



Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies Library

Papers of Steve R. Johnson

MS 3778

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COLLECTION SUMMARY

Creator:	Steve Johnson
Title:	Papers of Steve Johnson
Collection no:	MS 3778
Date range:	1960-1989
Extent:	.35 metres (2 boxes)
Repository	Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies

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ACCESS TO COLLECTION

Access and use conditions

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Preferred citation

Items from this collection should be cited as [Title or description of manuscript item], Papers of Steve R. Johnson, Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies, MS 3778, Series [no.], Folder or Item [no.]

Inter-Library Loan

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COLLECTION OVERVIEW

Scope and content note

The papers comprise photocopies of field notes on the Wik languages of North Queensland, compiled by the linguist, Steve Johnson in the late 1980s. There are also draft manuscripts, published papers, correspondence, and reference material.

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Provenance

The papers and audiovisual material on Wik languages by Steve Johnson were deposited in AIATSIS Library by the linguist, R.M.W. Dixon on behalf of the widow of Steve Johnson, in December 1999. The associated audio material was deposited in the Audiovisual Archives.

Material separated from collection

A disc containing word lists in Kugu Nganhcara was deposited in the Aboriginal Studies Electronic Data Archive (ASEDA), and audio tapes from this collection were deposited in AIATSIS Audiovisual Archives. This material was deposited by Steve Johnson in c.1989-90. For access to the disc material contact [ASEDA](#) and for access to the tape material contact the [Audiovisual Archive](#).

Arrangement of collection

The arrangement of the material reflects the work of Suzanne Kite who prepared the original 'finding aid', in 1999. In 2006 the AIATSIS Library rearranged the material into 'series' and 'folders' with minor variations to Kite's numbering system.

Related material

Important: Before clicking on the link to the catalogue entries below, please read our [sensitivity message](#)

For a complete listing of works by Steve Johnson held by the Library and for other related material consult [Mura@, the AIATSIS catalogue](#)

For access to audiovisual material contact the [Audiovisual Archive](#).

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BIOGRAPHICAL NOTE

Stephen Richard Johnson commenced his studies in linguistics at the University of Queensland in 1975. He graduated with BA (Hons) and a later was awarded Ph.D from that University. During his career he spent a year (1985-86) as a lecturer at S.A.L. (Batchelor, Northern Territory) where he taught Aboriginal peoples to work with their own languages, and at the time of his death (on 28 August 1990) was a lecturer in linguistics at the University of New England. Johnson wrote published and unpublished material on Aboriginal languages, in particular those of Cape York Peninsula.

In 1987 Johnson published a controversial article about the process of Aboriginal language death, and was known for his challenging views on this and related issues. For some time preceding his death in 1990 Johnson had been working with fellow linguist, Ian Smith, on both a grammar and dictionary of the Kugu Nganhcara language of Cape York. He was also starting work on a book of language of Aboriginal society, and was jointly editing a new journal, *Aboriginal Linguistics*, the first issue of which appeared at the end of 1989.

References: [Obituary] 'Steve Johnson', by Diana Eades, *Australian Aboriginal Studies*, no. 1, 1991, and AIAS documentation.

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SERIES DESCRIPTIONS

Series 1 Kugu Nganhcara – General

This series of photocopies of published and unpublished papers by Steve Johnson and others are held in one folder

Item

- 1 'The Status of classifiers in Kugu Nganhcara nominals', by Steve Johnson in *Aboriginal Linguistics* (1) 1988, pp.198-203
- 2 'Social parameters of linguistic change in an unstratified Aboriginal society', by Steve Johnson, 1989, 10pp
- 3 'Compound or classifier construction: Problems in Kugu Nganhcara word formation', by Steve Johnson. Presented at ALS Annual Meeting, Brisbane. 1985, 3pp
- 4 'The syntax of number in Kugu Nganhcara', by Steve Johnson and Ian Smith, ALS. 1986, 1p
- 5 'Where have all the Diphthongs gone?', by Steve Johnson, University of New England. 2Pp, Handout with examples from Kugu Nganhcara
- 6 'The cliticization of case markers in Nganhcara', paper by Ian Smith and Steve Johnson, 12pp
- 7 'Clitics and case-marking in an Australian language', 16pp. Paper examining enclitic case markers in Kugu Nganhcara
- 8 'Part II: The Kugu-Nganychara. Chapter 7. Introduction: the Kugu-Nganychara,' pp168-179
- 9 'Teeth among the Kugu Ngantjarra' (2pp). Includes many Kugu Nganhcara words
- 10 'Classifiers in Kugu Nganhcara', 3pp. Papers outlining which classifiers are used with which things
- 11 Meat, vegies, sex and other useful ways of classifying things, 2pp. Handout giving

Item

- examples of classifiers in Kugu Nganhcara
- 12 Vocabulary list: Kugu Nganhcara classifiers + nouns/ English, 2pp
- 13 Vocabulary list: Kugu Nganhcara/ English, 5pp
- 14 Map depicting Kugu Nganhcara dialects and accompanying lecture notes, on location of tribes in terms of Kugu Nganhcara, 1+3pp
- 15 Introduction to Kugu Nganhcara. Includes background notes, maps and 'The sound of Kugu Nganhcara', 4pp
- 16 Lessons 1-9 (each lesson contains information on Kugu Nganhcara grammar and vocabulary including vocabulary lists on relations, insects, human body, mammals, birds)

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Series 2 Kugu Nganhcara languages

Texts, translations, notes in the Kugu Nganhcara languages. Typescript and handwritten. The associated audio tapes are held in the Audiovisual Archives.

Folder

- 1 Wik Iyanh. Including:-
- Beetle story: Iyanh text (handwritten) with some English glossaries, 10pp [Taken from Tape PY06]
 - Fishing trip story: Iyanh text (typed and handwritten versions, 1+2pp). Handwritten version has some English glosses. [Taken from Tape PY07]
 - Tree-felling at Aurukun story: Iyanh text (typed version, 1p; 2 handwritten versions, 2pp each). Handwritten versions have some English glosses. [Taken from Tape PY07]
 - Kangaroo hunting story: Iyanh text (handwritten) with some English glosses. 9pp. [Taken from Tape PY07]
 - Spear-making story: Iyanh text (handwritten) with some English glosses. 2pp. [Taken from Tape PY07]
 - Iyanh word list (with English translations) of natural phenomena, 4pp. [Taken from Tape PY07]
 - Iyanh words/phrases and their English translations, 1p. [Taken from Tape PY09]
 - Iyanh kinship terms, 1p. [Taken from Tape PY09]
 - Jabiru story: Iyanh text (handwritten) with some ~ n ~ f i s h glosses, 6pp. [Taken from Tape PY40a]
 - Emu and Brolga story: Iyanh text (typed version, 1p; 5 handwritten versions). [Taken from Tape PY40a]

Folder

- Iyanh text with some English glosses, 2pp. Uncertainty as to source
- List of contents of Tapes PY05, PY06, PY07, PY09 and PY40a
- Lists of English words with Iyanh equivalents. 5Pp [c112 words]
- Notes on Iyanh (8/1/79), 5pp. Informant G.L.
- Notes on Iyanh, 17pp. Includes sentences; reflexive forms (p4); case forms (p6); instrumental demonstrative (p16)
- Notes on Iyanh, 7pp. Includes sentences and some vocabulary
- Notes on Iyanh, 1p. Includes reflexive forms and some cases

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Kugu Muminh. Including:-

- Field notes on Muminh taken from Silia Peters Wura
- Day 2, pp 1-7 (missing p6). Sentences etc. with some English glosses. p7 taped
- Day 3, pp1-12. Sentences etc. with some English glosses, p1-9 untaped, p10-12 taped.
- Day 4, pp1-10. Sentences etc. with some English glosses
- Day 5, pp1-5. Sentences (including interrogatives and negatives) etc. with some English glosses
- Day 6, pp1-4. Sentences etc. with some English glosses, cases and vocabulary (e.g. sky, cloud, rainbow, star)
- Day 7, 2pp. Untaped sentences etc. with some English glosses
- Day 8. pp1-6. sentences etc. with some English glosses, lists of verbal (?) paradigms
- Day ?. pp1-16 (missing p5,9). Sentences etc. with some English glosses
- Notes taken from Celia. Morphophonemics (1. invariable stems, 2. variable stems, Irregular), 1p. Wordlist of bodily functions, 1p
- Hale's Muminh wordlist (102 words), 2pp

3-5

Kugu Uwanh. Includes:

- Field notes on Uwanh taken from Matthew Gordon Wanhcam, 44pp. Curlew and Crow story (pp1-6), Eagle Hawk and Night Owl story (pp7-12), Eagle hawk and night owl story I1 (pp13-21), Taipan and Blue-Tongue story (pp22-25), Kadam (pp26-44). [Tape MG13]
- Field notes on Uwanh (presumably) taken from Maymona Holroyd including:
 - #10...50pp. Sentences with English glosses, pp1-10,8/1/79; pp11-23,9/1/79; pp24-27,10/1/79; pp2,50,11/1/79. [Tape MH10]
 - #11 105pp. Sentences with English glosses. pp2-4 short text; pp5-13, 13/1/79; pp14-21,15/1/79; pp22-30 What happened last night story, 16/1/79; pp31-61,17/1/79 (pp44-48 body parts); pp62-68, 13/2/79; pp68-69 sentences and vocabulary; p70 section P, sentences 56-68; pp80 - nga forms; p98+, 27/2/79; pp103-105 nhum forms. [Tape MH11]

Folder

#12 32pp. Texts with some English glosses. pp1-2, story (b); pp3-13 (missing p10-12), story (c); pp14-16, story (d) The way they used to gather food; pp17-19, I tried to go to Aurukun; pp20-27, Why I went to see the manager; pp28-32, Getting rid of nganca. [Tape MH12]

- Uwanh text 'When the cyclone came', taken from Maymona Holroyd. Typed version (in 3 parts) with some English glosses. Handwritten version with some English glosses, 14pp. Notes from the cyclone text, 1p. [Tape MHO1]
- Notes on Uwanh (presumably). Sentences and lists of words (with no English translations), 15pp; and lists of words, a consonant chart, sentences with English glosses, 4pp; sentences (from Celia?), 1p; Notes taken from Celia including notes on Uwanh sidetalk, 4pp

- 6 Kugu Ugbanh. Field notes on Ugbanh taken from Nellie Yantumba (25pp) including notes on body parts (pp1-7); and sentences and vocabulary with English translations (pp8-25). [Tape NY30]
- 7 Kugu Mu'inh. Field notes on Mu'inh taken from G.L. 8/1/79 (4pp) Sentences and vocabulary with some English glosses taken from Gracie Ellen Holroyd (1p)
- 8 Kugu Yi?anh. Vocabulary and sentences (with some English glosses) on Yi?anh taken from Maymona Holroyd (1p); and story in Yi?an (?) with some English glosses (4pp)

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Series 3 Kugu Nganhcara – Comparative

Folder

- 1 'A Phonetic and phonological survey of Kugu Uwanh and Wik Iyanh', 4th year linguistics honours thesis by Steve Johnson. Handwritten and typescript. Includes spectrograms
- 2 'Kugu Uwanh and Wik Iyanh: Comparative verb morphology'. by Steve Johnson (6pp)
- 3 'Lectal and register relationships in a "small" society: Plain and respect vocabulary in the patrillects of Kugu Nganhcara', by Ian Smith and Steve Johnson, May 1989. 6pp

Folder

- 4-6 Comparative word lists of Ugbanh, Uwanh, Mu'inh, Muminh, Yi'anh, Iyanh in the following domains. The lists are not complete in all of these languages for every domain (* indicates typed copy in addition to handwritten copy).
- body parts and bodily secretions* - c110 words (ordinary language), c130 words (avoidance language)
 - fish* - c70 words
 - reptiles etc.* - c60 words
 - insects* - c45 words
 - birds* - c110 words
 - animals* - c13 words (OL), c40 words (AL)
 - material culture* - c100 words (OL), c80 words (AL)
 - shells - c20 words
 - trees - c70 words (including grasses, vegetables and fruit)
 - elements* - c50 words (OL), c45 words (AL)
 - regions and seasons* - c24 words (OL), c10 words (AL)
 - river names - c15 terms (given by Maymona Holroyd)
 - directionals* - c50 words
 - expressions of time* - c20 words (OL), c6 words (AL)
 - kinship* - c45 words (OL), c23 words (AL)
 - adjectives and adverbs* - c70 words (OL), 3pp notes (AL)
 - verbs* - c220 verbs + c40 causative verbs (OL), c190 (AL)
 - miscellaneous - c30 words
 - miscellaneous - (Mu'inh, Iyanh only)
- 7 Sentences and vocabulary from Mu'inh, Uwanh, Iyanh, Ugbanh, Muminh, 2pp

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Series 4 Kugu Nganhcara – Drafts of grammar (+ comments)

This series includes a draft annotated manuscript entitled 'Kugu Nganhcara', by Ian Smith and Steve Johnson, printed November 1985 [Folder 1] and related material [Folders 2 and 3].

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Series 5 Wik-Mungkan

This series comprises some material by Steve Johnson and Ian Smith but the bulk of the material consists of photocopied reference material by others.

Folder

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Includes:-

- (i) 'Some thoughts about Wik-Munkan orthography', by Gavan Breen, 5pp
- (ii) 'Stories in Wik Munkan and English', by N. Chevathun and M. Koo'aga. School of Australian Linguistics, Darwin Community College, July 1980. 4pp
- (iii) 'Wik-Munkan verb morphology', by M. Godfrey, *Pacific Linguistics*, Series C-13, 1970, pp741-756
- (iv) 'Compound words and close-knit phrases in Wik-Munkan', by Christine Kilham, *Pacific Linguistics*, Series A-37, 1974, pp45-73
- (v) 'Word order in Wik-Mungkan', by Christine Kilham in Donald Laycock and Werner Winter (eds), *A World of Language: Papers Presented to Professor S.A. Wurm on his 65th Birthday*, *Pacific Linguistics*, C-100, 1987, pp361-368
- (vi) 'Wik-Mungkan bibliography', compiled by Steve Johnson [on 'Wik' disk in 'Aurukun' sub-file], 3pp
- (vii) Papers for Cape York: Wik-Mungkan, compiled by Steve Johnson (on 'Wik'disk in 'Aurukun' sub-file), 2pp
- (viii) Section E: Published creative writing material in Wik-Mungkan
- (ix) 'From Kugu to Wik: Mungkanization at Aurukun', by Steve. Johnson and Ian Smith, June 1987, 13pp
- (x) [Chapter] 9. Other sentential enclitics, 2pp
- (xi) Handout on case in Wik-Mungkan. 5pp
- (xii) Traditional Aboriginal Language Program: Oral Wik Mungkan section for Aurukun State School Bilingual Program
- (xiii) Teaching and working the 1987 revised bilingual program at Aurukun, Years 1,2 and 3

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Includes:-

- (xiv) Handouts from Anthropology course at University of Queensland including information on Wik-Mungkan seasonal life cycle, totemism and kinship
- (xv) Maps of Wik-Mungkan and surrounding languages
- (xvi) Notes on Wik-Mungkan grammar
- (xvii) Word lists of Wik-Mungkan/ English in the following domains: body, human, kin, culture, animals, birds, reptiles, fish, shellfish, crustaceans, frogs, invertebrates, insects, plants, inanimate nature, numbers, colour, size, shape, physical qualities, animate qualities, stance, motion, affect, induced rest, communication, corporeal action, domestic action, inanimate state, location, time, conjunctions, adverbs, interjections, exclamations
- (xviii) Field notes taken on inland Wik-Mungkan variety in June 1974, by Bruce Rigsby (informant: Oscar Gordon)
- (xix) List of contents of Wik-Mungkan tapes 1-19

Folder

- (xx) Background and English text of Clive and Francis Yunkaporta's 'The story of moving stone' (TAPE 12)
- (xxi) Wik-Mungkan sentences (English translation) and blue tongue lizard story (with English translation) given by Francis Yunkaporta (TAPE 14)
- (xxii) Wik-Mungkan sentences (English translation) given by Clive Yunkaporta (TAPE 16)
- (xxiii) Miscellaneous notes on Wik-Mungkan

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Series 6 Wik languages – Reference material

Folder

1-3 Kenneth Hale's work. Including:-

- (i) Lists of contents of Hale's tapes of Wik languages
- (ii) Wik-Me?n (Wik Ep) field notes. 1960, 178pp [2 copies]
- (iii) Wik-Mungkan textlet, 45pp
- (iv) Wik-Mungkan field notes, 26pp
- (v) Wik Ep phonology and grammar, 1960, 3pp

4 Other work . Including:-

- (i) Lists of informants, their dates of births, their relatives and their language affiliations
- (ii) Maps of Cape York Peninsula and the Wik languages
- (iii) Wik Me'enh dictionary. Compiled by S. Johnson. [on 'Wik' disk in 'Aurukun language' file]

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Series 7 Correspondence, 1979-89

This series comprises correspondence between Steve Johnson, Ian Smith and other linguists and/or publishers

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Series 8 Miscellaneous notes

This series contains handwritten notes by Steve Johnson

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Series 9 Other papers

This series comprises published articles and papers by Steve Johnson, Ian Smith and others, 1986-86

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Finding aid originally compiled by S. Kite, 1997 . Updated September 2006

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