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ENGLISH–AS–A–SECOND–LANGUAGE
IN ABORIGINAL AUSTRALIA:
A CASE STUDY OF MILINGIMBI

VANESSA M.R. ELWELL

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Master of Arts of the Australian National
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Unless otherwise acknowledged, this thesis is the original work of the author.
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CHAPTER 1 - INTRODUCTION

Aboriginal groups whose members all still speak Australian languages as first languages are now located only in relatively small areas of Australia, compared with the situation in the millennia preceding European settlement. These areas include quite large tracts of Central Australia and the Kimberley Ranges, as well as the coastal fringe of the Northern Territory away from Darwin, all of Arnhem Land and part of Northern Queensland, particularly the Cape York Peninsula.

While the future of at least some of these remaining viable Australian languages can now be regarded optimistically, Aboriginal groups all recognise that, in many ways, their future survival in a rapidly changing world depends on their ability to communicate in English, not only with each other on an intertribal basis, but also with members of the dominant European community in Australia. The Australian Government's policies of self-determination (1972) and self-management (1975) have given Aboriginal groups much greater control over their futures than existed in the past. Nevertheless, English is still generally recognised by Aboriginal groups as an essential tool, a useful bargaining implement, without which the freedom of choice of activity and life-style implied in "self-determination" and "self-management" is not possible. While recognising their general desire to learn English, teachers have an obligation to ensure that Aboriginal groups do not needlessly lose their own languages and culture in the process. Linguists or teachers of Aborigines should investigate and monitor their progress in attaining this goal of learning English, to make sure that the job is done as efficiently and as well as possible, regardless of the age-group of the language learner. The study this entails may also give European Australians who have contact
with these Aboriginal groups a much greater and well-deserved respect for their linguistic adaptability and resourcefulness than many of them feel at present (generally due to ignorance and prejudice). Given that an Australia-wide survey of English-as-a-second-language in Aboriginal Australia is beyond the scope of a study of this size, I selected one community, Milingimbi, for detailed investigation.

Milingimbi, an isolated community in north-east Arnhem Land, is fairly typical of Aboriginal communities where English is a second language. It is isolated from the mainstream of Australian society by virtue of its location and history. It is relatively homogeneous socially, and while the prospects for some of the closely-related languages and dialects spoken there are probably not good, at least one and probably two or three have an assured future. Many members of the community speak little or no English, regular schooling having been available only since 1951. More importantly, however, both Aboriginal and European elements in the community expressed a desire for such an investigation to take place in their community, so that the results can be used to improve the quality of English-teaching available at Milingimbi.

While the specific results of the following study of English at Milingimbi cannot be generalised to every other English-as-a-second-language community in Aboriginal Australia, it has considerable relevance for other communities in north-east Arnhem Land. Groups in this area share a similar cultural and linguistic heritage, the larger communities being generally similar to Milingimbi both socially and in terms of their historical development. Thus it is very likely that investigations of English-as-a-second-language at places like Yirrkala, Galiwin'ku, Lake Evella and Ramingining/Nungalala would yield very similar results if they were undertaken now. In general terms, too,
the study has relevance for other Aboriginal communities where English is a second language, because the same general pressures have been working in each to mould their development.

The scope of the present study is large. It aims to present an overview of English-as-a-second-language at Milingimbi, as well as the tools whereby some of the findings may be interpreted and understood. Because of its nature as a general survey, it does not treat each level of language or each feature exhaustively, but attempts to highlight the most salient characteristics of this variety of English-as-a-second-language.

The main theme of the study arises from the status of English as a second language at Milingimbi. Because it is a dialect of English used as a second language and not a standardized pidgin or a first language such as a creole, a wide range of variation exists at all linguistic levels. While linguists treat language ideally as unified "systems", this is not possible in the case of Milingimbi English. It is not a discrete entity in its own right like "Standard English", "Gupapuyku" or "Cape York Creole". It must be regarded as a system which is a continuum, containing considerable variation at all linguistic levels, ranging from forms approaching very closely to Standard Australian English at one end of the continuum, to forms at the other end where the influence of Standard Australian English appears to be relatively weak and the vernacular very strong, (often because of a very limited competence in Standard Australian English). Each person commands a range of the continuum, not a single point, the extent of this range being dependent on the level of his or her "best" English. The register used in any particular utterance is governed by its whole context.

As many of the non-standard features of English at Milingimbi tend to
conform to certain idiosyncratic patterns, it can be classified as a second-language system containing systematic and non-systematic variation. Because a substantial proportion of this second-language system consists of elements identical to the first-language system of Standard Australian English speakers, the study tends to emphasise the points of difference and variation, rather than the points where English at Milingimbi may be identical to Standard Australian English. This emphasis on "difference" and "variation" has practical value for teachers.

No previous study of English in Aboriginal Australia appears to have concentrated on a community where the English spoken by the Aboriginals is a second language. Sharpe's study of Alice Springs Aboriginal English (1976, summarised in 1977) and Kaldor and Malcolm (forthcoming), who investigate the English of Aboriginal children in Western Australia, discuss English in a very different situation. The history of Alice Springs and many Western Australian communities has relatively little in common with Milingimbi's, and many (but not all) of the people surveyed in both these studies speak English as a first language. Unfortunately neither study distinguishes between first- and second-language English speakers on an empirical level, so it is not clear whether the linguistic features discussed are the results of second-language or first-language learning or both. Further, the children concerned either speak a number of different Australian languages or are descended from people who did, so that the exact influence of each of the vernaculars on "Alice Springs Aboriginal English" and "Western Australian Aboriginal Children's English" cannot be isolated. Other studies of "Aboriginal English" have either been very minor (for example, Geytenbeek, 1977) or have studied English where it is a standardised pidgin or a first language, particularly Australian creolised English (for example, Dutton (1965), Fraser (1977) and Sharpe (1977).
Material was gathered for this study over the six months from June to December, 1978. An intensive study of Guppu and Djambarrpuyu, two closely related dialects of Milingimbi's major language, called Dhuwal/Dhuwala by linguists, was made throughout this period.

The English data was drawn from several different sources in the school and the community, in general using the observation and participation methods commonly employed by anthropologists. All the material discussed consists of spontaneous utterances, except for some of the data presented in the chapter on phonetics and phonology, where I also used nursery rhyme recitations, audio-lingual drills, counting and other non-original utterances.

During the first two to three weeks of the fieldwork period I spent a lot of time simply "observing" in all school classrooms, before I decided who, where and how much to record. No recordings were made in this observation period, although notes were sometimes taken. The aim of this initial period was partly to familiarise the children and teachers with my presence, partly to observe how English was taught and used in general terms, and partly to select those classes for more intensive observation where I felt the most valuable information could be obtained. I spent the remainder of the second term (until the end of August) in blocks of several mornings in each of the classes selected: preschool, grade 2, grade 5, the post-primary girls and the post-primary boys. More time was spent with the post-primary girls, particularly the oldest group (mainly sixteen-year-olds), because I wanted to observe their oral English class over a period. As these girls spoke very little spontaneous English in oral English classes, but "needed" it for other lessons, I spent some time with all the girls in domestic science classes and with the boys at manual training. In addition, I
participated where possible in all excursions which "my" class undertook during my temporary visit. This enabled me to get to know some of the children better and also, for example, to go camping with the post-primary girls, an occasion which yielded some fascinating data. A small cassette recorder with a built-in microphone (generally not concealed) was the only recording device used, although I sometimes took notes. During the third term, when many mornings were spent reading and transcribing and analysing the material in an empty room between two post-primary classrooms, I was often able to record examples of casual "outside the classroom" speech, mainly from the post-primary children as they walked past outside or when they stopped for a friendly chat.

The other body of data collected at the school consists of oral-English story-retelling tests, conducted, recorded and transcribed by some of the teachers as part of their regular third term testing procedures. I have used this sort of material from grade 5, grade 7 and the second- and third-year post-primary girls, whose teacher spontaneously volunteered to conduct the test for me, although it was not being given officially to the post-primary group.

My own English classes at the hospital formed another major source of data. These commenced a month after my arrival. After an initial period of three weeks, I sought permission from the group of more advanced students to record in subsequent lessons. All lessons for the next month were recorded.

The headmaster of the school interviewed and recorded the school's Aboriginal liaison officer for me.

The remainder of the data was recorded in the community in the second half of the fieldwork period: at the council offices, film sessions, sporting events, community meetings and from interchanges between
some of the Yolŋu and me. This recording took place only after a period of detailed observation to see where the most fruitful data-gathering opportunities lay. In these situations the cassette recorder was almost always concealed from the speaker, although permission to record was always obtained except in some public situations where it was impractical. I tried to go to as many public events as possible and to public gathering places, such as the store or offices, on a daily basis. In this way I became a reasonably familiar "institution" in the community and was thus able to make a large number of anecdotal observations in an unobtrusive way. Appendix A contains a summary of recordings and transcripts.

The thesis is internally subdivided in the following way.

Chapters 2 and 3 (and part of chapter 4) provide the essential background material for the study. The next four chapters describe the linguistic findings regarding English at Milingimbi, while chapter 9 goes some way to providing tools for explaining the results.

Chapter 2 demonstrates the importance of Milingimbi's social, geographical and historical isolation from the Australian mainstream in determining the status of English as a second language there. It also discusses the history of education at Milingimbi, showing how limited access to western-style education until relatively recently has

1. "Yolŋu" is a term very frequently used in this study. It is used by all the Aboriginal people of north-east Arnhem Land to refer to themselves. It has several levels of meaning. At the most general level it distinguishes Aboriginal people from Europeans (Balanda) and other non-Aboriginals. Sometimes it is used in a more restricted sense, to distinguish north-east Arnhem Landers from other Aboriginals. Most frequently it is used by the Yolŋu to refer simply to 'man' or 'person'. 'Balanda' is a term used throughout Arnhem Land to refer to non-Aboriginals, particularly European Australians. This word owes its origin to the Dutch word meaning 'Hollander', although in Australia it has lost this meaning. It was borrowed by the Arnhem Land people from the Macassans (early Indonesian visitors to Arnhem Land), who had adopted it from Dutch colonials in Indonesia. Both words are used in this study in preference to "the Aboriginals" or "white" or "European".
had a negative effect on the amount and possibly the quality of English spoken there.

Chapter 3 presents a brief sketch grammar of Gupapuyŋu, one of the major dialects spoken at Milingimbi. It also examines the extent of Yolŋu multilingualism and multidialectalism, as well as some of the sociolinguistic features of Yolŋu Matha and the extent to which the Balandas at Milingimbi can speak Yolŋu Matha.

Chapter 4 explores the sociolinguistic situation of English-as-a-second-language at Milingimbi. It defines Milingimbi English as a linguistic continuum, approaching the target language, Standard Australian English, at one end, while at the other end speakers demonstrate very little knowledge of any dialect of English. It surveys the general level of proficiency in English of the entire Milingimbi population, with regard to the difficulties of defining an "active" and a "passive" knowledge of a language, and the actual need for and use of English in the community. The chapter also discusses the range of variation in the English "interlanguage" of individual Yolŋu. Not only does the domain of the interchange affect the individual's choice of register in English, but it also affects the choice of code. "Code-switching style" contains varying proportions of English and Yolŋu Matha, the ratio dependent on such things as topic, interlocutor, mood and setting.

Chapters 5, 6, 7 and 8 discuss the phonology, morphology, syntax and semantics respectively of English-as-a-second-language at Milingimbi. Each chapter stresses the range and nature of the variables which can

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2. Yolŋu Matha, a Gupapuyŋu/Djambarrpuyŋu term meaning "Aboriginal (hence "our") language" is the term very frequently applied by all the Yolŋu to one or all of their languages/dialects, as opposed to English, other non-Aboriginal languages and "foreign" Aboriginal ones (those outside the north-east Arnhem Land region). It is used extensively in this study, except where reference is made specifically to the features of one particular language or dialect.
be found in the surface representation of each linguistic feature under discussion. The greatest range of variation occurs in the phonetic manifestation of Standard Australian English fricative, vowel and diphthong phonemes at the phonological level; the use of third person singular pronouns, number categories and verbal morphology in the indicative mood at the morphological level; and the use of prepositions, determiners and ellipsis at the syntactic level. The first three of these chapters also explore how code-switching, which is very prevalent among all the Yolŋu, regardless of their proficiency in English, affects each basic level of language.

By way of attempting to explain the previous findings, chapter 9 examines some aspects of English-learning environment which are beyond the scope of chapters 2, 3 and 4. It includes a synopsis of the main categories of "errors" (defined as such in relation to Standard Australian English only for the purposes of English teachers) which occur in Milingimbi English. It examines the English syllabuses in use in recent years at Milingimbi, the nature of teachers' "classroom English", the extent of the Yolŋu's exposure to English outside the school at Milingimbi, the problems of learning the English language without adequate exposure to relevant aspects of English culture and sociolinguistic behaviour and the attitudes to English felt by many of the Yolŋu today. This chapter provides the main justification for the recommendations presented at the end of chapter 10.
CHAPTER 2
MILINGIMBI: A GEOGRAPHIC, DEMOGRAPHIC, HISTORICAL AND EDUCATIONAL PERSPECTIVE

2.1 Introduction

Milingimbi is an isolated community in many respects. Geographically isolated from the major centres of population in Australia, it has also historically, socially and educationally had very little contact with the English-speaking world. This isolation is important in an examination of the English spoken by the Milingimbi Yolŋu, because it has a major bearing on the amount of exposure to English experienced by the bulk of the community. This chapter explores the major non-linguistic reasons why English remains very much a second language a Milingimbi, despite its people's fifty five years of more or less regular contact with first-language English speakers.

2.2 Geographical Context

Milingimbi is an offshore island in the Crocodile Island group in the Arafura Sea, 400 km east of Darwin and 200 km west of the recently established bauxite mining town of Nhulunbuy (Gove). The nearest settlements are Galiwin'ku (about 90 km to the east), Maningrida (about 50 km to the west) and Njangalala/Ramingining (about 30 km to the south) (see Map 1).1 It is part of Arnhem Land and Balandas require permits from the local councils to go there. Although it averages about thirty square kilometres in area, the size varies according to the season and the tide. At low tide it is surrounded by vast mud flats, making sea access difficult, but providing a substantial proportion of traditional

1. All spelling of Aboriginal words in this study follows the orthography devised for Gupapuyŋu by Beulah Lowe (Lowe, n.d. (a)).
Map 1: North-east Arnhem Land - Showing Approximate Location of Clan Territories of Those Clans Living at Milingimbi
foods, particularly crabs and shellfish, which are still often utilised. During king tides and much of the wet season the salt pans on the island become inundated.

Geographically, Milingimbi can be divided into three concentric areas. The outermost ring is a dense mangrove fringe, broken only at the entrance by two small beaches and a ridge of "higher" land, capped with tamarind trees, legacy of earlier Macassan visits.2 Inside the mangroves there are huge tidal salt pans, dotted in parts by salt bush and grasses. The central part of the island consists of a hardwood forest, in which eucalyptus, tycad palms and pandanus abound. The highest point is in the middle of the airstrip, generally assessed to be about ten metres above sea level. Mosquitoes and sandflies are abundant everywhere at all times of the year.

Milingimbi comes under the influence of the Asiatic monsoon system, which brings three seasons each year. The dry season lasts from May till early October. Little rain falls during this period, the temperature averages about 27°C and the humidity is low. The pre-wet, October and November, is the most unpleasant season, with high temperatures and humidity, but little or no rain. During the wet season (December till April), the temperature is generally about 35°C and the humidity averages 90%. The bulk of the rain falls during this season, transforming the island into a verdant, steaming mass of vegetation.

Because of the distance from major centres of population in Australia, the difficulty of access for non-Yolŋu, and the very different environment from most of the rest of Australia, the Yolŋu

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2. The term "Macassan" is explained in detail later in this chapter, in section 2.3.3.
can be considered isolated from the general English-speaking culture in a very real geographical sense.

2.3 The Yolngu People

2.3.1 Clans and Clan Territory

In north-east Arnhem Land, in a rough triangle bounded by Cape Stewart, Blue Mud Bay and Yirrkala, the population of about three thousand forms a "culture bloc", referred to by Warner (1937) as the "Murngin", although this name is certainly not used now, if indeed it ever has been. The people of Milingimbi are members of this "loc" and are thus relatively homogeneous socially, although a large number of different clan groups are represented, speaking several languages and dialects³ and coming in general from different "countries"⁴ further east.

The present population of Milingimbi constantly fluctuates, mainly according to season and whether or not a ceremony is being performed at Milingimbi or elsewhere. The number of Yolngu present at any one time is difficult to assess. Estimates of the "average" number vary from about 600 (the number cited by the school's pamphlet for prospective teachers) to about 900 or a 1,000. (This number is based on a count of all adults and children one night in "Top Camp" in 1977, in which it was found that there was one adult to every three children, with a total of the camp of a little over 300). Top Camp, Bottom Camp and Bush Camp, the three main Yolngu residential

³. The "language" and "dialect" situation at Milingimbi is very complex. It is examined in depth in chapter 3. In this chapter, both terms are used fairly loosely.

⁴. The Yolngu sometimes refer to the tract of land from which their clan group came and where the sacred sites associated with their clan group are to be found as their "country".
areas at the settlement, do not differ significantly in size. However, most references cite the Yolŋu population as being between 700 and 800 (for example, Harris [1977: 19] who indicates that 770 people were living at the settlement in December, 1976. The Health Centre records at Milingimbi in October, 1978, contained 332 people of seventeen years and over (at 1st January, 1979) who are "normally" resident at Milingimbi. This appears to be a slight underestimate. If the ratio of 1:3 (adults to children) established in 1977 is accurate, the Health Centre records confirm that the total population was approximately 1,000 at the end of 1978. The following discussion is based on the estimate of 332 adults at Milingimbi.

Representatives of twenty clan groups from the coastal regions and off-shore islands of north-east Arnhem Land can be found living at Milingimbi. Map 1 shows that the bulk of "Milingimbi people" come not from Milingimbi and the surrounding area at all, but from the country to the south and east of Elcho Island, particularly the coastal region around Buckingham Bay, as well as parts of Elcho and Howard islands. Five women who have married local men come from elsewhere in the Northern Territory, mainly central Australia. The clan names and distribution of population at Milingimbi between the clans in November, 1978, are shown in Table 2.1. Table 2.1 also contains the figures collected by Sue Harris (ex-adult educator) in 1976 or 1977. She is well-known to the Yolŋu and a fluent speaker of Yolŋu Matha.

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5. Permission to take name, age, sex and where given, clan group, was given by Jess Smith, Sister-in-Charge of Milingimbi Hospital. Sister Smith also helped me go through the files.

6. After going through the lists later to assess proficiency in English and to establish clan groups (with the aid of three long-term Balanda residents) it was realised that a few people (probably no more than ten) who are definitely "permanent" residents were not included. Unfortunately these omissions were never rectified because of time constraints.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Clan</th>
<th>Moiety</th>
<th>Elwell, 1978</th>
<th>Sue Harris, 1977</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>GUPAPUYNU (DAYGURRGOORR)</td>
<td>Yirritja</td>
<td>95</td>
<td>85 (including Birrkili)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DJAMBARPPUYNU</td>
<td>Dhuwa</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BIRRKILI</td>
<td>Yirritja</td>
<td>26</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BUYUYUKULULMIRR</td>
<td>Dhuwa</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LIYACALANGUMIRR</td>
<td>Dhuwa</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GADUKADU</td>
<td>Yirritja</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GANAMAJGA</td>
<td>Dhuwa</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UNSPECIFIED YANHANJU</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NALARRA</td>
<td>Dhuwa</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GORRYINDI</td>
<td>Dhuwa</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WAlANJU</td>
<td>Yirritja</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BURERA-MANARITJ</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DJINANHANHARRU</td>
<td>Dhuwa &amp;</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MURRUNJU</td>
<td>Yirritja</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MAYMIL</td>
<td>Dhuwa</td>
<td>13</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WANGURRI</td>
<td>Yirritja</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WARRAMIRI</td>
<td>Yirritja</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DURILI-MARRANJU</td>
<td>Dhuwa</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WUBULKARRA</td>
<td>Yirritja</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GANALBINJU</td>
<td>Yirritja</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GULALAY</td>
<td>Yirritja</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WIVES FROM NUMBULNAR,</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HOOKER CREEK, TI TREE,</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WARRABRI, DELISSAVILLE</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UNKNOWN</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>TOTAL</td>
<td></td>
<td>332</td>
<td>371</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ADDITIONAL (APPROX)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>about 10</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The difference in numbers is most likely due to the constantly fluctuating nature of the community.

Everyone and everything in the Yolngu social and cultural world is classified into one of two "moieties", Dhuwa or Yirritja. Each clan is either Dhuwa or Yirritja (also indicated in Table 2.1). Aggregates of clans or "tribes" speaking the same "language" (in a linguistic sense) consist of both Dhuwa and Yirritja clans.

The Gupapuyngu and Djambarrpuyngu, the two largest clans at Milingimbi, are further subdivided into groups. For example, the most powerful group at present is the Gupapuyngu-Daygurrurr, to which Djwá I, the present headman of Milingimbi, belongs. The Birrkili are also a Gupapuyngu group. Some of the clan groups are linked together linguistically as they speak the same dialect or language. Chapter 3 discusses the linguistic relationship between the various clans.

The traditional Milingimbi landowners are the Gorryindi, the Walamaŋu and the Batjimirruguŋu. The first two are Yânhaŋu clans and are insignificant both politically and numerically at Milingimbi at the present time. The Batjimirruguŋu are extinct now, and little is known about them or their affiliations.7

Traditional clan territory cannot be located specifically at the present time by any of the Balandas resident at Milingimbi, and could well be the subject of detailed research. While the location can be indicated in general terms, the situation is complicated by the fact that many clan sacred sites may be completely surrounded by another clan's territory.

For example, it is not known whether their language was Djinan (spoken on the mainland and to the south of Milingimbi) or Yânhaŋu (spoken by all other Crocodile Islands landowners) (Ian Ferguson, craftshop supervisor, personal communication).
C. membership is patrilineal, although moiety and subsection are always determined by those of the mother. Children are always in the opposite moiety to their mother (and therefore are members of a different clan). Provided the parent's liaison was not "incestuous" (where both are of the same moiety), the child belongs to the same moiety and clan as the father, but a different subsection. Marriage is frequently polygynous and always exogamous, preferably to people in one of either of two of the four subsections in the opposite moiety (always someone of a different clan). In a polygynous relationship, a man may be married to women of two or more different clan groups. Table 2.2 demonstrates how children inherit their subsection from their mothers. Table 2.3 illustrates the ideal operation of the marriage system.

**TABLE 2.2**

**INHERITANCE OF SUBSECTION (MALK) FROM THE MOTHER**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>MOTHER (DHUWA)</th>
<th>CHILD (YIRRITJA)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>MALE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wamuttjan</td>
<td>Narritj</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gamanydjjan</td>
<td>Bulany</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bilinydjjan</td>
<td>Bagadi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Galikali (Galidjan)</td>
<td>Gadjak</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>MOTHER (YIRRITJA)</th>
<th>CHILD (DHUWA)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Gutjan</td>
<td>Balaq</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bagaditjan</td>
<td>Burralaq</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bulanydjjan</td>
<td>Wamut</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Narritjan</td>
<td>Gamarranja</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
TABLE 2.3
THE "IDEAL" MARRIAGE SYSTEM

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DHUWA (MALE)</th>
<th>YIRRITJA (FEMALE)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Wamut 1</td>
<td>Gutjan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Camarran 2</td>
<td>Banadirjan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Balan 2</td>
<td>Narritjan</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Burralan 2</td>
<td>Bulanydjian</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>YIRRITJA (MALE)</th>
<th>DHUWA (FEMALE)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Gadjak 1</td>
<td>Wamutdjian</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Banadi 2</td>
<td>Gamanydjian</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Narritjan 2</td>
<td>Bilinydjian</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bulany 1</td>
<td>Galidjan (Galikali)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1 = subsection of most preferred marriage partner.
2 = subsection of second-preferred marriage partner.

Everyone within the community is related to everyone else through the operation of the classificatory kinship system, over which it appears that the subsection system has been superimposed. Once a person's subsection is known, however, his or her relationship (both classificatory and actual) to everyone else in the Yolŋu world can be established. Yolŋu kinship terminology is relatively complex compared with English (see Appendix D). Figure 2.1 demonstrates the Yolŋu kinship system.

Kinship and subsection membership are dominating aspects of Yolŋu social life. "Permanent" Balandas at Milingimbi are almost always accepted within a particular family group and given a subsection (or malk). As a result, various Yolŋu may address Balandas by any one of
FIGURE 2.1

KINSHIP TERMINOLOGY AMONG THE YOLNU

moiety A  moiety B  moiety A  moiety B  moiety A  moiety B  moiety A

LEGEND: 0 = female
△ = male
= marriage
= siblings
= one generation
= respect/avoidance relationship
twenty-four kin terms (depending on their sex and the particular relationship). Each kin term has a reciprocal term. For example, if someone called another person muri (mother's mother, or mother's mother's brother), that person in turn would respond by calling the first person gutharra (sister's daughter's child, if ego is male, or daughter's child, if ego is female). Because of the complexity of the kin network, kinship terminology (what one may call another person) is a major topic of conversation even between Yolnu and Balanda. Thus kinship terms are significant in a consideration of the language used at Milingimbi. Even if Balandas speak little Yolnu Matha, if they are to function as accepted and acceptable members of the community, they must learn to use both the subsection names and the kinship terminology. This need to use Yolnu Matha in this most important topic of conversation has a major influence on the quantity and quality of English which the observer will hear spoken casually between Balandas and Yolnu. In the main, the "English" component of a conversation is substantially reduced when the topic is kinship.

2.3.2 Traditional life-style

Like all other Australian Aborigines, the Yolnu were traditionally nomadic hunter-gatherers with a stone-age technology. North-east Arnhem Land is rich in natural produce from both land and sea, which means that clans did not have to range over large tracts of country in order to get enough to eat. The women traditionally gathered the staples of the diet: roots, berries, fruits, shellfish, crabs and small game. Men were the hunters, with fish, dugong, turtles, wallabies and large birds as their normal quarry.

Housing was always rudimentary by western standards, and material possessions few. Generally these consisted only of weapons, dilly bags,
clapsticks, didjeridoos and ceremonial objects.

Religious and ceremonial life were extremely rich and sophisticated. They have been documented in detail by Warner (1937) and Keen (1978). Ceremonies tended to be associated with initiation to various age-grades, like the dhupi (circumcision) ceremony and the Gunapipi, or totemic in nature (for example, the Dhua and Yirritja parrg ceremonies).

Yolŋu art was also highly developed and closely tied with religious and ceremonial beliefs and practices (H. Morphy, 1977). Bark paintings frequently depicted totemic emblems or part of the great epic myth cycles, for example, that of the Wagilak sisters, which forms the basis of the Gunapipi ceremony, or the Djanggawul cycle, documented by Berndt (1952 = his spelling). Yolŋu were not free to paint as they pleased, but were only permitted to paint those themes to which they had in some way inherited the rights. Within these limits and the limits of the painting medium, an artist was allowed to exercise a certain amount of artistic freedom. Bark paintings from north-east Arnhem Land are among the most famous of all Aboriginal art forms. Any wooden object might be decorated, as was the body for ceremonial purposes. Pigments included charcoal, white clay, and various red, yellow and brown ochres.

Hunting, gathering and ceremonial life still remain important preoccupations of almost all Yolŋu (of course, this is dependent in part on age, sex, ambitions and aspirations). Because of their importance within the present Yolŋu life-style, these subjects, like the kinship system, are important topics of conversation to the Yolŋu. The Balanda interested in talking about these things with the Yolŋu, even ones with very good English, will find them generally unwilling, or subconsciously or actually unable, to refer to them consistently in English.
2.3.3 A history of Milingimbi: pre-Mission days

According to traditional Yolŋu belief, history began with the mythical Djaŋ'kawu sisters, the original ancestors of the Yolŋu (Harris, 1977: 16). They came from an unknown place in the east to Arnhem Land, stopping on the way at Bralgu, the Dhuwa moiety island of the dead (Berndt, 1952: 2, his spelling). The story has many versions, the more secret ones being revealed only to initiated men.

The first known contact the Yolŋu had with the outside world started probably some time in the last quarter of the seventeenth century (Macknight, 1976: 97), with the beginning of seasonal visits by Macassans (a group of people from what is now Indonesia) to collect trepang, turtle shell and pearls. The exact date these visits to Arnhem Land started is not known, but is unlikely to be prior to the late seventeenth century, as before that time there was no market for trepang (Macknight, 1976, which contains a chapter presenting the difficulties of establishing the dates of the earliest visits). These visits were stopped officially by the South Australian government in 1906.

While there was little or no intermarriage between the two groups, the Macassans left a considerable legacy to the Yolŋu. Smallpox and venereal disease were apparently introduced by the Macassans (Harris, 1977: 17). Axes, knives, dugout canoes, cloth, tobacco and the long wooden pipe it is smoked in, and alcohol are the material contributions of the Macassans to the Yolŋu life-style. The beautiful tamarind trees which are a feature of Milingimbi at the settlement, the "Macassan Well" and most of the favoured hunting and

8. Dhuwa "propaganda" has dominated much anthropological literature of the region until recently. This is the traditional Dhuwa story of the origin of the Yolŋu. In fact, the Yirritja moiety has a similar oral tradition and its own set of "creator beings" (wagarr).
picnicking spots (Garki, Balma, Womila and Nalitjirriwa – see Map 2) grew from seeds dropped originally by the Macassans. Macassan influence can also be seen in the presence in the Yolŋu languages of a number of words of Macassan origin, such as *djirra* 'book' or 'letter', *puntji* 'alcohol' (clearly cognate with the Indonesian word *anegi*, also meaning 'alcohol') and *berratha* 'rice, wheat, barley', which probably comes originally from Sanskrit. Appendix C gives other examples of words of Macassan origin.

Japanese and Balanda contact started some time in the latter half of the nineteenth century. A vocabulary of a Yolŋu dialect was compiled in about 1870 by an English navigator but it seems unlikely that this person visited Milingimbi. Harris (1977: 17) cites a date of initial contact in the Milingimbi region as about 1885. The Japanese came for pearling and their influence on the Yolŋu people in both cultural and linguistic terms has been minimal. Balanda cattle-men came up the Roper River to Murwangi (see Map 1) where they established two cattle stations around the Florida and Arafura Homesteads. These were abandoned in the early twentieth century because distance from markets made them unprofitable.9

Milingimbi was a traditional meeting place for the north-east Arnhem Land tribes at certain times of the year, when the cycad nuts, waterlilies, honey, fruits and nuts were at their best. Big ceremonies were often performed at Milingimbi in preference to other places during the dry season because of the presence of a permanent water supply.10

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9. The old Arafura Homestead at Murwangi is the site of an Aboriginal cattle project, which now supplies beef to some Arnhem Land settlements.

10. Ironically, since the establishment of the mission, the water supply has been a constant source of problems, leading in the early days to plans for the abandonment of Milingimbi as a mission in favour of Liru Island. The inadequate supply of water at Milingimbi was also a factor in the establishment of Mangalala and Ramingining on the mainland.
Because of its accepted nature as a meeting place, and because there are relatively few traditional landowners, Milingimbi was probably a good location to choose for the establishment of a mission.

2.4. A History of Milingimbi: post-European (Balanda) contact

Milingimbi was established as a small-scale mission by the Methodist Church in 1923 (Hedrick, 1973 : 16). It remained under the control of the Methodist Church until 1974, when it was finally handed over to the Federal Government. A Methodist presence remains there, in the form of a parish of the Uniting Church in Australia, which subsumed the Methodist Church on 22nd June, 1977 (Sydney Morning Herald, 23.6.1977 : 2).

2.4.1 Mission days

The development of Milingimbi as a mission has been well-documented by Webb (1944) and Hedrick (1973) (these sources recount the early days only), McKenzie (1976) and to a lesser extent by Wells (1963). Until the 1950s, the number of non-Yolŋu was always very small, never more than between three and six Balanda and Fijian missionaries.

Farming was started and very early a small church was built. Reverend T.T. Webb, missionary from 1926 to 1939, was the first Balanda at Milingimbi to start studying the Yolŋu languages. The aim of his language study was to aid in the Christianisation of the Yolŋu (McKenzie, 1976 : 44). When Harold Shepherdson arrived in 1928, he established a sawmill, while his wife, Ella, opened a small nursing clinic.

Milingimbi was never an easy site for a mission. It is unsuited for intensive agriculture. It has a muddy coastline, poor anchorage for vessels and a poor water supply. In addition, despite the cultural homogeneity of the people, inter-clan feuds and violence frequently bubbled under the surface. The coming of the Depression was the only
factor which prevented plans to shift the mission to Elcho Island from being carried out (McKenzie, 1976: 51).

During the Second World War, an airbase was established on Milingimbi. However, as most of the Yolŋu were evacuated to the mainland and Elcho Island, there was very little contact with air force personnel for most of them. Thus only the small number of men who stayed on experienced some increased contact with English.

The first full-time teacher, Beulah Lowe, arrived at Milingimbi in 1951, nearly thirty years after its establishment as a mission. Not only was she faced with the enormous task of introducing the Yolŋu to a formalised western-style education (see section 2.5.2), but she also undertook the first major study of Gupapuyŋu, one of the dialects spoken at Milingimbi and a lingua franca for the region. She remained at Milingimbi until 1977. Jess Smith, the "longest Balanda resident" in 1978, arrived as a mission nursing sister in 1953.

The first major increase in Balanda staff occurred in the late 1950s, with the arrival of some more teachers and a headmaster. In addition, there was usually a chaplain/superintendent, a nurse, a farming expert, a sawmiller/builder and a mechanic, and their families.

The 1950s also saw the building of the small adobe huts in Top and Bottom Camps, the main form of housing for Yolŋu at Milingimbi at present. The fibro houses in Bush Camp were built during the 1960s.

Nganalala, and then Ramingining, two small settlements on the mainland thirty kilometers to the south were established by the Methodist mission authorities in the late 1960s and early 1970s respectively. The reasons were ostensibly the poor water supply on Milingimbi and the

11. Milingimbi was one of the only places in Australia actually scarred by the Second World War. The church was bombed, one Yolŋu was killed and Milingimbi's bushland has the wreckage of American and Japanese aircraft scattered through it. Many of the older people remember the war period very clearly, and have fascinating stories to tell. There is still some hostility felt towards the Japanese.
rapid growth of the local population, pushing Milingimbi's resources to the limit.

While a number of Yolñu were employed by the mission (as domestics, gardeners, health workers, teacher aides, mechanics and so on), wages were minimal and access to money and Balanda goods and services extremely limited.

2.4.2 Government control: self-determination and self-management.

The 1970s have brought marked changes in policy towards the running of Milingimbi. The process of converting the mission to a government-controlled settlement was begun in 1970, with the funding of the school passing to the Federal Government. Mission control was finally relinquished in 1974 when the medical facilities were transferred to the Department of Health, and general administration and funding of the settlement passed to the Department of Aboriginal Affairs. A number of the old mission-employed staff remain at Milingimbi, employed now by various government departments.

The advent of a Labor government in 1972, with a policy of self-determination for the Aboriginal people, saw changes for the Yolñu in other ways. They gained greater control of community affairs, many were employed in jobs previously held by Balandas, and the outstation movement was started (Gray, 1977; Coombs, 1974).

The effects of the change in official policy may have been less marked at Milingimbi than in some of the other Aboriginal communities. The reason for this was the relatively enlightened policy of the Methodist Church prior to 1972 in being prepared to train Aboriginals in "Balanda" skills and to take responsibility for their own community. As a result, the rapid changes which have affected Aboriginal communities
since 1973 have had less painful repercussions at Milingimbi than at most other Aboriginal settlements, although even there the changes were accompanied by a brief period of overt animosity towards Balanda (Harris, 1977: 13).

Over the last five years, the nature of the Milingimbi Council has changed and its powers have expanded. In 1978 it was an all-Aboriginal body, with representatives from most clan groups, elected by all long-term residents of Milingimbi, both Yolŋu and Balanda. It holds responsibility for employment, budgeting and the issuing of permits.

The strength of Milingimbi's Council can also be seen in other social areas. For eighteen months, all alcohol, whether for Yolŋu or Balanda consumption, has been completely banned. Prior to this, Milingimbi had a serious problem with the control of alcohol and alcohol-related violence (Keen, personal communication). The result of this ban is that Milingimbi does not at present have the alcohol problem which currently afflicts many Aboriginal communities. This is not to say that the Council's edict is not sometimes abused, but the damaging consequences of alcohol are at least minimised at present at Milingimbi.

Although unemployment is high (only some 60 out of about 330 adults are employed), and the prospects for increasing the level of employment are not good, many Yolŋu have responsible jobs that are held by Balandas in other communities. The Council secretary, the Connair agent, three of the four office workers, the supervisor of the Yurrwi Clothing Store, all but two store workers and all of the mechanics except for one are Yolŋu. The school and the hospital also employ relatively large numbers of Yolŋu. Three of the Yolŋu teachers are fully trained Commonwealth Teaching Service Band 1 teachers, and all have the same responsibilities and amount of teaching to do as the Balanda teachers. All these people receive good wages. While most forms of social security
are paid, the Council rejected the payment of unemployment benefits. As from December, 1978, even the Uniting Church at Milingimbi has a Yolŋu minister.

With self-determination, a number of Balanda-inspired employment and business projects which had "flourished" in the 1960s (mainly due to Balanda efforts) fell apart. These included the fruit and vegetable gardens, piggery, cattle project and poultry farm. Some fishing (non-commercial, because of the lack of cool-room facilities), carpentry, mechanics, plumbing and welding continue. The only projects of a commercial nature at present in operation are the Aboriginal art and craft shop, which has a very large turnover each year and provides money mainly to a number of older men and some women who would be otherwise "unemployable", and the women's sewing centre, which supplies clothing to the local Yurrwi Clothing Store.

The "outstation" movement, which has intensified all over Arnhem Land and other parts of Australia since 1973 (Coombs, 1974; Gray, 1977) has been much stronger from Ḍangalala and Ramingining than from Milingimbi. One outstation, Bodiya, exists on the island of Milingimbi itself, while a few others (for example Gumugumuk, Dhipirriŋura and Lajarra) flourish along the coast and off-shore islands. They are serviced by the Milingimbi Council, aided by one Balanda adviser.

At the beginning of October, 1978, there were forty-eight Balandas "permanently" resident at Milingimbi. Fourteen of them were children under twelve. Further reductions are taking place in 1979.

While Milingimbi has seen the transfer from mission to government settlement come relatively easily, it still remains historically isolated from the rest of Australia, in the sense that contact with non-Aboriginals has been relatively recent and brief. Its recent history has followed a different course from most other areas in Australia.
"Substantial" numbers of Balandas have lived at Milingimbi only for the last twenty years, despite the Yolŋu's previous thirty-five years of "regular contact" with native English-speakers. Even now, particularly with the policy of self-management, Balanda influence in the community is not strong, and is certainly no compelling incentive for the Yolŋu to learn to speak fluent English.

2.4.3 Cultural Change at Milingimbi

The lifestyle of most Yolŋu has changed surprisingly little, despite the now fairly prolonged (but generally superficial) exposure to Balanda culture, and increased access for Yolŋu to large towns like Darwin. While changes have undoubtedly occurred in many aspects of Yolŋu life, they can perhaps best be regarded as additions to the traditional way of life, rather than as fundamental alterations. With a remarkable degree of adaptability considering their long and conservative history, the Yolŋu have adopted many patterns of Balanda life, although many of them tend to be very superficial. Even in the most westernised and urbane Yolŋu, two thought patterns and ways of life, Yolŋu and Balanda, can coexist, usually with a fair degree of trauma for the Yolŋu concerned (visiting Department of Health psychologist, personal communication).

Patterns of entertainment have undoubtedly changed, although there again the range has merely expanded. Gambling, with cards is a major occupation of Yolŋu adults, and it is used to distribute the money acquired through jobs or social security more evenly through the community. Gambling is also "played" by young children (Sue Brown, teacher, personal communication). In the evenings, films are shown by the school, the Council or by private individuals, often as frequently as six nights a week. Kung fu films are the most well-loved, but as these are frequently in Chinese with Japanese sub-titles, their influence on the English spoken at Milingimbi is minimal! Year-round the Y.M.C.A. organises both
day-time and night-time sports, such as volleyball, basketball, softball and soccer during the Dry and football during the Wet. These are generally well-attended if there is no conflicting entertainment. Some western-style music, particularly country and western and some pop music, is very popular, at least among the younger Yolŋu.

Other more deep-seated aspects of Yolŋu life possibly remain little changed. Yolŋu Matha is used almost exclusively by Yolŋu all the time except when talking to Balandas, when it is still frequently used, anyway! Yolŋu Matha has been influenced by English only in its vocabulary and then only to a fairly limited degree. (See Appendix C and Chapter 8 for a discussion of English loan words in Yolŋu Matha). English may be used between younger Yolŋu in jokes, humorous role-playing or occasionally in anger. It is also commonly used in similar communities, such as Yirrkala, when the speaker is drunk (Frances Morphy, personal communication). The absence of alcohol from Milingimbi at present thus possibly reduces the number of occasions when English might be used.

English is needed in the community far less than five years ago, as most of the jobs are now held by Yolŋu. Only the small number of Yolŋu in the community workforce are in regular contact with Balandas and hence may "need" to speak or understand English fairly regularly. The "need" for and use of English at Milingimbi are discussed in greater depth in Chapter 4.

The kinship system remains extremely strong. Traditionally marriages tended to be polygynous and a "promise system" operated, whereby wives were "promised" while still babies, or even sometimes before birth, to their future husbands. These two aspects of culture are probably not weakening very much. There is apparently a greater number of widows and "divorced" women living independently than previously. Unmarried mothers are a recognisable category in the community now. In the past, while
women may not have been married to the fathers of their children, they would have certainly been married to someone, who would thus act as the child's father. Younger women are now often demonstrating the independence that was traditionally the prerogative of older women. A number of women in their twenties are still unmarried, which would have been unheard of a few years ago.

Ritual and ceremonial life remain apparently very strong. It is possible they may be experiencing an upsurge of activity, after a period of moderate suppression during the mission days. For example, two Gunapipi ceremonies were held in the area, one at Milingimbi and one at Ngalala, during the fieldwork period, although none had been held for several years.

In the area of belief systems, where the Balanda one is held at all, the two are frequently held concurrently. It is difficult to assess the impact of Christianity. Certainly the number of Christians remains very small, and it is probable that the Christians maintain their Christian beliefs alongside traditional Yolŋu religious ones without much conflict. In November 1978, full traditional funeral rites were accorded to a small girl who had died in Darwin Hospital. She was finally buried in a Christian manner, after a Christian service attended by all the people who had participated in the corroborees and traditional mourning of the previous days. The health workers are able to accept the Balanda germ theory of disease, without in any way altering their life-styles to lessen the likelihood of diseases spreading. However, traditional ideas and practices concerning childbirth and pregnancy have certainly changed or been lost among the younger generations. Appendix E contains an account of some of these beliefs, written by one of the health workers, a woman of 28 and the mother of three children. She had to consult older women in her camp in order to write the account.
Some Balanda material goods, like clothes (particularly for some of the younger woman), cars, motor bikes and bicycles, outboard motors, radios and cassette players are highly valued, although they are generally never 'cared for' in a Balanda sense.

While the store supplies the bulk of the Yolŋu food requirements, many people go fishing, hunting, collecting honey, or crabbing at the weekend and during holidays. Traditional food-gathering techniques are still being learnt and used.

While Balanda culture has had some impact on many aspects of Yolŋu life, we have seen that this influence has been generally superficial. Yolŋu receptivity to Balanda ways in many respects extends only as far as allowing some aspects of the two systems to coexist. In general, even after fifty-five years of regular Balanda contact, most Yolŋu remain very isolated from the Australian cultural mainstream. While they have adopted some features of Balanda social and cultural life, they still adhere very strongly to many aspects of their own traditional culture and society. This is important in a consideration of the teaching and use of English at Milingimbi. Because the Balanda and Yolŋu worlds are so disparate culturally, another whole dimension of the English language, the cultural mores accompanying it and the material things it describes, has also to be taught from the very basics, if the bulk of Yolŋu people are to learn to be fluent speakers of English.

2.5 A History of Education at Milingimbi.

The final aspect to be considered in this chapter discussing the background of Milingimbi as a site where English is spoken as a second language is the history of education there. As with other aspects of cultural life, the Balanda education system has probably not had as great an impact on Yolŋu ways as some people might like to believe. There are probably three reasons for this: first, the great disparity between
traditional Yolŋu methods of teaching and learning, including language learning, and Balanda methods; second, the extremely late start "institutionalised" Balanda education had at Milingimbi compared with the establishment of the mission; and third, the introduction of a bilingual/bicultural education programme, fully supported by the headmaster and teaching staff of the school, in which biculturalism has been genuinely accepted, with the consequent diminishing of emphasis on some aspects of Balanda culture. These points are elaborated in this section.

2.5.1 Yolŋu-style education

Traditional Yolŋu education and learning methods differ substantially from Balanda techniques. In the first place, Yolŋu education is not "institutionalised" as is the bulk of Balanda education. Teaching and learning are spontaneous, occurring whenever a child is in a position to learn from his or her peers or elders. There is no institutionalised role of "teacher". Instead, many people may temporarily adopt that role. Harris (1977, chapter 7) discusses five major traditional Aboriginal informal learning strategies, all fundamentally different from most Balanda learning.

First, in the Yolŋu world, learning takes place by observation and imitation. Verbal instruction, so basic in Balanda-style education, is minimal.

Second, much traditional learning takes place by personal trial and error, rather than by the demonstration of a process or technique by another person. A Yolŋu person does not "know" something unless he or she

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12. "Institutionalised" education is used here to refer to the bureaucratic aspects of education which takes place in schools (institutions) and which insist, for example, that all children between the ages of 6 and 15 must attend an "institution" to learn a set body of knowledge (often irrelevant for the real-life situation) from certain authorised people.
has a "right" to know it, and until the task has been actually personally performed.

Third, all Yolnu learning comes from real-life situations. There is no "practice" in contrived settings, a fundamental technique in Balanda-style education.

Fourth, Yolnu learning takes place in context-specific situations. This means that what is learned in one situation is not generalised to another situation. Much Balanda learning consists of the absorption of generalisable principles, rather than in the learning of many specific cases.

Finally, the identity of the person who may temporarily play the role of "teacher" to any individual is of greater importance generally than the information he or she imparts. If the "teacher" is not in the right relationship to the learner, the information will not be absorbed, no matter who well imparted it is nor how intelligent the learner.

Each of these aspects of traditional Yolnu education has fundamental ramifications for the teaching of English at Milingimbi. Firstly, to teach English successfully great emphasis should be placed on speaking the language creatively, not on isolated drills out of context, although the Yolnu ability to mimic and learn by rote should not be ignored. Secondly, the Balanda teachers' tendency constantly to correct spontaneous attempts to speak English should be curbed. Thirdly, Balanda teachers should realise that all attempts to speak should be meaningful to the learner, and take place in as many different situations as possible. What is learned in one situation may not be applied in another. Fourthly, because it takes time for a Yolnu person to feel confident in a Balanda person's presence, it will usually take a long time before the teacher will be really aware of what the student knows and what he or she is
capable of doing. Finally, the potential English teacher at Milingimbi should be aware that, because of the differences in educational technique between the two cultures, either the English learner must be actually taught how to learn in a Balanda way, or the English teacher must adapt the methods used to those understood and accepted by the Yolŋu.

2.5.2 Balanda-style education

The first school at Milingimbi was established by Beulah Lowe in 1951, nearly thirty years after the establishment of the mission. For some years she was the only teacher, with an average of 110 students. Initially she worked only with teenagers and young Yolŋu adults, who gradually assumed some of the responsibility for teaching the younger students. School supplies were minimal. Reading, writing, arithmetic and singing were the core of the syllabus. Instruction was in English, supplemented by Yolŋu Matała, while English-as-a-second-language was taught for an hour a day. It is hardly surprising that the results, in terms of fluency in English, were not very impressive for most people educated under this "mission school" system.

13. My own experience illustrates this point very well. A month after my arrival at Milingimbi I started teaching English to the ten health workers (all women) and four of the women's community workers. Classes were in two groups, the first consisting of those (the majority) who could already speak English and could read and write, the second consisting of three who could not speak English and held little or nothing in the way of basic literacy skills, and for the first three and a half months, two with reasonable English. In the first group, it was four months before much good quality creative written work was produced, and about the same time before I began to have any idea of what the three unschooled women actually knew and were capable of producing creatively. It is most probable that, due to the short time of the fieldwork period, I never found out what any of the students' true capacities and knowledge were. In such a situation one's effectiveness as a teacher is necessarily diminished.
In 1958, the Government started subsidising the school. A second teacher arrived in 1959, a third in 1960, and a headmaster/fourth teacher, Alan Fidock, in 1961. This period saw a rapid growth and extension of Milingimbi's educational facilities, with access to education being made available to all school-age children. Between 1962 and 1969 (the "Fidock era of mission school"), a pre-school and a post-primary section were added to the school. With the greater availability of teaching resources, and the greater number of Balandas, it is not surprising that a number of people educated in "Fidock mission school" days, became quite competent speakers of English.

2.5.3 Bilingual education

A bilingual education programme was instituted at Milingimbi in 1973, as a result of the change in policy towards Aboriginal people brought about by the new Labor government. Milingimbi was one of the five founding bilingual schools in the Northern Territory, and is considered now by a number of bodies as the greatest success.

Milingimbi was chosen for a bilingual education programme for a number of reasons. Gapapuyŋu was acceptable to the community as the vehicle for the vernacular section of the curriculum. (In fact, the closely related Djambarrpuyŋu is now much more widely used in the community). It had already been analysed and personnel trained in linguistics and speaking Gapapuyŋu were available. The concept of bilingual education had the strong support of the headmaster, and was acceptable to the community.

A major aim of bilingual education apart from being a more efficient means of introducing the Aboriginal children to literacy in English, was that it should be bicultural, instrumental in developing positive self-concepts and pride among the Aboriginal students.

At Milingimbi, the development of the bilingual education programme (operating from pre-school to Grade 6 in 1978), has probably had two major educational effects regarding the teaching of English. Firstly, as curriculum subjects are now taught in Yolŋu Matha in the early years, more time is available for creative oral English lessons than would have been the case formerly. Secondly, the apparent need for learning to speak English has probably diminished in the eyes of the Yolŋu children. As the programme has only been in operation for five years, it is too early to assess its impact on the level of competency in English acquired through the school.

2.6 The Future: Implications for Learning English

The future of Milingimbi and the Yolŋu people is difficult to predict. Self-management by the Yolŋu has greatly reduced their dependence on Balanda and consequently the number of Balanda resident there. This process of "Aboriginalisation" will probably continue, unless there is a significant change in Government policy. Counter-balancing this, from the point of view of speaking English, Yolŋu mobility to English-speaking centres will probably increase. It is possible that those with better schooling and better English will gradually drift to Darwin for jobs. Because it is an island, with no minable minerals, it is unlikely to be closely affected either by mining there or by the development of uranium mining in Arnhem Land, at least in the immediate future. The possible development of the Arnhem Land Highway may bring Milingimbi into much closer contact with Balanda culture and English, but again the effects may be minimised because it is an island. If
Government policy does not radically change, if the flow of money into the community does not decrease (always a possibility as Aboriginal communities are unfortunately dependent to a certain extent on the financial goodwill of successive governments), and if the local Council continues to remain as strong as it is at present, it is possible to envisage Milingimbi slipping quietly into the twenty-first century little altered from what it is today.

It seems unlikely, then, that the future will bring about radical changes which will alter the status of English as a second language at Milingimbi. Its geographical, social and historical isolation have cushioned it from many aspects of Balanda culture in the past, and this situation is unlikely to change in the future. Education at Milingimbi has been introduced too recently to have led to fundamental changes in the community, or to the development of English as a first language. The Yolŋu have not been forced to adopt English as a lingua franca as has happened to most other Aboriginal people in Australia. The reasons for this are partly historical, and partly because of their relative social and linguistic homogeneity. The upsurge of Balanda-style education recently has probably led to a marked improvement in the quality of English learned at Milingimbi, but not to the possibility of its replacing Yolŋu Matha as the community’s first language in the foreseeable future.
CHAPTER 3

MILINGIMBI: A LINGUISTIC PERSPECTIVE

3.1 Introduction

The study of the social and linguistic nature of Yolŋu Matha presented in this chapter is an essential part of the background of Milingimbi as a site for the investigation of English-as-a-second-language among Aboriginal Australians. The high status of the Yolŋu languages and their dialects compared with English is a major factor which distinguishes Milingimbi from many other Aboriginal communities. Almost all Yolŋu at Milingimbi speak one dialect or language of what is loosely referred to here and by the Yolŋu as Yolŋu Matha (any language or dialect spoken by any person in the socially homogeneous Yolŋu "culture bloc" of north-east Arnhem Land). The only Aborigines at Milingimbi who do not speak Yolŋu Matha as their first language are the few women from elsewhere who have married Yolŋu men,1 and the very few Burarra speakers from the country to the west.

Yolŋu Matha, or the Yolŋu language, as Schebeck (1976 and n.d.) and F. Morphy (1977) have loosely called the languages of north-east Arnhem Land, in fact consists of about six or seven closely related languages, each with a number of dialects. Some confusion exists in the use of the terms "language" and "dialect" in the region, however, arising possibly because of the tendency of each group to give its own speech form a name separate from that of its neighbours, even where they are technically very similar.

1. All of these women would currently be learning to speak Djambarpuyŋu and probably Gupapuyŋu. One of them speaks English as a first language. The others speak Nungubuyu, Aranda and Walbiri as their first languages.
This difficulty in the use of terminology and names in fact is widespread in Australia. Dixon (1976) shows how the anthropological literature in Australia frequently uses the terms "language" and "tribe" in a confusing and sometimes conflicting way. This stems from a general assumption that each "tribe" speaks its own "language" (for example, Berndt and Berndt, 1964:28). As "tribe" is a term which can only be used very loosely in the Australian context, this assumption automatically leads to difficulties. Dixon (1976:214) shows how the term "language" is frequently used in one of two quite distinct senses.

In its first sense, a "language_1" may denote what linguists would technically describe as different "dialects" or even a series of speech forms not closely related. Such a use frequently is politically motivated, in the sense that not all differences between "languages" are noted and ideologised by their speakers, while others are (Fishman, 1968:44).

In its second sense, a "language_2" is what linguists refer to technically as a chain of mutually intelligible dialects. Two modes of speech are "dialects" of the same "language_2" if they are closely related linguistically, and, on linguistic grounds, mutually intelligible.2

In Australia, "tribe", "language_1" and "language_2" are not always co-terminous. This is certainly the case in north-east Arnhem Land where a "language" (in fact a linguistic subgroup) consists of a number of dialects of about six "languages_2". R. Berndt (1976:159) points out that the dialect unit in north-east Arnhem Land is the local descent group,

2. "Mutual intelligibility", however, is not always of great use in determining the boundaries of a "language_2". Fishman (1968:44) concludes with Wolff in a study of West African group speaking distinct and sometimes unrelated languages that "mutual intelligibility" is largely a question of intergroup attitudes. Dixon's data on the Australian languages of the Atherton Tableland region in North Queensland tends to bear this out.
which is probably the strongest political unit. Thus in general each of these dialects of each "language\textsubscript{2}" constitutes a "language\textsubscript{1}". Even this is an oversimplification as sometimes members of two different clans say that they speak the same "language\textsubscript{1}" except perhaps for song-words. This type of "language" is at an intermediate level between the "language\textsubscript{1}" and the "language\textsubscript{2}". Gupapuy\textsubscript{2}u is an example of this (Frances Morphy, linguist, personal communication).

The term "Yol\textsubscript{u} Matha" is used at different levels by the Yol\textsubscript{u} themselves, to refer to both "languages\textsubscript{1}" and "languages\textsubscript{2}". Sometimes it means "any Aboriginal language" (in this case a "language\textsubscript{2}" which consists of many "languages\textsubscript{1}" as opposed to English (Balanda Matha). It may mean the "languages\textsubscript{2}" spoken in north-east Arnhem Land, which form a definite linguistic subgroup of the Australian languages. At other times it is used to refer specifically to any of the "languages\textsubscript{1}" (technically "dialects") spoken by any of the Yol\textsubscript{u} people. Actual language names are generally not used, unless specifically elicited.

3.2 Yol\textsubscript{u} Matha: relationship to other Australian languages

Languages of the Yol\textsubscript{u} subgroup of the Australian language family are spoken in a swathe from Cape Stewart, just west of Milingimbi, to Cape Arnhem, the eastern-most point of Arnhem Land and as far south

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3. Unfortunately, I did not check whether it could be used in this sense by Milingimbi Yol\textsubscript{u} to refer to a language like Burera, which is linguistically very different, although the Burera-speaking people share many social and cultural patterns with the Yol\textsubscript{u}. My feeling, however, is that they would not. Frances Morphy (personal communication) informed me that people at Yirrkala definitely refer to Burera as "foreign", but that they refer to the Djin\textsubscript{a}ng language as "foreign" as well. Djin\textsubscript{a}ng is clearly a Yol\textsubscript{u} language, although it has undergone a number of changes. As Milingimbi is closer to the Djin\textsubscript{a}ng area it is possible that Milingimbi Yol\textsubscript{u} do not regard Djin\textsubscript{a}ng as foreign.
as Blue Mud Bay on the Gulf of Carpentaria (see Map 1). They form a linguistic island, amid a group of apparently very disparate language subgroups which are different both from each other and from the Yolŋu subgroup. The Yolŋu languages are clearly members of the Pama-Nyungan language typological group, which extends over the bulk of the Australian continent, from Cape York south and west. In the north of Australia, from immediately to the west of Milingimbi, extending to the Kimberley Ranges in Western Australia, and south to the Gulf country, there are a number of languages, including Burera, which are typologically distinctive from the bulk of Pama-Nyungan languages. Dixon (personal communication) has hypothesised that the Pama-Nyungan languages are conservative, having failed to undergo a number of innovations which have affected these northern languages in the Northern Territory and Western Australia. Djinaŋ, geographically on the boundary between the Yolŋu languages and the atypical northern languages, appears to be undergoing a number of these innovations although it is clearly a Yolŋu language in origin (Bruce Waters and Frances Morphy, personal communication).

3.3 Dialects and languages of Yolŋu Matha, multilingualism and multidialectalism

At least nine Yolŋu dialects and one non-Yolŋu language are currently spoken at Milingimbi, and everyone is multilingual and/or

4. The name "Pama-Nyungan" is derived from two words for "man" in Australian languages, the word 'pama', common in Cape York languages, and the word 'nyunga', in languages of the extreme south-west of the continent. The name indicates the extensiveness of the language family (O'Grady and Voegelin (1966)).

5. These figures are true for November 1978, but are subject to variation. Members of some of the minority linguistic groups have relations elsewhere and are liable to move around, although they might be described as "permanent" residents of Milingimbi.
multidialectal, discounting their knowledge of English. There are two
lingua francas, the two very closely related dialects, Gupapuyŋu and
Djambarrpuyŋu.

Gupapuyŋu and Djambarrpuyŋu are two dialects of the Dhuaŋu/Dhuwał
language (F. Morphy, 1977). This language has two major subgroups, an
eastern and a western one, which contain phonological, morphological,
syntactic and lexical differences on a clearly geographical distribution.
(Schebeck (n.d.) also posulates a northern and southern subgroup). In
addition, there is a distinction with Dhuaŋu/Dhuwał's eastern and western
dialects which reflects a social dichotomy in Yolŋu society, the moiety
division between Dhuaŋu people (who speak a Dhuaŋu dialect such as
Djambarrpuyŋu) and Yirritja people (who speak a Dhuwał dialect, such as
Gupapuyŋu). The main linguistic criterion which separates the two
sub-types on this purely social basis is what F. Morphy (1977) calls the
vowel-deletion rule, which operates in all Dhuwał dialects. The vowel
deletion rule may be written as:

\[ V \rightarrow \emptyset / \emptyset CV ([+ \text{segmental}])_oCVC \rightarrow \emptyset \]

**Condition:** the rule only applies to grammatical morphemes.

This means that the last vowel of a word in Dhuwał is deleted in Dhuaŋu
if the word is more than two syllables long, there is only one consonant
between the final and penultimate vowel and if the word is or ends in a
grammatical morpheme (F. Morphy, 1977:53). Examples of the distinction
between Dhuaŋu and Dhuwał can be seen in the following:

6. The name is based on the words for 'this' in the respective dialects.
Naming languages by a derivative of the absolutive form of 'this'
with the derivational suffix of possession (=mirri or =mirr in
Dhual/Dhuwał) is apparently a common practice among the Yolŋu people,
(Schebeck, n.d.). However, these names are not used regularly in
this study as I never heard them used at Milingimbi, whereas
"Gupapuyŋu", "Djambarrpuyŋu" and "Yolŋu Matha" were.
object of transitive verb  •nha
movement towards something (allative)  •lili
stationary location (locative)  •nura
movement from (ablative)  •nuru
verb form  marrtji-•n 'go' (tertiary form)
pronoun  limurruru ('we plural inclusive')
demonstrative  dhuwal ('this')

Systematic exceptions to the rule in all dialects occur in the demonstrative paradigm and in verb paradigms where the operation of the rule would produce unacceptable ambiguities. For example, dhuwala 'this, visible and here' is reduced to dhuwal in the social dialects of the same name, while Dhuwala dhuwali 'that, visible and there, not far away' remains dhuwali in Dhuwal.

The western subgroup, including the Gupapuyu/Djambarrpuyu dialects, contains some exceptions to the criterion of length. The past continuous aspect marker, gana (only two syllables) in Gupapuyu, is gan in Djambarrpuyu. The oblique (genitive and dative) pronoun suffix in Gupapuyu is -ŋu, but only -ŋ in Djambarrpuyu, as in litjalangu (Gupapuyu) and litjalan (Djambarrpuyu) ('we two inclusive' + oblique).

[ŋ] cannot occur word-finally in either dialect. It appears, too, that the rule does not operate when a consonant cluster occurs before the final vowel.
There are very few lexical differences between the Dhuwal and Dhuwala dialects. Mission-living may well have broken down many former lexical distinctions.

The relationship between the various Yolŋu languages and dialects is still not completely clear. Schebeck (n.d.) names and classifies them on the basis of the word for the demonstrative 'this' (in the absolutive case) and the suffix indicating 'having' (-mirri, -mirr or -mi) in each dialect. This has led him to overlook the special relationship between the Dhuwal and Dhuwala dialects, which Morphy shows by the operation of one phonological rule to be socially-based dialects of the one language. This conclusion is also borne out by Zorc (n.d.:9) in his sub-grouping of seven Yolŋu language/dialects, including two Dhuwal ones and one Dhuwala, on the basis of the occurrence of cognate "functors" (function words) in the Yolŋu languages. Nevertheless, bearing this omission in mind, Schebeck's classification is useful in showing the likely relationships between the Yolŋu languages and dialects spoken at Milingimbi and those spoken elsewhere. Table 3.1 thus reproduces his system of classification (Schebeck, n.d.:10-11), but amalgamates his separate Dhuwal and Dhuwala languages into the one language, Dhuwal/Dhuwala. (The suffixes -mirri, -mirr and -mi on each name are omitted).

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7. While one would like to call this the comitative suffix, it does not fulfil all functions of a true comitative (Frances Morphy, personal communication).
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Languages and Dialects</th>
<th>Hoiety</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>I DHUWAL/DHUWALA LANGUAGE</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a) Western subgroup</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1) <em>Gupapuynu</em></td>
<td>Yirritja</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2) Gyuamirimilli</td>
<td>Yirritja</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3) Djambarrpuynu</td>
<td>Dhuwa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4) Buyuyukululmirr +</td>
<td>Dhuwa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5) Liyagalawumirr</td>
<td>Dhuwa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b) Eastern subgroup</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6) Gumatj</td>
<td>Yirritja</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7) Mangalili</td>
<td>Yirritja</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8) Makarrwanhalmirri</td>
<td>Yirritja</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9) Dūriwuy</td>
<td>Dhuwa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c) Northern subgroup</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>10) Wobulkarra</td>
<td>Yirritja</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11) Mārraŋu</td>
<td>Dhuwa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d) Southern subgroup</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>12) Nadarrpa</td>
<td>Yirritja</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13) Marrakułu</td>
<td>Dhuwa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14) Djapu</td>
<td>Dhuwa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15) Dhpuyynu</td>
<td>Dhuwa</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Underlining indicates dialect is spoken as a first language by Milingimbi Yolŋu now, or was traditionally so.

+ Schebeck uses the term "Leyagawumirr" (his spelling) for this dialect. Both terms are in use at Milingimbi, but "Buyuyukululmirr" is more common.
### Languages and Dialects

#### II DHAY'YI LANGUAGE *

16) Djarrwark  
17) Dalwanu  

#### III DHIYARUY LANGUAGE

18) Wagilak  
19) Mangurra  
20) Ritharrnu  

#### IV NHAJU LANGUAGE

a) Northern subgroup I  
21) Golpa  

b) Northern subgroup II (gutji subgroup)  
22) Bararrpararr  
23) Bararrnu  

c) Central and southern subgroups  
24) Yalukal  
25) Y̓unhaŋu **  
26) Gorryindi  
27) Walamaŋu  
28) Gamalanga  

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Moiety</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Dhuwa</td>
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<td>Yirritja</td>
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<td>Dhuwa</td>
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<td>Yirritja</td>
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<td>Dhuwa</td>
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<tr>
<td>Dhuwa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yirritja</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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** There is now some evidence that the Dhay'yi language may be the same language as Dhuwal/Dhuwala (Frances Morphy, personal communication).

** Schebeck's classification does not include Gadukadu or Malarra, which are both Y̓unhaŋu speaking groups (Michael Christie, personal communication). Presumably they belong in this subgroup. The Gorryindi, Walamaŋu, Gamalanga, Gadukadu and Malarra were all described as speaking Y̓unhaŋu. Whether this means that their own clan languages have become extinct in recent times and have been replaced by Y̓unhaŋu, or whether they originally spoke the one language, is not at present clear.
Gupapuynu is the first language of the Daygurrgrur and Birrkili people, who comprise the greatest proportion of Milingimbi's population. Two hundred people at present at Milingimbi are the descendents of two Gupapuynu men, who had twenty-two wives between them. Djambarrpuynu is the first language of the Djambarrpuynu clan and, in recent times, also of the Liyagalawumirr and the Buyuyukululmirr. A hypothesis that the
Buyuyukulu'mirr and Liyagalawumirr spoke different languages or dialects until recently arises from the observation that in the intraclan speech of older members of these clans, a number of lexical items which are definitely not Djambarrpuynu can be heard (Sue Harris, a fluent speaker of Gupapuyu, personal communication). Djinaŋ (which appears to have several dialects), Yânhaŋu, Warramiri and Caŋalbiŋu all appear to be dialects of or be separate languages. Wubulkarra and Mârraŋu (which is no longer regularly spoken at Milingimbi, having been replaced by Djambarrpuynu) appear to be dialects of Dhuwal/Dhuwala, while iâyml and Wangurri are dialects of yet another language. The Burera language is linguistically quite different from any of the Yolŋu languages, and, like the other non-Pama-Nyungan languages, is atypical of the major Australian type. Table 3.2 indicates the languages and dialects which the clan groups at Milingimbi once spoke, their tentative linguistic classification, those that are regularly spoken by adults, and those that are regularly spoken by children.

Most adult Yolŋu are multilingual and/or multidialectal. Because of the exogamous marriage system, children are reared in families where two languages or dialects may be spoken, some of the time, and often more in a polygynous family. In pre-settlement days, children grew up speaking their mother's language, switching to regular use of their father's language during their teens (Harris, 1977:20).

Djambarrpuynu is a very "strong" dialect (in terms of the number of people speaking it), and many Gupapuyu children appear to be failing to make the change to Gupapuyu in their own speech, although they would understand it. This is probably symptomatic of a rapid rate of sociolinguistic change, rather than of actual social breakdown. It is not uncommon to hear a younger Birrkili or Paygurrurr person speaking half in Gupapuyu and half in Djambarrpuynu, even in intra-group contexts.
### TABLE 3.1

**LANGUAGES AND DIALECTS AT MILINCINBI**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CLAN NAMES</th>
<th>ORIGINAL LINGUISTIC GROUP (Dialect)</th>
<th>CLASSIFICATION (LANGUAGE NAME)</th>
<th>ADULTS</th>
<th>CHILDREN</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>DAYGURRGURR</td>
<td>Gupapuyu</td>
<td>DHUMAL/DHUWALA</td>
<td>Gupapuyu</td>
<td>Djambarrpuyu and/or Gupapuyu</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BIRRKILI</td>
<td>Gupapuyu</td>
<td>&quot;</td>
<td>Gupapuyu</td>
<td>Djambarrpuyu and/or Gupapuyu</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DJAMBARRPUYU</td>
<td>Djambarrpuyu</td>
<td>&quot;</td>
<td>Djambarrpuyu</td>
<td>Djambarrpuyu</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BUYUYUKULMIRR</td>
<td>Probably Buyuyukulumir until recently. Now Djambarrpuyu</td>
<td>&quot;</td>
<td>Djambarrpuyu</td>
<td>Djambarrpuyu</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LIYAGALAWUMIRR</td>
<td>Probably Liyagalawumir until recently. Now Djambarrpuyu</td>
<td>&quot;</td>
<td>Djambarrpuyu</td>
<td>Djambarrpuyu</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DURILI=MARRANJU</td>
<td>Murrarju</td>
<td>&quot;</td>
<td>Djambarrpuyu</td>
<td>Djambarrpuyu</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WUBULKARRA</td>
<td>Wubulkarra</td>
<td>&quot;</td>
<td>Wubulkarra/Djambarrpuyu</td>
<td>Djambarrpuyu</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GULALAY</td>
<td>Wubulkarra</td>
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<td>Wubulkarra/Djambarrpuyu</td>
<td>Djambarrpuyu</td>
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<tr>
<td>GADUKADU</td>
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<td>NHANJU</td>
<td>Yanhaŋu/Djambarrpuyu</td>
<td>Gupapuyu and/or Djambarrpuyu</td>
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<td>GAMALANGA</td>
<td>Yanhaŋu</td>
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<td>Gupapuyu and/or Djambarrpuyu</td>
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<td>Gupapuyu and/or Djambarrpuyu</td>
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<td>GOSILANDI</td>
<td>Yanhaŋu</td>
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<td>Yanhaŋu/Djambarrpuyu</td>
<td>Gupapuyu and/or Djambarrpuyu</td>
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<td>WALAWANGU</td>
<td>Yanhaŋu</td>
<td>&quot;</td>
<td>Yanhaŋu/Djambarrpuyu</td>
<td>Gupapuyu and/or Djambarrpuyu</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CLAN NAMES</td>
<td>ORIGINAL LINGUISTIC GROUP (Dialect)</td>
<td>CLASSIFICATION (LANGUAGE NAME)</td>
<td>ADULTS</td>
<td>CHILDREN</td>
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<tr>
<td>MANARITI</td>
<td>Burera</td>
<td>BURERA</td>
<td>Burera</td>
<td>Djambarrpuyu</td>
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<td>MANHARRNU</td>
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<td>MURRUNU</td>
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<td>Djambarrpuyu</td>
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<td>WANGURRI</td>
<td>Wangurri</td>
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<td>Wangurri/</td>
<td>Djambarrpuyu</td>
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<td>Djambarrpuyu</td>
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<td>Warramiri</td>
<td>DJANU</td>
<td>Warramiri/</td>
<td>Djambarrpuyu</td>
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<td>Ganalbiŋu</td>
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<td>Djambarrpuyu</td>
</tr>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Djambarrpuyu</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OTHERS</td>
<td>Nungubuyu, Aranda, Walbiri</td>
<td>&quot;</td>
<td>learning</td>
<td>Djambarrpuyu</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The presence of a settlement at Milingimbi means that more people are speaking Gupapuyu or Djambarrpuyu than would have been the case previously, but not that fewer adults speak their own clan languages at the present time. It is possible that this situation will change considerably over the next few years. The children of minority groups are likely to grow up with Djambarrpuyu as their first language, but should learn their clan's first language later, as adolescents or young adults when they spend time with their relatives. While Djambarrpuyu, Djinaŋ (spoken widely on the mainland) and to a lesser extent Gupapuyu are the only Yolŋu languages and dialects spoken at Milingimbi which can be considered to have a strong future, the continuing high status of the three vis-à-vis English is nevertheless assured.
Patterns of multilingualism and multidialectalism are determined by clan affiliation and by the relative strength of Djambarrpuyuŋu. Gupapuyuŋu and Djambarrpuyuŋu-speaking people can use each dialect interchangeably. People with one parent from a minority group are likely to speak that language or dialect, as well as Djambarrpuyuŋu and possibly Gupapuyuŋu. People with both parents from minority groups are likely to speak both the minority languages, as well as Djambarrpuyuŋu and possibly Gupapuyuŋu. The minority languages and dialects are used for intra-group purposes, while Djambarrpuyuŋu is used by these people for inter-group purposes. While Gupapuyuŋu is the "official" language in Balanda eyes, at least for the purposes of the church and bilingual education, and was originally chosen by Beulah Lowe because it was a lingua franca, it seems that Djambarrpuyuŋu is now the dialect preferred as a lingua franca by the Yolŋu themselves. Whether this represents a "deliberate rebuff" to Balanda planners in recent times, or whether it has always been the case, or has evolved recently as other changes have accelerated, can only be surmised at present.

Language and dialect divisions do not always coincide with group divisions. Keen (1978) shows that Yolŋu are grouped according to many different criteria. For example, the Birrkili and Daygurrurr clan speak the same language, Gupapuyuŋu, although they have different ceremonies and songs. The "jinaŋŋu and the Djinaŋŋ clan have the same ancestors, traditionally, but they speak different languages.

The linguistic situation at Milingimbi is thus relatively complex. However, Djambarrpuyuŋu and, to a lesser extent, Gupapuyuŋu, represent strong unifying features. Despite the presence of a relatively large number of languages and dialects, the linguistic tensions which afflict settlements like Maningrida, where a large number of very different languages are spoken and there is no lingua franca (Elwell, 1977) simply
do not exist at Milingimbi, or are minimised primarily because of the interclan affiliations by marriage.

The strength of the Yolŋu languages, despite their linguistic differences, has important ramifications for the presence of English at Milingimbi. English is not "necessary" at Milingimbi, whether as a general lingua franca, or for people to be able to function satisfactorily within the community.

3.4. Major linguistic features of Gupapuyku: a dialect of Yolŋu Matha

This section investigates in brief the phonology, morphology, syntax and semantics of a dialect of Yolŋu Matha. The aim basically is to show how Yolŋu Matha behaves as a linguistic system. The dialect chosen for analysis is Gupapuyku, because, as we have seen, Djambarrpuyku generally differs from it quite systematically. The material in this section comes from Lowe (1965, n.d.(a) and n.d.(c)). F. Morphy (1977 and n.d.), Schebeck (1972, 1976 and n.d.) and from language classes conducted by Michael Christie, teacher-linguist at Milingimbi, during 1978.

Gupapuyku, like the other Yolŋu languages, is a suffixing language. Although word order is theoretically generally free, it is frequently constrained by discourse considerations. Nouns, pronouns and adjectives are marked for case by suffixes. The pronoun case system is nominative-accusative, while the nouns and adjectives contain features of both an absolutive-ergative and a nominative-accusative case system. Particles and suffixes mark verbs for tense, mood and aspect. There are few "pure" (non-dowd) adjectives and adverbs in Gupapuyku. There is no copula, although the verbs yhinya 'sit', norra 'lie', and dharra 'stand' can be frequently translated by a form of the verb 'to be'. The language has a rich supply of devices for deriving one
word-class from another.

3.4.1 Phonology

Gupapuyulu is phonologically very different from English. The consonants have seven contrastive places of articulation, while there are relatively few vowels and no phonemic diphthongs. Table 3.3 presents the Gupapuyulu phonemes. Two sets of symbols are used, those adopted for the orthography by Beulah Lowe (n.d.(a)), and their phonemic representations.

Gupapuyulu is unusual among Australian languages in that it has two series of stops, contrasting only word medially. The nature of the difference has been the subject of some debate. The distinction has been variously called a voiced-voiceless one (Lowe, n.d.(a):11)\(^8\), a lenis-fortis one (Heath, 1978) and a simple-geminate one (Schebeck, n.d.).

The status of the glottal stop is also under some debate. While Lowe has given it phonemic status, Schebeck (1972?) puts forward a fairly convincing argument to reinterpret it as a prosodic feature of the syllable. The phonotactics become simpler, too, as the number of possible consonant clusters is then reduced. This interpretation also explains how stem-final glottal stops can "jump over" consonants when suffixes are added, as in *djamarrkulili* ('children'), which becomes *djamarrkuliny'tja* when the suffix /nydja/ is added. However, as the debate is still in progress, the phonotactic discussion below interprets the glottal stop as a phoneme.

---

8. While Lowe (n.d.(a):11) calls the distinction a voiced-voiceless one, it is clear from her description of the difference that other factors, in particular, tension or possibly gemination, are involved, rather than voicing. Nevertheless, her orthography implies a voiced-voiceless distinction. As the general consensus now is that the distinction is one of gemination, an ideal orthography would probably replace her voiced symbols with voiceless ones, and her single voiceless ones with double voiceless ones (hence *g* becomes *k* and *k* becomes *kk*, for example).
### Table 3.3: The Phonemes of Gupapuynu

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CONSONANTS</th>
<th>BITABLIAL</th>
<th>ALVEOLAR</th>
<th>RETROFLEX</th>
<th>INTERDENTAL</th>
<th>ALVEO-PALATAL</th>
<th>VEILAR</th>
<th>GLOTTAL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>stops - simple:</td>
<td>b /b/</td>
<td>d /d/</td>
<td>d /ð/</td>
<td>dh /ð/</td>
<td>dʒ /ʒ/</td>
<td>g /g/</td>
<td>'j'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>geminate:</td>
<td>p /p/</td>
<td>t /t/</td>
<td>t /ts/</td>
<td>th /ts/</td>
<td>tʃ /ʃ/</td>
<td>k /k/</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>nasals:</td>
<td>m /m/</td>
<td>n /n/</td>
<td>n /ŋ/</td>
<td>nh /ŋ/</td>
<td>ny /ŋ/</td>
<td>ń /ń/</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>liquids:</td>
<td>l /l/</td>
<td>l /l/</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>rhotics = trill:</td>
<td>rr /r/</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>continuout:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>semi-vowels:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VOWELS:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>high:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>low:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* The phonemic representations use the symbols of the International Phonetic Alphabet, except for d and ʒ, which are, however, very widely used by Australian linguists to represent palatal stops.

+ It is not clear whether the phoneme /w/ is more accurately described as bilabial or velar, hence its occurrence in both columns. There is in fact only one /w/ in Gupapuynu, with generally little lip-rounding.
Gupapuynu has three vowel phonemes with contrastive length. The length contrast operates only in the first syllable of words (demonstrated in the minimal pair mūri ('mother's mother', 'mother's mother's brother) and māri ('trouble').

Like almost all Australian languages, Gupapuynu has a limited range of syllable types. Consonant-vowel (CV) is the most common syllable type, closely followed by CVC. CVCC is moderately uncommon, with the final consonant most frequently being a glottal stop. (Mūlk ('subsection') and barmiriti ('type of Yirritja bee or sugarbag') are examples where the syllable-final consonant is another stop or a nasal, both velar). CVCCC is very unusual. The consonant cluster in this syllable type is always of the form \( \{ \{ \} \} \mathbf{q}' \), as in the name Dayn'kuli, nyiln'thun ('to bow, stoop low') and maln'thun ('to appear').

Nearly fifty per cent of non-verb stems in Gupapuynu contain only two syllables. Three- and four-syllable stems comprise nearly another fifty percent, while one-syllable and five-or-more-syllable stems are comparatively rare. Many one-syllable words are particles, (for example, the non-conjugated verb particles dhar 'see', dąk 'hit', ba' 'leave', and larr 'go', and so on; and pa 'and' / continuous aspect marker, yow 'yes', and the interrogatives yol 'who?' and nhā 'what?'). There is also a small number of nouns consisting of only one syllable (such as rom 'custom', mūlk 'subsection', parr 'width', māny 'trail (of snake or jet)', mūt 'stick with chewed end for eating honey', mel 'eye' and mop 'dirt'). Most of them have a long vowel. All conjugatable verbs (thus excluding verb particles) have at least two syllables (root + suffix).

One-syllable verb roots cannot occur on their own.

9. There are some restrictions on the first and last phonemes of words. No word begins with a vowel phoneme. While all consonants except glottal stop may occur word-initially, the alveo-palatal series are least common in this position, occurring mainly in a few loan words. Single stops occur word-initially, while only semivowel stops occur word-finally. Vowels and the
Stress is not phonologically significant in Gupapuynu (unlike English). Primary stress is always on the first syllable. The second syllable is always unstressed. In three-syllable words the third syllable is also always unstressed. In words of more than three syllables, the third syllable carries a secondary stress. In words of more than four syllables, the penultimate syllable receives secondary stress if its vowel is a, as in the name, Mā-miŋ-gi-vā-vuy.

Thus Gupapuynu's phonology differs from that of English in a number of features, particularly the number and type of phonemes, syllable structure, length of words and stress.

3.4.2 Morphology

Seven word classes can be recognised for Gupapuynu: nouns, adjectives, verbs, adverbs, particles, demonstrative and pronouns. Unlike English, it has no prepositions or articles.

As nouns and adjectives take the same case and locational suffixes as the nouns they qualify, and both can stand independently in noun phrases, the difference between them is in fact very difficult to establish. It is possible that no adjective except numerals may take the derivational 'having' suffix, -mirri, while none at all can take the privative suffix, -miri (Frances Morphy, personal communication). Nouns may take both suffixes to derive an adjective or may stand on their own. For example bulutju navi (literally 'beard he') cannot mean 'he has a beard'/he is bearded', but only 'his beard'. 'He is bearded' is bulutjumirri navi. This remains a tentative distinction. The number of regularly-used "pure" (non-derived) adjectives in Gupapuynu is very small, probably well under fifty (Michael Christie, personal communication). A large number of "adjectival nominals" are derived from nouns, verbs and adverbs by the addition of a range of suffixes.
The Gupapuyŋu case system contains elements of both a nominative-accusative system and an absolutive-ergative one. +Human and -Human nouns take different inflections. With +Human nouns all three functions of intransitive subject, transitive agent and object are separately marked. Case inflections contain morphophonemic variation, conditioned by the phonological ending of the stem. The Gupapuyŋu case system, both grammatical and locational, is indicated in Table 3.4. Morphy suggests (n.d.:6) that -gala(ŋu) (and its variants) is a general marker for +Human local cases. The marker for the particular location is then added onto this.

There are four demonstratives in Gupapuyŋu, all inflected for case. The nominative forms are:

- dhuwala - 'visible and here'
- dhuwali - 'visible and there, not far away'
- ṣunhi - generally used referentially to denote something invisible but not necessarily far away. Also introduces relative clauses.
- ṣunha - 'not visible, there, far away'.

The demonstrative paradigms are quite complex, as, for example, Table 3.5 shows for dhuwala ('this, visible and here') and Table 3.6 shows for ṣunha ('that, not visible and there, far away').
TABLE 3.4: THE GUPAPUYNU CASE SYSTEM

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SUFFIX</th>
<th>PHONOLOGICAL CONDITIONING</th>
<th>FUNCTION</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 φ</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>ABSOLUTIVE:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 =dhu</td>
<td>/nasal-</td>
<td>1 ERGATIVE: -agent of transitive verb</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>=thu</td>
<td>/stops-</td>
<td>2 =h INSTRUMENTAL; for example: Narrra nanya bumara dharpa-y =him hit stick-INST. =I hit him with a stick;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>=yu</td>
<td>/liquid (+glottal stop)-</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>=y</td>
<td>/vowel (+glottal stop)-</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 =nha</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>ACCUSATIVE (partial):</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 =gu</td>
<td>/liquid {nasal} {semi-vowel}</td>
<td>OBLIQUE:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>=ku</td>
<td>/stop-</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>=wa</td>
<td>/vowel (+glottal stop)-</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>=yu</td>
<td>/liquid {semi-vowel} + glottal stop-</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 =yura</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>LOCATIVE: =h</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 =lili</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>ALLATIVE: =h</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* +h is the abbreviation used hereafter. It specifies nouns referring to human beings, as well as higher animate objects, like dogs, kangaroos and emus.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SUFFIX</th>
<th>PHONOLOGICAL CONDITIONING</th>
<th>FUNCTION</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>7 -wala</td>
<td>{liquid \vowel (+glottal stop)}</td>
<td>+H only</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>{vowel (semi-vowel)}</td>
<td>1. LOCATIVE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-gala</td>
<td>{liquid nasals}</td>
<td>2. ALLATIVE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>{semi-vowel}</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-kala</td>
<td>{stops nasal glottal stop}</td>
<td>3. INSTRUMENTAL: for example:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>{nasal semi-vowel}</td>
<td>\şarra nhantu djorra'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>I him-OB莉QUE letter</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>djuy-yurrana Laklak-kala</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>'I sent him a letter (by Laklak')</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>send-past Laklak +H INSTR.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>'I sent him a letter (by Laklak')</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>with</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8 (i)</td>
<td>=g {alanguuru}</td>
<td>For conditioning factors,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>=k {alanguuru}</td>
<td>ABLATIVE = movement away from</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>=w {alanguuru}</td>
<td>+H only</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>see 7.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>+H only</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>ABLATIVE = movement away from,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>origin from.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>=H only</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(ii)</td>
<td>=ŋuru</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9 -g</td>
<td>{uŋu}</td>
<td>For conditioning factors,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>=k {uŋu}</td>
<td>+H only</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>=w {uŋu}</td>
<td>ORIGIN from something given,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>written, sent or told by/from</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>person, for example:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>dhāwaw Mātjarrawuŋu</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>story Mātjarra-ORIGIN</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>'story told by Mātjarra',</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10 (i)</td>
<td>=g {urruru}</td>
<td>For conditioning factors,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>=k {urruru}</td>
<td>Movement THROUGH/along something</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>=w {urruru}</td>
<td>-H only</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(ii)</td>
<td>=g {alanguwurru}</td>
<td>For conditioning factors,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>=k {alanguwurru}</td>
<td>Movement THROUGH/along something</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>=w {alanguwurru}</td>
<td>+H only</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>see 7.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SUFFIX</td>
<td>PHONOLOGICAL CONDITIONING</td>
<td>FUNCTION</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>--------</td>
<td>---------------------------</td>
<td>----------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11 (i)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-buy</td>
<td>/nasals</td>
<td>1. ORIGIN from, when used with place names, for example: Milingimbi-wuy Yolŋu 'man from Milingimbi'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-puy</td>
<td>/all stops except glottal-</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-wuy</td>
<td>/vowel</td>
<td>2. CAUSATIVE, e.g. the man died because of poison.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>{semivowel</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>{liquid</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>{glottal stop}</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2. BELONGING to or RELATING to very closely, for example:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SUFFIX</th>
<th>FUNCTION</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>11 (ii)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-b</td>
<td>+H only</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-k</td>
<td>+H only</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-w</td>
<td>For conditioning factors, see 7.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Meanings as for 11 (i)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### TABLE 3.5

**THE DHUWALA, 'THIS, VISIBLE AND HERE' PARADIGM**

(after Morphy, n.d.:8)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CASE</th>
<th>+H</th>
<th>-H</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>NOMINATIVE</td>
<td>dhuwala</td>
<td>dhuwala</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GENITIVE/DATIVE</td>
<td>dhiyaku</td>
<td>dhiyaku</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ERGATIVE</td>
<td>dhiyaŋu</td>
<td>dhiyaŋu</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>INSTRUMENTAL</td>
<td>dhiyakala *</td>
<td>dhiyaŋu</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LOCATIVE</td>
<td>dhiyakala *</td>
<td>dhuwala</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ALLATIVE</td>
<td>dhiyakala *</td>
<td>dhipala</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ORIGIN</td>
<td>dhiyakuŋu *</td>
<td>dhipuŋuru *</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ABLATIVE</td>
<td>dhiyakalajŋuru *</td>
<td>dhipuŋuru *</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RELATOR/CAUSATIVE</td>
<td>dhiyakalajŋuŋu *</td>
<td>dhuwalajŋuŋu</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* These forms are identical in the dhuwali 'visible and there' paradigm

### TABLE 3.6

**THE JUNHA 'THAT, NOT VISIBLE AND THERE, FAR AWAY' PARADIGM**

(after Morphy, n.d.:9)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CASE</th>
<th>+H</th>
<th>-H</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>NOMINATIVE</td>
<td>günha</td>
<td>günha</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GENITIVE/DATIVE</td>
<td>nuruku</td>
<td>nuruku</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ERGATIVE</td>
<td>nuruŋu</td>
<td>nuruŋu</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>INSTRUMENTAL</td>
<td>nurukala</td>
<td>nuruŋu</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LOCATIVE</td>
<td>nurukala</td>
<td>günhala(ŋuni)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ALLATIVE</td>
<td>nurukala</td>
<td>günhawala</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ORIGIN</td>
<td>nurukuŋu</td>
<td>nulaŋuru</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ABLATIVE</td>
<td>nurukalajŋuru</td>
<td>nulaŋuru</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RELATOR/CAUSATIVE</td>
<td>nurukalajŋuŋu</td>
<td>günhanajuŋu</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The pronoun system is regularly nominative-accusative. There are separate singular, dual and plural forms, and first person dual and plural also distinguish between an inclusive and an exclusive form. There is no differentiation for gender in the third person singular form, as is the case in English. There are three types of pronouns: unmarked personal pronouns, reflexive/emphatic personal pronouns and interrogative pronouns. The unmarked personal pronouns are presented in Table 3.7.

The emphatic personal pronouns are formed regularly from the unmarked personal pronoun forms. The reflexive pronoun paradigm corresponds with the emphatic pronouns except that a reflexive nominative is impossible. In the nominative case, the suffix -pi (most likely derived from -puy) is added to the singular and dual nominative unmarked forms, while -wuy is added to the plural nominative unmarked forms, to derive the reflexive/emphatic. In the accusative case, the suffix -pinya (derived from -pi + nha) is added to the singular accusative forms, while -wuy + nha is added to the dual and plural accusative forms. The suffix -wuy is added to all unmarked dative/genitive pronouns to form the same case for the emphatic/reflexive pronouns. All other cases of the emphatic/reflexive pronoun paradigm form consist of the following structure:

stem type (4) + k/giyan + case ending

For example, in the locative + Human case the first person singular unmarked pronoun is narra-kala. The emphatic form is narra-giyan-gala.

There are three inflected interrogative pronoun paradigms, corresponding to 'who', 'what' and 'where' in English. Table 3.8 presents them.
### Table 3.7: Unmarked Personal Pronoun Paradigms

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Pronoun Category</th>
<th>S&amp;N Nom.</th>
<th>0 Accusative</th>
<th>Oblique/Genitive</th>
<th>Locative/Allative</th>
<th>Instrumental</th>
<th>Ablative</th>
<th>Origin</th>
<th>Causative/Relational</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>1st person</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Singular</td>
<td>(ŋa)ra*</td>
<td>ŋarranha</td>
<td>(ŋa)rraku</td>
<td>ŋarra-kala</td>
<td>stem of (4) + kalaŋuyru</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>stem of (4) + kalaŋuyway</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dual Inclusive</td>
<td>ŋali</td>
<td>(ŋa)litjalanha</td>
<td>(ŋa)litjalgulu</td>
<td>(ŋa)litjalan-gala</td>
<td>stem of (4) + galaŋuyru</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>stem of (4) + galaŋuyway</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dual Exclusive</td>
<td>(ŋa)linyu</td>
<td>(ŋa)linyalanha</td>
<td>(ŋa)linyalangulu</td>
<td>(ŋa)linyalan-gala</td>
<td>stem of (4) + galaŋuyru</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>stem of (4) + galaŋuyway</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dual</td>
<td>nhuma</td>
<td>nhumalanha</td>
<td>nhumalangulu</td>
<td>nhumalan-gala</td>
<td>stem of (4) + galaŋuyru</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>stem of (4) + galaŋuyway</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>2nd person</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Singular</td>
<td>nha</td>
<td>nhuna</td>
<td>nhunju</td>
<td>nhon-kala</td>
<td>&quot;</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>3rd person</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Singular</td>
<td>ŋayi</td>
<td>ŋanya</td>
<td>nhanjju</td>
<td>nhanju-kala</td>
<td>&quot;</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dual Inclusive</td>
<td>(ŋa)limurru</td>
<td>(ŋa)limurrunha</td>
<td>(ŋa)limurrungulu</td>
<td>(ŋa)limurrung-gala</td>
<td>stem of (4) + galaŋuyru</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>stem of (4) + galaŋuyway</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dual Exclusive</td>
<td>(ŋa)napurru</td>
<td>(ŋa)napurrunha</td>
<td>(ŋa)napurrungulu</td>
<td>(ŋa)napurrung-gala</td>
<td>stem of (4) + galaŋuyru</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>stem of (4) + galaŋuyway</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dual</td>
<td>nhuma</td>
<td>nhumalanha</td>
<td>nhumalangulu</td>
<td>nhumalan-gala</td>
<td>stem of (4) + galaŋuyru</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>stem of (4) + galaŋuyway</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>3rd person</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dual Inclusive</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dual Exclusive</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dual</td>
<td>walala</td>
<td>walalanha</td>
<td>walalangulu</td>
<td>walalan-gala</td>
<td>&quot;</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>&quot;</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* (ŋa) (when in brackets) is an optional element in Gupapuyu. In fact, I rarely heard "a pronoun forms with (ŋa) at Milingimbi, except ŋarra and ŋarraku, which were possibly as common as ŋra and ŋraku.*
### Table 3.8: Interrogative Pronoun Paradigms

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CASE</th>
<th>WHO?</th>
<th>WHAT?</th>
<th>WHERE?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>NOMINATIVE</td>
<td>yol</td>
<td>nhā</td>
<td>wanha</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ACCUSATIVE</td>
<td>yoinha</td>
<td>nhā</td>
<td>wanha</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GENITIVE/</td>
<td>yolku</td>
<td>nhāku/nhāku</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DATIVE</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>JRGATIVE</td>
<td>yolithu</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>INSTRUMENTAL</td>
<td>yolkala</td>
<td>nhaliy</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LOCATIVE</td>
<td>yolkala</td>
<td>nhāŋura</td>
<td>wanhami/wanha</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ALLATIVE</td>
<td>yolkala</td>
<td>nhǔlili</td>
<td>wanhawala</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ORIGIN</td>
<td>yolkugu</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ABLATIVE</td>
<td>yolkalalugu</td>
<td>nhāŋuru</td>
<td>wanhaluru</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MOVEMENT</td>
<td></td>
<td>nhākuru</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>THROUGH</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RELATIONAL/</td>
<td>yolkalawuy</td>
<td>nhāpuy *</td>
<td>wanhalawuy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CAUSATIVE</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Also nhāpuy 'what do you call t/him/her?' This contrasts with nhāpuy and is the only example in the language where the different allomorphs of a suffix give rise to a difference in meaning.
Verbal morphology in Gupapuyu is complex. Lowe (n.d.(c)) isolates nine verb classes or conjugations. Morphy (n.d.:17) has rationalised these in her analysis to five (with some subclasses).

One class of verbs borrowed from Macassan is uninflected throughout. All other conjugations have four basic inflected forms, called by Lowe the primary, secondary, tertiary and quaternary. Although these terms are not in general use in linguistics, they are preferred here because they do not in themselves carry a semantic loading. This type of term is necessary because the forms are not regularly used to designate any one tense, aspect or mood, as is shown below.

Table 3.9 demonstrates the primary, secondary, tertiary and quaternary forms of each conjugation in Gupapuyu. In this analysis all roots are vowel-final, and in some cases vowel alternation occurs according to the suffix. Only three verbs are irregular and thus cannot be categorised. They are:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Primary</th>
<th>Secondary</th>
<th>Tertiary</th>
<th>Quaternary</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>'beat, kill, hit'</td>
<td>buma</td>
<td>buŋu</td>
<td>bumara</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>'hear, listen'</td>
<td>ṇūma</td>
<td>ṇūku</td>
<td>ṇukula</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>'to put into'</td>
<td>galkan</td>
<td>galkurru</td>
<td>galkara</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

buma fits into three slots of conjugation 5a, (in Table 3.9), while its tertiary form would be regular in conjugation 4. ṇūma is more irregular, in that its primary and quaternary forms are regular in conjugation 5a, while its secondary and tertiary forms are unique.

galkan belongs to conjugation 4 by virtue of its primary and tertiary forms, but to conjugation 3 on the basis of its secondary form, while its quaternary is unique.
### TABLE 3.9: GUPAPYNU VERB CLASSES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>INFLECTION</th>
<th>1 (I)*</th>
<th>2a (II)</th>
<th>2b (IV)</th>
<th>2c (IX)</th>
<th>2d (III)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Primary:</td>
<td>$\phi$</td>
<td>$\phi$</td>
<td>$\phi$</td>
<td>$\phi$</td>
<td>$\phi$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Secondary:</td>
<td>$\phi$</td>
<td>$\phi$</td>
<td>$\phi$</td>
<td>$\phi$</td>
<td>$\phi$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tertiary:</td>
<td>$\phi$</td>
<td>$\phi$</td>
<td>$\phi$</td>
<td>$\phi$</td>
<td>$\phi$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quaternary:</td>
<td>$\phi$</td>
<td>$\phi$</td>
<td>$\phi$</td>
<td>$\phi$</td>
<td>$\phi$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No. of verbs</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>open</td>
<td>open</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Transitivity: transitive, intransitive, predominantly intransitive, reflexive.

Examples:
- vukirri 'write'
- djiangi 'work'
- djaga 'look after'
- bothuru 'count'
- mariti 'go'
- qachi 'cry'
- gurri 'enter'
- dawalayarri 'get better'
- djulghirri 'be happy'
- gurrupamirri 'give oneself'
- bunhamirri 'hit oneself'
- gurrupanmirri 'give oneself'
- notchra 'sleep'
- djaarra 'stand up'
- dharra 'stand up'
- djilathi 'write'
- djilathi 'write'
- djilathi 'write'
- djilathi 'write'
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- djilathi 'write'
- djilathi 'write'
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>INFLECTION</th>
<th>3 (V)</th>
<th>4 (VI)</th>
<th>5a (VII)</th>
<th>5b (VIII)</th>
<th>5c</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Primary: I</td>
<td>=n</td>
<td>=n</td>
<td>=ma</td>
<td>=ma</td>
<td>=ma</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Secondary: II</td>
<td>=rru</td>
<td>=lu²</td>
<td>=ŋu</td>
<td>=ŋu²</td>
<td>=lu²</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tertiary: III</td>
<td>=rruna</td>
<td>=ra</td>
<td>=ŋala</td>
<td>=ŋala</td>
<td>=ŋala</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quaternary: IV</td>
<td>=na</td>
<td>=nha</td>
<td>=nha</td>
<td>=nha</td>
<td>=nha</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No. of verbs</td>
<td>open</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>open</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>transitivity</td>
<td>mixed</td>
<td>predominantly transitive</td>
<td>predominantly transitive</td>
<td>predominantly transitive</td>
<td>predominantly transitive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>examples:</td>
<td>rulwandhun 'put down'</td>
<td>bathan 'cook'</td>
<td>nargamarama 'throw something away'</td>
<td>nayathama 'hold'</td>
<td>touch, reach</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>bul'yun 'play'</td>
<td>gurrupan 'give'</td>
<td>guruluma 'paddle, row'</td>
<td>dhangama 'die'</td>
<td>ganarrthama</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>malthun 'follow'</td>
<td>liyaman 'sing'</td>
<td>gukuna 'chase away'</td>
<td>'leave something'</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>+ See page 68</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Root-final a → u.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
When used on their own, these inflected verb forms have the following functions:

V + I: specific non-future tense.
V + II: imperative mood.
V + III: non-specific non-future tense.
V + IV: nominal—used to derive nouns, adjectives and reflexive verbs.

These inflected verb forms may be used with a series of four separate tense, three aspect and four mood markers. Figure 3.1 shows how tense, aspect and mood interrelate in Gupapuyku. Table 3.10 summarises the surface representations of these categories, and shows how they may be combined.

There are four separate tenses in Gupapuyku, marked by the primary and tertiary verb forms (with $\phi$ tense marker) for the non-future tenses and the particle dhu with primary and secondary forms for the future. Non-future is differentiated into past and present only when used in conjunction with the habitual aspect (which cannot be used with the future). In addition, both non-future and future may be subdivided according to whether a specific time is referred to or not. "Specific non-future" refers to the present time and any time before today when the time is explicitly stated (for example, barpuru godarr' non- ('yesterday morning')). The "non-specific future" refers only to the very recent past, generally only events which took place earlier in the same day. The "specific future" is used when referring to any time after today, when the time is stated (for example, godarr' milnitjpa ('tomorrow afternoon')). The "non-specific future" refers to a time

---

8. The Roman numerals I, II, III and IV are used to designate verbs in the primary, secondary, tertiary and quaternary respectively.
Figure 3.1

The interrelation of tense, aspect and mood in Gupapuynu

Mood

- Imperative
  - Unmarked aspect
    - Future
      - Specific
  - Completive (non-future)
    - Future
      - Specific
    - Non-future
      - Non-specific
  - Continuous
    - Future
    - Present
    - Past
  - Habitual

- Indicative
  - Continuous (future)
  - Habitual (future)
  - Unmarked aspect
    - Future
      - Specific

- Hortative
  - (Non-specific future)
  - Continuous (future)

- Irrealis
  - Habitual (future)
  - Non-future
  - Unmarked aspect
    - Future
      - Specific
TABLE 3.10: MANIFESTATIONS OF TENSE, ASPECT AND MOOD IN GUPAPUYNU

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>POSITIVE SENTENCES</th>
<th>NEGATIVE SENTENCES</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. IMPERATIVE MOOD : II + φ *</td>
<td>yaka + II + φ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. INDICATIVE MOOD :</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unmarked aspect : φ</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>non-future specific tense : I + φ</td>
<td>yaka + II + φ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>non-future non-specific tense : III + φ</td>
<td>yaka + IV + φ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>future specific tense : II + dhu</td>
<td>yaka + II + dhu</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>future non-specific tense : I + dhu</td>
<td>yaka + I + dhu</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Complete aspect : bili</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>non-future specific tense : I + bili + φ</td>
<td>yaka + II + φ + bili</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>non-future non-specific tense : II + bili + φ</td>
<td>yaka + IV + φ + bili</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Continuous aspect : ga-gi-gana-ganha</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>non-future specific tense : I + ga + φ</td>
<td>yaka + II + ga + φ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>non-future non-specific tense : III + gana + φ</td>
<td>yaka + IV + gana + φ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>future specific tense : II + gi + dhu</td>
<td>yaka + II + gi + dhu</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>future non-specific tense : I + ga + dhu</td>
<td>yaka + I + ga + dhu</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* '+' designates a word boundary in this table.
Word order of verb phrase components within the sentence is not fixed.
### Table 3.10 Cont'd

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>POSITIVE SENTENCES</th>
<th>NEGATIVE SENTENCES</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Habitual aspect : nuli</td>
<td>I + nuli + φ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>present tense :</td>
<td>IV + nuli + φ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>past tense :</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. HORTATIVE MOOD : -na</td>
<td>I -na +</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>non-specific future tense :</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. IRREALIS MOOD : (bäna)+balanu</td>
<td>POSITIVE SENTENCE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Continuous aspect (future tense) : II + balanu + gi</td>
<td>verb phrase + yaka</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Habitual aspect (future tense) : II + balanu + nuli</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unmarked aspect :</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>non-future tense 'might':</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>i)</td>
<td>II + balanu(bäna) + φ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ii)</td>
<td>IV + bäna+balanu + φ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>non-future tense 'might', 'should', 'must' :</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IV + balanu + φ</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>future tense, 'might' :</td>
<td>I + balanu + dhu</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

+ '-' designates a morpheme boundary in this table.
later today and any indefinite time in the future (for example, yalala ('later')). The non-future tense is the unmarked one.

The three aspects in Gupapuyngu are: the continuous, which refers to an ongoing event or state, marked by ga, gi, gana and ganha with the primary, secondary, tertiary and quaternary verb forms respectively; the habitual, referring to an action in the past or present which is regularly done, marked by the particle nuli (frequently shortened to li); and the completive, marked by the particle bili, which refers to an action which has been completed. The continuous aspect may be used with either of the future or non-future tenses, while the completive can be used only with the non-future tenses. The habitual aspect is used only in the non-future, but distinguishes between the past and present. It is neutral regarding specific and non-specific times.

The four moods in Gupapuyngu are the imperative, ('you do X!') (marked by the secondary form of the verb on its own); the indicative, marked optionally by the aspect markers and obligatorily for tense, by 'non-future' and dhu 'future' in conjunction with certain forms of the verb; the hortative, (Let's do X), which is morphologically distinctive from all other verb categories as it is marked by a suffix on the primary form of the verb; and the irrealis (subjunctive), designated by (bôna)balangü. The irrealis may be used with either the future or non-future tense markers or either of the two aspect markers, gi or nuli.

The negative particle, yaka, may be used in conjunction with any of the four moods. When applied to the imperative, hortative and irrealis moods, and the habitual aspect of the indicative mood, no component of the corresponding positive verb phrase is altered. When used with all other aspects of the indicative mood, with the non-future
marker, \( \hat{v} \), the verb suffix changes. When \( yaka \) is used with the future particle \( dhu \) in the indicative mood, the verb suffix is the same as for the corresponding positive verb phrase.

Verb phrase constituent ordering within both the phrase and the sentence is completely free (discounting morphological constraints), although a statistical \( \ldots \) would probably reveal a tendency for them to occur in the order

\[
\text{(mood)} + \left\{ \text{(aspect)} \right\} + \text{V-suffix}.
\]

The quaternary verb form may be used in adjective, adverb and noun formats—hence may take a full set of noun case markers. It is also used to form reflexive verbs of the form \( \text{V+quaternary suffix+} \text{=mirri}. \)

Gupapuynu is a language rich in word derivational processes. Compound verbs may be formed by connecting a noun with a verb. For example, \( buku \) 'forehead' plus \( bakhmara \) 'break' (transitive) forms \( buku-bakhmara \) 'answer'. Compound nominals may be formed by combining adjective with noun, or noun with noun. For example, \( liya \) 'head' plus \( däl \) 'strong' give \( liya-däl \) 'clever', while \( makarr \) 'thigh' combined with \( vindi \) 'big' gives \( makarr-vindi \) 'mainland'. \( Liya \) 'head' plus \( ninydiya \) 'plain' gives \( liya-ninydiya \) 'bald'.

The "Relator" suffix \( \text{-buy/-puy/-way} \) is very productive, giving rise, for example, to adjectives meaning 'belonging to', 'for' or 'about', for example, \( larrthapuy \text{ maypäl} \) 'mangrove shell fish' ('shellfish belonging to the mangroves') and \( dhāwuy guypuy \) 'story about fish'.

Many clothing terms are derived from names for body parts by the addition of \( \text{-buy/-puy/-way}. \) For example, \( manutji \) 'eye' and \( \text{-puy} \) yields \( manutjipuy \) 'spectacles'. Love (n.d.(c): lesson 39) hypothesises that these basically adjectival forms should strictly be followed by \( \text{pirri} \) 'clothes, thing', but that this is almost always omitted.
Many adjectives are formed by adding the quasi-comitative suffix, -mirri ('having, possessing') and the privative suffix, -miriw ('not having') to nouns. Examples are: yothu 'child' + -mirri, which gives yothumirri, meaning 'pregnant'. Yothu 'child' and -miriw give yothumiriw, which means 'childless'. -mirri can be added to numerical adjectives, to form 'once' (wanganymirri), 'twice' (murrna'mirri) and so on. A verb (short quaternary form or primary form, depending on the conjugation) with the suffix -mirri can form a noun, with the meaning of 'a person who performs the action', or an adjective, for example, gunga'yunmirri ('helper') and gunga'yunmirri yolju ('helpful man').

The quaternary form of the verb is a very productive derivational base, as it may take a number of nominal case inflections. The English infinitive is translated into Gupapuyku by adding -gu/-ku/-wu/-wu (oblique) to the long quaternary form of the verb (short quaternary + ra). The short quaternary form of the verb is used to form adverbs indicating stationary location (by adding the nominal case inflection, -nura); movement towards something (adding -iti) and movement away from (-nuru), while the long form derives adverbs of instrument (always the suffix -y after -ra). The adjectival expression 'about' or 'for' something is formed by adding -puy/-way to the short quaternary form of the verb, for example, dháwu miyapunuyawuy dharpunhawuy 'story about spearing a turtle'. If this English form implies a purpose, the -gu/-ku/-wa/-wu form -wa is substituted for -puy/-way.

Morphological processes transform transitive verbs to intransitive stems and vice versa. The intransitive verbaliser -'yun/-'thun (-'yun/ {vowel, liquid, semivowel} - ; -'thun/ {nasal, stop} -) may be added to nouns, adjectives and adverbs to form intransitive verbs. dhá ('m') plus -'yun gives dhá'yun, which means 'open one's mouth'. ganun is the stem of ganun'thun 'to limp'. The adverb róli
'movement towards the speaker' is the stem of rəlif'yun which means 'walk forward!'. Some verbs ending in -'yun/-'thun and adjectives, particularly some with duplicated stems (such as, for example, laplap 'open' and lapthun 'to open') are related, although the original direction of derivation is not known. Many -'thun verbs, although morphologically transparent, contain roots which now only exist as verb root forms, such as mukthun 'be quiet'.

-marama is a transitive verbaliser, which may be placed onto the stem of an intransitive verb. It converts the subject of the intransitive verb to the object of the new transitive verb. For example, the intransitive verb bəktun 'break' can become bakmarama 'break something'. -marama is added to the short quaternary form of all verbs, except for verbs ending in -un, where it is added to the verb stem, and for verbs ending in -an, where it is added to the primary form. There is no verbal process converting an intransitive subject to a transitive agent.

Intransitive verbs meaning 'become something' may be derived from adjectives and some nouns with the addition of the inchoative suffix, -dhirri/-thirri/-virri (-dhirri/nasal; -thirri/\{stop, vowel (+ glottal), liquid, semivowel\}; -virri/vowel (+ glottal) - ). For example, horum 'ripe' yields horumdhirri 'become ripe', and mokuy 'corpse' yields mokuythirri 'to die'.

Transitive verbs may also be derived from adjectives by the addition of the causative suffix -guma/-kuma/-yama (-guma/nasal =; -kuma/\{stop, vowel, liquid, semivowel\}; -yama/vowel =). For example, rakuny 'dead' is the root of the transitive verb rakunyguma 'to kill' (literally 'to make dead').
Gupapuyu also contains some suffixes which add emphasis to what has been said. -dhi (/nasals, stops/) and -yi/-dhi (/other environments /) are the equivalents of 'too' or 'again' in English.

The -nydja/-dja/-tja/-ny'tja set of suffixes, whose use is still little understood by linguists but appears to be partially "stylistic" (Lowe, n.d.(c): lesson 84) must also be considered in an analysis of Gupapuyu morphology, (-nydja/[liquids, vowels, semivowels], -dja/nasals -, -tja/(all stops except glottal, except when glottal follows a nasal) -, -ny'tja replaces the stem-final glottal stop on all words except those ending in nasal plus glottal stop). Christie (n.d.:16) suggests that -nydja and its variants is used to introduce or reintroduce new participants or information in a discourse. It can act as a focus marker, for example in the use of generic and specific terms. It may be used to differentiate between participants referred to by pronouns, particularly nayi, the third person singular nominative.

Finally, Gupapuyu is rich in devices for forming plurals, although the category of number is in fact only optionally marked. While some methods of plural-formation are strictly syntactic or semantic, all methods are discussed together for convenience. Two methods of plural formation act at the morphological level. Duplication of the whole or part of some words may indicate plurals, for example, djawulpa 'old' becomes djawudjawu when referring to more than one old person, while yolgu ('Aboriginal person') becomes yolguyulgu ('Aboriginal people'). -wurruth may be added to form the plural on specific singular and plural words, for example, dirramuwurruth 'men'. (If the singular form ends in a stop, an extra -kurru is inserted, for example, miyalkkurruwurruth 'women').

At the semantic level, only a few of the most frequent nouns, adjectives and verbs have different stems for singular and plural.
Examples are:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Singular</th>
<th>Plural</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>'little'</td>
<td>nyumukuniny</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>'child'/'children'</td>
<td>yothu</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>'young man/men'</td>
<td>gurrmul</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>'to spear'</td>
<td>dharpuma</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

For plural verbs to be used, the action denoted by the verb must be repeated or have a plural agent or object.

An adjective denoting number or quantity (such as marrma\' 'two', dharrwa 'many') may be used with either singular or plural nouns to form a plural.

At the syntactic level, noun phrases may be pluralised by using the pronouns walala 'they plural' and manda 'they dual' in conjunction with singular nouns to indicate two or more people. Mala 'group' (for plural) and manda ('they dual') may be used with singular nouns and adjectives to denote either people or things. Mala 'group' is limited in its occurrence only to nouns in the absolutive, ergative, instrumental, oblique and allative (-Human) cases.

All these methods of plural formation may be used optionally in conjunction with other methods, where applicable, for example:

a) Yothuy dharpuŋala guya 'The child speared the fish'
   (unmarked for number)

b) Djamarrkul\'i dharpuŋala guya 'The children speared the fish'

c) Djamarrkul\'i barrtjurruna guya 'The children speared (plural) the fish'

d) Djamarrkul\'i walala barrtjurruna guya mala fish (plural)'.

Gupapuyŋu is in many ways morphologically more complex than English. Nevertheless, there are some areas where English has
morphological divisions not found in Yolŋu Matha and these may cause
difficulties for the English learner. Such areas include the gender
distinction in the third person singular pronoun paradigm, the
obligatory number marking on count nouns and English verbal and
derivational morphology.

3.4.3 Some general topics in syntax

Syntactically, Gupapuyŋu is similar typologically to other
Australian languages. Word order is potentially almost completely
free, but is in fact limited. Choice of word order generally carries
significant semantic content regarding topic, focus and relationships,
as in other languages of this type. However, certain words always
occur in fixed positions. Interrogatives always occur sentence-initially.
Conjunctions and relative pronouns are always clause-initial. The
interrogative reinforcer, bili, always occurs after the interrogative
word if there is one. Verbs often occur at or towards the end of the
sentence, the most common element order being subject-verb-object.

In addition to the universal transitive, intransitive and
ditransitive sentences, and verbless (stative) sentences (which are
common but by no means universal in languages), Gupapuyŋu contains a
small category of verbless sentences which, however, occur very commonly,
where the concept expressed by a verb in English is expressed by an
adjective in Gupapuyŋu. djål, which literally means 'wanting', marngi,
which literally means 'knowledgeable', and dhuna 'ignorant of', are all
adjectives which take dative complements. For example:

a) Merra djål weti-wa
   1st singular pronoun wanting wallaby-dative
   'I want a wallaby'
b) Ṣaarra    maroŋgi wąŋa-wa dhiyaku
1st singular pronoun knowledgeable place-dative this-dative
'I know this place'

djil, maroŋgi and dhuna can form intransitive verbs with the addition of the inchoative suffix, -dhirri/-thirri/-virri, while the addition of the causative suffix -kutna on maroŋgi yields the transitive verb maroŋgi-kutna 'teach'.

Some Gupapuyngu particles are sentence modifiers. These include the dubitative naŋi, muka (which often acknowledges or demands agreement with something someone else has just said) and yanapi (which denotes that something was thought to be X but is not).

Gupapuyngu has a large number of particles and paradigmatic forms which act as conjunctions and relative pronouns in the formation of coordinating and subordinating structures. These conjunctions and relative pronouns, and examples of sentences using some of them (mostly from Lowe, n.d.(c)) are:

1) ga 'and' (frequently acts just as a coordinating particle, although it may be used as a sequencing device).
   miyalk rāli marrtjina ga dirramu bala wandina
   woman towards walk-III and man away run-III
   'The woman came and the man ran away'.

2) bala 'and/then/after that'. bala tends to have a more temporal meaning than ga, but the two can be used interchangeably.
   nayi dhu marrama djolŋu bala nhirrpan-na liya-lili-na
   he future get hat and put-III-style head-ALL-style
   'He'll get a hat and put it on his head'.

3) **bili** 'and/then/so/because' - primarily a causal conjunction.

Bonanydja mirithina djangarrthina **bili** nayi gana
Bonja-focus intensifier-III hungry-inchoative-III so she continuous
lukana gatha
eat-III food
"Bonja was very hungry so she ate some food"

4) **nanydja** 'or'

5) **nanydja/yurra** 'but' (coordinating conjunction).

6) **nunhi** 'that/which/what' - relative pronoun
dhiyaki-yi narra djainydja **nunhi** norra ga galki
that one-emphatic I wanting-focus which lie continuous near
bala'ura
hut-LOCATIVE
'I want that one which is lying near the hut'

7) **nunhi** + (personal pronoun)='who'

8) **nunhi/nuli/bay** 'when'

9) **nuli(balangu)/nunhi(balangu)/balangu** 'if'

10) **wanha balangu** 'whether', 'if', 'how about?..'

11) **marr (ga)** 'because'/'so that'/'that'

12) **(ga) yuna bili ga** 'until'
narra gana norrana yuna (ga) yuna bili ga djadaw'yurruna
I continuous sleep-III just until day break-III
'I slept until day break!'

13) **yurruna** 'before/then'

14) **dhanyuru/dhurrwaraquru nuliguru** 'after'

15) **nhakuna** 'after', 'like', 'as if', 'for instance'
It is also very common in informal speech for a number of clauses to be linked together sequentially, without any conjunctions. The fact that they form one sentence is indicated by intonation only. An example (Lowe, n.d.(c): lesson 93) is:

wandina navi, store-lili gurrina, mol-lang'landhurruna run-III he store-allative enter-III look around-III narali'wa tobacco-oblique

'He ran, entered the store and looked around for tobacco'.

Conjunctions are most frequently omitted when fast-moving action is being described or the subject matter is not new.

In Gupapuyu, ellipsis is very widespread in casual conversations, possibly because of the major role played by sign language and other forms of non-verbal communication in everyday speech. Because of ellipsis, nothing can be considered grammatically essential in a sentence except new information. It is possible that only tense, aspect and mood markers could not function alone in an utterance. The following short dialogue (a written demonstration in a language class) gives an idea of the effects of ellipsis in Gupapuyu.

A : Nhunjuru nhe?
   what-from you
   'Where've you come from?'

B : Yilan-nuru
   Cape Stewart-from
   'Cape Stewart'

A : Marthangay - nydja?
   boat - focus
   'Where's your boat?'
B: Dhuwal
there
'There'
A: Dharra guya?
many fish
'Did you get many fish?'
B: Yaka waanggan.
NEG one
'No, only one'
A: Yindipuy?
big-concerning
'Was it a big one?'
B: Yow. Djukurr-mirri
yes fat-containing
'Yes. It was a fat one.'
A: Garraw. Latju
great nice
'Great. It's a good one'.
B: Nhe djäl Lukanharawa?
you wanting eat-IV-dat/gen.
'Do you want to have some?'
A: Yow, manymak
yes, good
'Yes, please!'
B: Nali
we-2 incl.
'O.K., let's eat it'.

This example shows how verbs in particular are affected by ellipsis and are frequently omitted altogether. Subject pronouns may also stand alone.
in an utterance. This is not possible in English.

The final aspect of Gupapuynu syntax to be considered here is discourse structure. There are a few discourse particles which operate both at the sentence and utterance level. Manymak, meaning 'O.K.', 'listen-to-me', 'so-far-so-good, keep listening' occurs frequently, sentence-initially. Bala is "pseudo-directional" (Christie, n.d.:12), and means 'and then', 'after that'. At the clause level it means 'movement away from the speaker'. At the discourse level it indicates sequential movement along a temporal continuum, accentuating cause and effect relationships and logical sequences. Bala rarely occurs sentence-initially at Milingimbi, although ga bala is common in this position. Ga is the most common discourse marker, occurring both sentence-initially and sentence-medially. It connects focused elements with the comment, helps predicate it, and frequently introduces new information. It is often used in otherwise "English" utterances at Milingimbi, and its use in these situations is discussed in Chapter 7.

3.4.4. Semantics

The most notable aspect of Gupapuynu semantics from the point of view of a comparison with English is the very large number of alternate words which express the same meaning. For most concepts, at least two and often more words exist which have the same literal meaning, and frequently the same or similar use in metaphorical extensions. Examples of this duplication are: watu and wugan meaning 'dog'; mel, manuti and ganydjula all meaning 'eye'; nama and nandi both meaning 'mother'; gupagara, gupa and dhungurrk all meaning 'nape of the neck'.

The origin of these synonyms is not clear. One can hypothesise that at least some may have been borrowed in the past from neighbouring languages. to fill the gap left when words which sound like the name
of someone who has just died are temporarily outlawed.

Semantically, Gupapuyngu classifies the world quite differently from English, (as can be seen in the classification of parts of the natural world in Appendix D (after Rudder, 1979)). While Gupapuyngu has, for example, three separate words for 'eye', there are no separate lexemes for 'eye', 'iris', 'pupil', 'cornea' and 'retina', although the distinction can be made if necessary by other means. The Yolnu categorise the physical aspects of the environment much more finely than do English speakers, reflecting the natural emphases in their traditional life-style. Words for seasons reflect the seasonal situation in the tropics, with there being words for 'Wet season' (gummul); midawarr 'when the wet season is really gone and the fruit is ripe'; dharratharrmirri 'later in the dry season when the cold weather (dharrartharra) is here'; rarranhdharr 'before the wet season when the weather is hot'. gummul ('wet season') can also be used as an insult. Whether they are two homophonous lexemes or whether it reflects Yolnu attitudes about the wet season is not clear.

Gupapuyngu is also very rich in metaphor. The same word or set of words may refer to two different semantic areas. The terms for body parts are a good example of this, as they can be extended to refer to geographical features and other natural objects. For example, buku 'forehead' or 'face' also means 'hill' or 'cliff' in Gupapuyngu. gurrur 'nose' also means 'promontory' or 'headland'. Many body part terms also play major roles in the formation of abstract compounds, for example, liya 'head' is used in liya-marrtji 'become homesick', liya-madayinmirri 'wise'

head-go

head-sacred-with

liya-garrpin 'to worry', have a headache', and many others.

head-bird
Some words have different meanings to different people or in different contexts. Keen (1971) shows how Yolŋu religious language contains a considerable amount of ambiguity as a number of words may be interpreted in more than one "mode". For example, words like djota and mululu have a general "public" meaning (available to everyone, regardless of age or sex) (both refer to species of trees in this sense) and an "esoteric" meaning, with sacred objects as referents. Knowledge of esoteric referents in theory is restricted to initiated men. Thus madayin ('sacred') songs which are sung in public have different significance for different people, depending on their level of knowledge (Keen, 1977:45).

Gupapuyŋu is fairly receptive to borrowed words, although it is certainly capable of forming or deriving its own words for new concepts. English has probably been the main non-Australian source language. Appendix C contains a list showing how many non-Aboriginal loan concepts have been incorporated in Gupapuyŋu, and Chapter 8 on semantics discusses the subject in greater detail.

Finally, most objects in Gupapuyŋu are classified as "belonging" to either the Dhuwa or the Yirritja moiety. It is interesting to note that words for borrowed elements are always Yirritja. The Yirritja moiety is traditionally more innovative than the Dhuwa in many areas.

3.5 Yolŋu Matha: some sociolinguistic aspects

An analysis of a language, particularly when required for cross-cultural purposes, is incomplete without some examination of its sociolinguistic features. This area is of particular significance in relation to the Yolŋu's competence in English, because it is here that differences may not be recognised or only imperfectly learned, thereby causing many misunderstandings.
3.5.1 Avoidance relationships and their effect on language use

As in other Aboriginal groups, a number of 'avoidance' (wukindi) relationships (built actually on extreme deference and respect) exist within the Yolŋu world, the strongest being between a man and his mother-in-law. There is a complete taboo on direct verbal communication between the two of them, and no face-to-face contact is permitted. If no one else is present, and communication is essential, the speaker would talk to a tree or a dog rather than directly to the mother-in-law. It would be most unlikely that either the man or the mother-in-law would allow themselves to be left alone together. There is no special 'avoidance' vocabulary. This constraint exists between ego and mukul rumaru (wife's mother), ego and maralkur (wife's mother's brother) (these two are in the same moiety as ego) and between ego and mamalkur (wife's mother's mother), ego and nathiwalkur (wife's mother's mother's brother) (in the opposite moiety to ego).

In the descending generation the constraint affects ego's relations with gurrun (sister's daughter's husband and his sister) in the same moiety as ego, and dhumungur (sister's daughter's daughter's husband and his sister) in the opposite moiety to ego. The verbal taboo operates in general between these reciprocal avoidance relations of the opposite sex. Avoidance relations of the same sex do not address or refer to each other by name, and use nhuma ('you plural') when addressing each other rather than nhe ('you singular').

Brother and sister are also subject to verbal constraints, but only to the extent that a man will not tolerate hearing his sister insulted or referred to in a sexual way. Brother and sister will not say each other's names. Both these constraints are described much more fully for the Yolŋu context in Harris (1977: 365-375).
3.5.2. Children's language

A "children's language" exists at Milingimbi (Harris, 1977: 23; Buyuminy and Sommer, 1978). The importance of this in a consideration of English there rests in the fact that children may expect their language to be different from that of adults. Hence they may possibly deliberately not exactly produce the type of English of their adult teachers.

"Children's language" is spoken by all people from toddlers to people of about twenty. It affects vocabulary use mainly, but also grammar. For example, it regularises irregular verbs and operates in a three-verb-form rather than the adults' four-verb-form framework (the quaternary form is assimilated with the tertiary). The children use -ba for the genitive/dative suffix (probably related to the adult allomorph -wa), and use -thi for the ergative suffix. Vowel initial words are used, such as apapa 'father' (derived from bōpa), athuthu 'child' (derived from yothu) and ōpaki 'white person' (derived from nōpaki). Children use some different lexemes, for example, gōki, rather than narali 'tobacco'.

The most overt distinctions between adults' and children's language are the phonological ones documented by Buyuminy and Sommer (1978). They note that glide /r/ and trilled /rr/ are both softened to [y] in children's speech in most environments as in:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Adult speech</th>
<th>Children's speech</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>raki</td>
<td>yaki</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bira'yun</td>
<td>biya'yun</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>gorrmur</td>
<td>gorrmuy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>wukirri</td>
<td>wukiyi</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

"rake, string"  
"awake"  
"hot"  
"write"

This does not exist in the form if both rhotics occur in the one word.
There are other phonological processes whereby children derive their words from adult forms: consonant cluster simplification (for example, adult marri 'go' becomes children's mati, consonant or syllable reduction (adult nul 'completive' becomes children's li, adult nurru 'nose' becomes children's yu) and the choice of unmarked consonants in preference to more marked retroflexed or laminal ones (adult dawurr 'feather' becomes children's dawuy).

The reason underlying the existence of a children's language can only be hypothesised. It is probably associated with the strength of the peer group within Yolgu society.

3.5.3 Lexical taboos and language change

Because of the process of tabooing the name of a person who has just died, and lexemes which sound similar to that name, the rate of lexical change appears to be quite high in Aboriginal societies. This process is widespread in all Yolgu languages. The length and extent of the taboo depends on the status of the person who died, the length of time since the death and the closeness of a person's relationship to the mokuy ('dead person'). In recent times, English words have been affected by this taboo, although generally only in children's usage. Examples of English words recently tabooed at Milingimbi are 'millions', 'seven', 'yellow' and 'Billy'.

Most "mokuy words" are replaced by one of their alternates in the Yolgu Matha stock. For example, dhawada 'beach' has been replaced since 1977 by ranli, a word which had previously been the preferred term for 'beach' in Gumatj, a Yirritja moiety dialect very closely related to Gupapuyu and Djambarrpuyu and spoken at Yirrkala. Because of the importance of the man who died, ranli is now used by everyone at Milingimbi and is likely

9. As copies of this thesis are to be made available to the Milingimbi community, the names of the dead people concerned are not provided here, for fear of giving offence.
to continue to be used for some time.

One instance is recorded of a Yolnu Nmath "mokuy word" actually being replaced by an English word, at least in the speech of those reasonably familiar with English. When Guyagnha died at Galiwin'ku (Elcho Island) in 1978, guyana ('think') was replaced by 'think', by some better educated "Bottom Camp" people at Milingimbi (Aafke Dykstra and Gayungi, preschool teachers, personal communication).

3.5.4. Yolnu rules of interpersonal communication

To say a person is highly proficient in a second language implies not only that they have mastered the linguistic system, but also that they can use the normal social rules of communication for the second language. Harris (1977: 375-446) outlines in detail a number of Yolnu rules of interpersonal communication, particularly those which differ in some way from English ones. They are mentioned here very briefly in order to highlight some of the sociolinguistic problems encountered by Yolnu when learning English.

Among Yolnu there is often a gap between a verbal commitment to do something at a particular time and the actual implementation of that undertaking. Thus promises to carry out a plan are very frequently not honoured at the time when a Balanda might expect them to be. This probably stems from Balandas' preoccupation with clock time, rather than "mere inclination" to do something or time governed by natural factors like the sun. It is not part of traditional Yolnu culture to greet people on meeting, or to express thanks. A Yolnu always reserves the right to speak and the right not to listen when someone else is talking, regardless of what other people might wish. Interested audiences always actively participate in whatever they are listening to. Related to this, a speaker often uses phrases and verbalised question markers specifically designed to elicit at least minimal responses from the
listeners. This is rarely done in English except in rhetoric.

There are several aspects of English sociolinguistics which the Yolnu find difficult to understand. The Yolnu always avoid direct "strong talk" (verbal confrontation) and impersonal debate forms, both characteristic of English, unless the speaker wishes to express actual personal animosity and anger. Verbal measures taken by Yolnu to avoid potential conflict situations include: lengthy preparatory conversations before asking a favour; procrastination as a way of saying 'no'; circumlocution in a debate to avoid open conflict (for example, by apparently agreeing with the previous speaker, then airing all viewpoints very carefully before concluding with his or her opposing view); the use of stories and allegories to soften verbal discipline; the use of rhetorical questions and irony, providing an oblique approach to criticism; and saying what they think the other person wants to hear. When a Yolnu asks a Balanda for assistance, he or she does not necessarily expect 'yes' for an answer. Balandas generally do, as they tend not to ask for assistance unless fairly sure of a positive answer. This difference is one of the major sources of tension in Yolnu-Balanda relations.

Apparent exceptions to the general Yolnu desire to avoid "strong talk" are the widespread (but relatively inoffensive) use of swearing and teenage abuse, adults' shouting at naughty children and teasing among children. However, teasing can be a very disruptive factor at school.

Yolnu ask and answer direct questions much less frequently than Balandas. A Yolnu person feels no obligation to answer a question seeking information. There is little interest in information for information's sake, except of the type seeking name, origin, present activities and where one is going. Yolnu people frequently feel
threatened by the explicitness required in a Balanda question and answer situation. Questions of a hypothetical nature, analytical 'if...then' questions and propositions, and 'why' questions are possibly used much less frequently by Yolŋu than Balandas. They may well be the prerogative of senior men and women, it thus being inappropriate for children to reflect on things in this way. Hypothetical questions that can be answered by a generalisation from an "ideal" are frequently not understood. This partially accounts for the difficulties experienced by some Yolŋu children in transferring mathematical principles they have learnt in one situation to another, such as doing addition with shells and then the same sum again with other types of objects. If a question seeking information is asked, the question should be specific, or it will not be understood.

These are all aspects of sociolinguistic behaviour which cause particular problems in a cross-cultural setting. They are all important in the teaching context and for Balandas in general living at Milingimbi. Perhaps the most important from the point of view of teaching English is the disparity in the use and type of questions asked by Balandas and those asked by Yolŋu. Asking questions as a teaching technique, so common in the Balanda world, is generally an ineffectual way of teaching English or any other subject at Milingimbi.

3.6 Balandas' use of Yolŋu Matha

Of the thirty four Balanda adults at Milingimbi in 1978, only three could be considered to be fluent speakers of Yolŋu Matha. All three had been at Milingimbi for a number of years. One was the teacher-linguist, one was the minister of the church, while one had been adult-educator until the birth of a child in 1977. A fourth fluent speaker, Beulah Lowe, was no longer there, although she had been there
for about twenty seven years until the end of 1977. Two of the remaining three fluent speakers (the minister and his wife) left Milingimbi permanently in December, 1978. All three stated that because they could speak Yolŋu Matha well, no Yolŋu (with a couple of exceptions) ever spoke to them in English. Of the remaining adults, two of the teachers and two of the non-school workers could use Yolŋu Matha to communicate on a functional level, although they could not be described as fluent to any extent. A further seven had a reasonably good comprehension of Yolŋu Matha and could use it to communicate on a basic level. Of the remainder, most would be able to understand something of what they heard and be able to speak a few common words, with varying quality of pronunciation. Within quite a short period, everyone learns a few "essential" words. (For a list of Yolŋu Matha words regularly used by Balanda, see Appendix B).

All the Balanda children could speak a smattering of Yolŋu Matha, and most could understand and speak it rather better than their parents. Some of the younger children would probably be unable to say whether some words they know are English or Yolŋu Matha. For example, a two-year-old girl regularly talked about namini ('breast', 'milk' - she was still being breast-fed) and bāpi ('snake').

Because so many of the Balandas understand and speak at least a few words of Yolŋu Matha, even fluent speakers of English among the Yolŋu frequently pepper their speech with commonly-known Yolŋu Matha words. It may of course be because the Yolŋu always use certain Yolŋu words that the Balandas are obliged to learn them and even start using them themselves. With those Balandas whose comprehension is moderate to reasonable, two-way conversations (a regular aspect of the traditional Aboriginal multilingual setting) are very common, whether the Yolŋu person concerned speaks good English or not. Much Balanda–Yolŋu
communication outside work hours consists of the Balanda trying to find out the Yolŋu translations for certain English words.

Because of the number of Balandas at Milingimbi with positive attitudes to Yolŋu Matha, whether or not they can speak it, the use of Yolŋu Matha rather than English with Balandas is very high in many cases. There is mostly no need or pressure for Yolŋu to use "English and English only".

3.7 Summary: implications for learning English at Milingimbi

This chapter has provided the linguistic context in which to place the learning and speaking of English at Milingimbi. We have seen that the Yolŋu languages and dialects are all typical of the Australian language type. While a large number of Yolŋu dialects are spoken at Milingimbi, the Yolŋu people are all multilingual and multidialectal and two lingua francas exist. The bulk of the chapter features a brief analysis of the phonology, morphology, syntax and semantics of Gupapuyŋu, one of Milingimbi's major Yolŋu dialects, and an account of some sociolinguistic features of Yolŋu Matha in general. Both these facets of language differ substantially from English.

Unlike the linguistic differences, the sociolinguistic differences between English and Yolŋu Matha are frequently not recognised or understood by either Balanda or Yolŋu. This is particularly the case with the rules of interpersonal communication. Thus the teaching of English should be far more than just the imparting of a basic phonological, grammatical and semantic system. A whole new range of sociocultural behaviour patterns must be learnt if the Yolŋu person is to function efficiently in English. The number of fluent Balanda speakers of Yolŋu Matha is small, but some have a working knowledge of it, while everyone could say something, and this in turn tends to lessen the need for English at Milingimbi.
CHAPTER 4

ENGLISH-AS-A-SECOND-LANGUAGE AT MILINGIMBI:
SOME SOCIOLINGUISTIC ISSUES

4.1 Introduction

The status of English as a second language at Milingimbi is one major factor which distinguishes this study of Aboriginal English from related studies in other parts of Australia where English is a first language or standardised pidgin. While most Yolŋu are bilingual in English and Yolŋu Matha, this in no sense implies that they have an equal command of Yolŋu Matha and English or that English poses a serious threat to the future of Yolŋu Matha as the community's first language. English and Yolŋu Matha have fundamentally different roles and this disparity is reflected in the sociolinguistic properties of Milingimbi English as a language system and in its formal linguistic properties as a continuum spanning a range from "no knowledge of English" to a completely fluent dialect. This difference is manifest both in the community-wide command of English (the degree of variation which exists on a general level) and in the individual's use of his or her range of English registers, whether or not juxtaposed with the use of Yolŋu Matha in code-switched sequences. Choice of English register on an individual level is particularly sensitive to the influence of the domain of the utterance. This chapter examines the relationship of the second language system to the target language and provides the theoretical and sociolinguistic framework within which we can consider the formal properties of English-as

1. Strictly speaking, Milingimbi is a multilingual and multidialectal community. The Yolŋu are described as "bilingual" here in order to juxtapose the knowledge and use of English, the second language under consideration, with the knowledge and use of all the Australian languages spoken there, Yolŋu Matha. Contrasting the use of the various Yolŋu languages and dialects as well as "Yolŋu Matha", and English would be a fascinating and productive study, but was beyond the scope of this research.
a second language at Milingimbi.

4.2 The nature of the target language and Milingimbi English as linguistic systems

The target language (Standard Australian English) and Milingimbi English can each be described as a system comprising a linguistic continuum, but the systems differ in one fundamental respect. All first language speakers of "Australian English" are completely fluent in at least one dialect of English, while many Yolŋu, who speak English as a second language, are not.

Mitchell and Delbridge (1965a and 1965b) isolated three general varieties of Australian English: Cultivated Australian, General Australian and Broad Australian, which cover the extremes and middle range of a stylistic continuum. These "styles" are governed neither by the geographical origin nor socioeconomic status nor educational attainments of the speaker, but apparently by the rather more amorphous quality of "identity". The term "Standard Australian English" used here is a cover term for all styles of English spoken by people in Australia for whom it is a first language. Hence substantial variation along a continuum is encompassed by the term "Standard Australian English".

The only features of Standard Australian English (hereafter abbreviated to SAE, using the convention adopted by Kaldor and Malcolm (forthcoming)) as a first language to have received systematic attention from linguists so far are its phonetics and to a lesser extent its lexicon (Mitchell and Delbridge, 1965a and 1965b; and also much more briefly and less scientifically, Baker, 1945; Ramson, 1966a and 1966b; and Turner, 1966). A survey of Queensland English was carried out in the 1960s, but its results are not generally available. The concentration of study so far on the phonetic properties of SAE, rather
than its morphology and syntax, may suggest that the major styles are identifiable most by their phonetic characteristics.

A number of studies have been carried out on non-standard English dialects in Australia, specifically forms spoken by some migrant communities (see Clyne, 1976) and by various Aboriginal groups. Most of these examine forms acknowledged to be creoles or other non-standard first language dialects, or fairly standardised pidgins. The only major exceptions are Sharpe's study (1976) of Alice Springs Aboriginal English, and Kaldor and Malcolm's examination (forthcoming) of Western Australian children's English. Both these studies include English-as-a-second-language speakers. They are also exceptional in that they document morphology and syntax, in addition to phonology and phonetics. The nature of Aboriginal English as a first-language continuum has also been discussed, in particular by Dixon (forthcoming), Jernudd (1971) and Douglas (1976).

Access to SAE as a distinct dialect of English is somewhat limited at Milingimbi at present, and, as we have seen in chapter 2, has been even more limited in the past. Of the Balandas permanently resident at Milingimbi in 1973, three spoke Standard New Zealand English (differing from Australian English primarily in certain phonetic details), four spoke various dialects of British English, while the remainder mainly spoke "Cultivated" or "General" Australian (according to Mitchell and Delbridge's classification). As most of the Balandas have close contact with only one or two Yolngu families outside work hours, if at all, and many of these interchanges tend to be in a language

2. The following references describe some of these in varying detail: Alexander (1965 and 1968); Douglas (1976); Dutton (1965, 1969 & 1970); Crowley & Rigsby (forthcoming); Flint (1965 & 1970); Fraser (1977); Hall (1943); Readdy (1961); Sharpe (1975, 1976 & 1977); Sharpe & Sandefur (1976 & 1977); Sommer (1974); Stefferson (1975); and Kaldor & Malcolm (forthcoming).
mixture or Yolnu Matha, rather than SAE, the bulk of the Yolnu experience relatively little exposure within the community to much of the continuum of SAE. Because access to English forms a major component of the English-learning environment, chapter 9 discusses in detail the whole issue of the amount of exposure to various types of English at Milingimbi.

While Milingimbi English can profitably be regarded as a linguistic continuum (in common with other second-language dialects of Aboriginal English) its nature as a continuum is intrinsically different from the SAE continuum. At one extreme, a few people speak and understand absolutely no English. Next to these on the continuum come a group whose "best" English cannot be described as fluent by any criteria and reflects both a minimal command of the structures of any dialect of English, and a very high degree of interference from the vernacular. Speakers at the other extreme in their "best" register may be completely fluent in a dialect of English which approaches SAE (but is never identical to it) and has minimal interference from either the vernacular or "interlanguage fossilisations".

The main difference between Milingimbi English which is a second language, and SAE and other first-language forms of Aboriginal English so far studied, is that whereas all English-as-first-language speakers command a range of the linguistic continuum, not all "English speakers" at Milingimbi do. The range of the English continuum commanded by Yolnu increases in direct proportion to the proficiency of their "best" English. A person whose "best" English is very limited commands a very small span of the continuum. The performance of someone with "excellent" English may range from a style which sounds as if he or she has virtually no English through the entire range to the extremely sophisticated style which approaches very closely to SAE. This type of variation is discussed again later in this chapter.
The terms "pidgin English" and "creole English" have been applied to most other forms of Aboriginal English which have been studied. The term "creole" is completely inappropriate here as no one at Milingimbi (except for one woman from Delisi near Darwin) speaks English or a variety of English as a first language. The term "pidgin" should also be avoided when referring to Milingimbi English, because there is no standardised form of English which is used as an auxiliary contact language (the definition of Decamp (1971:15) and Hall (1966:xii)) between Yolŋu and Balanda at Milingimbi. A small child with little English often has different vocabulary from an old man who also has little English, although there may be some overlap in morphological and syntactic structures.

The term "pidginisation" can, however, be productively used to describe the linguistic processes operating in the English of those who know very little. Such processes include reduction or simplification of grammatical markers. The range of vocabulary used is restricted, often with a simultaneous extension of the meaning of some items. "Pidginisation" is a feature of most, if not all, language-learning situations, and is certainly a feature, to varying degree, of some forms of most registers of the English of Milingimbi Yolŋu. In a speech which would otherwise be assessed as standard in terms of fluency and "accuracy" a copula or an article may often be omitted, both examples of "simplifications" of English grammatical rules. This is exemplified further in subsequent chapters.

While it is essential to describe English-as-second-language at Milingimbi as a linguistic continuum, terms like "pidgin", "creole", and "pidginisation", commonly associated with "continuum" in the literature discussing other contexts, should be avoided or used with extreme care.
4.3 The structure of Milingimbi English: interlanguage

The term "interlanguage" was coined by Selinker (1974) to refer to all utterances, whether standard or not, produced when a second-language learner attempts to speak the target language, but fails to achieve native speaker performance, based on the norms of the target language (Selinker, 1974:117). "Interlanguage" is a phenomenon common to all second-language-learning situations and among most people (specifically those who lack native speaker fluency) when they speak a second language. Thus "interlanguage" may be used to denote the grammar of any second-language system, such as Milingimbi English.

The grammar of the Milingimbi English interlanguage consists of several kinds of constructions which may be categorised according to their standardness and how often they occur in the interlanguage. They include: "fossilisations" generated and perpetuated by the Yolngu themselves, without reinforcement from Balandis; "fossilisations" reinforced by Balandis; relatively systematic rule-governed non-standard features (which, however, do not occur often enough to be described as "fossilised"); sporadically occurring non-standard features; and features common to SAE. Of these, only the types of "fossilisations" require further explanation at this stage.

Many "errors" in second-language production become "fossilised" (or institutionalised) within the second-language system, both of the individual and the community, and may be below the level of conscious utterance. These items, which all occur quite systematically in the speech of members of the second-language community, are of particular relevance to linguists, psychologists and educators with an interest in overcoming the discrepancies between the second-language speaker's interlanguage and the target language. "Fossilisations" are defined as being unlikely to be ever consistently corrected in creative speech,
regardless of the age of the learner or the amount of correction and explanation given to the speaker concerned. The English of all Yolŋu speakers of English at Milingimbi, no matter how good their "best" register is, contains a number of fossilised items, particularly if they have completed their active English-learning. These often reflect interference from Yolŋu Matha and may be generated by Yolŋu themselves. For those with good English, the most common fossilised items are the declinable sentence filler nhawi (discussed in detail in chapter 8), the interrogative sentence modifiers muka and gani, and ga, which acts, among other things, in the same way as the conjunction 'and' and as a discourse marker. The latter three are discussed in detail in chapter 7.

The absence of the copula, the auxiliary be and concord in the English of many Yolŋu, much of the time, also constitutes fossilised language (discussed in chapter 6). While fossilised items vary from individual to individual, and depend on how "well" the speaker produces his or her "best" English, most fossilised items form distinct subsystems which typify the interlanguage, Milingimbi English, as a whole.

Some fossilisations may be reinforced by the Balandas' own interlanguage, their attempts to learn Yolŋu Matha. For example, there is considerable overlap in the items of Yolŋu Matha vocabulary which regularly appear in Yolŋu English in the speech to Yolŋu of Balandas with little Yolŋu Matha (the majority) (see Appendix 1 for a list of the most regularly recurring items). It is not possible to say who reinforces whom at present or whether (as is more likely) it is a two-way process. Undoubtedly, however, well-meaning Balandas' use of certain Yolŋu Matha words in conjunction with a string of English produces non-standard English on the part of the Balandas themselves, which in turn may reinforce certain constructions in the Yolŋu's English. A good example of this can be seen in Balandas' use of the Yolŋu word yaka ('no', 'not') in
imperatives. *Yaka doing that!* and similar constructions (where the word with imperative force contains on -ing suffix) are used very frequently by Balanda instead of SAE *Don't do that!*, or even the code-switched mixture *Yaka de hiku!,* in which the grammar of the English segment is completely standard.

The Milingimbi English interlanguage is the subject of the next four chapters, and it is there that each of its features are described and exemplified in detail.

4.4 English in the Milingimbi community

4.4.1 A passive versus an active knowledge of English

One of the limitations of a study such as this is that it is difficult to ascertain the limits of a person's active knowledge of a second language, let alone his or her passive knowledge. "Active knowledge" corresponds to a certain extent, to the Chomskyian notion of "performance", while "passive knowledge" corresponds to the notion of "competence". "Competence" describes a person's underlying knowledge of a language and encompasses comprehension, while "performance" designates the actual utterances produced (or understood) by a speaker in any situation and encompasses the ability to speak.

There is clearly a difference in the amount "known" between these very different skills. While passive knowledge can be tested, such an evaluation was beyond the scope of this study. Passive language knowledge at Milingimbi can be assessed a little on the basis of the present data, however, by examining the amount of language accommodation necessary, in terms of simplification of grammar and vocabulary, and alteration of the normal rate of utterance, for comprehension to be possible. Native speakers of English must alter their utterances fairly substantially before those Yolŋu who cannot express their own thoughts
creatively in English comprehend them. One frustrating aspect of teaching English to Yolnu from the Balanda teacher's viewpoint is that they sometimes pretend very well that they have understood everything when they have not, and it is often difficult to judge whether a lack of reaction is due to the fact that they have not understood the utterance or that they reserve the right not to respond. This study provides only circumstantial evidence to elucidate passive knowledge of English by Yolnu. It goes some way towards establishing the active knowledge of some of the children and a small number of adults with a "better" command of English.

The difficulties of assessing a person's level of competence and performance are also encountered in the survey of English at Milingimbi which is the main subject of this section. "Proficiency" is a term used here to cover both "competence" and "performance". The "proficiency rating" scale provided attempts to rank the level of each adult's "best" English (both active and passive knowledge), so that a profile of the entire range of English spoken and understood in the community can be made.

4.2 Proficiency in English

The following discussion is based on the results of the survey carried out in October-November, 1978.3

3. Four long-established Balandas at Milingimbi were closely involved in the survey, and I am indebted to each of them for their help and interest. Sister Jess Smith (resident since 1953) gave me permission to use the Hospital records for people's names, ages and sex. She also gave up much valuable time to help me go through the files, reading names which I wrote, and weeding out those people she knew to be no longer "normally resident at Milingimbi or its outstations".

The assessment of English proficiency, clan affiliation, amount of schooling and other relevant factors was carried out by David McClay (resident since 1968, and the Milingimbi School headmaster), Michael Christie (resident since 1972 and the school's teacher-linguist) and Sue Harris (also resident since 1972, who is an ex-adult-educator for Milingimbi, had taught English to many of the adults and had a very close relationship with the women. Between the three of them they knew the entire Milingimbi population.
The survey showed that some form of English can be spoken by all but twenty-one of the 332 adults at Milingimbi in November, 1978. While the survey did not include children (any person under the age of seventeen years on 1st January, 1979), it is possible to make a number of generalisations about children’s English, on the basis of observations in the school and the community in general.

The aims of the survey were to establish an approximate guide to the range of English competence at Milingimbi and to discover what factors might affect this range. Thus the survey sought five pieces of information for each person normally resident at Milingimbi or its outstations and who were born before 1st January, 1962 (thus being seventeen years old or more on 1st January, 1979). The factors considered were: age; sex; clan membership (for the purpose of establishing a clan profile of the community, and thus not intended to be related to the assessment of English proficiency); an approximate assessment of educational background (including the amount and type of schooling for each person, "other relevant educational factors" such as attendance at adult education classes (for learning English), training or travel away from Milingimbi, and whether or not the person holds or has held a "Balanda-type job", working closely with Balandas); and finally, an assessment of English proficiency.

Level of proficiency in English was established on a seven-point scale from 1 to 7, which describes both understanding and speaking ability. Those assigned a rating of 1 could be considered to have no English at all. Those assigned a rating of 7 can speak a fluent form of English closely approaching SAE, although differing from it in

3. Cont’d. Balanda assessors were used, rather than Yolnu, because I considered that native speakers of English were needed to assess proficiency in English with regard to the norms of SAE. Most Yolnu would not be sufficiently familiar with the English of their fellows to make an objective assessment.
ways which are discussed later. The scale used and what each number means in terms of general proficiency in English are as follows:

1 - cannot understand or speak any English.

2 - can understand a small amount of English and can speak a few words, which are, however, assimilated almost entirely into the Yolnu Matha phonology, morphology and syntax.

3 - can understand some English spoken at a basic level and is able to conduct a very basic conversation on such things as shopping and other everyday topics. Most utterances contain strong interference from Yolnu Matha in all aspects.

4 - has a reasonable comprehension of fairly basic English. Can answer a variety of personal questions and is able to make a few spontaneous statements. Interference from Yolnu Matha at all levels is likely to be still fairly strong.

5 - has good comprehension of basic English. Is beginning to be able to express his or her own thoughts creatively, although generally without fluency. Interference from Yolnu Matha, particularly in phonology, may sometimes be fairly strong.

6 - has a good comprehension of basic English and can also comprehend some English on abstract topics, particularly those associated with their work and possibly politics and religion. Beginning to attain fluency. May be able to handle some colloquial English quite well. Interference from Yolnu Matha is most noticeable on the phonological level, although it may exist at all levels, and may be well-controlled when "good English" is felt to be required.
7 - has an excellent comprehension of basic English and a good understanding of a number of more abstract topics when discussed in English. Can be described as a fluent speaker of English, though some (mainly phonological) interference and occasional use of non-standard morphology, syntax and lexical items distinguishes them from speakers of SAE. Generally has a reasonable command of English colloquialisms and English sociolinguistic rules of interpersonal communication (which again will be demonstrated only when deemed "necessary").

While all but twenty one of Milingimbi's adults can "speak" English of some sort, this does not mean that a native English speaker newly arrived at Milingimbi, would be able to understand English utterances made by all these people. People assigned a rating of 2, 3 or 4 would be almost incomprehensible to a visiting native English speaker with no knowledge of Yolŋu Matha. Many people with a rating of 5 would probably be very difficult to understand initially. Even with people assigned 6 or 7 on the rating scale, the new arrival will often feel

4. Assigning people a rating was rarely a contentious issue, although obviously at this level highly subjective. Initially, some considerable care was taken to ensure that two or three people known to all three of the Balanda "assessors" (and to me too, where possible) were assigned to each rating as "rating guides". This took some time. Once this had been done, it was a relatively trouble-free process to assign all other adults a rating. Disagreements were surprisingly rare, and where they did occur they tended to be the result of opposed personal feelings about the person concerned and could be readily resolved when this was recognised. When disagreements could not be resolved the "average" rating was assigned (thus when a person had been assigned variously 3, 4 and 5, 4 was accepted). If two people were in agreement, their view prevailed. In borderline cases, where a person could have been assigned to two groups, the lower rating always prevailed. The ratings were later ratified by other Balandas at Milingimbi.
baffled after a conversation. While a knowledge of Yolŋu Matha is less
necessary to understand people at this level of proficiency, their choice
of vocabulary, use of verb morphology and ellipsis, and certain features
of their discourse structure, will often leave the new arrival wondering
exactly what had just been said or meant. Example (1) illustrates this
in the speech of a man assigned a rating of 6. (He was in fact one of
the "borderline" cases and could have been assigned 7).

(1) (Many, 5man, 41): 'Hmm. The er, the NLC ah Council was...
was decided permanently [the meaning of SAE 'finally' is
probably intended by permanently] that the um... um...
council workers... Balanda council workers have to get the
er... permission and er... work with Aboriginal people,
and there is a two types of ah... ah... places to be use,
lease by the ah... er... maybe with the NLC [Northern Land
Council] or DAA [Department of Aboriginal Affairs] people.
One is ordinary licence for the government workers... And
licence the um... doctors, nurses, teachers and ah...
electricians people... checking all the power house and so on.
And ah... one is just the ah... ordinary licence... ah...
for the Council workers... Balanda... and for the visitors.
Now ah... Bodiyalil is place he will suggestion that ah...
ah... instead of all making a two... two licence... one is
this ordinary and one is special, but he was suggesting that
[kant包裹] [this word is a non-standard rendition of council
with the Yolŋu Matha oblique suffix, -wa] put into a... he
was recommended that all Balanda go'n' to have the ah... just

5. All names are abbreviated except those cited in examples.
ordinary licence, he will ah... gove'ren' men' workers... but
we hasn' been know [naœ] put for on a conclusion on these
matters.

[This is an extract from an interview with the school's headmaster
and the man knew he was being recorded. He is now the liaison
officer between the school and community and has been actively involved with
the school and the headmaster for many years].

4.4.2.1 Adults

In terms of overall numbers of speakers, the extreme ends of
the rating scale contain the smallest number of people. Twenty one
people speak no English at all (a rating of 1), while only twelve
people have a rating of 7. Approximately half the adults in the
community (165 out of 332) have a rating of 4 or less, while the other
half (167 out of 332) have a rating of 5, 6 or 7. The biggest
concentration occurs on 5, followed some way behind by people on 4, and
some way behind again by people on 6. Table 4.1 shows the breakdown
of numbers of people speaking the various levels of English according
to their age and sex. This is illustrated diagrammatically in Figure
4.1 and Figure 4.2.

Table 4.1, Figure 4.1 and Figure 4.2 demonstrate a number of
interesting points relating to distribution by age and sex. In terms
of distribution by sex alone, more women speak no English or very poor
English (ratings 2 and 3) than men, while more men proportionately
speak moderately good English (rating 5) and good English (rating 6)
than women.

Proficiency in English appears to be very much a function of age
as well. Everyone in the 17 to 20 age-group has a proficiency of at
least 4. Only one person less than 35 speaks no English at all. There is
TABLE 4.1

ADULT PROFICIENCY IN ENGLISH BY AGE AND SEX

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>AGE GROUP AND SEX</th>
<th>TOTAL PER AGE GROUP</th>
<th>RATING</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17-20 Ψ + Ψ⁺ :</td>
<td>63</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ψ :</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ψ⁺ :</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21-25 Ψ + Ψ⁺ :</td>
<td>66</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ψ :</td>
<td>44</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ψ⁺ :</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26-30 Ψ + Ψ⁺ :</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ψ :</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ψ⁺ :</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31-35 Ψ + Ψ⁺ :</td>
<td>36</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ψ :</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ψ⁺ :</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>36-45 Ψ + Ψ⁺ :</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ψ :</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ψ⁺ :</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>46-55 Ψ + Ψ⁺ :</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ψ :</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ψ⁺ :</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>56+ Ψ + Ψ⁺ :</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ψ :</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ψ⁺ :</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Ψ + Ψ⁺ :</td>
<td>332</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Ψ :</td>
<td>180</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total Ψ⁺ :</td>
<td>152</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
FIGURE 4.1
DISTRIBUTION OF ENGLISH PROFICIENCY FOR ADULT POPULATION BY SEX (IN %)

Legend
\( \times \) Total adult population
\( - - - \) Total female adult population
\( \bullet \bullet \bullet \bullet \bullet \bullet \) Total male adult population
FIGURE 4.2

DISTRIBUTION OF ENGLISH PROFICIENCY BY AGE GROUP (IN %)

Legend

- - - - - - 17-20 years
• • • • • • 21-25 years
- - - - - - 26-30 years
• • • • • • 31-35 years
• • • • • • 36-45 years
• • • • • • 46-55 years
• • • • • • 56+ years
[ } ] discontinuity, as no
speaker on this rating
no one over 36 who has a proficiency rating of 7, no one over 46 who has a proficiency rating greater than 5, and only two people over 56 have a rating of more than 2 (both with a rating of 4). The majority of people under 26 have a rating of 5. Those few people in this age group with ratings of only 2 or 3 are all people with impaired hearing, congenital speech problems, severe emotional disturbances or who for some reason have had minimal contact with Balandas or school. In the 26 to 30 age group the bulk of people are spread fairly evenly over 4, 5 and 6, the greatest numbers are on 4 and 5 in the 31 to 35 bracket, on 4 in the 36 to 45 bracket, on 3 in the 46 to 55 group and on 1 and 2 among those over 56.6

The age groups used were chosen because they correspond at least roughly with a general assessment of the amount and type of education received by the majority of people in that age group. People over 46 are unlikely to have had any schooling. Those people between 36 and 46, if they went to school at all, which many (particularly women) did not do, attended the early mission school run by Beulah Lowe. This sort of schooling was generally not extensive, probably no more than a couple of years, with people studying mostly as teenagers or young adults in enormous classes. Most people aged between about 23 and 35 would have had the bulk of their schooling in the mission school run by Alan Fidock. Only the younger ones in this age group would have had either preschool or post-primary education. People under about 23 would have experienced either a mixture of "Fidock school" and "McClay school", or almost entirely "McClay school". The main difference between the later "Fidock school" and "McClay school" as far as the adults are concerned, lies in

6. Note that relatively few people survive into the 56+ age bracket. Women's chances of living this long are rather better than men's, although the three oldest people at Milingimbi are all men.
the amount of funding and the teaching facilities available, both increasing dramatically after the Commonwealth Government assumed responsibility for the school, when David McClay became headmaster in 1970. Table 4.2 demonstrates the relationship between amount and type of schooling and level of proficiency in English.

Table 4.2 also considers a number of other factors relating to educational background. Many people (mainly over about 25 and many of the workers in the community) have attended adult education classes to learn English at some stage in the past. A number of people (mainly men) have spent extended periods in Darwin or other centres, where English was required for things like job training. For example, some of the health workers have attended extended nursing courses in Darwin or Nhulunbuy. Many of the Yolgu teachers have spent at least one year in teacher-training courses at Kormilda College in Darwin or at Batchelor. Some people have undergone technical training of some sort, or have gone to Bible Colleges.

The temporary or permanent holding of a "Balanda-style" job at Milingimbi is also relevant in a consideration of English proficiency. Only those workers who produce craft and artefacts cannot be considered to have a "Balanda-style" job, although obviously some jobs require a greater degree of proficiency in English than others, and some of these jobs (such as dress-making at the Women's Sewing Centre) now involve little, if any, necessary communication in English.

Other aspects of Table 4.2 also need comment. A few younger people have attended one of the Aboriginal secondary residential colleges, either Kormilda in Darwin or Dhupuma in Nhulunbuy. This requires far greater use of English than does attendance at post-primary classes at Milingimbi, as the classes are drawn from communities all over the Top End, with different cultural and linguistic backgrounds. However,
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Education Category</th>
<th>Total</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
<th>6</th>
<th>7</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No schooling</td>
<td>74</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No schooling + a.e., tra., tr., job.</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Early mission school - Beulah Lowe style</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>9</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Early mission school + a.e., tra., tr., job</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fidock mission school (+ post-primary)</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>7</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fidock mission school + post-primary + a.e., tra., tr., job</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>7</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>McClay/Fidock school (primary)</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>McClay school post-primary</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>McClay post-primary + a.e., tra., tr., job</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>10</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kormilda/Dhupuma</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kormilda/Dhupuma + a.e., tra., tr., job</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elcho/Maningrida primary</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elcho/Maningrida post-primary</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elcho/Maningrida/elsewhere post-primary + a.e., tra., tr., job</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other factors: deaf, mute, psychological problems, retarded</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Abbreviations: a.e. = adult education English classes
              tra. = travel
              tr. = training
              job = "Balanda-style" job
on average most children spend only about two terms at these colleges, although some have stayed two, three or four years. Those who attended Kormilda or Dhupuma may have therefore spent relatively little time there, and far more time in post-primary classes at Milingimbi, while some may have had all their post-primary education away from Milingimbi.

Some people now resident at Milingimbi had their schooling at either Galiwin'ku or Maningrida. Length and quality of education is thus not known for these people.

"Attendance at school" does not necessarily imply regular attendance. While someone may have nominally had "twelve years schooling" (available in any case only in the last ten years and just recently raised to thirteen) attendance was so irregular or infrequent in many cases that the total effective schooling might have been no more than a year. It is thus not surprising that despite a nominal "attendance at school", the level of English attained in many cases may not be very high.

Table 4.2 demonstrates that proficiency in English is indeed closely correlated with the amount of formal schooling obtained and also the degree of extended exposure to English received outside the community. Variation within the same category is probably largely related to intelligence, linguistic ability and also to variation in actual length of attendance at school. The other notable feature which emerges is that adult education, travel, training and the holding of a "Balanda-style" job significantly improve the proficiency in English of people within each educational category over people in the same categories (in terms of initial schooling) who have not had the wider experiences. The actual type of schooling experienced by people who have attended the Fidock mission school, McClay school or even Kormilda or Dhupuma Colleges appears to make relatively little difference.
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The bulk of people who have received their schooling in one or a combination of these institutions, without wider experiences, have a proficiency rating of 5. More people who attended Kormilda or Dhupuma have a rating of 6, however, than among those who completed their schooling at Milingimbi. The greatest number of people who attended the "Fidock mission school" have a rating of 4, rather than 5 (the McClay average score). Those who received post-primary schooling in the "McClay era" have a minimum rating of 4.

Thus two general statements can be made which correlate level of English proficiency with general education. Of those who received a reasonable amount of schooling and whose access to English has been maintained, if not increased, since leaving school, those in the older age groups tend to have better English than those in the younger ones. Second, if access to English since leaving school has actually diminished, greater maturity alone will not have improved proficiency in English.

Thus with one exception, people rated at 7 are over 20, and four of them with relatively little schooling are also over 30. Of those who are at present less than 20, it is likely that a number will improve substantially as they mature and their experience widens, and that some of them will achieve a proficiency rating of 7 at some stage in the future. This seems to suggest that the English taught at school has less of an impact on the final outcome, in terms of English proficiency, than might be assumed or hoped by educationists, and that it is intensive contact with English for a period as adults, along with general maturity and experience, which can make a marked improvement in a person's English. Of course whether this is in fact so needs careful consideration and testing, and it would be wrong to underemphasise the impact of schooling.

That schooling does not play a necessary role in the acquisition of English as a second language at Milingimbi is borne out by an
examination of the figures for those people who had either no schooling or some schooling in the early mission school run by Beulah Lowe. All 21 of the people with no English at all also had no schooling of any sort. More than two thirds of the people with no schooling at all learnt some English, generally in the 2-3 categories, although some people have ratings of 4 and 5. Of those with no schooling but other wider experiences, only one knew no English and the greatest number had a rating of 4. One exceptional person in this category has a rating of 6. Among those educated in the early mission school with Beulah Lowe, the bulk have a rating of 4, while those with the same type of initial schooling plus wider experiences have a rating range from 3 to 7, with the majority on 5.

The three Balanda assessors all felt that a number of generalisations could be made with regard to proficiency in English, amount and type of schooling and general level of intelligence. All those with a rating of 7, regardless of age, sex or schooling, are exceptionally gifted people. Those people with a rating of 6 are all intelligent, lively, capable individuals who were able to profit from their experiences or their education. Most people who received a reasonable amount of schooling

7. "Intelligence" is frequently used in a number of different ways and its use must be clarified in this context. Discussions of Aboriginal intelligence and intellectual achievement can be found elsewhere, for example, Seagrим and Lendon (1976). In this section, "intelligence" is used loosely. Apart from the fact that IQ test results are not available for Milingimbi's adult population, such results would be unlikely to give a true picture of the intellectual potential of the Yolŋu because of the cultural biases of such test material. "Intelligence" is used here subjectively to indicate some of the qualities normally associated with intellectual capacities: receptivity to new ideas and knowledge, a critical reasoning ability and an ability to solve meaningful problems. The fact that demonstrations of Yolŋu intelligence might not conform to normal Balanda views of accepted "intelligent" behaviour is irrelevant. What is relevant is that within the Yolŋu group, as with any other group of people, one can find a range of "intelligence".
and could be considered to be of average intelligence have a rating of 5. In general they felt that those who had experienced a reasonable amount of schooling but whose English was rated at 4 or less were either "below average" in intelligence or in linguistic ability. Those who had received some schooling in the early mission school and who received an English proficiency rating of 5 or 6 were all highly intelligent, while those of more average intelligence had a rating of 4. It was not thought valid to categorise those with no schooling according to intelligence as age and amount of contact with Balanda were the most relevant factors. It was considered, however, that those in this "un-schooled" category with a rating of 3 or more were obviously all very intelligent.

In summary, the survey has shown that proficiency in English is clearly related to a number of factors: age, sex, amount of schooling, extent of adult education in English, travel, training and the holding or otherwise of a "Balanda-style" job. All these other factors may render the person's age invalid as a predictor of proficiency in English. "Other things being equal" the three Balanda assessors felt that general level of intelligence and linguistic capacity were sufficient to explain the differentiation between the proficiency in English of Milingimbi's adult Yolgu.

4.4.2.2 Children

No survey was carried out to establish the proficiency in English of the children at Milingimbi. However, the length of the fieldwork period, the concomitant period spent in classrooms at all levels of the school, and the time spent making general observations of the language use of children, both in the community and in my home, do enable me to make some generalisations about the children's proficiency in English.
Probably no child can be assigned a rating of 7, although a number of predictions could be made of who would be likely to reach that level, given further exposure to English, by whatever means. Some, principally in the 1978 post-primary school, but including a very small number from the upper primary class could be assigned a rating of 6. The majority of the post-primary classes (aged thirteen to sixteen), some in Grade 7 (aged about 12) and a small number in Grade 6 would have a rating of 5. The remainder of the post-primary school, probably most of Grade 7, about half of Grade 6 and a few in Grade 5 would have a rating of 4. Most of Grade 5 and Grade 4 and a few in Grade 3 would have a proficiency rating of 3. The rest of Grade 3 and probably all of Grade 2 and Grade 1 would contain children with a rating of 2. The preschool would contain children with ratings of both 1 and 2. Children below preschool age would have a rating of 1, with a very small number of exceptions.

The extent to which bilingual education has affected the English proficiency of those children going to school now, and how it will affect their English in the future, is difficult to ascertain at this stage, as the first bilingual class to start at Milingimbi was only in Grade 6 in 1978. It is possible that the most dramatic and beneficial results of bilingual education will be felt in other areas not directly related to proficiency in English. Learning in other curricula areas, particularly literacy in both Yolnu Matha and English, and mathematics, and psychological factors such as motivation to learn and "self-concept", are more likely to improve markedly than oral English. One of the reasons for this is that because half the time in a bilingual classroom is spent teaching in Yolnu Matha, the amount of time spent listening to English and possibly trying to produce it is also reduced. Whether this is offset by the children spending more time
for creative oral English lessons which they enjoy and in which they are more likely to succeed in learning English well is not clear, although one can speculate that this is probably the case. Another factor which complicates a casual assessment of the effects of bilingual education at this stage is the fact that the basic type of oral English syllabus used at Milingimbi School did not change with the introduction of bilingual education. It was only within the last eighteen months or so that any considerable soul-searching about methodology for English-as-a-second-language teaching and experimentation with other methods than the audio-lingual one previously used has taken place at Milingimbi. The questions of English syllabuses and their effect on English heard and produced by the Yolŋu are discussed further in chapter 9.

4.4.3 The need to speak English

The "need to speak English" must be assessed in two parts, for life at Milingimbi and for travel elsewhere. The need for English at Milingimbi is very low for the majority of people. Away from Milingimbi and the Yolŋu-speaking area, the need is obviously much greater, but it is experienced by relatively few people, for comparatively brief periods.

There is very little need for English in daily life at Milingimbi and what "need" there is is largely optional. No enterprise is staffed solely, or even largely, by Balanda. It is possible to operate within the "Balanda domain" of shopping, going to the office, cashing a cheque, going to the hospital, booking a seat on a Connaught flight to Darwin, going to the workshop for petrol or getting a vehicle fixed and going to church without ever actively having to use English, and most likely without ever actively having to listen to it (except, of course, for prices which are always given in English).
In dealing with the school, it is more difficult, but by no means impossible, to avoid using English. Parents wishing to discuss their children's education can go to the Yolŋu liaison officer or one of the many Yolŋu teachers, if they prefer to avoid contact with Balandas. It would even be possible to discuss one's queries in Yolŋu Matha with some of the Balanda staff. School children, too, can, and frequently do avoid using much English. They hide behind a barrier of shyness, or confine their responses to Yolŋu Matha.

Social contact with some of the Balandas is one area where English may well be "needed", but then no one forces anybody to associate with anyone they do not want to. Contact with Balandas, and exposure to English that way, is thus completely optional, and beyond a certain point generally only at the instigation of the Yolŋu. Much of this sort of contact consists of a learning exchange, often with the Balanda concerned trying to learn some Yolŋu Matha.

Apart from these situations, only a small number of people "need" to use English regularly at Milingimbi. They are people who hold "Balanda-style" jobs, when they need to talk to their Balanda partners, supervisors or customers. Much of this English is frequently at a very basic level, perhaps all that is necessary to get the job done. This explains how within the hospital workforce, although the Balanda nurses speak very little Yolŋu Matha, there are three workers with an English proficiency rating of only 2 or 3 (one of whom cannot speak at all because of a congenital condition, although she can understand quite a lot). One of those with little English has been working there for about sixteen years. Generally, however, those people in Milingimbi who hold the "Balanda-style" jobs do also tend to be among the better speakers of English. For those who are not, others in that workforce may act as interpreters.
Away from Milingimbi the situation is reversed and the "need" for English appears to increase sharply, particularly for those few attending training courses. As these tend to be people who participate in the Milingimbi workforce or have done so at some stage, this does not significantly widen the number of people who regularly use English. A number of people travel to Darwin for private purposes other than attending courses. As many of them stay in hostels with other Yolŋu, and socialise almost entirely with Yolŋu, this does not require them to use much English.

Since the need for English is so low, relatively, in the community, English does not pose a threat in any sense to the viability or prestige of Yolŋu Matha. As a result, the Yolŋu probably do not at present feel a need not to speak English. The feeling of "a need not to speak English" is possibly quite widespread in many other Aboriginal communities, where the integrity of the Aborigines as Aboriginal people is threatened by English and many other aspects of European civilisation.

This discussion of the need to speak English at Milingimbi is complemented in chapter 9 by an examination of the Yolŋu's actual exposure to it.

4.4.4 Actual Use of English

While superficial impressions suggest that English is used very little at Milingimbi, in accordance with the relatively little need for it, closer observation indicates that it may be used sometimes in a variety of circumstances. Firstly, it is used where a "need" for it apparently exists, that is, between Yolŋu and Balanda. English is the main language between members of the Yolŋu workforce and their Balanda workmates, supervisors and customers. It is used at school, but rarely spontaneously, except by some of the post-primary boys and sometimes
by the younger children, who may use some stock sporting phrases in playground games such as softball and football. It is frequently used in the many social interchanges between Balandas and Yolŋu, both adults and children, although there, too, Yolŋu Matha is likely to predominate, once the Yolŋu realise that the Balanda concerned can understand some Yolŋu Matha. Yolŋu Matha is the regular medium for interchange between the three Balandas with fluent Yolŋu Matha and all but about two or three of the Yolŋu adults. Yolŋu children all enjoy visiting Balandas in their spare time. While frequently the visit is just to get a drink, something to eat or to explore the inside of a "real" Balanda house, a number of the children from about nine or ten years old on appear anxious to use the English they have learned.

Secondly, English does appear to be used in a number of situations where there is no apparent need for it. Young men tend to use it more than women. They often use it in word games or as a means perhaps of showing off when a Balanda is nearby or within ear-shot. Whatever the reason, spontaneous English can be observed between Yolŋu men when Balandas are within hearing in otherwise apparently unmotivated situations.

A young male Yolŋu teacher at Jangalaŋa on the mainland reprimanded a group of children in English and miscorrected it within my hearing (Did you hear - I mean - I heard me?). A 24-year-old man with excellent English was heard exchanging smalltalk outside the office to the male council secretary and the two male bank clerks. Again I was within hearing, but I was not close and did not linger at all near the group. A 19-year-old man with excellent English, conducted a complete although elliptical interchange with one of the bank clerks, at the bank, with me standing waiting my turn. A man in his late 40s, who works in the store, talked in English with another man of the same age about a meeting later in the week when he was to come back from an outstation.
Again I was the only Balanda present, standing immediately behind them in a queue at the checkout. The extent to which these interchanges in English were triggered by my presence cannot be determined. They occurred rarely within the six-month fieldwork period.

English can be observed in a number of other well-defined and generalisable situations. Frequently speeches in the form of exhortations or harangues are made before or during films, generally on some issue which is upsetting the person concerned. Topics covered during the fieldwork period included a condemnation of alcohol, an exhortation to send children to school and various problems involving "wrong" sexual liaisons. These film-night monologues invariably contained segments in English. Code-switching between English and Yolŋu Matha, which is discussed further later in this chapter, was a common aspect of this type of utterance.

A group of young men sit on the balcony near the projection room during film showings at the school and make many comments and "wise-cracks" in English about the action or people involved in the film.

English sporting jargon is commonly used by people playing sports and by observers on the side-lines. Much of this consists of phrases heard, for example, at the football in Darwin and often indiscriminately used at Milingimbi in relation to other sports as well as football. Chapter 8 discusses this type of utterance in greater detail.

Speeches made by Yolŋu in the church and at community meetings often contain segments in English. The use of English in these situations appears to be triggered by the topic or the presence of even a very small number of Balanadas in the audience.

Some sacred ceremonies have suffered some intrusion by English. The headmaster of the school told me he heard some English used in a
dhāpi (circumcision) ceremony, at which he was the only Balanda present. Unfortunately he could not remember the details.

Both men and women use English in the heat of anger. I heard a well-educated woman in her mid-twenties use English in an angry outburst towards a younger woman, whom she was accusing of promiscuity and hypocrisy as a Christian.

Thus English is used occasionally at Milingimbi between Yolŋu and Yolŋu, not just Yolŋu and Balanda. The extent to which it was used in the cases quoted because a Balanda was nearby, if not actively involved, cannot be assessed, however, as in each case the observer was a Balanda. While this account of situations in which English was heard in spontaneous utterances between Yolŋu is not exhaustive, I was unable to find out reliably the extent to which English is used between Yolŋu when no Balandas are present. This question requires further research.

The amount of English used in the community is probably gradually expanding, as the proportion of English-speakers slowly increases. Nevertheless, it can hardly be said that English is even beginning to replace Yolŋu Matha as the main language of communication at Milingimbi. English remains very much a second language there, and is likely to remain so within the foreseeable future.

4.5 Variation in the English of individual Yolŋu

Milingimbi English is also subject to variation at the individual level. Most people command a range of language along a continuum from wholly Yolŋu Matha to wholly English, with a "code-switching style" connecting the two. At the English-end, most speakers command a range of registers of English, the more informal ones bearing some influence from Yolŋu Matha in certain constructions. "Code-switching style" consists of utterances containing varying proportions of English and Yolŋu Matha components.
4.5.1 Domain and register

As we have seen, almost all Yolŋu command a range of registers of English. The extent of this range depends on their proficiency when they are speaking English as well as possible, as their English varies between this "best" register and the 2-level on the continuum, where it appears that the speaker knows very little English. The register chosen in any one situation depends on the domain of the interchange. The concept of "domain" has been developed by a number of sociolinguists, for example, Fishman (1972). We can compare two domains on several parameters. Two domains are said to be "the same" if the general topic of conversation, and/or the relationship between speaker and interlocutor, and/or the nature of the speech act, and/or the location in which the speech act takes place, can be considered to be the same. The social world of most individuals consists of many domains, hence many registers.

Within each basic domain where English may be spoken at Milingimbi, speakers with "good" English are able to make their choice of appropriate register, dependent on the context of the interchange. The range of registers can be seen clearly in some recordings with a 14-year-old girl (examples (2) and (3)), the 41-year-old school liaison officer (haranguing a film audience and talking to the headmaster) and a 28-year-old man working in the council offices (examples (4) and (5)), (see Appendix A for details of the recordings).

(2) (Girl, 14): Alan bought his fishing line. Alan show his fishing line to his Dad. Dad and Alan went for fishing. Dad show Alan shellfish. Dad opened the shellfish. Dad show him the hook and started to put the fishing line on.

8. Those who do not command a range of registers in English in fact have very little English and their "best" English is at the 2-end of the continuum.
the water. Alan pulled the fishing line. Alan caught the fish. Dad was still waiting for fish. The families ate the fish.

(3) (Girl, 14): Naughty Di! She teach me over there and I was very angry. ... and nhawi [= "um"] blood... nhū [= "what"] she's naughty [...] Di! You gonna count by nhawi [= "um"] club nhawi [= "um"]/]. Club nhū bili [= "what/which" (emphatic)]. We will make nhawi [= "um"] big fire... [...] Nhawi [= "um"], Maryanne, last night we saw a picture about ring of fire starring Tom Jones.

The interlocutor in (2) was the speaker's English teacher (a 22 year-old woman) and the story (guided by pictures in a book and thus not something with which she was personally involved) was told into a cassette recorder in a "test" situation inside a classroom. The story's style is rather stilted. Each sentence contains subject, verb and object (where appropriate). Relatively few pronouns are used although the speaker mentions the referents of the noun phrases several times in the story. The definite article is used consistently. There is no direct interference from any aspect of Yolŋu Matha grammar or vocabulary.

By contrast, the comments by the same girl in (3) were made in a completely casual setting, cooking potatoes in a campfire while camping on an island near Milingimbi, with a large group of teenage Yolŋu girls, two older Yolŋu women and three Balanda women. The interlocutors in (3) were the three Baldasas (one of whom was the teacher/interlocutor in (2)) and a couple of shyer girls. At home in her own environment, confident and relaxed enough to chastise a Balanda teacher jokingly (naughty Di!), the girl's English reflects this difference in
context. Several sentences are elliptical, articles tend not to be used and the Yolŋu Matha sentence-filler nhawi is used several times, along with one appearance of the Yolŋu Matha interrogative nhɔ bili ('what?' (emphatic)), which often appears in otherwise English utterances.

Examples (4) and (5) reflect a similar difference between formal and informal registers. In both cases the speaker is the works' supervisor, talking in the Milingimbi council offices on a Friday morning. The topic and interlocutor affect the choice of register.

(4) (Gaatically, man, 28): ... Hullo, hullo! I'm ringing from Milingimbi... Who... Hullo... I'm ringing from Milingimbi. Um, all right, um... one carburettor... complete, for toyota. And the, um, part number is two double one, double zero six one zero one zero... Yeah?... No, this just a private order... Um, yes... And could we, ah... have community price please?... Well, it's not the, um, for the council, this is, um, private order... Ah... I'll spell the name to you. Y = e = double r... double r = i = 1 = 1. That's all... Yeah?... Yeah?... Two hundred sixty six... Want it through... O.K., then... Well, ah... I'll send you a cheque over... well ah, I'll put it... in the cheque... Yeah?... O.K. then... Yeah. Bye. Thank you.

(5) (Gaatically, man, 28): Lazy djuma [= "work"]... that'll be too much... Every time I go hunting...

(LS, Balanda woman, office worker, 29): You [= "yes"]?

(Gat): With 22.50 shots. I put about nhawi [= "um"] fifteen bullets into that thing.

(LS): Nhɔ [= "what"] and get one working!

(Gat): Wait a minute, I'm telling you good story.

(‡): Well, ma' [= "get on with it!"]...
(Gat): A blank, nhawi [= "um"], see a wallaby and try to shoot one, you know.

(LS): Hmm?

(Gat): No, well, that thing... Last time I shoot ga [= "and"] wanyang [= "one"] mal [= "maybe"], the second time I was trying 'n' couldn't make it. Because too blind warrapam' [= "everything"]. That time I was...

(LS): Bâydi [= "it doesn't matter"].

(Gat): That time I was too blind, little bit nhawi [= "um"] sleepy.

In (4), Gat is ordering a spare part for a Toyota truck by telephone from a garage in Darwin. While this speech contains ellipsis (unlike the formal register in (2)), there is no Yolnu Matha, and nhawi has been replaced by English ah and um. There are relatively few features which distinguish this register from SAE (absence of some articles and the copula where SAE would require them).

(5) contains a casual interchange between Gat and the Balanda office worker, a woman of about the same age. As they know each other fairly well, the whole interchange is bantering and humorous. Gat's speech contains ellipsis, substantial use of nhawi—instead of um and ah and several phrases in Yolnu Matha, perhaps prompted by the interlocutor's use of occasional Yolnu Matha phrases, rather than English, and by the relative casualness of their relationship.

It is difficult to isolate cases of the speech of other speakers in more than one readily identifiable domain in the data. Thus one can only say in fairly general terms how registers of Milingimbi English differ and what governs their usage. It seems clear that the choice of register is determined in part by who the interlocutors are, the sex
of speaker and interlocutor, and the topic. The best English is
frequently (but not always) produced when the interlocutor is a new
visitor and the topic is not related to Milingimbi or the Yolŋu life-
style. Other more diffuse and complex factors are certainly involved
in the choice of register, too, such as the perceived "need" to speak
English in a given situation, individual attitudes to English and Balanda
relative to attitudes to Yolŋu and Yolŋu Natha, and the nature of the
speech situation. For example, the register used in a "harangue" at a
film showing may differ from that used in oratory at a community meeting,
again different from a chat with a Balanda (degree of familiarity and
friendship between the particular Balanda and Yolŋu also affects the
language used), or a sudden explosion of anger towards another person.

4.5.2 Code-switching, communicative effectiveness and language stability

Code-switching\(^9\) is the process which takes place when one
language (code) is changed (or "switched") to another in a multilingual
community. In such societies, the languages may have a specialised
function, their use being limited to certain domains.\(^10\) Code-switching
in this situation can be described as domain-governed. Non-domain-
governed code-switching occurs when the codes change, but there is no
apparent alteration in the domain. It may happen at the discourse level
(generally domain-governed) or several times within the same sentence
(both domain-governed and non-domain-governed).

Both types of code-switching occur at Milingimbi. Nevertheless
Milingimbi can be described as a community where stable domain-governed

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\(^{9}\) Studies of code-switching include Sankoff (1972), Blom and Gumperz
(1972), Gumperz (1976a & 1976b) and Greenfield (1972).

\(^{10}\) Ferguson (1964) uses the term "diglossia" to describe a parallel
situation where two dialects of the one language ("high" and "low")
are restricted in use to particular domains.
code-switching predominates, as the few situations where English is used are readily identifiable. Most Balandas were prepared to say that English is never used between immediate family and close friends among the Yolŋu in a casual camp setting or in any of the various adults' ceremonies. (This statement needs to be tested by a Yolŋu observer). As we have seen, English is generally used only when a Yolŋu is directly addressing a Balanda (and then not always in this context, as topics like hunting and kinship usually trigger the use of Yolŋu Matha).

"Code-switching style" is common even when Yolŋu are talking with Balandas who have a minimal knowledge of Yolŋu Matha. Yolŋu with a high level of proficiency in English, particularly among the women, frequently use Yolŋu Matha sentential modifiers, kinship and time words and Yolŋu Matha words for objects characteristic of the Yolŋu domain (such as foods, vegetation and animals). The resulting language can be described as "Yolŋu-ised English", some Yolŋu Matha vocabulary in a basically English grammatical matrix) (example (6)).

(6) (Girl, 15): You Bulanydjan? [a "skin" name].
You're my mukul [father's sister or wife's mother].

Even when talking Yolŋu Matha to a predominantly Yolŋu audience, certain topics (for example, land rights and uranium mining) demand a minimal use of English vocabulary. Such language can often best be described as "Anglicised Yolŋu Matha" (some English vocabulary in a basically Yolŋu Matha grammatical matrix) (example (7)).

(7) (Many, man, 41):
Yaka lirrruyu dhu ga güma ruli
not we (plural inclusive) will discourse marker bring to here
ŋaŋitji balanya nhaku-na Raminginiŋ-ngur ga
grog like -style locative and
Among Yolnu who are less proficient at English (those with a rating of 5 or less), code-switching is frequently a matter of expediency. Their desire to express themselves to Balandas often goes beyond their command of English.

The linguistic systems of English and Yolnu Matha are quite discrete in domain-governed code-switching at Milingimbi (example (8)).

(8) (Maw, man, 31):

\[
\text{ga nayi Dr Zorn ga waga nayi} \\
\text{discourse marker he continuous talk-I he} \\
\text{bitjan I'm finish. I'm finish. I can't go bit further.} \\
\text{like this} \\
\text{'And Dr Zorn keeps saying things like "I'm finish!} \\
\text{I'm finish! I can't go bit further".'}
\]

The grammatical systems of each code frequently overlap in non-domain-governed code-switching (example (9)).

(9) (Maw, man, 31):

There is no way to talk because government-ku power

\[
\text{yindi mirithirri just like this world} \\
\text{big intensifier-I} \\
\text{'There is no way to talk because the government's power is} \\
\text{very big, just like this world.'}
\]

In the phrase government-ku power yindi mirithirri, the speaker has intermixed the two linguistic systems, by adding the Yolnu Matha genitive suffix to an English word and by omitting the definite article (before
government) and the copula, both required in SAE. government and power are the only words in this utterance which one might have predicted (on the basis of their referents) to be in English.

From the point of view of each system as a separate entity, the Yolnu Matha and/or the English segment of non-domain-governed code-switched utterances may sometimes be individually ungrammatical (as in (9)). However, many cases an "obligatory" grammatical category in the English segment, which may be omitted, is supplied or unnecessary within the Yolnu Matha segment, and vice versa. Thus in many code-switched utterances it is as if the speaker has combined the two grammatical systems into one, making aspects of each "optional" as long as the omitted component is supplied or grammatically unnecessary in the other code.

While a detailed examination of the motivation underlying each occurrence of code-switching would probably provide insights into the relation between language and culture in a bilingual setting, an in-depth analysis of this kind is beyond the scope of this study. Nevertheless, some preliminary remarks can be made.

Some examples of code-switching are clearly translations. In speeches of a political or oratorical nature, such as are common at community meetings, some speakers carefully repeat all major ideas in both codes if Balanda are present (examples (10) and (11)).

(10) (Dh, man, 34):

ŋarra dhu godarr' marrrji 'I'll go,

I will tomorrow go-1

'I'll go tomorrow I'll go',
(11) *(Dh, man, 34)*:

qarra dhu yaka binana milkaram shorts ga shirt.
I will not banana take off-I and
I'm not a banana - to peel my skin, to peel my understanding.
yaka qarra-ny qaŋak yün
not I-focus flesh only
'I am not a banana, to take off my shorts and shirt.
I'm not a banana, to peel my skin, to peel my understanding.
I am not just flesh'.

Sometimes code-switching occurs when the topic can be related
to a Balanda domain, although Yolŋu Matha may well have a means
of expressing the same thing (examples (12) and (13)).

(12) *(Many, man, 41)*:

... marngi-gurrup-ul dhuwal community
teach - II this
bili dhuwal miyalk-kurr ga djamarrkuli'
completive this woman-plural and children
walal ga nhawi-ny feel home Milingimbi is their
they and um-focus Milingimbi
country ga much beer
and
'... and teach this community, because these women and
children, they, um, feel home Milingimbi is their country
and much beer'.
(13) (Maw, man, 31):

Mr Fraser [said] Mr Yunupingu will

nhe dhu yaka'yun garrra will destroy

you will say 'no'-I

land. Mr Yunupingu, will nhe dhu yaka'yun garrra

you will say 'no'-I

will destroy sacred mala

group

'Mr Fraser said, "Mr Yunupingu, if you say 'no', I will
destroy land. Mr Yunupingu, if you say 'no', I will
destroy the sacred things"'.

[Note that in both verb phrases following Mr Yunupingu, the
future is expressed by both will in English and dhu in
Yolnu Matha].

"Stage directions", meta-comments and statements like "he said
this..." are generally in Yolnu Matha, while the actual instruction or
statement may be entirely or partially in English (example (14)).

(14) (Maw, man, 31):

If you not sign th'agreement, we will

destroy land bitjan geyi waqa

do like this-I he say-I

'He says thus, "If you not sign th'agreement, we will
destroy land"'.

it appears that

Sometimes a person attempting to speak English may find that his

or her ideas develop too fast for their expression in the foreign

language. (This is hard to differentiate from other types, so no example
is given). Many other examples of code-switching remain at present apparently unmotivated (example (15)).

(15) (Many, man, 41):

Ca Nunhi nhuma li yəwungu limurru
and when you habitual yesterday we (plural incl)
djəma nhuma dhu accept as you use as you own law,
work you future
each tribe .

'And when we worked yesterday as you usually do, you will accept as you use as your own law each tribe'.

Code-switching on as complex a level as this is extremely common at Milingimbi. Some further analysis of its main linguistic effects is provided in chapters 6 and 7.

The prevalence of code-switching at community meetings and in other situations at Milingimbi in many ways lessens the communicative effectiveness of the speeches. Although some Yolŋu are highly articulate in both codes, most are not, because of their more limited knowledge of English. The same situation applies for the Balanda population, very few of whom could follow a detailed argument in Yolŋu Matha, let alone speak in it at a public forum. Thus while some Yolŋu display considerable oratorical skill in their use of both codes, the meaning of half is generally lost to most of the audience. Most of the older Yolŋu who attend community meetings would be unable to understand much of any English segment, while most Balandas present would be unable to comprehend much of the Yolŋu Matha. Example (16) (an extract from the code-switched text in Appendix F) illustrates how code-switching may reduce communicative effectiveness.
(16) (Dh, man, 34):
Get that idea. We like people.

ŋarrakuŋy ŋarra, ŋarra bili commitment
my = focus  I  emphatic
djäma ŋarrakuŋy ŋarra ga ŋarrakuŋy
work my = focus  I  and my = focus
family... family rrakuŋy-na warrpam'
my = focus = style all

That's my commitment,

'Get that idea! We like people. My... I have made a
commitment to work for my own... I my family, my family,
the whole lot of them. That's my commitment'.

The presence or absence of domain-governed code-switching within
multilingual communities has major implications for language stability.
Communities where different languages are spoken can be described as
linguistically stable if all languages and registers spoken there are
actively maintained within their separate domains, whether or not one
or more of the languages are spoken by a "minority group" in terms of social
status. Where code-switching is not domain-governed, nothing keeps
the languages apart and the one spoken by the greatest number of people
or which has the highest social prestige is likely to prevail after a
period of multilingualism and unmotivated code-switching. This situation
can be described as linguistically unstable as the social norms and
attitudes attached to each code are in flux.

4.6 Summary and implications
This chapter has spanned a wide range of sociolinguistic issues
related to the status of English-as-a-second-language at Milingimbi.
We have seen that the target language, SAE, and Milingimbi English are both continua of fundamentally different kinds. All SAE speakers are completely fluent in at least one variety of English, while many Yolnu at Milingimbi cannot in any sense be described as fluent English speakers, because it is a second language for them. Milingimbi English cannot be described as a "pidgin" or a "creole". The Milingimbi English "inter-language" contains several categories of constructions: "fossilisations" (generally reflecting interference from Yolnu Matha, but including reanalyses of internal English grammar), systematic and sporadic (but nevertheless rule-governed) non-standard features and constructions common to SAE.

A survey of English proficiency at Milingimbi found a range from "no English at all" to a form closely approaching SAE, although not identical to it. There are relatively few people at either end of the range. About half the adult Yolnu can begin to express their own thoughts in English, although many lack fluency and "accuracy" in terms of SAE. Age and sex of the speaker, the amount of schooling he or she has had and factors such as travel or training outside Milingimbi, and the holding of a "Balanda-style" job, appear to be the main factors affecting English proficiency. General intelligence, maturity and a wider experience of the Balanda world appear to have greater weight than the amount and type of schooling in determining the level of English.

The need for English is very low for most people, and its use tends to be confined to the Balanda domain, with a very few easily definable exceptions. The extent to which it may be used when Balandas are not there cannot at present be determined, although one suspects it to be very low. Nevertheless, one can predict that if all Balandas were to leave Milingimbi tomorrow, English would continue to be used at least at sporting events and possibly in public meetings with a political content.
Milingimbi is a community where stable domain-governed code-switching prevails, so neither English nor Yolŋu Matha are under threat within their own domains. Most Yolŋu command a range of registers in English, dependent on the level of their "best" English. Choice of register depends again on the domain. Code-switching between English and Yolŋu Matha is very common and exercises a distinctive influence on English-as-a-second-language at Milingimbi.

Given the little need for English at Milingimbi, it is in some ways remarkable that so many Yolŋu speak it as well and as often as they do.
CHAPTER 5

PHONOLOGICAL AND PHONETIC VARIABLES IN MILINGIMBI ENGLISH

5.1 Introduction

We have seen in the previous chapter that "variation" in use of registers characterises individual Yolnu's use of English. Each register or style can be said to be delineated by a number of linguistic variables. These "variables" are alternative methods of expressing the same meaning. Linguistic variables have sociolinguistic significance when the speaker's "choice" (often subconscious) of one variable over another indicates something about the social position, situation or attitudes of the speaker. Those linguistic variables which characterise Milingimbi English as opposed to SAE (that is, which occur in Milingimbi English, but not in SAE), are sociolinguistic variables which designate the speaker as an Aboriginal person from Milingimbi, with Yolnu Matha as first language, as opposed, for example, to a native English-speaking European Australian from Sydney or a "town" Aboriginal from Alice Springs, who may no longer speak his or her tribal language. However, perhaps because English is a second language for the Yolnu, and because they have attained very different levels of proficiency, one person's most "formal" register of English may be very different from another's, as the individual's level of proficiency overall determines the range of his or her linguistic options. As we have seen, this range is determined in part by such things as age, sex, amount of schooling, travel or job training and general linguistic ability and adaptability. Choice of variables in turn depends partly on topic, setting, interlocutor, speaker's intention and so on. Linguistic (and sociolinguistic) variables occur at all levels of language, whether phonetic, phonological, morphological, syntactic, lexical or semantic. This chapter discusses some of the phonetic (and phonological) variables of Milingimbi English.
Because of the nature of Milingimbi English as a second language, in most cases no single "standard" pronunciation, distinctive from SAE, has as yet become institutionalised for each situation (formal, informal, intimate, etc), as has generally happened in Aboriginal communities where a form of English is spoken as the community's first language or has become a standardised pidgin. A number of studies of varying quality and length deal exclusively or primarily with the phonetics of English spoken in some of these communities, for example: Yarrabah (Alexander, 1965), Weorabinda (Alexander, 1968), Fitzroy Crossing (Fraser, 1977), Dunwich and Cherbourg (Readdy, 1961), Ngukurr (Roper River Mission) (Sharpe, 1975, Sharpe and Sandefur, 1976 and Sandefur, 1979), and Bamyili (Stefferson, 1975). In these communities where English or an English-based creole is generally spoken as a first language, the phonology of the Australian vernacular, whether still spoken or not, is frequently the major influence which differentiates the phonology of these forms of English from that of SAE.

The Australian languages are relatively homogeneous phonologically. Their phonology differs quite substantially from that of SAE in certain features, for example: the absence of fricatives (for all but a very few languages), the absence of affricates and the aspirant /h/, the absence of a contrast between two series of stops (Yolgu Matha is of course an exception in this last case, but here the distinction between the two series is clearly not one of voicing anyway), the much smaller range of vowel phonemes and the absence of diphthongs with phonemic status. As a result, the phonetics and phonology of the various forms of Aboriginal English studied so far do not differ substantially from each other, except in the extent of regular divergence from the target language.
The phonology of English-as-a-second-language at Milingimbi is not markedly different from the phonological systems of Aboriginal English described in the works referred to above. For this reason, the phonology of English has been studied here in less detail than in some of these works, and in less detail than the following discussions of morphology and syntax. Because this chapter is a brief survey only, no statistical generalisations can be made about the variables selected by groups in the community in different situations. It nevertheless provides a useful background for the principal areas of interest of this study, the morphology, syntax, semantics and language-learning environment of Milingimbi English.

Ideally, the phonology of any language or dialect should be studied as a system in its own right. However, there is little evidence in the present data to suggest that Milingimbi English does possess a phonological system distinctive from that of SAE. This may be because the recordings made are of the spontaneous speech of adults with ratings of 5, 6 and 7 (the "best" English) and children's usage (both spontaneous and non-spontaneous; mostly at school and hence generally in formal contexts). It is probable that a more detailed phonetic and phonological analysis of a wider range of people, particularly adults with "poor" English (ratings 2 to 4) would yield sufficient data to support a hypothesis that the English of certain Milingimbi Yolŋu has indeed a phonological system significantly different from that of SAE. While all aspects of the phonology of Milingimbi English (particularly the range of allophones) at times bear the marks of extensive interference from Yolŋu Matha (to the extent that one can hypothesise a phonological system for Milingimbi English where all "foreign" elements of SAE phonology have been reinterpreted according to the patterns of Yolŋu Matha phonetics and phonology), no member of
the community recorded speaks such a dialect of English all the time, or even most of the time. At the other extreme, while some Yolngu use the phonetics of SAE most of the time, no one appears to use SAE phonetics exclusively and it remains a moot point whether such phonetic variation constitutes a different phonological system. Most allophones which occur in Milingimbi English are quite systematic and predictable in form, although individual occurrences of particular allophones could not generally be predicted. This chapter explores the nature of both systematic and non-systematic variation in the phonology of Milingimbi English.

5.2 Phonemes

The phonemic system of Milingimbi English frequently demonstrates a range of allophones which differs from the range present in SAE. While in most cases the range is entirely predictable, once one knows the phonological system of Yolngu Matha, the actual occurrence of each allophone is often irregular and to a certain extent unpredictable. One can hypothesise that this unpredictability in the occurrence of regularly varying forms stems from the nature of English at Milingimbi as a second language, an extra-group system of communication in flux both for the community as a whole and for many individuals, particularly if they are still actively learning English. Among the younger children and those adults who are less proficient in English, the occurrence of variant forms is generally very widespread, regardless of context.

While the children are excellent mimics, the ability does not appear to become particularly marked until they are in about grade 3 (children aged about seven or eight). Hence it is not uncommon to hear young children repeating new rhymes line by line after the Balanda teacher, with a number of "mistakes" in their pronunciation.
They have frequently reinterpreted "foreign" English sounds according to the familiar Yolnu Matha sound system. Where the meaning of what they are hearing is not clear to them the range of sounds they produce instead of the "correct" ones tends to be much greater and also more random.

The reasons for these phenomena are likely to be twofold. First, younger children may not be fully aware of the significance of the differences between the English and Yolnu Matha phonologies, or perhaps not aware that they form two different systems. Thus they may reinterpret the "foreign" sounds according to the system they know, not realising that the result is strange to a native English speaker. Second, it is probable that where the speaker cannot attach a meaning to an utterance, the memory span is much shorter. In situations where the child is parroting something not (or imperfectly) understood, only those elements of the utterance which are familiar or easier to remember will be "accurately" reproduced. Hence it is a familiar experience in the younger classes to hear a rhyme being repeated, often with reasonably "correct" stress and intonation, but with a jumble of sounds and syllables.

Regardless of proficiency in English, adults and older children are generally able to reproduce words and phrases with specifically English sounds straight after a demonstration. The "accuracy" of subsequent repetitions frequently depends on their having understood the meaning of the word concerned. ¹ When placed within a meaningful context which requires no more manipulation than repetition, the phonetic

¹ I found this to be the case with two of my older women students (one aged 32, one aged 42) whose English was minimal. Observations in classrooms suggested this was true with children, too. Boredom with repetition could well be a factor influencing the presence of "mistakes".
standardness of utterances is high.

Skill in controlling the phonetic realisation of English in creative language situations tends to increase as the general level of proficiency increases. It is most standard where the speakers are consciously controlling their pronunciation (when other factors in their English production may perhaps be less controlled), and appears to be least standard where either the method of producing the utterance morphologically or syntactically, or problems in choosing suitable words, or the meaning, have assumed greater importance for the speaker. This happens in particular when a person is trying to talk about a topic unfamiliar in the second language or when the situation contains a high level of emotion. It is probable that in certain contexts such mechanical factors may have no relevance, and a style of English bearing strong influence from the phonology of Yolŋu Matha for some reason is considered the most appropriate.

Casual observation suggests that sequences where code-switching is frequent contain a greater number of phonological variables than do utterances made by the same speaker when a greater distance in time is maintained between English and Yolŋu Matha. This suggests a hypothesis that where the topic is unfamiliar, or where the emotional content is high, much code-switching may be taking place at a sub-vocal level, leading to a possible increase in the occurrence of non-standard variables at the vocal level as the boundaries of the two systems become blurred. As a result, the English of those with lower proficiency ratings is less distinct as a system from Yolŋu Matha than that of people whose level of proficiency is high. Code-switching at both a vocal and a sub-vocal level is thus likely to be higher among people with less English, with the result that the phonology of their utterances is likely to be more varied, or to approach more closely to that of their
Yolŋu Matha substratum. This hypothesis provides a possible explanation for the occurrence of non-standard phonological variables in the speech of most individuals at Milingimbi. However, it needs to be tested with a larger body of phonetically transcribed data than is at present available.

5.2.1 Consonants

The amount of variation in the phonetic realisations of the consonant phonemes of Milingimbi English depends substantially on the nature of the phoneme, and whether or not its place and manner of articulation correspond to those of a sound in Yolŋu Matha. In terms of manner of articulation, the least amount of variation in English occurs in the nasal series, the greatest amount in the fricative and affricate series. Stops (both voiced and voiceless), the aspirant /h/ and the liquids and semi-vowels are all subject to some degree of allophonic variation.

In terms of place of articulation, the greatest variation occurs among the alveolar consonants ([d], [t], [n], [s], [z] and [l]). This is most likely because English consonants (except some fricatives and the affricates) are articulated in one of three positions (lips, alveolar ridge and velum), as opposed to seven places in Yolŋu Matha (lips, teeth, alveolar ridge, middle of the palate, back of the palate, velum and glottis). Only the lips and the velum correspond as contrastive place of articulation for stops and nasals in both English and Yolŋu Matha. As some non-contrastive variation occurs in the place of articulation of the English alveolar phonemes, they are ambiguous to a Yolŋu and may be reinterpreted to correspond with any of the consonants articulated in an equivalent manner anywhere between the lips and the velum in Yolŋu Matha. This is illustrated
diagrammatically in Figure 5.1. In addition, alveolar consonants only rarely occur word-initially in Yolgu Matha. These two factors may explain the tendency to reinterpret word-initial SAE alveolar consonants quite frequently as consonants with some other place of articulation in words borrowed from English (for example, 'doctor' is dhukta [dʊkta], 'damper' is dhamba [damba]), and also occasionally in the ordinary English utterances of Yolgu people.

Nasals cause the fewest difficulties to Yolgu speakers of English. Within the phonetically transcribed sections of the fieldwork corpus, /m/ and /ŋ/ are never reinterpreted. Only alveolar /n/ displays any variation. It is occasionally reinterpreted as [ŋ] after high back vowels (in particular [o], [ɔ] and [ɔ]) and also after the central vowel [ʌ]. [kəniya] 'Connair' contains SAE /n/ pronounced as retroflex [ŋ].

Considerable variation occurs in the pronunciation of both series of stops in Milingimbi English. As we have just seen, Yolgu sometimes reinterpret English alveolar stops as stops articulated in different places. Thus an occasional alternate pronunciation of 'David' is [dɛvlid], where initial /d/ is interdental. 'too' is sometimes pronounced [tʊ:], where initial /t/ is palatalised before a high vowel, while word-final /t/ is sometimes glottalised ([fiː] 'feet') or omitted [fiː] 'feet'). /t/ is often replaced by [ʔ] in some dialects of English (for example, Cockney), but not in SAE. Alveolar stops can be reinterpreted as retroflexed, as in [bolbo] ('football'), where /t/ becomes [ɾ] after a high back vowel. It seems likely that this could be a common phenomenon in this environment.

The occasional apparent confusion of voicing of English stops lends strong support to the theory that the difference in the Yolgu Matha

1. [o] is a high back rounded vowel, corresponding in position to [I] in the front unrounded vowels.
stop series is not one of voice, but is due to another factor, such as
gemination or tension.² In Milingimbi English, /p/ is sometimes replaced
by [b], /t/ by [d], /k/ by [g], and vice versa. Examples include:
[bænt] 'pants', [piɡ] 'big', [bɪkɪbɪki] 'pig' (an English loan-word
in Yolŋu Matha), [paθɛɾm] 'bathroom', [dɒk] 'dog', [ɡɛɨɲ] 'crying',
Interference from Yolŋu Matha is the most likely explanation for such
non-standard forms.

2. This difference between SAE and Milingimbi English is particularly
evident when playing word games like "I spy". Frances Morphy, a
linguist who has worked at Yirrkala (another Yolŋu settlement),
found that Yolŋu did not differentiate between word-initial /p/
and /b/, /t/ and /d/, and /k/ and /g/ when playing this game. While
the distinction in Yolŋu Matha stops is only word-medial, if the
distinction was one of voice, one could assume that it would be
recognised in other positions, even if not always pronounced. In
Yolŋu Matha any single stop may occur word initially, although /'ʃ/
is fairly rare. Except for glottal, only some geminate stops occur
word-finally and they are /k/, /tʃ/ and, very rarely /t/.
The aspirant /h/ does not occur at all in Yolŋu Matha, and appears to cause a number of problems for Yolŋu when they speak English. There is some evidence to suggest that it may have lost its phonemic status. Most frequently it is simply omitted ([av] 'have', [en] 'hen', [ampi] 'Humpty', [eyiŋi] 'Hazel' and [angĩ] 'hungry'). This happens commonly among people of all ages and at all levels of proficiency, although it increases perceptibly the younger the person, or the less proficient the adult is in English, and in the more "unguarded" moments of those with a high level of proficiency in English. Of particular interest, however, is a phenomenon which is most pronounced with young children and which may be regarded as "hypercorrection". This is an old sociolinguistic term used, for example, by Labov, to designate a process whereby a linguistic feature, recognised overtly by speakers as "needing alteration" in their own speech for some reason, is "inaccurately" or inconsistently "corrected". With the /h/ phoneme constantly brought to their attention by teachers, the children frequently "misapply" it. They often pronounce it word-initially on words starting with vowels in SAE, while they drop it completely from words on which an SAE speaker would have pronounced it. This process is very evident among children in preschool, grade 1 and grade 2 in nursery rhyme recitations and in the practice of drills from the audio-lingual English syllabuses devised by Tate (1967) and the Department of Education (1975-1977). An example where this happens in a nursery rhyme recited by grade 1 is:

 Kumpty Dumpty sat [h]-on a wall,
 Kumpty Dumpty had a great fall,
 All the king's horses and all the king's men,
 Couldn't put Kumpty together [h]-again.

The [h]'s omitted and retained or inserted tend to differ on each recitation. It does not appear to be inserted on the indefinite article, a.
An example from an audio-lingual drill is: 'I have two eyes, I have two ears', which sometimes becomes '[(h)-I gave two [(h)]-eyes, [(h)-I gave two [(h)]-ears]', the most extreme variant which grade 2 children occasionally produce.

Two other variables of /h/ also occur, though much less commonly and generally not so overtly. Before the high front vowel [i], /h/ is sometimes manifested by [y]. [(h)] sounds similar to the palatal fricative [ç] as the tongue is in the same position. As this sound is also unfamiliar to Yolnu Matha speakers, it is reinterpreted as [y], which may have the same position of articulation and is a very common phoneme in Yolnu Matha. Before back vowels, such as [ɔ] and [o], /h/ may be manifested as [w], as in the word [woɔpI] 'hospital', an English loan word in Yolnu Matha which is also transferred to Milingimbi English.

The semi-vowels, /w/ and /y/, which are found in both English and Yolnu Matha, are almost always standard in Milingimbi English. However, two isolated variables were noted in the corpus, a word-initially in place of /w/ ([otɔ] 'water') and a word-medially in place of a glide [y] in diphthongs ([iʔa] 'ear'). These are most unlikely to be common variants.

The liquid /l/ and rhotic /r/ show a small but systematic range of variation. /l/ is fairly regularly replaced by [l] when following a high and sometimes medium back vowels, even in the "good" English of people with a proficiency rating of 6 or 7. SAE syllabic /l/ is generally reinterpreted as [ɔl] in Milingimbi English. [l] instead of [l] after high back vowels thus appears to be a general characteristic of English-as-a-second-language at Milingimbi. It is not clear why this should be the case. /l/ does occur in word-final position in Yolnu Matha (for
example, *dakul* 'axe' and *maralmaral* 'young girls'). Certainly the
tongue position for the articulation of the high back vowels is closer
to the retroflexed position than the alveolar one. Words where /l/
is frequently manifested by [l] include: [lito!] 'little', [fo!] 'full'
(and all derived words ending in -ful), [pi:po!] 'people', [mayiko!]
'Michael', and [eyi:p!] 'Hazel' (the last two are names of Balandas
at Milingimbi).

[ɻ] is also a very much rarer manifestation of /l/. It appears
only once in the corpus, in [bi:boɾz] 'peoples', a form uttered by one
of the post-primary girls.

The continuant /ʃ/ is almost always pronounced [ʃ] in Milingimbi
English (hence [ʃʌn] 'run', [boɾʃ] 'bring'). The two are phonetically
very similar, [ʃ] being pronounced further back than [ʃ]. Word-medially
and in the second element of consonant clusters, /ʃ/ sometimes has
a trilled allophone, [ɾ], as in [θɾi] 'three'.

As in many forms of Australian English, [ɻ] (as an allophone of
ʃ/) is frequently inserted between verbs ending in [w] and a suffix
*ing, ([dɾoɾin] 'drawing').

The careful speech of many individuals is frequently punctuated
by very conspicuous glottal stops at each word boundary. This is
probably the result of both hesitation and increased care in the
production of each utterance.

Undoubtedly the greatest range of phonetic variation occurs in
the fricative and affricate series, neither of which occur in Yolŋu
more than one phonetic Matha. One form, the voiced fricative /ʒ/, is not recorded as having any
variable in Milingimbi English. This is likely to be a comment on its
relative rarity in English, rather than its regular occurrence in
Milingimbi English, as there is no reason to suppose that it might be
an exception. The fact that both fricatives and affricates have a voiced and voiceless series complicates the picture. For any fricative, there are several common types of allophones in Milingimbi English: the voiced and voiceless forms of the stop occurring in the equivalent place of articulation, and the affricate or the other voiced (or voiceless) fricative in the same place of articulation. Fricatives produced in different places of articulation may also be occasional variables. Non-standard forms are most likely to result from speaker confusion, which in turn probably arises from the Yolŋu's general unfamiliarity with this large range of sounds. Those fricatives whose places of articulation correspond approximately to Yolŋu Matha stops which do not occur in English may be replaced by the equivalent Yolŋu Matha stops in the nearest place of articulation. The variants of English fricatives noted in the corpus are as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SAE fricative</th>
<th>Milingimbi voiceless</th>
<th>Position in word</th>
<th>Examples</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>/ʃ/</td>
<td>[ʃ]</td>
<td>all positions</td>
<td>[fayip] 'five'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>[h]</td>
<td>initial</td>
<td>[bɪŋgəz] 'fingers'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>[bɔtɔl] 'football'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>[bol] 'fall'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>/p/</td>
<td>[p]</td>
<td>all positions</td>
<td>[pɪŋgəz] 'fingers'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>[wɔpɪl] 'office'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>[nakap] 'knock-off'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>θ</td>
<td>final</td>
<td></td>
<td>[Inawo] 'enough'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SAE frieative voiceless</td>
<td>Milingimbi Alternatives</td>
<td>Position in word</td>
<td>Examples</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------------------------</td>
<td>-------------------------</td>
<td>-----------------</td>
<td>----------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>/s/</td>
<td>[s]</td>
<td>all positions</td>
<td>[sənˈeɪk] 'snake'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>[ʃ]</td>
<td>all positions</td>
<td>[ʃiˈdʒi] 'sister'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>[ʃə] 'sauce'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>[tʃ]</td>
<td>medial</td>
<td>[biˈniʃə] 'Vanessa'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>final</td>
<td>[wɔˈpɪʃ] 'office'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>[tʃ]</td>
<td>final</td>
<td>[moʊz] 'mouse'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>[t]</td>
<td>final</td>
<td>[ˈtɪt lɪ] 'this is'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>φ</td>
<td>initial</td>
<td>[kɾaθ] 'scrub'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>final</td>
<td>[kɾɔ] 'cross'</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This absence most commonly occurs on plurals or verbs in the third person singular.

| /ʃ/                     | [ʃ]                     | all positions   | [ʃəldəz] 'shoulders' |
|                         | [ʃ]                     | initial         | [ʃə] 'sugar' |
|                         |                         |                 | [ʃɔt] 'shirt' |
|                         | [tʃ]                    | medial          | [miˈʃɪn] 'mission' |
|                         | [ʃ]                     | initial         | [ʃi] 'she' |
|                         | [ʃ]                     | initial         | [ʃəldəz] 'shoulders' |

<p>| /θ/                     | [θ]                     | all positions   | [θərɪ] 'three' |
|                         | [θ]                     | initial         | [θəŋk] 'thank' |
|                         |                         | medial          | [kæθi] 'Kathy' |
|                         | [d]                     | initial         | [dæŋk] 'thank' |
|                         |                         |                 | [dɪrɪ] 'three' |
|                         | [t]                     | initial         | [tæŋk] 'thank' |
|                         | [z]                     | final           | [məʊz] 'mouth' |
|                         | [tʃ]                    | final           | [ʝɪˈmiʃ] 'Smith' |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SAE Fricative</th>
<th>Milingimbi Alternatives</th>
<th>Position in word</th>
<th>Examples</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Voiced</td>
<td>[v]</td>
<td>all positions</td>
<td>[vInasa] 'Vanessa'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>/v/</td>
<td>[b]</td>
<td>initial</td>
<td>[bInasa] 'Vanessa'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>medial</td>
<td>[scbən] 'seven'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>final</td>
<td>[fayib] 'five'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>[f]</td>
<td>initial</td>
<td>[fən] 'van'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>medial</td>
<td>[scfən] 'seven'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>final</td>
<td>[of] 'of'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>[fayɪf] 'five'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>[p]</td>
<td>final</td>
<td>[fayɪp] 'five'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>[p]</td>
<td>final</td>
<td>[fayɪ] 'five'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>[b]</td>
<td>initial</td>
<td>[bɛt] 'vet'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>/z/</td>
<td>[z]</td>
<td>all positions</td>
<td>[æz] 'has'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>[s]</td>
<td>final</td>
<td>[æs] 'has'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>[fɪŋɡəs] 'fingers'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>[mɛns] 'mens'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>[ɡ]</td>
<td>medial</td>
<td>[cyldʒə] 'Hazel'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>/ð/</td>
<td>[ð]</td>
<td>all positions</td>
<td>[ðɛn] 'then'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>[d]</td>
<td>initial</td>
<td>[də] 'the'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>[dð]</td>
<td>initial</td>
<td>[dðə] 'the'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>medial</td>
<td>[mæððə] 'mother'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>[d]</td>
<td>initial</td>
<td>[de] 'the'</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
This range is not exhaustive.

When /s/ has morphemic status (as a concord marker on third person singular present tense verbs, or a plural or a possessive marker on nouns), it does not appear to be subject to the same range of allophones as other occurrences of /s/. In these situations, as in SAE, its allophones are [s], [z] and [az], with the additional also of $\gamma$. Final [z], when it is a grammatical morpheme, is frequently devoiced ([dogs] 'dogs').

Whether the general absence of verb concord (see the discussion in Chapter 6) should be considered of phonological or morphological interest or both is difficult to establish. It probably has both phonological and morphological origins. The same suffix, /-s/, occurs fairly regularly on plural nouns in Milingimbi English, marking of the category of plural number being optional in Yolnu Matha but obligatory in SAE. In Yolnu Matha, no concord exists between verb and subject or agent, although it is obligatory in SAE. As a result, this category in English is quite "foreign" to the Yolnu. It is possible that the expression of a grammatical category with which they are familiar by a morpheme with which they are not (for example, /-s/ on nouns to mark the plural) is much easier and more meaningful than the expression of a category with which they are unfamiliar (concord on verbs) by a similarly unfamiliar morpheme. If this is the case, it explains why noun plurals (and possessives) are generally standard in Milingimbi English, while verb concord is frequently lacking. It also suggests that the tendency to omit /s/ in one situation while inserting it in another is due primarily to morphological rather than phonological factors.

A similar range of variation within the limits outlined above for fricatives can be seen for the voiced and voiceless affricates. They have the same place of articulation as the alveo-palatal stops in
Yolnu Matha, which are their most common reinterpretations. The variants of English affricates noted in the corpus are as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>English affricate</th>
<th>Milingimbi alternatives</th>
<th>Position in word</th>
<th>Examples</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>/tʃ/</td>
<td>[tʃ]</td>
<td>all positions</td>
<td>[tʃaːtʃ] 'church'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>[ʃ]</td>
<td>initial</td>
<td>[ʃa] 'charter'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>final</td>
<td>[dog] 'torch'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>[ʃ]</td>
<td>initial and final</td>
<td>[ʃaʃ] 'church'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>medial</td>
<td>[waʃaʃ] 'watches'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>[t]</td>
<td>final</td>
<td>[kat] 'catch'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>[s]</td>
<td>final</td>
<td>[kas] 'catch'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>/dʒ/</td>
<td>[dʒ]</td>
<td>all positions</td>
<td>[edʒ] 'edge'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>[ʃ]</td>
<td>initial and medial</td>
<td>[dʒa] 'Georgie'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>final</td>
<td>[ɔɪŋ] 'orange'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>[ʃ]</td>
<td>initial</td>
<td>[ʃa] 'Georgie'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>[ʒ]</td>
<td>medial</td>
<td>[ʃaŋaʃ] 'Georgie Porge'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>[tʃʃ]</td>
<td>initial</td>
<td>[tʃoɔkIŋ] 'joking'</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A common feature of words containing fricatives and affricates is that often these are reinterpreted with the same allophone within word boundaries, even though more than one such phoneme may occur in the equivalent SAE word. The same speaker may also vary his or her pronunciation of the same fricative over an utterance. If a fricative and a stop occur in the same word, one is frequently assimilated to the pronunciation of the other. Thus, a common pronunciation of
'Sister Smith' is [ʃɪʃɪʃɪmɪtʃ], while, 'pocketful' may be heard as [fɒkɪtʃ].

5.2.2 Vowels

Vowels in Milingimbi English tend to display a less systematic range of variation than do consonants. As in most Australian languages, the vowel system of Yuin Matha contains relatively few contrastive vowels, in a range of only three positions of articulation. Diphthongs are not contrastive, occurring only as vowel variants. In most positions, vowels can be described as phonetically "pure". Vowel length is significant only in the first syllable.

The vowel system of English is very complex by contrast and differs from dialect to dialect. The actual number and nature of vowel phonemes is under debate, but most scholars would recognise at least twelve in SAE. Relatively few SAE vowels are "pure". In SAE all high and medium long vowels, which may be "pure" in other dialects ([i:], [e:], [o:], [u:], [ɔ:] and [0:]) are pronounced with more or less overt traces of diphthongisation (p.

Another feature of the vowels of Milingimbi English is that forms which are regularly schwa [ə] in SAE are often reinterpreted or repositioned, as in words like [pɔkit] 'pocket' and [goconat] 'coconut'. The direction of reinterpretation is frequently not in the direction linguists might predict on the basis of careful utterances by native speakers of English. The guiding principle in such phonetic readjustments is not known, although vowel harmony sometimes appears to play a part.
For example, my first name was regularly pronounced by Yolŋu in a number of different ways, such as [biniŋa] (most common), [flisa] or [bInisa], the variation only extending to the two fricatives. The Balandas customarily called me [vanesa], [vanesa] or even [vana]. The Yolŋu regularly reinterpreted the second vowel as [ɪ], the nearest sound to SAE /ɛ/ within the Yolŋu Matha system. The first vowel was always reinterpreted as [ɪ], perhaps in harmony with [ɪ] in the second syllable. Never was it reinterpreted as [a], which might have been predicted if phonetic adjustment of vowel variables was to be to the nearest corresponding sound in the Yolŋu Matha system or in line with careful pronunciation by a native speaker of SAE.

A similar example of vowel harmony appears to be operating in the loan word [wotemliŋ], 'watermelon' ([wotemelŋ] in SAE), where the first schwa is harmonised with the adjusted vowel [o] in the first syllable, and the second schwa is harmonised with the adjusted vowel [ɪ] in the third syllable.

The vowels subject to the least amount of variation in English are those which correspond exactly with vowels in Yolŋu Matha. All others show a greater degree of variation, both "up" and "down" in terms of position of articulation. Central vowels, very common in SAE but relatively rare in Milingimbi English, may be reinterpreted in any direction. An English vowel not found in Yolŋu Matha (and even some which are) may be replaced by another vowel foreign to the Yolŋu Matha system. For example, as in most varieties of SAE, rounded high back /u/ is quite commonly manifested as unrounded high back [ʊ], particularly word-finally and in stressed syllables. At present one can only speculate on why this "foreign" vowel is adopted while others, to which the Yolŋu are equally frequently exposed, may not be. In the speech of many people, word-initial unstressed vowels on polysyllabic words are
frequently dropped, as in [\textipa{\textit{elekt\textipa{\textit{is\textipa{\textit{an}}} 'electrician} and [\textipa{\textit{na\textipa{\textit{a}}} 'another'.

Vowel variables noted in the corpus (and thus far from exhaustive) include:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SAE phonetic realisation</th>
<th>Milingimbi English variants</th>
<th>Examples</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>/i/</td>
<td>[i]</td>
<td>[slip] 'sleep'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>[ɛi]</td>
<td>[we wele we\textipa{\textit{ke}}] 'wee willy Winkie'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>[i]</td>
<td>[\textipa{\textit{i\textipa{\textit{in}}} 'eating'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>[niz]</td>
<td>'knees'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>[ə]</td>
<td>[fe\textipa{\textit{t}}] 'feet'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>[θə]</td>
<td>'three'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>/ɛ/</td>
<td>[i]</td>
<td>[\textipa{\textit{in}}} 'ching'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>[i]</td>
<td>[\textipa{\textit{in}}} 'hin'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>[i]</td>
<td>[\textipa{\textit{iyə}}} 'wind'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>/æ/</td>
<td>[ɛ]</td>
<td>[\textipa{\textit{bet}}} 'bed'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>[a]</td>
<td>[\textipa{\textit{væ\textipa{\textit{t}}} 'very well'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>[a]</td>
<td>[\textipa{\textit{yæs}}} 'yes'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>[i]</td>
<td>[\textipa{\textit{prins\textipa{\textit{s}}} 'princess'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>/a/</td>
<td>[a]</td>
<td>[\textipa{\textit{fan}}} 'van'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>[Λ]</td>
<td>[\textipa{\textit{trak\textipa{\textit{t}}} 'tractor'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>[i]</td>
<td>[\textipa{\textit{d\textipa{\textit{e\textipa{\textit{n}}} 'Alan'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>[i]</td>
<td>[\textipa{\textipa{\textit{b\textipa{\textit{d\textipa{\textit{g}}} 'pussy cat'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>/a/</td>
<td>[a]</td>
<td>[\textipa{\textipa{\textit{p\textipa{\textit{a\textipa{\textit{n}}} 'father'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>[i]</td>
<td>[\textipa{\textipa{\textit{b\textipa{\textit{n\textipa{\textit{u\textipa{\textit{s}}} 'Vanessa'</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SAE phonetic realisation</th>
<th>Milingimbi English variants</th>
<th>Examples</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>/i/</td>
<td>[i]</td>
<td>[bir ι] 'bird'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>[ə]</td>
<td>[ʃiɾt] 'shirt'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>[a]</td>
<td>[ɡiɾl] 'girl'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>[a]</td>
<td>[sɪɾ] 'sir'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>[ɛ]</td>
<td>[sɛkɔɾ] 'circle'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>[o]</td>
<td>[sʊ] 'sir'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>[o]</td>
<td>[ʃɪɾt] 'shirt'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>/ə/</td>
<td>[ə]</td>
<td>[θe] 'the'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>[ɪ]</td>
<td>[wɔmən] 'woman'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>[ʌ]</td>
<td>[θe] 'the'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>[ə]</td>
<td>[θe] 'the'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>[a]</td>
<td>[wɔmən] 'woman'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>[ɛ]</td>
<td>[heɪɾn] 'Alan'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>[ɛyɾ]</td>
<td>[gɛyɪn] 'against'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>[o]</td>
<td>[ɡəkəɾnəɾ] 'coconut'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>/ʌ/</td>
<td>[ʌ]</td>
<td>[mədθə] 'mother'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>[ə]</td>
<td>[kɔzən] 'cousin'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>/u/</td>
<td>[u]</td>
<td>[kʊɭ] 'cool'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>[u]</td>
<td>[sʊ] 'Sue'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>[yʊ]</td>
<td>[yu] 'you'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>[o]</td>
<td>[yu] 'you'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>[o]</td>
<td>[pən] 'spoon'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>[i]</td>
<td>[ˈsloʊ] 'school'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SAE phonetic realisations</td>
<td>Milingimbi English variants</td>
<td>Examples</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------------------------</td>
<td>----------------------------</td>
<td>------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>/o/</td>
<td>[o]</td>
<td>[pot] 'put'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>[o]</td>
<td>[womIn] 'woman'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>/ʊ/</td>
<td>[ʊ]</td>
<td>[koʊ] 'caught'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>[ʊ]</td>
<td>[goʊ] 'sauce'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>[aʊ]</td>
<td>[naʊ] 'nought'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>[o]</td>
<td>[faʊ] 'fall'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>/ɔ/</td>
<td>[ɔ]</td>
<td>[pɔtʃ] 'bottle'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>[a]</td>
<td>[wɔt] 'what'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>[ʌ]</td>
<td>[wʌt] 'what'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>[o]</td>
<td>[ʌf] 'of'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>[ɔ]</td>
<td>[wɔtʃɪ] 'hospital'</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

5.2.3 Diphthongs

As with consonants and "pure" vowels, a wide range of phonetic realisations are possible for diphthongs (vowel clusters) in Milingimbi English. Two features of diphthongs in Milingimbi English are immediately apparent. First, there is a definite tendency for them to be reduced, generally to "pure" vowels (as in [got] 'goat'). This may be because phonetic diphthongs in Yolŋu Matha are non-contrastive, being phonologically conditioned by the occurrence of a following alveo-palatal nasal or stop (as in the name [daːmein], 'Dhūmány').

In addition, Yolŋu Matha contains a phonological rule where:

/vowel/ + /semivowel/ + /vowel/ = [diphthong],

as in the names Haynumdjii, Gawuki and Nawukuwuy, where:

/a/ + /ʊ/ + /o/ = [aʊ]. In English, the reverse situation occurs,
in that:

\[
\text{/diphthong/} = [\text{vowel}] + [\text{semivowel}] + ([\text{vowel}]) \text{ (etcetera),}
\]

as in \textit{rain}, where /\textit{eyi}/ = [\text{e}] + [\text{y}] + [\text{i}]. In this situation, vowel clusters which are, for example, phonetically [\text{ao}] in SAE are frequently reduced in Milingimbi English to [\text{a}] or even [\text{a}], as in the two alternative forms for 'council', [\text{kanso]}] and [\text{kanso}].

Second, the glide (which can be described as a semi-vowel) preceding the final vowel segment in diphthongs in Milingimbi English is much more prominent than in SAE. Thus [\text{w}] is often overtly pronounced within diphthongs beginning or ending in the high back vowel [\text{o}] (for example, [\text{aw}], [\text{ow}] and [\text{waw}]), while [\text{y}] is clearly pronounced within diphthongs ending or beginning in the high front vowels [\text{i}] or [\text{y}] (for example, [\text{e}^\text{y}1], [\text{a}^\text{y}1], [\text{o}^\text{y}1] and [\text{y}^\text{y}1]).

The individual vowel components of the English diphthongs appear to be subject to much the same range of variation as the isolated "pure" vowels in Milingimbi English. Some of the diphthong variables noted in the corpus include:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SAE diphthongs</th>
<th>Milingimbi English variants</th>
<th>Examples</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>/\text{io}/</td>
<td>[\text{iə}]</td>
<td>[\text{iəz}] 'ears'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>[\text{iya}]</td>
<td>[\text{iya}z] 'cars'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>[\text{ia}\text{a}]</td>
<td>[\text{ia}\text{az}] 'ears'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>[\text{i}]</td>
<td>[\text{i}] 'ears'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>[\text{ɛ}]</td>
<td>[\text{ɛ}] 'here's'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>/\text{eo}/</td>
<td>[\text{ɛə}]</td>
<td>[\text{ɛə}z] 'there'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>[\text{iə}]</td>
<td>[\text{piə}] 'pear'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>[\text{iya}]</td>
<td>[\text{wiya}] 'where'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>[\text{ɛ}]</td>
<td>[\text{we}] 'where'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SAE diphthongs</td>
<td>Milingimbi variants</td>
<td>Examples</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------------</td>
<td>---------------------</td>
<td>----------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>/ei/</td>
<td>[ei]</td>
<td>[beit] 'bait'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>[e]</td>
<td>[leti] 'lady'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>[eyi]</td>
<td>[eyit] 'eight'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>[ayi]</td>
<td>[tayip] 'tape'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>/ai/</td>
<td>[ai]</td>
<td>[faip] 'five'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>[ayi]</td>
<td>[mayin] 'nine'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>[a]</td>
<td>[am] 'I'm'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>/oo/</td>
<td>[oo]</td>
<td>[aos] 'house'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>[o]</td>
<td>[bən] 'brown'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>[oo]</td>
<td>[mooz] 'mouse'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>[aoa]</td>
<td>[pxoa] 'power'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>[awa]</td>
<td>[flawa] 'flower'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>/oo/</td>
<td>[oo]</td>
<td>[koalə] 'clothes'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>[ao]</td>
<td>[taoz] 'toes'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>[awa]</td>
<td>[nawoz] 'nose'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>[ɔɔ]</td>
<td>[bowo] 'bowl'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>[o]</td>
<td>[taoz] 'toes'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>[ɔ]</td>
<td>[hoki] 'hokie'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>[ə]</td>
<td>[bojdeza] 'bulldozer'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>/oi/</td>
<td>[oi]</td>
<td>[toi] 'toy'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>[oyi]</td>
<td>[boyi] 'boy'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>/oɔo/</td>
<td>[ɔ]</td>
<td>[nɔlin] 'Noelene'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>[ɔɔ]</td>
<td>[nɔɔlin] 'Noelene'</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
5.3 Phonotactics

Standard Australian English permits a greater range of syllable types and inter- and intra- morphemic consonant clusters than does Yolnu Matha. Consonant clusters are frequently reduced, either by the omission of one or more elements of the cluster, particularly word-initially and word-finally, or by the insertion of an epenthetic vowel word-initially, word-medially and in a limited number of word-final clusters.

While no word begins with a vowel in Yolnu Matha, the occurrence of word-initial vowels in English does not usually cause problems for those Yolnu speaking "better" English. One of two things may happen in the speech of those who have less proficient English. As we have seen, a word-initial syllable vowel may be dropped if it is unstressed. This accounts for such forms as [nada] 'another' if the vowel is stressed, or if the syllable is VC or VCC, an extra consonant may be placed word-initially. This consonant is generally [w] and [ɻ] before back and low vowels, as in [wopI] 'office', [wɛɻɊɏIɛɏIین] 'aeroplane', [wask] 'ask' and [hawɔɭyɛ] 'how are you', and [y] or sometimes [ɻ] before high front vowels, as in [ɻIndIɪn] 'engine' and [ɻIndIɭyan] 'Indian'. This process thus eliminates many V, VC and VCC syllables.

Reduction of consonant clusters by the omission of one or more consonants takes a number of different forms. If the consonant cluster (such as [nasal] + [homorganic stop]) occurs in Yolnu Matha in the same word position it is unlikely to be altered in English. If these consonant

3. There appear to be only three exceptions to this, all of them being names. A personal name, spelled Yinitjua, is phonetically [ɪnilˌoʊwa]. The name of a ceremonial ground, spelled Yinapuŋapa, is phonetically [ɪnəˌpʊŋəpə]. At Yirrkala, the language name Wubulkarra is phonetically [ʊɪɠə] (Frances Morphy, personal communication). At Hilingimbi this name is pronounced [wʊbʊlkərə] and spelled Wubulkarra.
clusters occur word-finally in English, one of the consonants, generally (but not always) the last, is dropped (as in [hæn] 'hand').

Both two- and three-consonant clusters occur word-initially in English. The only three-consonant clusters permitted in this position are of the form \( [s + \text{voiceless stop} + \text{rhotic} ] \). In Milingimbi English, the initial \([s]\) is sometimes omitted, and the remaining part of the cluster is treated as a regular two-consonant cluster, as in [krab] 'scrub'.

Word-initial two-consonant clusters in English are of the form \([\text{stop} + \{\text{liquid, \text{rhotic, \text{fricative, \text{nasal, \text{semivowel}}}}\}]\). They are sometimes broken by an epenthetic vowel, [i], [o] or [ə], as in [səlip] 'sleep', [bəlo] 'blue', [pəliz] 'please', [ɡɪmɪt] 'Smith' and [ɡərɪn] 'green'. If the initial consonant in the cluster is \([s]\) it is sometimes omitted, as in [pən] 'spoon' and [pənd] 'sponge'. Alternatively (and more rarely) one consonant may be omitted, as in [laws] 'flower'.

Final consonant clusters are subject to greater variation, in that regardless of the size of the cluster, some or (more rarely) all elements may be omitted, and this alteration is sometimes quite unpredictable. Thus alternative forms such as [mæs] and [mæt] exist for 'mats', and [hæn], [hæ] and [hænz] for 'hands'. In final clusters containing nasals and homorganic stops (plus optionally a fricative), either the stop or both the nasal and the stop are omitted, never just the nasal. Hence *[hæd(ə)] was never heard for 'hand(ə)'. Final /velar nasal/ + /velar stop/ (as in [θæŋk] 'thank') do not appear to be reduced. (This cluster appears in Yolŋu Matha). Where the second (or third) consonant of final consonant clusters is syllabic /l/, an epenthetic vowel [ə] is almost always inserted between /l/ and the preceding consonant, and /l/ becomes [ɬ]. In this way the cluster is still reduced, although
none of the elements are lost. Examples of both types of final
c consonant cluster reduction are: [lɪtoʊ] 'little', [piːpəl] 'people',
'children' and [nɛks] 'next'.

Word-medial consonant clusters are subject to the least amount
of variation. If such clusters can occur in Yolŋu Matha, whether
intramorphemically or extramorphemically they do not appear to be
altered in Milingimbi English. Hence the clusters in [hæmptɪ] 'Humpty'
and [hæŋɡri] 'hungry' occur as in SAE.

In clusters which contain elements "foreign" to Yolŋu Matha,
(fricatives or affricates), these "foreign" elements are frequently
reinterpreted in the same way that single consonants are, with subsequent
alteration of the original cluster. Once the alteration has taken place,
if it is going to, the same processes of vowel insertion or consonant
deletion may still be applied. Examples of such cluster alterations
[plɔwa] 'flour', and [dImok] 'smoke'.

5.4 Stress and Intonation

The stress of Milingimbi English, like all other aspects of its
phonology, contains some differences from SAE. Most of these differences
conform to the strict rules of stress in Yolŋu Matha, where it is non-
contrastive and occurs regularly on the first syllable. However, stress
in English is contrastive ('convert', a noun, as opposed to 'convert', a
verb), and also may regularly occur on the second syllable, even when no
contrast is involved.

When variation in stress occurs in Milingimbi English, it tends
to place the primary emphasis, as in Yolŋu Matha, on the first syllable
of each word. Interference from the Yolŋu Matha stress pattern thus
accounts for the following representative forms: [kəsɛt] 'cassette',


The elements of some noun phrases can be regarded as regularly co-occurring (like 'cup and saucer' and 'sports day'). In colloquial SAE, such phrases generally have only one primary stress, to indicate that the phrase is a compound, regarded as a phonetic and semantic "whole". In other phrases, each lexical morpheme contains at least one primary stress. The range of phrases containing only one primary stress has been extended at Milingimbi, as the following examples demonstrate: [kʌŋfu] 'kung fu', [bɒdjɪt] 'pussy cat' and [ʃuːt] 'Sue Brown' (a teacher). 4

Another phenomenon of the stress of Milingimbi English which cannot be explained satisfactorily at present is the occasional emphasis on word-final open syllables, such as [bʊldəzə] 'bulldozer', [mɪstə] 'mister', [dʒɛnɪfə] 'Jennifer' and [wʌn dələ] 'one dollar'. This word-final stress may be related to an occasional Yolŋu Matha discourse feature of lengthened word-final vowels and consequent stress, generally when the speaker is searching for the next word and does not want to give the impression that he or she has finished the utterance.

Some very brief comments can be made about intonation in Milingimbi English. In general it appears to differ relatively little from SAE. As in SAE, polar questions may be indicated by rising intonation alone, or in combination with other syntactic features. Statements and questions with interrogative words tend to end with falling

4. It is interesting to note that this teacher was always called 'Sue Brown' (with various phonetic realisations), never just 'Sue', although all other teachers were called by their first names. As three others had monosyllabic names, the shortness of 'Sue' is most unlikely to have been responsible for this. It may have been due to the fact that there were two other Balanda: 'Sue's' in the community, although there was clearly no ambiguity in the classroom.
intonation, again as in SAE. Statements may end with rising intonation if the speaker is eliciting a response or if he or she has not completed the utterance. This is sometimes described as a characteristic of Australian women's speech (most Yolŋu have been taught English by women), but it appears to be very common as well in some regions. Sharpe (1976) describes it as a characteristic of the speech of non-Aboriginals in Alice Springs, for example. It is not particularly salient among the Balandas at Milingimbi. The difference in intonation between Milingimbi English and SAE is most marked in lengthy discourses (for example, at community meetings). In these discourses, the intonation of each sentence begins normally, then rises and remains at a high level for the bulk of the sentence, falling only on the final word or syllable. My impressionistic observation is that this conforms to the intonation pattern of Yolŋu Matha discourse in similar situations.

5.5 Summary: possible directions for change

Many features of the phonemic inventory (particularly the range of allophones), phonotactics, stress and intonation of English-as-a-second-language at Milingimbi are subject to variation from the norms of SAE. Most people, even those with a "low" proficiency rating in English, command a range of the phonological continuum, from forms closely approaching SAE to forms basically little different from the phonological system of Yolŋu Matha. The extent of this range generally depends on the person's level of familiarity with English and general linguistic abilities. Within this range, the selection of phonological features in any particular utterance depends on a number of factors, such as the speaker's attitude, mood and familiarity with the subject matter and the identity of the interlocutor.

The present evidence suggests that, as a generalisation covering the people surveyed at least, the inventory of phonemic distinctions...
varies little, if at all, from SAE, while each phoneme has a much wider range of allophones than is the case in SAE. This range reflects substantial interference from Yolnu Matha. The phonetics and phonology of Milingimbi English have a number of distinctive characteristics: the "pure" vowels; the tendency for SAE central vowels to move to the periphery of the mouth; the tendency to reduce SAE diphthongs to simple vowels or to break them into [vowel + semivowel (+vowel)] sequences, the reinterpretation of SAE /j/ as /ʃ/, the tendency to omit /h/ where it would occur in SAE, while sometimes inserting it word-initially on words which in SAE begin with vowels (one suspects that SAE /h/ has indeed lost its phonemic status in Milingimbi English, although this hypothesis needs to be tested further); the regular occurrence of [!] as an allophone of /l/ after high back vowels; the frequent but by no means universal reinterpretation of fricatives and affricates, generally as stops in the equivalent place of articulation; an occasional loss of the distinction of voice in the consonants; the frequent reduction of consonant clusters, particularly word-initially and —finally, either by the insertion of ephenthetic vowels or the deletion of one or more of the elements in the cluster; and the occasional placement of primary stress on the first syllable of commonly occurring idiomatic phrases and of words which in SAE have primary stress elsewhere.

On the basis of this analysis one can predict what might happen to the phonology of Milingimbi English if English were to become the language of regular intra-group communication for the Yolnu in the future. All or most fricatives and affricates would probably be reinterpreted as stops in the equivalent place of articulation; a loss of the voicing distinction in the stops, fricatives and affricates would probably occur, with the possible maintenance of the two series by means of gemination.
(as in Yolnu Matha); /l/ might bifurcate into /l/ and /ə/; /h/ would almost certainly disappear; the number of vowel and diphthong phonemes would be reduced; and primary stress would probably regularly occur on the first syllable of words. A dialect of English with this type of phonology could be used for intra-group communication, while SAE would probably need to be learned for extra-group communication. This is of course hypothetical because, as we have seen, there is no evidence at the present time to suggest that English is likely to be used consistently as the main medium for intra-group communication for Yolnu in the foreseeable future, let alone become the first language of Milingimbi.
CHAPTER 6

MORPHOLOGICAL VARIABLES IN MILINGIMBI ENGLISH

6.1 Introduction

The analysis of the grammar and semantics of Milingimbi English presented in this and the following two chapters is based on data drawn from people whose English proficiency encompasses the total range from 2 to 7. Nevertheless, the range of proficiency covered in the data is skewed by age. The English of the children aged between four and sixteen who are included in this survey does embrace the entire range (2 to "borderline 6/7") spoken by this age group. However, the English of the adults surveyed covers only half the adult community, those with the "best" English (ratings 5, 6 and 7), with two minor exceptions (a man of 48 and a woman of 50, who both have a rating of 4). The grammatical analysis presented here undoubtedly reflects the absence from the survey of adults with a more limited command of English.

Three further comments should be made about the data. First, the material used for this study of grammar and semantics is of three basic types. Some is spontaneously generated, but elicited by means of questions in English from a Balanda (normally a teacher) in formal contexts. Much comes from non-elicited and spontaneously generated conversations or monologues, most often informal. The speeches recorded at community meetings and between the headmaster and Yolgu liaison officer are exceptions, as they can be considered rather formal. The remainder (some of the material from the post-primary girls and grade 5, and all of the grade 7 material) comes from story-retelling tests. In these tests the teacher read the story and showed the pictures to the children individually, before they immediately "retold" it in their own words, using the same pictures as a memory-guide to the events. These
constitute a formal style, as the setting was artificial and the speaker not personally involved with the events or characters of the story.

Secondly, because the material was gathered from spontaneous speech, the absence of some structures from the data or sections of it does not mean that the Milingimbi Yolŋu (or groups of them) cannot recognise or use them. This comment affects all aspects of grammar, particularly verbal morphology, derivational affixes, certain pronouns and some complex syntactic structures.

Third, much of the data contains code-switching between English and Yolŋu Matha. This reflects the real use of English within the community, a "code-switching style" (as opposed to a style or context demanding only English or only Yolŋu Matha), rather than some hypothetical ideal which might have been recorded in more artificial circumstances. Code-switching is particularly prevalent in the material collected while camping with the post-primary girls, from the nurses' English classes and pre-fil "harangue", and the two community meetings organised by the Milingimbi Council and addressed by men. The effect of code-switching on the grammar of Milingimbi English is discussed in separate sections on morphological code-switching in this chapter and syntactic code-switching in the following chapter.

This chapter explores the extent of variation in both the inflectional and derivational morphology of Milingimbi English.

6.2 Nominal morphology

6.2.1 Number

Number (a distinction between singular and plural) is a property of noun phrases, governed by the head noun, in both SAE and Milingimbi English. Noun modifiers and prepositional phrases agree with the head noun when they have the appropriate concord. Verbs show number concord with the subject noun phrase in the present tense. This section discusses
number with relation to demonstratives and nouns, while number in
pronouns and verbs is discussed in sections 6.2.4 and 6.3.3 respectively.

As in SAE, nouns in Milingimbi English can be subcategorised
into three types: "count nouns" (such as tablet, potato and picture); 1
"non-count" (or "mass") nouns (such as flour, honey and water) and proper
names (such as Dad, Alan and Mrs Green). The members of each category
of noun in SAE and Milingimbi English do not entirely coincide.

"Count nouns", as the name suggests, distinguish between an
unmarked singular form and the plural form, usually designated by the
plural morpheme /-g/. A small number of count nouns form plurals
irregularly. Irregular plurals which occur in the Milingimbi English
corpus: as in SAE are children and people (for all groups of post-primary
age and over, and also for Grade 5), teeth (the nurses), and men, media
and feet (the men). Some non-standard irregular plurals coexist with these
in the corpus: mens and womens (produced by grade 2 children) and
childrens (produced by a speaker at a community meeting). The regular
plural marker is added to irregular plural forms in each of these. baits,
a non-count noun in SAE, is sometimes used by children as a count noun
in Milingimbi English (example (1)).

(1) (Girl, 12): They was picking some baits.

Other non-count nouns in SAE which are countable in Milingimbi English
include cash, help, ~weed, petrol, TB and meningitis.

Non-count nouns are not specified for number and show singular
concord with verbs (Honey is your God - (B, man, 38)). They may be used
in the plural, generally indicating "kind of" or "sort of", but the
effect is very marked. Yolnu sometimes convert SAE count nouns into
non-count nouns in Milingimbi English, for example, after lots of

1. All underlined examples are drawn from the data.
Most count nouns in SAE may be used as non-count ones, and this happens even more often in Milingimbi English. It is not clear whether Milingimbi English has reinterpreted SAE count nouns as non-count ones, or whether the same phenomenon may be explained by saying that plural is optionally applied on Milingimbi English count nouns when the syntactic or situational context suggests that the noun referent is indeed plural (example (3)):

(3) (Girl, 15): Alan is getting shell.

As Alan in (3) is collecting shellfish for bait before he goes fishing, he is clearly collecting more than one shell. Fifteen SAE count nouns occur in the singular in the corpus (mainly among the adults) where the context indicates that the referent of the noun is in the plural.

While in general plurals occur in Milingimbi English where they would in SAE, there are a few differences. Milingimbi English does not need to mark plural more than once in noun phrases containing a noun and determiner or numeral, for example, when it is marked by the head noun (example (4)), a determiner (example (5)), a noun phrase used as a comparison or in apposition (examples (6) and (7)) or a number (examples (8) to (10)).

(4) (owards, woman, 30): Nhawiy (="un"), Barry, muri [a kinship term, signifying in this case 'mother's mother's brother'] could I say something this... to this girls.

(5) (Child, 12): They get some hook.
(6) (Bi, woman, 28): Children playing with sharp things such as knife, gani [= "is that right?"].

(7) (Boy, 14): Teacher 'gain student we play soccer.

(8) (Dia, woman, 32): It's a hundred milligram.

(9) (Cal, woman, 23): She got two nhawi [= "um"] boy.

(10) (Dia, woman, 32): And broke her front... her two front tooth.

The plural marker on head count nouns is most commonly omitted when the noun phrase also contains a number word. People of all age-groups above the grade 7 children omit it in this situation twenty-seven times, as opposed to thirty-four instances where the plural marker occurs on a noun qualified by a number (as it would in SAE).

The children occasionally omit the plural marker in Milingimbi English when a plural + human subject is referred to collectively as (each) having or doing a singular X, where SAE would obligatorily mark X as plural (example (11)).

(11) (Girl, 15): Di, look... some people got pencil.

Some nouns which always occur in plural form in SAE, although they might refer to only one object, are optionally used in the singular in Milingimbi English, as a result of back-formation (example (12)). Isolated words to which this applies include pant ('pants') and short ('shorts') (both used by the preschool children) and cloth ('clothes') (used by one of the nurses).

(12) (Di, man, 34): That's what Land Right is and not money.

SAE 'Land Rights' often becomes Land Right in the speech of adult men at community meetings.
The plural morpheme is fairly rarely used in Milingimbi English when SAE would require a noun unmarked for plural. Examples include:

(13) (Many, man, 41): And license the um... doctors, nurses, teachers and ah... electricians people.

(14) (Boy, 13): They boys, they big, eh, but we beat them in three, NT boys, but we lose when we play with Saints John.

(15) (Dh, man, 34): There won't be wiry yams growing on those bitumen.

(16) (B, man, 38): He will talk Northern Land Council meeting, he will talk those problem.

(17) (Bil, woman, 28): Let's go into the supermarket and get some somethings which will be nice.

(18) (VE): Somebody point to exactly what 'naraka' is.

(Bil, woman, 28): Every bones in our body.

In (13) it is not clear whether people is head of the noun phrase electricians people or of a much larger noun phrase incorporating the um... doctors, nurses, teachers and ah... electricians people. Unlike in SAE, nouns in modifying functions in Milingimbi English can take the plural. This example and (18), where plural bones is qualified by the plural every, demonstrate how plural may be marked more than once in Milingimbi English noun phrases, for example, on adjectives, where it could be marked only once in SAE. Saints John in (14) differs from SAE in that the adjective 'saint' has been pluralised, while the SAE possessive suffix /s/ is also absent from John. (The omission of the possessed noun phrase, X, ('Saint John's X') is entirely standard in colloquial English).
There is some evidence to suggest that the SAE pro-forms *something, anything, etcetera, may be treated optionally as count nouns in Milingimbi English. In (17), *something behaves exactly like a count noun, being preceded by an article and containing the plural suffix /-s/. *anything also occurs as a plural of *anything. The occasional use of determiners with these pro-forms, discussed in chapter 7, also supports this hypothesis. Interference from Yolŋu Matha is not the cause as the English concepts correspond to words which do not take inflections in Yolŋu Matha.

Examples (15) and (16) illustrate how plural demonstratives in Milingimbi English can be followed by a mass noun (bitumen) and a singular count noun (problem).

Table 6.1 summarises the overall incidence of plural markers in Milingimbi English, compared with SAE, for each category of people surveyed. Proportionately the post-primary boys and men omit the plural marker where an SAE speaker would use it more often than any other group, while the grade 7 children and the nurses use it most often where it would not occur in SAE.

Despite the number of instances where plural marking in Milingimbi English differs from SAE, it occurs in general as it would in SAE. Most instances where the usage of the two systems does not coincide can be explained by the fact that while the category of number is only optionally specified in Yolŋu Matha, plural may be marked more than once in any noun phrase, as we have seen in chapter 3. The phonological "foreignness" of /s/ probably has no bearing on the Yolŋu's use of this particular phoneme as a suffix in English.

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1. I have omitted preschool and grade 2 from the discussion as the total number of occurrences of 'plural' for these two groups is very small.
TABLE 6.1
THE OCCURRENCE OF THE PLURAL SUFFIX IN HILINGIMBI ENGLISH

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>GROUP</th>
<th>PRESENCE</th>
<th></th>
<th>ABSENCE*</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>STANDARD</td>
<td>NON-STANDARD</td>
<td>NON-STANDARD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PRESCHOOL</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GRADE 2</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GRADE 5</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GRADE 7</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>POST-PRIMARY GIRLS</td>
<td>73</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>POST-PRIMARY BOYS</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NURSES</td>
<td>139</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>COUNCIL</td>
<td>91</td>
<td>30</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SPORTS OBSERVERS</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>9</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MISCELLANEOUS:</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MEN</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WOMEN</td>
<td>11</td>
<td></td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

"Standard presence" means the morpheme occurs as it would in SAE.

"Non-standard presence" means the morpheme occurs where it would be absent in SAE.

"Non-standard absence" means the morpheme was absent where it would have occurred in SAE.

"Standard absence" means the morpheme was absent as it would be in SAE.

* The category "standard absence" was not regularly noted in the analysis.
6.2.2 Possession

Possession is marked morphologically in Milingimbi English, as in SAE, by means of the morpheme /-s/ (with phonologically conditioned allomorphs [s], [z] and [ez]). It is also occasionally marked syntactically, by means of possessive noun phrases of the form NP of NPosssesor (as in members of the Council (Maw, man, 31)). A variant of the first type which does not occur in SAE is marked simply by the apposition of the noun phrase possessor, with zero marking, with the noun phrase possessed following (examples (19) to (22)). This happens nine times in the corpus as opposed to thirty-four regularly marked with /-s/.

(19) (Boy, 10): Simon fishing rod.

(20) (Boy, 14): Who's your father name?...
Who's your mother name?

(21) (B, man, 38): I'm crying to my children and my children children in the future.

(22) (Mil, woman, 26): One from Djumbutj class.

The absence of the standard possessive morpheme in (20) and many other examples with name in the children's speech can be explained as a result of interference from Yolnu Matha. Yolnu Matha contains a morphological distinction between alienable and inalienable possession. The possessive morpheme is only used when the possessor's possession of the possessed is regarded as alienable. Body parts and the word yoku ('name'), are considered inalienably possessed, and possession of these objects is marked in Yolnu Matha simply by the apposition of the two noun phrases, as in example (20). Milingimbi children under the age of about twelve rarely mark possession at all in their English in the
corpus, and it is always when the possessor is pronominalised, or by means of apposition, whether or not the possession is inalienable (as in (19)). Grade 7 and post-primary age boys use both apposition and the morpheme /s/, (compare (20) and the following forms: his grandpa's name and this boy's name). The morpheme /s/ is used as well as apposition by all older age-groups, although inalienable possession (according to the norms of Yolŋu Matha) is not apparently distinguished from alienable, as the following forms, by the nurses, testify:

Joe's lungs, dog's tongue and the little boy's name. The absence of /s/ in just four examples (including (21) and (22)) among the adults and the marking of possession by apposition, as if the NPpossessor were an adjective, cannot be explained at present.

6.2.3 Comparison of adjectives and adverbs

The only inflectional affixes which occur on adjectives and adverbs in Milingimbi English, as in SAE, are the suffixes of comparison: the comparative /-er/ and the superlative /-est/. In this respect English adjectives, which can only take derivational affixes, differ substantially from Yolŋu Matha ones, which, while able to carry derivational suffixes, must take inflectional suffixes to agree with the head noun. better, further and more are the only irregular comparative adjectives used in the corpus ('less' and 'worse', the other irregular forms in SAE, have not been encountered).

Interference from Yolŋu Matha accounts for one non-standard comparative in the corpus (example (23)).

(23) (Girl, 12): He was very clever fisherman than me.

This appears to be a blend of two SAE constructions ("He was a very clever fisherman" and the comparative 'He was a cleverer fisherman than me'). The comparison is suggested to SAE speakers by than me. To speakers
of Milingimbi English it is suggested by very, which translates Yolŋu Matha mirithirri, an intensifier that inflects like a verb, and would be used to express comparative degree in Yolŋu Matha.

Only /-er/ has an allomorph variant (more + \{adjective\} + + \{adverb\} - + ) in the corpus, but it occurs only once and differs from SAE (more further (boy, 13)). The speaker has probably not realised that further is the comparative form of 'far', and has thus applied the comparative twice, using both means of comparative formation.

6.2.4 Pronouns

Use of personal pronouns in Milingimbi English appears to correspond in general with that of SAE. Variables exist in the third person singular subject, possessive and, to a lesser extent, object functions. These occur primarily in the speech of children, but also (rarely) in the speech of adults. The paradigms for the five personal pronominal functions are summarised in Table 6.2. Like SAE, Milingimbi English also has a set of "indefinite pronouns",

\[
\{\text{some} \mid \text{no} \mid \text{any} \mid \text{every}\} + \{\text{thing} \mid \text{one} \mid \text{body}\}.
\]

The high rate of correspondence between Milingimbi English and SAE pronouns is in itself a little surprising. Many non-standard dialects and creolised forms of Aboriginal English contain substantial differences from the SAE pronoun paradigms, particularly in the presence of a dual and plural number, and an inclusive/exclusive distinction in the first person dual and plural (for example, Cape York Creole Koper Creole (Sharpe, 1975; Sharpe and Sandefur, 1976, 1977) (Crowley and Rigsby, forthcoming), and varieties of Aboriginal English spoken in the Kimberleys (Kaldor and Malcolm, forthcoming)). While Yolŋu Matha contains a distinction between dual and plural number in the pronouns, and an inclusive/exclusive distinction in the first person dual/plural,
### TABLE 6.2

**PRONOUN PARADIGMS ATTESTED IN MILINGIMBI ENGLISH**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SINGULAR</th>
<th>SUBJECT</th>
<th>OBJECT</th>
<th>POSSESSIVE MODIFIER</th>
<th>POSSESSIVE HEAD OF NP</th>
<th>REFLEXIVE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>I</td>
<td>me</td>
<td>my</td>
<td>mine</td>
<td>myself</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>you</td>
<td>you</td>
<td>your-you</td>
<td>yours</td>
<td>yourself</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>he/she</td>
<td>him/her</td>
<td>her-his</td>
<td>*</td>
<td>himself-hisself</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>masculine</td>
<td>-it</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>feminine</td>
<td>she-he</td>
<td>her</td>
<td>*</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>neuter</td>
<td>it</td>
<td>*</td>
<td>itself</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>we</td>
<td>us</td>
<td>our</td>
<td>*</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>you</td>
<td>*</td>
<td>*</td>
<td>*</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>they</td>
<td>them</td>
<td>their</td>
<td>*</td>
<td>themselves-themselves</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Form not attested within the corpus.

these are not manifest in Milingimbi English.

The main difference between SAE and Milingimbi English pronouns is that *her* is a variable for all attested third person singular object and possessive modifier pronouns. In the subject paradigm, *she* (and to a lesser extent, *it*) are occasional variables of the masculine singular *he*, while *he* is a (rare) variable of the feminine singular, *she*. The possessive modifier paradigm is the most strongly affected by this phenomenon (*her* substitutes for *his* twenty times, out of a total of thirty one occurrences, while *his* substitutes for *her* twice). In other non-standard dialects of Aboriginal English, such as the southern varieties of Western Australian Children’s English, the masculine pronoun tends to be generalised to the other genders (Kaldor and Malcolm, forthcoming).
This intermixture stems almost certainly from interference with Yolŋu Matha, which does not possess any gender distinction in its pronominal paradigms. It certainly does not indicate an inability to distinguish gender.

The tendency to use pronouns distinguishing gender in a non-standard way in Milingimbi English appears to be primarily a feature of the children, although isolated instances occur among the adults (examples (24) to (32)).

(24) (Child, 12): Then he got the fishing line, he put on the car. Alan put her in the car.

(25) (Many, man, 41): What the Neil going to do tomorrow? Is it or going to see individual... parents or go to the council or...?

(26) (Girl, 10): One day, Simon go fishing. She get some fish. She is falling. She get some fish.

(27) (Child, 10): Then he [Simon] put some shellfish and then she get some, and she get some shellfish, and she hold it with her hand and she put it on the stone and cook it that billy. [Each underlined pronoun refers to 'Simon'].

(28) (Girl, 14): And Alan is doing what her father told her.

(79) (Child, 12): Then Adam and her father went to home and then was cooking her mother that fish.

(30) (Girl, 15): Alan went back and her father was still fishing.

(31) [This is an interchange between me and my English class of nurses and women's community workers].

(Woman 1): Dr. Pretty.

(VE): Pretty?
(Woman 1): nii ["yes"].
(Woman 2): Bāygu ["no"].
(Woman 3): He's very very old.
(VE) : [laugh].
(Woman 4): Oh, she's...
(VE) : Oh, it's a she, is it?
(Woman 4): nii ["yes"].
(Woman 5): Yaka [= "no"].
(Woman 1): She-miruw [= "it's not a she"].
(Woman 2): He.
(Woman 3): He.
(Woman 2): Yaka she [= "not a she"].
(Woman 4): He's a very good dirramu [= "man"].

(32) (Bil, woman, 28): Little girl nhā [= "what"?]
fell from tree... broke his neck.

In example (24), the variable her is used where it would be expected in SAE. Example (25) contains it as a variable of SAE he. In (26) to (30), she and her occur almost always as variants of SAE he, him and his, while the reverse occurs in (32). Example (31) demonstrates how she and he both occur in the same interchange, with the same reference.

Other subject pronouns are almost always used as in SAE. They may be omitted or used in a non-standard way, from the point of view of the discourse structure, very occasionally (as in examples (33) and (34)).

(33) (Boy, 12): Dad said, "Have you got any bait?". Alan said, "Yes, it is..." [The context suggests that 'I have' is expected as an answer].
Discourse rules of SAE predict that when a person asks 'you' something, the speaker replies 'I' (or 'we'). This has not happened in (33).

Similarly, in (34), the subject pronoun I, understood from the context (the boy is talking about himself), has been omitted probably by the rules of ellipsis in Milingimbi English, which differ from those of SAE. (This topic is discussed in some depth in the next chapter).

Other object pronouns are almost always used in a standard way in Milingimbi English. Two exceptions are (35) and (36).

(35) (Boy, 15): Me Narritj (= a subsection name).

(36) (Bill, woman, 28): Country western... country westerns music. Have you got them?

In example (35), the speaker has used the object pronoun, me, where a speaker of SAE would use the subject 'I'. them in (36) refers to records or cassettes of country and western music. A speaker of SAE would probably have used 'it', 'any' or 'some' in place of Milingimbi English them.

Milingimbi English occasionally contains "redundant" subject and object pronouns, in apposition with nouns with the same referents. "Redundant" subject pronouns, as in example (37), do occur quite commonly in some forms of colloquial Australian English.

(37) (Child, 12): Dad and Alan, they fishing over the river.

By contrast, object pronouns (mainly it) in apposition with their nominal referents are an occasional feature of Milingimbi English which never occurs in SAE (examples (38) to (40)).
(38) (Child, 12): He pull it the fish.

(39) (Maw, man, 31): [The prime minister said]: "Yunupingu Galarrway, sign it th'agreement, because we will destroy your land".

(40) (Boy, 10): He's big one. I catch him big crayfish.

Many creolised forms of English, for example, Cape York Creole (Crowley and Harper Creole (Sharpe and Bandefur, 1976) and Rigsby, forthcoming) mark transitive verbs with the suffix -im ('him'). While the effect is the same in (40), in that transitive catch is followed by him plus another noun phrase, it is not a productive process in Milingimbi English as it occurs only twice in the data.

Except for his and her which we have already discussed, possessive modifier pronouns are almost always used in a standard way. The only other non-standard allomorph is you, alternating with the standard your (example (41)).

(41) (Mal, woman, 18): That's you yukiyuku little brother. [yukiyuku = "little brother"].

This variant occurs mainly in the speech of the women with less formal education (the nurses are all recorded as using you). The occurrence of you in (41) and elsewhere might have arisen because the speaker remembered that two syntactic functions were expressed by the one second person pronoun, you, and was not sure which uses, or simply generalised the rule to the possessive function as well.

Milingimbi English does not oblige the speaker to indicate deixis in noun phrases as often as does SAE, and this particularly affects the use of possessive pronouns (examples (42) and (43)).

The speaker has not mentioned that in fact it is her own head which is swimming.

(43) (M, man, 38): You just pull in the head, money first. [The speaker is quoting a politician who told the members of the Northern Land Council that money was more important than anything else].

A speaker of SAE would be forced to replace the in (43) with 'your'. Possessive (head of noun phrase) and reflexive pronouns occur only rarely in the corpus. The possessive (head of noun phrase) pronouns are entirely standard, but there are two reflexive variables which do not normally occur in SAE. (Both occur only once).

(44) (Girl, 15): Dad is fishing by himself.

(45) (Mtr, woman, 20): They were holding themselves on the road.

The speaker in (44) has regularised the rule for the formation of reflexives in English, as all but the third person singular masculine and third person plural reflexives consist of possessive modifier pronoun + self/selves. By a process of analogy with this more common structure the speaker has produced his (possessive modifier) + self, rather than the standard (but irregular) object pronoun + self ('himself'). In (45) the speaker has not applied the plural to the two parts of the plural reflexive (SAE plural pronoun stem + 'selves'), obligatory in SAE but apparently optional in Milingimbi English.

Of the indefinite pronouns, only something, nothing and anything are used in a non-standard way in the corpus, nothing the most commonly so, (examples (46) to (48)). All are regularly constructed except for one occurrence each of anythings and somethings (see section 6.2.1), where the plural morpheme has been applied. None of these forms have inflected variants in SAE.
(46) (Gat, man, 28): Because? Something just him and Murrug.

(47) (Girl, 10): He is going to the fish, nothing.

(48) (Jul, man, 28): ... but Monday anything afternoon leave that for this.

These can each be regarded as syntactically non-standard. In (47), ellipsis has deleted an existential SAE statement 'there is', which is implied in the Milingimbi English by a slight pause before nothing. The meaning of both (46) and (48) is obscure.

6.3 Verbal morphology

The verbal group is the most complex area of SAE morphology, and the one where the greatest range of variables exists in Milingimbi English. Milingimbi English appears to contain a larger range of tense options and a smaller number of mood options than SAE. Like SAE, it uses a number of modal auxiliaries, primary auxiliaries and semi-auxiliaries, although in general they occur less often than in SAE.

Figure 6.1 summarises the verbal group components of Milingimbi English in such a way that each type of auxiliary is defined.

Most verbs in Milingimbi English, as in SAE, have four different morphological forms: the base form (V), which signifies the imperative mood, the infinitive, and the present tense, except for some occurrences of the third person singular; the -s form (V-s), optionally used in Milingimbi English to indicate concord between the third person singular subject and verbs.

3. The structure of the Milingimbi English verbal group contains features of both morphological and syntactic interest. This section examines those aspects which are primarily morphological. Chapter 7 contains a discussion of some syntactic features of Milingimbi English verbs, particularly the sequence of tenses, and the syntactic evidence for an unmarked non-future tense.

4. This discussion of verb morphology draws on Quirk et al (1972, Chapter 3), particularly in the use of terminology.
FIGURE 6.1
MILINGIMBI ENGLISH VERB CLASSES*
(after Quirk et al (1972:69))

auxiliary verbs

primary auxiliary

periphrastic

DO

auxiliary verbs

modal auxiliary

can could
may might
shall should
will/will would/would
must
ought to
used to
etc.

semi-auxiliary verbs

have to
be going to
be sure to
had/had/"ll better
have got to
get to
etc

lexical verbs

walk, sing, see, etc

* Only auxiliaries attested in the corpus are quoted here. This figure makes no claim about the absolute numbers of auxiliaries known and used by Yolnu.
in the present tense; the past tense form \( (V\text{-ed}_1) \), which also marks perfect aspect and passive voice in "regular" verbs; and the \(-\text{ing} \) (present) participle \( (V\text{-ing}) \) which signifies continuous aspect. A small group of "irregular" verbs have a fifth form, the \(-\text{ed}\) (past) participle \( (V\text{-ed}_2) \), which marks perfect aspect and passive voice (gone as opposed to past tense \textit{went}). Modal auxiliaries have only one form, although some can be paired together on the basis of signifying present versus past tense (\textit{can-could}, \textit{will-would}, etcetera). The copula and primary auxiliary \textit{be} is unusual in that it has eight different forms, three present tense and two past tense forms, as well as \textit{v}, \( V\text{-ed}_2 \) and \( V\text{-ing} \).

6.3.1 The finite verbal group

Verbal groups in Milingimbi English can be described as finite or non-finite. Finite verbs, the distinguishing feature of finite verbal groups, must differentiate active and passive voice, and indicative and imperative mood. Perfect or continuous aspect specification is optional. Tense marking is also optional in Milingimbi English, unlike in SAE, particularly in phrases carrying aspect specification, passive voice, negation, or interrogative force. Many lexical verbs with superficial present tense morphology and no aspect specification appear to carry the semantics of a general non-future tense. Finite verbal groups optionally indicate concord between subject/agent and verb.

Finite verbal groups are generally simple in Milingimbi English, but may be complex. Simple ones consist of a lexical verb, which indicates tense or the imperative mood. There are four basic types of complex finite verbal groups, which normally occur on their own. While they may also appear in combination, the extent to which this may happen in Milingimbi English is not well attested, as they are rare in the corpus.
1) Type A (modal/periphrastic): modal/periphrastic auxiliary + base of verbal group head.

2) Type B (perfect aspect): auxiliary have + V-ed\textsubscript{1} of verbal group head (or V-ed\textsubscript{2} where the verb is "irregular").

3) Type C (continuous aspect): auxiliary be + V-ing of verbal group head.

4) Type D (passive voice): auxiliary be + V-ed\textsubscript{1} of verbal group head (or V-ed\textsubscript{2} where the verb is "irregular").

When these appear in combination, components which would otherwise be repeated, such as the verbal group head, are omitted. Complex finite verb groups attested in the corpus include: A=C (will be leaving), A=B (might have been, should have gone), B=C (has been eating), A-D (will be changed), and B=D ('ve been told).

6.3.2 Tense, mood, aspect and voice in Milingimbi English

Verbs in Milingimbi English are in the imperative or indicative mood. An irrealis mood, distinct from the indicative, cannot be isolated morphologically. Quirk et al (1972:76) note that it is rarely used in contemporary English, being normally replaced by constructions in the indicative.

Verbs in the imperative mood, regularly V!, are identical morphologically to the corresponding SAE forms. They are used by people with all levels of proficiency in English, in all age-groups above the preschoolers (examples (49) to (51)).

(49) (Child, 6): Sue Brown, look! Look!

(50) (Boy, 15): Greg, come here! Come and have a look.

(51) (Dja, woman, 32): Enjoy it with your family!
The indicative mood distinguishes at least past and present tense. When the verb group contains a lexical verb only, tense is specified by the form of the verb. Tense marking is optional in verbal groups specifying aspect. There is some evidence to support the presence in some verbal groups of an unmarked non-future tense. This is discussed in detail in section 6.3.3 (on verb concord) and in the next chapter, as this semantic generalisation can be made only on the basis of an examination of the syntax of the discourse context in which the verbs are situated. The morphological basis for the hypothesis rests in the absence of concord on many base-form verbs with third person singular subjects. Reference to future time is denoted by a wide range of constructions, one of the most common being the modal auxiliary will plus the base form of the verb.

The present tense (with no aspect specification) may be denoted by the base form of the verb for all but some instances with third person singular subject. Within the corpus the grade 5 children are the youngest to use it with clear semantic reference to present time (example (52)). All groups at times extend the semantic domain of the present tense form, using it where SAE would employ the past tense or complex verbal groups indicating aspect (regardless of time reference), (examples (53) to (56)). This extension of the domain of use of present tense forms to include contexts with past time reference lends some support to the hypothesis that Milingimbi English contains an unmarked non-future tense.

(52) (Nul, man, 28): They always say they want to spend money.

(53) (Teacher): What's he doing?
(Child, 6): Kiss, kiss!
(54) (Boy, 13): You know when they show that show here...
(talking about a show several days earlier, which was shown only once).

(55) (Dja, woman, 32): Little girl nhawi [= "um"] we call "Diane". [Dja is naming a character in a story which the class is about to develop from a set of pictures they have just seen for the first time].

(56) (B, man, 38): Nothing happen in that meeting [held the previous week].

Quirk et al (1972:85-86) define the functions of the present tense in English as specifying: the present without reference to specific time (both universal time statements (as in example (52)) and specific time statements); the instantaneous simple present; the simple present with future time reference; and the simple present with past time reference. In Milingimbi English it is used in a far wider range of contexts. In (53), the six-year-old uses it in response to a teacher's question which has continuous aspect (and ambiguous tense reference). This type of response to such questions is common among this age group. In (54) and (56) the present tense form is used in sentences where the action of the verb took place (and was known to have taken place) at an earlier time. These two examples are candidates for the proposed "nonfuture" tense. The use of call in (55) is less obviously different from SAE. It appears to be a universal time statement. However, as Dja is merely casually suggesting a name for an unknown personage in a picture, not insisting on one, reporting a group decision, or making a statement with real truth value, it corresponds to complex SAE verb groups of the type 

\[
\begin{cases}
\text{can} \\
\text{might} \\
\text{will} \\
\text{could}
\end{cases}
\text{call}
\]
A number of simple present tense forms occur where the same context in SAE would require a simple past tense or past participle of an irregular verb. Examples include *make, say, read* and *send* (example (57)).

(57) (Many, man, 41): Aah... that’s what letter was saying, *send from the ah education to the council.*

“That’s what the letter, sent from the education department to the council, was saying.”

All regular simple past tense structures (V-ed) are formed in the same way as in SAE, although, as we have just seen, there is a tendency to use other structures, particularly the simple present, with past time reference. All groups from grade 5 on regularly use the simple past. *been* (‘been’ + V, which marks simple past tense in many non-standard dialects of Aboriginal English, such as is spoken at Alice Springs (Sharpe, 1976) and in Western Australia (Kaldor and Malcolm, forthcoming), does not occur in Milingimbi English.

Irregular past tense and past participial forms are generally constructed according to the rules of SAE. Again, all groups from grade 5 on can use at least some with ease. Those known and used by grade 5 children with the same semantic domain and time reference as in SAE include: the past tense forms *said, did, went, gone* and *took* and the past participles *run* and *broken*. Grade 7 children also control past tense forms like *caught, brought, bought, put, got, kept, told, sat, found* and *saw*. Only four variable V-ed forms occur in the data (examples (58) to (61)).

(58) (Girl, 12): Dad [*tot*] bin how to cut the mussels.

(59) (Girl, 14): Alan *caught* a fish.

(60) (Girl, 14): Then Dad *fined* it and he start to open it.

(61) (Girl, 14): Little boy *caught* the fish.
The variable past tense forms in (60) and (61) are formed by analogy with the regular past tense in Milingimbi English, \( V + \text{ed} \). The speaker in (58) has realised that the past tense of *teach* is irregular and altered the vowel accordingly, but has not changed the last consonant from \([t\ddagger]\) to \([t]\), as would be the case in SAE. While the speaker concerned regularly used the form \([t\ddagger]\), she is the only one recorded as doing so. Hypercorrective \( \ddagger \)may have caused the addition in (59) of the third person singular concord marker /-/s/ onto a past tense from which is otherwise identical to the irregular SAE/Milingimbi English past tense form. This overapplication of the rule of concord on an apparently past tense form does not regularly occur in Milingimbi English, this being the only example noted in the corpus. An alternative interpretation is that the speaker concerned is using *caught* as a regular verb root, with *caughts* marking present time reference in the third person. The surrounding sentences in the narrative all unambiguously carry present time reference, while the speaker uses *caught* at the end of the narrative in a clause which clearly carries past sense with the same third person subject (example (62)).

(62) (Girl, 14): Mum is asking questions that Alan really *caught* the fish.

The hypothesis that *caught* and *catch* may be synonymous verb roots in Milingimbi English is supported by the use of *caught* as the verb head in two complex verbal groups containing modal auxiliaries (examples (63) and (64)). The verb head is normally (but not always) uninflected in Milingimbi English.

(63) (Child, 12): Only Alan *caught* one fish and Dad *couldn't caught* fish.
(64) (Child, 12): He Dad said, "You can catch one fish for us".

got and got may also be separate lexemes in Milingimbi English (discussed below).

As in many non-standard dialects of English, like varieties of American Black English (Labov, 1973) and Alice Springs English (Sharpe, 1976), the copula (verb 'to be') is optional in Milingimbi English, though it is compulsory in stative sentences in SAE. Grade 5 children are the first to use it in the corpus. Yolnu Matha, where many sentences are verbless, does not contain a copula. Interference from Yolnu Matha thus accounts for the frequent absence of the copula from Milingimbi English. All age groups appear equally likely to choose not to use it. The third person singular present is is proportionately the most commonly omitted, followed by are. am is rarely omitted. Neither of the two past tense forms appear to have been omitted in the corpus. This suggests that Yolnu choose not to use the copula where its use in the present tense is semantically unnecessary, as the statement in question is a generalisation, often with universal time reference (examples (65) to (68)).

(65) (Girl, 14): Nhawiy [= "um"], my favourite picture nhawiy [= "um"] "Seven Golden Vampires".

(66) (Boy, 16): I am with you.

(67) (Maw, man, 31): [We will] sit back and think if we are not happy.

(68) (Boy, 15): What is this for?

In these sentences, a corresponds to SAE 'is', 'am', 'are', and 'is' respectively.
Sometimes the copula is used in Milingimbi English with a semantic domain different from SAE (examples (69) to (71)).

(69) (5:71, 14): One was the one and she was sweet potato too.

(70) (Girl, 16): At home I was nhawi [= "um"] headache -ku [= oblique case]. ["At home I had a headache."]

(71) (Child, 10): Simon in fish... net. [...] Simon is big fish. [...] Simon is fishing... fish.
"Simon is fishing with a net. Simon has a big fish.
Simon is putting the fish on the fire."]

The meaning of (69) is not clear to a speaker of SAE. As it stands, if she refers to a girl, which is probable, the copula would not be used in SAE, and was has the same semantic domain as SAE 'had'. It is possible that was is an auxiliary, with the head of the verb phrase (perhaps something like eating), omitted by ellipsis. If she refers to a sweet potato (quite possible from the context, as the speaker is raking through some embers to find potatoes) then the copula does in fact carry the same meaning as in SAE. The speaker in (70) again uses was with the sense of SAE 'had'. Thus the copula may be used in Milingimbi English to indicate possession of a quality or characteristic. Each occurrence of is in (71) differs from SAE, as they all equate two noun phrases which do not have the same referents. In the first and last occurrences, it is possible that fish and fire (respectively) are used as verbs. While corresponding verb groups in SAE would require the continuous aspect, this is not obligatory in Milingimbi English. is V appears to be an alternative means of indicating simple present tense in Milingimbi English (discussed below). Thus in these two cases the status of is (whether an auxiliary marking tense or the copula) is ambiguous. In the second occurrence, the speaker has used is with the same semantic domain of SAE has (as in (69) and (70)).
Milingimbi English contains an alternative means of marking tense with no aspect, using *be* as an auxiliary, which is not possible in SAE. Verb groups in Milingimbi English may have the structure \{ am, is, are, was, were \} + \text{V}. While such phrases are sometimes used where SAE may use continuous aspect (examples (72) and (73)), in Milingimbi English they simply convey implications of tense (present or past, dependent on which auxiliary is selected) (examples (74) to (76)).

(72) (Child, 12): They *was* eat some fish.

(73) (Uja, woman, 32): Oh Mummy, *I'm feel* all right.

(74) (Maw, man, 31): That's *mean* the people in the world will laugh to us.

(75) (Maw, man, 31): The land *is belong* to Aboriginal and the uranium, *uran*ite, minerals, everything, *is belong* to Commonwealth.

(76) (Many, man, 41): Well ah, Ian *was suggest* that depends on whether this new Balanda bloke...

It is not clear why this construction is selected in preference to \text{V} and \text{V-ed}, which also correspond to present and past tense respectively in Milingimbi English.

Verb groups indicating continuous aspect in Milingimbi English optionally contain the auxiliary *be*, which carries tense specification for such cases. Past tense appears to be obligatory, in that it is always marked in contexts where it appears to an SAE speaker to be necessary. Table 6.3 summarises the use of present tense with continuous aspect in positive statements in Milingimbi English. Tense is always marked in negative statements in the corpus, but is sometimes omitted in questions by the post-primary boys and adult men. Grade 2
TABLE 6.3

TENSE AND CONTINUOUS ASPECT IN MILINGIMBI ENGLISH:

POSITIVE STATEMENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Present Tense</th>
<th>Past Tense</th>
<th>No Tense</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>can</td>
<td>was</td>
<td>NP V-ing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>is</td>
<td>were</td>
<td>NP V-ing</td>
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<tr>
<td>are</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade 5</th>
<th>23</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>13</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Grade 7</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Post-Primary Girls</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Post-Primary Boys</td>
<td>16</td>
<td></td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nurses</td>
<td>77</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Council</td>
<td>21</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Miscellaneous Women</td>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Miscellaneous Men</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

children also use the continuous aspect, with tense, in response to teachers' questions designed specifically to elicit it. (example (77)).

(77) (Six, grade 2 teacher): What's he doing?

(Child, 6): He's drinking.

In these utterances the tense marker (auxiliary be) is always present.

Examples (78) to (81) demonstrate the use of continuous aspect with and without the auxiliary aspect marker in Milingimbi English.

(78) (Child, 12): Dad and Alan, they fishing over the river.

Then they going to home. He fish big they cooking.
(79) (Bil, woman, 28): And... the boy is saying something.

(80) (Maw, man, 31): Dhuwala [= "this"] dhuruk [= "word"] is supporting from other people white Australia.

(81) (Girl, 12): He was still holding fishing rod. [...] He was sitting on the rock.

The use of tense with continuous aspect in (79) and (81) corresponds to the way they would be used in SAE. Example (78) demonstrates the use of continuous aspect without the auxiliary carrying tense. Continuous aspect in (80) corresponds semantically to the SAE passive construction ('is supported').

The corpus contains one example of a reduplicated verb root which conveys the notion of an action being repeated or continued (example (82)).

(82) (Worr, woman, 31): If you not shut up I can't talk [Yolnu Matha phrase]. If you cry cry like that...

cry cry corresponds to SAE 'keep on crying'. The use of reduplicated verb forms to indicate continuous aspect is common in other non-standard dialects of English.

The present participle (V-ing) is generally used in the same way as in SAE. It is sometimes used in Milingimbi English in a sense which apparently corresponds to the SAE simple present tense (example (83)).

(83) (DS, domestic science teacher): Who knows what baking powder does to the damper?

(Boy, 15): Making nhav [= "um"] big one.

Like the continuous aspect, the perfect aspect in Milingimbi English may be optionally marked for tense. When the tense marker, the auxiliary have, is omitted, all but some irregular verbs with
special \( v \rightarrow \text{ed}_2 \) participles are then indistinguishable from simple past tense verbs, and it is only the context which suggests that the verb carries the semantics of perfect aspect. The perfect aspect marker occurs far less often in Milingimbi English than in SAE. The grade 5 children are the first to use it within the corpus, but it appears to be very rarely used by children younger than post-primary age. The perfect aspect occurs most commonly with the verb \textit{got} in Milingimbi English. \textit{got} without any auxiliary carrying tense (example (84)) occurs almost as frequently as \textit{has/have got} in contexts where the latter would be expected in SAE (example (87)). It is also common in Alice Springs Aboriginal English (Sharpe, 1976). \textit{NP got} in Milingimbi English corresponds semantically to SAE 'NP have', thus suggesting that \textit{get} and \textit{got} are different lexemes (like \textit{catch} and \textit{caught}). While no form \textit{gots} occurs with third person singular subject in the data, this may be because the Yol?u have never heard 'gots' in SAE. Another variable of the perfect aspect in Milingimbi English is \textit{have tense} \( v \) (example (85)), where the verb's base form is used rather than the past participle. This happens primarily with irregular verbs. Tense is omitted in verb groups containing perfect aspect specification eleven times with verbs other than \textit{got} (example (86)), as opposed to eighteen times where the perfect is used exactly as in SAE (examples (87) and (88)).

(84) (Gal, woman, 23): And she \textit{got} lots of children at Yirrkala... she \textit{got} three, I mean four... and she \textit{got} ten more... eleven... she \textit{got} twenty.

(85) (Girl, 10): Simon had \textit{make} a string.

(86) (Boy, 13): Yeah, I been to Melbourne.

(87) (Dia, woman, 32): Mother's telling Sister Lewis...
(Bil, woman, 28): ... that ah the little girl's still got half of the tooth still inside.

(88) (Burr, woman, 26): I've just eaten something-dja [= focus].

Milingimbi English generally uses the periphrastic verbal auxiliary (do in the present tense and did in the past tense) in clauses containing negation or an interrogative form of simple present and past tense verbs (example (89)). It occurs slightly less often than would be the case in SAE (example (90)) as it is not always used in negatives in the simple present tense. It may (very rarely) be used as the auxiliary in negative or interrogative clauses containing continuous aspect (example (91)). Most of the time, as in SAE, the verb head in do clauses is the base form. However, occasionally tense may be marked twice in such phrases, so that the verb head is optionally the V-ed or V-S form (example (92)).

(89) (Boy, 16): How much do you want, Greg?

(90) (No, woman, 27): You ain't look an' smoke an' drink.

(91) (Boy, 13): When do you going back?

(92) (Bil, woman, 28): What sort of medicine did he ate?

d...going in (91) is a blend of the standard SAE simple present interrogative ('when do you go?') and interrogative with continuous aspect ('when are you going?'). In this sentence, do carries the same semantic loading as SAE 'are'.

As in SAE, do is sometimes used in Milingimbi English to lend emphasis to an exclamatory statement (example (93)).

(93) (Gar, man, 28): Do they hit you for their djäma ["work"]!

[Falling intonation here].
Gat is complaining about the expense of having vehicles fixed. His exclamation has the same effect as colloquial SAE 'what a rip-off!'.

Milingimbi English uses complex verbal groups containing modal auxiliaries quite frequently. The most common modal in the corpus is will, used first by grade 5 children, followed by can. can may be used in Milingimbi English to give the verb group future reference, with no implication of ability or permission (example (94)). Future reference appears to be always marked when it would be in SAE, generally by will V, but also by can V, be going to V and gonna V. Other modals are used infrequently in Milingimbi English, often in constructions which either would not occur in SAE or would have different implications (examples (95) to (104)).

(94) (Girl, 10): And I can take my fish to home.
(95) (Bil, woman, 28): She might be like some country western.
(96) (Girl, 15): She might sleep. [The speaker is describing to a teacher the probable condition of a girl who was absent from school, in an effort to discourage the teacher from visiting her in camp].
(97) (Child, 12): That's must be catfish.
(98) (Maw, man, 31): Northern Land Council must agreement.
(99) (Girl, 10): "Oh!" said Simon. "I can holding my little fishing".
(100) (Maw, man, 31): If not, the land will destroy.
(101) (Dja, woman, 32): I'll better tell Mummy.
(102) (Gat, man, 28): I'll be talk like a monkey.
(103) (B, man, 38): And you'll left something behind.

(104) (Boy, 15): It will nhawi [= "um"] melting.

Examples (99), (103) and (104) demonstrate the main difference between modal phrases in Milingimbi English and SAE: modals in the former may optionally occur in phrases consisting of modal + V = [ved ?], These forms all correspond semantically to modal + V in SAE.

might be like in (95) is ambiguous to a speaker of SAE. It may correspond to SAE 'might like'. Alternatively might be here may have the same meaning as SAE 'perhaps' or 'may be', both of which are also used in Milingimbi English. modal + be + V also occurs in (102), where it corresponds with SAE 'ill be Ving' or 'ill talk'.

While might sleep (96) corresponds morphologically to SAE, it does not do so semantically. The meaning intended is SAE 'might be asleep'.

In (97), 's must be parallels the construction [am, is, are, was, were] + V, which does not occur in SAE, but, as we have seen, is an alternative means of indicating simple tense in Milingimbi English. This example demonstrates that modal phrases may be marked for tense in Milingimbi English (by means of auxiliary be), unlike SAE.

Example (98) shows how must can occur alone in a verb group with a noun complement in Milingimbi English. must here corresponds closest to 'must reach' in SAE. Alternatively, it is possible that agreement (a noun in SAE) is treated syntactically as a verb in this sentence.

While the verb structure in (100) is morphologically indistinguishable from SAE, it is semantically distinctive, as land is the subject of destroy, impossible in SAE. This sentence has the same meaning as a passive construction in SAE, 'will be destroyed'.
The modal will in (101) widens the range of options available to speakers of Milingimbi English when they want to convey the meaning of SAE 'had better V'. Will better V cooccurs with had better V and 'd better V in Milingimbi English, while SAE speakers can only choose either of the last two options.

Passives (auxiliary be + V-ed\textsubscript{2} (V-ed\textsubscript{1} for regular verbs)) are very rare in the corpus, possibly as a result of interference from Yolgu Matha, which does not contain them. In some passive-like constructions the SAE past participle optionally becomes the base form of the verb in Milingimbi English (example (106)). One is used by the post-primary boys, the rest by adults (examples (105) to (110)).

(105) (Maw, man, 31): The way I see the old things, the land all be changed by [mining].

(106) (Maw, man, 31): [The prime minister said] "You must sign agreement or else land is destroyed."

(107) (Boy, 16): The tape measure is run over.

(108) (D, man, 38): Where are we brought to?

(109) (Dh, man, 34): [...] but the lesson that he carrying out given by someone else.

(110) (Bil, woman, 28): You've been told about Munguli, that she's...

As in active constructions expressing aspect, tense is optional in Milingimbi English passives. It is omitted in (109), which is nevertheless clearly a passive construction. be changed in (105) corresponds to the SAE phrase containing the modal 'will', indicating future reference, 'will be changed'. (107), (108) and (110) are identical to SAE passives. In (106) the base form of the verb is used
instead of the past participle. The structure is thus grammatically ambiguous, as it could also denote the present tense, on the pattern of \{am, is, are, was, were\} + \textit{\textit{V}}, which, as we have seen, may signify present tense in Milingimbi English. However, the semantics of \textit{destroy} suggest that \textit{land} is its object and that \textit{is destroy} carries a passive meaning, probably with future time reference.

6.3.3 Verb concord

There is some evidence to suggest that verb concord conveys semantic information about lexical verbs which is different in Milingimbi English from SAE. All Milingimbi English verb classes, except the modal auxiliaries, appear optionally to specify concord between third person singular subjects (or subjects unspecified for number) and verbs in the present tense. The concord marker is the suffix \textit{/-s/}, placed on the present tense stem (the base form) of lexical verbs. In finite phrases \textit{non-modal} containing a \textit{auxiliary}, concord is generally marked on the auxiliary, though may, rarely, occur instead on the verb group head. As in SAE, concord with \textit{be} is more complex than with other verbs, as there are three present tense forms (\textit{am}, \textit{is} and \textit{are}) and two past tense forms (\textit{was} and \textit{were}). Both \textit{have} and \textit{do} have irregular realisations of concord in the third person singular present, \textit{has} and \textit{does} respectively, as in SAE.

Yolgu Matha does not oblige its speakers to specify concord, and this may explain the general tendency not to do so in Milingimbi English. Concord is less likely to be specified on lexical verbs than on auxiliaries. There is no verb concord on lexical verbs in any of the grade 5 utterances, only one occurrence among the grade 7 utterances, and among all the other groups the concord marker is omitted from lexical verbs, with no environmental conditioning factors, over fifty percent of the time in circumstances where it would occur in SAE.
The frequent absence of the concord marker on lexical verbs with third person singular subjects renders such utterances ambiguous for tense, as it is then not clear whether the speaker intends the verb to correspond to SAE $V$-$S$ or $V$-$cd$. $V$ cannot occur with third person singular subjects in SAE, but does so frequently in Milingimbi English. If these tense-ambiguous lexical verbs are assumed to have present tense, 32 out of 42 of the post-primary girls' utterances apparently containing simple present tense do not contain concord where SAE would mark it. The past tense marker $-cd$ appears to be regularly applied by people in all cases when past tense reference is clearly intended with non-third person singular subjects. This suggests that speakers imply present time reference in these tense-ambiguous utterances. Nevertheless, as the discourse contexts containing some of these forms lacking concord or other tense indicators suggest that the discourse overall is in the past tense, the use of the base form of the verb with third person singular subjects implies an uneasiness in the handling of the present and past tense distinction. Such forms may constitute an unmarked "non-future" tense in Milingimbi English, corresponding to the non-future tense in Yolgu Matha. If this is the case, the presence of concord in Milingimbi English, unlike SAE, does convey semantic information about lexical verbs. The next chapter explores this hypothesis further, as the evidence for it is primarily syntactic rather than morphological. Examples (111) to (115) demonstrate how the concord marker is used or not used on lexical verbs in Milingimbi English.

(111) (Girl, 10): Simon was walking. Simon put to water. Simon catch fish. Simon get a fish. Simon was put to, he take to fire. He get a six fish. He take to fire and fish go back to water and he see his fish is nothing.
(112) (Girl, 14): Michael Christie know [Djambarrpuyu].

(113) (Dja, woman, 32): It cost fifty dollars for ten people. [This is in answer to the question "How much does it cost?"]

(114) (Mar, woman, 20): And we saw Nabalco where they makes nhawi [= "um"], what's that stuff?

(115) (Bil, woman, 28): Marrji [= "know"]. She already knows.

In (111) to (113) none of the lexical verbs with third person subjects contain the concord marker, although the verbs all have present tense stems. Concord occurs as it would in SAE in (115). In (114) the speaker has overapplied the rule of concord to a verb with its subject in the third person plural.

Verbal concord tends to be more standard on auxiliaries than on lexical verbs in Milingimbi English. Non-standard concord with auxiliaries has no semantic implications, as the tense, when specified, is still conveyed by the choice of auxiliary form. Concord on Milingimbi English auxiliaries differs from that in SAE particularly in the past tense of the auxiliary be. It may occasionally be applied to the verb head in Milingimbi English, mainly in phrases containing the periphrastic auxiliary do. Examples (116) to (121) demonstrate how Milingimbi English concord on auxiliaries differs from SAE.

(116) (Child, 12): They was sitting at the stone. They was looking at the something. Father and Adam was fishing at the stone.

(117) (Maw, man, 31): Government are concerned for the money.

(118) (Bil, woman, 28): What sort of music do your friend like?

(119) (Bil, woman, 28): What sort of music do your friend likes?
(120) (Di, woman, 32): Same doctor muka [= sentential modifier inviting agreement], but he's changed. He were off-duty ga-a [= "a-and"] then the next day he's on duty now.

(121) (Maw, man, 31): Here is the government have to listen.

The use of was with subjects other than he and I (example (116)) is more common in Milingimbi English than the extension of were to he and I (example (120)). The use of plural are in (117) and have in (121) with government suggests that the speaker in these cases reinterprets this noun as a plural. This happens in some dialects of British English. However, he also uses government quite freely with singular verbs. In (118) and (119) the same speaker is having difficulties with concord on do + V. In (118) she does not specify concord at all, while she applies it to the verb group head, not the auxiliary, in (119).

6.3.4 Non-finite verbal groups in Milingimbi English

Non-finite verbal groups in Milingimbi English, as in SAE, do not have a subject in the same clause, and, unlike finite phrases, never distinguish tense or have an imperative mood. Modal and periphrastic auxiliaries have no non-finite form and hence cannot occur in non-finite phrases. In general these verbal groups are marked by structures containing the infinitive marker to and the base form of the verb. Sometimes to is omitted in Milingimbi English where it would be obligatory in SAE. Examples (122) to (129) demonstrate the use of infinitive verb groups in Milingimbi English.

5. The speaker is taking part in a role-playing episode in a class, where some of the details of the story, but not the language, have been suggested. This accounts for the almost identical repetition of the same idea.
(122) (Día, woman, 32): And you... we wants you to be weighed, little boy.

(123) (Many, man, 41): ... and there is a two types of ah... ah... places to be use, lease by the ah...

(124) (Boy, 14): You know how to speak Yolŋu Matha?

(125) (Child, 12): Dad said to him, "Let's go to fish."

(126) (Girl, 14): Then they started to fishing.

(127) (Child, 12): Alan want to go fish.

(128) (W, woman, 31): Don't you be cheeky, I don' want you be big [-].

(129) (Girl, 15): Alan's father teaching to holds rod.

The infinitive verb groups in examples (122) and (124) correspond exactly to SAE ones. In (125) go to fish probably corresponds with the more colloquial SAE 'go and fish'. to is omitted in (128). In SAE, the verb immediately following to is always the base form. This is not necessarily the case in Milingimbi English, as examples (126) and (129) testify. They contain the continuous aspect marker and the third person singular present concord marker respectively. The complex infinitive verb phrases to be use, lease (123) and to go fish (127) correspond to SAE 'to be used, leased' and 'to go fishing' respectively.

6.4 Derivational morphology and compounding

English contains a large number of derivational morphemes, as well as productive processes for combining roots to form compounds. Relatively few of either occur in the Milingimbi English corpus, however, and there is very little evidence to suggest that the speaker is aware that derivation and compounding are productive processes. The children
frequently use shells, fish and shellfish in the same speech act, which suggests they may be aware of the origin of shellfish. This is unlikely to be the case with words like radioactive or even chairman.

Milingimbi English contains relatively few compounds. Most of them amalgamate the components of a regularly occurring SAE noun phrase into the one lexeme. The fact that Yolŋu interpret these "compounds" as one word is shown by their stress. Each lexeme in SAE contains one main stress. When a noun phrase becomes a compound in both SAE and Milingimbi English, the major stress falls on the first syllable, as in 'watermelon' ['wotemIlIn]. Those which occur regularly in Milingimbi English but are marked, have a different semantic domain, or are rarer in SAE, include: nungut ('goat' (male or female), derived from 'nanny goat'), bûdjigit ('cat', from 'pussy cat'), sùbran ('Sue Brown', the name of a teacher) and mûrika ('car', from 'motor car'). 'goat', 'cat', (when referring to 'Sue Brown' only, as other Sue's in the community were 'Sue') 'Sue' and 'car', the commonly used forms in SAE, do not occur in Milingimbi English.

The most prevalent derivational morphemes in Milingimbi English are -ing and -ed, both of which convert verb stems into participles. Occasionally -ing participles are used in Milingimbi English where a speaker of SAE would use -ed (example (130)). -ing participles often occur in the English of those Yolŋu with a low proficiency rating in English. While -ing may not be used productively by such people (in that the speaker uses -:a participles as verb roots), it appears to be used by a greater proportion of people with low proficiency ratings than any other English morpheme.

In SAE, a human agent is 'interested' in something which is 'interesting'. The speaker in (130) has extended the domain of interesting to incorporate the activities of a human agent.

Milingimbi Yolgu have derived at least one new English nominal with the derivational suffix -ing. Jealousing (not 'jealousy') is a major problem in the community. Chapter 8 describes its semantics. Jealousing occurs in conjunction with the transitive verb to jealous, which has attested forms jealouses and jealousy.

-ed as a morpheme deriving past participles from verbs occurs less often in Milingimbi English than in SAE (examples (131) and (132)). The type of utterance in (132) is very common in Milingimbi classrooms.

(131) (Girl, 14): Maryanne! This not cook!

(132) (Boy, 14): Finish! Greg, I'm finish!

It is difficult to tell to what extent the Yolgu are aware of the nature of certain English morphemes as derivational affixes. Prefixes (even 'un-', very common in SAE) are almost completely absent from the corpus. It is difficult to tell whether this results from chance or interference from Yolgu Matha, which contains no prefixes. Derivational suffixes occur more often, but rarely in contexts where it is clear that the speaker is using them productively to derive one part of speech from another. The derivation of adverbs from adjectives by means of the suffix -ly does appear to be a productive process. Other word pairs showing evidence of the productive use of derivational suffixes by at least some Yolgu (mainly adults) include: Aborigine - Aboriginal, govern - government, agree - agreement, Africa - African, danger - dangerous, work - worker, power - powerful and nation - nationality. The speaker in examples (133) and (134) demonstrates an understanding of the productive function of some derivational suffixes.
(133) (Dh, man, 34): Other countries suffer lot of things. What they have in mind is liberation, but liberator in the Christ Jesus. That foundation stands for all.

(134) (Dh, man, 34): [...] identity that garra [= "I"] can identify myself.

At other times the speaker appears to be confused by the existence of derived forms (as in example (135)).

(135) (Dh, man, 34): ... that's dirty, that's dirt.

Sometimes the speaker may use a derived form in a standard way, but in another situation use the non-derived form apparently as a variable of the derived one (examples (136) and (137)).

(136) (Mur, woman, 20): That's very danger.

(137) (Mur, woman, 20): Dangerous pain ache.

danger in (136) appears to be used as an adjective, like dangerous. This may result from the blurring of the morphological and syntactic boundary between noun and adjective in Yolnu Matha, which we saw in chapter 3. Both would probably be translated by madakatritj in Yolnu Matha.

Some sentences in the corpus suggest that the speaker is not aware of either the presence or function of SAE derivational suffixes in particular instances (examples (138) and (139)).

(138) (Dja, woman, 32): I think he need admission him to the hospital.

(139) (Many, man, 41): Now, ah... Bodiyalil and Alan Rofe is place he will suggestion that ah... ah... instead of all making a two... two licence... one is this ordinary and one is special, but he was suggesting that...
admission (a noun in SAE) occurs in (138) where SAE would probably use
a verb or participle (hence 'admit' or 'admitted'). The same type of
thing happens in (139), where suggestion (noun in SAE) appears to be
used as a verb (a variable of suggest). The present participial form
suggesting occurs later in the same sentence, as it would in SAE.

6.5 The effects of code-switching on morphology

While code-switching affects all levels of Milingimbi English,
its purely morphological manifestation is on the whole less overt than
the syntactic. Nevertheless, many utterances contain code-switching
at the morphological level. Morphological code-switching never entails
the use of Yolŋu Matha words with English morphemes, but only English
lexical roots with Yolŋu Matha suffixes and grammatical words.
Sometimes English lexemes occur entirely within a matrix of Yolŋu Matha
morphology (example (140)), and it is impossible to understand the
whole utterance without a knowledge of Yolŋu Matha.

(140) (B11, woman, 28):
   yaka ngayi holiday-ŋur
   negative he -locative

'He's not on holiday'.

Another phenomenon of code-switching is that the speaker
commonly incorporates morphological items from both Yolŋu Matha and
English into his or her utterances. Such utterances conform to the
morphological requirements of neither parent system. This use of language
constitutes a particular "code-switching style" which is grammatically
neither English nor Yolŋu Matha (examples (141) to (143)).
(141) (Dja, woman, 32):

skull dhuwal covering-dja ga nhawi

this -focus and um

protecting the bone ga nhawi brain

and um

'This skull is the covering (that we referred to earlier) and um is protecting the bone and um the brain'.

(142) (Maw, man, 31):

He asked government people=nha they will fill

-accusative

munatha hole=lili

hole -allative

'He asked government people [if] they will fill hole'.

(143) (Maw, man, 31):

You this in us agreement tomorrow, Thursday walu because

time

pressure ga marrtji government-ku ga

continuous go -oblique and

mining-gu company to traditional land and Northern -oblique

Land Council Chairman, Mr James Yunupingu.

(meaning not clear, though probably: 'You must agree with us by tomorrow, Thursday, because pressure is coming from the government and mining companies to traditional land owners, and the Northern Land Council chairman, Mr James Yunupingu')
A number of code-switching sequences contain morphological translations, both English and Yolŋu Matha morphemes signifying the same grammatical notion (examples (144) and (145)).

(144) (Bill, woman, 28):
   Too hard for rubbing-
   -dative

(145) (Dija, woman, 32):
   She's your auntie. Auntie nhuŋu Burraypurray-tja
      your
   [Burraypurray = woman's name].
   'She's your auntie. Burraypurray (as I've just said)
   is your aunt'.

(144) expresses the dative relationship in both codes, while (145) contains a translation of your, for emphasis, with a focusing device on the person's name.

Morphological code-switching tends to be particularly prevalent in short and elliptical utterances (examples (146) to (148)).

(146) (Nar, woman, 20): Pack up-na
   -hortative
   'Let's pack up'.

(147) (Boy, 14): Rubber-way
   -concerning
   'Pass the rubber'.

(148) (Boy, 15): Wood rasp-lili
   -allative
   'Go and get a wood rasp'.

An interesting aspect of code-switching is that English phrases which are often regarded as commonly cooccurring (such as wood rasp in
containing two lexemes in SAE), frequently take a suffix from Yolnu Matha only on the last element of the phrase, not on both as would be the case if the words were regarded as two Yolnu Matha lexemes. This suggests that such phrases are regarded as compounded single lexemes in Milingimbi English. Processes of this nature may account for the introduction of new compound words into Milingimbi English. Other examples, noted in the speech of grade 2 and the nurses respectively, are red truck-ku ('of' or 'for the red truck', a vehicle which belongs to the school and is always named the 'red truck') and methylated spirit-ku ('of' or 'for methylated spirits').

6.6 Morphology: summary

The morphology of Milingimbi English differs from that of SAE in a number of ways. Milingimbi English only optionally marks number, and plural need not be specified more than once in noun phrases containing determiners and numerals. In addition to the SAE possessive morpheme /-s/, possession may be marked by the apposition of the noun phrase possessed with the noun phrase possessor. The main difference between SAE and Milingimbi English in the use of pronouns lies in the tendency of the latter to generalise the third person feminine pronouns in all syntactic functions to incorporate masculine and neuter referents as well. Verbal morphology contains many distinctive characteristics. Tense in verb groups which do not convey aspect specification may be marked by the base form of the verb, with or without the preposing of the present or past tense forms of the auxiliary be. Tense marking appears to be optional, particularly in verb groups containing aspect specification. The tendency to omit concord on verbs with third person singular subjects provides some evidence for a hypothesis that Milingimbi English contains a three-way tense distinction, between present, past
and an unmarked "non-future" tense. Milingimbi English contains comparatively few derivational affixes, the most common being -ing, -ed, and -ly. Prefixes do not occur within the corpus. Morphological code-switching provides evidence to suggest that some SAE phrases with regularly co-occurring components are interpreted as compounded single lexemes in Milingimbi English.
CHAPTER 7

SYNTACTIC VARIATION IN MILINGIMBI ENGLISH

7.1 Introduction

This chapter examines the main aspects of the syntactic system of English-as-a-second-language at Milingimbi, drawing attention to those areas where variables exist. The features of its syntax which differ most from those of SAE are the use of certain prepositions and articles, and the range of permissible types of ellipsis. In these areas variation in use is extensive and relatively systematic (at least in the speech of some of the speakers). These systematic differences characterise the syntax of Milingimbi English as distinctive from that of SAE.

7.2 Discourse in Milingimbi English

As the syntactic properties of an utterance depend in part on the discourse in which it is embedded, we need to consider the function and nature of discourse in Milingimbi English. A "discourse" can be defined in general terms as a "unit of communication", whether a monologue or an interchange involving two or more people. The present corpus of Milingimbi English contains the following types of discourse: question-answer interchanges in classrooms (involving two or more active participants); narratives; a telephone conversation; non-narrative conversations, with two or more participants taking turns, conversations based on "teasing"; and role-playing. Some of these types of discourse occur with varying levels of formality within the corpus, with consequent effects on style and register, while particular registers and syntactic devices typify other kinds.

1. However, none of these types of discourse would take place uniformly in one register at all times, with all participants.
Question-answer interchanges in classrooms, among both adults and children, tend to be formal and artificial, with the teacher asking and students answering questions. As a result of the context, the students, whatever their age, give short, elliptical responses, often consisting of only one word, although lengthy comments and interchanges between the students may be interspersed in Yolŋu Matha (example (1)).

(1) [The following was recorded in a domestic science class with a group of 16-year-old girls]
(DS, domestic science teacher, 32): Will you want more bleach or less?
(DS): Why do you think "less"?
(Girl): Less than the nhawi [= "um"] bucket.
[brief interchange in Yolŋu Matha].
(DS): Has it got more water?
(Girl): Yes. [Two or three short comments in Yolŋu Matha].
(DS): Has the washing machine got less in it or more water than in one bucket?
(Girl): More.
(DS): More water. If it has more water, then it has ... more bleach or less bleach?
[a few words in Yolŋu Matha].
(DS): Why would it have less bleach?
(Girl): [Yolŋu Matha: a couple of sentences].
(DS): No, it's going to have more.
This type of discourse characterises the English of Yolŋu of all ages inside the classroom.

Other formal situations compel the speaker to give extended English utterances. In the story-re-telling tests conducted among the grade 5 and grade 7 children and post-primary girls, each child was forced to narrate a whole story. These stories contained very little or no Yolŋu Matha, and virtually no ellipsis. Even the grade 5 children almost always told the story using complete "sentences". Example (2) is the story told by one of the members of the class quoted in (1).

(2) (Girl, 16): Alan's holding his nhā [= "what"] fishing line. His father pointing at Alan's rod. Alan's putting his rod on the car, ḣani [= "is that right?"] He's getting some mussels, ḣani [= "is that right?"] His father is cutting up the mussels. His father showing him the mussels. Alan's father fishing. Alan caught a fish. He got fish on his hook. His father didn't catch a fish.

Discourses such as (2) contain far more continuous English than would be heard in the question-answer type of discourse.

By contrast with (1) and (2), example (3) shows the linguistic nature of informal narrative discourse.

(3) [Three Balanda women and a group of Yolŋu girls are sitting round a fire at night, while camping].
(Girl₁, 14): Maryanne, I'll do my fishing over there for myself.
(MG, Balanda teacher, 22): And bring me a big fish.
(Girl₁, 14): Nhawiy, [= "um"] I'll tell Hercules he will nhawī [= "um"] caught the nhā [= "what"] whale.
(Girls & women): [laughter].

(DS, Balanda teacher, 32): And we ate it.

(Girl$_1$, 14): Yow [= "yes"]. Like nhawi [= "um"]

Sinbad the Sailor.

(Girl$_2$, 14): I like Sinbad the Sailor.

(Girl$_1$, 14): [Yolnu Matha clause] ga [= "and"] nhawi [= "um"] he didn't.

Informal "narratives" in Milingimbi English are characterised by audience participation (questions, elaboration, digression and so on), so that the story becomes disconnected, and takes on the features of an informal turn-taking conversation. Such narratives and informal conversations regularly contain portions in Yolnu Matha and many occurrences of the Yolnu Matha sentence filler, nhawi-, as well as repetition and ellipsis.

Business telephone conversations in English (see example (4) in Chapter 4), do not contain any segments in Yolnu Matha, (not even the sentence - filler nhawi- or isolated meta-comments like jani [= "is that right?"] or nhii [= "what?"]). They contain frequent repetition (when the interlocuter has not fully heard what the speaker is saying), ellipsis, and periodic comments of acknowledgement or acquiescence like yeah ... yeah, which are often conveyed by facial expressions or gestures in face-to-face conversations.

Monologues in Milingimbi English (see appendix F for an example) are characterised by frequent code-switching, rhetorical questions, analogies, imagery, discourse connectives like and and ga, and multi-clause sentences. Ellipsis does not occur very often, perhaps because the lack of audience feedback and participation prevents the speaker from gauging whether the audience has understood the speech so far. All the monologues recorded are formal and rather lengthy.
Informal arguments and teasing (example (4)) can also be contrasted with the question-answer school situation. Code-switching and ellipsis are common, as is the sentence-filler nhawi-.

(*4) [This is an extract from a much longer conversation between me and a group of women of whom at least Gal. was my own age, at night, before a film. While the conversation was largely in English (because of my presence), my own active contribution was small].

(Gal., woman, 23): And she got lots of children at Yirrkala.

(Warr., woman, 31): Bâyŋu, [= "no"], she's joking.

(Gal.): She's five children at Yirrkala.

(Warr.): She's joking ... she's joking.

(Women): [argument in Yolŋu Matha].

(Gal.): Three ...

(Warr.): Bâyŋu [= "no"]. Yow yow yow [= "yes yes yes"], right.

(Mal., woman, 18): Two far away.

(Gal.): Five more.

(Women): [Yolŋu Matha = brief interchange].

(Mal.): Two adopting ga murrma' [= "and two"]

[= "and two"] ...

(VE): Two adopting?

(Gal.): Adopting ... Adopting ...

(Warr.): Bâyŋu ... and ... she's joking ...

[Yolŋu Matha phrase] nhawi [= "um"] ... understand.

(Mal.): Bâyŋu ... [= "no"]. She got bulu [= "more"].

(Gal.): No-o! Telling liar ... to Vanessa.
(Worr.): Two nhawi [= "um"] boy ga [= "and"] nhawi [= "um"] girl.
(Mal.): Mummy, Mummy come and kiss kiss Mummy, kiss kiss ... to mine coming.
(Gal.): Three nhawi [= "um"] girls.
(Mal.): They were married at Yirrkala ... yes.
(Worr.): She's telling liar.
(Gal.): She's nyul miyalk [= "woman who tells lies"] ... I mean, she's nyul'yun [= "tell lies"]. ...
(Gal.): And she got ten more.
(Worr.): That's lying.
(Gal.): Eleven ... she got twenty.
(Mal.): Twenty ga [= "and"] ... she got nhawi [= "um"] ...
(Gal.): Maningrida number two. Yirrkala she got ten, Goulburn three, ga [= "and"] Milimginbi twenty. [Yolgu Matha].
(Mal.): At Milimginbi - ten nhawi [= "um"] thirty, ga [= "and"] Darwin ...
(Gal.): Ten.
(Mal.): That's forty.
(VE): Walal! [= "goodness!"]
(Mal.): Ga [= "and"] last one ... ga [= "and"] forty one dhuwala [= "this one"].

While this type of interchange has many of the discourse features of ordinary turn-taking conversations, its nature as a teasing session tends to limit the length of each utterance. The victim of the teasing has fewer opportunities to put her case than the people
responsible for it. The actual topic, children, is mentioned twice at
the beginning, then omitted as "understood".

Role-playing utterances tend to contain little ellipsis, and
relatively little Yolŋu Matha except as meta-comments (for example,
ŋani ('is that right?'), which question an outside observer about the
"accuracy" of the utterance. Such utterances often contain extensive
repetition, as speakers prompt others, or try to become fluent in what
has just been devised (example (5)).

(5) (Bil, woman, 28): Ten people is coming in for the
party and we haven't got enough things. Let's go
and get some from the shop. Let's go ... [Yolŋu
Matha meta-comments].

(Bhil., woman, 23): Go!

(Bil.): [Meta-comments in Yolŋu Matha] shops ... I
don't know what food to get [Meta-comments in Yolŋu
Matha].

(Dja., woman, 32): I don't know, let's ask the
salesman.

(Bil.): Excuse me ... Oh yes, can I help you,
biyak [= "say it like that"].

(Dhil.): Oh yes, can I help you?

(Bil.): We're having a ... ten people and we don't
know what to get. Can you help us?

(Dhil.): Crab ... there's crab, ŋani. [= "is that
right?"]

(Bil.): There's fresh crab.

(Dhil.): There's fresh crab ... today.

(Bil.): How much do they cost? biyak
"say it like that").

(Dja.): How much do they cost?

Bil. is the pivot of this role-playing interchange, both playing her own part and providing guidance for the other participants. Such discourses are artificial and stylised, and do not reflect the linguistic nature of more spontaneous discourses.

These examples of different types of discourse in Milingimbi English demonstrate the range of syntactic structures in the corpus. The extent to which any individual is able to participate in such discourse depends in part on their level of proficiency and their status in the community. (For example, it could be considered inappropriate for most people, specially women, to indulge in public monologues, of the type demonstrated in Appendix F). In particular, there is a divergence in the syntactic scope of utterances used by children and those used by most adults, which thus affects the range of discourse in which they are able to participate.

For example, the utterances in English of young children (possibly until the ages of about eight or nine) are rarely full "sentences" in the sense of having subject and verb, or agent, verb and object. This probably stems partly from the nature of the school situation (where they were recorded) which, as we have seen, generally triggers only minimal responses from speakers of all ages. These children have little or no need to use English outside school and very little experience in doing so. Even when speaking Yol'gu Matha, many of these children use single word utterances, although they are clearly capable of extended ones. Minimum responses to the teacher, regardless of language, appear to be considered appropriate in school classrooms,
when addressing a teacher. Outside school, casual conversational language, as we have seen, contains a high proportion of very elliptical utterances, whether in Yolŋu Matha or English.

While expanded discourse in English is not considered appropriate for school, most young children do not have enough English to contribute much to it anyway. Nevertheless, grade 2's Balanda teacher found that a few members of her class did sometimes spontaneously articulate whole "sentences". For example, towards the end of the year, some of the brightest children were saying the following in the classroom: Here's your tea and Here's your supper (using "pretend food"), Where's your money?, Stick'em up! and You wanna fight? These English sentences formed part of an extended and animated turn-taking conversational discourse. The situation was exceptional. Although they were in the classroom, the children were having "free activities", and all twelve children present were involved in a very intense game centred around a "gambling circle", which was being served "drinks" and "food" by those who were not participating in the card-playing. These English utterances were heard only after the game had been in progress for over half an hour and the children were excited and involved. Nevertheless, these "sentences" are all stock phrases and are thus unlikely to have been creatively generated. The children probably learnt them in that

2. This reticence with teachers in classrooms probably stems from the Yolŋu, and the whole Balanda-style education process. As we saw in Chapter 2, Yolŋu expect a "teacher" to demonstrate new things as they become relevant to the context, and the learner passively to "receive" the new knowledge from the teacher before or while trying to apply it. The Balanda question-answer style of education is alien to the Yolŋu.
form from watching films, or in the classroom, and transferred them as borrowed idioms into their own speech. English words like drink were occasionally heard in this game, both as complete utterances and as part of larger chunks of the Yolŋu Matha discourse.

Again inside the classroom, some of the brighter grade 2 children may ask the Balanda teacher: Where's my money?, Where are you going?, and more rarely say things like I'm a little teacher (word substitution based on the song "I'm a little teapot") and I'm going home (possibly derived from drill lessons). This type of discourse is always initiated by the child.

When this teacher visits camp, these children address her in Yolŋu Matha (although she is not fluent in it). Within her own home, this teacher finds that the children from her class rarely talk to her (they generally come with older children), although they do sometimes make single-word utterances in English, such as lolly!, plum!, and apple! ('Apple').

Thus young children do not have the linguistic resources to participate in many types of discourse in English. They can respond to classroom situations, get something they want, mimic, and, when very relaxed, role-play with each other in English. They probably could not participate in lengthy narratives, complicated turn-taking conversations or monologues in English. While the reasons for this are partly cultural (for example, young children are not expected to take the lime-light at public gatherings), they are predominantly linguistic. Young children have had insufficient exposure to and practice in using English to permit them to be highly articulate in it.
By contrast, adults with a high level of proficiency in English may command and use a varied range of discourse types and the major syntactic structures appropriate for each. Their utterances extend from one or two word structures, typical of the young children in all contexts, to lengthy discourses containing complex sentences with conjoined, embedded and subordinate clauses. Ability to control the more complex discourse structures is limited for those adults with a smaller command of English.

The syntax of Milingimbi English thus varies according to the speaker's level of proficiency and the type of discourse involved. A notion like "sentence" as an abstraction defining the use of language in units of communication is valid for Milingimbi English, although the "sentences" used by young children are subject to syntactic rules which characterise a small sub-set of SAE "sentences" and the English "sentences" produced by older Yolnu. Ellipsis is a fundamental feature of Milingimbi English at all levels in most types of discourse. In order to understand the importance of ellipsis and how it operates at a syntactic level, we need first to consider the structure of the smaller units of syntax (phrases) and how they are amalgamated into larger ones (clauses and sentences).

7.3 Phrase structure

7.3.1 Noun phrase constituents

A number of possible constituents may fill the noun phrase slot in a Milingimbi English sentence, most of them identical to those of English, a few of them not. Table 7.1 summarises the alternatives, giving standard examples and, where applicable, examples idiosyncratic to Milingimbi English. Most specifically Milingimbi English noun
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Constituent Combinations in NP</th>
<th>Examples - SE 6 Milingimbi English</th>
<th>Examples - Milingimbi English Only</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>NOUN(N)</td>
<td>bait</td>
<td>hammer</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ADJECTIVE (ADJ)-N</td>
<td>chocolate cake</td>
<td>animal doctor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ADJ-ADJ-N</td>
<td>two big ones</td>
<td>long fishing line</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ARTICLE (ART)-N</td>
<td>the stone</td>
<td>a Alan, some baits</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ART-ADJ-N</td>
<td>a fishing rope</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ART-ADJ-ADJ-N</td>
<td>a new fishing line</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ART-INTENSIFIER-ADJ-N</td>
<td>a very clever fisherman</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>POSSESSIVE N(Nposs)-N</td>
<td>Alan's father</td>
<td>my children children</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ART/POSS/PRON-Nposs-N</td>
<td>a man's hand</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>POSSESSIVE PRONOUN (possPRON)-N</td>
<td>his father</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>possPRON-ADJ-N</td>
<td>his fishing rod</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DEMONSTRATIVE(DEM)-N</td>
<td>this bait</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DEM-ADJ-N</td>
<td>that good story</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DEM-ADJ-ADJ-N</td>
<td>this new</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DEM.</td>
<td>Balanda bloke</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PRON.</td>
<td>you, I, me, myself, mine, etcetera</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DEM.</td>
<td>this, that, these, those</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ART.</td>
<td>some, any</td>
<td>the, a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ADJ.</td>
<td>traditional, sacred</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N-ADJ (N used adjectivally)</td>
<td>one thing wrong, nine years old</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ART-ADJ.</td>
<td></td>
<td>a nine</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ADJ-N-ADVERB(ADV)</td>
<td>no fish</td>
<td>big fish, orange, white and silver</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ADJ-N=ADJ-ADJ-AND=ADJ</td>
<td>a big gold and silver fish</td>
<td>nothing understanding</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NEGATIVE-N</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ART-ADJ-ADJ-AND=ADJ-N</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ADJ-N=DEM.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DEM-Nposs-N</td>
<td>this boy's name</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
phrases differ from SAE ones in the choice or absence of articles (as in, for example, a Alan). As this is one of the most significant areas of difference between SAE and Milingimbi English, the next sub-section discusses it in some detail. Some Milingimbi English phrases demonstrate different rules of number concord between determiners and noun heads from SAE (for example, this girl). Discussed already in section 6.2.1. Other noun phrases contain constituents in a different order from SAE (for example, big fish orange white and silver). Noun phrases containing adjectival heads occur in Milingimbi English (traditional), although rather infrequently. This type of noun phrase probably reflects interference from Yolnu Matha, where adjectives can occur as the only noun phrase constituent.

Noun phrases of the type ADJ-N-DEM (for example, big one that) are a common feature of Milingimbi English in many situations, although they are found less often in SAE. They sometimes occur as complete utterances. While noun phrases with adjectives and demonstratives as heads do occur in Milingimbi English, as we have seen, there is nevertheless, a tendency to extend them, generally by adding one (as in good one! or Di, this one?).

Milingimbi English contains fewer restraints on the position of adjectives than does SAE. Phrases such as apple green (describing an apple), fish big, government Commonwealth and big fish, orange, white and silver can occur, although rather rarely compared with the SAE ordering of ADJ-(ADJ...)N. Noun phrases with two or more adjectives preceding the noun are very rare (this new Balandabloke and a big gold and silver fish). This may also be due to interference from Yolnu Matha, where noun phrases very rarely contain more than two adjectives.
7.3.2 Determiners

The determiners in Milingimbi English are particularly susceptible to variable usage. As in SAE, there are two types of determiners: articles (the definite article the and indefinite articles a, some and any, while it may have definite or indefinite reference, or have no implication about definiteness) and demonstratives (this, that, these and those). Table 7.2 summarises their main functions. Use of a certain determiner in preference to another is dependent on context. Choice of determiners in Milingimbi English differs from that of SAE less at the discourse level, however, than at the phrase level, where determiners and nouns are sometimes used in combinations not permitted in SAE.

**Table 7.2**

**The Determiners in Milingimbi English**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Singular</th>
<th>Plural</th>
<th>Mass noun</th>
<th>Names</th>
<th>Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>DEMONSTRATIVES:</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>'here'</td>
<td>this</td>
<td>this</td>
<td>this</td>
<td>φ</td>
<td>this/these</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>'there'</td>
<td>that</td>
<td>these</td>
<td>that</td>
<td>~ that</td>
<td>that/those</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>ARTICLES:</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>the ~ φ</td>
<td>the ~ φ</td>
<td>the</td>
<td>~ the</td>
<td>the ~ φ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>DEFINITE reference</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>INDEFINITE reference</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>a/an ~ any</td>
<td>some ~ any</td>
<td>some ~ φ</td>
<td>φ</td>
<td>a ~ φ ~ any</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The demonstratives generally operate in a syntactically standard way in Milingimbi English. They may be the only components of noun phrases or may co-occur with nouns (and adjective-noun combinations). Their use is perhaps more widespread at Milingimbi than in SAE, as Yolŋu tend to use them in contexts where SAE might use definite articles, pronouns, or even nothing at all (examples (6) to (9)).

(6) (Boy, 13): Eh, you know, at Elcho, you know, that's the Sheppies [a basketball team]. You know that Shepherdson College?

(7) (Gat., man, 28): And the other ... those three of them, they're just playing cards.

(8) (Boy, 13): Eh, looks funny with this glass. [The boy was peering through my spectacles].

(9) (Djil., woman, 32): That Jack was talking.

In (6) and (9) that gives special emphasis to the name, which would generally be unmarked in SAE. Such uses of that do occur, however, in a number of dialects of English. This structure may be a syntactic blend of SAE phrases like 'Jack' and 'that fellow, Jack', (which contains two noun phrases in apposition) this in (8) carries the same semantics and syntactic function as it does in SAE, giving definite reference to something in which the speaker is immediately interested. The deictic reference conveyed by those in (7) is stronger than the phrase requires in SAE, which would substitute 'the' instead ('the three of them'). As Yolŋu Matha optionally uses demonstratives to specify definiteness, this tendency of Milingimbi English to use them in a wider range of situations than SAE does probably results from interference.
Greater variation occurs in the use of articles, particularly the and a/an. The prevalence of a where SAE requires an article (generally the or a) suggests that Milingimbi English does not oblige speakers to make a choice regarding definiteness, some and any occur within the same range of situations as in SAE.

Any in Milingimbi English, as in SAE, is used with indefinite plural count nouns and mass nouns when the sentence is negative (examples (10) and (11)), interrogative (example (12)), as the head of a noun phrase (example (13)) and with singular and plural count nouns to indicate a greater degree of indefiniteness than a/an or some (example (14)).

(10) (Girl, 11): Dad sat down for an hour but he didn't caught any fish.

(11) (Māw., man, 31): [The prime minister said]: "If chairman of the Northern Land Council will yaka [= "not"] sign, there won't be any outstation movement".

(12) (Bill., woman, 28): Has he had any chest infections before?

(13) (Cat., man, 28): Find any there, Sue?

(14) (Bill., woman, 28): Excuse me, I'm looking for some cassettes that I can ... any sort of cassette that I can sort out for my friend.

SAE uses 'any' in a wider range of situations, but these other manifestations are not attested in the corpus. It seems to be the last article learned (perhaps because of its semantic and syntactic complexity), not appearing before the grade 7 material.
As in SAE, *some* in Milingimbi English refers to more than one referent of a count noun (examples (15) and (16)) or a portion of a mass noun (the second *some* in (16)). It may qualify a noun or occur as the only component in a noun phrase, (example 17)). *some* appears first in the grade 5 corpus.

(15) (Child, 10): One day, David went to get *some* crayfish. Then he put *some* shellfish ... and then she got *some* ... and she get *some* shellfish.

(16) (Child, 12): They will get *some* shells for bait. They both are cutting *some* bait. Alan and Dad, they was find them. They get *some* hook.

(17) (Boy, 13): *Some* of their ... nhawi [="um"] that south people don't know Aborigine. [Note that plural is marked only once in the noun phrase, *that south people*, where SAE would also mark it on the demonstrative].

*Some* occurs in a couple of situations where SAE would not use it, or do so only in a syntactically different way (examples (18) and (19)).

(18) (Girl, 10): I see *some* nothing.

(19) (Gat., man, 28): NHM [="what"] *some* we were ...

The occurrence of *some* in the same noun phrase as *nothing* in (18) lends support to the hypothesis postulated in section 6.2.1, that Milingimbi English optionally treats the indefinite pronouns as nouns. *Some* occurs in opposition with *we* in (19), corresponding semantically to SAE 'some of us'.
Although the rule for applying the in SAE is relatively easy, in that it is not subject to morphophonemic or morphological variation (unlike other determiners), it optionally occurs in a wider range of contexts in Milingimbi English. As in SAE, the occurs: with mass and count nouns to mark definiteness where this is required because of the position of the noun phrase in the discourse (He is making a fishing line ... They put the fishing line ...); with nouns with only one referent or no possibility of ambiguity about the identity of the referent (the world, the clinic, the government, the Balanda community); with phrases referring to "absolutes" (all the power house, the last baby, the end of the story, after the next patient, the only vehicle, with the same card); in certain context to with mass nouns (the bait) and abstractions (the liberty); with some non-personal names (the Northern Land Council, the Esplanade [Lodge], the Territory, the Country Party, the Christ Jesus, the Bible, the Ranger agreement, the Amesees [a type of tablet]); and in certain idiomatic phrases (half of the tooth, on the phone).

The use of the in the following utterances, however, distinguishes Milingimbi English from SAE (examples (20) to (32)).

(20) (Child, 12): They were looking at the something.
(21) (Boy, 12): When they got home, they the fish for the tea.
(22) (Girl, 14): Don't get the cold! [meaning: 'It's chilly, don't get cold'].
(23) (Dja., woman, 32): Vanessa, I saw you in the photo.
(VE): What photo?
(24) (Dhū, woman, 23): Don't worry about ... the Mum is ringing the doctor.
(25) (VE): Does aspirin make you really sick really quickly?
(Bill, woman, 28): Yaka bōyŋu [= "no no"]
Not the boy of that age.

(26) (Bill, woman, 28): The music she likes is the
country western music.

(27) (Girl, 14): And the Dad is fishing.

(28) (Dja., woman, 32): That's the good girl, Diane!

(29) (B., man, 38): You just pull in the head, mo'ly first.

(30) (Many, man, 41): Henry, ah, the bloke that was
working on the A.L.P.A. [Arnhem Land Progress
Association].

(31) (Many., man, 41): Hmm ... but ah ... the Ian
was er ...

(32) (Many., man, 41): What the Neil going to do
ah ... tomorrow?

A number of these distinctive uses of the can be classified as
such according to semantic or syntactic considerations. In (24), (27),
(31) and (32), the is used with personal names, never the case in SAE,
where, however, the is often used with the proper names of objects or
institutions. While personal names are only rarely used with the in
Nilingimbi English (in comparison with the number of occasions when
the is not used), it appears that at least some adult speakers may
have devised an optional rule permitting the occurrence of the +
personal name, perhaps by analogy with those situations where the may
coccur with a non-personal name in SAE. Its use in (30) with A.L.P.A.,
an acronym (pronounced [alpa]), appears to be generalised from its
optional use with other names, especially by that particular speaker. Balandas at Milingimbi were never heard saying the A.L.F.A.

Milingimbi English uses the in a number of idiomatic expressions where it never appears in SAE (examples (21), (22), (28) and (29)). the (21) is not used with names of meals in SAE (though it is with 'meal' itself). It is redundant in (28) as that specifies definite reference. The expressions in these examples correspond to SAE 'for tea', 'get cold', 'that's a good girl' and 'pull in your head'.

The presence of the with something in (20) once more supports the hypothesis that indefinite pronouns of this type are optionally treated as nouns in Milingimbi English.

In the remaining examples ((23), (25) and (26)) the use of the is distinctive from SAE because of its different function within the discourse. Dia. opens her conversation in (23) by referring to the photo, which, as this is the first reference to any photo and there is none present, prompts "what photo?" as my response. Dia. is more specific than an SAE speaker would be at that juncture, possibly because the photo has definite reference for her. In (25) the speaker has used the in a generalisation, where it corresponds to indefinite, general 'a' in SAE, or an indefinite plural ('not boys ...'). Milingimbi English the country western music in (26) corresponds to a generalised statement that 'she' likes 'country western music', where no article at all is used within the development of the "same" discourse in SAE. the does not appear to be within the productive repertoire of the preschool children and children in grade 2 use it very rarely. Grade 5 and grade 7 children and the post-primary girls employ the in the same way as SAE speakers, but are also likely to use it in idiomatic phrases where it would not be present in SAE, with names like
and irregularly within the sequence of the discourse.

Adults’ use of the tends to differ most from SAE at the discourse level, particularly when the speaker assumes the hearer knows what he or she is talking about or is making generalisations which in SAE require indefinite articles or no article at all. Some adults use the in idiomatic phrases which do not contain the in SAE, and with personal names. Only the post-primary boys are recorded as using the solely where it occurs in SAE.

The rules for applying the indefinite article a in SAE are much more complex than for the, and it is here that the difference in use of determiners between SAE and Milingimbi English is widest. The morphophonemic variants a and an are used in the same way in both. As in SAE, a is used to indicate: indefinite reference within the discourse with count nouns (take a message, a kung fu [film], on a contract, a skeleton, a new fishing line, a crayfish, a girl...); in certain idiomatic phrases (just a minute ...); with certain numbers (a hundred and forty); with the meaning of ‘each’ ($24 a night); and with diseases with non-technical names (a chest infection).

However, a is also used in a range of utterances impossible in SAE. Most commonly (thirteen occurrences), it is used with nouns which in SAE are count nouns (examples (33) to (36)).

(33) (Child, 12): Do you want a help?[^3][Do you want help?]}

[^3]: Intonation and stress indicate that a here is not the sentence-filler ah. ah always receives some stress, is lengthened, and frequently precedes or follows a slight pause. These occurrences of a are unstressed and occur in completely fluent utterances.
(34) (Mur., woman, 20): We'll give you a petrol to make you play.

(35) (Girl, 14): Her father show his, show her to cut a bait.

(36) (Mau., man, 31): Every country got a nuclear power.

The effect of using a here is to convert these nouns into count nouns. This is the only occurrence of petrol in the corpus, and the only one where nuclear power is utilised with an indefinite article. Both help and bait commonly occur as count nouns in Milingimbi English, especially in children's speech.

a occurs six times in the corpus with whole numbers or fractions (examples (37) to (40)), where it does not occur in SAE because of the plural reference.

(37) (Girl, 10): He looking to a six fish at a rock.

(38) (Many., man, 41): ... and there is a two types of ah ... ah ... to be use, lease by the ah ... et ... may be with the NLC [Northern Land Council] or DAA [Department of Aboriginal Affairs] people.

(39) (Dh., man, 34): Only three and a three quarter per cent.

(40) (Child, 12): Alan was a nine.

Related to the use of a with phrases containing numbers is its use with plural nouns (five instances, as in (41) to (43)).

(41) (Girl, 10): Find the boiling in the fire and the get some fish a lots of fish.

(42) (Mur., woman, 20): Here come a pretty ladies with Mr Pretty.
(43) (Rtik., woman, 35): Have you got a scissors here, or báyou? [= "no"].

a occasionally appears with count nouns where the structure of the discourse suggests that it would not be used in SAE (example (44)).

(44) (Girl, 12): They had a fish for supper.
The fish being eaten in (44) was the subject of the whole previous discourse. "Thus a fish in this instance corresponds to 'the fish' in SAE.

In SAE, the technical names of some diseases do not occur with any article. There are two instances in Milingimbi English (by the same speaker) where a is used in conjunction with the names of diseases (examples (45) and (46)), by analogy with SAE 'a cold', 'a stroke' and 'a headache'.

(45) (Dja., woman, 32): He had a TB. [TB also occurs without any article in the next utterance, by a different person].

(46) (Dja., woman, 32): I think he's got a meningitis.

There are two instances where SAE derived adjectives are treated as count nouns in Milingimbi English (example (47)).

(47) (Child, 10): 'e's a tired.

a is used in other isolated instances where it would not occur in SAE: with a present participle (example (48)); with something (example (49)); in an idiomatic phrase (example (50)); with a name (example (51)); and with an "absolute", (example (52)).

(48) (Dj., man, 24): I can't get them and, you know, give me a thinking, and I'll go and I can start perhaps do some learning business.
(49) (Boy, 14): I can see something.

(50) (Child, 12): Alan is having dinner.

(51) (Girl, 12): Dad said, "Yes! It was a Alan caught the fish".

(52) (Child, 12): He's sitting on a front of a picture.

(48) could be a syntactic blend of two SAE clauses, 'give me a thought' and something like 'start me thinking'. (49) contains the final piece of evidence to support the hypothesis that something and other indefinite pronouns may sometimes function as count nouns. having a dinner in (50) corresponds with the idiomatic SAE phrase 'having dinner'. The rules of SAE are idiosyncratic, as 'having a meal' is acceptable. (51) and (52) show respectively how Milingimbi English can optionally use the indefinite article with a name and with an "absolute" word like 'front'. In (52), a may be the surface manifestation of 'the'.

The indefinite article appears to be the determiner learnt first by Yolnu children, as it is attested a small number of times in both the preschool and grade 2 material. These groups never use it in ways not possible in SAE. Grade 5 and grade 7 children use it according to the rules of SAE approximately twice as often as they use it in a manner distinctive to Milingimbi English. All older groups employ it as in SAE, but also optionally in additional circumstances. Post-primary boys use it (proportionately) least frequently.

Many nouns in SAE are not specified for definiteness or indefiniteness. Learning where determiners are not used appears to be one of the most difficult tasks which face Yolnu in becoming competent speakers of SAE. Because definiteness and indefiniteness are optionally marked in Yolnu Matha, specifying definiteness and indefiniteness becomes optional in Milingimbi English as well. So
far we have only considered situations which denote one or the other. Table 7.3 summarises the number of times articles are used and omitted in Milingimbi English by each category of people surveyed, in comparison with SAE.

As in SAE, speakers of Milingimbi English do not use determiners in the following situations: when the noun is in the plural and a generalised statement is being made (see individual parents, with Yolnu people, other accidents like falls ga [= "and"] burns, for ten people, playing cards, take clothes, other mussels, lots of crayfish ...); with mass nouns unmarked for definite or indefinite reference (oxygen, nice firm skin, money, pressure, power, law, for bait, it's seaweed ...); in many idiomatic phrases (after lunch, for supper, by hand, on holiday, on duty, want time off, at home, to breakfast, go by boat ...); with the names of languages and nationalities (speak English, with Aboriginal people ...); with other names (to Dhirirri [an outstation], from America, Mornington ga [= "and"] Aurukun, God, Ian, Henry, Di ...); the second noun of conjoined noun phrases when the determiner is specified at the head (the spades ga [= "and"] crowbars); with the names of some diseases (got pneumonia, he had TB); and in phrases consisting of sort of + noun (what sort of medicine?).

There are many utterances in Milingimbi English where no determiner is used in contexts which suggest that a speaker of SAE would add the. Most commonly (forty-four times), g is used instead of the when the noun concerned is in an unambiguously definite statement, or has only one possible referent (examples (53) to (58)).

(53) (Child, 10): Simon is go to water.
### Table 7.3

The use of articles in Milinjimbi English

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>A/AN</th>
<th>SOME</th>
<th>ANY</th>
<th>THE</th>
<th>φ</th>
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</thead>
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<tr>
<td></td>
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<td>ND</td>
<td>ST</td>
<td>ND</td>
<td>ST</td>
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<td>AB</td>
<td>PR</td>
<td>AB</td>
<td>PR</td>
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<td>1</td>
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<td>16</td>
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<td>Post-Primary Girls</td>
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<td>10</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Post-Primary Boys</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nurses (Women)</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Council (Men)</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Miscellaneous Men:</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Women:</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*PR = Presence
AB = Absence

The terminology is explained in Table 6.1.

†The numbers are absolute scores and should be compared only within the scores for each article.

** NON-STANDARD φ signifies that φ (no article) is used in Milinjimbi English when SAM requires the use of an article, but two or more articles would fit the particular context in SAM.
(54) (Maw., man, 31): We want to take matter back to community. [The 'matter' in question is the question of uranium mining on Aboriginal land, while the 'community' is unambiguously Milingimbi].

(55) (Boy, 13): One who play lead man? I've got phone for him. [In the first sentence the boy is referring to the man who had led a country and western group which had visited Milingimbi the previous week].

(56) (DNa, headmaster): Does the committee talk to Dr Eedle or is it a committee to talk to the NAC? [National Aboriginal Congress].

(Cap., woman, 26): Committee to talk to minister of education. [Referring specifically to the Northern Territory minister of education].

(57) (Dj., man, 24): ... so, because I am working for Y.M.C.A., some of the words I don't understand, you know ... [While Y.M.C.A. is a name, it is also an acronym, conventionally referred to in SAE as "the Y.M.C.A."]. English is very confusing here, as SAE has 'the Y.M.C.A.' but 'A.L.P.A.', while Milingimbi English has Y.M.C.A., but the A.L.P.A.]

(58) (Krik., w., man, 35): It's all right, nhawi [= "um"], Vanessa. I am sleeping, tired in sun.

In all these sentences the identity of the referent is unambiguous as there is only one item which could possibly be inferred in the context. Thus the use of the here in SAE is semantically redundant. This may account for the tendency of Milingimbi English not use the in such phrases.
is used at least twenty times when the would be required in SAE by the structure of the discourse (examples (59) to (63)).

(59) (Dj., man, 24): No, the thing was I don't like was ... ah ... you know, like um ... noise of it.

(60) (Dh., man, 34): "You take that money, put it into plane". [Referred to a minute earlier by the same speaker].

(61) (Dia., woman, 32): Yaka [= "no"], yuwalk [= "it's true"]. It's not far from house. [Referring to a house belonging to the subject of the story, in a picture].

(62) (Boy, 13): Big mountain. You can't go into edge, you know, you can just come down.

(63) (Girl, 12): He had a new fishing rope [...] Alan put fishing rope into the car.

Because of the structure of the discourse (the object has already been mentioned, or the noun can be directly related to its referent by means of a picture, or the syntax in some other way implies specific reference), the use of definite articles in these and similar utterances is semantically redundant in SAE, hence unnecessary in Milimbimbi English.

Semantic redundancy of the definite article is also probably responsible for the occasional omission of the in phrases containing "absolutes" like first, last and end (example (64) and (65)).

(64) (Boy, 13): I stay till end of August. ['till August' is good SAE, of course].

(65) (Girl, 15): Yaka [= "no"]. That's last one.
Some noun phrases with human referents in Milingimbi English are treated like names, hence the absence of determiners (example (66)).

(66) (Bil., woman, 28): Last picture is the nhawi [= "um"] when doctor is on duty the next day.

The name of a people may be used without an article (example (67)).

(67) (Mur., woman, 20): Yoľgu was unhappy because of the ... fishing boat.

In almost all contexts in which Milingimbi English does not use the where it would be obligatory in SAE, its presence would entail a degree of semantic redundancy. While this redundancy is permitted in the same context in many other utterances, Yoľgu make the selection of the purely optional, in the same way they can choose whether or not to be specific in Yoľgu Matha.

also alternates with the indefinite article a in Milingimbi English, especially when the discourse structure requires a in SAE. When the referent is clearly not specific, or it is the first time it has been mentioned, the Milingimbi English speaker has the option of not indicating anything about definiteness or indefiniteness, by omitting a (examples (68) to (73)).

(68) (Girl, 12): [Alan] spend his money in fishing line. His father said, "You've got long fishing line".

(69) (Girl, 14): They caught fish in water. [Fish is morphologically ambiguous for number in SAE, but the context here clearly suggests that in this case fish is singular].

(70) (Dhü., woman, 23): This is Dutch name.

(71) (Boy, 14): I've got hammer at home.
(72) (uɛ, man, 28): I'm telling you good story.

(73) (Dhɨ, man, 34): ... I'm sitting on that parliament chair an' I'm proud man, because I'm talking English.

Some diseases and aches marked by a in SAE are unmarked for definiteness or indefiniteness in the same contexts in Milingimbi English (examples (74) and (75)).

(74) (Dhɨ, woman, 23): I've got tummy ache. [This is acceptable in some dialects of British English].

(75) (Dju, woman, 32): This little boy will have bad chest, so I send him to the hospital, gani [= "is that tight?"].

lot and bit are sometimes unmarked for number or definiteness in Milingimbi English. lot of may correspond to SAE 'lots of' or 'a lot of', while bit is equivalent to SAE 'a bit' (examples (76) and (77)).

(76) (Dhɨ, man, 34): Other countries suffer lot of things.

(77) (Maw., man, 31): [Dr Zorn said] "I'm finish! I'm finish.

Yolŋu frequently choose &, where SAE requires the speaker to use either a definite or indefinite article but the choice is arbitrary, not dependent on the position of the noun within the discourse or the type of noun. Most commonly this occurs with count nouns where the context indicates that an article is syntactically necessary in SAE, but the choice is semantically irrelevant (examples (78) to (81)).

(78) (Dhɨ, woman, 23): little girl fell from tree.
(79)  (Gat., man, 28): Bāpa [literally "father", but also the name customarily given to the minister of the church at Milingimbi] will get tractor on Saturday. I'll do it myself.

(80)  (Girl, 14): Nhawiy [= "um"], Maryanne, last night we saw a picture about ring of fire starring Tom Jones.

(81)  (Child, 12): "He caught fish", said Dad. [Explaining what had happened].

In Milingimbi English, singular nouns with no article may be used to correspond either with an SAE plural or unspecified singular (examples (82) and (83)).

(82)  (Many., man, 41): Don't ever bring bottle Milingimbi (= "to Milingimbi").

(83)  (Boy, 13): And we'll play three and after three we'll have shower and then go to barbeque.

Articles are frequently not used after the preposition, to (examples (84) to (86), and to barbeque in (83)). Other prepositions do not appear to affect the use of articles.

(84)  (Dhu., woman, 23): Let's go to supermarket.

(85)  (Girl, 14): And we were talking to nhawi [= "um"] man.

(86)  (Girl, 10): He was put the fish to net.

Most of the examples given so far for an unspecified SAE article corresponding to a in Milingimbi English occur in prepositional or predicate phrases, either as the object of a transitive verb or the complement of a stative sentence. In general, subject/agent noun phrases are marked for definiteness or indefiniteness. (Exceptions
include examples (66) and (67)). However, as in SAE, articles are relatively rarely used utterance-initially in informal expressions, particularly those which contain only one phrase (Same one, Rubber, please, Theatre or ward?; Drip, gani (= "is that right"), Big healthy baby, Last one double 'r', Piece of paper, Dentist is pulling it out, Excellent story, ...).

Where choice of articles in Milingimbi English corresponds to SAE at the phrase level, their sequence is generally the same in narrative discourse. When noun phrases first occur, those which do not have "absolute" referents are marked by an indefinite article (for count nouns) or remain unmarked or marked by some or any (for mass nouns). The definite article is frequently anaphoric, making each subsequent occurrence of noun phrases, as in some mussels ... get the mussels out of the shell ... hook the bait (where mussels and bait have the same referent). However, as Yolnu use a to correspond with both definite and indefinite articles, the sequence is sometimes different in Milingimbi English as in (Child, 12) ... get some bait ... open the bait (as in SAE) ... put bait into the hook (specific to Milingimbi English), and (Girl, 15): ... a fishing line ... a fishing line ... get a bait ... cutting bait for fish ... caught big fish ... didn't catch fish.

7.3.3 Prepositions

Use of prepositions is another syntactic feature which distinguishes Milingimbi English from SAE. The category "preposition" does not exist in Yolnu Matha, where inflectional suffixes generally supply the semantic information provided by English prepositions. (A very small number of English prepositions corresponds to Yolnu Matha particles).
This difference does not appear to be a source of difficulty for Yolnu learners of English. The main differences between the use of prepositions in Milingimbi English and SAE arise partly because the semantic domains of the Yolnu Mitha case and locational suffixes do not entirely correspond to those of the English prepositions and partly because they are not used in identical circumstances. Table 7.4 summarises those prepositions in the corpus of Milingimbi English which sometimes occur in situations different from SAE. The domains of all the prepositions and preposition-like phrases in Milingimbi English overlap with those of SAE.

A number of (rare) prepositions in Milingimbi English occur regularly in semantic and syntactic domains equivalent to SAE. They include: between, over, through, on top of, beside, out of, outside of, above, until, because of, around, along, beside, till, instead of, under, before, against, down at, and on behalf of.

In general, Yolnu do not begin to use English prepositions until some time between grade 2 and grade 5. in occurs in the grade 2 material. Grade 5 children use at least on, at, in, to, from, for, of and with. The proportion of occurrences of all prepositions which coincides with SAE, or are idiosyncratic to Milingimbi English, or which are omitted where they would occur in SAE, is much the same for all, except for to and in. to has a number of uses specific to Milingimbi English.

The grade 3 and grade 7 children, the post-primary girls, and adult men are the groups most likely to use to differently from SAE (examples (87) to (93)). The adult women and post-primary boys almost always use to in the same way as in SAE.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ENGLISH PREPOSITIONS &amp; PREPOSITION-LIKE FORMS</th>
<th>CORRESPONDING YOLNU MATHA SUFFIX</th>
<th>PRESENT STANDARD</th>
<th>PRESENT NON-STANDARD</th>
<th>ABSENT NON-STANDARD</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>on</td>
<td>-gura</td>
<td>87</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>in</td>
<td>-gura</td>
<td>118</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>at</td>
<td>-gura</td>
<td>73</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| to                                            | {-lili (Human)  
  -g/k/wala (+ Human) } | 163             | 43                   | 5                   |
| from                                          | {-guru (Human)       
  -g/k/wuru (+ Human) } | 64              | 5                    | 1                   |
| for                                           | {-gu/-ku/-wa/-wu  
  -b/p/wuy } | 163             | 12                   | 12                  |
| of                                            | -gu/-ku/-wa/-wu               | 106             |                      | 7                   |
| by                                            | {-dhu/-thu/-yu/-y (INSTRUMENT)  
  -gura (STATIONARY LOCATION) } | 17              | 2                    | 1                   |
| with                                          | {-dhu/-thu/-yu/-y (INSTRUMENT)  
  -mirri (HAVING) } | 66              | 7                    | 1                   |
| about                                         | -b/p/wuy                       | 24              | 1                    | 1                   |
| into                                          | -lili                           | 11              | 4                    |                     |
| after                                         | particles: baguru, gurinuru, etcetera | 10             | 1                    |                     |
| up                                            | semantically contained within verbs | 3              | 1                    |                     |
| within                                        | particle: djinaga -guru          | 1               | 1                    |                     |
| off                                           | -guru                           | 6               | 1                    |                     |
| in the top of                                | particle: garrwar -guru          | 1               | 1                    |                     |
| out from                                      | -guru                           | 1               | 1                    |                     |
| off from                                      | -guru                           | 11              |                      |                     |
(87) (Child, 10): He's walking to upstairs.
(88) (Child, 10): Simon went to fishing.
(89) (Girl, 10): He was put the fish to net [...] and he went her little fish to away.
(90) (Child, 12): Cut him off to the rock.
(91) (Child, 12): Then Adam and her father went to home.
(92) (Maw., man, 31): ... support me to delegate [...] that's mean the people in the world will laugh to us.
(93) (Boy, 15): When will you go to back?
(94) (Girl, 15): He put ... put the bait carefully to the hook.
(95) (B., man, 38): [...] before to three weeks time coming [...].

Two types of generalisations specific to Milingimbi English are made in the use of to in these examples. While constraints exist in SAE which permit the preposition to to govern only nouns, in Milingimbi English it may also govern adverbs and participles, like fishing (88), upstairs (87), away (89) and back (93). While home (91) is commonly a noun in English, it has adverbial characteristics in the SAE colloquial expression 'go home', in which to never occurs. However, at Milingimbi the equivalent English expression is regularly go to home. The allative suffixes -lili and -gala, are used more widely in Yolngu Matha than to is in English, and the use of to in these types of utterances stems from

4. Note, however, that 'going to my home' is standard, as the owner of the home has been specified. In ... 'home' has connotations of 'belonging to someone'. In 'going to the home' the implication is that the 'home' is some type of institution.
interference. For example, 'I'm going home' translates into Yolŋu Matha as:

ŋarrŋarrtji ga wāŋa-lili

I go continuous home-ALLATIVE

go to home occurs quite regularly among the primary-age children and slightly less systematically among the older Yolŋu.

to in SAE implies "motion towards" a person or a place and has no interpretation of stationary location or entry. It has a wider range of meanings in Milingimbi English, as all the other cited examples testify. The first to in (89) corresponds to SAE 'in' or 'into', which combines the notion of "motion towards" with "location within the bounds of an object". off to in (90) corresponds with SAE 'off'. Its use possibly results from a different perspective, emphasising "going to a rock" or "putting a knife to a rock" from which one then removes the shellfish. support me to delegate in (92) has the same connotations as 'support me as/for/to be a delegate'. laugh to us corresponds with SAE 'laugh at us'. The difference here results from interference from Yolŋu Matha, where the object of 'laugh' is in the dative, as the following sentence testifies:

Balanda walala dhu limurrungala girkithun

Balanda they future we (plural incl.)-dative laugh

'The Balandas will laugh at us'.

In (94) to corresponds with SAE 'onto', which gives the implication of attachment or placement. The meaning of before to three weeks time coming (95) is not entirely clear, but it seems to correspond to SAE 'in three weeks time' or 'before the next three weeks are over'.
Like SAE, Milingimbi English contains an optional "dative movement" rule, applied to clauses containing ditransitive verbs (like give and show), whereby 'dative to' is deleted and the order of the noun phrase object and indirect object reversed if the object is not pronominal. This may be expressed as:

\[
\text{NP}_1\text{-ditr.}V\text{-}NP_2\text{-to-}NP_3 \quad \text{optional} \quad \Rightarrow \quad \text{NP}_1\text{-}NP_3\text{-}NP_2 \quad \text{example (97)).}
\]

(96) (Dja., woman, 32): Show it to me.

(97) (Girl, 15): Alan show his father the fish.

Both these constructions occur only three times in the corpus, among people of post-primary age on. In one sentence the dative relationship is expressed by for (example (98)).

(98) (Girl, 14): Father show his bait for Alan.

As on, in and at, all indicators of stationary location or time in SAE, correspond to the one suffix, -ngura, in Yolgu Matha, it is not surprising that their use and non-use diverges from SAE in Milingimbi English (examples (99) to (107)).

(99) (Many., man, 41): Henry, ah, the bloke that was working on the A.L.P.A.

(100) (Child, 10): Fish they are stone.

(101) (Boy 13): I'm leaving here at 7th and I'll leave Darwin at 9th.

(102) (Cat., man, 28): I look close look māi ["what?"] people and I couldn't find those workshop men.

(103) (Girl, 10): He put it down in the stone.

(104) (Many., man, 41): There was, wa, the first place the council was thinking about employ Henry.
(105) (Bil., woman, 28): We haven't got enough food to eat in the party tonight.

(106) (G.B., manual training teacher, 20): Where were you this morning?

(Boy, 14): At America.

(107) (Man): And we can go on Monday, Yerrilil, Nulupam, Binya ...

(Nul., man, 28): See if they can go on ah, tomorrow.

In (99), on corresponds to 'with' in SAE, where one works 'on' a project, but 'with' an organisation (A.L.P.A. -puy 'concerning ...' in Yolgu Matha). Perhaps by analogy with time phrases like on Monday, the speaker in (107) extends on for use with tomorrow, not possible in SAE.

The context in (100) makes it clear that the fish are 'on the stone', not 'made of stone', as the sentence implies to an SAE speaker. The absence of on here is hard to explain as the locative must be expressed in the corresponding Yolgu Matha sentence:

guya gunda-pura

fish stone-stationary location

'The fish are on the stone'.

The extension of at to have the same semantic domain as 'on' in (101) and 'in' in (106) also probably results from the conflation of the three within the Yolgu Matha suffix -pura (Milingimbi English at America corresponds to Yolgu Matha America-pura). at is used for times in SAE ('Come at ten o'clock'), and this has been extended in Milingimbi English (101) to include dates. Transitive look in (102) corresponds to SAE transitive 'look at' ('look' is intransitive in SAE). Both can be translated by the transitive verb nhuma ('see, look at') in Yolgu Matha, so it is probable that the transitive use of look in Milingimbi English arose from interference.
After to, in is the preposition which diverges most in Milingimbi English from its use in SAE (examples (103) and (105)). The context in (103) suggests that in here corresponds with SAE 'on' as the speaker is inferring stationary location on top of the stone, not inside it. in corresponds with SAE 'at' in (105). Both usages again probably arise from the merging of SAE 'in', 'on' and 'at' in Yolŋu Matha -nura. the first place in (104) corresponds to the idomatic SAE expression 'in the first place'.

Milingimbi English from differs from SAE 'from' relatively little (example (108)).

(108) (Bil., woman, 28): I've got Diane here who fell off from the bike and broke her tooth.

In this example, Milingimbi English off from corresponds to SAE 'from'. In SAE one falls 'off' something or 'from' something (this alternative is more marked than the former). An idiosyncratic constraint prevents the two co-occurring in sequence. This constraint does not exist in Milingimbi English, which has on:onto::off:off from.

Milingimbi English for diverges from SAE slightly more often (examples (109) to (111)).

(109) (B., man, 38): Thank you that.
(110) (Girl, 11): Those boys are rude for you.
(111) (Dj., man, 24): I couldn't stand for the weather over there.

While thank is a ditransitive verb in SAE, and cannot govern two direct objects, this is not necessarily the case in Milingimbi English, where p that (109) corresponds to SAE 'for that' for in (110) corresponds to 'to' or 'about' in SAE. be rude for corresponds to expressions in Yolŋu Matha. This type of utterance is 
the Yolngu children. Colloquial SAE 'stand', in the sense of "tolerate", is a transitive verb to which the transitive Milingimbi English lexeme *stand for* corresponds in (111).

of never occurs with an extended meaning in Milingimbi English, but it tends to be used less often than in SAE (examples (112) and (113)).

(112) *(Mur., woman, 20)*: One scrap paper.

(113) *(Gat., man, 28)*: If there's something goes wrong still ... would be ... in middle part nhawi

[= "um"] wire.

The opposition of paper with scrap in (112) has the same semantic implications as SAE 'scrap of paper'. The Milingimbi English utterance is a syntactic blend of the SAE phrases 'scrap paper' (where 'scrap' is an adjective) and 'one scrap of paper', (where 'scrap' is a noun).

*paper* may be a count noun in Milingimbi English, in the sense of 'a sheet of paper', while it is a mass noun in SAE. *middle part* wire (113) is a direct translation of the equivalent Yolngu Matha phrase, where *middle part* is an adjective:


apungga wire

middle part wire

Non-human instrument may be expressed by 'with' or 'by' in SAE, but by the one suffix *-dhu/-thu/-yu-y* in Yolngu Matha. This poses a problem of choice for the Yolngu speaker of English, who must learn the separate functions of the two English morphemes. Milingimbi English uses them interchangeably, while SAE does not. *by boat*, which is the same in Milingimbi English and SAE, coexists with *with* train (114).

(114) *(Boy, 13)*: ... and from Melbourne we'll go with train.
by corresponds with SAE 'in' in the idiomatic phrase in (115)

(115) (Max., man, 31): Balanda and Yolŋu walk together
giga [a discourse marker] side by side hand by hand.
The speaker probably used by here by analogy with side by side, as the
expression is symmetrical in other respects.

into in (116) corresponds to SAE 'to' or 'onto' or even 'on'.

(116) (Boy, 16): Big mountain. You can't go into
edge, you know, you can just come down.

Many Yolŋu children have never seen mountains, as the coastal region of
Arnhem Land is completely flat.

7.4 Clause structure

We have seen that by the end of grade 2, some of the brighter
children are using simple clauses, particularly among themselves or
when they have initiate! the interchange with a Balanda. At the same
time, the discussion of the varieties of English discourse available to
the different groups within the community has shown that the discourse
structure of the ordinary classroom situation is not conducive to the
development or practice of expanded utterances, whether or not the
speaker has the competence in English to create them. Within the corpus,
the grade 5 children's story-telling narratives are the first place
where we find utterances containing or consisting of clauses used
reasonably systematically. Active and extended use of co-ordinate and
some subordinate clause structures begins in this group so it is probable
that grade 3 or grade 4 children make use of at least simple clause
structures in similar narrative contexts. Subordinate and conjoined
clauses in the corpus almost always begin with conjunctions or relative
pronouns. Clause-level constituent order is generally the same as in
SAE, although it is subject to regular variation if the connective concerned also functions as an interrogative.

7.4.1. Coordinate connectives (coordinators)

Of all the coordinators, and is the only one to be used by the pre-school children at Milingimbi. It coordinates nouns in example (117) which, like the preschoolers' other utterances, is not a regular sentence.

(117) (Boy, 4): Boy ... an' boy an' boy an' boy.

[pointing out all the boys in the class].

and occurs in coordinate constructions (both phrases and sentences) most frequently in the speech of the grade 5 and grade 7 children. While and is prevalent in the speech of adults, it is likely to be replaced by the equivalent Yolgu Matha word, ga, which, like and, may connect nouns, verbs, adjectives, whole phrases or clauses. Example (118) demonstrates how ga and and occur in the same utterance. Although it is a long example it is quoted in full because it exemplifies how ga and and may be used both as connectives and discourse markers.

(Double-underlining signifies the use of and and ga as discourse markers (connectives which are not strictly coordinators) in (118), while single underlining designates and and ga when used as coordinators).

(118) (Dja., woman, 32): Nib-by-mouth. That's n-i-i. I didn't know it was on top of the bed. So I got up ga I saw the nhawi [= "um"] other patients they were having their breakfast ga nhawiy [= "um"] ...

and I was sitting there watching them. And then nhawiy [= "um"] sister came ... in ga she had a nhawi [= "um"] big needle. After that ga I ...
they had a nhawi [= "um"] ... sponge wash Ga they took all the nhawi [= "um"] cloth off from me. Then they put gown on. Ga ... then after that they put they gave me the needle.

(VE): So you don't remember what happened?

(Dia.): Yow [= "yes"], what happened Ga I didn't know that. I got into the nhawi [= "um"] operating theatre. I didn't know what was going to happen ... because of that nhawi [= "um"] anaesthetic ... Ga then after that what happened I didn't know ...

Then after that Ga I was in the middle of the ward Ga I was sleeping Ga I was still holding something like rubber in my mouth. Ga after that Ga then I got up, I asked sister who is on nhawi [= "um"] beside me, I asked sister for a drink. Ga bilin. [= "and that's the end"].

Example (118) shows how Ga is used in preference to and (although both occur) by an adult whose utterance is otherwise primarily in English. While and is principally a conjunction, Ga in Yolnu Matha commonly has an extended function of "discourse marker" as well (Christie, n.d.:10), serving to connect focused elements in an utterance with the comment, thus helping to predicate them, as in:

ga  qunhi  manda  gana  nhinana  qunhil'-yi
discourse then  they-2  continuous-ill  rest-ill  there-emphatic
'Then they rested there'.

Example (118) shows how Ga is used in preference to and (although both occur) by an adult whose utterance is otherwise primarily in English. While and is principally a conjunction, Ga in Yolnu Matha commonly has an extended function of "discourse marker" as well (Christie, n.d.:10), serving to connect focused elements in an utterance with the comment, thus helping to predicate them, as in:

ga  qunhi  manda  gana  nhinana  qunhil'-yi
discourse then  they-2  continuous-ill  rest-ill  there-emphatic
'Then they rested there'.
"Discourse ga" in Yolŋu Matha is also discussed in section 3.4.3). and may fulfill this role to a certain extent in SAE (for example, 'And now we are about to witness a historic occasion'), but it does so comparatively rarely. Not only does "discourse ga" play a vital pivotal role in Yolŋu Matha discourse, but this carries over extensively into Milingimbi English, particularly in the speech of adults.

and and ga (as coordinators) are both used to connect noun phrases and verb phrases in Milingimbi English (examples (119) to (122)). ga is used less commonly than and in this capacity.

(119) (Girl, 16): Shaddrack and Hannah [the names of two goats resident at Milingimbi during 1978].

(120) (Boy, 15): All the spades ga crowbars ga ...

(121) (Boy, 14): You don't have to read and write.

(122) (Girl, 16): Sign ga say your name.

and and ga conjoin nouns in (119) and (120), and verbs in (121) and (122). and is sometimes omitted in Milingimbi English where it is required in SAE, as in Bernard Liam (referring to two young Balanda brothers at Milingimbi).

or, or else and but have the same function in Milingimbi English as in SAE (examples (123) to (125)).

(123) (Boy, 13): I see her at airport or you know at...

[sentence was incomplete].

(124) (Mur., woman, 20): [... she had been somewhere visiting a friend] but she saw Dorothy and ...

Diane ... they were holding themself on the road.

(125) (Mary., man, 31): You must sign th' agreement or else land is destroy.
7.4.2 Subordinate connectives and relative pronouns (subordinators)

Speakers of Milingimbi English use a wide range of subordinate connectives and relative pronouns. Table 7.5 summarises the distribution among the groups surveyed of those which occur within the corpus. While this table makes no claim that people in various groups cannot use certain subordinators, it is probable that the table demonstrates reasonably accurately the proportion used by each group (except the "miscellaneous women"). It also indicates the ones which are most common in Milingimbi English. In general, these subordinators operate within the same semantic domain and with the same syntactic function as in SAE. *soon as* (example (126)) is the only one which would not be found in textbooks of English. Corresponding to SAE 'as soon as' it is nevertheless in general use in informal registers of SAE.

(126) (Many., man, 41): ... when [...] I was suggesting that ahm, *soon as* the council plan to have somebody in.

A few usages of subordinate connectives and relative pronouns are different from SAE. Sometimes in Milingimbi English they fulfil a different syntactic function and their semantic domain may be extended. *that, how, where, if and when* all fill these categories (examples (127) to (133)).

(127) (Girl, 14): Mum is asking questions *that* Alan really caught the fish.

*that* in (127) corresponds semantically to SAE '(about) whether'.

(128) (Girl, 15): Dad is showing Alan *how* the parts of the rod.

In (128) the verb (possibly 'work') of the clause introduced by *how* has been omitted by ellipsis. An alternative interpretation is that
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<th>POST-PRIMARY GIRLS</th>
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Milingimbi English may use subordinators to link two noun phrases. where may be used with a different meaning from SAE (examples (129) and (131)). Clauses introduced by where in Milingimbi English sometimes have subject-verb inversion (examples (129) and (130)).

(129) (Dja., woman, 32): Show me the way where's that little boy.

(130) (Girl, 15): I don't know where did I put my sheet.

(131) (Girl, 15): Where it fried, it was cooked.

where in (129) has an allative sense (after show me the way), and thus corresponds with SAE 'to where'. The subordinate clause in both (129) and (130) are syntactic blends, combining an SAE interrogative structure with the subordinate clause position in Milingimbi English. The probably reason for this is that in SAE and Milingimbi English where functions as both an interrogative and a connective. The subordinate clause may have either SAE subordinate clause or interrogative component ordering. In SAE subordinate clauses the ordering is obligatorily subject-verb, while in interrogatives the subject and auxiliary carrying tense must be inverted. However, when the same word functions as an interrogative or a subordinator, the Milingimbi English speaker does not have to invert the subject and tense-carrying auxiliary. This greater flexibility in Milingimbi English clause structure probably results from interference with Yolnu Matha, where there are no grammatical constraints on clause constituent order, except for the connective.

The meaning of (131), where the subordinate clause is introduced by where, is obscure to a speaker of SAE. It may correspond to SAE 'when they had fried it, it was cooked', or 'Where it had been fried
it was cooked, (but the unfried parts were raw').

*if* is sometimes used with the same semantic domain as SAE 'after' or 'when' (example (132)).

(132) (Boy, 13): *If* we wait we'll leave from ... Adelaide, I means from Darwin, Northern Territory.

with *when* in example (133) has the same function as SAE 'if'.

(133) (Mave., män, 41): *It's not fair* with *when* he could come in and shift the person from the position.

The situation under discussion was hypothetical.

7.4.3 Constituent order in clauses

While the constituent order of Milingimbi English sentences in general conforms to that of SAE, there appears to be slightly greater flexibility in the former. Actual constituent order in Yolgu Natha has semantic significance (in terms of focus and old and new information) but is grammatically almost entirely free, and it is probable that Milingimbi English reflects a degree of interference. Nevertheless, the number of constructions with different constituent order within the corpus is very small. Section 7.3.1 discussed noun phrase constituent order very briefly. Modifier placement and subject-verb-object order appear occasionally to be subject to less stringent constraints in Milingimbi English than in SAE.

7.4.3.1 Modifier placement

As in SAE, adverbs and adverbial phrases in Milingimbi English generally occur sentence-initially, sentence-finally, between the subject noun phrase and the verb phrase, and between auxiliaries and lexical verbs. Unlike SAE, modifiers in Milingimbi English may also occur
between the transitive verb and object (example (134)), between possessive pronouns and nouns in noun phrases (example (135)) and preceding the second element of a conjoined noun phrase (example (136)).

(134) (Gay, woman, 33): Somebody is lucky because she had over there sister.

(133) (Girl, 14): She's using my really torch. [Not clear whether clause should be 'She's really using my torch' or 'She's using my real torch'.]

(136) (Gay, man, 28): Aah. Old garden ga [= "and"] round that way stockyard.

These are the only examples where modifiers occur in positions different from SAE. In each case they occur in the same position as SAE adjectives and can thus be considered as derived adjectives in Milingimbi English.

7.4.3.2 Subject-verb-object ordering

Milingimbi English, like SAE, marks case relationships syntactically, not morphologically (as is the case in Yolngu Matha). Word order thus conveys grammatical information, as well as information about topic and focus of a sentence. Intransitive sentences consist of subject-verb S-V in that order, while transitive statements are composed of subject-verb-object (S-V-O). In polar and Wh-interrogatives, subject and verbal auxiliary (where one occurs in Milingimbi English) are almost always reversed (always the case in SAE), thus giving Auxiliary-S-V-(O). There is some freedom in the placement of other sentence constituents, within the constraints already discussed in this chapter. Despite the contrast between permissible variation in constituent order in Yolngu Matha and SAE, there are very few exceptions to the generalisations just made within the Milingimbi English corpus.
Some exceptions to the general ordering constraint result from unusual emphasis or a shift in focus (examples (137) and (138)). This type of reordering, with stress, occurs in SAE in similar circumstances.

(137) (Nia., woman, 32): "John" call him!

(138) (Gal., woman, 23): One thousand babies she got.

In (137) "John" was slightly stressed, as the speaker was trying to voice her opinion over competing voices. One thousand babies was stressed in (138), part of a lengthy interchange where Gal. and others were teasing an older woman about the number of children she has (actually only three!).

There are a very small number of exceptions where unusual constituent order has changed the focus of the sentence, although the syntactic changes were not accompanied by increased stress, pauses, or change in intonation. They are examples (139) to (142).

(139) (Child, 10): Coming fish.

(140) (Child, 12): ... and then was cooking her mother that fish.

(141) (Child, 12): He fish big they cooking.

(142) (Gal., man, 28): That's why you always see me eyeglass wearing.

Sentence (139) has V-S ordering, in contrast with the regular S-V structure. Sentences (140) to (142) all contravene the regular S-V-O ordering in various ways. It becomes V-S-O in (140). (141) has O-S-V ordering. In addition, the sentence contains a pronoun with subject form but object function (he), in apposition with the object noun phrase, fish big, while the adjective follows the noun. Sentence (142) contains an embedded clause with O-V ordering. The O-V structure
conforms to that of SAE compound nominals, which consist of noun + verb-ing ('joke-swapping', 'uranium mining', 'horse-riding', etcetera). It appears that there may be greater flexibility in the formation of O-V compounds in Milingimbi English. Others do occur, particularly in sequences where the remainder of the utterance is in Yolnu Matha (such as time wasting).

Clause order is slightly more flexible in Milingimbi English than in SAE (example (43)), when one clause is the object of the verb in the main clause.

(143) (Dia., woman, 32): What happened ga (= discourse marker) I didn't know that [...]. Ga (= discourse marker) then after that what happened I didn't know.

The subordinate clause what happened has received the major focus of the utterance, although it was not stressed. While subordinate clauses frequently do occur sentence-initially in both SAE and Milingimbi English, in this case what happened is the object-complement of I didn't know. What happened is foregrounded in the first instance, rather than have it occurring in apposition with that. Thus the structure of this sentence is O-S-V=O, where O has the same referent in each instance. In the second sentence, the order is simply O-S-V.

5. Word order may differ from that of SAE in other ways, too. In example footnote (1), the object is displaced from the verb and the dative marker has been postposed, instead of preposed as is normal in SAE.

footnote (1): (Maw, man, 31):...government Mr Viner put through today it Yolnu for not for th ' agreement.

This is an exceptional structure in Milingimbi English.
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It appears that there may be greater flexibility in the formation of O-V compounds in Milingimbi English. Others do occur, particularly in sequences where the remainder of the utterance is in Yolŋu Matha (such as *time wasting*).

Clause order is slightly more flexible in Milingimbi English than in SAE (example (143)), when one clause is the object of the verb in the main clause.

(143) *(Dja., woman, 32): What happened ga [= discourse marker] I didn't know that [...] Ga [= discourse marker] then after that what happened I didn't know.*

The subordinate clause *what happened* has received the major focus of the utterance, although it was not stressed. While subordinate clauses frequently do occur sentence-initially in both SAE and Milingimbi English, in this case *what happened* is the object-complement of *I didn't know*. *What happened* is foregrounded in the first instance, rather than have it occurring in apposition with *that*. Thus the structure of this sentence is **O-S-V-O**, where **O** has the same referent in each instance. In the second sentence, the order is simply **O-S-V**.

5. Word order may differ from that of SAE in other ways, too. In example footnote (1), the object is displaced from the verb and the dative marker has been postposed, instead of preposed as is normal in SAE.

footnote (1): *(Maw, man, 31):...government Mr Viner put through today it Yolŋu for not for th ' agreement.*

This is an exceptional structure in Milingimbi English.
7.5 Types of utterances

7.5.1 Sentential utterances

Sentences in Milingimbi English, like those of SAE, contain simple, coordinate and subordinate clauses, whose verbs may have transitive, intransitive and ditransitive functions. Simple sentences, consisting of one principal clause, form the bulk of all sentential utterances.

Coordinate constructions (containing two or more principal clauses linked by conjunctions like and, but or or) and subordinate constructions (containing one or more subordinate clauses in addition to the principal clause) occur by contrast relatively infrequently. Subordinate constructions occur more often than coordinate ones in the speech of adults, while the reverse happens for primary-age children. The proportion of coordinate and subordinate constructions is approximately the same among the post-primary children. Coordinated sentences contain the same types of elements in Milingimbi English as in SAE, with one exception (example (144)) which coordinates an imperative with an existential statement. Several subordinate constructions are distinct from SAE (example (145)).

(144) (Dja., woman, 32): Let's go and that supermarket's over there.

(145) (Boy, 13): Nhulunbuy is bigger than Groote Eylandt that you know what that er town.

Example (145) is ambiguous and the speaker's intonation does not clarify its meaning. It is not clear whether know is the main verb of the clause beginning with the first that, or whether it is part of the sentence-filler you know. It is possible that the speaker's intention would be
conveyed by the following in SAE: 'Nhulunbuy is bigger than Groote Eylandt. Do you know what the name of that town [on Groote Eylandt] is?'

Coordinate constructions commonly have only two or three conjoined clauses. In two of the younger children's narratives, virtually the whole story becomes one long coordinated sentence with eight clauses joined by and (example (146)).

(146) (Girl, 10): Simon had make a string and Simon said, "He was biting", and he get one and he hold his neck and he said, "Here's six!" and put on stone and Simon make fire and six they go away and Simon look on stone, is gone.

Subordinate constructions rarely have more than one subordinate clause (example (147)).

(147) (Girl, 14): Father taught Alan how to get bait.

Yolnu people over the age of about twelve may use English sentences which contain both subordinate and conjoined clauses (examples (148) and (149)).

(148) (Boy, 13): If I go there I'll ring him and let him know when we'll play footy.

(149) (Many,, man, 41): Well, ah, Ian was suggest that depends on whether this new ah Balanda bloke ah sort of ... really work with Aboriginal people and interested

6. This type of sentence is common among young SAE speakers as well (Graham Little, lecturer, Canberra College of Advanced Education, in a seminar paper given, May, 1979, to the Department of Linguistics, S.G.S., A.N.U., entitled "Developments in the Function and Form of Language Use: Ages 7 to Adulthood").
and ah ... if ... he said that ... if he's ah ...

sort of ... it's not fair with when he could
come in and shift the person from the position.

Both these speakers have English which is exceptionally good for their age-group.

Milingimbi English contains many series of unlinked principal clauses which, judging from the intonation, comprise single sentences (example (150)). This feature is typical of both Yolnu Matha and SAE, but occurs to a lesser extent in the latter. Subordinate constructions in Milingimbi English can omit connectives with greater freedom than SAE (example (151)). (151) probably would not occur in SAE, where the corresponding sentence would contain 'how' between Alan and to. The type of utterance in (152) occurs commonly in SAE.

(150) (Wurr., woman, 31): Well ... you children speak English, you're not A-af-Aboriginal, we are together Aboriginal and English.

(151) (Child, 12): Dad shows Alan to make cutting.

(152) (Bil., woman, 28): Do you think I could get some crabs?

7.5.2 Non-sentential utterances and ellipsis

Colloquial speech in all languages regularly contains a large number of utterances which do not form "sentences", but which can be considered "standard" because of rules of constituent and functional ellipsis accepted by all speakers of that language or dialect in certain registers. Elliptical utterances in Milingimbi English, as in SAE, may range from one or two words to whole subordinate clauses or utterances where only one or two components (for example, actor, goal or auxiliary carrying tense specification) may be missing. Ellipsis is
a process whereby, in certain registers, a principle of economy of effort determines that old information, that which is "understood" by both speaker and interlocutor, need not be said, leaving only new information in an utterance.

As we have seen in section 7.2, ellipsis is an important feature of Milingimbi English in most types of discourse. Some of its rules differ substantially from those of SAE. While SAE allows ellipsis of most old information, there are certain grammatical constraints on what can be omitted. By contrast, Milingimbi English allows ellipsis of all old information within an utterance and no grammatical category or function is immune.

This extensive use of ellipsis in many ways reflects the nature of the Milingimbi speech community. First, ellipsis in Milingimbi English parallels ellipsis in Yolnu Matha where, as we have seen in section 3.4.3, few if any grammatical categories are obligatory. Second, sign language comprises a substantial proportion of daily communication among Yolnu, partly because the relatively closed nature of the community means that most people know each other extremely well, reducing the need for formal verbal interaction. Often what is not said orally may be expressed by signs (Sue Harris, personal communication). Sign language and extensive verbal ellipsis in Yolnu Matha are in many ways "in group" means of expressing familiarity in a casual Yolnu context. Some Balandas may be included within the ambit of this type of communicative network.

7. Sign language among the Yolnu is a non-verbal system containing standard gestures for all common objects and actions. It does not appear to be a fully developed language system at Milingimbi, as utterances do not contain more than about three signs in sequence (Michael Christie, personal communication).
extended to Milingimbi English, if the situation is sufficiently relaxed. The extent to which signing forms a component of Milingimbi English discourse has not been investigated, but it is likely to play a part. Ellipsis occurs extensively in many contexts in Milingimbi English.

As in SAE, Milingimbi English non-sentential utterances may consist of single words (whether verb, noun, adjective, conjunction, interrogative, etcetera), phrases or subordinate clauses (examples (153) to (159)). These are particularly prevalent in the formal school context, and in relaxed outside-school interchanges.

(153) (DS, domestic science teacher): Come on, if there's half a cup for each bucket, how many full cups? (Girl, 16): Two.

(154) (DS): No, which one? (Girl, 15): Here, Di! This one!

(155) (Girl, 16): Di, finish. [The speaker is signalling to the teacher that she has finished her written work].

(156) (SB, grade 2 teacher): What colour's that? (Child, 6): Green, green.

(157) (Dia., woman, 32): They took all the nhawi [= "um"] cloth off from me ... (Burr., woman, 26): Gown. Gown, pani? [= "is that right?"].

(158) (GB, manual training teacher): Boys, I want you all to put your names and class on these books. (Boy, 14): What grade?
Many utterances in Milingimbi English contain ellipsis of the subject/agent. These are generally anaphoric (examples (160) and (161)).

(160) (VE): Is that the name of a dentist you know?

(161) (Gar., man, 28): I put about fifteen bullets into that thing. [...] A blank, nhawi [= "um"], see a wallaby and try to shoot one, you know. ['I' has been omitted before see].

Ellipsis of the verb phrase head is relatively rare in Milingimbi English (example (162). Refer to example (128) as well).

(162) (Boy, 12): He got a big fish and his Dad said, "Good!" [...] When they got home, they the fish for the tea. ['ate' has been omitted].

As we have seen in section 6.3.2, Milingimbi English optionally omits auxiliaries carrying tense, for example:

(163) (E., man, 38): What going to happen?

Utterances like (164), which contain no subject or verb, occur in Milingimbi English (and probably also in SAE).

(164) (DS, domestic science teacher): Well, we need more trees like this with holes in them.

(Girl, 16): Honey from here, too.
Children in particular are likely to issue commands in extremely elliptical ways, without backup from any larger structure or context within the discourse (examples (165) and (166)). In such utterances, intonation may be the only guide to the speaker's intention.

(165) (Child, 7): Toilet.

[= 'Can I go to the toilet?' or 'I want to go to the toilet' or 'Can I go and play in the bathroom?', etcetera].

(166) (Child, 10): Drink.

[= 'We want a drink' or 'Can I have a drink?' or 'Give us a drink', etcetera].

Milingimbi English contains an optional rule of ellipsis which deletes co-referential noun phrases. (Co-referential noun phrase deletion is normally obligatory in SAE). If the subject noun phrase of the first clause in a conjoined sentence is the same as the subject noun phrase in second (and subsequent) conjoined clauses, it may be deleted after its first occurrence. This may be expressed as:

$$\text{NP}_1-\text{V}_1-(\text{NP}_2)\begin{cases} \text{and} \\ \text{but} \\ \text{or} \end{cases} -\text{NP}_3-\text{V}_2-(\text{NP}_4)$$

$$\Rightarrow \text{NP}_1-\text{V}_1-(\text{NP}_2)-\begin{cases} \text{and} \\ \text{but} \\ \text{or} \end{cases} -\text{V}_2-(\text{NP}_4),$$

optional

where NP$_1$ and NP$_3$ are identical.

The use of this deletion rule in Milingimbi English depends on the age of the speaker. Sentences where it has and has not been applied occur in all age-groups from the grade 5 children on. All but the grade 5 children always apply it when the noun phrase concerned contains a noun head. Grade 5 children in general are rather unlikely to apply
it. Grade 7 children apply it proportionately more often, but still less than 50% of the time. Post-primary children apply it in half the possible situations, while adults generally use it. Example (166) demonstrates the application of the rule when the noun phrase concerned is a pronoun. The deletion rule is not applied in examples (167) and (168), where the co-referential noun phrase is a pronoun and a noun respectively.

(166) [bil., woman, 28]: He's been, or ... he rang the hospital and said that he was admitting the little boy.

(167) (Child, 10): And then she get some and she get some shellfish and she hold it with her hand and she put it on the store and she cook it that billy.

(168) (Girl, 10): Simon had make a string and Simon said, "He was biting".

SAE allows object deletion with transitive verbs only under certain restricted conditions. In Milingimbi English, objects are "missing" about thirty times where they would be obligatory in SAE. There are two ways of interpreting the data at this point: first, that Milingimbi English allows object deletion with transitive verbs more readily than SAE; and second, that what are transitive verbs in SAE may be treated as intransitive in Milingimbi English. The first interpretation explains the data better, by allowing Milingimbi English the same flexibility in object deletion as is permissible in Yolŋu Matha. None of the cases where objects are deleted in Milingimbi English can be explained by underlying differences in transitivity in the way the verbal concepts are expressed in English and Yolŋu Matha. Examples (169) to (81) demonstrate the range of transitive verbs where objects are deleted in Milingimbi English but would not be in SAE.
(169) (Boy, 12): "I caught", said Alan.

(170) (Child, 12): Alan is ... he saw him how hand how to cut.

(171) (Girl, 14): Di ... nhawiy [= "um"] we'll break.

(172) (Child, 10): Simon put to water.

(173) (Girl, 15): Alan's father teaching to holds rod.

(174) (Girl, 14): Then she pulled out. [in the sense of pulling a line out of the water, not of "withdrawing"].

(175) (Baq., woman, 22): I found [lollies] in the cupboard.

(176) (Bil., woman, 28): Who's saying now?

(177) (Dhii., woman, 23): She didn't have [any tablets.]

(178) (Nul., man, 28): And then we'll get right.

[actual object intended not clear from context].

(179) (Maw., man, 31): [...] paper supporting [us] from other parts of the world than Australia.

(180) (Child, 12): Then he saw big fish and her father said, "I help you?" and he said, "No, I hold [it] myself".

(181) (Child, 10): Van ran over ... ran over [a dog].

While most of these are examples of definite ellipsis, in that the object is clear from the context, some of them are non-anaphoric (examples (169), (171), (175), (176), (178) and (179)).

All these verbs also occur, quite commonly, with object noun phrases in Milingimbi English. put is the one most affected by object deletion, followed by pull, find and catch.
Some of these verbs do allow direct object ellipsis in SAE in other more limited contexts (like 'he's teaching now', 'she pulled out' (in the sense of 'retired' or 'withdrew') and the idiomatic expressions 'I'll get even with you', and 'I'm holding tight'). Not only does Milingimbi English allow direct object deletion with a greater number of verbs, but it also permits it in a wider number of contexts than is possible in SAE.

The locative (and more rarely the allative) may also be deleted in a wider range of circumstances in Milingimbi English than in SAE. This takes the form of deleting either verbal particles or whole phrases (examples (182) and (183)) or of deleting prepositions (examples (184) to (188)).

(182) (Child, 12): Alan is putting fishing line.

(183) (Diə., woman, 32): Keep him lying.

Unlike in SAE, it is not necessary to put something 'somewhere' in Milingimbi English, or to keep someone lying 'somewhere'.

(184) (Child, 10): She cook it that billy.

(185) (E., man, 38): [...] Thursday conference Darwin.

(186) (Maw, man, 31): Bitjan waŋa [= "thus speak"]

Government people Canberra.

(187) (Maw., man, 31): Dhuwala dhäruk [= "this word"]

is supporting from other people white Australia.

(188) (Di., man, 24): I went there Melbourne, too ...

for a month.

In (184) and (187), the locative is expressed by the apposition of the noun phrase of place after the noun phrase indicating what is located there. In (188) the allative is marked by the apposition of the destination with the verb went.
Occasionally other prepositions and verbal particles may be omitted (example (189)).

(189) (B., man, 38): He will talk those problem.

talk here corresponds to SAE 'talk about' and is used transitively.

Some elliptical answers to questions seeking information and already suggesting an answer are expressed by the repetition of the key word or phrase in the question, rather than by saying "Yes, it does" (etcetera), which a speaker of SAE would say instead. Example (190) demonstrates this in an interchange between one of the nurses and me about an operation she had experienced.

(190) (VE): You had oxygen??!

(Dja., woman, 32): ṣiyi [= acquiescence], oxygen

muka [= emphasis].

(VE): Does that happen to everybody who has an operation?

(Dja.): ṣiyi [= acquiescence], everybody.

(Others): [...]

(VE): Did you feel homesick when you were in hospital?

(Dja.): ṣiyi, [= acquiescence], homesick muka

[= agreement].

(VE): Where were you in Darwin? ... Was this in Darwin?

(Dja.): ṣiyi [= acquiescence], Darwin.

These elliptical answers are as common in Milingimbi English as the SAE equivalent, 'yes'; ('I did', etcetera). They should be contrasted with the subsequent response (example (191), which is structurally typical of SAE.)
(191) (VE): So you have no family there, or did you?

(Dja., woman, 32): Böynu [= "no"]. There was lots of people in Darwin, but they didn't ... all drunk.

7.6 Sequence of tenses and the syntactic evidence for non-future tense

There appears to be greater flexibility in the sequence of tenses in Milingimbi English story-telling than in SAE, where it is normal to maintain the same tense throughout a story unless it contains conversations or there is a specific change in time reference. Sequence of tenses in conversational Milingimbi English appears to diverge little from SAE, cases like example (192) being the exception rather than the norm.

(192) (Gat., man, 28): That time you were [past] nhawi [= "um"] going to the Perth, they take [present] it.

In the children's story-retelling, one story by a ten-year-old has no tense reference at all, although most appear to contain a mixture of no tense and both present and past tense verbs. A few of the stories by a ten-year-old, some grade 7 children and some post-primary girls appear to have a tense sequence indistinguishable from SAE. The tense sequence is more likely to be standard in stories recounted wholly in the continuous aspect or with stative verbs, where the child concerned is describing the cue pictures rather than actually "telling a story" (example (193)).

(193) (Girl, 15): Alan is holding a rod. Alan's father teaching to holds rod. They are going fishing and they are putting rods onto car. Alan and his father they are looking for shells. They are taking nhawi [= "um"]] bait for fish from shells. Alan's father
teaching him how to get bait out from shells. They are ready to throw the lines to the sea nhawli [="um"] water. Alan and his father are waiting for fish to eat bait. The fish is eating a bait from Alan's line. Alan's father is sitting on the rock and he is fishing. They are sitting on a chair and they are eating some fish. [All verb phrases are in the present tense except for two with continuous aspect, where the auxiliary-tense marker is omitted].

The presence of so many stories with mixed sequences of tenses with lexical verbs (examples (194) and (195)) is hard to explain. In the previous chapter I hypothesised the presence in Milingimbi English of an unmarked non-future tense, which may account for tense sequences different from SAE. There are, however, a number of alternative explanations, which should be examined. First, many of the most commonly occurring verbs in both SAE and Milingimbi English are irregular, containing past tense forms with 'ent roots from the present tense forms. Non-standard sequences of surface tense may arise because the speaker is not aware that certain words are past tense manifestations of present tense forms they already know, and vice versa (for example, that catch and caught signify different tenses of the same verb in SAE. As we have seen, there is some evidence to suggest that some Yolnu use to catch and to caught as different verb roots). This probably does explain certain non-standard sequences containing irregular past tense verbs (example (194)).

He got [irregular-past] the big fish then he go [irregular-present] home. Dad he waited [regular-past] to fish to go ... car. And then they go [irregular-present] to eat the fish in the home.

This explanation works less well, however, in example (195), where most verbs are regular.

(195) (Girl, 14): He saved [regular-past] the money.

He want [regular-present] to go to fishing. They get [irregular-present] their nhawi [= "um"] rods. They pulled [regular-past] their lines, makes bait [irregular-present (present tense completely regular)]. They went [irregular-past] to fishing. They first look [regular-present] for bait. Dad's

Most of the verbs in (194) have irregular past tense forms (the auxiliary be, get, catch, throw and go). put and cut are ambiguous for tense, although in the absence of a concord marker with a third person singular subject, they would be expected to have past reference. get occurs both as get (present) and got (past) (twice each). go occurs only in the present tense form, but the past tense went is widely used by other children in the same age-group and it is unlikely that the speaker here did not know it. The verb be occurs in the present tense as a stative verb at the beginning of the story and gives no clue to the story's intended time reference. As an auxiliary it occurs twice in the past tense. Only two regular verbs occur in the story, help (used in the present tense) and wait (in the past tense). throw is used three times in the present tense, and it is possible that the speaker did not know the past tense form. caught occurs only once and there is no other evidence to suggest whether this is interpreted by the speaker as present or past.

Apart from containing two statements which are premature for the thread of the story (easily explained by factors of memory and confusion arising from the situation and therefore not linguistically
relevant), the basic surface tense appears to change a number of times in (194). As the first verb is stative in the present tense, the story could have followed in the past or the present. Since the second verb (the auxiliary be) is in the past it appears that the child has decided to tell the story in the past. Subsequently, however, there are six verbs in the present tense (where other children of the same age know the past), two ambiguous for tense, five in the past tense (where the present would probably be known), and three in the present and one in the past where the speaker may not realise the morphological relationship of the present and past tense forms.

Regular verbs are more common in (195), the only irregular ones being get and make in the present tense, said and both non-standard caught and standard caught in the past tense, and the past participle found. Other children of the same age can manipulate the past tense of get and make and it is unlikely that this speaker cannot do so too. This supports the hypothesis postulated in the previous chapter that get and got and possibly certain other irregular co-occurring present and past tense pairs) constitute different verbs in Milingimbi English. In this story, five verbs occur in the present tense, one is ambiguous for tense (put), five are clearly past, while two past tense forms of catch occur, caught (by analogy with regular verbs) and the standard caught. Thus it appears that relatively few verbs occur as they do in this story because the speaker thinks the present and past tense forms of the one verb are actually different verbs.

The irregular sequence of present and past tense in Milingimbi English is likely to be partly influenced by the tense structure of Yolŋu Matha. Yolŋu Matha distinguishes future and non-future tense, not past and present (except in verb phrases containing the habitual
aspect). Phrases with future reference in Milingimbi English are always marked as they would be in SAE, past and present being the only ones to occur "out of sequence". (Many phrases in Milingimbi English contain no tense marker at all, particularly where the copula or an auxiliary would be used in SAE). Transfer in the use of tense from Yolŋu Matha to English may account for some of the non-standard sequences, in that to a Yolŋu with a future-non-future tense orientation, the distinction between present and past is in a sense irrelevant, and hence becomes random (as in (194) and (195)), both forms being regarded merely as "non-future".

Concord is not marked on the lexical verbs in either (194) or (195) except once with a third person plural. This adds to the uncertainty about time reference, particularly in (194). Concord could have been marked eight times in (194), rendering each of these verbs unambiguously "present". As it is, these verbs now appear to have general unmarked "non-future" time reference.

While the evidence for an unmarked non-future tense in Milingimbi English is not conclusive, it provides one plausible explanation for the apparent randomness of tense in some narratives. Most verbs lacking concord with third person singular subjects can be regarded as non-future. Regular verbs suffixied by _ed_ probably have a definitely past tense reference. Some irregular SAE past tense forms like 'caught' and 'got' can be interpreted as verb roots in Milingimbi English which, when unmarked, convey non-future reference. All verbs with concord /-s/ can probably be regarded as unambiguously present. Within narratives, flexibility exists in choice between the past, present and non-future tenses, partly because the Yolŋu are oriented to future-non-future thinking, and partly because tense marking is in any case optional in Milingimbi English (at least in phrases specifying aspect).
7.7 Some other aspects of syntax

7.7.1 Negation

Nouns in Milingimbi English, as in SAE, are negated principally by replacing the determiner of the noun phrase with no (or no more). Clauses are negated in general by adding not after the first element of the corresponding positive verbal group, where there is more than one constituent, or, if only the verb root is present, by inserting do and adding not between it and the verb. Sometimes do is omitted (example (199)). Milingimbi English also contains a range of negative words, nothing, never and neither being attested in the corpus. Milingimbi English does not contain double negatives, unlike many non-standard dialects of English, including those of American Blacks (Labov, 1973). Negative morphemes may be used with greater flexibility in Milingimbi English than SAE (examples (196) to (198)).

(196) (Boy, 13): And if you want, he's no talk to you.
(197) (Wor., woman, 31): An' me no more talking English.
(198) (Dh., man, 34): There is nothing understanding in here.
(199) (Maw., man, 31): [The prime minister said] "if you not sign th' agreement, we will destroy land".

The use of nothing as a negative adjective in (198) corresponds to SAE 'no'. nothing understanding conveys greater emphasis than the alternative 'no understanding'. Sentence (196) is ambiguous as it stands. The speaker has used no, thus suggesting that talk is a noun, in which case to corresponds to SAE 'for'. As \( \{\text{am} \} \) \( \frac{\text{is}}{\text{are}} \) -V is a fairly common
variable for the simple present tense in Milingimbi English, it seems more likely that talk is a verb here. In this case, no corresponds to SAE 'not'. The speaker's intended meaning in (197) is probably best conveyed by SAE 'no longer talking English' or 'talking no more English'. Examples (196) to (198) are unusual within the corpus and are outnumbered by negative constructions formed exactly as in SAE. While (199) is more common, negative verbal constructions indicating tense but not marking aspect generally contain do.

7.7.2 Question formation

Question formation is relatively complex in Milingimbi English, particularly as a wider range of alternatives exists than in SAE. If an interrogative pronoun (WH-word) occurs sentence-initially, the first element of the auxiliary and the subject are generally permuted before the WH-word is added. If the corresponding statement contains only a lexical verb, the periphrastic auxiliary do is optionally inserted in the auxiliary's slot. Subject and the first word of the auxiliary are reversed in polar questions with falling intonation. Rising sentence-final intonation may be the only guide to the nature of some utterances as polar interrogatives. Other means of indicating questions in Milingimbi English include the use of oh, the Yolgu Matha sentential modifiers, nani and muka, and, very rarely, tag formations.

Almost all case relationships within a sentence can be questioned in Yolgu Matha, so it is not surprising that a wide range of interrogative pronouns is attested in the Milingimbi English corpus. They are: what?, where?, whereabout?, ... where ... to?, how much?, how many?, who?, which?, which way?, how?, when?, why?, what about?, what else?, what sort of (things)?, how about? and what time? Of these, only who? is ever used
with a wider semantic domain than is possible in SAE (example (200)).

(200) (Girl, 10): Who your name?

Use of who? in (200) is a blend between SAE 'who are you?' and 'what's your name?'. This replacement of what? by who? is very common at Milingimbi, particularly in this context. This usage parallels the way to ask someone's name in Yolŋu Matha:

yol nhe yaku
who you name
'What's your name?'

[As a person's name is regarded as inalienably possessed, the subject (and not possessive) pronoun is used in this context].

Questions are an area of Milingimbi English syntax where considerable flexibility exists in what can be said and what can be omitted by ellipsis. While word order in WH- and polar questions with falling intonation is very rarely not inverted (example (201)), a common feature is the omission of the auxiliary (example (202) and (203)), and an even more elliptical feature in polar and "polar intonational" questions, the omission of both auxiliary (and/or verb) and subject (examples (204) and (205)). These characteristics are common in informal styles of SAE. Many Yolŋu, particularly children, tend to carry constituent ellipsis to an extreme when asking questions, by saying only one word (ref. to examples (165) and (166) in this chapter).

(201) (Boy, 16): Where I can take it? From here?
(202) (Boy, 14): Where you going?
(203) (Girl, 16): Anybody got a rubber?
(204) (Boy, 15): Seen that picture?

(205) (Boy, 15): This one?

Of these sentences, only (201), where the ordering is WH-subject-auxiliary, could not occur in SAE. Questions without WH-words often have falling intonation in Milingimbi English, only the context signifying that a question is intended. This contrasts with most "polar intonational" questions in SAE.

Tag questions, very common in SAE, occur only once in the Milingimbi English corpus (example (206)). However, Yol'nu Matha contains two sentential modifiers which function like English tags and generally have a similar meaning: ɲani (dubitative) and muka (expressing agreement, or seeking agreement from the interlocutor). These occur very commonly in the corpus where one might expect an English tag question, even in otherwise completely English utterances. Examples (207) and (208) illustrate their use as "tag questions" in Milingimbi English.

(206) (Mai., woman, 18): You're a naughty girl, aren't you, baby!

(207) (Girl, 15): The skeleton was chasing nhawi [= "um"], muka, Djandjay? [= "you agree, don't you?"]

(208) (Dhūi., woman, 23): Yes, he might get lost in Darwin, ɲani? [= "have I said it right?" or "is that the right thing to say?" This is an extract from role-playing discourse, hence the speaker's checking the "accuracy" of her comment].

"eh" is another sentence-filler which occurs as an interrogative marker in Milingimbi English, primarily in the speech of the post-primary
boys (example (209)).

(209) (Boy, 13): Long trip, oh? from ... especially
from Darwin to ... Alice Springs back. Going on
long trip, one thousand ... one thousand miles, oh?

7.7.3 Code-switching at the syntactic level

The main syntactic effect of code-switching on Milingimil English is seen in the use of the determiners. Articles generally are not used at the boundaries of code-switched passages, particularly if the noun phrase concerned immediately follows a segment in Yolŋu Matha (examples (210) to (213)).

(210) (Dh., man, 34): Ga nhuma-laŋ picture now

discard you-genitive

clear. Three bags of money, full might be ...

Mornington ga Aurukun. Now black people bitjan

and thus

Mornington-buy Aurukun-buy wanja three weeks ago,

-from -from say

within a week, "You take that money, put it ... into plane. Balanya-yi nhe dhu post office-

in this way - emphatic you will

lili marrţji, where it belong.

-allative go

'Your picture is now clear. Three bags of money, full, might be, Mornington and Aurukun. Now that's what the black people from Mornington and Aurukun said, three weeks ago, within a week. "You take that money, put it ... into the plane. In that way, you will go to the post office where it belong'.
In this speech, there is no determiner before black people and plane, both of which occur immediately before a segment in Yolų Matha, or before post office, which is surrounded by Yolų Matha.

(211) (B., man, 38): One week ŋayi djümä bala big world. he work then

'Then in one week he made the big world'.

(212) (B., man, 38): ... community gurrupan representative give
N.L.C.-iili ga marrtji Yurrwi-puy -allative continuous come Milingimbi-from

'... give the community representative to the N.L.C. from Milingimbi ...'

(213) (Many., man, 41): Ga wiripu-ŋura outside of now other -locative
wuną-ŋura settlement-ŋura yaka limurru camp -locative -locative not we (plural incl.)
dhu ga gũma rülü ngฎitji.
will continuous bring movement towards grog.

'Now in other places outside of the camp, the settlement, we will not be bringing grog'.

In each of these sentences the relevant segment in English could as easily have been in Yolų Martha.

However, when a noun phrase is broken by nhawi- 'um', in an otherwise English sentence, or a sentence which is substantially in English, the determiner generally occurs (examples (214) to (216)).
(214) (Gat., man, 28): Yaka baydhi. I'll be six foot
no it doesn't matter

foot nhawiy sleeping above the nhawi gurtha.

um um fire

'No, it doesn't matter. I'll be six foot um sleeping
above the um fire'.

(215) (Naw., man, 31): ... angry sat end of the nhawi
[= "um"] table.

(216) (Dja., woman, 32): Where we keep all the nhawi [= "um"]
... words mala [plural].

There are only five examples in the corpus where an article is
present after a sequence of Yolnu Matha (example (217)).

(217) (Dja., woman, 32): ... what sort of medicine he had

nhawi [= "um"] bitjan [= "thus"] the first-tja [= focus].

The tendency to omit articles from noun phrases at junctures
where codes actually change, particularly after Yolnu Matha, probably
arises from a number of factors. The grammatical boundaries between
the two codes are possibly somewhat blurred to the speaker, particularly
when English follows Yolnu Matha. The first English noun phrase after
a sequence of Yolnu Matha is frequently treated grammatically as a Yolnu
Matha noun phrase (and hence the category "article" is not distinguished).

7.8 Syntax: summary

Like its phonology and morphology, the syntax of English-as-a-
second-language at Milingimbi contains a range of rule-governed variation.
Such variation nevertheless often occurs only sporadically. We briefly
surveyed the types of discourse present in the data, in order to show
how general syntactic use reflects the situation and the speakers'
intent. For example, we saw that ellipsis occurs extensively in most types of discourse, except role-playing and lengthy monologues. We also saw how young children, at least, have only very restricted discourse patterns available to them in English. At the phrase level, Milingimbi English adjectives may occur after nouns, unlike in SAE. The use of determiners, particularly the articles the, a and an, is the area where the greatest difference exists between Milingimbi English and SAE. Some SAE count nouns and phrases containing plurals and numerals can be used with a in Milingimbi English. a replaces the most often where use of the entails semantic redundancy, for example, when the noun phrase concerned has only one possible referent. a is often used when SAE requires an article, but the choice is not determined by the context. The use of prepositions reflects interference from Yolnu Matha. to, followed by in, are the ones most commonly used in a distinctive way in Milingimbi English. Prepositions may have their semantic domains extended, or be used where the corresponding SAE utterance would not use them. The most notable feature of Milingimbi English clause structure is the frequent use of Yolnu Matha ga, both as a coordinator ('and') and a discourse marker. This feature is particularly prevalent in the speech of adults. Clause level constituent order and modifier placement may also depart from the norms of SAE. Most sentences in Milingimbi English are simple, but the children frequently use compound ones, while the adults command a range of complex sentence types. Ellipsis is very widespread throughout the community, affecting all grammatical categories, including noun phrase objects, prepositional locatives and verbs. The non-standard sequence of tenses in children's narrative discourse provides some syntactic evidence for the presence of an unmarked non-future tense,
In addition to past and present, in Milingimbi English, Milingimbi English allows greater flexibility than SAE in the formation of negatives.

In addition to the methods of question formation available in SAE, Milingimbi English may use the Yolnu Matha tag-like structures \textit{nani} and \textit{mut} to give interrogative force to utterances. The main syntactic features affected by code-switching are the determiners, which are generally omitted at the boundaries of the two codes, particularly after sequences of Yolnu Matha.
CHAPTER 8

ASPECTS OF LEXICAL AND SEMANTIC VARIATION IN MILINGIMBI ENGLISH

8.1 Introduction

On the semantic level, some words in English-as-a-second-language at Milingimbi have developed a range of meanings not normally found in SAE. While it was not possible in this study to test how many English lexical items the Milingimbi Yolŋu know, or the range of meaning individuals attach to each, some generalisations are possible as a number of English words are used in Milingimbi English in a manner distinctive from SAE.

In general, apparent size of English vocabulary correlates very closely with general level of proficiency in English. Those with a proficiency rating of 7 all have a competent command of English informal and idiomatic language, words denoting basic cultural items, items and activities common to the environment, and a range of abstract terminology, some general and others specific to areas of interest, such as technical vocabulary, religious, philosophical and political language or the language of education or medical theory. People with a proficiency rating of 6 possibly have a similar range of vocabulary, though in general their command of colloquial expressions is less proficient. At the other end of the scale, people with a rating of 2 would have just sufficient vocabulary to cope with very basic interchanges of an everyday nature, such as buying food or asking to borrow something. Those with ratings of 3, 4 and 5 fit on a scale between the two extremes. Knowledge of vocabulary and use of particular lexemes tend to be highly personal and individualised, however, and their use is strongly governed by context. Because of this, semantic and lexical information is less accessible in spontaneous speech than phonological,
morphological and syntactic material.

Since semantic and lexical information is so difficult to quantify, this chapter necessarily takes on a somewhat ad hoc appearance. I have attempted to answer only a few of the possible semantic questions, leaving many completely untouched. Fewer generalisations are possible here than with other aspects of language and a number of comments deal with highly specific usage. With this in mind, however, it is possible to make a number of extremely interesting observations about lexical and semantic usage in Milingimbi English.

8.2 How Yolnu Matha copes with non-Aboriginal loan concepts

Once regular contact with non-Aboriginals with different cultures began, it was inevitable that new concepts should also be introduced. We have seen in chapter 2 that the Yolnu have been historically extremely isolated from non-Aboriginal peoples, and that outside contact appears to have begun only about three hundred years ago. The Macassans' annual visits to collect trepang had a moderately strong cultural impact on the Yolnu. Contact with Japanese pearl divers much more recently appears to have been so fleeting that they left no cultural or linguistic trace. While contact with Europeans has occurred only very recently (it has been "intensive" only for the last twenty or so years), their cultural impact on the Yolnu appears to have been relatively strong.

When contact occurs which is sufficiently major to influence material or philosophical culture, two things are likely to occur linguistically. If a group develops a need or use for some of the "foreign" elements, their names may be borrowed from the donor culture, along with the item or concept. Otherwise, the group may develop a word from its own linguistic stock to apply to the new idea, or extend the semantic domain of one of its already-existing words to include the new concept.
These processes may occur simultaneously with the same concepts.

Both these things have happened at Milingimbi. Concepts first introduced by the Macassans generally also have Macassan names, some of which have been thoroughly assimilated into the phonological system of Yolŋu Matha. Concepts first introduced or used extensively under Balanda influence may have their own Yolŋu Matha name, either constructed for the purpose (following the word-building principles of Yolŋu Matha), or derived by the extension of the semantic domain of an already existing word. All loan concepts are classified as belonging to the Yirritja moiety, primarily because the Yirritja clans are regarded traditionally as the innovators, in terms of their accepting or developing new ideas (whether linguistic, mythological, ceremonial, etcetera). Appendix C contains a list of non-Aboriginal loan concepts in Yolŋu Matha, divided roughly according to general topic. It is comprehensive, but by no means exhaustive. The "translation" in Yolŋu Matha and the origin (whether Macassan, English or indigenous) is indicated for each concept. All "translations" when used may be assimilated completely into the morphology and syntax of Yolŋu Matha. The degree of phonological assimilation depends on a number of factors, including the origin of the actual translation, the length of time the Yolŋu have used the concept and also its importance within the present general Yolŋu cultural world. Many Macassan words in Yolŋu Matha are phonologically completely assimilated (for example, jāniti 'alcohol', 'grog') from the Macassan anesti). Some English ones are, too, but by no means all. It is instructive to see which concepts have been translated by new or old Yolŋu Matha words and which have been translated by words borrowed from English or Macassan. The discussion focuses on those loan concepts whose translations have an English origin.
There are a large number of loan concepts relating in some way to childhood culture and school. These concepts include mathematical terms (groups of^1, all numbers, sets of [tékaweyi] (‘take away’) and so on), terms for equipment and activities used or done at school, such as raba (‘rubber’), pensul (‘pencil’), kopí (‘copy’), redin (‘reading’), rule (‘ruler’) and saw, concepts associated with films, such as yindiyan (‘Indian’), wetseru, kófú (‘kung fu’) and bittija (‘picture’, ‘film’); sport, such as pàyit (‘kite’) and butbul (from ‘football’); and all colour terms (at least when used in relation to coloured pencils and other colours talked about at school, as Yolŋu Matha has its own stock of colour terms). Almost all these loan concepts are translated by English words, the main exceptions being wukirri (‘write’), bothurru (‘count’), and djorra (‘book’/‘letter’), all of which are Macassan in origin.

The reason for the dominance of English in this category of loan concepts is mainly sociohistorical. The visiting Macassans did not import a system of schooling to Milingimbi, although they may have shown the Yolŋu books and how to count and write. Films came to Milingimbi long after the cessation of Macassan visits to Arnhem Land. "School" as an import arrived relatively recently, as we have seen in chapter 2. It is also generally restricted to the young. Many adults have never had any personal contact with school, beyond the fact that their own children or grandchildren may attend. School is still not important for "Yolŋu life as a Yolŋu" at Milingimbi, despite its value in teaching

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1. Where English words can be readily adapted to the phonology of Yolŋu Matha, I have spelled them according to the conventions of the Yolŋu Matha orthography, devised by Beulah Lowe. Where the words regularly contain sounds "foreign" to Yolŋu Matha in the speech of the Yolŋu themselves, I have maintained the regular English spelling or provided phonetic notation where this might clarify certain phonetic differences between the word in SAE and when used by Yolŋu.
skills to operate in the Balanda domain. The internal trappings of bul ('school') at present are not a salient feature in the everyday life of adult Yolnu. The use of English words for features of school life is thus not in any way perceived as a linguistic threat, as most of the words (except those relating to sports and films) would never or only rarely be used outside school.

Among this group of English loan words, only butbul has definitely been semantically altered in the speech of Yolnu. Obviously derived from 'football', its meaning has been extended to include any sort of ball, of any size or shape, for use in any ball game. Thus small rubber balls, tennis balls, balls for softball, basketball and volleyball, and the enormous air-filled Y.M.C.A. ball which stood taller than many children and was used for a while in children's games after school, may all be designated by butbul. Yolnu apparently do not extend it to include other ball games, such as basketball.

Among concepts related to mechanics, vehicles and buildings, a number are translated by English words, while others are translated by words from Yolnu Matha whose meanings have been extended to cover the new concepts. Among those with English origins, one can recognise the following: bilavin ('plane'), halikupta ('helicopter'), rinydjin ('engine'), warripilyin ('aeroplane'), guniya ('Connair', the airline which services Milingimbi), gandurak ('airstrip'), mutika ('car', derived from 'motorcar'), Heron (a type of plane), trak ('truck'), trakta ('tractor'), landin ('landing'), land roha ('land rover'), buti ('barge') and djata ('charter').

Of these English words, all but two appear to denote the same semantic domain as in SAE. I noticed that a number of children, particularly the post-primary boys, referred to the DC3 aeroplanes which land regularly at Milingimbi as guniya (from 'Connair', the name of
the airline which flies the DC3s). The Heron aircraft also flown by 
Connair was always referred to as Heron. The distinction is made clear 
in example (1), where the manual training teacher, on hearing the hum of 
an aeroplane overhead, asks:

(1) (Teacher): Connair? [meaning 'a Connair plane'].
(Boy 14): Nhā? [= “what?”]. Heron!
The DC3s have flown to Milingimbi for a much longer period and with much 
greater frequency than the Herons. The use of guniya to refer only to 
the DC3s probably stems from the days when DC3s were the only planes 
run by Connair.

The etymology of gandurak ('airstrip') is not immediately clear. 
In fact, gandurak is derived from the English word 'contract'. Contractors 
(working on "contracts") built the early airstrips in Arnhem Land, 
including the one at Milingimbi which was constructed during the Second 
World War. The meaning of 'contract' was extended to include the 
object being built on the contract. It will be very interesting to 
see what happens to gandurak now, as many Yolŋu on outstations are at 
present building their own airstrips, not on contract to anyone.

From this category of mechanics and buildings, Yolŋu Matha 
words describe concepts associated with motion or the sound of vehicles, 
words referring to boats (except bēti 'barge'), and words associated with 
buildings. This suggests that words for foreign objects are less 
susceptible to being absorbed by the borrowing language's word stock 
than words for their motion, which can be compared to the motion of 
things in the natural environment.

Among many concepts relating to home management, clothing and 
food, the following are clearly derived from English: batigut (from 
'petticoat'), banikin (from 'pannikin') and possibly dindin (both
meaning 'metal container for boiling water in'), bulumitj (from 'bloomers'), bothulu ('bottle'), bira ('brassiere'), duratj ('dress'), bokit ('pocket'), possibly dhamba (meaning 'damper'), hayim ('to buy' [transitive]), djelim ('to sell' [transitive]), dho ('store'), bilikan (''billy' or 'milk tin'), bakit ('bucket'), djakit ('jacket'), dhawal ('towel'), watumilin ('watermelon'), sugunat ('coconut') and ayiglas (derived from 'eyeglass') or glas ('glasses' or 'spectacles').

A number of these have meanings extending beyond the semantic domain of the original English word. batigut means 'skirt', in addition to 'petticoat'. bulumitj means 'underpants', rather than 'bloomers'. Words for clothes derived from English coexist in Yolŋu Matha with a set of terms which have been recently derived by means of traditional derivational processes in Yolŋu Matha. The suffix -buy/-puy/-wuy ('for', 'concerning') has been added to the Yolŋu Matha word for the part of the body next to which the item of clothing is worn. Hence ayiglas ('glasses') coexists with manutji-puy ('eye-for'), batigut ('petticoat') coexists in its traditional sense with djinaga-wuy ('inside-for'), while birr ('bra') coexists with namini-puy ('breast-for').

dhamba ('damper') may in fact be derived originally from a Yolŋu Matha word, meaning 'light weight'. While dindin ('metal container') may be of Macassan origin, it may also be a reduplicated form of the English word, 'tin'. hayim 'to buy' and djelim ('to sell') are the only verbs in Yolŋu Matha (or Milingimbi English) where the object in (derived from 'him') has been actually incorporated in the transitive verb root. Forms like these are common in many varieties of Pidgin English (such as, for example, bairtun 'biti', digim 'dig', and pulim and Joper Creole (Sharpe, 1975; Sharpe and Sandefur, 1976 and 1977)), 'pull' in Cape York Creole (Crowley and Rigsby, forthcoming) It is possible that hayim and djelim derive their origin at Milingimbi from imported Pidgin English forms.
Words for grains, money, tobacco, alcohol and some items of clothing and cooking ware tend to be derived from Macassan. Foreign concepts which are similar to things in the Yolŋu world may be translated by the words from Yolŋu Matha denoting the appropriate items. Words of English origin in this semantic domain tend to be restricted to cooking utensils, clothes, the practice of buying and selling (associated with Balanda behaviour) and items of food only recently imported to Milingimbi.

In the category covering administrative, political and other technological concepts, English loan words predominate except in the technological sphere covering firearms, some types of lights, telescope, small tools and some activities associated with these implements. Words of English origin include: djıji ('church'), mitjin ('mission'), wopitj ('office'), watjpil ('hospital'), wuktjaq ('workshop') gur ('school'), kafevi ('cafe'), mirritjin ('medicine'), dhukta ('doctor'), djitji ('nursing sister'), tevip ('tape'), kásit ('cassette'), revidiyo ('radio'), broadkastin ('broadcasting'), dotı ('torch'), bulldjiimin ('policeman'), lan rayit ('Land Rights'), profıt, Northern Lan Kansul ('Northern Land Council') and sekitiri ('secretary'). Of these, only tevip ('tape') and kásit ('cassette') appear to have extended semantic domains. Both words may be used to describe the equipment which plays the tape or cassette. All these English terms are either for recently introduced concepts or for highly organised institutions which have affected the Yolngu in a substantial way.

Following words are used regularly by Yolŋu for animals new in recent times: bikibiki ('pig'), biddjigit (from 'pussy cat'), buluki (from 'bullock'), djukidjuki (from 'chicken'), and nanigut
(from 'nanny goat'). bikibiki, djukidjuki and budjigit all have the same semantic domains as the English originals. The semantic domain of buluki is extended to encompass all cattle of any sort or sex, whether singly or in herds. At Milingimbi it does not refer to "cattle-driver", the usual meaning of 'bullocky' in SAE. Manigut, too, has its semantic domain extended, as it refers to male goats in addition to female ones.

A large number of English time words are used by Yolnu, at least when speaking in the presence of Balandas. Whether this happens when no Balanda is present is not clear, but it seems to be unlikely as Yolnu refer to time in quite different ways from Balandas. Time reference in English is abstract (the division of the day into twenty four "hours", consisting of sixty "minutes" each, and the year into fifty two "weeks", none of which coincide with any phenomenon in the natural world), while in Yolnu Matha it can be highly specific, as Yolnu refer, for example, to times when particular foods are in season, or to the position of the sun or stars. None of the other loan concepts in the "miscellaneous" list are translated by English words.

Thus English words tend to be used for loan concepts only when the borrowed item has been a recent innovation in the Yolnu world, when the concept affects only a part of the population, or when the concept has been highly institutionalised.

8.3 How differences in classification affect lexical choice in English Languages tend to classify aspects of the world in different ways, depending on their particular importance within the cultural

2. 'Horse' is yarramarn, an Aboriginal word originally from the Bateman's Bay language, which was spread over Australia by means of the pidgin used by early white settlers when talking to Aborigines.
life of their speakers. By contrast with native English-speaking children in Australia, Yolnu children from an early age know all the names, for example, for different types of vegetation and their fruit, berries, leaves and roots, and the many varieties of animals, birds, insects, fish and shellfish found at Milingimbi. (See Appendix D(b) for Rudder's (1979) classification of Yolnu basic food and existence classes). While the same degree of precision in classification for these objects is possible in English, many such terms are known only by specialists. Most speakers of English in Australia refer to 'trees', 'bushes', 'grasses', 'creepers', for example, and only rarely use species' names, such as 'eucalyptus', 'grevillea' and 'acacia'. Even when speaking English, Yolnu generally refer to such items by their specific Yolnu Matha name, very rarely by the general English term which may be used commonly by Balandas at Milingimbi. The Balandas frequently try to learn many of these Yolnu Matha words, particularly when they are given "bushfoods" to eat, or go out gathering with a group of Yolnu. Very often, too, a general term in Yolnu Matha is used in preference to the specific one or the equivalent generic term in English. When talking English, both Balandas and Yolnu may talk, for example, about: būpi ('snake'), parriwa ('a species of turtle'), rāgudha (a species of shellfish shaped like a dunce's cap and very easily obtained at low tide), nyoka ('mudcrab'), mutamuta (an edible crunchy berry growing on a small bush), warraga ('cycad palm nuts'), bāru ('crocodile') and rūkay ('water lily roots'). Example (2) demonstrates this use of vocabulary by both Balandas and Yolnu.

(2) (MG, Balanda woman, 22): What are these holes for?

Būf : [ "snakes"].

(Œ, nan, 50): Yaka, yaka būpi ["no, not snakes"].

(VE): Nyoka? ["crabs"].

(Œ): Wiripu maypal ["another sort of shellfish"].
(VE): Oh, maypal [= "shellfish"].

(E): niyi, same like nyoka [= "crabs"].

(VE & MG): Aah-ha ... What animal sort is that?

(E): Weri [= "wallaby"].

The most overt examples of extended semantic domains for English terms when used by Yolnu exist in the complex area of kin terminology (see Appendix D(a) for a comparison of English and Yolnu Matha kin terms).

(3) (VE): Are they brothers?

(Boy, 13): Yeah, but different father and mother ...

but one granddad ... and grandma.

(4) (Mal, woman, 18): That's my sister.

(VE): Manymak, dhumungur [= "O.K., my daughter's daughter's husband's sister"]. Dhumungur, a distant relationship, was the kin term I called Mal.

(VE): Same father same mother?

(Mal): Yaka [= "no"]. Different father ... ga [= "and"] one grandmother, only one.

The Yolnu have a classificatory kin system, by which they can relate everyone in the community to everyone else in a classificatory sense, if not in actual fact. By contrast, kin terms in SAE refer only to genetic relations, except in certain limited circumstances (for example, children may call very close friends of their parents 'auntie' and 'uncle'). Thus brother and sister in SAE refer strictly to male and female siblings with the same genetic parents. At Milingimbi, wūwa ('elder brother'), yapa ('sister') and yukiyuku ('younger sibling') are applied not only to people with the same parents, but also in a classificatory sense to the children of men and women who stand in the
classificatory relationship of bapa ('father') and qandi ('mother') (that is, parents' own immediate siblings, as well as some relatives in the descending generations). When speaking English, Yolnu often use kin terms such as brother and sister (examples (3) and (4)) in this classificatory sense, to refer, for example, to people with only one grandparent in common. It is interesting that in examples (3) and (4), father, mother, granddad and grandmother are all used according to the conventions of SAE, although brother and sister are used with meanings extended to include classificatory relationships. In general, however, all kin terms in Milingimbi English may be used at times to refer to classificatory, not actual, relations. As it is not always clear whether classificatory or actual relatives are under discussion, it is always "semantically safer" for Balandas to learn to manipulate Yolnu Matha kinship terminology.

8.4 Use of English colloquialisms and jargon

Being able to use the colloquial expressions of a second language with ease, accuracy and appropriateness is sometimes considered one of the hardest aspects of second-language learning. English colloquial language is typical in this respect, and competence in using it was a major criterion in judging the level of Yolnu's proficiency in English. Many Yolnu from primary age on can manipulate a certain number of colloquial and idiomatic structures. Table 8.1 summarises the informal and idiomatic expressions that I actually recorded. A few of them are used frequently by all groups.

Some colloquialisms tend to be commonly used by only one or two groups. Notable in this category is you know, a common "sentence-filler" in SAE, which is used extensively by the post-primary boys, two of the young men recorded, and also by one group of women (example (5)).
### TABLE 8.1

**Colloquialisms Used in Milingimi English**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>GROUP</th>
<th>STANDARD</th>
<th>NON-STANDARD</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>GRADE 5</td>
<td>'yes, all right', 'oh yes', 'what a good idea', 'please', 'yes, I will', 'what's your name?', 'hullo'.</td>
<td>'Can I have a toilet?', 'who(s) your name?'.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GRADE 7</td>
<td>'be careful', 'sure', 'O.K.', 'it's all right', 'don't worry about that'.</td>
<td>'sure and I am'.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>POST-PRIMARY</td>
<td>'all right', 'hurry up', 'hello', 'hi!', 'sure, if you don't mind!', 'oh, thanks a lot', 'O.K., let's go', 'excuse me', 'bye', 'see you', 'see you later', 'see you another time', 'sorry', 'so am I', 'there is!', 'thank you', 'I think so', 'right', 'O.K.', 'yes, it is', 'mama mia', 'have a go!', 'thank you', 'well..', 'all gone', 'be careful', 'have dinner', 'never mind', 'I mean', 'I don't feel like work'.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>GIRLS</td>
<td>'guess what', 'excuse me', 'please', 'you know' [used 32 times], 'right', 'hurray!', 'it's up to you', 'what about me?', 'thanks', 'I don't know', 'hey', 'yeah', 'ycp', 'I know', 'sahh!', 'be quiet', 'mama mia!', 'shut up', 'shit'.</td>
<td>'I means', 'the time is what?'.</td>
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<tr>
<td>POST-PRIMARY</td>
<td>'once upon a time', 'I'd better V..', 'what sort of..', 'oh dear', 'hey', 'hullo', 'in a minute', 'good enough', 'how is he?', 'will he be all right?', 'please', 'thank you', 'on holidays', 'after that', 'I don't know', 'oh, my goodness', 'it's all about..', 'all right', 'on their own', 'excuse me', 'sure', 'O.K.', 'too dear', 'well, then'. 'thank you very much', 'bye bye', 'that's all right',</td>
<td>'I'll better V..', 'I better V..', 'don't be mind'.</td>
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<tr>
<td>BOYS</td>
<td>'I mean', 'the time is what?'.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>NURSES</td>
<td>'once upon a time', 'I'd better V..', 'what sort of..', 'oh dear', 'hey', 'hullo', 'in a minute', 'good enough', 'how is he?', 'will he be all right?', 'please', 'thank you', 'on holidays', 'after that', 'I don't know', 'oh, my goodness', 'it's all about..', 'all right', 'on their own', 'excuse me', 'sure', 'O.K.', 'too dear', 'well, then'. 'thank you very much', 'bye bye', 'that's all right',</td>
<td>'I'll better V..', 'I better V..', 'don't be mind'.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GROUP</td>
<td>STANDARD</td>
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<tr>
<td>NURSES</td>
<td>'it's up to you', 'can I help you?', 'see you',</td>
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<tr>
<td>CONT'D</td>
<td>'ta ta!!', 'of course', 'have a good time',</td>
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<td></td>
<td>'yeah', 'just about', 'sorry', 'oh gosh',</td>
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<td></td>
<td>'oh goodness gracious', 'Oh, my God', 'right?',</td>
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<td>'sshh', 'be quiet', 'hey', 'if you don't mind',</td>
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<td>'have a look', 'come on', 'how are you?',</td>
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<td>'you remind me of...', 'well...', 'just hang on</td>
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<td></td>
<td>a moment', 'welcome'.</td>
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<tr>
<td>COUNCIL</td>
<td>'hey', 'have a look', 'hullo', 'please', 'all</td>
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<td>right?', 'can I help you?', 'hold on', 'thanks',</td>
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<td></td>
<td>'O.K.', 'all right', 'well', 'bye, thank you',</td>
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<td></td>
<td>'tell you what!', 'see?', 'wait a minute', 'you'</td>
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<td></td>
<td>know', 'good afternoon', 'all told', 'thank you',</td>
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<td></td>
<td>'have in mind', 'ladies and gentlemen'</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>MISCELLANEOUS</td>
<td>'hullo', 'well', 'hey', 'oh yeah', 'all right',</td>
<td>'I couldn't stand</td>
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<tr>
<td>MEN:</td>
<td>'you know' [twelve instances], 'that sort of',</td>
<td>for the X'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>'hmm', 'well, no worries', 'right', 'down south',</td>
<td>'let's go, I</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>'bloke', 'sort of', 'see?'.</td>
<td>think'.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WOMEN:</td>
<td>'hey', 'oh, I see', 'I mean', 'O.K.', 'shut up',</td>
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<td></td>
<td>'you know'.</td>
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</table>

(5) (Boy, 13): Djarrrka [= a basketball team] is ... you know
nhawi [= "um"] ... his uncle ... all his uncle play for
Djarrrka and his two brothers. Eh, you know, at Elcho,
you know, that's the Sheppies. You know that Shepherdson
College? They was here, you know.
mama mia, used by both the post-primary groups, is obviously of Italian origin, probably learned from films (such as Italian-made "spaghetti westerns") or from Italian contractors working during the dry season at Milingimbi.

Most of the colloqualisms in the "non-standard" column in Table 8.1 differ from SAE grammatically rather than semantically. Who's your name? is a syntactic blend of two sentences seeking the identity of the interlocutor. Milingimbi English has introduced who in this sentence instead of SAE 'what?', as a result of interference from the corresponding Yolnu Malak expression. In sure and I am (which corresponds to SAE 'sure I am', and appears to function as a discourse marker, rather like ra (discussed in chapter 7). The concord marker /=s/ on the verb with a first person subject distinguishes I means from SAE 'I mean'. The post-primary boys' use of the time is what? alters the focus of the sentence from the conventional SAE what's the time? the time is now the old information, as if the speaker is about to tell one the time, and the interrogative has become the new information. I'll better V and I better V (in the indicative mood) cooccur in the nurses' speech with SAE I'd better V (in the subjunctive mood). don't be mind corresponds to SAE 'don't mind (it)'. mind has become an adjective in the Milingimbi English version. In thousands of million, the speaker has reinterpreted the SAE phrase 'thousands of millions'. Milingimbi English 'million (not 'millions') is used in conjunction with numbers (hence two million, thousands of million). The presence of for in I couldn't stand for the X would lead to an SAE speaker's misinterpreting the Yolnu's intention, as the meaning intended is 'I think X is awful', not 'I couldn't make myself available for the office X' or 'I couldn't stand up'. The juxtaposition of two clauses, one a very definite suggestion, the other an expression of hesitancy, is semantically very marked to a speaker of
SAE in *let's go, I think*, though not grammatically non-standard.

Only one expression has non-standard semantic implications.

A speaker of SAE would interpret *Can I have a toilet?* as meaning that either the speaker wants to *own* a toilet or that she is asking whether a toilet is free for use and her temporary possession. In fact, the speaker is merely asking permission to 'go to the toilet', using a structure very common, at least among children, in Milingimbi English. It is based on the SAE model of 'Can I have a pee?'.

Some younger Yolŋu use colloquial English expressions referring to length of time in a completely standard way. (example (6)).

(6) (Girl, 15): Alan's Dad sat there *for hours* but he didn't get a bite.

English jargon can be observed at all sporting fixtures at Milingimbi. During women's softball games the conversation is entirely in Yolŋu Matha, except for the umpire's calls. These expressions are all standard softball jargon: *foul ball, strike, safe (on) first/second (at)* third/home, *out at... ball outside/inside*, ball one/two/three/four, next batter up, home run, *ball high/low, out, fair ball, and take a walk.*

The 1978 Milingimbi Basketball Finals were one of the social highlights of the year, attended by a very large number of Yolŋu of all ages. Only a couple of Balandas were present as the event took place during the school holidays. Expressions heard from a group of men included: *Rebels [= one of the teams in the final], go, man, go!, come on!, get them, number Xi, at them!, into the Rebels!, pull up your socks!, make for Xi, shake a leg!, all the way!, break through them!, on the ball!, take it all the way!, take it away!, oh yes!, all yours, get your men!, get away!, line!, good play!, one more!, number X in!, and this is serious — make them work!*. 
Many of these spectators' exhortations to the players, and others which were not recorded, would have been learned by people watching sports in Darwin and imported for use at general sporting occasions at Milingimbi. While Yolŋu Matha is used extensively at all sporting events, it tends to be restricted to private conversations. English is definitely accepted as the most suitable language with which to encourage or make suggestions to sporting teams in action. If all the Balandas were to leave Milingimbi immediately, there seems little doubt that English jargon would continue to be used as extensively at sporting fixtures as it is at present.

8.5 "Sentence-fillers" - nhawi- versus er, um and ah

The use of "sentence-fillers" can be very significant in determining how "English" or how "Yolŋu" or how much like any other language an utterance is. Such sentence-fillers are generally below the level of the speaker's conscious awareness of his or her speech, and consequently very difficult to control, although they often appear quite noticeable in the speech of others. Probably the most common sentence-fillers in English are er, ah and um. In Yolŋu Matha, nhawi- fills the slot of sentence-filler. nhawi- is grammatically different from er, ah and um, in that it takes case markings according to the grammatical function of the word whose place it takes, or of the following word if it fills the same grammatical slot (in other words, if the speaker says nhawi- while trying to think of the next word). nhawi- also corresponds roughly with 'whatsthisname' and 'thingamejig'.

There is a marked difference in the use of nhawi- as opposed to er, um and ah in Milingimbi English. All categories of people use nhawi-. er, um and ah make their first appearance among the post-primary
boys, although nhawi- is used exclusively by the post-primary girls.

The nurses, some of whom have excellent English, use nhawi- most of the time, although a couple of them, including the one whose English is "best" on other criteria, use er, ah and um occasionally, most noticeably when role-playing or telling stories set in clearly Balanda contexts. The young male workers in the council offices use er, ah and um extensively though not as often as nhawi-. Here topic and the identity of the interlocutor are the main parameters affecting the choice. For example, um and ah were used exclusively by Gat when ordering a spare part for a Toyota truck by telephone from a dealer in Darwin (example (7)).

Two men I observed were able to control their use of er, ah and um to the extent that they both used these English fillers at all times in preference to nhawi- in quite lengthy conversations where they covered a wide range of topics with Balandas. Examples (7) to (12) illustrate the use of nhawi- versus um, er and ah in Milingimbi English.

(7) (Gat, man, 28): Well, it's not the, um, for the council, this is, um, private order . Ah . I'll spell the name to you . . [Extract from a longer telephone conversation with an unknown interlocutor in Darwin].

(8) (Girl, 14): And we were talking to, nhawi man . . I just looked at him. Di, and after that we nhawiy we started looking and we got nhawi same as this nhawi snake. Blue tongue ga [= "and"] nhawiy goanna. Big one. Nhawi . . . [Telling a personal story, with a local setting].

(9) (Boy, 13): We'll go to Alice Spring first, we'll play two team ah game, and we'll go on . . I don't know, late flight, and we'll land at . . um . . Adelaide. [Telling a personal story with a Balanda oriented setting].
(10) (Dja, woman, 32): He's got a chest infection. I think I better...nhawi...past history... Has he nhawi...been eating nhawi anything more?

[Contributing to a group story-telling session where the story is governed by a series of pictures. While the topic is the operation of Balanda-style medical practice, it is one with which Dja, a nurse for about twelve years, is very familiar].

(11) (Bil, woman, 28): We're going to have a party tomorrow and ah there's ah ten people attending this party and ah we haven't got enough things for the party, like ah... whatever...

[Role-playing in a (Balanda-oriented) story, the outline of which was suggested by me].

(12) (Many, man, 41): Hmm... but ah...the Ian was or...Ian and the other Yolŋu are going to or...down south for the ah...exhibition and the council was asking ah Ian to or... ah interview some of the ah...Balanda down south... which ah married bloke and ah... [Passing on information to the school's headmaster about a Council meeting].

The speakers in (8) and (10) were never heard to use or, um and ah.

The speakers in (7), (9) and (11) use nhawi- quite frequently. Their use of or, ah and um in these examples appears to be related to the topics (all Balanda-oriented) and the types of discourse (a telephone conversation (7) and a role-playing situation in a classroom (11)). There is a considerable element of "showing off" in (9), which, combined with the topic, possibly accounts for the presence of English "fillers". These
utterances do not contain any code-switching.

The control of *er*, *ah* and *um* exercised by the 41-year-old speaker of (12) is quite remarkable. Although he often uses *nhawi*- when he is code-switching, in otherwise totally English utterances *nhawi*- was never heard. (12) is an extract from a conversation lasting about five minutes between the speaker and the school's headmaster, in which *nhawi*- did not appear once, although *er*, *um* and *ah* occurred sixty eight times. Despite the many non-standard structures characteristic of his English, the lack of code-switching and the complete control of *er*, *ah* and *um* as opposed to *nhawi*- as 'sentence-fillers' make his speech in English actually sound "very English".

8.6 Other words with altered semantic domains or use

A few English words are regularly used with semantic domains different from SAE. We have already seen how loan words such as *buluki* and *guniya* regularly have extended semantic domains. A few others also occur in Milingimbi English. *Drink* has very specific reference, which excludes 'water': When children ask for *drink*, they always mean a cold drink such as cordial or juice, and cold water is not acceptable.

*Jealousy* can be a very major problem at Milingimbi. When a person *jealouses* someone else, he or she is hostile towards the second person, generally because the latter appears to be trying to "act like a Balanda" (for example by being bossy, working very hard or wanting a Balanda house and many material goods). In Milingimbi English the noun derived from the adjective *jealous* is *jealousing* (not SAE 'jealousy') and *jealous* can be used as a transitive verb (not the case in SAE). Thus Milingimbi English has extended the meaning of *jealous* as well as altered its morphological potential and syntactic function.
The implication of number generally supplied by **one** when used as an adjective in SAE is secondary in Milingimbi English (example (13)).

(13) (Boy, 15): Those brother. One mother, one father.

In this sentence, **one** has the sense of SAE 'same'.

The modal **can** in Milingimbi English often has a different semantic domain from SAE, where it is used with the sense of someone’s having the ability or permission to do something. At Milingimbi **can** may have a general future sense, without the connotations of permission or ability (examples (14) and (15)).

(14) (Boy, 15): Excuse me, you **can** talk to all the boys?

(15) (Child, 12): Be careful, you **can** not fall down.

The boy in (14) was excitedly hoping that I would speak to his fellows, so **can** makes sense here only if it has future reference. The warning in (15) has meaning in the context only if **can** is again generalised to denote future time. There is an underlying implication of result in the second clause, caused by its placement in apposition with **be careful**!

A number of other words are used sporadically in interesting ways, such as **bludging around** (example (16)), **crash** (example (17)) and **author** (example (18)).

(16) (Girl, 12): We are just **bludging around**.

The children’s teacher was away at a conference, and the children were unsupervised and not sure what to do with themselves. This phrase is common in colloquial "bush" English.

(17) (Maw, man, 31): [The prime minister said]

I’m going to, I will **crash** the Northern Land Council.

**Crash** is not used as a transitive verb with an organisation as its object in SAE, although it is used very effectively in this way in Milingimbi English.
(18) (Bil, woman, 28): Can you give me the name and **author** of music that your friend likes?

**Author**, in the context of the utterance, refers to a writer of music, not books or plays. The speaker has expanded the semantic domain of **author** to include that of SAE 'composer'.

**Other** in Milingimbi English has a variable **other**, which may be used with both singular and plural nouns (example (19)).

(19) (Maw, man, 31): Can we fight for **other** rights?

Constructions equating one thing as 'same as' another in SAE are generally expressed by **same like** in Milingimbi English (example (20), an extract from (2)).

(20) (E, woman, 50): *nįyi* [= acquiescence], **same like** *nyoka* [= "crabs"].

### 8.7 Imagery

The use of imagery is extensive in Yolŋu Matha, particularly when drawing analogies, a frequent oratorical device. A small number of people use metaphors and similes in Milingimbi English. They occur in particular at community meetings, where speakers are often able to indulge in rhetoric and oratory (examples (21) to (24)).

(21) (Dh, man, 34): I'm not a banana, to peel my skin, to peel my understanding.

(22) (Maw, man, 31): Mr Yunupingu, [if you] sign th'agreement, you gonna be like a bird, looking for a land.

(23) (E, man, 38): We black and white we are fighting jackals from this land.

(24) (E, man, 38): Money is your God, for your government people.
Speaking for all Arnhem Land Aborigines in (21), Dh is saying that if you take away his land, you take away his Aboriginality, his whole emotional being. His Aboriginality cannot be "peeled" away from him as easily as one peels a banana. (22) evokes the sense of rootlessness and homelessness which Arnhem Land Aboriginals feel is an inevitable result of the loss of their land, when it is taken over by the jackals of example (23), who worship only money (24) and do not value the land except as a source of money.

These examples of imagery are pertinent and evocative. Even though English is a second language for these men, they are able to use it with considerable oratorical skill.

8.8 Lexicon and semantics: summary

Although Milingimbi English semantics is less accessible to analysis in the corpus than its other linguistic properties, this chapter has illustrated a range of its semantic and lexical characteristics. Only some non-Aboriginal loan concepts are translated into Yolŋu Matha by means of words from English. Macassan words and the word-building processes of Yolŋu Matha itself are used extensively. English loans tend to denote relatively recently borrowed concepts or ones which, like some administrative terminology and much school language, have been institutionalised. English kinship terminology appears to be the main area where misunderstandings directly attributable to differences in the systems of classification in English and Yolŋu Matha may arise. The range of SAE colloquial expressions in Milingimbi English appears to be fairly limited, although some like you know are used extensively by certain groups. "Sentence-fillers" can add an important dimension to the "flavour" of a language and may influence an observer's subjective perception of how fluent or "foreign" a person's use of the second language
is. At Milingimbi, women use English "sentence-fillers" comparatively rarely, in contrast to their generally extensive use of the Yolngu Matha one, nhawi-. The speech of some Milingimbi men and boys conveys a strong "English" flavour simply because they want to and have learned to restrict their use of "sentence-fillers" to English ones. The majority of Yolngu use most English words with semantic domains apparently corresponding to their use in SAE. Notable exceptions are jealous and to jealous, drink, one, can, bludging around, crash and author. Finally, while the use of imagery in Milingimbi English tends to be restricted to contexts where extended oratory is possible, at least some Yolngu are able to express themselves very skilfully in English, using oratorical and metaphorical language.
CHAPTER 9

THE ENGLISH-LEARNING ENVIRONMENT AT MILINGIMBI

9.1 Introduction

The final aspect of our picture of English-as-a-second-language at Milingimbi consists of an examination of the community as an English-learning environment. This enables us to set in perspective many of the non-standard features of Milingimbi English that were discussed in the previous chapters. We have seen that each level of the second language, whether phonological, morphological, syntactic, lexical or semantic, contains variables and different usages which distinguish Milingimbi English from SAE. Each variable and the range of variation can be explained by one or more aspects of the English-learning environment. None are totally random. This chapter provides much of the rationale for the list of recommendations for improving the English-learning environment at Milingimbi, to be found in Chapter 10.

9.2 Types of "errors" in Milingimbi English

The previous four chapters surveyed the interlingual grammar of Milingimbi English, highlighting those features which distinguish it from SAE. This section provides a synopsis of the main types of "errors", defined in terms of their probable causes, thus drawing together the huge variety of regularly-occurring non-standard structures into a relatively simple system of classification. The term "error" is defined here in relation to SAE, a perspective I feel may be useful for English teachers. These "errors" are the distinctive features of what we have called the interlanguage of Milingimbi English.

Until recently, linguists and teachers believed that most "errors" in the speech of second-language learners were due to interference from the learner's first language (Chastain, 1976:61). While native
language interference clearly plays an important role in the interlanguage, it is now generally recognised that many "errors" are due to intralingual and developmental factors as well, reflecting the learner's competence at a particular stage of learning rather than an inability to separate the first and second language systems (Richards, 1973b:96).

A further category of "errors" may be described as "induced", as they result from ambiguities of presentation in the classroom situation, rather than either interference from the first language or an incomplete competence in the second (Stenson, 1974:54). Yet another group consists of "performance errors", due to such factors as fatigue and memory limitations (Richards, 1973a:41). Many "errors" can be regarded as "code-switching errors", a type, frequently systematic, resulting from the incomplete application of the rules of one or both language systems when both are used in the one speech act. This type of "error" is not discussed in the literature on error analysis to which reference has been made. All six types of "errors" occur in the corpus of Milingimbi English.

9.2.1 "Errors" due to interference from Yolnu Matha

"Errors" resulting from interference between the first and second language systems generally arise because the languages concerned classify aspects of language and the world differently. They are perhaps most pervasive at the phonological level in Milingimbi English, although they occur at the other levels as well. Most examples presented here are supplementary to those of earlier chapters to avoid repetition, but they synthesise the processes discussed earlier.

In Chapters 3 and 5 we saw that Dhuwal/Dhuwala and other Yolnu languages contain many phonemes which do not occur in SAE and vice versa. In particular, Yolnu Matha's absence of fricatives, affricates and an aspirant, its much smaller range of vowel phonemes and its larger number
of places of articulation in the stop and nasal series, may cause
extensive and relatively systematic interference in all but the nasal
series in Milingimbi English. Many of the resulting "errors" are
tossilised in the speech of individual speakers, at least at the level
of individual lexemes. English fricatives and affricates are generally
reinterpreted as Yolnu Matha stops corresponding to the nearest place
of articulation. The wide range of SAE vowel and diphthong phonemes
tends to contract in Milingimbi English to relatively "pure" high front
and back and low front vowels, in conformity with Yolnu Matha. /h/ is
frequently omitted, or, because Yolnu Matha does not tolerate word-
initial vowels, may be replaced by [w], [y] or [ŋ]. First language
interference also affects English stress patterns, as contrastive stress,
which does not occur in Yolnu Matha, is frequently lost in Milingimbi
English. Consonant clusters in Milingimbi English may be reduced if
they do not conform to the phonotactics of Yolnu Matha. Phonological
interference from Yolnu Matha thus accounts for such fossilisations
in Milingimbi English as [eyidol] ("Hazel", the name of a Balanda child),
hinitja ("Vanessa") and djilip ("sleep").

A number of morphological "errors" in Milingimbi English are due
to interference from Yolnu Matha in such areas as: the distinction
between alienable and inalienable possession in Yolnu Matha, not made
in SAE; the gender distinction in SAE third person singular pronouns,
not made in Yolnu Matha; the use of number distinctions, obligatory
with count nouns and determiners referring to count nouns in SAE, but
optional for nouns in Yolnu Matha where, however, plural may sometimes
be marked more than once in a noun phrase; and the absence of verb
concord and the copula in Yolnu Matha, both obligatory in SAE. The
result is that grammatical distinctions compulsory in SAE but absent
from Yolnu Matha tend to be optional in Milingimbi English, and
vice versa (examples (1) to (4)).

(1) (Girl, 14): Nhawiv [= "um"], Maryanne. My grandfather from different nhawi [= "um"]. She is nhawi [= "um"] Djinaŋ.

(2) (Bill, woman, 28): ... country westerns music. Have you got them?

(3) (Maw, man, 31): That belong to the government, for the white people.

(4) (Girl, 16): What that noise?

 jumps (subject), ganya (object) and nhangu (oblique) are the third person singular pronoun forms in Yolgu Matha, irrespective of the gender of the object or person concerned. As SAE makes a distinction between masculine, feminine and neuter in pronouns, regardless of syntactic function, interference gives rise to a situation where the three may be used randomly in Milingimbi English, with a tendency to select she and her in preference to the masculine and neuter pronouns (as in example (1)).

A plural marker has been suffixed to an adjective in (2). While plural is only optionally marked in Yolgu Matha, it may be specified more than once in the noun phrase or attached to any constituent. This relative freedom carries over into Milingimbi English, where an adjective can be marked for plural, even when the noun phrase head is a mass noun in SAE. music here probably translates as manikay, a count noun in Yolgu Matha.

Example (3) demonstrates the absence of verb concord in Milingimbi English when the verb has a third person singular subject. Absence of the copula be in (4) again reflects interference from Yolgu Matha, where no copula exists.

"Errors" due to syntactic interference are widespread in
Milingimbi English. They occur mainly in: the use of articles (example (5)), a word class which does not occur in Yolŋu Matha; ellipsis, where by contrast to SAE, virtually "anything", including objects and prepositions, may be omitted as a result of interference from the less stringent rules of ellipsis in Yolŋu Matha (examples (6) and (7)); the domains of reference and use of prepositions with semantic and syntactic overlap from locational suffixes in Yolŋu Matha (example (8)); and constituent order, where the almost complete freedom of constituent order in Yolŋu Matha, by contrast with SAE, gives rise to greater flexibility in Milingimbi English word order (example (9)).

(5) (L, woman, 32): At 5.30 we went to the Esplanade for tea and after that we had a nhawi ['um'] film. [...] Next day we went out to Berry Springs. We had a picnic out there. And there were Balanda. They don't know about us much. We told them [...] We gave a concert. The absence of indefinite articles before film, picnic and concert, obligatory in SAE because these are all count nouns lacking definite reference in the context, arises because the category "article" is absent from Yolŋu Matha, which does not need to specify indefiniteness.

(6) (Child, 10): Plum [meaning "Give me some plums" or "We want to have some plums" or "Can I have some plums?", etcetera]. A request of this kind is quite normal in Yolŋu Matha (cf. yupu! 'water!'), but would be considered quite rude in SAE. While this example can also be regarded as sociolinguistic interference, it is manifested linguistically in the syntax.

(7) (Boy, 14): You can put?

Object deletion (7) is generally not possible in SAE as the presence or otherwise of an object is the only means one has of telling
a verb's transitivity. This constraint does not exist in Yolŋu Matha or Milingimbi English.

Prepositions are subject to considerable interference from Yolŋu Matha. The occurrence of for twice in (8) where it is redundant in SAE exactly parallels the equivalent structure in Yolŋu Matha (8a).

(8) (Dh, man, 34): That's where money goes, bill

[ = causal connector], Government want for money.

Aboriginal people want for land.

(8a) government djäl rupiyan-wa
government wanting money-dative

'The Government wants money'.

Interference in Milingimbi English from Yolŋu Matha constituent ordering is in fact relatively rare, although one could expect the opposite. Nevertheless, Milingimbi English noun phrases are, for example, sometimes broken by non-nominal constituents (example (9)).

(9) 'Boy, 10): What's that saying bulldozer? [The boy is talking about a little bulldozer in his reader which is able to talk and behave like a human].

"Errors" due to semantic interference from Yolŋu Matha appear to be relatively rare in the corpus. The most overt examples occur where Yolŋu extend the semantic domain of English words to correspond with Yolŋu Matha usage. For example, as we have seen in the previous chapter, Yolŋu use kin terms to refer to classificatory as well as blood relations. Thus in Milingimbi English, mother, father, brother, sister, cousin, grandmother, grandfather, niece, nephew, and daughter may all be used to refer to people who are not blood relatives.
9.2.2 Intralingual "errors"

Intralingual "errors" are often fossilised within the individual second-language speaker's interlanguage. Some arise from analogy with other forms in the second language, or from hypercorrection or the overgeneralisation of certain rules. Ignorance of rule restrictions and the incomplete application of rules may also result in intralingual "errors". These causes are often closely interwoven.

The frequent placement of [h] word-initially on words beginning with vowels in SAE, due to hypercorrection, perhaps the most salient type of intralingual "error" at the phonological level.

Intralingual "errors" are most widespread at the morphological level. The use of the plural marker /-s/ on non-count nouns such as *bait* is probably due to analogy with count nouns. The obligatory use of the plural on SAE count nouns has been overgeneralised to apply to SAE non-count nouns as well (thereby rendering them morphologically as count nouns in Milingimbi English).

Ignorance of the rule restriction preventing object pronouns from co-occurring with nouns in SAE noun phrases causes utterances like example (10)).

(10) (Child, 10): *He took it the fish off the hook and touch it fish.*

The irregular reflexive pronouns *hisself* and *themself* arise from analogy and the incomplete application of the rules for formation respectively. SAE reflexive pronouns consist of the possessive pronouns plus *-self*/-selves* in all but the third person (singular and plural), where the object pronoun forms the pronominal stem. Milingimbi English *hisself* is derived by a process of analogy with the more common possessive pronoun + *self* forms. Both pronominal stem and *-self* must be marked
for plural in SAE plural reflexives. The plural has not been applied to -self in Milingimbi English themselves.

Intralingual "errors" are prevalent in several areas of verbal morphology: particularly the tendency to omit concord markers on verbs with third person singular subjects (example (11)), (we have seen in Chapters 6 and 7, however, that this may sometimes have an underlying semantic basis); the insertion of concord on verbs with non-third person subjects (example (12)); occasional non-standard past tense and past participial forms (such as finded); the occasional application of tense marking to both auxiliary and verb head in complex verb phrases (example (13)); and non-standard concord with the auxiliary, be (example (14)).

(11) (Boy, 16): You know Ganyitiw? She go to school with Maryanne.

(12) (Dja, woman, 32): We wants you to be weighed, little boy.

(13) (Bil, woman, 28): When did he got sick?

(14) (Girl, 11): You was doing twist las' night. [addressed to one person].

Past tense forms of irregular verbs like finded are derived by analogy with the V-ed forms of regular verbs. The absence of concord on verbs with third person singular subjects (example (11)), where it does not have a semantic basis, results from the regularisation of all present tense verbs, regardless of subject. Hypercorrection is probably the cause of the non-standard present tense concord with a first person subject in (12). Overgeneralisation of the application of past tense accounts for its being marked on the verb head, as well as on the auxiliary in (13), where it would occur only on the auxiliary in SAE. The speaker in (14) has regularised the auxiliary be paradigm with the second person singular
subject. In SAE, _was_ occurs only with first and third person singular subjects and _this_ has been extended to encompass second person singular subjects as well in Milingimbi English.

Intralingual "errors" at the syntactic level are only common in the use of determiners, particularly the articles, _a_ and _the_. In general, the non-standard occurrence of these articles is due to ignorance of rule restrictions, for example, rules preventing the insertion of _the_ before most names (example (15)) and of _a_ before SAE non-count nouns (example (16)).

(15) (Cat., man, 28): That time you were nhawi ["um"] going to _the_ Perth they take it.

(16) (May., woman, 26): You girls, find _a_ shade and sit down.

While absence of articles where required in SAE is probably due to interference, as was suggested in section 9.2.1, it is also often due to intralingual factors in cases where the speaker uses articles "correctly" in other situations. The absence of _a_ three times - example (5) may be due to such causes, as the speaker generally uses articles in a standard way.

9.2.3 Developmental, induced and performance errors

Developmental "errors" are a subcategory of both interlingual and intralingual "errors". They can be regarded as arising from false hypotheses about aspects of the second language system. These "errors" occur where speakers have not developed to their final competence regarding particular grammatical points, probably because they are still young and have ample opportunity to increase their proficiency in English. Many of the "errors" made by the younger people (all of those still at school) could well be regarded as developmental. By definition, such "errors" are not fossilised (yet) in the learner's speech.
Performance "errors" are difficult to isolate in a second-language context because they may be indistinguishable from other types of "errors". They affect the speech of first- and second-language speakers equally. In general, "errors" which occur frequently or semi-systematically in any individual's speech (such as the absence or non-standard use of articles, the absence of verb concord without apparent semantic basis, and the regular use of masculine or feminine forms for all third person singular pronouns) cannot be regarded as performance "errors". No judgement can be made about "errors" which occur only sporadically in the corpus, as they could still be due primarily to native language interference. Many performance "errors" are immediately corrected by the speaker (example (17)), sometimes after a little hesitation. Such "errors" have been omitted in the discussion so far.

(17) (Dja, woman, 32): He's got a chest infection. I think I better ... nhawi [= "um"]... past history ...

Has he been eating anything more?

The hesitation after better in (17) indicates that Dja had not thought out exactly what she wanted to say. The absence of a verb in the sentence beginning I think thus cannot be ascribed to ellipsis of the verb in Milingimbi English, but is merely a performance "error" resulting from hesitation when the speaker thought of a new idea.

Induced "errors" almost certainly figure in the non-standard features of Milingimbi English, but they cannot be isolated without a detailed knowledge of how new material is presented in the classroom. Such "errors" may result both from classroom presentation of new material and from incomplete instructions on the type of response expected by the teacher. For example, new vocabulary items which are phonetically similar (although their meanings may not be) are frequently confused in the mind of the learner if they are presented simultaneously, as are
lexical items which may be partially synonymous. Probable examples of induced "errors" of this nature occur in the data, all of them more than once (examples (18) to (20)).

(18) (Girl, 10): ... and I look his fish is going to water.
(19) (Girl, 15): He brought his new rod, fishing line.
(20) (Maw, man, 31): I talk Government about Aboriginal people.

'look' in SAE is an intransitive verb, implying that the subject is actively engaged in something. SAE 'see' is transitive and implies that the subject's involvement in the action is more passive. In (18), the speaker uses look as if it were see. The context in (19) makes it clear that the speaker meant 'bought' rather than its near-homonym 'brought.' talk is used as a transitive verb in (20), although it is intransitive in SAE. It corresponds to SAE 'tell' (or 'talk to').

While there are doubtless other examples of induced "errors" in the corpus, a detailed examination of them and of how they are induced is beyond the scope of this study.

9.2.4 Code-switching "errors"

Code-switching "errors" can be regarded as those non-standard forms which occur in the English component of utterances containing frequent code-switching, if the speaker does not make the same "mistake" in the absence of code-switching. As we saw in Chapter 4, many such utterances could be regarded as "accurate" if one combined the two grammatical systems of SAE and Yolŋu Matha into one linguistic "whole", where the speaker could optionally select grammatical features from one code or the other, regardless of whether the choice was normally standard in SAE. This appears to be what happens in many code-switched utterances, where the boundaries between the two grammatical systems
have become blurred. In many code-switched utterances, features obligatory in SAE, such as determiners, are omitted in the English sequence (example (21)), although the speaker would probably not omit them when he or she is talking only English.¹

(21) (Dja, woman, 32):

Saturday = 'nur  barbeque = 'nur  ... inviting
     - locative     - locative

nayi  barbeque = lil ...

he = allative

'On Saturday, at a barbeque ... he's inviting to a barbeque'.

Had (21) been entirely in English, the speaker would probably have used the indefinite article *a* before both occurrences of *barbeque*. She may also have inserted the *is* form of the auxiliary *be* before *inviting*, and placed *he* before the verb phrase, rather than after it. These types of code-switching "errors" have become fossilised in the Milingimbi English interlanguage.

All the types of "errors" discussed in this section are products of the English-learning environment at Milingimbi. Teachers need to know which "errors" may be rectified and the ones which are unlikely to be substantially influenced by modifications to syllabuses or other changes in the English-learning environment. As the occurrence of developmental "errors" forms a stage in the acquisition of the second language, it is realistic to expect that such "errors" will persist in the learner's speech for at least a short period. Code-switching and performance "errors" are not "errors" which teachers could or should expect to change in a major way. Interference, intralingual

¹. This has been shown to be the case with determiners, but is a subjective statement otherwise. It should thus be regarded as a hypothesis which requires further testing.
and induced "errors" are the only ones which changes in teaching are likely to influence.

9.3 English syllabuses

Chapter 4 suggested that the amount of regular schooling and access to English via the school may be less important for the English proficiency of some Yolngu in the long run than time spent outside the Yolngu area and the holding of a Balanda-style job. However, for many Yolngu, the English syllabus taught at school remains the only regular and easily accessible means they have for developing their active competence in English. The content and methods of the English syllabuses used thus form an integral part of the English-learning environment at Milingimbi.

In recent decades there have been two major approaches to second-language teaching: the audio-lingual approach (arising from behaviourist psychology) and the cognitive approach (closely related to cognitive psychology and the theories of transformational and generative linguistics) (Chastain, 1976:109, 130). More recently, a synthesis of the two has been achieved, while other theorists have propounded a more semantic base (Silva, 1975). Until 1977, only the audio-lingual approach had been used at Milingimbi in recent years, based on the South Australian Department of Education syllabus (1975-1977) and the Welfare Branch (Education Section) syllabus (1967-1969) for Aboriginal schools in the Northern Territory, and the syllabus devised by Tate (1967) for use in indigenous schools in Oceania. The aim of the audio-lingual approach is to teach language-learners to handle the second language at the subconscious level, by conditioning them to give, automatically, correct responses to oral or written stimuli (Chastain, 1976:111). Responses are conditioned by means of dialogue memorisation.
and pattern drills which are taught without explanation and without referring to the learner's first language. The teacher follows the "natural" sequence (listening, speaking, reading, writing), and a prescribed pattern in terms of the ordering of the introduction of new second-language skills. Such a syllabus allows little room for teacher autonomy or the interests of the children.

During 1977 a new audio-lingual approach to teaching English, which is described as "audio-lingual structure-global" by its designers, was introduced to Milingimbi. It was devised on two levels, one suitable for adults (Dickinson, Gilbert, Leveque and Sagot, 1975) and one suitable for children of eight onwards (for example, Wild-Bičanić, Nonveiller, Pervan and Stojsavljević, 1972). While this approach makes use of oral repetition of dialogues, it does not force the learner to say anything until he/she is ready. More importantly, it has a "global" approach to language, working from a recognition that one cannot function in a second language without having a "perception of speech in a situation which is a total system of communication and expression" (Dickinson, et al., 1975:15). Consequently, it stresses comprehension and the importance of conveying meaning, rather than the mere parroting of isolated sentences. It also recognises the importance of rhythm, intonation, stress, time, pause, mime, gestures, positions and movements as part of the speech act. From the beginning, the learner is exposed to completely "natural" English in readily identifiable, "universal" situations, such as being lost and asking directions from someone, being ill, and being visited by one's mother-in-law. This method has so far been used at Milingimbi with adult education and post-primary classes (with the "adult" version, "All's Well") and with grades 3, 6 and 7 (with the junior version (Book 1), "Come and Play").
Teachers' comments and student response have been uniform to both methods. Both teachers and students find the traditional audio-lingual method boring and unproductive, unless used very sparingly to help with difficult grammatical points. Sentences from traditional audio-lingual courses are never heard uttered spontaneously outside the classroom. Even after an intensive drill session on the one grammatical point, the "mistakes" which led to the drill session are still repeatedly heard. By contrast, adult attendance at a six-week intensive "All's Well" course in 1977 was very regular and apparently very keen. People who were non-users of English prior to the course were quickly responding and using English spontaneously (Sue Harris, adult education teacher, personal communication). It has been slightly less successful among the post-primary children, largely due to their relative lack of maturity. Nevertheless, many of them use "All's Well"-type phrases spontaneously outside the classroom where the situation is relevant, and also apparently for enjoyment. The primary teachers who have used the junior version all noticed that phrases and sentences from the dialogues are used spontaneously outside the classroom and that interest in the "situations" is high. The grade 3 group apparently found some of the situations "too foreign" and were reacting less well to the course. This is probably because their range of experience is more limited and they do not have the maturity to understand some of the situations.

Teachers involved in these new courses have all commented that the use of creative English by their students has improved and that their confidence in using English has increased.

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2. One sixteen-year-old boy in particular often repeated "All's Well" phrases to himself again and again, quietly but still audibly, and was frequently heard experimenting with different accents, intonation patterns and emphases.
Both methods are basically audio-lingual, but the structure-global one is apparently more successful than the other. The reasons for this are manifold. First, the Yolŋu are all excellent mimics, and the audio-lingual structure-global courses depend substantially on this ability. Second, these new courses present usable and natural English in each "situation". Third, likable characters reappear throughout the courses in situations which are universal, even though some of the material objects involved might be highly culture-specific. This is particularly important as, while the courses require considerable imagination in some ways, the situations themselves provide a recognisable point of reference. Fourth, non-verbal aspects of English use are emphasised, and the Yolŋu are generally very interested in gestures and non-verbal behaviour. The course contains a wider variety of activities and opportunities for extending one's language capacities in English than in traditional methods. Finally, the course uses teaching techniques which are familiar to Yolŋu (see the outline in Chapter 2, from Harris (1977)).

By contrast, the traditional audio-lingual courses have little to offer. They are somewhat sterile and many of the utterances expected are both unnatural and unlikely in a conversational situation. The grade 2 children, for example, were heard trying to cope with such useful conversational pieces as: "I have two eyes, I have two ears, I have two hands, I have two feet, I have a mouth", etcetera. It is perhaps not surprising that courses based on this method have not been demonstrably

3. When singing in a group, the post-primary girls started singing a wide variety of modern pop and folk songs and hymns, all of them with "perfect" diction and grammar, and often with accurately-rendered American accents. Children as young as seven or eight repeat verbatim, with "perfect" pronunciation and grammar, many comments they hear.
successful at Milingimbi when they have been the only courses used.
One can predict that the audio-lingual structuro-global courses will
have more positive long-term effects on the general level of proficiency
in English of Milingimbi Yolŋu than the traditional audio-lingual courses.

Since 1977, a number of teachers within the school have developed
their own teaching materials for the first time. They have been based
primarily on the more semantically-oriented approach of the audio-
lingual structuro-global method. Teachers have selected a wide range
of topics that are relevant to the situation or interests of the children.
For example, grade 4's English "language experience" classes during
1978 included such topics as animals, kites, pirates, farms, dress-ups,
shopping, cowboys, gingerbread men and crocodiles. It is probable that
this method too, will have greater success in teaching English than the
traditional audio-lingual programmes, because a higher level of
motivation and interest in the topic itself stimulates language-
learning.

Songs, nursery rhymes, poems, films and stories all play a
major part in the "controlled" English to which the school exposes
the children. It is difficult to say whether their importance is
primarily linguistic, in terms of improvements to the children's
spontaneous English, or more social and cultural, since they introduce
Yolŋu children to an important element of English childhood sub-culture.
Undoubtedly they develop the children's control of English phonetics,
stress and intonation, and their capacity to memorise chunks of English.

While the use of English syllabuses at Milingimbi has changed
quite markedly, the long-term effects of this change and the accompanying
greater teacher-awareness of the strengths and limitations of English
syllabuses may not be felt for some time.
9.4 "Classroom English"

"Classroom English" is the variety of English heard by the second-language learners regularly in the classroom. It is important in a consideration of the English-learning environment at Milingimbi for two main reasons. First, although "classroom English" provides a substantial proportion of the English language input at Milingimbi for most children, the classroom contains a limited range of sociolinguistic situations, some of which are "foreign" in the Yolnu context. Secondly, because of the circumscribed nature of these classroom sociolinguistic experiences, the language used also tends to be restricted and stereotyped.

Sociolinguistically, the English-learning classroom consists of one teacher who assumes a position of authority and dominance, and a number of children who are expected to be obedient and attentive to the teacher. The social network in the classroom is thus unequal, partly because of a difference in age, partly because of a difference in status, possibly sometimes because of a sex difference, and the teacher's language to the children reflects this. Although the teacher's relationship with the children may be very good, the children do not have the experience of hearing how English is used by a peer. Balanda children's activities at school tend to differ from the Yolnu children's, particularly in oral English lessons.

In the Milingimbi classroom the children cannot experience the range of sociolinguistic situations requiring English which they may encounter in centres like Darwin, for example, being a customer served by an English-speaking person in a shop, bank, post office, social

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4. For many of the young boys the balance is partly redressed by their teacher being young, female and generally unmarried, a person generally of low status in the eyes of the Yolnu. In 1978, all Balanda teachers with classes between preschool and grade 6 were female. There were no Yolnu men teaching at all after August, 1978, although several had various jobs around the school.
security office or airline agency (all staffed by Yolnu at Milingimbi),
being lost and asking for directions, catching taxis, buses or trains,
using a telephone, being ill where there are no medical personnel able
to speak Yolnu Matha, and so on. Organised school trips to Darwin, and
even trips "down south" for a few older children, go some way to
rectifying this, but, because of the expense, few children get such
opportunities more than once. Although role-playing could and does
provide a useful substitute, Harris (1977:2.8) suggests that Yolnu learn
in real-life activities by personal trial-and-error rather than in
"practice" situations in contrived settings. If this is true, language
learning is likely to be hindered by lack of real opportunities for using
the second language.

Teachers' language reflects the sociolinguistic setting.
Imperatives are used far more frequently inside than outside the
classroom. Many of them are related to discipline. Be quieter!, hands
on heads!, sit down (properly)!, come on!, hurry up!, cross your legs!,
listen!, you sit still!, don't waste time!, etcetera, form a high percentage
of teachers' utterances, in addition to procedural imperatives such as
put...!, show me...!, do...!, count...!, write that...!, start work...!
While this type of language provides excellent practice in forming English
imperatives, it is not the type of model the children are likely to want
or need to imitate.

The same problem exists with question formation, which forms a
much higher percentage of teachers' classroom language than of normal
social interchanges. The use of questions (the "discovery method") is
a major teaching technique in Balanda schools, but is of limited use
in a Yolnu context (Harris, 1977:437). Yolnu do not ask questions when
they already know the answer, something a teacher frequently does in class.
Frequent use of such a technique in a Yolnu class leads to total silence or random answers, although the children may know the answer. Hypothetical questions requiring speculation beyond a real-life situation (such as 'If I were married to my nathivalkur (an avoidance relationship) what would my children call him?' or 'what would you buy if you won a million dollars?') never occur in Yolnu speech, but are a common aspect of Balanda culture. Harris recommends that this type of question and the contexts for its use be taught to English-learners as a rule-governed form of English communication.

Many other utterances made by teachers in the classroom are related to discipline and procedure. We'll put that away now, We're not having any more today, Are you ready?, Waiting...!, I'm not very happy with this group, When someone else is talking you listen, Would you stop staring at someone and make them cry or I'll be very cross with you!, Look, if you don't start doing this properly we'll do it at morning tea time, Quiet from everybody, please, Group A, I want you to do your writing, We'll have no baboons, thank you, There are still some people here who are not saying anything (etcetera) all reflect the unequal balance in "power" between teacher and language-learner. They are not counter-balanced by much colloquial language or the sort of interchange typical of friends and peers. The absence of colloquial language in the classroom is a serious omission.

Teachers' classroom language contains a high proportion of short "stock" phrases of a procedural nature, or which offer comments on the children's linguistic and other efforts. These phrases often preface other statements, and include: good, O.K., right, all right, very good, good girl, good boy, ready? and hey!. Impersonal utterances, such as Everyone V-ing (for example, Everyone looking to the front, and everyone sitting still) are more common than their normal currency outside the classroom.
All Balanda teachers use a small number of Yolŋu Matha words and phrases in their classroom interaction with children. While this demonstrates a willingness to accept the children's first language, it probably does not improve their use and fluency in English if used in oral English lessons. Such phrases include: manymak ('good'), hulu ('again'), ma' ('go'), bothurru ('count'), yaka ('no'), yow ('yes'), bâywu ('no'), nhâmunha ('how many?') and dharrrwa ('many'). Possibly these phrases should only be used in the classroom by Balanda teachers when they are immediately translated. Yolŋu Matha should certainly be used as an explanatory tool where the teacher is sufficiently fluent and a problem in communication exists.

The major point arising from both this and the previous section is that learning the grammar, pronunciation and how to use the lexicon of a language does not constitute gaining the ability to communicate in that language. Sociolinguistic and cultural factors are extremely important. Syllabuses which recognise this are likely to be more successful than ones which do not. Likewise, the classroom is not a realistic example of a natural speech community. Teachers who inject a wide range of English sociolinguistic behaviour and cultural patterns into their language in the classroom are more likely to be effective English teachers than ones who do not.

9.5 Exposure to English outside school and adult education classes

We saw in chapter 4 that, for most Yolŋu, need for English outside school within the north-east Arnhem Land region tends to be limited, although it increases markedly outside the Yolŋu culture bloc.

5. Because no adult-educator had been assigned to Milimngimbi for 1978, the only adult education classes in English held then were those I conducted for the women working at the hospital and the Women's Community Centre. Adult education classes cannot be considered a regular and consistent means of access to SAE.
For most Yolŋu, their actual exposure to English at Milingimbi is far greater than their need for it. While the need for English may be quite high in Darwin and other non-Yolŋu centres, the length of time spent there by most of them is so relatively small that in fact their main exposure to English occurs at Milingimbi. Thus the need for English there is very low, although exposure to it may be (voluntarily) quite extensive. This section on exposure to English at Milingimbi complements the discussion in chapter 4 of the need for it.

The bulk of Yolŋu receive their most extensive exposure to English outside school from regular attendance at the many British, American and Australian films shown at Milingimbi. Kung fu films are often dubbed with American voices, though many are in the original Chinese. Films with dramatic visual content demand less English and are the most popular. Films with less visual drama and more spoken content are less popular, though this may not be related to the level of English comprehension required. Yolŋu audiences are very responsive to rapid verbal repartee in films, though this may be because non-verbal cues such as facial expression and voice pitch convey meaning as clearly as the dialogue. Possibly Yolŋu are quick to respond as a group when one person finds something entertaining. Films certainly purvey a view of Balanda society and behaviour which the Yolŋu find very amusing. Yolŋu appreciate the mannerisms, social etiquette, the emphasis on sex and violence, the stupidity of many film characters and the ridiculous situations embroiling many heroes as much from visual cues as from understanding the dialogue. Nevertheless for those wishing to improve

6. Milingimbi Yolŋu tend to congregate together in Darwin. Children always go in as school groups. Adults all tend to stay at the Gordon Symons or Galawa Hostels and they generally socialise together. This minimises the need for English. When it is needed, one person in the group often acts as spokesperson.
their English, films are the most accessible means of doing so at Milingimbi.

Comics and magazines are a relatively insignificant means of exposure to English, despite their popularity. Most comics (for example, "True Tales from Beyond the Grave", Boris Karloff and various "Tales from Africa") are rarely read. In many the writing is not easy to decipher, while the linguistic structures may be complex and archaic. One comic I examined contained many phrases in Swahili. Walt Disney comics may have more linguistic impact, but it seems the interest in comics and magazines is largely visual.

Country and western and pop music provide another frequent means of exposure to English, although for many people the words are incomprehensible. We have seen in chapter 5 and section 9.3 that the Yolŋu are all excellent mimics, able to learn words and accents of songs by ear and sing them with no "errors". Teachers of students in all age groups could make much greater use of these popular songs (not just nursery rhymes and hymns, although these are valuable, too) as language-teaching tools than is at present the case.

Radio and church both provide much more limited exposure to English. The number of regular attenders at church is relatively small. The Balanda minister directed his English to the Balandas, while always addressing the Yolŋu in Yolŋu Matha. Thus only those Yolŋu with fluent English were able to benefit from this type of exposure to English. The minister is now a local Yolŋu and it is probable that the amount of English heard in church will substantially diminish.

Radio has so far been a little utilised resource at Milingimbi, as Radio Australia is the only service available. It is nevertheless used as a source of information. When matters deeply affecting Arnhem
Land were in the news in 1978, many complete family groups would listen intently to evening news broadcasts.

The presence of a small number of Balandas at Milingimbi does not increase the Yolŋu's exposure to English very substantially. Contact outside work hours is limited for most, although many form warm and sustained friendships. Those Balandas who spend a lot of time with Yolŋu tend to speak at least some Yolŋu Matha. Balandas visiting temporarily are relatively rare and their contact with the Yolŋu generally minimal. Contractors (often migrants with poor English) frequently spend large parts of the Dry season at Milingimbi, but they have virtually no contact with the Yolŋu.

While the potential for exposure to English is quite high within the general community, for most Yolŋu, through choice, it remains only partially tapped.

9.6 Learning a language without a full command of the cultural and social environment

Probably one of the major problems associated with learning English at Milingimbi arises from the difficulty of learning a second language without a full command of its cultural and social environment. From birth, children of all backgrounds are socialised into behaviour patterns accepted and expected by their first language community and they are surrounded by the material and cultural objects of their society. By the time Yolŋu children are three or four, like all other children, they are fully functioning members of their society. They understand the kinship system and are familiar with the objects of their environment, their language, expected and socially-acceptable behaviour and traditional stories and wisdoms. Some of them have never been inside a Balanda's house or been in close contact with any Balanda. Very few of them are
really familiar with such "mundane" aspects of Balanda life as beds, chairs, tables, stoves, ovens, refrigerators, washing machines, flush toilets, kitchen utensils, cleaning equipment, toiletries, books, pot plants and other paraphernalia of Western living. Probably none of them know anything of the cultural ethos on which Balanda-style schooling is placed, the heritage of morality taught through nursery rhymes and fairy stories on which all young Balanda children are reared. And because they are Yolŋu children, not Balanda, they do not know the patterns of behaviour expected by an English-speaking society, such as greetings and saying "please" and "thank you". This difference in first- and second-language backgrounds is scarcely recognised by the school system as a whole. Where it has been recognised in the past and in other contexts it has been seen as the rationale for "compensatory" education programmes for "culturally-deprived" children who have been brought up unused to white middle class behaviour and culture. Such programmes have been strongly criticised, for example, by Bernstein (1972) and Labov (1973), but many problems remain. Even with bilingual education, Milingimbi children are still introduced to English at the age of four or five without any knowledge of the associated culture. While many people subscribe in part to Whorf's ideas about the relativity of language and culture (Whorf, 1956), this mere recognition has not facilitated the teaching of English-as-a-second-language to children from vastly different cultural backgrounds.

Probably the best solution to this problem lies in a recognition that if "teaching English" to Yolŋu children is to be successful, it must entail the prior or concurrent teaching of relevant aspects of Balanda culture, both material and social. This is where English syllabuses which recognise the importance of appropriate sociolinguistic behaviour as well as the mere acquisition of linguistic patterns have a
much greater chance of "educating" students to function effectively in the environment of the second language, when they need to, than ones which do not. No aspect of the second-language culture should be taken for granted by teachers as already "known".

9.7 Attitudes to English

The final aspect of the English-learning environment at Milingimbi to be considered in this chapter is the attitude to English held by different segments of the community.7 This is important because the attitudes to English affect the receptivity of the people to it, both in the school and in its general use in the community.

The view was expressed that many Yolŋu, particularly the older ones, feel an increasing desire simply not to listen to English. English is not important to them, except to the extent that it represents a foreign intrusion which they wish had never taken place. They have never been sufficiently demoralised by racial prejudice or threatened or dominated by Balanda or aspects of Balanda culture, to feel that they are "inferior" because they speak Yolŋu Nutha as first language and may have little or no knowledge of English. A number of factors are responsible for this: the isolation of Milingimbi from the mainstream of Australian social life, the relatively small number of Balandas there at any one time, and the relatively enlightened attitudes of the Methodist church in the past and the Federal Government in recent years.

The Yolŋu at Milingimbi remain a strong, united and dignified people. This has not happened with most other Aboriginal groups in Australia, many of whom have suffered ridicule for the use of their vernacular and their "poor" English.

7. Some of the ideas presented here were suggested by Sue Harris, ex-adult-educator with a fluent command of Yolŋu Nutha, who had lived at Milingimbi for seven years and formed a close relationship with many of the women.
There is some evidence to suggest that English may be regarded as something like a "secret language" by many of the younger men. It gives them access to information that the non-English-speaking old men do not have, and thereby a source of power for them in the community and over the old men, traditionally the most powerful people. Because of their command of English, many younger men are now involved in major community decisions. Traditionally they would have been regarded as too immature and inexperienced. This very real power which a knowledge of English invests in the ambitious younger men is probably a major cause underlying the passive hostility of many of the older people towards English.

Among the younger teenagers there is an increasing desire to emulate certain aspects of Balanda behaviour, principally things they see and hear on films. This appears to be stimulated by peer group pressure. Whether this will lead to a real revolution within the next generation in the attitude of Yolnu towards English cannot be determined at present. Once the older generation dies, English will no longer be the source of power that it is now for many of the younger men. Whether the general hostility to English will fade with the older generation, or whether it is an attitude which will pass on to the "new elder generation" in a cyclic pattern cannot be predicted.

Lambert and Tucker (1972) suggest that second-language teaching is more successful when the students have an "integrative" rather than an "instrumental" approach to the second language. Language learners with an integrative approach to the second language desire to "be like" the people who speak the second language as first language. A person with an "instrumental" approach to the second language wants to learn it for some external purpose, perhaps so he or she can get a better job or (in a middle class context) go to university. It is possible that this
applies in general at Milingimbi too. Most Yolŋu (if they think about it) may want to learn English so they can get a good job or go to Darwin or help the cause of the Aboriginals in Arnhem Land (for example, in the fight against uranium mining) all factors which constitute an "instrumental" approach to English. None, except possibly the group of teenagers referred to above (and then only in a peripheral sense) want to be "like" Balandás. It is not for Balandás to try to force the Yolŋu to adopt an attitude to English that is not theirs, nor to insinuate that their approach to language learning is "wrong".

The children are the main English learners at Milingimbi, and they have almost certainly not thought about why they are learning it. Nor have they been given a choice about it (except insofar as they choose to go to school or not). There is a notable lack of any positive attitude at all to English among most of the people "supposed" to be learning it, much as there has been a general apathy to missionary activities in the past. Learning a second language in these circumstances becomes either very difficult or a "non"-task. Children need to be motivated before they can learn. New teachers should be made aware of this situation before they start teaching at Milingimbi. Given this situation, it is perhaps surprising that English has been learnt as well as it has so far.

### 9.8 Summary

In this chapter we have seen how the Milingimbi English interlanguage is a product of the English-learning environment. It is differentiated from SAE by various types of second-language "errors", intralingual, classroom-induced, developmental, performance, code-switching and "errors" due to interference from Yolŋu Matha. At least five "environmental" factors contribute to the structure of the
interlanguage. Of the English syllabuses in use over recent years at Milingimbi, the one taking account of the total language situation (both verbal and non-verbal) appears to have had greater success than ones concentrating on the purely linguistic aspects of English. "Classroom English", the other major English input at school, is atypical of the range of language available in English. It tends to consist only of a narrow range of sociolinguistic situations, thus limiting the effectiveness of the Yolŋu in many contexts where English is necessary. While a fair degree of exposure to English is possible outside school, attendance at events providing such exposure is entirely voluntary, and there is no obligation to listen or comprehend. Trying to learn a second language without a knowledge of the cultural and social environment of that language is almost insuperable. One of the major difficulties faced by Yolŋu learning English is their inadequate grounding in many aspects of English material, social and psychological culture which English speakers tend to take for granted. Finally, four basic attitudes to English within the community must affect the level of teaching. A passive hostility to it among the older people stems in part from its use as a tool of power by many of the younger men. While some of the teenagers seek to emulate the Balanda behaviour they see on films, most of those who are actively engaged in learning English seem indifferent to it, have not been given a choice in the matter and possibly do not have the maturity and experience to decide for themselves whether English has any benefits for them or whether they want them if there are any.
CHAPTER 10

SUMMARY AND CONCLUDING REMARKS

This study has shown how the term "variation" characterises English-as-a-second-language at Milingimbi. Because of similarities in historical, social and linguistic background, it is also probably typical of other Aboriginal communities where English is spoken only as a second language. Variation exists not only in the general level of proficiency in English of individual Yolŋu, but also in the register of English used by individuals on different occasions. It occurs in the need for English among individual Yolŋu, in their attitudes to English and in their general level of exposure to it. All aspects of English language performance contain variation, in both the number of variables and types of differences from SAE, the target language.

Chapter 2 provided the historical, social and educational context for this study. It showed that Milingimbi's isolation geographically, socially and historically from the Australian main-stream has played a major role in shaping the relatively low need for English in the community today and the general level of proficiency in English of the Yolŋu people. In many ways, from the Yolŋu viewpoint, the place of English in the community has been peripheral in the past, and there is no reason why this might change in the foreseeable future. Nevertheless, the availability of education and opportunities for learning English have expanded only relatively recently. The proportion of English speakers within the community is always expanding, too, as most of the adults who do not speak any English are elderly. Thus while the status of English within the community appears unlikely to change, the quality of English spoken will probably improve in the future.
Chapter 3 examined the linguistic background against which English-as-a-second-language must be set. The Yolŋu have a tradition of multilingualism and multidialectalism, stemming from the exogamous marriage system which determines that marriage partners must be from different clans, thereby speaking different dialects and sometimes even different languages. A sketch grammar of the Gupapuyŋu dialect of Dhulul/Dhuwala, the major language of Milingimbi, described a linguistic system very different from SAE, although it is structurally typical of the Australian language family. Gupapuyŋu has a wider range of stop and nasal phonemes, more rhotics and laterals, but fewer vowels than SAE, and, unlike SAE, no contrastive diphthongs, no fricatives or affricates and no aspirate. It is phonotactically different, as the range of consonants in each word position and in clusters is more circumscribed than in SAE. There is no contrastive stress. The case marking system of non-Human nouns is absolutive-ergative, while that of pronoun is nominative-accusative. Human nouns are half way between, as they distinguish intransitive subject, and transitive agent and object morphologically. Suffixes mark case and local relationships. The marking of number is optional, although plural may be indicated as a number of different ways. Gupapuyŋu distinguishes a future and non-future tense, completive, continuous and habitual aspect, and hortative, imperative, indicative and irrealis moods. There is no passive voice. At the syntactic level, word order within the sentence is almost completely free (governed by semantic considerations) and ellipsis may affect any component of the sentence. Gupapuyŋu contains a large number of fully synonymous terms for many concepts. The chapter also discussed aspects of Yolŋu sociolinguistic behaviour, such as the limits placed on verbal communication between
people who stand in avoidance relationships to each other, the existence of a distinctive children's language, the phenomenon of lexical replacement because of the taboo on a person's name and words (including English ones) sounding similar when that person dies, and a number of general Yolŋu rules of interpersonal communication. Sociolinguistic knowledge is a very important aspect of communication. Without an adequate understanding of English sociolinguistic rules, a Yolŋu finds it difficult to function in an English-speaking context. The chapter explained that while the number of Balanda resident at Milingimbi who speak Yolŋu Matha is very small, most know and regularly use at least a small number of Yolŋu Matha words, which thus affects the quality of English they hear from them.

Chapter 4 explored a range of sociolinguistic issues affecting the type of English spoken at Milingimbi. Both SAE and Milingimbi English are continua, though of different kinds. All SAE speakers are completely fluent in English, regardless of the extent of their command of registers. Many Milingimbi English speakers are far from fluent in any English register. The Milingimbi English "interlanguage" consists of a range of both "fossilised" and sporadically occurring non-standard features, as well as many features identical to SAE. It examined the range of English proficiency in English among the Yolŋu. In general, level of knowledge of English depends on three factors or a combination of these: first, the amount of schooling experienced by each individual; second, the extent and nature of their association with Balanda; and third, the possession of a Balanda-style job. Proficiency in English ranges from non-existent to excellent, "excellent" being a form which approaches closely to SAE, but is always identifiable as different. In general, the status of English in the community is low, reflecting the
need for it among most members of the community. Each individual commands a range of registers of English, the extent of this range being dependent on the level of proficiency, while choice is dependent on domain. Because stable domain-governed code-switching prevails, there is no likelihood of English "taking over" within the foreseeable future.

Chapter 5 briefly considered the range of variables in the phonetics and phonology of Milingimbi English. These differ little from other dialects of Aboriginal English. Possibly above all other aspects, the phonology of Milingimbi English bears the imprint of the most regular and definable interference from Yolnu Matha, which, as we have seen, is phonologically typical of the Australian language family. SAE alveolar stops tend to be reinterpreted in Milingimbi English as stops with some other place of articulation. [h] is rarely used in places where it would be expected in SAE. Fricatives and affricates are often reinterpreted as stops, or another type of fricative. Yolnu frequently do not distinguish SAE voiced and voiceless consonants in Milingimbi English. Vowels are reinterpreted and phonetically diphthongised far less often than in SAE, while in contrastive diphthongs the glide tends to be accentuated. Consonant clusters are often reduced, either by the insertion of an epenthetic vowel or by the loss of one or more components of the cluster. Words tend to receive primary stress on the first syllable, even when this is not the case in SAE.

Chapter 6 discussed the morphology of Milingimbi English. It showed that the category of number in noun phrases is optionally marked, or may be marked only on the head noun whereas in SAE it would also be shown in the choice of determiners in the noun phrase. The opposition of the noun phrase possessor and possessed occasionally marks possession instead of the addition of the suffix /-s/ to the noun phrase possessor. Comparison of adjectives and adverbs
occurs much as in SAE. The main difference between Milingimbi English and SAE pronouns concerns the use of the third person singular. Milingimbi English often fails to maintain the gender distinction, the feminine pronouns tending to be used where SAE would use masculine or neuter ones. Verbal morphology sometimes differs substantially from SAE. Tense need not be specified, particularly when the verb complex specifies aspect as well. The auxiliary be plus the base form of the verb may mark present or past tense when aspect is not specified.

There is some evidence that past and present tense are not distinguished as often in Milingimbi English as in SAE. Milingimbi English maintains a future-non-future tense distinction as well, paralleling that of Yolŋu Matha. The copula is optional in Milingimbi English, as is verb concord. Unlike in SAE, verb concord on verbs with third person singular subjects in Milingimbi English carries meaning, marking that verb for present tense as opposed to general non-future tense (which is unmarked).

Derivational affixes are far less common in Milingimbi English than in SAE. The only ones to be used productively and at all regularly are -ed and -ing. Morphological code-switching always entails the use of Yolŋu Matha suffixes on English lexical items, never the reverse. The use of Yolŋu Matha suffixes at the end of word groups regularly occurring provides morphological evidence that these phrases may be regarded as one lexeme in Milingimbi English.

Chapter 7 examined the syntax of Milingimbi English. From a survey of the range and characteristics of discourse in the corpus of Milingimbi English, we turned to phrase-level syntax. The main difference in the composition of noun phrases between Milingimbi English and SAE lies in the greater flexibility in the use of determiners and the ordering of nouns and adjectives in the former. The use of the articles the and
is the factor which differentiates Milingimbi English from SAE most at a syntactic level. Both are used extensively in environments at the phrase and discourse level where they could not occur in SAE. Determiners are omitted with greater frequency in Milingimbi English than in SAE. Prepositions, particularly to, in, on and at, frequently have extended semantic domains in Milingimbi English or are used where they would be syntactically unnecessary in SAE. Clause structure differs relatively little from SAE. The Yolngu Matha connective and discourse marker ma frequently replaces 'and' at both clause and phrase level. Some subordinate structures beginning with subordinators which also function as interogatives may have the constituent order of interogatives. Sentential utterances in general differ little from those of SAE.

Ellipsis occurs with greater freedom in Milingimbi English than in SAE. Objects and locatives expressed by prepositions or verbal particles, both normally obligatory in SAE, may be omitted by ellipsis in Milingimbi English. Subject-verb-object constituent order, adverb placement and negation are subject to relatively little variation. The main difference from SAE in interrogatives lies in the use of the Yolngu Matha tag-like forms nani and muka. Non-standard tense sequences in children's narratives support the hypothesis that Milingimbi English distinguishes a non-future tense in addition to the present and past. The main effect of code-switching on the syntax of each segment of English within an utterance containing it lies in the tendency to omit determiners at code-switching boundaries.

Chapter 8 explored those aspects of lexical and semantic variation which were most salient in the data. It discussed how Yolngu Matha copes with non-Aboriginal loan concepts, indicating those concepts
which are translated by loans from English, those where Yolnu Matha has
drawn on its own resources and those where Macassan influence is evident.
Differences in classification affect lexical choice in English, particu-
larly in the use of kin terms, which often have extended meanings.
Colloquialisms are relatively uncommon in Milingimbi English, although
a wide range of English sporting jargon is current at sporting events.
Even if Balandas were to leave Milingimbi immediately, it is likely that
the use of these English sporting terms would continue. Sentence-fillers
are generally subconscious, but nevertheless instrumental in "flavouring"
a language. Most Yolnu regularly use the Yolnu Matha sentence-filler
nhawir-, while relatively few (predominantly men) use the English ones or,
ah and um. Chapter 8 also explored how Milingimbi English uses some
words with altered semantic domains, and its use of imagery.

Chapter 9 investigated various aspects of the English-learning
environment at Milingimbi. First, it summarised the product of the
English-learning environment, the types of "errors" which distinguishes
the Milingimbi English "interlanguage" from SAE: "errors" due to inter-
ference from Yolnu Matha, and intralingual, developmental, induced,
performance and code-switching "errors". It found that the English
syllabuses which have so far been used with the most success are those
which approach English from a semantic base and aim to present the
"total" language system, including relevant sociolinguistic behaviour.
Teachers' classroom language, the other major English input at school, is
sociolinguistically limited and this restricts the type of language
the children hear. Despite the relatively low need for English in the
community, exposure to it can be relatively high if the Yolnu choose.
One of the major difficulties in teaching and learning English in a
community like Milingimbi is that the Yolnu have a totally different
cultural and social environment from a Balanda one. Thus much English-language teaching requires prior teaching of English culture and socio-linguistic behaviour. While most adult Yolŋu would probably consider it good to know some English, their attitude to it varies from passive hostility (some of the old people) through rank indifference (the bulk of the population, including most school-age children) to some covert enthusiasm (some of the younger men who may regard it as a means for furthering their own ambitions for power). The general indifference to English among most of those who are supposed to be actively learning it makes the task of teaching it very difficult.

Inevitably, a survey with as wide a scope as this one cannot answer all questions, and new ones continually arise. A number of points raised in this study deserve either initial investigation or research in greater depth. The most serious omission here is the lack of any discussion of the use of English (if indeed it is used at all) when Balandas are not present, particularly in the camp setting. This is a problem which arose from the nature of the fieldwork situation itself, primarily with my being a Balanda, as well as young and female. I sometimes felt that isolated English utterances I happened to hear were probably triggered for my benefit. Without trained local Aboriginal fieldworkers observing language use (without explaining what they are doing, thereby inevitably influencing the choice of language), we have no way of determining how much Yolŋu use English when Balandas are not present.

This study has made only passing reference to similarities or differences between Milingimbi English and other varieties of Aboriginal English. A detailed comparison with other non-standard dialects of English would reveal much about the effects of language contact on English,
particularly what is generalisable in the processes of pidginisation and the development of English "interlanguages", and what is specific to particular contact situations.

A detailed study of the actual teaching of English at Milingimbi would increase our knowledge of how "errors" can be induced in the classroom. Once this is known, informed attempts can be made to rectify them.

This study merely touched the surface of a discussion on how the meanings of English words can be extended, restricted or otherwise altered by Yolgu. As Yolgu and Balanda tend to classify the world differently, such a study of the semantics of Milingimbi English could prove very interesting and profitable.

While it is possible to test passive knowledge (understanding) of English in an objective way, this study did not attempt to do this. Such a study would be very useful for educationists.

Conversational code-switching is a phenomenon which is very significant at Milingimbi, although it was discussed relatively briefly. A detailed study of the mechanics and motivation of code-switching at all levels at Milingimbi would be an interesting and useful adjunct to a study such as this.

By way of conclusion, a number of recommendations can be made, arising out of this study, which it is hoped may be of use to educationists. First, sociolinguistic rules of English, such as the informal debate style, the use of hypothetical questions and rules of English verbal "etiquette", should be taught overtly and explained as "things which Balanda people do themselves and expect of people talking English". Teachers should be aware not only of the purely linguistic aspects of English, but also of English social behaviour and expectations, which are generally below the level of conscious thought. While recently
introduced syllabuses go some way towards teaching these things, they are not entirely adequate as they are geared to British English, not the norms of SAE. While this difference is not itself critical, an Australian-made syllabus of similar design would present Australian colloquial and idiomatic language and sociolinguistic behaviour, the aspects of language which tend to differ the most from one dialect to another.

Related to this is a need to familiarise Yolnu children with traditional Australian English childhood and material culture before, or concurrently with, trying to teach the relevant English. The apparent success of the "All's Well" English course demonstrates that it is not the actual foreignness of objects which may be a handicap to the Yolnu's learning English, but the foreignness of a total "situation". Nevertheless, without an understanding of relevant material objects, the language appropriate to many situations cannot be learned and used without difficulty.

Yolnu Natha should probably not be used by teachers in oral English classes, except when absolutely necessary to explain a point. The language-learner models many of his or her hypotheses about English on what he or she hears from the teacher. Children could be encouraged to use as much English as possible in oral English classes, perhaps by means of group games and competitions.

The general absence of colloquial language from the classroom should be rectified. Because of the importance of colloquialisms in English, a person who cannot use them appropriately probably cannot communicate in English efficiently and well in informal situations.
Probably all non-Aboriginals in communities like Milingimbi should seek to understand the linguistic reasons for the range of variation in the variety of Aboriginal English to which they are exposed.

Finally, it is important to recognise that the Yolŋu would justifiably be very antagonistic to the teaching of English in their community unless they feel free to use Yolŋu Matha whenever they want. The maintenance of stable domain-governed code-switching is extremely important to all Yolŋu people, and teachers should not feel frustrated if children they are teaching use only Yolŋu Matha among themselves. The Yolŋu are learning a tool to help extend the range of their communicative network and their communication, not to replace or "improve" their own.
APPENDIX A

SUMMARY OF RECORDINGS AND TRANSCRIPTS MADE AT MILINGIMBI

NOTE: Transcripts are available for all recordings. As some

cassettes were rerecorded, not all recordings are available.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>RECORDING NO.</th>
<th>TOPIC</th>
<th>DATE</th>
<th>LENGTH</th>
<th>RECORDBNG AVAILABLE</th>
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<td>70 mins</td>
<td>yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>53</td>
<td>PRESCHOOL AND GAYUNGI</td>
<td>20.9.78</td>
<td>40 mins</td>
<td>yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>54</td>
<td>COUNCIL &amp; COMMUNITY MEETING WITH GALARKWAY YUNUPINJU</td>
<td>29.9.78</td>
<td>90 mins</td>
<td>yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>55</td>
<td>NALIMBU'A'S FAMILY, BEFORE FILM</td>
<td>16.10.78</td>
<td>35 mins</td>
<td>yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>56</td>
<td>MISCELLANEOUS: CHURCH &amp; FETE</td>
<td>Oct.78</td>
<td>45 mins</td>
<td>yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>57</td>
<td>MANYDJARRI (INTERVIEW BY DAVID McClay)</td>
<td>Nov.78</td>
<td>10 mins</td>
<td>yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>58</td>
<td>GRADE 5 ORAL ENGLISH STORY-RETELLING TEST</td>
<td>Nov.78</td>
<td>16 children Milingimbi</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>59</td>
<td>&quot; 7 &quot; &quot; &quot; &quot; &quot;</td>
<td>Nov.78</td>
<td>17 children Milingimbi</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>60</td>
<td>POST-PRIMARY GIRLS &quot; &quot; &quot;</td>
<td>Nov.78</td>
<td>19 children Milingimbi</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
CATEGORIES OF SITUATIONSRecorded

1. PRESCHOOL, including Gayungi.
2. GRADE 1.
3. GRADE 2, including Warmbirrirr.
4. GRADE 5
   a) classroom and excursion to beach at low tide, including Milmilany.
   b) oral English story-retelling tests.
5. GRADE 7: oral English story-retelling tests.
6. POST-PRIMARY GIRLS
   a) WARRAY group at "ALL'S WELL" English classes.
   b) at domestic science.
   c) camping at Rāpuma, main speaker: Djanydjay. Also Eva.
   d) oral English tests for years 9 and 10.
7. POST-PRIMARY BOYS
   a) at manual training.
   b) in domestic science room, main speaker: Dhälirri.
8. NURSES' ENGLISH CLASSES: main speakers: Bīlin, Djakala, Dhämamy, Murarrgirrarri. Also Burraypurray, Muwalkmunuy 2, Gungarinya, Munguli (all women).
9. COUNCIL OFFICES: main speaker: Gatigatjwy. Also Julupani & Yuwati, (all men).
11. SPORTING EVENTS:
    a) softball (women, particularly Milmilany).
    b) basketball grand finals (men mainly).
12. INTERVIEWS OR MONOLOGUES: Djupandawuy (man), Gapanuy (woman), Lāwuk (woman), Manydjarrri (pre-film speech and interview with headmaster) (man).
13 MISCELLANEOUS

a) church (woman).
b) fête (men & women).
c) group of women before film (main speakers: Malimbusa, Wurrarndihigaway, Notiti, Galaway).

14 Written notes were made on many occasions, arising from observations made all round the community with many people, in many situations. These tend to show a disproportionate number of "errors", or non-standard features, because of my own memory limitations and the tendency to note the unusual rather than the expected.
### APPENDIX B

**SOME YOLNU MATHA WORDS COMMONLY USED BY YOLNU AND/OR BALANDAS WHEN SPEAKING ENGLISH AT NILINGIMBI**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Yolnu Matha</th>
<th>Nearest English Translation</th>
<th>Used by Yolnu</th>
<th>Used by Balandas</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>yaka</td>
<td>no</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>yow</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bąuyu</td>
<td>no</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bilin</td>
<td>finished</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bąydhi</td>
<td>it doesn't matter, never mind!</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>nhä</td>
<td>what?</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>nhămunha?</td>
<td>how many?</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>frequently at school</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>wala!</td>
<td>wow! Great!</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>djamarrkuli'</td>
<td>children</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>way!</td>
<td>hey!</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>not very often</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>nyumukuniny</td>
<td>little</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>yindi</td>
<td>big</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>manymuk</td>
<td>good, well</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>wanha</td>
<td>where?</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ma'</td>
<td>go on! go!</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>dharrwa</td>
<td>many</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>yes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Some of these are words Balandas tend to learn first. They then speak English to the Yolnu (not being able to manipulate Yolnu Matha grammar), lacing it with some Yolnu Matha words, almost always without any Yolnu Matha grammatical markings.

+ Judgement as to use is subjective. Use by Balandas is based largely on my own use after a short time. As I was a short-term visitor, my actual usage of Yolnu Matha was probably fairly typical of Balandas who could not maintain a conversation in Yolnu Matha, although my theoretical knowledge of the grammar was generally far greater than most. No word is used all the time by either group.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Yolnu Matha</th>
<th>Nearest English Translation</th>
<th>Used by Yolnu</th>
<th>Used by Balanda's</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>yalala</td>
<td>later</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>yatha</td>
<td>food</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ga</td>
<td>and</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>mak</td>
<td>maybe, perhaps</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>yol</td>
<td>who?</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>djäma</td>
<td>work</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>latju</td>
<td>lovely! isn't it nice!</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>less commonly</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>nyoka</td>
<td>mud crabs</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>rägudha</td>
<td>sp. shellfish</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>yes (if known)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bäpi</td>
<td>sarke</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>maypal</td>
<td>shellfish</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>wotj</td>
<td>wallaby</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>märrma'</td>
<td>two</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>less commonly</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>målk</td>
<td>subsection name (skin)</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>mâma'</td>
<td>mother</td>
<td>yes, sometimes</td>
<td>probably rare</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>nandi</td>
<td>mother</td>
<td>sometimes, (although mâma' preferred)</td>
<td>slightly commoner than mâma'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bäpa</td>
<td>father</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>yapa</td>
<td>sister</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>wäwa</td>
<td>brother</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>waku</td>
<td>sister's child, own child (female ego)</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>sometimes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>mukul</td>
<td>aunt (father's sister)</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>sometimes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>mürri</td>
<td>grandmother (mother's mother)</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>sometimes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>gut'arta</td>
<td>grandchild (sister's daughter's child)</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>sometimes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>gäthu</td>
<td>own child (male ego)</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>sometimes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yolnu Matha</td>
<td>Nearest English Translation</td>
<td>Used by Yolnu</td>
<td>Used by Balanda</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>----------------</td>
<td>---------------------------------------------</td>
<td>---------------</td>
<td>----------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>qarra (rra)</td>
<td>I</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>nhe</td>
<td>you (sg)</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>sometimes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>gayi</td>
<td>he, she, it</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>sometimes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>walal (a)</td>
<td>they</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>sometimes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>dhëpi</td>
<td>circumcision ceremony</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>sometimes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bathi</td>
<td>basket, bag</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>sometimes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>djuku</td>
<td>louse</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>you?</td>
<td>I don't know</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>djibay!</td>
<td>get lost! scram!</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>sometimes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>muka</td>
<td>isn't it, etc? am I right?</td>
<td>yes = almost</td>
<td>no = or very</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>always</td>
<td>rare</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>qani</td>
<td>isn't it, etc?</td>
<td>yes = almost</td>
<td>no = or very</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>always</td>
<td>rare</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>nhawi</td>
<td>um, er, ah, what'sit? name</td>
<td>yes = mostly</td>
<td>yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>nhóku</td>
<td>why?</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bitján-bitjara</td>
<td>do like this</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>rarely</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>baduk</td>
<td>wait a moment</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>no = or very</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>yuwalk</td>
<td>true, really</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>rare</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>wangany</td>
<td>one</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>sometimes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>go! [go]</td>
<td>come here</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>no = or fairly</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>yothu</td>
<td>baby, child</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>rare</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>dhuwal</td>
<td>this</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>no (but not</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>other parts of the paradigm)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>nhá bili?</td>
<td>what?</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>no</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>balanda</td>
<td>white person</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>yolnu</td>
<td>Aboriginal person</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>miyalk</td>
<td></td>
<td>sometimes</td>
<td>sometimes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>dirramu</td>
<td></td>
<td>sometimes</td>
<td>sometimes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yolŋu Matha</td>
<td>Nearest English Translation</td>
<td>Used by Yolŋu</td>
<td>Used by Balandas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-------------------</td>
<td>----------------------------</td>
<td>---------------</td>
<td>-----------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>guku</td>
<td>honey, bee, beehive</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>sometimes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>marratja</td>
<td>father's father, father's father's sister</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>no - or very rare</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>dhuway</td>
<td>son's children (male ego)</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>no - or very rare</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>galay</td>
<td>sister's husband (actual or potential) and his sister</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>other kin terms</td>
<td>wife (male ego)</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>very rare</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Appendix C

**Some Non-Aboriginal Loan Concepts in Yolŋu Matha**

#### A. Childhood Culture, School, Films, Sport

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Concept</th>
<th>Translation</th>
<th>Origin</th>
<th>Source</th>
<th>Comments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Indians</td>
<td>indiyan</td>
<td>English</td>
<td>corpus</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>igloo</td>
<td>igloo [ɪɡˈloʊ]</td>
<td>&quot;</td>
<td>&quot;</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>eskimo</td>
<td>eskimo [ɪskɪˈmoʊ]</td>
<td>&quot;</td>
<td>&quot;</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>letter (the symbol)</td>
<td>letter [ˈleɪtə]</td>
<td>&quot;</td>
<td>&quot;</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>blocks</td>
<td>blocks [bloks]</td>
<td>&quot;</td>
<td>&quot;</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sets of [no.]</td>
<td>sets of [no.]</td>
<td>&quot;</td>
<td>&quot;</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>groups of [no.]</td>
<td>groups of [no.]</td>
<td>&quot;</td>
<td>&quot;</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>count</td>
<td>bothurru</td>
<td>[y.m.]</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>numbers</td>
<td>[waŋ, tw, 6ri, fo, fayib, 6li(k)s, sbaŋ, eylt, nayin, ten, etc.]</td>
<td>English</td>
<td>&quot;</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>copy</td>
<td>copy [kɒpɪ]</td>
<td>&quot;</td>
<td>&quot;</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>start</td>
<td>start [stɑːt]</td>
<td>&quot;</td>
<td>&quot;</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>finished</td>
<td>finish(ed) [ˈfɪnɪʃ]</td>
<td>&quot;</td>
<td>&quot;</td>
<td>Also finish-nha y.m. inflection = meaning object</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>book, letter</td>
<td>djorra'</td>
<td>Macassan</td>
<td></td>
<td>common throughout coastal Arnhem Land</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>pencil</td>
<td>[pɛnˈsəl] pencil</td>
<td>English</td>
<td>&quot;</td>
<td>as in rubber-way -concerning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>rubber</td>
<td>rubber [ɾaˈba]</td>
<td>&quot;</td>
<td>&quot;</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* y.m. = Yolŋu Matha.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CONCEPT</th>
<th>TRANSLATION</th>
<th>ORIGIN</th>
<th>SOURCE</th>
<th>COMMENTS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>reading</td>
<td>reading [tidiŋ]</td>
<td>English</td>
<td>corpus</td>
<td>so far unsuccessful attempts have been made to replace this word with one from the Yolngu Matha stock</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tea-towel</td>
<td>tea-towel [titawo!]</td>
<td>&quot;</td>
<td>&quot;</td>
<td>&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>kite</td>
<td>gāyit</td>
<td>&quot;</td>
<td>SB</td>
<td>&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>saw</td>
<td>saw [so:]</td>
<td>&quot;</td>
<td>corpus</td>
<td>as in saw-lili -towards (movement)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ruler</td>
<td>ruler [mulo]</td>
<td>&quot;</td>
<td>&quot;</td>
<td>as in ruler-puy -concerning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>write</td>
<td>wukirri</td>
<td>Macassan</td>
<td>&quot;</td>
<td>&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>marble</td>
<td>marble [mabok]</td>
<td>English</td>
<td>&quot;</td>
<td>&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>blue, green</td>
<td>milkuminy-mirri</td>
<td>y.m. 'gall=</td>
<td>Love</td>
<td>'having'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>bladder' &amp;</td>
<td>(n.d.(d))</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>red</td>
<td>red [red]</td>
<td>English</td>
<td>corpus</td>
<td>&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>green</td>
<td>green [gočin]</td>
<td>&quot;</td>
<td>&quot;</td>
<td>&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>blue</td>
<td>blue [bołé]</td>
<td>&quot;</td>
<td>&quot;</td>
<td>&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>pink</td>
<td>pink [pînk]</td>
<td>&quot;</td>
<td>&quot;</td>
<td>&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>black</td>
<td>black [bölēk]</td>
<td>&quot;</td>
<td>&quot;</td>
<td>&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>grey</td>
<td>grey [goceyi]</td>
<td>&quot;</td>
<td>&quot;</td>
<td>&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>purple</td>
<td>purple [psipo!]</td>
<td>&quot;</td>
<td>&quot;</td>
<td>&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>yellow</td>
<td>yellow [yelo]</td>
<td>&quot;</td>
<td>&quot;</td>
<td>&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>orange</td>
<td>orange [orando]</td>
<td>&quot;</td>
<td>&quot;</td>
<td>&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>dark</td>
<td>dark [da:k]</td>
<td>&quot;</td>
<td>&quot;</td>
<td>&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>yellow</td>
<td>buthulak</td>
<td>y.m.</td>
<td>SH</td>
<td>&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>red</td>
<td>miku</td>
<td>?</td>
<td>&quot;</td>
<td>&quot;</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

All the different ochres have names to designate their colours, but they tend not to be used except with paintings.

+ A teacher (Balanda)

* SH is the ex-adult-educator, a fluent speaker of Gupapuyŋu
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CONCEPT</th>
<th>TRANSLATION</th>
<th>ORIGIN</th>
<th>SOURCE</th>
<th>COMMENTS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>adding, plus</td>
<td>ga</td>
<td>y.m.</td>
<td>'land'</td>
<td>corpus</td>
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<tr>
<td>minus, take away</td>
<td>tākeaway</td>
<td>English</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>[tēyikaweyi]</td>
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<tr>
<td>right</td>
<td>right [qayit]</td>
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<td>sums</td>
<td>sums [samz]</td>
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<td>equals</td>
<td>equals [ikwol(ə)]</td>
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<td>kung fu</td>
<td>[kānfo]</td>
<td>Chinese</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>film, pictures</td>
<td>bittja ('pictures')</td>
<td>English</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>ball, football,</td>
<td>[bōtō]</td>
<td>English</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>tennis ball</td>
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<tr>
<td>= ball of any size,</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>for any game</td>
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**B. GENERAL MECHANICS, VEHICLES, BUILDINGS**

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<tr>
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<th>ORIGIN</th>
<th>SOURCE</th>
<th>COMMENTS</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>'throb of engine'</td>
<td>burrburyun</td>
<td>onomatopaeia?</td>
<td>y.m. (n.d.(d))</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>'aeroplane' dikarr</td>
<td></td>
<td>y.m. 'flying'</td>
<td></td>
<td>not really used</td>
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<tr>
<td>'to land' (of plane)</td>
<td>dhal'yun</td>
<td>y.m. 'to land'</td>
<td></td>
<td>used</td>
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<tr>
<td>'plane accelerating to take off'</td>
<td>dhathatthun</td>
<td>y.m. 'bird'</td>
<td></td>
<td>onomatopaeia</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>man, running</td>
<td>before take off, 'high jump', 'running to catch up'</td>
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<td>CONCEPT</td>
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<td>ORIGIN</td>
<td>SOURCE</td>
<td>COMMENTS</td>
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<td>-----------------</td>
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<td>plane</td>
<td>bilayin</td>
<td>English</td>
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<td>helicopter</td>
<td>halikupta</td>
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<td>heavy vehicle</td>
<td>mitjiyan</td>
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<td>engine</td>
<td>a) rindjin</td>
<td></td>
<td>SH</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>b) burburruyaway</td>
<td>y.m.</td>
<td>SH</td>
<td>onomatopoeia</td>
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<td>aeroplane</td>
<td>wartipilany</td>
<td>English</td>
<td>SH</td>
<td></td>
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<td>Connair</td>
<td>guniya</td>
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<td>SH</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Connair DC3 plane</td>
<td>guniya</td>
<td>English</td>
<td>corpus</td>
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<td></td>
<td>[h]eron</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>airstrip</td>
<td>gandurak</td>
<td>English, SH</td>
<td>from 'contract'</td>
<td>all early airstrips in Arnhem Land were built by contractors</td>
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<tr>
<td>iron bar</td>
<td>djimuku</td>
<td>probably Macassan</td>
<td>SH</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>stairs, steps, ladder</td>
<td>dhoka</td>
<td>y.m. 'steps'; Lowe 'still'; 'only'; (n.d. (d)) 'just'</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>church</td>
<td>bumbu</td>
<td>y.m. = any Lowe building, (n.d. (d)) an building types of constructions</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>dhuyu</td>
<td>y.m. = 'holy', 'special'</td>
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<tr>
<td>ladder</td>
<td>dolŋ</td>
<td>Macassan</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>window</td>
<td>dhalakarr</td>
<td>y.m. = 'hole', 'opening', 'space', 'room'</td>
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<td>dinghy</td>
<td>dhæam'am1</td>
<td>possibly a Lowe y.m. word (n.d. (d)) meaning 'shell'</td>
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<td>car</td>
<td>mutika</td>
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<td>corpus</td>
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<tr>
<td>truck</td>
<td>truck [dɔɾak]</td>
<td>English</td>
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<tr>
<td>tractor</td>
<td>tractor [dɔɾakta]</td>
<td>&quot;</td>
<td>&quot;</td>
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<tr>
<td>landing</td>
<td>landing [lændɪŋ]</td>
<td>&quot;</td>
<td>&quot;</td>
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<tr>
<td>land rover</td>
<td>land rover [lænd əvə]</td>
<td>&quot;</td>
<td>&quot;</td>
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<tr>
<td>barge</td>
<td>barge [baːɡ]</td>
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C. HOME MANAGEMENT, CLOTHING, FOOD

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>hat</td>
<td>liyapuy</td>
<td>y.m. 'for the head'</td>
<td>Lowe (n.d.(c))</td>
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<tr>
<td>shoes</td>
<td>lukupuy</td>
<td>y.m. 'for the feet'</td>
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<td>shirt</td>
<td>gumurrpuy</td>
<td>y.m. 'for the chest'</td>
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<td>trousers</td>
<td>makarrpuy</td>
<td>y.m. 'for the legs, thighs'</td>
<td>&quot;</td>
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<tr>
<td>spectacles</td>
<td>manutjipuy</td>
<td>y.m. 'for the eyes'</td>
<td>&quot;</td>
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<tr>
<td>petticoat</td>
<td>djinagawuy</td>
<td>y.m. 'for the inside'</td>
<td>&quot;</td>
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<tr>
<td>jumper, cardigan</td>
<td>guyinarrpuy</td>
<td>y.m. 'for the cold'</td>
<td>&quot;</td>
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<td>jacket</td>
<td>jacket [dækIt]</td>
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<td>corpus</td>
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<td>towel</td>
<td>towel [tawo]</td>
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<td>&quot;</td>
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<td>watermelon</td>
<td>wutumilin</td>
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<td>SB</td>
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<td>coconut</td>
<td>gusanat</td>
<td>&quot;</td>
<td>SB</td>
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<td>sandal, thong</td>
<td>dhapathuŋ</td>
<td>Indonesian = sapato 'shoe'</td>
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<td>dress</td>
<td>duratj</td>
<td>English = 'dress'</td>
<td>SH</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>spectacles, eye-glass, glass</td>
<td>guyiŋglas, [glas]</td>
<td>English</td>
<td>corpus</td>
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<tr>
<td>small piece of tobacco</td>
<td>y.m. 'wing'</td>
<td>y.m. 'wing'</td>
<td>SH</td>
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<tr>
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<td>ORIGIN</td>
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<tr>
<td>chair,</td>
<td>bala'pala [-wuy?]</td>
<td>bala'pala, possibly from 'palace' English</td>
<td>Lowe (n.d.(d))</td>
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<td>cloth,</td>
<td>barrambarra</td>
<td>?</td>
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<tr>
<td>clothes</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>petticoat, shirt, petticoat</td>
<td>batigut,djinaguyuy</td>
<td>English</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>pannikin</td>
<td>banikin batjikali dindin</td>
<td>English? Macassan?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>coat, shirt</td>
<td>butjupatju</td>
<td>?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>bloomers, pants</td>
<td>bulumitj</td>
<td>English</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>bottle</td>
<td>buthulu</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>tap bread to see if cooked</td>
<td>dambatambayyn</td>
<td>y.m. 'tap wood to see if hollow for didgeridoo'</td>
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<tr>
<td>without money</td>
<td>dhaparq</td>
<td>y.m. 'without food'</td>
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<tr>
<td>bottle, jar</td>
<td>dhuli'na</td>
<td>y.m. = 'ear'</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>cup, pannikin</td>
<td>djalarun rupa gap</td>
<td>Macassan English</td>
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<td>trousers</td>
<td>djalwarra</td>
<td>?</td>
<td>Lowe (n.d.(d))</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>tin, pannikin</td>
<td>djambaka</td>
<td>Macassan = 'tin'</td>
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<td></td>
<td>djapidana</td>
<td>Macassan loan</td>
<td></td>
<td>no longer really used at Milingimbi</td>
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<tr>
<td>tobacco</td>
<td>a) getju</td>
<td>?probably y.m.</td>
<td></td>
<td>more common than jarali among older people</td>
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<td></td>
<td>b) jarali'</td>
<td>y.m. 'bush'</td>
<td>corpus</td>
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<td>TRANSLATION</td>
<td>ORIGIN</td>
<td>SOURCE</td>
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<td>------------------</td>
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<td>----------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>trousers, shorts</td>
<td>makarrpuy</td>
<td>y.m. 'for the thighs'</td>
<td>Lowe (n.d.(d))</td>
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<td>soapsuds</td>
<td>mulmul</td>
<td>y.m. 'foam'</td>
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<td>brassiere</td>
<td>ðaminipuy bira</td>
<td>y.m. 'breasts-concerning' English</td>
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<td>pocket</td>
<td>pocket [pokit]</td>
<td>English</td>
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<td>pocket-mirri</td>
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<td>sweet potato</td>
<td>bawaj</td>
<td>Macassan = 'onion'</td>
<td>SH</td>
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<tr>
<td>sugar</td>
<td>a) munatha</td>
<td>y.m. = 'sand'</td>
<td>SH</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>b) djuga</td>
<td>English = 'sugar'</td>
<td>SH</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>damper</td>
<td>dhamba</td>
<td>y.m. = 'light weight'</td>
<td>SH</td>
<td></td>
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<td>twenty cents</td>
<td>dubab</td>
<td>English 'two bob'</td>
<td>SH</td>
<td>(shillings)</td>
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**FOOD STORE**

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<th>SOURCE</th>
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<tr>
<td>rice, wheat, barley</td>
<td>berratha</td>
<td>Name for Indonesia</td>
<td>Lowe (n.d.(d))</td>
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<td>Macassan possibly originally from Sanskrit</td>
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<td>'corn, maize'</td>
<td>birrali</td>
<td>?</td>
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<td>money</td>
<td>rrupiya</td>
<td>Macassan (Sanskrit)</td>
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<td>doy'</td>
<td>Macassan?</td>
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<td>gunda</td>
<td>y.m. = 'stone, rocks' corpus</td>
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<td>baking powder</td>
<td>dulul'mirri</td>
<td>y.m.</td>
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<td>tobacco</td>
<td>dhambaku</td>
<td>English = 'tobacco'</td>
<td>Lowe (n.d.(d))</td>
<td>old people</td>
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<td>to buy</td>
<td>dharrima</td>
<td>Macassan?</td>
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<td>bûyim</td>
<td>English (corpus)</td>
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<tr>
<td>paper money</td>
<td>galga</td>
<td>y.m. 'skin, bark'</td>
<td>Lowe (n.d.(d))</td>
<td>used, not common</td>
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<td>sell</td>
<td>djelim</td>
<td>English 'sell him'</td>
<td>SB</td>
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<td>ORIGIN</td>
<td>SOURCE</td>
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<td>cigarette, cigarette paper</td>
<td>galurru</td>
<td>y.m. = ?</td>
<td>Lowe (n.d.(d))</td>
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<td>treacle - all sweet things</td>
<td>gola</td>
<td>y.m. 'syrup'</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>Indonesian for 'sugar' = gula</td>
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<td>jam</td>
<td>gunbala</td>
<td>y.m. 'native sugar bag'</td>
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<td>money</td>
<td>gundá</td>
<td>y.m. 'rock, stone'</td>
<td>&quot;</td>
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<td>rice</td>
<td>lanydjarrna</td>
<td>Macassan</td>
<td>&quot;</td>
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<td>alcohol</td>
<td>ñanitji</td>
<td>Macassan = anesi</td>
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<td>tea leaves</td>
<td>ñurrogti</td>
<td>y.m. 'charcoal pieces'</td>
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<td></td>
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<td>'shade'</td>
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<td>bread</td>
<td>rrothi</td>
<td>roti = Indonesian</td>
<td>&quot;</td>
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<td>for 'roasted' type of biscuit</td>
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<td>store</td>
<td>[do] store</td>
<td>English</td>
<td>corpus</td>
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<td>paunkin, billy</td>
<td>[banIkIn]</td>
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<td>&quot;</td>
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<td>milk</td>
<td>[biliken]</td>
<td>&quot;</td>
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<td>bucket</td>
<td>bucket [bakIt]</td>
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D. ADMINISTRATIVE, POLITICAL, OTHER TECHNOLOGICAL

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<tr>
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<td>bolldjiman</td>
<td>English</td>
<td>corpus</td>
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<tr>
<td>charter</td>
<td>djata</td>
<td>&quot;</td>
<td>&quot;</td>
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<td>land rights</td>
<td>land right(s)</td>
<td>&quot;</td>
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<td>profit</td>
<td>profit [profi]</td>
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<td>Northern Land Council</td>
<td>Northern Land Council [noon lan kansoi]</td>
<td>English</td>
<td>corpus</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>secretary</td>
<td>secretary [sek[Itci]</td>
<td>&quot;</td>
<td>&quot;</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>preach</td>
<td>djabarrkthun</td>
<td>y.m. ?</td>
<td>Lowe (n.d.(d))</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>baptise</td>
<td>liya-lupmarama</td>
<td>y.m. liya = 'head'</td>
<td>&quot;</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>lupmarama = 'to wash'</td>
<td>(transitive)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>church</td>
<td>djútj</td>
<td>English 'church'</td>
<td>SIH</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>mission</td>
<td>[ml金山]</td>
<td>English 'mission'</td>
<td>&quot;</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>post office</td>
<td>wopitj</td>
<td>English 'office'</td>
<td>&quot;</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>hospital</td>
<td>watjpil</td>
<td>English 'hospital'</td>
<td>&quot;</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>workshop</td>
<td>wuktjap</td>
<td>English 'workshop'</td>
<td>&quot;</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>school</td>
<td>gul</td>
<td>English 'school'</td>
<td>&quot;</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>café</td>
<td>café [kafeyi]</td>
<td>English</td>
<td>corpus</td>
<td>as in cafe-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>medicine</td>
<td>mirritjin</td>
<td>English 'medicine'</td>
<td>&quot;</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>doctor</td>
<td>dhukta</td>
<td>English 'doctor'</td>
<td>&quot;</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sister (nursing)</td>
<td>djitji</td>
<td>English 'sister'</td>
<td>&quot;</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>telescope</td>
<td>dharrupuŋ</td>
<td>? probably Macassan</td>
<td>Lowe (n.d.(d))</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>fire (gun)</td>
<td>dhudi-</td>
<td>y.m. &quot;bottom&quot;</td>
<td>&quot;</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>dhungur'yun</td>
<td>+ to light fire</td>
<td>&quot;</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>road</td>
<td>dhukarr</td>
<td>y.m. 'path way'</td>
<td>&quot;</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>revolver</td>
<td>djilitjilikان</td>
<td>? part</td>
<td>onomatopaeic</td>
<td>&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>iron crowbar, any steel stick</td>
<td>djimuku</td>
<td>Macassan</td>
<td>&quot;</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CONCEPT</td>
<td>TRANSLATION</td>
<td>ORIGIN</td>
<td>SOURCE</td>
<td>COMMENTS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----------------------</td>
<td>---------------------</td>
<td>--------------</td>
<td>----------------------</td>
<td>---------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>rifle</td>
<td>djinapaŋ</td>
<td>Macassan?</td>
<td>Lowe (n.d.(d))</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>carpenter's gathang</td>
<td></td>
<td>Macassan?</td>
<td></td>
<td>&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>plane</td>
<td></td>
<td>Macassan?</td>
<td></td>
<td>&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>lamp</td>
<td>Ianhdhirra</td>
<td>Macassan?</td>
<td></td>
<td>&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sinker, filling in</td>
<td>lätuŋ</td>
<td>Macassan?</td>
<td></td>
<td>&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>teeth</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>photo</td>
<td>mali'</td>
<td>y.m. = 'shade'</td>
<td></td>
<td>&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>torch</td>
<td>maŋutji</td>
<td>y.m. 'eye',</td>
<td></td>
<td>&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>globe, bullet</td>
<td></td>
<td>'seed', 'well'</td>
<td></td>
<td>&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>'hole', 'fishhook',</td>
<td></td>
<td>&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>'sweet-heart'</td>
<td></td>
<td>&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>germ</td>
<td>miriŋu</td>
<td>y.m. 'enemy'</td>
<td></td>
<td>&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>gun</td>
<td>mürriŋu</td>
<td>?</td>
<td></td>
<td>&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>to aim camera or gun</td>
<td>milnyinyiyun</td>
<td>? y.m.</td>
<td></td>
<td>&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>possibly</td>
<td>y.m., originally</td>
<td>&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>meant</td>
<td>'line up'</td>
<td>&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>give an injection,</td>
<td>barrtjun, djawar'yun</td>
<td>y.m. 'to spe:</td>
<td></td>
<td>&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tape recorder,</td>
<td>tape [teyip]</td>
<td>English</td>
<td>corpus</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>cassette recorder</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>cassette player,</td>
<td>cassette [kaset]</td>
<td>&quot;</td>
<td>&quot;</td>
<td>&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>cassette</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>radio</td>
<td>radio [reyidiyo]</td>
<td>&quot;</td>
<td>&quot;</td>
<td>&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>broadcast(ing)</td>
<td>broadcasting</td>
<td>&quot;</td>
<td>&quot;</td>
<td>&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>torch</td>
<td>[doŋ] (torch)</td>
<td>&quot;</td>
<td>&quot;</td>
<td>&quot;</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### E. ANIMALS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Concept</th>
<th>Translation</th>
<th>Origin</th>
<th>Source</th>
<th>Comments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>pig</td>
<td>bikibiki</td>
<td>English 'pig'</td>
<td>Lowe (n.d.(d))</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sheep</td>
<td>bembi [biːmbi]</td>
<td>?</td>
<td>&quot;</td>
<td>used only at church</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>buffalo</td>
<td>detaŋ</td>
<td>?</td>
<td>&quot;</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>cat</td>
<td>[bōdjigit]</td>
<td>English 'pussy cat'</td>
<td>personal observation</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>cow, cattle, bull</td>
<td>[boloːki]</td>
<td>English 'bullock'</td>
<td>&quot;</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>goat</td>
<td>nanigut</td>
<td>English 'nanny goat'</td>
<td>&quot;</td>
<td>used also for males</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>horse</td>
<td>yarraman</td>
<td>unclear, but Australian</td>
<td>&quot;</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### F. MISCELLANEOUS, INCLUDING TIME

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Concept</th>
<th>Translation</th>
<th>Origin</th>
<th>Source</th>
<th>Comments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>white person</td>
<td>balanda</td>
<td>Macassan</td>
<td>personal observation</td>
<td>many other words</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>nāpaki</td>
<td>?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>white woman</td>
<td>hayini</td>
<td>?</td>
<td>Lowe (n.d.(d))</td>
<td>neither used much</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><em>ona</em></td>
<td>?</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sticky</td>
<td>dikmanyija</td>
<td>y.m.? English?</td>
<td>&quot;</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>prison</td>
<td>dharrungu</td>
<td>?</td>
<td>&quot;</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>stockman</td>
<td>dhudi-yarraman-mirri</td>
<td>y.m. 'behind horse-with'</td>
<td>&quot;</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>rust</td>
<td>dhulwir</td>
<td>?</td>
<td>&quot;</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>big town or city</td>
<td>maypurra</td>
<td>probably Macassan</td>
<td>&quot;</td>
<td>e.g. Darwin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CONCEPT</td>
<td>TRANSLATION</td>
<td>ORIGIN</td>
<td>SOURCE</td>
<td>COMMENTS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------------</td>
<td>--------------------</td>
<td>------------------</td>
<td>--------------</td>
<td>--------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>big European place</td>
<td>naninyga (way)</td>
<td>probably Macassan</td>
<td>Lowe (n.d.d)</td>
<td>originally meant specifically Denpasar in Bali</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>full of food, things (of billy, suitcase, store, etc.)</td>
<td>pedu- dhurru</td>
<td>y.m. 'inside, 'centré'</td>
<td>&quot;</td>
<td>&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tamarind (both tree and fruit)</td>
<td>djamboŋ</td>
<td>probably Macassan</td>
<td>personal observation</td>
<td>&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>late</td>
<td>late [leyit]</td>
<td>English</td>
<td>cor</td>
<td>&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>midnight</td>
<td>midnight [mîndnayit]</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>next time</td>
<td>next time [nêkstâyim]</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>as in next time-ryu</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>all the time</td>
<td>all the time [ôl ûtâyim]</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>last night</td>
<td>last night [lîsneiyit]</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>this afternoon</td>
<td>this afternoon [ôîsafteyim]</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>&quot;</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### APPENDIX D

#### COMPARATIVE CLASSIFICATIONS

**a) COMPARISON BETWEEN FOOD AND EXISTENCE CLASSES IN YOLNU MATHA**

*(after Rudder, 1979:6)*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Food Classes (Use Class)</th>
<th>Natha 'vegetable foods'</th>
<th>Borum 'fruit'</th>
<th>Butthunamirr(i) 'those that fly' <em>(i.e. (edible) bats, flying birds, possums that glide)</em></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Warrakan 'all land or fresh water animals and reptiles, plus all birds'</td>
<td>Marrajiyamirr(i) 'those that go on their feet' <em>(i.e. remaining (edible) land animals, emu, not the echidna)</em></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Miyapunu 'marine turtles marine mammals'</td>
<td>Gal'yunamirr(i) 'those that crawl' <em>(includes (edible) lizards, goannas, crocodiles, tortoises, echidna)</em></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Maranydjalk 'stingrays and sharks'</td>
<td>Djuryunamirr(i) 'those that slide' <em>(i.e. (edible) snakes)</em></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Guya 'fish'</td>
<td>Narakamirr(i) 'those having shells <em>(i.e. (edible) turtles)</em></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Maypal 'shellfish, crustaceans, some insect larvae'</td>
<td>Balawalamirr(i) 'those having twin horizontal flukes on their tails' <em>(i.e. dolphins, dugong, whales)</em></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Guku 'native bees and bee products'</td>
<td>Maranydjalk <em>(edible) stingrays</em></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Mapu 'eggs'</td>
<td>Bul'manydji <em>(edible) sharks</em></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Natha 'all vegetable food other than fruit'</th>
<th>Maranhu 'food'</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Borum 'fruit'</td>
<td>Gonyil 'food'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Butthunamirr(i) 'those that fly' <em>(i.e. (edible) bats, flying birds, possums that glide)</em></td>
<td>Miyapunu 'marine turtles marine mammals'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Marrajiyamirr(i) 'those that go on their feet' <em>(i.e. remaining (edible) land animals, emu, not the echidna)</em></td>
<td>Narakamirr(i) 'those having shells <em>(i.e. (edible) turtles)</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Gal'yunamirr(i) 'those that crawl' <em>(includes (edible) lizards, goannas, crocodiles, tortoises, echidna)</em></td>
<td>Balawalamirr(i) 'those having twin horizontal flukes on their tails' <em>(i.e. dolphins, dugong, whales)</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Djuryunamirr(i) 'those that slide' <em>(i.e. (edible) snakes)</em></td>
<td>Maranydjalk <em>(edible) stingrays</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Narakamirr(i) 'those having shells <em>(i.e. (edible) turtles)</em></td>
<td>Maranydjalk <em>(edible) stingrays</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Balawalamirr(i) 'those having twin horizontal flukes on their tails' <em>(i.e. dolphins, dugong, whales)</em></td>
<td>Bul'manydji <em>(edible) sharks</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Maypal 'shellfish, crustaceans, some insect larvae'</td>
<td>Maypal <em>(edible) molluscs and some insect larvae</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Guku 'native bees and bee products'</td>
<td>Gommirri <em>(edible) shellfish, crustaceans, some insect larvae</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mapu 'eggs'</td>
<td>Mapu 'eggs'</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**nhûninin 'useless as food'**
**EXISTENCE CLASSES**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>dha:pa</td>
<td>'plants with definite stems'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>mulmu</td>
<td>'plants without a definite stem'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>warrakan</td>
<td>'all land or fresh water animals and reptiles, except snakes, plus all birds'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>butthunamirri</td>
<td>'those that fly' (i.e. bats, flying birds, possums that glide)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>marrtjirunamirri</td>
<td>'those that go on their feet' (i.e. remaining land animals, emu, not the echidna)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>gal'yunamirri</td>
<td>'those that crawl' includes lizards, goannas, crocodiles, tortoises, echidna</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bâpi</td>
<td>'all snakes, legless lizards and worms'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>miyapunu</td>
<td>'marine turtles and marine mammals'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>garakamirri</td>
<td>'those having shells', (i.e. turtles)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>balawalamirri</td>
<td>'those having two horizontal flukes on their tails (i.e. dugong, dolphins, whales)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>maranydjalk</td>
<td>'stingrays and sharks'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bul'manydji</td>
<td>'sharks'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>guya</td>
<td>'fish'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>maypal</td>
<td>'shellfish, crustaceans and some insect larvae'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>maypal'</td>
<td>'molluscs and some insect larvae'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>goŋmirri</td>
<td>maypal 'those with hands' (i.e. crabs, shrimps, crayfish)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>guku</td>
<td>'native bees and bee products'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>gälkal</td>
<td>'ants'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>garkman</td>
<td>'frogs'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>gundirr</td>
<td>'varieties of mound-producing termites/their mounds'</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

This table demonstrates two aspects of Yolnu classification of living things: one 'use' class, 'food', and the 'existence' classes. These two sets of classes may be further classified on the basis of locality.
### Kinship Nomenclature: English and Yolnu Matha

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>English</th>
<th>Yolnu Matha</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>wife</strong></td>
<td>galay (U)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>fiancéé</strong></td>
<td>dhuway (H)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>husband</strong></td>
<td>wāwa (B)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>fiancéé</strong></td>
<td>yapa (Z)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>brother</strong></td>
<td>nāndi (M) - nama' (M)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>sister</strong></td>
<td>Also (MZ)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>mother</strong></td>
<td>bēpa (F) (also FZ)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>father</strong></td>
<td>mukul bēpa (FZ; DSD)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>aunt</strong></td>
<td>nāndi (HZ; DDD) - nama' (HZ; DDD)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>great-grandmother</strong></td>
<td>nāpipli (MB; DDS to ŋego)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>uncle</strong></td>
<td>mūri (FM)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>great-grandson</strong></td>
<td>mūri'mu (FF)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>grandmother</strong></td>
<td>nathni (MF)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>grandfather</strong></td>
<td>dhuway (male &amp; female)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>cousin</strong></td>
<td>wāwa (male)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>grandfather</strong></td>
<td>yapa (female)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>great-aunt</strong></td>
<td>yukiyuku (male &amp; female)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>great-uncle</strong></td>
<td>galay (male &amp; female)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Also:

- blipa (male & female)
- mūri (MZ)
- mūri'n (MFZ)
- momu (MFZ)
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ENGLISH</th>
<th>YOLNU MATHA</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>great-uncle</td>
<td>mūrī'mu (FFB)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>mūrī (HMB)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>nathi (MFB)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>great-grandmother</td>
<td>waku (male ego for descending generation)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>great-grandfather</td>
<td>gāthu (female ego for descending generation)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>nephew</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>son</td>
<td>waku (female ego)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>daughter</td>
<td>gāthu (male ego)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>granddaughter</td>
<td>maratja (SD/SS) (male ego)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>grandson</td>
<td>gāminyarr (DD/DS) (male ego)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(SD/SS) (female ego)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>gutharra (DD/DS) (female ego)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>second cousin</td>
<td>dhuway (FZSS/FZSD)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>galay (MFBSS/MFBSD)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>mūrī (HMBSS/HMBSD)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>gutharra (FFZDS/FFZDD)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>wūwa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>yapa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>first cousin once removed</td>
<td>ŋāndi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>napipi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>gāthu</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>waku</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>gurrunŋ (FZDS/FZDD)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>mother-in-law</td>
<td>mukul rumaru (HMI)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>mukul bōpa (HMI)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ENGLISH</td>
<td>YOLNU MATHA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>---------------------</td>
<td>------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>father-in-law</td>
<td>qapipi (WF)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>waku (HF)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sister-in-law</td>
<td>galay (WZ/WB)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>brother-in-law</td>
<td>dhuway (HZ/HB)</td>
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<tr>
<td>son-in-law</td>
<td>waku (DH) (male ego)</td>
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<td></td>
<td>gurruŋ (DH) (female ego)</td>
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<tr>
<td>daughter-in-law</td>
<td>nāndi (SW) (male ego)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>gāthu (SW) (female ego)</td>
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<td>maralkur (WMB) (male ego)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>momalkur (WMB) (male ego)</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>nathiwalkur (WMB) (male ego)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>dhumungur (HZDS/HZDD) (female ego)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Abbreviations:

W = wife
H = husband
B = brother
Z = sister
F = father
M = mother
S = son
D = daughter
A WRITTEN ACCOUNT IN ENGLISH OF SOME YOLNU BELIEFS AND CUSTOMS
CONCERNING PREGNANCY AND CHILDBIRTH: THE PASSING OF SOME TRADITIONAL LORE

The following is an account of Yolnu beliefs and customs concerning pregnancy and childbirth. It is of interest to this study for two main reasons. First, it is a sample of a Yolnu's written expression in English, and is thus reproduced unaltered. It was written by a twenty-eight-year-old woman, who has been working as a health-worker for a number of years. She was educated under the "Fidock" school system, has had nursing training in Darwin and Nhulunbuy, and has represented Milingimbi at a number of conferences for Aboriginal health-workers, including Australia-wide ones. Her English proficiency was assessed as 7 (see Chapter 4). While written English has not been discussed in the body of this study, it is, of course, important in a consideration of the total picture of English at Milingimbi. This piece of writing is unusual in its length and the general "accuracy" of the spelling and grammar.

The second reason for its interest is that it represents the gradual passing of at least one area of traditional lore, that concerning beliefs about pregnancy and childbirth, presumably as a result of changing practices introduced by Balanda-style medicine. The account is in two parts, written on two different days. The first part was written from the writer's own knowledge, the second part was written after consultation with some of the older women in her camp. Thus, despite the fact that she is herself the mother of three children, this woman has not learnt all the traditional knowledge about pregnancy and childbirth. It is unlikely that her initial ignorance of some of these things stems simply from the fact that she is a Balanda-trained
health-worker. The account is as follows:

"In olden days, people had special signs and dreams which they dreamt or found strange things, which they knew that someone was going to be pregnant, they knew whether the baby was Yirritja or dhuwa. This was known before the mother felt that she was pregnant. By that time the older womens would give advice in what food to eat. There are lots of food which the pregnant woman can't eat from the time they are pregnant until the baby is a year old, there are two kinds of turtle which the pregnant woman or with babies who are breast feeding are allowed. Usually it is a woman's job to assist with a woman who is in labour.

"I have found out lot of things from the older womens about who assist the woman who is in labour, its usually an older person like someone who already has had children and who knows exactly when to start pushing the baby out. When the baby is born they make a fire with ant hills broken to pieces on pieces of small stones to make their uterus contract, quicken, then they put grasses on top with a small amount of water to make the steam come up, then they sit the mother and baby in the smoke from which the steam is coming up. With both mother and baby covered or the face they can tell when to come out. the umbilical cord which has been cut off they wear around their necks till they decide what to do. They sometime make bags which contains something that only the men knows?"
APPENDIX F

TEXT CONTAINING EXTENSIVE CODE-SWITCHING

This appendix presents the transcription and translation of a text containing frequent code-switching. It was recorded just over half-way through a big community meeting which lasted for about five hours. The meeting had been called urgently to discuss the signing of the Ranger Uranium agreement and the broader issue of land rights. Up to two hundred Yolŋu of all ages were present. The number of Balandas there was very small, never more than about half a dozen (including one temporary visitor from Canberra). The meeting took place outside, on an open stretch of sand under the tamarind trees between the Adult Education Centre and the beach. (As the tide was high, the sound of lapping water was ever-present in the section of the recording transcribed here). In the time I was there (the last half of the meeting), the speakers were all men (mostly aged over 30, several over 40), and a number of the speeches were like this one, in terms of the extent of code-switching.

In the initial part of the recording this speaker was not using a microphone and was very hard to hear over the water, wind, dogs and children. Phrases which could not be transcribed are marked "[...?]". There was no difficulty transcribing once he was given a microphone, except one or twice when he turned away from it.

The speaker is a 34-year-old Gupapuyŋu man, whose English proficiency was assessed as 7. Several Balandas considered his English to be the "best" at Milingimbi. He has spent some time away from Milingimbi doing such things as community welfare work near Kununurra in Western Australia. He has often represented Milingimbi in public contexts in Darwin and other centres.
While this speaker is highly articulate in both English and Yolŋu Matha, the extensiveness of his code-switching partially limits his communicative effectiveness. Many more senior members of the audience would have been unable to follow much of the English component of this speech, while most of the Yolŋu Matha segment was too complex for any of the Balandas attending to gain more than a rough idea of what he was talking about.

The Yolŋu Matha segments in the following text also contain code-switching at another level, between Guj:tpuyŋu and bjambarpuyŋu words. An analysis of this type of code-switching is beyond the scope of this study.

**TEXT**

Speaker: Dh, man, 34:

You worry for your life and your nature too. [...]?

barpuru limurru ga using [...]? called

yesterday we (plural inclusive) continuous

[...?] dhurrara ga Outback Foundation for ever and ever

stand continuous

might happen my children can have it! Narraku gathu ga

my child and

gathu-mirriŋu-w marratja walalangu dhu marram [...?...]

child-having -possessive grandchild their Future get

wapmaram, Wanca dhu ga dhurrara ɲunhi Foundation-jur

jump down Where future continuous stand that -locative

[...?] wongany-dja five minutes... [...]? dhu marrtji...

one -focus future go
[...] but my dirt stands there and that's my foundation. Now people li ga agreement djāma bitjan because money habitual continuous work like this

[...] Balanda [...] bala djāma nhū? [...] mirithirri then work what very much

[...] Nanydja limurru? Limurru [...] wanha bili but we (plural) we where emphatic

ga nhūtha limurru dhu djarrany'tjun yān. That's one thing and when we future dig up just will out. ḳarra dhu godarr' marrṭji I'll go yaka nhuma I future tomorrow go not you(2+)

[...] nhuma-langu dharrā [...] bitjan gam'. Get that idea! you -dative stand like this like this

We like people. ḳarraku-ny ḳarrā ḳarr a bili commitment my -focus I I completive
djāma ḳarraku-ny. ḳarra ga ḳarraku-ny family. family work my -focus I and my -focus

rraku-ny-na warrpam'. That's my commitment. That's what ḳarrra my -focus-style all I
dhu say [...] qunhi ḳarr a dhu dharrā ga wanga future when I future stand up and talk

walalnThe. ḳuruku qunhi naparru nhumalan they-dative that-gen/dat that we (plural exclusive) you-dative
dhu ga wanga dhuwala. Dhuwala ga nhina ga future continuous talk this this continuous sit discourse
government dhu ga nhina Australia bitjan dhuwal
future continuous sit like this this
muk dhu waga you go and do our job, but nhuma job-dja?
maybe future say you-6 focus
to do us our job. Bitjan limurru dhu ga waga.
like this we(inclusive) future continuous say
Yaka narra dhu guruniyi proud-dja because I'm
not I future that-INST-emphasis ?/ERG -focus
sitting on that parliament chair, an' I'm proud man because I'm talking
English. Yaka narra dhu gurukiyi wagan. But
not I future that-DATIVE-emphasis speak-III
Government-thu ga napurrnha dhu
ergative discourse us (3-exclusive)-ACC future
ga bitjen "you do our job". Wanhaka rrupiya... rrupiya
continuous like this where money money
yaka narra ga rrupiya liya-nura gi gorri because
not I continuous money head-locative continuous-II lie
I got friends. One dollar, two dollar dhu rra nyan'thon today
future I consume
but next week dhu rra nyumukunfny-gu nyan'thon.
future I little -dative consume
That's economy. But I need to see nature still standing there. Narra
I
dhu 'nother story Lakaram. Three weeks ago, wangany-dja meeting
future tell one -focus
Galarrwuy Yunupingu, from Yirrkala, the president of the Northern Land Council.

1. James Galarrwuy Yunupingu, from Yirrkala, the president of the Northern Land Council.
walalaŋ yurru napurrup dhu waŋa limurru
they-dative but we(pl. exclusive) future speak we(pl. inclusive)
dhu yep... yep mala marrtji ga. Waŋan dhiyaŋu bala
future plural go-I and speak-III now
limurru dhu yaka bitjan-dja light. Waŋan,
we(pl. inclusive) future not like this-focus speak-III
Ga limurru dhu gama walalaŋ yurru yakana. You're
and we(pl. inclusive) future take they-dative but no-style
wrong. Limurru [...] gama [...] mari-lilj
we(pl. inclusive) take trouble=allative
napurrup dhu marrtji ga Bûŋu dhu
we(pl. exclusive) future go continuous no future
Government-thu litjalangu voice gama. Balanya
=ergative you each one and me hear thus
I understand. Mukthun nhina unless nhuma dhu shoot through.
be quiet-I sit you(2+) future
Ga nhuma-ny picture now clear, three bags of money, full
discourse you -focus
might be... Mornington ga Aurukun. Now black people were talking
and
three weeks ago, within a week: "You take that money, put it... into
this plane", bitjan Mornington-buy Aurukun-buy waŋa. Ga
like this -from -from talk discourse
balan ...-yi dhe dhu post office-lilj marrtji
thus =emphatic you(sg) future =allative go
where it belong. Napurrul dhun nhūma nature. Ga pads
we(pl. exclusive) future see discourse
it on qunhiwallyi ge bilina dhuwali.
there-allative-emphtatic and finished that

TRANSLATION

You worry for your life and your nature too. [...] yesterday we were using [...] called [...] the]2 Outback
foundation for ever and ever might happen my children can have it!
[My child and his child, their grandchildren will get it [...] jump
down. Where will it be? With that foundation! [...]3 one more
point] five minutes. [...] will go [...] [...]. But my
dirt stands there and that's my foundation. Now people [are often
trying to work out an] age lent [in this way] because money [...] Balanda [...] [then work, what about that? [...] very much
[...] [...]]. But what about us? We [...] where and when we might
just dig it up]. That's one thing will out. [I'll go tomorrow [...]]
I'll go. [You will not [be there?] but I'll be there and stand for
you, and I'll say:] "Get that idea! We like people. [My... I... I have made a] commitment [to work for my own, I... my] family [my]
family, [the whole lot of them]. That's my commitment. That's what
[I will] say [...] [when I stand up and talk to them. We'll talk to
them about what I'm talking about now to you, that's what I'll talk about

2. Translations of sequences in Yolŋu Natha in the text are bracketed [ ].

3. This non-transcribable part was a procedural aside. The speaker was
asking the chairman for permission to speak for another five minutes.
I started recording him after he had been speaking for some time.
to the government [of] Australia [and that's what we'll maybe say for you]. You go and do our job but [your] job [-dja] to do us our job. That's what we'll say [I will not be proud [-dja because of that], because I'm sitting on that parliament chair, and I'm proud man because I'm talking English. [I won't speak of that!]. But government will say this of us]. You do our job. [It's not money I'm thinking about] because I got friends. [I will consume] one dollar, two dollar today but next week [I will consume only a little]. That's economy. But I need to see nature still standing there. [I will tell you] another story. Three weeks ago [one] meeting [at Galwin'ku and another one which you also know about, one] meeting [in Darwin, when Galarrwuy was] locked up [with them]. Bjelke-Petersen [will send] three bags of money, free plane within a week. Queensland [Aboriginals]...
Queensland [Aboriginals said thus:] You take that money back. We want to see Nature [and] tree, life, dirt. [And we won't dig it up. They will finish putting down the] bitumen. There won't be wiry yams growing on those bitumen. That's what Land Right is and not money. [On the other hand, I reckon we'll get a] little bit of money [by this means]. But we can find food. [And I will tell them there today. I am not a banana to take off my] shorts [and] shirt. I'm not a banana, to peel my skin... to peel my understanding. [I am not just flesh. That's what I will say to them, but we will speak, we] rep... rep [-s will go and speak today and that way we will not] fight. [Talk. And we will take it for them, but not] You're wrong. [We [...?] take [...] get ourselves into trouble. [The] government [will not hear our] voice. [That's as] I understand [things. Sit quietly] unless [you're going to] shoot through. [Your] picture now clear, three bags of money, full might be, Mornington [and] Aurukun. Now black people were talking three weeks ago, within a week: "You take that money, put it... into this
plane", [that's what the people from Mornington and Aurukun said. And in that way you will go to the] post office where it belong. [We'll see] nature [but not you. Now] pass it on [over there, and I've finished].
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Addendum