Disclaimer

The information contained in this book is correct at the time of production, June 2013. Whilst it provides information and words from the Ngadjju language, the work on recording and analyzing this language has just begun and therefore material in this book may change in time.

Warning for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander People

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people are warned that this document may contain images, names and material about deceased persons.

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Production

This document was produced by Lois Spehn-Jackson Teacher’s Cert. Dip, Teach. Bachelor Ed. and compiled and edited by Susan Hanson Dip.Ed, Grad. Dip Linguistics in consultation with Sonny Graham and Dorothy Dimer. Original material is from records produced by Dorothy Dimer.

The Goldfields Languages Project is a project of the Ngalia Foundation under the National Trust of Australia (WA).

Many people have generously assisted with the production of this document. In particular I would like to acknowledge and thank:

The National Trust of Australia (WA) Tom Perrigo, Karl Clement Hayes and Ada Hanson.

MEEDAC, Leonora, in particular Sandra Evans, for kind support with working and meeting space.

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Any errors that appear in this work are my own and will be amended in future versions of this document as the work on the language continues.

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Introduction

Ngadju or Ngadjumaya is a language of the Goldfields region of Western Australia. It is a Pama-Nyungan language and appears to be of the Wati group of languages.

Status of the language

There appears to be one speaker and several partial speakers of that language. These speakers are located in Coolgardie and Esperance. The speakers have reasonable lexical knowledge but little grammatical ability. The language is poorly documented with some work being done by non-linguists and for native title purposes. This material is not available for use by Ngadju people.

Fieldwork on language collection was commenced by linguist Sue Hanson in 2012 and has since been handed over to Dr. Doug Marmion to continue, as a partnership between the Ngalia Foundation’s Goldfields Language project and AIATSIS. The fieldwork will assist in the collection of the remaining language, recovery and documentation of existing material, and may stimulate speakers to remember and potentially revives language learning.

Language documentation

Much material was recorded and documented by von Brandenstein (1980) and further research was carried out by Doug Marmion (2008). Wordlists were also collected by Normal Tindale, O’Grady (1957), Douglas (1968 and 1976) and Daisy Bates at the turn of the 20th century. Steven Roberts wrote a sketch grammar of the language in an undated essay.

This wordlist is compiled of all known material and verified with speaker Mrs. Dorothy Dimer during 2012 and 2013.

Acknowledgment

This wordlist is based on the work of several people over a 50-year period and from language elicitation recordings with Dorothy Dimer. Many thanks are due to Mrs. Dimer and her daughters Betty and Alison for their encouragement and support to enable this work to be undertaken.

The material in this wordlist is in draft form until a thorough database and analysis is undertaken by Doug Marmion, which will lead to a published dictionary and language learning resources.

Many thanks are due to Sonny Graham for his support for the language work, encouragement and enthusiasm for language learning.

Sue Hanson June 2013
Mingiwa Rockhole on Ngadju land
Contents

Introduction

Birds
Animals
Insects
Reptiles
Plants and Bush Tucker
Implements
People
People and Body Parts
Elements
Actions

English to Ngadju
Introduction:
To be able to say and use words, phrases and sentences in Ngadju, it is important to know the sounds.

GETTING TO KNOW THE NGADJU SOUNDS USING THE NGADJU ALPHABET:
It is important to be able to say words [pronounce words] before learning to read the printed word. There are some sounds which are not in English but the sound in Ngadju is always constant, unlike in English where one sound may be said a number of ways. E.g. the English ‘a’, as in cat, many and path.

NGADJU VOWELS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SOUND</th>
<th>WHAT IT SOUNDS LIKE IN ENGLISH</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>a</td>
<td>as in about or media or but</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>aa</td>
<td>like ar as in car or part or father</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>i</td>
<td>as in hit, bit or bikini</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ii</td>
<td>as in beat</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>u</td>
<td>as in put</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>uu</td>
<td>as in book or sometimes boot</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

NGADJU CONSONANTS

| d     | Like in dog                  |
| j     | Like in judge                |
| k     | Between English g and k, like the k in skill |
| l     | As in lamp or nil            |
| -ly   | Like million, never quickly  |
| m     | As in man                    |
| n     | As in nil                    |
| ng    | Like ng in sing, never like ng in finger |
| ny    | Like onion, nuisance, never like many |
| p     | Between English b and p, like the p in spin |
| -r    | As in ran or carol           |
| -rt   | Like saying d with tip of tongue turned back |
| -rl   | Like saying l with tip of tongue turned back |
| -rn   | Like saying n with tip of tongue turned back |
| -rr   | A trilled r like in Italian or Scottish English |
| t     | Between English d and t, like the t in sting |
| tj    | Like the ch in chair but sometimes like the j in jam |
| w     | As in wet                    |
| y     | As in yell                   |

NGADJU TOPICAL DICTIONARY
Birds

julaya
emu
Birds

pankalangka.
in the tree.
Animals

jirimarta
echidna

tjutju
dog

nguparnu
red dingo

narni
sheep

pikuta
red kangaroo

Pikuta parnangka.
Red kangaroo on the sand.

kulpit
grey kangaroo
Animals

matjarru
bullocks

ngartu
cat

jurajura
camels

pakurny
fox

puniversity
horse
Insects

**katara/parti**
witchetty grubs

**minga**
ants
Reptiles

kaljala
snake

yuna
bobtail lizard

kalun
cheeky goanna
Plants and Bush Tucker

**manjali**
food/tucker

**punjuri**
pigface

**mitjal**
Kurrajong tree

**nyulyku**
wild potato/yam

**pankal**
tree

**tumpari**
quandong
Plants and Bush Tucker

**kunapirti**
wattle

**tutiyyara**
Gimlet tree

**kalkurla**
silky pear

**kartji**
pankal tree

**pilkarla**
white sugar on gum leaves
Implements

**kartji**
spear

**yartu**
coolaman

**nanpa**
head string/hair belt
People

yaka
woman

Kaddee
great grandmother

yaku
mother

Kaddee
great grandmother

nganya
you

yaka
mother

marlpa
man

wanya
girl

marlpa
bushman

Nguni
grandfather

wanti
boy

wanti kaja
little boy

katha
brother-in-law

kartj
baby

mama
father
People—Body Parts

- **kata/wiyuntu** (head)
- **kula** (ear)
- **wartu** (eye)
- **tjaa** (mouth)
- **ngunti/ngantjka** (neck)
- **pipi** (breast)
- **warnku yiirn** (skinny arm)
- **warnku** (arm)
- **piri** (fingers)
- **kura ngalpa** (big leg/thigh)
- **ka** (leg)
- **tjina/jina** (foot)
- **jina piri** (toe nails)
Elements

pankal  
(tree)  

ngarnka  
(cave)  

mityjal  
(water)  

tjuraly  
(shade)  

Tjurlpurn  
(flat rock with water hole)  

Parna  
(ground/earth)
Elements

- martungu: rain cloud
- jirntu: sun
- punka: stars
- yakun: moon
- kala: fire
- milyal: rain
Actions

**nyina**
sit

**Wanti nyinan.**
The boy is sitting.

**Wanti parnangka nyinan.**
The boy is sitting on the ground.

**yankun**
walking

**Waamuku yankun.**
Walking to the camp.

**ngala**
eat

**Parti ngala.**
Eating bardi.

**Ngatju parti ngala.**
I’m eating bardi.
**Actions**

**wartu**
watch

Wartu nyangukan nyanjarr.
Watching our meat. (kangaroo)

Ngatjuku wartu nyangukan nyanjarr.
I’m watching the kangaroo. (our meat)

**jankaru**
kiss

**pungku**
hit

**jurnu**
talk

**kupalya**
sleep
### A - a
- Aboriginal man, bushman: marlpa
- Alcohol, grog: mityjal
- All of us: ngalpuru
- Ants, black: minga
- Any woman: yaka
- Arm: warnku
- Ashes and tobacco mixture: kurlja
- Ate, eat: ngalkurn (past tense?)
- Aunt, mother: yaku

### B - b
- Baby: kartj
- Back: kaarmpu
- Back, big right to bottom: kaarmpu nyaparu
- Bad: ngalpa
- Beard: walyi
- Boy: wanti
- Boy, little: wanti kaja/minya wanti
- Boys: wantikaja
- Break for wind: yalka
- Breasts: pipi
- Brother-in-law: katha
- Bullocks: karlaku
- Burnt the country: marlpa
- Bushman, Aboriginal: yaparu/nyaparu
- Bush, green, fruit: yuna
- Bush, where parti found: watalka/nyajun

### C - c
- Camel: jurajura
- Camp: waamu
- Carrying a baby, pregnant: kamparti kartj
- Cat: ngartu
- Cave: ngarnka
- Cheeky goanna: kalun
- Children: kajara
- Children, big mob of: wilarra kajarra
- Cigarette, smoke: puya
- Clouds, rain coming: martungu
- Cold: kalaru
- Coolaman: yartu
- Coolgardie: Kukurtu
- Colour, black: puntju
- Corporation name: Mingawi
- Coughing: kuntuly
- Cry: wulan
- Crying: wulanyi

### D - d
- Dead: manytja/mantja
- Deaf: kular walyi
- Decide which one, choose: kartarr
- Dingo, red: nguparnu
- Dog: tjutju
- Dog, tail: nurnti
- Drink, to: mijul/kawkin?
### E - e

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Word</th>
<th>Pronunciation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ear</td>
<td>kula</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ears</td>
<td>kular</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ears, deaf, no good</td>
<td>kular walyi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>earth, ground</td>
<td>parna</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>eat</td>
<td>ngala</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>eating</td>
<td>ngala</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>eat, ate (past tense?)</td>
<td>ngalkurn</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>echidna</td>
<td>jirimarta</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>egg</td>
<td>ngawu</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>emu</td>
<td>julaya</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>eye</td>
<td>warrtuya</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### F - f

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Word</th>
<th>Pronunciation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>fall down</td>
<td>yupurun</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>father</td>
<td>mama</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>father, Dorothy Dimer's</td>
<td>Nguni</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>feed</td>
<td>munjali</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>feed from the leaves</td>
<td>pilkarla</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>finger, fingernails, toes</td>
<td>piri</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>fire</td>
<td>kala</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>foot</td>
<td>jina</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>fox</td>
<td>pakurny</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>fruit, green bush</td>
<td>nyajun/watalka</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### G - g

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Word</th>
<th>Pronunciation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>get up</td>
<td>pakan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>giggle</td>
<td>tjinkir</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gimlet, tree</td>
<td>tutiyara</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>girl</td>
<td>wanya</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>girl, little</td>
<td>minya wanya.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>goanna, short tailed</td>
<td>kalka</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>goanna, cheeky</td>
<td>kalun</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>goanna, small</td>
<td>kalyja</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>goat, sheep</td>
<td>narni</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>good</td>
<td>yalunya</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>good food</td>
<td>Munjali yalunya</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>good shade</td>
<td>Tjuraly yalunya</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Great grandmother, Mrs Dimer’s spelling</td>
<td>Kaddee</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>green bush, fruit</td>
<td>nyajun</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>grey kangaroo</td>
<td>kulpit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>grog, water</td>
<td>mityjal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ground</td>
<td>parna</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>group name</td>
<td>Martu Wangka</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>gum, runny honey</td>
<td>jarun</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>gum tree, where water is found in roots</td>
<td>malinyu</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>guts</td>
<td>kampurti</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### H - h

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Word</th>
<th>Pronunciation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>hair</td>
<td>manka</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>hair, long</td>
<td>kata ngalpajarra</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>hair, lots of</td>
<td>kata/Wiyuntu ngalpajarra</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>hair on head</td>
<td>kata manka</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>head</td>
<td>kata/wiyuntu</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>head string, hair belt</td>
<td>nanpa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>hear</td>
<td>kurnal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>heart</td>
<td>kururtu</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>highest point, such as on a hill</td>
<td>martu</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>hill in Coolgardie area</td>
<td>Mingawi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>him</td>
<td>nyawagi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>hit</td>
<td>pungnya</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>honey</td>
<td>jarun</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>horse</td>
<td>puni</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>hot</td>
<td>narnji</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>hot, very</td>
<td>ngarnji warrtayi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>hurry up</td>
<td>yirrakala/wijarnu</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>hurry up and put your camp up</td>
<td>Mintal warrany</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

NGADJU TOPICAL DICTIONARY
### I - i

I hear and I'm thinking.
Kurnal kuurnakin.
I'm a Ngatju.
Ngatju marlpa.

I, me
ngaju

I'm eating tucker
Ngatju manjali ngala.

I'm talking to him.
Gaju jurnu nyanya.

in the tree
pankalangka

### K - k

kangaroo, from the desert, not marlu
originally from area
kangaroo runners
nuniny

kangaroo, grey
kulpit
kill the kangaroo
Kulpit manyta pungu.

kangaroo, our meat
nyangukun nyanjarr
kiss, to kiss a child
jankaru/yaantjulku

kangaroo, red
pikuta
Kurrajong tree
mitjal

Kangaroo tail
ngunti
Kurrajong tree with water
mitjal karta

### L - l

language, talk
maya
listen
kurnakin

language name
ngatju
ngatju
Listen to the rain clouds coming.
Martungu kurnakin.

language name, Dorothy
Dimer's father's language
Marlpa maya
lizard, bobtail
yuna

leg
kura
long hair
kata ngalpajarra

little
minya/kaja
lots
wiyuntu

little boy
wanti kaja/minya wanti
lots of hair
wiyuntu ngalpajarra

little girl
minya wanya

### M - m

making cold
jatarringu
moon
yakun

man, Aboriginal, bushman
marlpa
mother
yaku

me
ngaju
mouth
tja

meat
nyanjarr/jurru
mucous
yulkarta

mob
ngalpuru/wilarra

### N - n

name of corporation
mingawi
no good
walyi

name of people
Marlpa Ngadju
north
yalintjarra

name of person
Palili
nose
mula

name of thing
ngantjka/ngunti

NGADJU TOPICAL DICTIONARY
**O - o**
- on a hill, highest point
- one
- on the head, hair

**P - p**
- people, name
- people on high ground
- people, white
- person, mixed heritage
- person, white
- phlegm
- pig face
- pine tree, people would bury dead under these trees

**Q - q**
- quandong

**R - r**
- raining
- rain clouds coming, listen
- rain coming, clouds
- red dingo
- red kangaroo

**S - s**
- shade, shade tree
- sheep, goat
- silky pear
- sit
- sitting
- skinny arm
- sleeping
- slow
- slow walking
- smoke, cigarette

**NGADJU TOPICAL DICTIONARY**
### T - t

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Term</th>
<th>Ngadju Equivalent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>tail, dog</td>
<td>nurnti</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tail, kangaroo</td>
<td>ngunti</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>talk</td>
<td>junu/jurnu/tjunu</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>talk, language</td>
<td>maya</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tears</td>
<td>milyan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tears falling, weeping</td>
<td>milyan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>teeth</td>
<td>yiirri</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>thinking</td>
<td>kuurnakin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>three</td>
<td>wanul?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tobacco</td>
<td>namari</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tobacco mixture with ashes</td>
<td>kurlja</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>toenails</td>
<td>jina piri</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tongue</td>
<td>mitjun</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>track</td>
<td>tjina</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tree, Blackbutt</td>
<td>kanyarr</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tree, Gimlet</td>
<td>tutiyara</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tree, Gum</td>
<td>malinyu</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tree, Kurrajong</td>
<td>mitjal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tree, Kurrajong with water</td>
<td>mitjul karta</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tree, pine</td>
<td>partinyu</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tree, spear</td>
<td>kartji</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tree, species</td>
<td>pankji</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>trip over, fall down</td>
<td>yupurun</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tucker</td>
<td>manjali</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>two</td>
<td>kutjarra</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### V - v

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Term</th>
<th>Ngadju Equivalent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>very hot</td>
<td>ngarnji warrtayi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>vine with a yam</td>
<td>junkujunku</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>walking</td>
<td>yankun</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>walking slow</td>
<td>yankun wakala</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>watch</td>
<td>wartu</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>water, grog</td>
<td>mityjal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>water falling down, raining</td>
<td>milyal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>wattle</td>
<td>kunapirti</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>weeping, tears falling</td>
<td>milyan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>west of Mingawa</td>
<td>Malkarmi swamp</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>where parti is found, bush</td>
<td>marun</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### W - w

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Term</th>
<th>Ngadju Equivalent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>walking</td>
<td>yankun</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>where water is found in roots, gummalinyu tree</td>
<td>ngarnji warrtayi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>white person</td>
<td>Wajala/ngarta</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>white, sweet sugar on gum leaves</td>
<td>pilkarla</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>white woman</td>
<td>mitjinya</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>wind</td>
<td>winju</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>wind break</td>
<td>yalka</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>winter camp, flat rock with water-hole</td>
<td>tjurlparn</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>witchetty grub</td>
<td>katarra</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>woman, any</td>
<td>yaka</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>woman, white</td>
<td>mitjinya</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Y - y

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Term</th>
<th>Ngadju Equivalent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>yam</td>
<td>nyulyku</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>you</td>
<td>nganya</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>yam, vine with a yam, grows near creek beds</td>
<td>junkujunku</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>yam, vine with a yam, grows near creek beds</td>
<td>junkujunku</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

NGADJU TOPICAL DICTIONARY
Ngadju Topical Dictionary images sourced from:-

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