases, the intimate knowledge of the traditional people is deeply embedded in a range of materials that are now widely dispersed within the community and within the historical records that have been collected in many collection institutions. It is possible that in the first instance, locating new materials within existing collections will require a level of linguistic analysis so that it can be properly described and so that negotiations about access can be undertaken with the correct language communities.

Develop community engagement, access and delivery of materials in appropriate and relevant formats

Indigenous communities will be engaged in ensuring appropriate storage and access to collections. The policy may also provide advice on possible delivery locations in which resources could be accessed or stored, or suggest methods through which to negotiate this with the language communities to whom the materials belong.

Outcomes

An essential outcome of the “Audit, Discover, Locate” project will be the establishment of a process of resource identification. This will require the resourcing of a collaborative program between library staff, community representatives and linguists (where required) to correctly identify materials, and to have an understanding of their particular value as language resources. While initial judgements will need to be made to progress the availability of these materials, the agency protocols need to allow for changes to be made if later research shows that the materials have been incorrectly described.

Given the changing environment in which collection agencies exist, implementing the Strategy requires an ongoing informed discussion to identify the future service and delivery needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities. These discussions need to lead to solutions that prioritise:

- the employment of professionally trained Indigenous library staff in significant roles
- improved future use based on the quality of access that communities will have available to them
- coordinated approaches to future collection planning and development that address gaps in collections
- peak agency sign-off on the overarching policies and protocols related to the management of Indigenous language collections
- community being invited in to institutions to undertake research
- collaboration with collection agencies to promote the materials and access to language and cultural resources
- developing relationships with language centres and assisting with training
- out-of-copyright material being made available locally
- developing procedures and processes to protect materials at risk
- contacting those universities and academics who have research and community consultation skills to assist in identifying materials as they become available
- libraries developing and applying appropriate language cataloguing to unpublished materials
- collection institutions developing a protocol to improve feedback to cataloguers
- institutions identifying and describing all their Indigenous language materials in partnership with appropriate communities and researchers
- institutions establishing best practice delivery methods in national, state, government agencies, regional libraries (knowledge centres) and local libraries, museums etc – this will ensure that materials are more discoverable and more used

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- feedback of information about the collections to institutions – user annotation of material
 - material being repatriated to communities (through local libraries/ knowledge centres) and available on country

Trove search engine, National Library of Australia

Trove was designed to:

- provide a single point of access to the resources within our collecting institutions.
- facilitate access to a significantly greater range of resources from major organisations, including selected digitised material freely available online
- support searching of, and access to, full-text content
- enhance ease of discovery by providing improved relevance ranking, refinement by facets, grouping of all editions of the same book and exploitation of thesauri
- engage with communities and individuals through annotation services
- ensure that relevant information is not missed in a search by reducing the need to search material-specific discovery services separately
- provide a platform for niche services to query a vast resource of Australian metadata and adapt it for their own needs.

The content found through Trove comes from the National Library of Australia, over 1,000 libraries around Australia and from other cultural and educational organisations. International digital collections of relevance are also being harvested. Information comes to Trove through Libraries Australia.

Content is presented in a manner which encourages contextualisation of the search term. A list of books is presented next to images, scrolling down the page will provide details for and newspapers, journal articles, maps, and people relevant to the search term. Depending on the number of items listed this can help build an understanding of the language context at a glance.

Members of Libraries Australia (including most of Australia's major collecting institutions) provide details of their catalogues for inclusion in the Libraries Australia database. This is the database that populates Trove.

Information sharing

Establish a central database of materials held across all major institutions in Australia –

The establishment of a national collections database and an effective access system would obviate some of the collection duplication that currently exists, and allow institutions to develop collection specialisation. Two aspects of this specialisation would support the development of processes for specialist care of materials, and the allocation of strategic resourcing of their collections.

In establishing a central database it will be vital to construct a way to “group” materials so that these can be easily located within the collection, enhancing accessibility for users. Consultation with community groups is essential to ensure the accurate identification of language groups linked to collection materials.

A central system of access to materials, or at least to access details of the materials and their location, has long been requested by language workers and their communities.

Obvious practical problems arise with regard to ownership, classifications, and spelling. However much work has been done in this regard and AIATSIS has helped in removing some confusion with regard to language names through the identification codes used in the Austlang Database.

Ownership of language and language materials remains an area of sensitivity. First Languages Australia can provide advice in this regard but public access to language materials is an issue that should be negotiated between the language communities and collecting bodies that hold their materials.

The development and adoption of consistent cataloguing systems will ensure ease of access. Libraries Australia recommends a system and asks all member organisations to contribute the meta-data for all materials in their collections to be available for national access. Participation allows the meta-data of holdings in state (or regional) collections to be easily accessible to other institutions as well as to the public through Trove.

There are a number of options for the provision of an online catalogue/ database that contains details of all language materials, including their access location and conditions, and their online access as increasing amounts of material are digitised.

Finding and allocating the resources required to establish and maintain an expanding and inclusive system for knowledge maintenance poses a key challenge for all stakeholders. But the opportunity that it presents is one of such profound historical and cultural significance that it warrants critical thought.

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In considering the idea of a central database or catalogue for holding, maintaining, and providing access to all Indigenous language materials, the stakeholders must first assess the existing resources available to them. Discussions with experts regarding information sharing systems such as European, Ara Irititja and Trove (as well as others in their knowledge) have been investigated in compiling this report.

At this stage it seems the most practical and cost effective tool currently available for sharing information about all the Indigenous language materials held in Australian collections is Trove. Trove is a free search engine for Australian libraries, established by the National Library of Australia. A brief overview of Trove with suggestions for its optimal use for Indigenous languages is included as Appendix E.

Notwithstanding the apparent fit with the purpose, as outlined in this Strategy, a more thorough and critical assessment of Trove is necessary to determine the course of action that will best guarantee the success for Indigenous languages and language communities for this initiative.

Improve access for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to resources currently held by institutions –

Another longer-term strategy for improving access is for Indigenous language communities and collections institutions to develop, in collaboration, an appropriate metalanguage that is cognisant of, and consistent with, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander ways of knowing. An Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cataloguing metalanguage will ensure that information is accessible to end-users. Such a strategy may have a two-fold effect:

- Firstly, it may address a perceived mistrust by Indigenous communities of Government organisations who have in the past prevented them from accessing knowledge and materials pertaining to their own culture.
- Secondly, the protocols that would be established through such an endeavour may be used as a template for future classification of and access to materials.

In looking at materials listed as accessible to the public and thus available through Trove (either now or in the future) there are a number of ways to facilitate community access to their language material. Dr Marie-Louise Ayres, Assistant Director-General, Resource Sharing, National Library of Australia, has highlighted a number of ways that language groups could work with libraries to help Trove give proper focus to Indigenous languages:

1. Encourage all libraries with Indigenous language collections to become members of Libraries Australia if they are not already.
2. Encourage libraries with Indigenous language collections to prioritise their language collections and make sure that full details of all of those materials are provided to Libraries Australia for inclusion in Trove.

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3. Encourage libraries with Indigenous language collections to prioritise the digitisation of language resources and provide them to Libraries Australia so that they can be accessed through Trove.
 4. Encourage member libraries to work with other local collecting bodies, (e.g. language Centres, Historical Societies) to make sure their materials are including in the collection and details, and/or digital copies as appropriate, are available through Trove.

Dr Ayres has also suggested tools that language workers could use to facilitate access to the Indigenous language materials currently in Trove, namely lists and tags. Further information on Lists and Tags are included in Appendix D. While lists and tags maybe of use for individual language workers wanting to build a list of their language resources in the collections, lists and tags are not a tool for the development of a comprehensive list of all Indigenous language resources.

There are two possible options to make the content of Trove more readily accessible to Indigenous language workers, researchers and community members. Firstly, the Trove team could establish subject-based portals, and Indigenous culture has been suggested in this regard. Trove does not currently have funding for such an endeavour, nor is it actively looking for funds or expecting them to be made available internally, however if the resources were to become available it would be prioritised. To be clear, Indigenous languages on its own would not currently be seen to be a sufficiently broad focus, but a portal for all Indigenous content is of interest.

Secondly, to facilitate the sharing of information from Trove an API (application programming interface) has been developed. The API enables external parties/websites to pull information from Trove for their own uses. At this stage we do not know the specific nature of the API but it certainly indicates that it may be possible to establish an Indigenous languages online directory external to Trove but using the contents of Trove to populate the website. This however is an endeavor that is likely to have significant start up costs as well as ongoing expenses in perpetuity, thus should not be started without considering all other available options.

Further research and dialogue is necessary to determine how Trove can work most effectively with the stakeholders of this Strategy . In particular, all parties need to reconsider the prioritisation of resources to implementing the strategies outlined above. To support this, advocacy and lobbying work needs to be undertaken by all involved.

Technology

Institutions will need to work closely with key Indigenous agencies to monitor emerging technologies and the impact these will have on the management of cultural material. Indigenous staff and community organisations will develop a standing process to evaluate current and future technologies for their capacity to facilitate appropriate access to resources.

First Languages Australia will work with its partners and their Indigenous and heritage collections staff to ensure that Indigenous language materials are given high priority in the digitization process. And to ensure that meta-data and copies of these materials are passed on to Libraries Australia so there is no longer duplication and overlap as materials are prioritized for digitisation in different institutions.

Building an effective relationship with organisations such as the National and State Libraries Association and its relevant working groups is an important way for First Languages Australia and its partners to stay abreast of the latest discussions and technological developments.

Conduct ongoing analysis of the implications of emerging technologies in relation to the form, mediation, access to and archival of materials –

First Languages Australia and partners will establish and maintain a close relationship with the National and State Libraries of Australia in respect of:

- digital preservation
- community created content
- archival collections
- delivery working groups.

The **Digital Preservation Working Group** aims to identify best practice in the preservation of born-digital and digitised materials. In doing so, it determines the core requirements for managing digital collections in NSLA libraries, both individually and collectively.

The **Community Created Content Working Group** encourages community members to contribute to the collections of their national, State and Territory libraries by creating films, writing, stories, pictures and other web content using their resources and those of the libraries.

The **Archival Collections Working Group** explores efficient and cost-effective ways of cataloguing and archiving heritage collections. It enables manuscripts to be made available to the public sooner, with content description lists and copyright information searchable via Trove and Libraries Australia.

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NSLA's **Delivery Working Group** aims to provide faster and more efficient access to library materials across libraries. The development of reciprocal lending and copying agreements along with a standard service delivery model across institutions means that library users can request digital material from any State or national Library and have improved choices for how, when and where they access books and documents. In addition to existing online delivery services, the project is piloting home delivery of some library materials.

Conduct ongoing analysis of the developments in the legal environment particularly in relation to intellectual property law, the rights of Indigenous people over their own cultural “artefacts” – NSLA's Indigenous Working Group aims to develop common policy and best practice for digitisation of Indigenous archives, the display of materials from Indigenous collections, procedures for obtaining copyright permission and community consent for the reproduction of materials.

The Copyright group is concerned with clarifying and simplifying the language and procedures connected with copyright of library materials. It draws upon a number of legal provisions to free up access to NSLA library material, including Creative Commons licences, orphan works legislation (where the copyright owner cannot be identified), and exceptions specified in the *Copyright Act 1968*. The project supports legislative reform to ensure that copyright laws keep pace with changing technologies.

The Open Borders project works to improve public access to licensed online databases and supports its ongoing development as Australia's national portal to library collections. It aims to break down geographical barriers, providing full access to library materials for library patrons in regional and remote areas, as well as those using mobile broadband services.

A significant outcome of this process will be the development of and dissemination of appropriate intellectual property protocols for Indigenous language materials, including those relating to the repatriation of original materials to communities.

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APPENDIX A

National Indigenous Languages Policy 2009

<http://www.arts.gov.au/indigenous/languages>

The importance of Australia's Indigenous languages

Objectives

- 1. National attention:** To bring national attention to Indigenous languages – the oldest surviving languages in the world; and the pressures they face.
- 2. Critically endangered languages:** Reinforce use of critically endangered Indigenous languages that are being only partly spoken to help prevent decline in use and to maintain or extend their common, everyday use as much as possible.
- 3. Working with languages to Close the Gap:** In areas where Indigenous languages are being spoken fully and passed on, making sure that government recognises and works with these languages in its agenda to *Close the Gap*.
- 4. Strengthening pride in identity and culture:** To restore the use of rarely spoken or unspoken Indigenous languages to the extent that the current language environment allows.
- 5. Supporting Indigenous language programs in schools:** To support and maintain the teaching and learning of Indigenous languages in Australian schools.

Actions

- 1. National attention**
 - Undertake a feasibility study for the National Indigenous Languages Centre recommended by the NILS Report.
 - Increase public recognition and appreciation of Indigenous languages by expanding the use of these languages across public and government functions.
 - Support greater coordination and assistance amongst Indigenous language centres to maximise their impact nationally and to reach languages not currently supported.
- 2. Critically endangered languages**
 - The Maintenance of Indigenous Languages and Records Program, administered by the Office for the Arts, is investing \$9.6 million in 2011-12 on 67 activities around Australia supporting the revival and maintenance of Indigenous languages.

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- Increase use of new technology to broaden the impact of language maintenance and revival activities by local community Indigenous language centres.
 - Pilot Early Childhood Language Nests and Mobile Language Teams to supplement the work of language centres, especially in more remote areas that are not within easy reach.
 - Consider tax deductible status to Indigenous languages organisations through the Register of Cultural Organisations for maintaining and reviving Indigenous languages.

3. Working with languages to Close the Gap

- Given the centrality of language to strong Indigenous culture, and the broader social benefits of functional and resilient families and communities, better targeting support for Indigenous languages as part of a broader national focus on Indigenous culture generally, will contribute to the overall wellbeing of Indigenous communities.
- COAG has committed \$38.6 million towards interpreting and translating services as part of the new Remote Service Delivery sites. The Remote Service Delivery National Partnership (RSD NP) provides for the strengthening of interpreting and translating services in response to local needs in each of the priority locations. In addition to the employment of interpreters in each location, the Commonwealth is responsible for working with the States and Northern Territory to introduce a national framework for the effective supply and use of Indigenous language interpreters and translators. It will include protocols for the use of interpreters and translators.
- Components of the proposed national framework include:
 - development and strengthening of Indigenous interpreting services through establishing mentor/coordinator positions, providing base salary funding for interpreters and administrative support of interpreters;
 - training and accrediting Indigenous interpreters – development of nationally consistent curriculum material for training and provision of training leading to accreditation and expertise in particular subject areas;
 - increasing supply of Indigenous interpreters through development and establishment of a national recruitment and retention strategy, with localised flexibility;
 - increasing demand for interpreters through increased training for government and non-government employees working in relevant locations; translation of government information products.
- Consideration could be given to forming a National Reference Group of Experts to advise on future directions of policy on Indigenous interpreters. Each of the components would involve contributions from the Commonwealth and from each of the jurisdictions.

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4. Strengthening pride in identity and culture through language revival

- Support community-based Indigenous language centres by increasing links with major national, state and territory cultural institutions to ensure that Indigenous languages material is properly preserved and made accessible appropriately.
- Through the Indigenous Contemporary Music Action Plan, support music in Indigenous languages to increase the transmission of languages across generations to younger speakers, utilising festivals and multimedia to strengthen the focus on Indigenous languages and increasing broadcasting content in Indigenous languages.
- Potential collaboration with the Songroom Project, Sing Australia, Australian community Business Network and Foundation for Young Australians to work with communities where languages have been lost to promote language revival.
- Encouraging more grass-roots collaboration between language learning programs and Stolen Generation members and their organisations.

5. Supporting Indigenous language programs in schools

The Government recently commissioned the Indigenous Language Programs in Australian Schools – A Way Forward report, which revealed that between 2006 and 2007 over 16,000 Indigenous students and 13,000 non-Indigenous students located in 260 Australian schools were involved in Indigenous language programs, covering over 80 different Indigenous languages.

Significant funding for languages education is being provided to the states and territories through the National Education Agreement for languages, allowing jurisdictions flexibility to determine how funding is allocated. Funding can be used to support and maintain Indigenous language programs operating in government schools.

\$56.4 million is also being provided over 2009 to 2012 through the Schools Assistance Act 2008 to support the teaching of languages, including Australian Indigenous languages, in non-government schools.

Several jurisdictions are currently establishing programs to strengthen the teaching and learning of Indigenous languages in schools, including a proposal by New South Wales to develop national senior secondary Indigenous languages courses.

Indigenous languages and literacy and numeracy

The Government is committed to languages education and recognises the important role that Indigenous language learning plays in some schools, particularly bilingual schools.

The learning of English is also a fundamental skill that all Australians, including Indigenous Australians, must have in order to maximise their learning opportunities and life chances.

All Australian governments through the Council of Australian Governments (COAG) processes have committed to halving the gap in the reading, writing and numeracy achievements between Indigenous and non-Indigenous students within a decade.

The Government is providing \$56.4 million over four years to provide extra assistance to schools to enable them to expand intensive literacy and numeracy approaches that have been successful with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students and provide professional development support to assist teachers to prepare Individual Learning Plans for Indigenous students.

National curriculum

The National curriculum is being developed by the Australian Curriculum, Assessment and Reporting Authority, initially in English, mathematics, science and history. A second phase of subject areas will be developed in languages, geography and the arts.

Indigenous perspectives will be written into the National Curriculum to ensure that all young Australians have the opportunity to learn about, acknowledge and respect the language and culture of Aboriginal people and Torres Strait Islanders.

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APPENDIX B

National Indigenous Languages Collections Forum 2010 – Summary of outcomes

Coordinated by Eastern States Indigenous Languages Working Group
Powerhouse Sydney – Friday, 21 May 2012 – 9 am to 4 pm

The Eastern States Indigenous Languages Working Group coordinated the National Indigenous Languages Collections Forum to address key points contained in the National Indigenous Languages Policy, these noting the role of national collecting institutions in preserving and making accessible materials relevant to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander languages.

The Forum brought together representatives of major national, state and territory collecting institutions to recommend strategies relevant to the development of a National Indigenous Language Materials Collection Policy. This would aim to ensure effective and appropriate management of language materials into the future.

This document contains the discussion points and recommendation which resulted from the forum and a list of those who attended.

The program

The format followed was to ask the members to consider the roles of their organisations from the point of view of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people who are interested in accessing or managing information about their traditional languages. Members of the Eastern States Indigenous Languages Working Group gave an overview of the role of their group and a background to the coordination of the forum.

Members were then asked to do the following:

1. Work together to draw up a set of issues for consideration and discussion under each of the following headings:
 - A. Auditing and identification of resources
 - B. Access to collections
 - C. Aboriginal knowledge
 - D. Growing collections
2. Each set of issues was then summarised in a brief statement.
3. The forum members were then asked to draft a brief set of strategies which could address the issues they had identified.
4. In the final session, the group was asked to propose a set of short term (next 12 months) and long term (next 5 years) actions, which could feasibly be implemented.

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The next action following on from this will be to maintain a communication stream between all the participants, to distribute this and other relevant documentation, and to call for nominees to work together to achieve the goals identified.

A. Auditing and identification of resources

List of issues

The current status of library materials:

- Identifying the unknown catalogue of language materials. Knowing who has what and the distribution of content.
- Funding and resourcing issues, finding the “\$ & time”
- Recognising that Indigenous people have fundamental right to access materials which contain Indigenous language knowledge.
- Working with the community
- Identifying persons with knowledge to help identify materials, local experts, linguists?
- Need for a national awareness campaign
- How to provide an immediate link
- Partnerships between libraries, archives, museums etc.
- Prioritising the collection of materials
- Metadata tags/language
- The need for a national framework/approach
- Central catalogue

The limitation of locations:

- Indigenous materials need to be audited and identified by Indigenous communities and not only by institutions.
- Lack of knowledge of holdings often due to original catalogue systems.
- Mistrust of Government institutions.
- Repatriation of Indigenous materials to their communities of origin.

Statement

“There is a need for funding of a national awareness campaign to investigate where materials concerning Indigenous language and knowledges are held, and to maximise Indigenous ownership, access to and intellectual property rights over this material. A central information database should be established for community people to locate their own materials. Maximum access to and repatriation of Indigenous language and knowledge materials is imperative. Partnerships should be established between Indigenous communities, libraries, universities and museums. Grants should be provided for Indigenous community research.”

Strategies

A.1 Call for funding to resource –

- Better description of items already in institutions
- Campaign to locate items not in institutions
- Full consultation with Indigenous communities to ensure

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appropriate storage and access to collections

- To promote access to Indigenous resources which are already held in institutions.

A.2 Using “language” as a tag within collections

A.3 Updating catalogues using AIATSIS Thesaurus and better guidelines for Government generated materials.

A.4 Campaign to encourage the keepers of Indigenous materials to lodge copies with secure repositories/institutions. Make communities aware of the need for this.

A.5 Funding communities to gather Indigenous language/knowledge materials

A.6 Developing a national protocol around donations and Indigenous community negotiations.

Actions for next 12 months

- Becoming alert to materials at risk
- Contact Universities/ academics to identify materials
- Apply language cataloguing to unpublished materials
- Improve feedback to cataloguers

Actions for next 5 years

- Institutions have all/most of their materials identified/described in partnership with communities/researchers
- Materials are more discoverable; more used
- Feed back information on the collections to institutions – user annotation of material
- Repatriation of materials to communities (through local libraries?) available on country.

B. Access to collections

List of issues

- Access is a relationship between rights holders, content and users.
- Access is not only about digital- it’s physical as well and most access is not provided off-site. Think about multiple strategies.
- How can remote communities have access to information and content
- Sensitivities need to be addressed, national protocols. More than format. – has to take cultural issues into account.
- Local content can be accessible locally in digital format without being connected to internet
- Local people also need capacity building to do their language work
- Lack of resources \$\$ to make material available in digital format and need good platform to put material online
- Support local communities to collect and manage their local resources. E.g. Libraries and knowledge centres (NT) and IKCs (Qld.)
- Centralised access systems (not centralised repositories) e.g. Trove (National Library) can link up local systems, e.g. AIATSIS

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- AUSTLANG database (making links)
- Great example – newspapers online – cooperative project and cooperative /community involvement to edit/improve records
 - Unpublished material retains copyright in perpetuity – risk management? Risk strategy – find balance.
 - National Indigenous Knowledge Centre – what will this look like? “Virtual” repository?
 - Map interface to access language by region
 - Use Web2.0 interfaces to engage communities with library collections to “discover” content and then add information to it.
 - “trust in technology” (Monash) “E-Hive” “Collections Australia Network”

Statement

“Online content should be curated – with opportunity for the public to respond.”

Strategies

Practical –

B.1 Establish best practice in rights/ access regimes/acknowledging differences/protocols

- Engaging collaborative community consultation
- Developing relationship with language centres
- Providing physical access to physical collections
- Indigenous view of Trove
- Raising awareness of language issues within catalogues
- Client training around indigenous material

Policy –

B.2 Promote understanding that access is not only about digitisation; discovery can lead to access, but not necessarily

B.3 Establish access principles, to be applied locally

B.4 NSLA Indigenous Working Group –propose activities and tasks

B.5 ASA/CARA response to issues

B.6 Identify funding dollars to include access costs

B.7 Ensuring access to materials in academic research collections

B.8 Explore possible role and responsibilities of a National Indigenous Knowledge Centre.

Actions for next 12 months

- Invite community in to do research
- Collaborate with others to promote all institutions to visitors
- Promote Indigenous ownership of Indigenous Knowledge
- Develop relationships with Language Centres and assist with training.

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Actions for next 5 years

- National Indigenous Knowledge Centre operating – coordinating, funding, leadership, policy development, protecting Intellectual property
- Out of copyright material could be made available locally

C. Aboriginal Knowledge

List of issues

- Empower, inspire local communities; to establish local repositories build capacity
- Provision of advice to communities on how to deal with institutions or linguists etc.
- Build relationships with national organisations/infrastructures
- Use of cultural advisors in regions/communities
- Be responsive to community requirements/needs
- Indigenous ownership of knowledge, Indigenous control of programs. Regard to cultural property, individual rights and community ownership may have equal importance. Work with existing community protocols
- “GLAM” collaborative approach to working together and with communities
- Case by case considerations.
- Legal framework in line with national cultural authorities.
- Potential for knowledge to have economic value!

Statement

“It is vital that Indigenous ownership of our knowledge and languages be fully recognised and reflected in a robust set of uniform national guidelines for the use of and access to Indigenous knowledge.....”

Strategies

C.1 Address the lack of knowledge of archived materials.

C.2 Adopt guidelines which:

- Respect community ownership
- Address Indigenous issues of rights around copyright and acknowledgement.
- Respect indigenous ownership of knowledge.

C.3 Formulate national standards around Indigenous knowledge content.

C.4 Support the correct Identification of materials.

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Actions for next 12 months

- NIKC submission from today's findings – ESILWG.
- Professional organisations – who are the ones who can take this forward? e.g. Native Title Rep bodies?
- Increase awareness in institutions around ownership and management of collections

Actions for next 5 years

- Needs policy work and collective action to develop strong framework (refer to Terri Janke's work)
- New Indigenous Representative Body could play a leadership role (First Nations)

D. Growing collections

List of issues

- Very little contemporary material being collected
- Models of collecting
 - Partnership with communities
 - Collected in language by indigenous facilitators
 - Stories provide grammar
 - Facebook/web 2 make connections
- Promoting best practice protocols, approvals.
 - Formats
 - Learning from mistakes of past on
 - Agreement on what is best practice
- Digital issues –storage, backup, format
- Repository material: in university archives /research collections.
- Current material being collected by indigenous language centres being deposited with collecting institutions
- Audit – who is collecting what?
- Who should be collecting what? Valuing the local (things stored locally)
- Community liaison important Asking what local communities want
- Lack of aboriginal researchers – reluctance to share with non-indigenous researchers
- Duplication of resources is endemic
 - Set up national database
 - Indigenous knowledge centre
- No national framework exists but infrastructure exists now it needs coordination
- Access to donated resources –cataloguing, providing access
- Specialist care of materials.
- Legal IP issues and community approvals /protocols- can contradict each other
- Predicting future use

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Statement

“It should be acknowledged:

- That currently the task of growing collections is not being done well
- That unclear areas of responsibilities exist.
- That there are issues of trust and responsibilities
- That emerging and new models of collecting change the landscape

Work must be done to establish a national framework, based on existing infrastructures.”

Strategies

D.1 Identifying best practice into the future

D.2 Predicting future use

D.3 Identifying gaps- strategic collection planning/development

D.4 Establishing and maintaining respectful relationships between communities and collecting institutions.

D.5 Defining roles and responsibilities in a national framework.

D.6 Managing emerging technology with cultural material.

Actions for next 12 months

- Know more about what we have and what we are doing
- Can do things now – user driven
- Know what communities are doing and offer support

Actions for next 5 years

- Collecting born digital material – advise on standards
- “Uber-Librarian” (Universal Black Education Resource)

National Indigenous Languages Collections Forum
 Coordinated by Eastern States Indigenous Languages Working Group
 Attendance list

Name	Organisation	State
Cate Richmond	Assistant Director, Public Libraries & Knowledge Centres, Northern Territory Library	NT
Tita Allom	Resource Management Librarian, Bachelor Institute of Indigenous Tertiary Education	NT
Richard Neville	Mitchell Librarian, State Library of New South Wales	NSW
Ronald Briggs	Indigenous Services Librarian, State Library of New South Wales	NSW
Louise Denoon	Executive Manager Heritage Collections, State Library of Queensland	QLD
Terena Hopkins	(Apologies) Regional Director CAIRNS, State Library of Queensland	QLD
Suzy Russell	Content Services Librarian, State Library of SA	SA
Jennifer Howard	CEO, Central Australian Aboriginal Media Association, Alice Springs	NT
Rod Stroud	Library Director, AIATSIS	ACT
Sarah Cutfield	Research Fellow, Language and Society, AIATSIS	ACT
Rita Morrison	Koorie Heritage Trust Oral History Unit	VIC
Melissa Lucas	Senior Project Officer, National Indigenous Knowledge Centre Project	QLD
Brendan Fitzgerald	Research and Development, VICNET, State Library of Victoria	VIC
Kevin Bradley	Curator of Oral History and Folklore, National Library of Australia	ACT
Hilary Rowell	Assistant Director Reference Projects, National Archives of Australia	ACT
Christine Guster	Oral Histories Program, National Film and Sound Archives	ACT
Brenda Gifford	Archivist, Indigenous Collections, National Film and Sound Archives	ACT
Stephen Cassidy	Director, Indigenous Languages and Culture, Department of the Environment, Water, Heritage and the Arts Canberra	ACT
Barbara Poliness	Assistant Manager Indigenous Languages and Culture, Department of the Environment, Water, Heritage and the Arts, Canberra	ACT
Brian Kelly	Department of the Environment, Water, Heritage and the Arts	NSW
Karina Lamb	Interdisciplinary Cross-Cultural Research Program, Research School of Humanities and the Arts, Australian National University	ACT
Daryn McKenny	Eastern States Indigenous Languages Working Group	NSW
Paul Paton	Eastern States Indigenous Languages Working Group	VIC
Faith Baisden	Eastern States Indigenous Languages Working Group	QLD
Melinda Holden	Eastern States Indigenous Languages Working Group	QLD
Bridget Priman	Eastern States Indigenous Languages Working Group	QLD
Geoff Anderson	Eastern States Indigenous Languages Working Group	NSW
Kevin Lowe	Eastern States Indigenous Languages Working Group	NSW

APPENDIX C

Case study – Queensland Indigenous Languages Strategy

State Library of Queensland

The State Library of Queensland has been a library leader in Indigenous language work. SLQ's Reconciliation Strategy (Attachment C1) clearly states that one of the institution's goals is to establish and maintain effective consultation and partnerships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities and organizations to ensure the provision of responsive and inclusive library services.

In 2006–07, the State Library of Queensland was supported by the Australian Government (through the Maintenance of Indigenous Languages and Records Program of the Department of Communications, Information Technology and the Arts) to undertake state-wide consultation on the best way for the library to support Indigenous languages in Queensland. Meetings were held with language centres and workers, resulting in the State Library of Queensland's Indigenous Languages Strategy, which was endorsed by the Queensland Indigenous Languages Advisory Committee.

In 2008 SLQ initiated its Queensland Indigenous languages project. The aim of this project is to support the work of all community-based Indigenous language programs throughout Queensland, to encourage the participation of new communities in language preservation, and to generate awareness of the endangerment of languages to a broad state and national audience. Much of the success of the project is linked to the delivery of practical skills training to Indigenous language workers, and to the innovative steps taken to link a range of services and facilities of the State Library and 300 regional libraries with the people in communities whose programs can benefit from the alliance.

Some of the main activities covered by the project include language recording training workshops; technology training; liaison and support for language centres and project teams; resource development; digitisation of old recordings; community outreach meetings to increase awareness of language endangerment and participation of new language groups; collation of language resources held in the State Library and other institutions; and information sharing, networking, and promotion.

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To date the project has undertaken a diverse range of activities:

2007–2009	Auspiced Queensland Indigenous Advisory Committee.
2008	Queensland Indigenous Language exhibition [http://www.qilac.org.au/2008/02/].
2008–2009	Auspiced the Eastern States Aboriginal Language Group.
2008–2010	Delivery of digital media training workshops to language workers around Queensland.
2008–2009	Publishing community language resources as online audio books [http://www.slq.qld.gov.au/find/virtualbooks/atsi].
2009	QILAC and SLQ produced “talking” body parts poster. The poster contains audio content in eight Queensland languages.
2010	Fact sheets developed: <i>Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Languages – Ideas for School Communities</i> <i>Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Languages – Ideas for Public Libraries</i> (Attachment C2)
2010-2012	Discovery Research Workshop [http://blogs.slq.qld.gov.au/jol/2010/06/22/queensland-indigenous-languages-project/]

In 2009 Faith Baisden, at that time employed with the SLQ’s Queensland Indigenous languages project, wrote a paper detailing the history of the project and its delivery, comprising Chapter 29 of *Reawakening Languages* (Attachment C3). The paper provides great insight as to how a library can work with key community members to develop a sustainable project flexible to the needs of the participating language communities.



State Library of Queensland Indigenous Languages Strategy

“Language is the expression of our culture and our land. We cannot have one without the others. We cannot describe our culture and our land if we do not have language.”

Queensland Indigenous Languages Advisory Committee

“ Recognition of Indigenous languages and support for Indigenous language programs stand alongside land rights, health, justice, education, housing, employment and other services as part of the overall process of pursuing social justice and reconciliation in Australia.

One might go so far as to say that without recognition of the Indigenous people and their languages, many other programs will be less effective, because this lack of recognition will show that the underlying attitudes of the dominant society have not changed significantly.”

Dr. Graham McKay. Edith Cowan University. *The Land Still Speaks*. 1996.

The languages of Aboriginal people and Torres Strait Islanders are recognised as the cornerstone of indigenous cultural heritage, but suffer under pressures felt by many other threatened linguistic groups around the world. Of an original number of over 500 known Australian Indigenous languages and dialects, only 145 are still spoken and the vast majority of these, approximately 110, are in the severely and critically endangered categories.

The situation in Queensland is one of the most critical in Australia. The National Indigenous Languages Survey Report (NILS) 2005, commissioned by Department of Information Technology, Communications and the Arts (DCITA) and carried out by Australian Institute for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies (AIATSIS) and the Federation for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Languages (FATSIL), singled out Queensland as the state most lacking in language centres, either state or regional despite the presence of languages in all categories (from strong to no longer fully spoken).

The NILS report also recommended libraries as institutions that could play an important part in preserving and supporting Indigenous languages.

State Library of Queensland’s Responsibilities

State Library of Queensland (SLQ) is a leader in Australia in terms of providing services to Aboriginal people and Torres Strait Islander clients. SLQ’s *Reconciliation Strategy* clearly states that one of the institution’s goals is to establish and maintain effective consultation and partnerships with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities and organizations to ensure the provision of responsive and inclusive library services.

In November, 2006, SLQ became the first state library in Australia to have an Indigenous Knowledge Centre, with the opening of *kuril dhagun*. This centre aims to celebrate a wide range of Queensland Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander knowledge, from the traditional to the contemporary. The main focus will be on intangible knowledge, such as language and oral histories.

SLQ is the convener of the National and State Libraries Australasia Indigenous Library Services and Collections Working Group. As such it is responsible for implementing the *National Policy Framework for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Library Services and Collections*. SLQ holds Aboriginal people and Torres Strait Islanders, their interests, needs and perspectives as central to any development of policy or practice.

The *SLQ Protocols for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Collections* stress the importance of Aboriginal people and Torres Strait Islanders, as owners of their cultural heritage and knowledge, being able to interact with the State Library and to make use of the State Library's collections and services. Specifically this means that the State Library will:

- Promote and raise awareness of the State Library's collections and services with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities
- Develop and strengthen positive partnerships between the State Library and Aboriginal people and Torres Strait Islanders
- Encourage the use of State Library premises and facilities as meeting places and resources for Aboriginal people and Torres Strait Islanders.

Consultation and Partners

In efforts to support the preservation and maintenance of Indigenous languages SLQ will partner with language centres, people who work with languages, speakers, linguists, publishers, Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander broadcasters, cultural corporations, public libraries and local Councils. It will be guided by these partners in devising strategies to support languages and in developing the appropriate services.

Consultation meetings will need to be held with key and strategic stakeholders to understand the needs of language centres and people who work with languages, and where possible, these needs will be matched to services available through the library. SLQ staff will also undertake site visits to talk to community language workers and to observe efforts to revive and preserve language at first hand. The Queensland Indigenous Languages Advisory Committee will form the basis of the consultation group, joined by other language workers, as appropriate.

State Library of Queensland's Commitment

As a result of this consultation the State Library has developed a broad statement of commitment to working to support Indigenous languages in Queensland. Specifically the State Library is committed to:

- Supporting the revival, reclamation and maintenance of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander languages in Queensland
- Promoting awareness and interest in the Indigenous languages of Queensland in the broader community
- Ongoing consultation with the representative organisations and individuals for Indigenous Languages in Queensland so as to understand their needs and respond appropriately.



- Ensuring Language Centre workers, speakers and linguists are aware of the range of services available through the State Library.
- Facilitating access to the services and resources of the State Library and the network of Queensland's public libraries and Indigenous Knowledge Centres.
- Offering the State Library as a safe repository for language resources, ensuring that digital and other resources remain available over time.
- Training SLQ staff in awareness of the cultural significance of languages and ensuring SLQ staff are aware of the organisation's commitment.
- Following the SLQ protocols for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Collections in regard to the ownership of and access to Indigenous Language resources held in the library.
- Taking a lead role in supporting Indigenous languages with other State and Territory library services.
- Disseminating the findings and achievements to other similarly minded organisations through participation in national forums.

Strategies to support the Revival, Maintenance and Preservation of Indigenous Languages

The outlined commitments will be achieved through the following range of strategies, carried out by both the State Library of Queensland and other partner organisations:

- Holding regular consultation sessions with Queensland language centres and people involved in language work to keep abreast of current needs and initiatives.
- Forming partnerships with Language Centres to promote the importance and richness Queensland's Indigenous languages.
- Using State Library spaces such as *kuril dhagun* to promote Indigenous languages and the work being done to preserve and revive these languages.
- Providing space and support for exhibitions promoting language, generated by local community members with the support of library staff.
- Making language information and resources available through the State Library website.
- Promoting the Indigenous language resources held at the State Library to groups and individuals working in this area.
- Encouraging use of public library facilities for community Indigenous language activities, meetings and classes, particularly in areas where space for such activities is limited.
- Training in the use of digital equipment for language recording and advice on digital standards and preservation.



- Lending multi-media equipment for recording language and stories.
- Assisting language workers, speakers, linguists and others to access relevant language records and manuscripts.
- Encouraging the use of SLQ as a safe repository for copies of Indigenous language resources, to ensure that they are available to future generations.
- Purchasing and distributing published language materials through the Public Library Services of the State Library.
- Digitising photographic collections
- Sharing information about funding/partnership opportunities to support Indigenous languages
- Seeking additional funding to be able to extend the range of services available to language centres and people involved in language work
- Regularly reviewing the services being offered to language centres people involved in language work to make sure they are relevant.

Implementation of Strategies

Strategies to support Queensland Indigenous Languages will be implemented as part of SLQ's overall Strategic Plan 2007 – 2011 *Queensland Memory – Today for Tomorrow*, which has been written to specifically require SLQ to partner with Queensland's Aboriginal and Torres Strait islander communities to record Indigenous knowledge, culture and histories.

The work will be led by SLQ's Indigenous Library Services Unit but will also involve other areas such as Heritage Collections (repository for language recordings, manuscripts and photographs) and the Resource and Discovery Unit, which looks at providing on-line access to resources.

July 2007 *This document has been revised and endorsed by the Queensland Indigenous Languages Advisory Committee at their meeting at SLQ in Brisbane, 17 – 18 July 2007.*





Indigenous Languages Resources Ideas for Public Libraries

The following is a collection of ideas and activities as well as resources related to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander languages. It can support Public Libraries and Indigenous Knowledge Centres in their roles for recording, documenting and collecting Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander languages. These ideas could be used in conjunction with the State Library of Queensland publication *Welcoming Places: Ideas for public library services for Aboriginal people and Torres Strait Islanders*.

Our Community Our Languages

Create a space in the Library for local Indigenous history, including collections of language materials. Libraries and communities can work together to develop a profile of the languages in the community – this may involve community-based research.

The following questions may serve as a guide/starting point:

- What is the traditional language of the area?
- Which other language groups are represented in our community?
- Are there language speakers in our community?
- Are there traditional words still used in/by the local community?
- Can we record, collect and collate words from the community?
- How can we support community to record/document languages in the community?
- Research local/traditional language words for geographical locations, natural landmarks, etc.?
- Are there oral histories, creation stories associated with the local area or particular landmarks?

Suggested activities and strategies for Libraries:

- Record/document language speakers from the local community
- Interview Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander people from the local community to record their stories?
- Build up word lists for common/everyday things (e.g. family names, body parts, plants, animals, placenames, etc.); create an everyday dictionary for the local language/s
- Record/document language songs, dance, and stories relating to the local community.
- Learn greetings/farewells in the local Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander language.
- Promote a 'language word of the week'
- Dual signage/labels in the library – English and the local Indigenous language.
- Incorporate language activities into key events/displays, e.g. NAIDOC & Reconciliation Week

Websites/Weblinks

The following is a selection of websites and weblinks that can support communities as well as libraries in the revival/revitalisation of Indigenous languages.

Aboriginal Languages of Australia Virtual Library: One of the first websites devoted to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander languages – it has annotated links to 231 resources for about 80 languages www.dnathan.com/VL/austLang.htm

Australian Indigenous Languages (Australian National University): Website developed by David Nash, Linguist, based at ANU – weblinks to resources, wordlists, research papers, etc. relating to Indigenous languages. www.anu.edu.au/linguistics/nash/aust/

Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies (AIATSIS): AIATSIS is the premier institution in Australia and research about the cultures and lifestyles of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, past and present. They have an extensive collection of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander language resources: print, audio-visual and digitised materials. www.aiatsis.gov.au

Other sections/units in AIATSIS:

AIATSIS – Online exhibition ‘Collectors of Words’: Indigenous language wordlists collected by Robert Brough Smyth and Edward Micklethwaite Curr from the late 1800’s. www1.aiatsis.gov.au/exhibitions/languages/lang_hm.html

AIATSIS Indigenous Language Select Bibliographies: The Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies (AIATSIS) in Canberra has produced PDF versions of *Select Bibliographies* that provide a list of materials held by AIATSIS relating to specific languages/language groups across Australia. www.aiatsis.gov.au/library/languagebibs.html

AIATSIS – Family History Unit: AIATSIS has an extensive collection of materials that relate to family history and genealogical research – www.aiatsis.gov.au/fhu/start.html
Aboriginal Biographical Index (ABI) is a personal name index to published material held in the AIATSIS Library. www.aiatsis.gov.au/fhu/abi.html

Federation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Languages and Culture (FATSILC): FATSIL is the national peak body for community based indigenous language programs in Australia. The organisation was established in 1991 in response to the Australian Language and Literacy Policy, to promote the maintenance, retrieval and revival of indigenous languages, through the support of community based language programs. www.fatsilc.org.au

South Australian Museum: Norman B. Tindale: Tindale was an anthropologist whose research resulted in the ‘Tindale Map’ which depicts the distribution of Aboriginal languages; Tindale also mapped out genealogical and sociological profiles for Aboriginal communities in Eastern Australia. www.samuseum.sa.gov.au/tindale/index.html

State Library of Queensland – Indigenous Languages in Queensland: Overview of the State Library of Queensland Indigenous Languages Program to support the revival and maintenance of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander languages in Queensland. www.slq.qld.gov.au/info/ind/languages

SIL International: SIL International is a faith-based non-profit organization committed to serving language communities worldwide as they build capacity for sustainable language development. www.sil.org/

Language Computer Software

The following is a suggested list of resources for libraries to acquire that can support language revival in their communities – some are freeware, while others may require purchase/license.

Audacity is a free software program to assist language recording/audio editing. The program is easy to use and allows for manipulation/editing of sounds in a range of formats including MP3. Further details: www.audacity.sourceforge.net/

Lexique Pro is a free Dictionary software program for making interactive lexicons or word lists; it also makes picture dictionaries and lexicons for CD's and websites. Further details: www.lexiquepro.com/

Miromaa is a licensed software program developed by the Arwarbukarl Cultural Resource Association Inc to aid in Aboriginal language work; the program is easy to use/user friendly. Basically, Miromaa serves as a database for the collection, analysis and documentation of languages. Further details: www.miromaa.org.au

Microsoft Software: there is a range of Microsoft programs that can be utilised to support language revival – most of these programs are installed as part of Windows-based PC operating systems. Further details: www.microsoft.com/downloads/en/default.aspx

- Word
- Publisher
- PowerPoint
- PhotoStory - download from Microsoft
- MovieMaker - comes with Windows XP onwards

These software programs in conjunction with a quality digital recording microphone and digital camera can enhance the capacity of libraries and communities to collect, record and document Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander languages. Training in these software programs and equipment is recommended to gain the maximum benefit – the State Library of Queensland may be able to assist in conducting/facilitating training for Public Libraries staff and community members.

Further Details

For further information on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander languages at the State Library of Queensland, please contact:

Queensland Memory, State Library of Queensland

Stanley Place, South Brisbane Qld. 4101.

PO Box 3488, South Brisbane Qld. 4101.

Telephone: (07) 3840 7666 Fax: (07) 3842 9126

SLQ Indigenous Languages Webpages: www.slq.qld.gov.au/resources/atsi/languages

Faith Baisden ¹

Abstract

There are many large organisations that have within their charter an expressed commitment to provide services to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. The challenge for these institutions is to find a way to meet such a pledge, and to do this in ways that have meaning for the people with whom they aim to connect. This paper describes the process by which the State Library of Queensland extended its services to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people through offering support for language programs. It covers the development of the project from the initial consultation processes through to the organisation and delivery of training workshops and creation of resources, in a collaboration between the State Library of Queensland, the communities and partner organisations. It provides an example to other institutions of the outcomes that can be achieved when services are effectively and appropriately adapted to support the initiatives of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander clients.

With a charter to support Indigenous cultural heritage and a bent for innovation, the State Library of Queensland embarked on a visionary project to link its considerable resources with the needs of even the smallest community projects, giving welcome support to the revitalisation of Indigenous languages in Queensland.

These places are filled with volumes written about Indigenous people and not nearly enough, by them. This is where Indigenous people can be telling the real stories, recording their own histories, and in their own languages. These are very much your libraries. (Queensland State Librarian Lea Giles Peters to members of the Queensland Indigenous Languages Advisory Committee 2007.)

The commitment of the State Library of Queensland would encourage Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to actively record their stories, to be stored and shared

¹ State Library of Queensland.

with others as they deemed suitable. It would help bring together people in all parts of the state, many with no prior involvement in language programs, and it would support people to learn to record languages and create resources for the sharing of their language knowledge.

The question

The Queensland Indigenous Languages Project was initiated by the State Library of Queensland (SLQ) in 2006 in response to some of the recommendations from the National Indigenous Languages Survey Report from the year before. This survey, which had been commissioned by the Commonwealth government to document the status of languages in Australia, contained disturbing statistics pointing to the rapid decline in the use of traditional languages in Queensland and the imminent loss of many of them. It was within the charter of the SLQ to support the preservation and promotion of Indigenous culture and the organisation was recognised already for the depth of its Indigenous library services. These included the network of 16 Indigenous Knowledge Centres (IKCs) in the more remote areas of the state, and projects to support the delivery of information technology to these communities.

The concept underpinning this project was: with such a critical situation in terms of language preservation occurring, how could the SLQ make a difference? What resources do libraries have that could be of help to people working in Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander language programs? To find the answer to this open-ended question the SLQ project team began consulting with community representatives around Queensland. The group most directly involved was the Queensland Indigenous Languages Advisory Committee, with members holding a breadth of experience over many years in the development of programs aimed at revitalising and preserving their traditional languages.

So began a process to list the resources that could be accessed through libraries and had potential to be of use. This was interesting, because it required a new way of thinking about the resources that are taken for granted by people who work in such a large system, looking with new eyes to see what value they could have for people who had been working with very limited resources.

The possibilities

Bringing together SLQ staff and the Indigenous language consultants, ideas soon began to flow as to how best to form a productive partnership. People saw the potential benefits of using the library spaces for meetings where there was no language centre available to fill this role. Helping language workers with access to computer equipment and internet were also considered, as well as the fact that some of the libraries were equipped with listening post facilities with multiple headsets for shared learning.

The network of over 330 libraries in key locations were considered as possible venues for the promotion of Indigenous languages through special exhibitions, and through

the display and promotion of the books and resources that have been created through local projects. The public libraries were seen to represent an excellent distribution channel for language materials and, where desired by the community, public library services could be approached to purchase and distribute these published materials.

Website promotion was also considered, and the potential to include in the SLQ website some pages specifically devoted to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander languages. These would also be used to direct people to online access of the library resources catalogues.

In terms of the research that is integral to any of the language projects, the discussions highlighted the potential benefits of promoting greater connection between library staff and community users, to offer support to people as they attempt to manoeuvre their way through historical records and catalogue systems. But the point that came out most strongly through these consultations was that people wanted to learn to make their own language recordings. The SLQ could contribute immediately to the revitalisation of languages by teaching community workers how to record their own people and to show how computers and technology could be used with these recordings to make teaching resources. With the race against time that many people now acknowledge they are engaged in, the language workers were ready and willing to put the time into recording the sounds of the remaining speakers, given the appropriate training.

More than just a wish to see recordings being made, there was also a strong drive to reclaim control over the processes of linguistic documentation and recording which was seen to have been so firmly in the hands of non-Indigenous academics to this point in time. The sentiment expressed in these talks was that for too long people had been coming into communities and recording, writing and leaving with the outcome of their research. The books and recordings were acquired by visitors to the communities through the gifting of knowledge, time and effort generously afforded them by their hosts. People in many cases were then left with a challenge to gain access to recordings made of their own family members and were not credited as being custodians of the knowledge they had shared. This was, of course, not the case in all instances and was acknowledged to be a practice that is changing for the better. However the impact from those negative experiences was a key issue reflected in these talks.

With this background as added incentive one of the first tasks of the Queensland Indigenous Languages Project became the coordination of training workshops to provide the skills people wanted in order to take control of their own language revitalisation.

The workshop

The first of these training workshops took place in Townsville, north Queensland. It was coordinated with the North Queensland Region Aboriginal Corporation Language

Centre (NQRACLC) with people from six different language groups from around the Townsville area taking part. The number of participants was more than expected and it was seen from the outset that the program needed to be adaptable to cater for the unexpected.

In this first workshop people from the Girramay, Nyawaygi, Gudjal, Djirrbal, Ngadjan and Warrgamay groups worked together. Beginning with the basics of using audio and video recording equipment, participants worked in pairs or small teams to record each other demonstrating the sounds of the languages. They were able to produce videos that could teach correct tongue and mouth positions for forming the words. They recorded each other's oral histories and in interview settings. There were mistakes and laughter, embarrassment and pride as people struggled with and mastered unfamiliar sounds and skills. There was also a wonderful bonding between the older and younger students. Where some of the older people were short of computer confidence, they had the younger ones to help them. In turn the Elders shared their language knowledge and stories. As one of the teenage students later said:

I was always so ashamed to try to use language because I thought I would say it all wrong. But being here and hearing our Elders make mistakes too sometimes makes me feel really OK about trying. That's what I'll do from now and start to learn and speak it.

The project has highlighted the need for adaptability and innovation at times from people who are involved in capturing language. The primary aim is to teach people to make recordings on quality audio and video equipment, with appropriate microphones and attention to the immediate surroundings to produce best results. Digitising standards are taught for scanning and photography. However, as valuable opportunities for recording cultural information, stories and snippets of language may occur at any unplanned moment, the workshops have been helping to prepare the students in the use of whatever equipment is available to capture a recording. So, while best practice and archival quality recording remains the primary aim, participants are also shown how to record information on mobile phones, take video on small digital cameras and to record directly into a laptop without an available microphone. New ways are mixed with old in finding ways to teach language to community. These range from the use of podcasts and social networking sites to putting lessons on cassette tapes to be played in car stereos.

The project also covers some photography basics. While everyone knows how to point and shoot, the tricks to resizing for email, basic retouching of photographs and importing images to other applications are popular inclusions in the workshops. Also pivotal to the training is learning to transfer collected data to computers and to organise the information in retrievable, logical systems for future reference.

Partnerships

This first workshop set a pattern of creating partnerships that has continued as the project moves around the state. Taking part in the Townsville meeting with SLQ and

the NQRACLC were the local Indigenous radio station 4KIG and the Arwarbukarl Cultural Resource Association (ACRA) from Newcastle, which has played a key role in a number of the training workshops conducted since. The staff at 4KIG provided a number of rooms to cater for over 20 participants with access to recording studio spaces, helpful links to local media and on-air promotion of the project.

ACRA is a recognised Aboriginal training agency that has provided major input to the recording workshops. ACRA has helped train people in the use of the most suitable computer programs and technologies for the work they want to undertake, and trains in effective practices for data collection and storage which are key aspects of the workshops. ACRA's Miromaa Language Program ² is a community-focused computer program for the collection, collation and storage of language data. Miromaa has proven to be a valuable inclusion in the training workshops empowering people to begin hands-on work on their language projects while learning a range of skills to support their desired outcomes. Having a place on the computer to input wordlists, audio, video and relevant research data, with the ability to easily export to dictionary and document creation tools, has proven to offer both incentive and encouragement for people to be involved in language projects.

Accessing suitable equipment for the workshops is important to their success. A starting point is always to establish what people already have available to them and, from there, decide what needs to be brought in. In some cases there is equipment available which has had little or no previous use due to a lack of training for the staff. Providing this training has been a useful outcome from the workshops. SLQ has a number of portable minilabs with audiovisual recording and computer equipment. ACRA also provides an extensive range of transportable equipment. For the Townsville workshop the materials needed were contributed by ACRA, SLQ and 4KIG, again reflecting the collaborative nature that has extended as the project continued.

A key aspect of the project has been listening to the needs of the community group involved to determine their particular focus. This varies all the time according to whether people are just starting to work on languages or whether they are connected to a language centre with well-established programs.

The broader picture

Although the training workshops are a major part of the project there are many other suggestions from the initial recommendations that have been taken on and are now expanding the reach of the project.

Through the SLQ website, pages have been made available to promote the language centres, their work and publications. This has been useful for the majority of Queensland language centres who don't as yet have an individual web presence. The SLQ website also displays a number of Indigenous language children's books

² See www.miromaa.com.au

in an easy to read and hear virtual format, and will soon be expanding its links to educational resources and research materials.

The Library is encouraging people to use its facilities for the safe storage of language materials, giving due recognition to issues of limited and appropriate access to the materials as determined by the depositor. This complements the work of the Australian Institute for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies in Canberra and, it is hoped, will eventually provide people in this state with more ready access to copies of records also held there.

Supporting the growing network of communities who are becoming involved in language revitalisation is another of the project's roles. This takes the form of information-sharing using email networks and blogsites. Community outreach meetings are being held in areas where no established language centres are operating as well. These are jointly coordinated with nearby language programs or centres. They involve bringing people from established programs into a community to give presentations about their work and their achievements to date, and to offer encouragement to people who may consider starting work in their own communities. These meetings are also a way of linking communities with the staff and services of their local regional libraries.

The identification and digitisation of old language recordings is taking place, as is the reformatting and reproduction of language teaching materials and the creation of new resources. Issues of ownership of the materials are discussed with each community, with permission sought for copies of items produced to be held in the SLQ.

The project extends from Weipa and the far north Cape York communities to the southern border towns and western Queensland, with ongoing outreach planned. The web of contacts grows and the number of people who are willing to share their knowledge, and support new communities in their endeavours, is inspiring.

It is also inspiring to see the commitment of the SLQ to support Aboriginal people and Torres Strait Islanders in creating their own records of history and culture in this state; the message and the hope to tell your own story, and be heard in your own voice.

References

Australian Institute of Aboriginal & Torres Strait Islander Studies (2005). National Indigenous Languages Survey report 2005. Canberra: Department of Communications, Information Technology & the Arts.

APPENDIX D

Case study – Re-discovering Indigenous Languages

**Mitchell Library, State Library of New South Wales
(funded by Rio Tinto)**

Since the arrival of Europeans in Australia a range of people have left documents that include significant Indigenous language content: surveyors, clergymen; government officials; farmers; and policemen, amongst others. Early written sources are often used in language revitalization projects occurring when a language has ceased to be passed on to the next generation in full. It is anticipated that much Indigenous language material is laying dormant deep within the bowels of various collecting institutions waiting to be rediscovered.

To lead the way for libraries The Mitchell Library, home to the State Library of New South Wales' manuscript and Australiana collections, proposed a project to locate and identify any resources relevant to Australian languages within its collections. This is a significant undertaking as the Mitchell Library has thirteen linear kilometres of manuscripts through which to sort.

The three-year project is being funded by Rio Tinto and is planned to occur in three overlapping phases.

The first phase is well underway. It is now clear that over a hundred languages from right around Australia are held in the manuscript collections. Results to date reveal that often resources under one person's name may in fact have come from a variety of sources. Such resources can raise issues not only in attribution but also in establishing genealogies of manuscripts.

In some instances locating a manuscript with Australian Languages material is the easy part: what is difficult is identifying the material - language(s), date of recording, location of recording etc. To accomplish this the first phase of the project has involved employing a Australian language expert with firstly; sufficient knowledge to recognise Australian language content in the collection and identify the likely region of the language; and secondly with a network of contacts sufficient to be able to then identify someone from that region who can authoritatively identify the language.

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Progress though phase one has confirmed the original assumption that archival repositories like the Mitchell Library hold a wealth of previously catalogued resources on Australian languages. It is expected that targeted research on other repositories is likely to produce comparable results.

Although the project is not yet complete it is clear from community discussions so far that results of projects such as this will bolster efforts to revitalize struggling languages that have been sparsely documented. In addition, resources pertaining to languages still in use are also important as the materials provided by now deceased language speakers can be of great relevance to those communities.

The second phase of the project involves: making contact with the language community to whom the content belongs, providing copies of the material and negotiating appropriate public access. Being a public library was an automatic assumption that material in the collection belongs to and is made available to the public. The State Library of NSW has been willing to learn that archival language materials can be sensitive to the communities to which they belong and that language communities need to be involved in the process of providing public access. For the most part the participating communities have been willing to make materials publicly available so long as they are made specifically aware of the materials and have copies provided for their first use.

For archival purposes selected wordlists are “treated” by the preservation lab, digitised, transcribed and thoroughly catalogued. With approval these may also be made available on the web with their transcriptions.

The Third phase of the project is about facilitating access to the materials. Though still in development it is envisaged that the final stage will involve creating resources that direct people to and contextualise a selection of identified materials. Providing any known details about the language speaker and person who wrote the language down and their relationship, as well the time and place in which the documents were written can make the materials far more useful to the language community and the general public alike. Links may be made to other complimentary materials in the collection such as maps and photos. In addition it is hoped that learning tools may be produced around significant materials and the Re-Discovering Indigenous Languages team have had initial discussions with the NSW Board of Studies in this regard.

The content of this case study is drawn directly from AIATSIS seminars by Michael Walsh, Melissa Jackson and Ronald Briggs [<http://www.aiatsis.gov.au/research/seminars.html>].

APPENDIX E

Case study – Baby Board Books and Community Stories

Northern Territory Library

In contrast to libraries in the Eastern States of Australia, the Northern Territory library exists in a context of living language. More than 100 Aboriginal languages and dialects are spoken in the Territory, and many Indigenous Territorians speak English as their third or fourth language. Local language speakers make use of the full suite of services the library provides. A strong push for language maintenance is evident in the community and the Library has been encouraged to undertake Aboriginal language specific projects to that end.

Baby Board Books

The content, language and artwork of the bilingual baby board books are developed using early childhood education principles. Audio CDs accompany the baby board books, providing greater accessibility to the text.

These books contribute to community pride in identity and assist in the promotion of indigenous languages. The bilingual baby board book project also provides opportunities to increase transmission of language across the generations.

Benefits to the community

The content is created using a community development approach. Northern Territory Library staff work with community groups on a strength based model where young people are offered strong role models to help them reconnect with their culture and language.

The story, song, chant and artwork is created by the community group with the final book speaking across the generations as a genuine reflection of the community's cultural history brought to life through art.

The process of working together to create, perform and record the content for the book engages people in a group project, connecting families and kin groups, while preserving culture, language and song traditions. This project also provides the opportunity to experience reading for enjoyment and highlighting the value of books.

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Broader social outcomes

Positive messages of pride, purpose, self respect and empowerment are worked into a new song, chant or story that becomes the content and audio for the books. This results in a tangible long lasting product and a meaningful social resource for each community.

Bilingual baby board books are a language specific resource accessible throughout all public and community libraries in the Northern Territory. These books are collected and preserved as part of the Northern Territory Library's mission of preserving the Northern Territory's documentary heritage.

Bilingual baby board books are a valuable promotional tool, increasing awareness of Indigenous culture and languages that provide opportunities for discussion and further learning. These books provide an effective and accessible representation of the cooperative and proactive cultural activities taking place in communities to preserve language and culture.

A bilingual board book provides a place-based resource showcasing local language and English within a cultural context. The books are an invaluable resource, being available in homes and community centres, schools and public libraries across the Northern Territory.

Community Stories

Another community project run by the Northern Territory Library in partnership with Pitjantjatjara Council is the maintenance of a community database. The partnership has developed a new version of the Pitjantjatjara Council Ara Irititja software now known in the NT public library network as Community Stories.

The initiative has been the cornerstone in communities for collecting and generating local content that stimulates use and retention of local languages and culture. Each community controls access to the content however sharing of information will be facilitated through the web.

The new version of Community Stories is available in over 30 communities. Providing training and support to 30 communities is a challenge.

http://www.nretas.nt.gov.au/knowledge-and-history/northern-territory-library/about_us/our_story_version_2_projects

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Information kindly provided by Jo McGill

APPENDIX F

A brief overview of Trove and suggestions to optimize its use for Indigenous languages

Trove is an exciting, revolutionary and free search engine for all Australians. It is a project of the National Library of Australia that allows users to search a large and unrivalled repository of Australian material at the click of a button.

The National Library of Australia wanted to make finding and getting information easier for all Australians. Trove provides a quick, easy and powerful way to search making finding information an effortless and enjoyable experience.

Trove was designed to:

- provide a single point of access to the resources of the deep web
- facilitate access to a significantly greater range of resources from major sources, including selected digitised material freely available online
- support searching of, and access to, full-text content
- enhance ease of discovery by providing improved relevance ranking, refinement by facets, grouping of all editions of the same book and exploitation of thesauri
- engage with communities and individuals through annotation services
- ensure that relevant information is not missed in a search by reducing the need to search material-specific discovery services separately
- provide a platform for niche services to query a vast resource of Australian metadata and adapt it for their own needs.

The content found through Trove comes from the National Library of Australia, over 1,000 libraries around Australia and from other cultural and educational organisations. International digital collections of relevance are also being harvested. Information comes to Trove through Libraries Australia. Libraries Australia is a membership-based resource sharing service managed by the National Library of Australia for Australian libraries and their users. Its key missions are to support the workflows of Australian libraries and provide data to underpin the Trove discovery service.

Members of Libraries Australia (including most of Australia's major collecting institutions) provide details of their catalogues for inclusion in the Libraries Australia database. This is the database that populates Trove.

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The content provided is managed entirely by the collecting institution and not by Trove, or Libraries Australia. Member libraries have varied reasons for using Libraries Australia's services. Although Libraries Australia encourages libraries to provide full details of their collections in the past specific types of materials have often been overlooked. Sometimes when institutions held the only copies of material the need to provide detail of this material to the Libraries Australia was not prioritised. Although this situation is changing it has particular implications for Indigenous Language materials as the manuscript collections of many libraries fall into this category.

At present much of the Indigenous Language content on Trove takes the form of a publication reference and points the user to where they can access the hard copy material. It is envisaged that as member libraries digitise their collections more digital content will be available directly through Trove.

Trove's interface structure is designed to help build broader picture of the search topic rather than simply listing resources. The interface groups types of content (e.g. books, newspapers, photos, people) so as to provide some insight at a glance as to the content area. How well this works depends of course on how much content is, or has been made, available.

Discussion with Dr Marie-Louise Ayres, Assistant Director-General, Resource Sharing, National Library of Australia, has highlighted a number of ways that language groups could work with libraries to help Trove give proper focus to Indigenous languages:

1. Encourage all libraries with Indigenous language collections to become members of Libraries Australia if they are not already.
2. Encourage libraries with Indigenous language collections to prioritise their language collections and make sure that full details of all of those materials are provided to Libraries Australia for inclusion in Trove.
3. Encourage libraries with Indigenous language collections to prioritise the digitisation of language resources and provide them to Libraries Australia so that they can be accessed through Trove.
4. Encourage member libraries to work with other local collecting bodies, (e.g. Language Centres, Historical Societies) to make sure their materials are included in the collection and details, and/or digital copies as appropriate, are available through Trove.

Dr Ayres also suggested tools that Language workers could use to facilitate access to the Indigenous Language materials currently in Trove, namely lists and tags.

Lists

Trove has a facility through which users can make public or private lists. Each list is given a name and an introductory preamble. Materials in the relevant materials are found on Trove and added to the list along with collection are then added to the list along with explanatory notes. A nice example of how lists can be used well is that for Ballets Russes:

<http://trove.nla.gov.au/list?id=1194>

Tags

Tags are a tool to note items that belong to a specific category. Once tagged the name of the tag can be used to display all the information that has been given that tag. Thus reducing the amount of material identified in a search. At this stage catalogue information cannot be provided to Libraries Australia with tags, they must be added through the Trove interface. The process of tagging is open to any user of Trove, this means anyone can set up a new tag. While this is a good thing it may provide some difficulty in the ongoing development of a comprehensive list of language materials. The following tags currently exist in Trove with each having less than five items under that tag.

- Aboriginal language
- Aboriginal Language Address Victoria
- Aboriginal Language Groups
- Aboriginal Language WA
- Aboriginal languages
- SE Qld Aboriginal languages
- Tasmanian Aboriginal languages
- Transcription of Australian Aboriginal languages
- Australian Indigenous languages - Queensland
- Australian Indigenous Languages Collection
- Indigenous languages

In addition to the above suggestions Dr Ayres mentioned that there have been discussions within Trove regarding establishing subject focused portals, and that Indigenous Culture was an area of interest in this regard. This would involve Trove developing an interface and search system which would attract only material with Indigenous Cultural content. It would be impossible to develop such systems for every subject area, and as such the focus of the directory would need to be as broad as possible. That is including all aspects of Indigenous culture rather than being limited to language. There is no current funding for this project nor is there an expectation that the Trove team will find internal funding to prioritise this project at any time in the near future. However, if funding for this proposal presented itself it is envisaged that the Trove would be interested.

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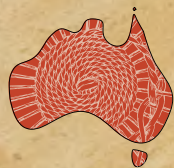
To facilitate the sharing of information from Trove, an API (application programming interface) has been developed. The API enables external parties/websites to pull information from Trove for their own uses. At this stage we do not know the specific nature of the API but it certainly indicates that it may be possible to establish an Indigenous languages online directory external to Trove, but using the contents of Trove to populate the website. This however is an endeavor that is likely to have significant start up costs as well as ongoing expenses, thus should not be undertaken without thorough consideration.

Further information about Trove and how it can be used can be found through Trove (<http://trove.nla.gov.au>) and in the National Library of Australia 2010 staff papers:

How to utilise Trove in your organisation by Debbie Campbell
[<http://www.nla.gov.au/openpublish/index.php/nlasp/article/view/1664>]

Trove: more than a treasure? How finding information just became easier by Rose Holley [<http://www.nla.gov.au/openpublish/index.php/nlasp/article/view/1867>]

First Languages Australia is a national organisation working with community language programs around the country to support the continued use and recognition of Australia's first languages.



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