

New Media Toolkit

Indigenous Languages Resources Language Apps

Purpose

There is a lot of interest in Apps that can be used with Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander languages. The advent of new technologies has created opportunities to develop learning tools for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures and languages. This info guide explores some of the Language Apps available that may be utilised to support language revival in communities.

Introduction

In addition to pre-loaded Apps, there are a range of Apps available for Android or Apple devices that can be utilised for the recording, documentation and preservation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander languages. These Apps may also be used to produce language learning/teaching resources as well as sharing traditional languages to a wider audience.

Language Recording

Some of these Apps were developed for music or music recording, or even dictation, but can be adapted to suit language teaching/learning contexts.

These include:

[Aikuma](#): Aikuma is a free Android App for recording and translating spoken language. Make your own recordings, share them, and translate recordings into other languages.

[Audiopal](#): Audiopal is another very simple voice recording tool that uses a small embeddable widget to put on your blog, wiki or website.

[iTalk](#): iTalk Recorder is a full-featured recording app with a streamlined and intuitive user interface to manage recordings.

[QR Voice](#): This app can generate QR codes that link to short audio clips in language.

[Soundcloud](#): Soundcloud is a web 2.0 tool with an easy-to-use iPad/iPod app. It's designed for musicians, but language teachers should take advantage for in-class voice recording.

[Vocaroo](#): Vocaroo is a very simple voice recording tool. There is no registration needed and you get a small embeddable widget to put on your blog, wiki or website.

[Voki](#): Voki is a creative voice recording tool to create speaking avatars. It offers multiple customization options. Registration is needed and you get an embeddable widget in various sizes and colours. With Voki you also have a text to speech option.

Need further information?

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Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Language Apps

Additionally, there are language-specific Apps available for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander languages.

Each has their own particular purpose or focus whether that is for translation of language-to-English or for use as a portable dictionary.

Anindilyakwa [Northern Territory]: In April 2013, NT Library Services launched a flash-card based [App](#) for the Anindilyakwa language based on Groote Eylandt. It comprises everyday words from Anindilyakwa and is designed as a bilingual literacy tool for people of all ages in Anindilyakwa communities, as well as English-speaking workers and visitors to the Groote Eylandt region. It is presented in the style of 'flash cards' but includes sound, text and hand gestures through the use of video.

Gamilaraay [North-West New South Wales/South-West Queensland]: The developers of Ma! Iwaidja have lent their expertise to other language communities to document their languages via an App. [Gamilaraay Language App](#)

Iwaidja [Northern Territory]: The Ma! [Iwaidja app](#) was the first language app developed for an Australian Indigenous language and was released in June 2012! The app is an initiative of the Minjilang Endangered Languages Publication project to preserve the Iwaidja language of Croker Island in the Northern Territory. Ma! Iwaidja contains 1000 words and 400 phrases as well as an overview of the state of languages on Coburg Peninsula and Croker Island; it also has the capacity to record new words and add to the Iwaidja language database.

Nyoongar Culture [Western Australia]: [Sharing the Dreaming](#) is an initiative of the Western Australian Government and provides a window to the Nyoongar culture. The app explores culture, language, art and Dreaming Stories and is an educational tool as well as an introduction to the Nyoongar language.

Wiradjuri [Central-West New South Wales]: In June 2015, the Wiradjuri Study Centre developed and launched their [Wiradjuri Dictionary](#) for Android devices; language content is based on the work of Uncle Stan Grant and John Rudders; the App explores the language as well as providing examples of everyday words, phrases and conversations.

Yawuru [Western Australia]: [Yawuru Ngan-ga](#) explores the Yawuru language of Broome region; includes a dictionary as well as word games.

Yugambah [South-East Queensland]: [Yugambah Language App](#) as the first App for Queensland languages is also one of the better known apps. The App provides background information on the Yugambah language as well as a pronunciation guide to accompany the Dictionary of words with pronunciation to assist language learning.

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International Indigenous languages

There has also been considerable App development with Indigenous languages in other parts of the world, particularly the First Nations of the United States and Canada.

Inuit [Canada/Alaska/Greenland]: The [Tusaalanga App](#) was developed to maintain the Inuit language which extends from Canada through Alaska and Greenland onto Russia.

Cree [Canada]: [My Cree](#) app is designed to learn Plains Cree in a fun way. It is aimed at young people to find and use the language from a range of categories, e.g. families, food, etc. as well as learning activities.

Maori [New Zealand]: The Maori language of New Zealand has a strong tradition and is used on a daily basis, so it is no surprise to see Maori language apps.

[Te Pumanawa App](#) has been developed by the Waiariki Institute of Technology and is a way to learn Maori on a mobile device. It is based on Maori language courses run by the Waiariki Institute of Technology and includes over 150 interactive lessons!

As a companion to the Maori Language Dictionary, there is a [Te Reo Maori language App](#) that allows users to learn Maori language as well as cultural knowledge, customs and beliefs.

The selection of Apps shown here are only a representative sample of what's available - the weblinks referenced in the footer provide further details on the range of Apps available to promote the learning of Indigenous languages and cultures.

Apps are also a great way to promote Indigenous languages and make them accessible to a wider audience. In terms of language revival, they should be seen as a tool that complements the ongoing language revival processes within communities.

As Claire Bowerm reminds us in a post on [Fully \(sic\)](#) Crikey's Language Blog - 'phone Apps don't save languages, people do!'

Further Reading/References

There is a range of online sites that review and highlight Apps that can be adapted and used for recording, documenting and sharing language.

Aboriginal Art and Culture Blog: [There's an app for that!](#)

App Advice – [Best Studio Recording Apps for iPads](#)

App Advice – [Best Flashcards Apps](#)

Apps in Education: [Sharing Australian Aboriginal Culture webpage](#)

[ARC Centre of Excellence for the Dynamics of Language](#)

[Fully \(sic\) Crikey's Language Blog](#)

[iOS Apps for World language Education](#)

Oxford Uni Press – [10 mostly free apps for creative language learning](#)

Resource Network for Linguistic Diversity (RNLD): [Indigenous Language Apps](#)

Rising Voices: [Review of Indigenous Language-Learning Apps](#)

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Info guide

Further Details:

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[SLQ Indigenous Languages Webpages](#)

[SLQ Indigenous Languages Blog](#)

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