

DOMAINS AND CODESWITCHING AMONG BILINGUAL ABORIGINES

Patrick McConvell

INTRODUCTION

Stephen Harris makes the following statement (1977:135):

Between two cultural systems that are still very different (for example, traditional Aboriginal and white Australian cultures), the use of domains rather than code-switching is likely to be found.

Harris argues (1977:121) that:

The use of different language in different speech domains is probably a reality already in most Australian Aboriginal communities.

He also advocates the separation of Aboriginal bilingual school classes into English and Aboriginal language 'domains':

the idea of language domains seems both practical and essential to a maintenance curriculum model of bilingual education.

This view is contrasted with that of O'Grady and Hale (1975:14):

Education has the goal of enabling an Aboriginal scholar to write and talk about literally anything under the sun, either in English or in his native tongue.

Some of Harris' views on domains and codeswitching, which have achieved wide currency in Aboriginal bilingual education circles, deserve critical re-examination. I hope to show here:

- (a) Codeswitching is a reality in many Aboriginal communities;
- (b) Codeswitching is more likely to occur when cultural differences are greater between the two languages;
- (c) Codeswitching is mainly used by the speaker to convey social meanings;
- (d) Codeswitching between a traditional language and English or Kriol produces social meanings in the same way as codeswitching between different traditional languages and dialects;

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- (e) The fact that language can switch in codeswitching without a change in domain casts doubt on the strong form of the domain model, in communities where this occurs;
- (f) The idea of a necessary correlation between separation of language domains and stable bilingualism remains a hypothesis, with little supporting evidence, and should not be an assumption in planning educational and language maintenance programmes.

DO ABORIGINES CODESWITCH?

The phenomenon of codeswitching between different Aboriginal traditional languages and forms of English or English-based pidgins/creoles is common throughout a wide area of Northern Australia, and is well recognised by Aboriginal and Islander people themselves, and by European observers alike. Such speech is often referred to by non-linguists of both groups as 'mix' or 'mixture', or, in Kriol, *mikijimap* (mix-im-up).

John Haviland, an ethnographer and linguist who has worked for years at Hopevale, North Queensland, describes the situation there as follows (1982:55):

Hopevale talk is riddled with small-scale switches between Guugu Yimidhirr and English ... most talk at Hopevale mission involves a mixture of both languages. This mixture constitutes the unmarked register in conversation.

Vanessa Elwell, who studied multilingualism at Maningrida, notes examples of switching between different Aboriginal languages and between these and English, 'for a variety of reasons' (Elwell 1983:95-97). Jennifer Lee writes of the Tiwi of Bathurst Island, where the Tiwi language has undergone radical changes in the younger generation (1983:25): 'The language situation of the Tiwi community is further complicated by the amount of codeswitching which occurs'. Bruce Shaw, who has collected much oral history material around Kununurra in Western Australia, writes of the type of speech gathered (Shaw 1981:4): 'Words and phrases of the indigenous languages frequently were inserted into the Aboriginal English; neither was divorced wholly from the other'.

In the nearby Victoria River District of the Northern Territory in the period 1975-1980, I also found codeswitching between sentences of the traditional languages and sentences of English, and insertion of phrases of one into sentences of the other, in both directions, to be the normal pattern of Aboriginal people roughly in the age range 25-55. Examples of this in Gurindji are presented and analysed below. Although Aboriginal people participating in a survey of the Kimberleys do report some differentiation of languages according to domain, they also report a 'mixture of 'language' [i.e. traditional language] and 'Broken English' as being appropriate to a wide range of situations (Hudson and McConvell 1984).

In the Torres Strait, younger people in both traditional language groups have become habitual codeswitchers. Of Murray Island, Ron Day has this to say (Day 1983:20):

The speaker commences the sentences in very good, if sometimes simple, Meriam Mir, but suddenly switches and ends in Pidgin. Let's take this question for example:

- | | |
|--|-------------------------------------|
| (1) Ma pe nako pe ma nali
How about you | IU GO KAM TU?
WILL YOU COME TOO? |
|--|-------------------------------------|

Similar examples are given for the Western Island language (Kalaw Lagaw Ya) by Bani (1976). This common style involving pervasive codeswitching is there known as Ap-ne-ap (*Half and half*).

LINGUISTIC REASONS FOR CODESWITCHING

Explanations offered by Aboriginal people to explain their own codeswitching behaviour include (a) temporarily forgetting a word or phrase and substituting an equivalent in the other language; and (b) changing to a language because the idea cannot adequately be expressed in the other language. These reasons are expressed in the following quotations from Kimberley Language Resource Centre workers (Hudson and McConvell 1984:43):

(a) We box-im-up English and our language. Sometimes we forget English and stick on our language; sometimes we forget our language and stick on English. (David Mowaljarlai, Mowanjum)
[Box-im-up is a Kriol term meaning *join or collect together*]

(b) We put it in our language when describing certain things that do not have an English name. (Daisy Utemorrah, Mowanjum)

The idea of 'forgetting' as a description of the subjective feeling a bilingual has when he switches languages is by no means confined to Australian Aborigines. It does not actually explain anything about the switch, but inasmuch as it does have content, it would relate to the question of the psychological 'switch mechanism' or monitor (Albert and Obler 1978). This question cannot be pursued here: the linguistic and in particular, the social parameters of codeswitching are what concern us here.

The linguistic aspect of codeswitching is the one highlighted by the second quotation, especially the contrast in semantics and lexical organisation of the two languages involved. This is particularly important in the case of switching between English and Aboriginal languages. There is of course a vast technical and cultural vocabulary stemming from European traditions, modern technology and institutions, in English which had no equivalents in the traditional Aboriginal languages. Numerous English words for modern introduced items have been borrowed and assimilated into the languages, as well as new items being coined from the existing resources of the language or neighbouring languages. The two Gurindji words for 'car' illustrate both of these processes: kurririj (probably from Goodrich); rarrajkaji lit. *running thing*. It is increasingly common however for bilingual Aborigines to 'stick on' (as Mowaljarlai described it) words or more extensive passages of only partially assimilated English when modern things or processes are to be mentioned. Arguably sometimes such items have a 'triggering' effect which will cause speakers to stay in English for some time after the strict lexicosemantic necessity for it has passed. It is usually difficult to distinguish between true cases of 'triggering' by lexical items, and cases where a social meaning is also attributable to the switch to Kriol or English, since the total activity being talked about has associations with what I, following Scotton and Ury (1977), call a different social arena (see further below). Dixon (1980:82-84) adduces similar reasons for those examples of Dyirbal codeswitching for which he can find an explanation.

Such codeswitching for apparently 'linguistic' reasons does not only work in one direction, of course. The above quotation from Daisy Utemorraah singles out the opposite case, where there is no appropriate English word to use.

Two kinds of contrastive relationships are involved in such 'linguistic' factors:

- (a) where the lexicosemantic field in the two languages is organised in a radically different way, and
- (b) where there is a lexicosemantic field or an aspect of meaning in one language which is *absent* or virtually absent in discourse in the other language.

Examples of (a) can be found in kinship terms, e.g. ngaji and jaju in Gurindji, compared to the 'nearest equivalents' father and grandparent in English. Ngaji is wider in reference than father: it includes father's brothers (called uncle in English) and father's classificatory brothers. Jaju on the other hand is in one way more restricted than grandparent — it refers to mother's mothers and their siblings only — but it is less restricted in that it refers to grandparents' siblings, great aunts and uncles.

Kriol kinterms are organised more similarly to Gurindji than to English. However, there is a strong tendency for Gurindji to use Gurindji kinterms, even when talking Kriol amongst themselves (except for the term uncle, oddly).

Body parts constitute another area in which semantic organisation is different in Gurindji, Kriol and English. To take a simple example, the term for 'leg' in Gurindji, jamana, only refers to the hind leg of an animal. The foreleg is called wartarn, the commonest term for referring to the hand or arm of a human being. When people are involved in butchering a cow, as in the text to which I shall be referring frequently, this creates something of a dilemma. The term 'leg' in English is though appropriate in that it belongs to the butchering register; it also has the advantage over the Gurindji term jamana, that it is not ambiguous between 'foot' and 'leg'. (There are also Gurindji terms for upper and lower leg, but these are too restricted in their meaning for common use.)

However, the fact that English 'leg' does not distinguish between the hind leg and foreleg of an animal, often creates the need to disambiguate between the two. Thus, in the following passage of text, J is standing on one side of a slaughtered cow: in his request to G to cut a 'leg' of the beast, he could only be referring to one of the two legs on his side. In order to clarify the referent, he has to add ngayinyjarni nyawa (*this one right next to me*). Had he used the Gurindji term, such qualification would have been unnecessary. In the last line of the passage, C switches to Gurindji/Wanyjirra and uses the terms wartarn and jamana. Not only does this clarify a practical request, it also gives C a chance to make a pun.

Wanyjirra and Gurindji are very similar. In the examples, lexical items shared by both have been given in bold face. Lexical items unique to Gurindji are given in bold face and are underlined, those unique to Wanyjirra are given in *script*, and those belonging to Kriol are in CAPITALS. The English equivalents of common Gurindji/Wanyjirra items are in *light italic*, those of uniquely Gurindji items are in *light italic* and underlined, those of uniquely Wanyjirra items are in *script* and those of Kriol items in CAPITALS.

(2) J: Nyawa | NOW LEG | parra ngayiny-ja-rni nyawa
 this *cut me* LOC ONLY *this*

G: Parntara-rni wayi nyila-ma | LEG?
 whole ONLY Q *that* TOPIC

C (to N): Ngapu, kataj parra-yi kanyju-pal
 father *cut* *cut* 1sO *below* ACROSS

J: | PUT-IM | jimpiri
 hole

C: Jimpiri yirra-yi wartarn-ta jamana-rla
 hole *put* 1sO *arm* LOC *leg* LOC

— — —

J: *Cut this* | *LEG NOW* | *this one right next to me.*

G: *The whole of that* | *LEG.*

C (to N): *Daddy, cut it across the bottom for me.*
 (could also mean Cut me across the bottom)

J: | *PUT* | *a hole (in it).*

C: *Put a hole in the foreleg and hindleg for me.*
 (could also mean Put a hole in my hand and foot)

There are a number of instances of switching into English for body-part terms which refer to cuts of meat in English butchering terminology, where there is no exact equivalent in Gurindji. The English technical register of body-parts used in butchering is in common use, (not always solely in relation to domestic animals), as well as a more standard English set in the acrolect and a more 'Aboriginal' set in the basilect of the Kriol, and more or less 'deep' Gurindji. There is also semantic interference (in both directions) between the languages in the field of body-parts.

There is considerable switching from Kriol into Gurindji to insert body-part names where these have no direct exact equivalents in Kriol or English. Use of vague terms in Kriol or English is discouraged, particularly by the older men, in favour of switching into Gurindji for more precise terms. The following textual example shows G berating N for not doing this:

(3) N: WHERE THAT ROUND THING?

G: WENIM 'ROUND THING'? | Wankarr-wankarr, marri! Marri nyampa?
 'round guts' EXCL EXCL *what*

N: | HERE, THAT ROUND ONE HERE

G: | Nyampa-ma? Yini-murlung? Wayirt?
 what TOPIC *name* WITHOUT *'round yam'*

— — —

N: *WHERE'S THAT ROUNG THING?*

G: *WHAT'S A 'ROUND THING'? | Do you mean wankarr-wankarr ('round guts?'), or what?*

N: *| HERE IT IS, THAT ROUND ONE IS HERE.*

G: *| What is it? Is the name tabooed? Is it a wayirt ('round yam'?)*

'Linguistic' motivation of type (b) comes about where there is a virtual absence of the type of concept concerned in the discourse of one language. In relation to switching into an Aboriginal language, this is perhaps a more extreme case of 'things that do not have an English name' than (a) above, or the more familiar absence of vocabulary items in English for, say, a local plant or a ceremonial decoration.

Examples of the (b) type are:

- (i) the triangular kinterms in Gurindji;
- (ii) the elaborate system of directional terminology in Gurindji.

Heath, Merlan and Rumsey (1982:11) have this to say of triangular kinterms:

These are terms which simultaneously relate the designated referent to the speaker and to another person, commonly the addressee, so that three (rather than just one) relationships are indexed by a single term (speaker-referent, addressee-referent, speaker-addressee), though usually any two of these relationships make the third predictable.

A hypothetical example may serve to elucidate this type of system. It is taken from an invented language which happens to have the same lexicon and grammar as English, but has in addition triangular kinterms. In such a language the speaker would have to choose a particular lexical item from the set *father/dad/papa* which all index the same father relationship on the basis of what the relationship is between the speaker and the *propositus* (the 'possessor'). This I, as speaker, would say:

- (a) 'your father' or 'his father' if my relationship to you or him happened to be, say, husband;
- (b) 'your dad' or 'his dad' if my relationship to you or him happened to be, say, uncle; and
- (c) 'your papa' or 'his papa' if my relationship to you or him happened to be, say, son.

Let us take some actual examples of triangular kinterms from Gurindji. The unmarked most neutral word for 'father' is *ngaji*; this covers also actual and classificatory father's brothers. To say 'your father', you say *ngaji-marnany* (*father-your*); similarly for 'his or her father' you say *ngaji-nyan* (*father-his/her*).

In practice, however, these terms are only used where the *propositus* (you or he/she) is in the category of husband, wife, mother, mother's brother, or sister's child to the speaker. If the *propositus* is in a different kinship relation to the speaker, different terms for father must be used:

- (a) If the propositus is the speaker's brother, sister, father's father('s sister), father('s sister) or brother's child (or vice versa).

parnara-marnany; parnara-nyan
father your father his/her

- (b) If the propositus is the speaker's cross-cousin or mother's father('s sister) (or vice versa).

yarriki-marnany; yarriki-nyan
father your father his/her

- (c) If the propositus is the speaker's wife's mother('s brother), mother's mother('s brother) or vice versa.

wurrurru-marnany; wurrurru-nyan
father your father his/her

Such triangular kinterms are very commonly used in Gurindji discourse, presumably because the indexing of kinship relations among participants along several dimensions is of far greater significance in Aboriginal culture than in European culture. Similarly directional terminology is far more elaborated and commonly used in Aboriginal discourse than in normal European discourse.

In a large number of Gurindji sentences, in all contexts, reference is made, using such directional terms, to the relative position or direction of movement of people or things. The directional term system consists of basic terms for:

- (a) the cardinal points (north-south-east-west) and
(b) topographical orientation (upstream-downstream-up and down (away and towards the river)).

In addition, there are a number of suffixes which produce various combinations of (a) and (b) (e.g. north and up), relation to terms (e.g. across north and up), and other modifications of the basic terms (e.g. on the north side of the river, on the north end of the ridge, etc.). (For a listing of some terms, see McConvell 1982b.) In most English, parallel to Gurindji discourse with directional terms, the physical orientation would either be omitted entirely, or conveyed using different (and usually less precise) means, e.g. demonstratives, 'left' versus 'right' (never used in this way in Gurindji), and gestures.

Example (4) below shows the use of a triangular kinterm (pilirlingurra, in the first line) and two directional terms (kurlarrak and karlarniwariny, in the second and third lines respectively). Here the passage is entirely in Gurindji/Wanyjirra.

(4) J: Nyawa-ma ngu-rna-yina kangku pilirli-ngu-rra-wu
 this TOPIC AUX 1st 3rd PO take FUT MoMo your PL DAT

G: Kurla-rra-k-kurla-wu patati-rla-rni?
 south ALL TURN LOC DAT 'ringplace' LOC ONLY

J: Karla-rni-wariny-ja-wu
 west UP END LOC DAT

Fishman and associates (Fishman 1972a, b) but actually derives from the work of Schmidt-Rohr and other German scholars working on German speaking minorities outside Germany, in the 1930s. Lists of 'domains' are usually based on names of places or institutions, such as 'home', 'school', 'office', 'church'. There has been some debate about what the list of domains should include, but this seems to have little real theoretical interest. Despite Fishman's efforts, 'domain' seems to be still a vague notion with an uncertain theoretical status, which different researchers pick up and use in their own chosen ways.

The domains represent a conflation of several factors including typical interlocutors and their roles, type of activity and discourse generally carried on in the setting, etc.; physical location itself is not usually of major consequence. For instance, two Belgians having an intimate conversation in an office (where the 'official language' is French) would speak Flemish (Fishman 1972a) and could probably code-mix (Baetens Beardsmore 1982:42-43). 'Setting' rarely figures in strict or unique correlation with language selections: e.g. in Sauris (Denison 1971):

other ingredients of the situation, especially the roles of the participants have greater priority than physical setting in diatypic selection.

On the question of interlocutor, language competence is obviously a relevant factor. One does not normally speak to a person directly in a language that one knows he does not understand, except perhaps to be deliberately rude or provocative. However, it is quite common for a speaker to shift into a language which is not known by some of the interlocutors. I have observed this recently among Ngarinman speakers:

- (a) young people (who usually talk Kriol, rarely Ngarinman, amongst themselves) switching from Kriol/English to Ngarinman when discussing a delicate matter to do with another Aboriginal, because of the presence of a white person, and
- (b) switching from Kriol/English to Ngarinman, when talking on the short-wave radio to another Ngarinman speaker about local matters of a confidential nature, because of the large number of Kriol and English speaking non-local Aboriginals who can listen in.

Hatch (1976:202-204) gives examples where speakers do not switch despite the presence of an interlocutor repeatedly cueing for a switch to another language.

Clearly in these cases, we are looking at speakers who, in Denison's words (1971): 'seek to steer situations - or better, perhaps - create situations to their own advantage'. Their choice of language is not determined by the interlocutors, but on the contrary, the choice of language determines who shall be in the 'inner' group of interlocutors.

In other cases, as we shall see, this involves more subtle groupings of participants and their roles. For the above cases, we find realised in the most stark fashion the exclusion/inclusion mechanism which Gumperz sees as basic to 'meaning bearing' codeswitching (Gumperz and Hernandez-Chavez 1972; see further below).

Investigating the speech of bilinguals in the company of other bilinguals who share at least partly the same linguistic repertoire is our main concern here, and that of most researchers into codeswitching. In the context, it is not the

competence of interlocutors in particular languages or lects which is usually at stake. Other factors are influencing the choice of language, where code-switching is occurring in such a group.

One such factor may be the *status* of interlocutors. It seems a fairly rare occurrence in most bilingual communities that the relative status of two bilinguals is so fixed on all occasions that a fixed pattern of language use is always demanded. Interlocutors may alternate between different *roles*, which may be loosely or strongly associated with alternation between different perception of their own and other interlocutors' roles, or beyond that, distort the linguistic reflection of role-relationships for comic or other expressive effect.

Only a proportion of cases of codeswitching amongst people who share the same linguistic repertoire can be explained by direct reference to the identity of interlocutors, or the setting or to a combination of both. In many cases, as in the Gurindji case we are examining, this proportion is vanishingly small. In order to capture some of the more elusive instances within the net of 'situational' switching, the third factor is often adduced: topic of discourse.

Unfortunately 'topic' in this sense is less easy to define than 'interlocutors' or 'setting', and tends to shade off imperceptibly into the various categories that have been used to account for 'non-situational' switching: social meaning (Blom and Gumperz 1972), mood (Denison 1971), tone (Hatch 1976).

It is of course possible for certain areas of behaviour to be so strongly associated with a particular group that a certain language or lect is considered overwhelmingly appropriate for it. However, it would appear more common:

- (a) for the same activity to have different social connotations depending on the participants involved, and other factors, and engender different language choices, as a result; and
- (b) for the same activity to be regarded from different social viewpoints and engender different language choices as a result of this too.

Such complications are often thought to go beyond the 'situational' determination into the realm of 'metaphor', 'mood', 'tone', 'rhetoric' or 'style'. It is sometimes believed that these devices are somehow 'linguistic' or 'internal' (Hatch 1976) as *opposed* to being 'social' or 'external'. This is a mystification because it confuses the *form* of the discursive device, with its content, or meaning, which is social.

Gumperz and Hernandez-Chavez (1972:99) have broken through this type of confusion to some extent in separating the 'wide variety of contextual meanings — degree of involvement, anger, emphasis, change in focus' from the 'basic meaning inclusion (we) versus exclusion (they)', and in likening the meaning of code-switching to lexical meaning. A linguistic form with social meaning is meaningful because a choice (between languages) is involved, and away from its normal environment, in 'a new context, it becomes socially marked'.

A further extension of Gumperz' work, and of Brown and Gilman (1960), is that of Scotton and Ury (1977). Although this study does not formally break with the situational/metaphorical dichotomy of Blom and Gumperz (1972), it does launch a new approach to the social functions of codeswitching, through the concepts of strategy and social arena, which actually transcends the dichotomy.

The situational and metaphorical classifications are useful because they describe how and when code-switching occurs. But to know that a code-switch signals change in topic or lends emphasis to a topic still does not tell *why* a speaker code-switches. To explain the 'why' of code-switching means to explain the switch as an extension of the speaker. It means to explain the relationships between the subject of discourse and the participants of an interaction and the societal norms which give a language choice a meaning.

(Scotton and Ury 1977)

It is suggested that a speaker switches codes for the following reasons:

1. To redefine the interaction as appropriate to a different social arena, or
2. to avoid, through continual codeswitching, defining the interaction in terms of any social arena.

Scotton and Ury diagram their model of 'social arenas' as follows:

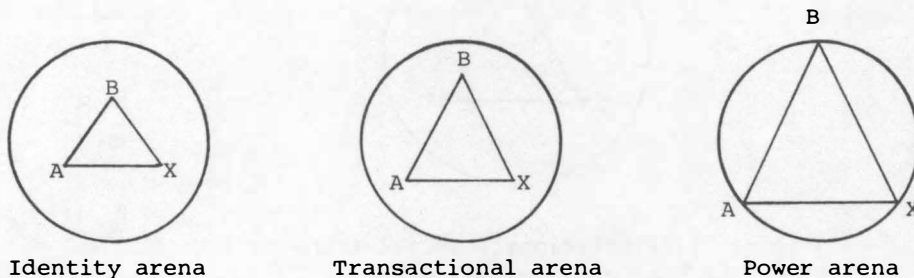


Figure 1: Social arenas in codeswitching (after Scotton and Ury)

A and B are 'participants'; X is 'the discourse'. The length of the line joining A and B represents their 'social distance', which is 'the separation which exists between A and B, participants, in terms of their mutual relationship to X, the discourse'.

The approach to codeswitching by this paper is similar to that of Scotton and Ury in the following respects:

- (a) It dispenses with the situational-non-situational and the switching-mixing dichotomies;
- (b) It adopts the idea of the speaker employing strategy in discourse;
- (c) It adopts the idea that codeswitching is primarily connected to the definition of social arena.

However, their model has been modified in several respects, which are more fully described in McConvell (forthcoming). One of the main differences concerns the characterisation and interrelation of the social arenas.

Scotton and Ury define the social arenas as universally three: identity, power, and transactional. The present approach prefers not to define the social arenas a priori, but to discover them on the basis of local social formations, their linguistic composition and local ideologies.

Not only should the arenas be named for each situation, but their interrelations should be defined within the theory. The example of the Gurindji situation is presented below in which arenas are nested within each other (symbolised by concentric circles). This is only one possible type of relation between arenas, however, not universally valid for all sociolinguistic situations.

The following is the basic trirelational- social arena unit from which the model used in this paper is built up. It is derived from Figure 1 (Scotton and Ury 1977) but I have modified it considerably, adapting some ideas from Laughren's model of triangular kinterms (Laughren 1982).

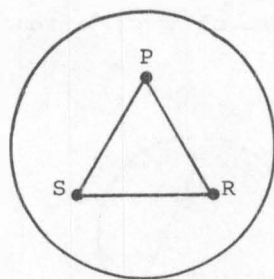


Figure 2: Trirelational- social arena unit,
as used in this paper

S stands for speaker; P for primary participant (could be addressee, or a third person of particular significance in the interaction); R for referent (the person thing or event which undergoes switching in discourse). The points of the triangle, and the circle are given particular values for the situation being examined. The circles (social arenas) are linked to each other in constrained ways, which represent the functional relations between social arenas in a particular speech community (they are not universally defined as in Scotton and Ury's model, Figure 1). As they represent the overall sociolinguistic structure, the configuration of these circles remains constant for one community at one time. The configuration of the triangles and the positions of S, P and R within them vary with the circumstances of the particular interaction or exchange, and the position which the speaker assigns to P and R. This assignment of position represents the speaker defining who are the 'them' and who the 'us' on different occasions, the promoting the standpoint from which he wants people, things and events to be viewed.

GURINDJI CODESWITCHING

Nearly all the examples in this paper are of codeswitching among the Gurindji, an Aboriginal group living mainly in the Wave Hill area of the Northern Territory of Australia, with whom I did linguistic fieldwork in 1974-1977.

The Gurindji situation may be briefly characterised as follows: a numerically relatively small (about 500) group of classless former hunter-gatherers, Gurindji speakers inhabit a large area with groups linked through residence or descent to smaller areas within the larger area, some of which groups speak identifiable dialects of the main language. The language has been somewhat standardised by the concentration of people in non-traditional centres (a large cattle station and a government settlement) for some decades. They have been, for about one hundred years, progressively and acceleratingly absorbed into the colonising society and economy, which in their area is mainly represented by cattle stations (for whom they work as stockmen) and governmental and missionary institutions, which function to assimilate them to a western way of life and cultural values. The language of these institutions is exclusively Standard Australian English. Traditionally, links with some neighbouring non-Gurindji groups were strong, through trade, ritual, intermarriage, etc.; communication was mainly possible through widespread multilingualism. Today contacts with other Aboriginal groups are more frequent and widespread, and carried out using a Pidgin English which developed on the cattle stations. This Pidgin/Creole (Kriol) is also used today (switching with Gurindji) among older Gurindji speakers and has become the first language of the younger generation.

The Gurindji conceive of certain social arenas relevant to languages as embedded within each other. Some of this embedding is in part traditional in nature: the position of locally based dialect groups within a wider speech community of Gurindji speakers. However, the current manifestation of this departs from its traditional form in having been moulded by European contact: 'standard' Gurindji has largely grown up by a fusion of different dialects first on Wave Hill Station, then at Wave Hill Settlement and Daguragu, whereas local origin dialectal groups now are based more on smaller stations (e.g. Wanyjirra at Inverway) than strictly on traditional estate or foraging range. The other arenas of the model presented in Figure 3 are more direct results of contact: the wide network of Aboriginal people who speak Pidgin/Kriol either as a first or second language, and the wider Australian society for which English is the standard language.

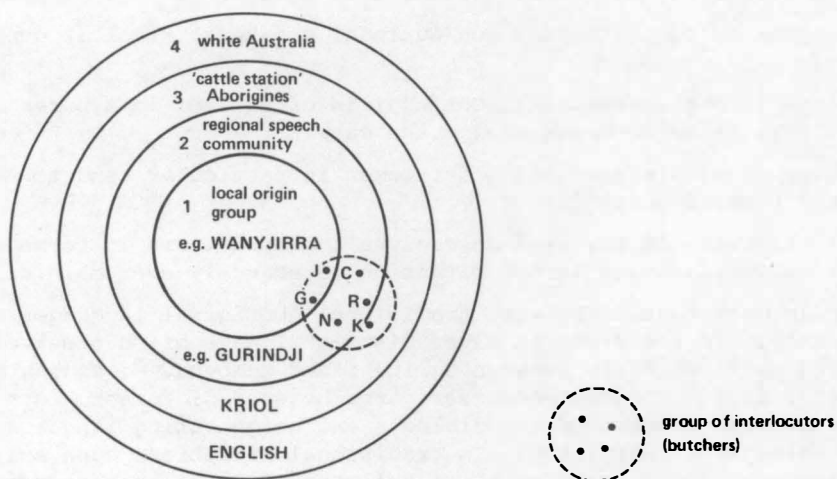


Figure 3: Model of Gurindji social arenas

All the Gurindji examples, including those in the previous section, are drawn from the soundtrack of a film shot by Kim McKenzie and myself in 1976 of Gurindji stockmen butchering a cow on Daguragu station. The tape was subsequently transcribed by me and discussed with the help of some of the participants (whose names are replaced by letters here for the sake of privacy). The orthography used for Gurindji is a practical orthography in general use for that language, and for neighbouring languages Warlpiri and Walmajarri. Kriol is transcribed using a variant of English spelling, rather than the orthography used at Bamyili, to ease the reader's task.

By concentrating on this one group I do not mean to imply that the pattern of codeswitching among them is identical in detail with that of other Aboriginal groups, much less with that of any non-Aboriginal groups. I do however believe, on the basis of my own observation, that the linguistic situation of the Gurindji is quite typical of a large number of groups in Northern Australia.

Similarly, although the butchering event naturally has its own particular social character, I do not believe it to be atypical in terms of the distribution and motivation of codeswitching. The full text, partially analysed here and in McConvell (forthcoming) has around one third fully Gurindji sentences, one third Kriol and/or English and, of the remaining 'mixed' third, about a half basically Gurindji in grammatical structure with Kriol insertions and the other half basically Kriol in grammatical structure with Gurindji insertions. (In the above I use the word Gurindji to include Wanyjirra dialect forms.) I would estimate, from several years of observation of Gurindji conversation, that this distribution is fairly common in everyday discourse in many situations.

There are some circumstances in which a less 'mixed' form of speech may be selected:

- (a) among children, or with adults speaking to children, a much higher proportion of Kriol and less Gurindji is used;
- (b) in the presence of Europeans, Kriol/Pidgin is used by older people and a closer approximation to Standard English, by younger people (unless the European is being excluded from the talk, in which case both groups may talk full Gurindji, or as near as they can manage);
- (c) in speaking to Aboriginal non-Gurindji speakers, Kriol is generally used;
- (d) in traditional ceremonies, Gurindji is often used in a purer form, but this is by no means always the case;
- (e) groups of middle-aged and older women in particular tend to use a purer form of Gurindji.

Some of these observations may lend themselves to an analysis in terms of *domain*, but adherence to one language in one situation is scarcely ever maintained.

Codeswitching in conversation between traditional Aboriginal languages also occurs frequently. In the Victoria River District I have often observed frequent switching back and forth between Gurindji and Mudbura, Ngarinman and Ngaliwurru, etc. and in the Western Desert area between different Western Desert dialects, and between Western Desert dialects and neighbouring languages, e.g. Nyangumarta, Walmajarri, Jaru, etc. In traditional situations such switching would have been used and is used mainly 'stylistically', to express *meanings* about social situations. As with other types of codeswitching discussed, very

little of it is amenable to analysis in terms of *determination* by situation, whether this is defined as including person, setting, topic or any combination of them, unless determination is seen in some vague, probabilistic way. In the modern situation, this type of traditional codeswitching is often combined with codeswitching between vernacular and a creole and/or a form of English. This is a feature of the butchering text too: there is codeswitching between Standard Eastern Gurindji and Wanyjirra. Again there is little evidence of determination by situation or domain.

The two older men J and G are associated with the western area, and are basically Wanyjirra (W) speakers. Both of them more often use Standard Eastern Gurindji (SEG) forms when they are at Daguragu or Wave Hill however, as in the present text. Although there is a tendency for them to use Wanyjirra when speaking to other Wanyjirra speakers, this does not always occur, as we shall see in examples below. J and G both on occasion use SEG to each other, as well as W on other occasions, to convey specific social meanings, as I shall argue. Although they mainly use SEG, J and G they also sometimes use W when speaking generally to the group, again to convey social meaning. The younger men are SEG speakers and do not use W, but in one instance C does use a W form for a particular effect.

The presence of two kartiya (white men) — Kim McKenzie filming and myself re-recording sound — may have had some influence on the choice of language at some points, but I believe this was minimal. The men asked me before the filming started if they should talk in English, and I said no, talk just as you would normally — which is, on most occasions a 'mix' of Gurindji and Kriol, as in the present text. More significantly, the butchering had to be done very quickly as it was the middle of the day in full sun. Everyone was working hard and had little time to relate to the whites observing them or to carefully monitor their speech. The result is a fairly natural and typical piece of modern Gurindji conversation.

For the purposes of studying codeswitching of the 'non-situational' type, the butchering sequence is well-suited in a number of ways. Firstly, all present were adult bilingual speakers of Gurindji and Kriol; differences in depth of knowledge certainly exist, but not great enough to make speakers switch languages solely because of the competence or lack of competence of any participants in either language. The additional presence of Wanyjirra speakers provided an interesting sidelight on codeswitching between Gurindji dialects; Wanyjirra is sufficiently close to standard Gurindji to be understood, in most cases, by all the participants. As we shall see, the use of Wanyjirra is not determined simply by the speaker, or addressee, or both being Wanyjirra speakers, but by other 'non-situational' factors. One factor which may perhaps be seen as 'interlocutor'-determined 'situational codeswitching' is the tendency to use Kriol more than Gurindji when speaking to younger people. However, this is evidently not a firm rule, and may not even account for the majority of utterances of older to younger men, which are in both languages.

'Situational' factors of interlocutor play a limited role; factors of 'setting/place' and 'topic' are clearly even less relevant to codeswitching here. 'Setting' remains constant throughout: butchering a cow in a bush paddock. 'Topic' is similarly very limited: the great majority of the talk is about either the detail of butchering the animal or about the distribution of the meat. There are some joking references to other people and places. Since switches happen in the middle of talking about one of the two major topics,

and switches often do not happen when changing from one to the other or inserting jokes, we can conclude that there is no strong connection between 'topic' (at least in the superficial sense) and the pattern of codeswitching.

Since the obvious factors of 'situation' or 'domain' are almost completely absent here, the text provides a good testing ground for the theory of code-switching which is being developed in this paper. There is not space enough to analyse the whole text, so reference will be made to particular examples of codeswitching, set in a brief discourse context.

Most of the exchanges between the butchers during their work concern the distribution of meat. The Gurindji now own Daguragu Station; some of their white advisors want them to run the station according to their particular concept of an 'economic basis', which involves restricting as much as possible the people to whom beef is given without payment. On the other side, it has been traditional hunting practice to distribute meat killed in hunting on the basis of kinship obligations. Neither traditional lore nor 'modern' station practice give unambiguous answers to questions about meat distribution. On many white-owned stations, at least some of the resident white people get free beef, often according to a varying combination of factors of staff and sometimes family position. Who are staff and who are family in the Daguragu situation where everyone is kin of some kind? Who is the 'boss' who makes the decisions (in European times), or the 'hunter' who controls the meat (in Aboriginal terms), in this new situation? If there is such a person or people, what criteria do they use to assign cuts of meat to people?

In this context there are obviously competing interests. It is not common for proponents of such interests to argue for them explicitly, but more common for subtle verbal cues (such as codeswitching) to be used to place an issue in the particular framework in which they would like it to be viewed.

Consider the passage. (Specifically SEG forms which contrast with W forms are underlined; specifically W forms are in script. Kriol continuum elements are in capitals. Codeswitches are indicated by a vertical line. The same conventions are followed in the translation below the example (beneath the broken line) and in all textual examples.)

- (6) G: MINE | *pampirila* | THERE AGAIN, OLD MAN | *pampirila, waku nyarra?*
 | *shoulder* | | *shoulder or which way*

kankurla-pala-nginyi	ngu - yi - n	kuma-wu
<i>above</i> ACROSS SOURCE	AUX 1sO 2sA	<i>cut</i> FUT

- J: | Laja -ma | ngartji ma-ni W-rlu
shoulder TOPIC *choose* *get* PAST ERG

- G: | Nganīnga-ma
my TOPIC

000000 000000 000000

- G: The shoulder | THERE IS MINE, OLD MAN | the shoulder, or what?
You have to | cut | some for me from across the top.

- J: W - picked out | the shoulder.

- G: (It's) | mine.

G begins in Kriol, but switches to Wanyjirra to emphasise the close local bond between himself and J, in relation to J's giving him the shoulder, and the cutting action which will provide G with the shoulder. J however responds by shifting back on to the wider community arena by using SEG, and emphasising the rights of a non-Wanyjirra community member. G reasserts his claim within the narrower arena by using the W term for 'mine'.

There is continuing ambiguity throughout the text about the assignment by J and G of the giving or receiving of meat, to the local group arena or to the wider community arena, and as a result, continual codeswitching between W and SEG when talking about it. J and G each speak in both dialects, at different times, even where the addressees are the same, and the other elements of the situation the same. In a number of instances, one begins in one dialect and the other possibly deliberately switches to the other for effect, but no overall generalisation can be made about who will start, and which dialect they will use; this depends on the interaction of the social meaning of the switch with the basic meaning of the utterance.

(7) J: Nyila-ma kanyju nganinga
that TOPIC under mine

G: Nyununy, wayi?
yours eh

J: Nyawa-ma ngu-rna-yina kangku pilirli-ngu-rra-wu
this TOPIC AUX 1sA 3pO take FUT MoMo your pl DAT

— — —

J: *That (meat) underneath is mine.*

G: Yours, eh.

J: *I'm going to take this to your 'grannies' (who are my 'aunties')*

Here J at first makes the 'we' of discourse the Wanyjirra group specifically, thus especially drawing G's attention to his claim to a certain cut of meat. G switches to SEG to bring the decision into the wider social arena, presumably to disassociate himself from 'collusion' on J's previous statement. J counters by putting the transaction in the context of G and J's shared kin (J's relationship indicated by the triangular term pilirli), to whom he is going to take the meat, and re-emphasises the close kinship solidarity he wishes to impute to the event by using the W second person kin possessive suffix -ngu, rather than SEG -marnany.

Indexing the social arena by means of codeswitching need not simply result from manipulation of a situation to advantage, by the speaker trying to influence the framework within which the thing or event is perceived. Use of a particular language for an item, phrase, etc. can be used to denote the kind of circumstances under which the particular item is normally raised, or has been raised in the discourse. This can be close to the use of quotation to refer back to a part of an utterance; in this case of an item which is in a codeswitching paradigm, it is not only the fact that it was spoken by a particular person which is recalled, but the social meaning intended in the context. An example of this in the text concerns the shoulder, which G earlier called (in W) pampirla,

and J (in SEG) laja. Finally, the shoulder is again mentioned by J who tells R to cut it. Although speaking to an SEG speaker, and using mainly SEG, the word pampirla is used to refer not to J's own viewpoint on the social arena in which the shoulder enters discourse, but rather to refer to G's earlier use of the W word, and G's viewpoint about the relevant social area. In fact pampirla here could be glossed *the shoulder which G asked to be an issue between J and G only, as joint local group members*.

(8) J: HERE, R-, CUT-IM, GIVE IT LONGA 'IM | nyila pampirla parra kataj NOW
that shoulder cut IMP cut

Ngu-rna kang -ku parntara-rni, ngantu-wu-warla?
AUX 1st take FUT whole ONLY who DAT FOCUS

— — —

J: HERE, R-, CUT IT, GIVE HIM IT | cut that shoulder | NOW
I'm going to take the whole lot; whose is it?

The type of quotation of codeswitching variants sometimes comes close to mimicry and parody: the above example has more than a touch of humour in it. When C in example (2) (not a W speaker) uses the W verb yirra- *put*, it may be that he is trying to show deference to J, or that he is asserting some identity with J's group (he is J's sister's son). However, given that C is a known joker and mimic, and that C and J are in the approved joking relationship, some humour is almost certainly intended too.

The social meanings being played upon in SEG/W codeswitching concern only the two inner circles of the model of Gurindji social arenas (Figures 4 and 5). The position of the interlocutors in these two concentric circles is to be interpreted in this way: J and G belong potentially to both the Wanyjirra local origin group area and to the wider Gurindji speech community; for present purposes, the others belong to the latter, not the former. J and G can choose to define particular events or relationships involving R in the model as falling within: (a) the local origin arena, or (b) the wider community arena, by speaking in (a) Wanyjirra or (b) Standard Eastern Gurindji. In terms of the model, the option (a) places R in the inner circle, and (b) places it in the second circle.

The examples of codeswitching between SEG and W in most cases reflect an attempt to 'shift ground' — to locate the discourse in a slightly different framework. In terms of our social-arenas/triangular model, this is expressed by saying that R moves from one code (social arena) to another. R is the referent in the discourse which links together the speaker(s) and the primary referent P (in most cases here, the participant who is a joint member of the W group).

In the figures below we see presented the configurations involved in the example (6) above. Figure 4 represents the case of G using the W form pampirla; Figure 5 represents the case of J using the SEG form laja.

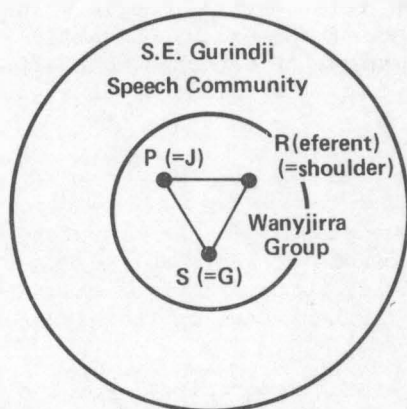


Figure 4: G using W pampirla in (6)

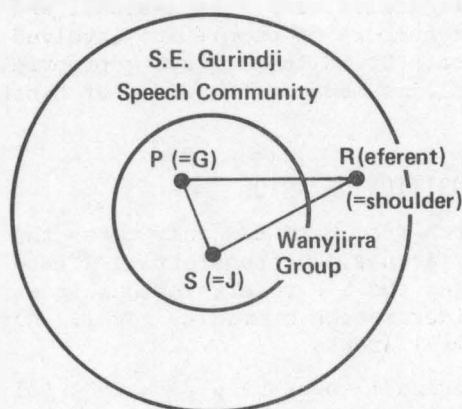


Figure 5: J using SEG laja in (6)

Variations and extensions of this model are required to deal with cases of quasi-quotation as in (8), creation of fictional situations as in (2), three way switching including Kriol described in the next section, and various other situations not described here. More details can be found in McConvell (forthcoming).

Whatever further connotations may be created by individuals, or through discourse, there is a common core of feeling about the difference between a local dialect and the standard language Gurindji. Judging by the examples, in the butchering text, a major element in this is overall closeness of kinship ties in the local group arena, and a commensurate lack of value placed on non-kinship roles and relations, such as position in the cattle station workforce, Council, etc. in that arena. It is for this reason that triangular kinterms are frequently associated with local dialect use, and that local dialect is used to reinforce adherence to traditional avoidance practice, on the basis of actual kin relations, as opposed to a looser 'matiness' of co-workers. Most importantly it is this set of kin-based values which ensures that requests or claims for meat or assistance are most appropriately expressed in a shared local dialect, where this is possible. Sharing and help between kin is an obligation, and the closer the tie, the more pressing the obligation. 'Asking' for something (yangki panu and other verbs) is predicated on such ties, which are most significant in the local group.

Kinship ties of various kinds also exist, of course, among most people in the wider speech community. Less of such ties are close, actual kinship links than in the local origin group, and more are distant and classificatory. Such links are therefore less intimate in general, and less strong in conferring rights and duties to others in terms of sharing food, and rendering other assistance. Also other types of relations, of a political or ritual nature within or between large communities or involving work relationships, etc. come into play more strongly, whereas in the local origin group context these are overshadowed by close kinship ties. It is for this reason that a switch to SEG from a local

dialect indicates a less personal and more distant relationship, one in which larger numbers of people are involved, at the level of community, or cattle station. It is the dialect appropriate to questioning, or detaching oneself, from claims made on the basis of kinship ties, in the local dialect.

THE POSITION OF KRIOL

A switch from W to SEG only takes the discourse one step up in the hierarchy of social arenas, by transferring R into the second circle of the model, and thereby defining the S-P role relationship as being (at least temporarily) enacted at the wider speech community level. But there are further steps up the hierarchy of social arenas.

All Gurindji speakers also have Kriol as part of speech repertoire. For the youngest speakers it is their first language, Gurindji being acquired more slowly, and mostly as a passive competence. Most of the younger speakers have a better passive command of standard English than the older people, and actively control a more acrolectal Kriol (as well as basilectal), and, in some cases, fairly standard English too.

Kriol, in the model proposed here, is for middle-aged Gurindji at least the language of the next higher social arena, which is equated here with Aborigines in general, of which the Gurindji community is a small part. There is of course a limit to the range of Aborigines with whom the Gurindji actually interact and use Kriol as a medium of expression. For most of them this would only include people in the cattle station belt of the central-west of the Northern Territory, and the Eastern Kimberleys of Western Australia; actual delimitation of this group is not particularly important.

In what follows there is no discussion of the variation within the local Kriol between forms which are closer to Standard English, and those which are farther removed from it. Examples of this type of variation do occur in the text, and could well be regarded, in some cases, as a type of codeswitching with social meaning. Neither the form nor the function of such variation/switching has been thoroughly studied, however, so it will only rate a brief mention here. For the most part switches will be referred to as between Gurindji (G) and Kriol (K) without detailing the Kriol lect involved. Since there is no Standard English in this text, switching involving Standard English (which does occur elsewhere) will not be discussed either. Since Standard English is not available to many speakers or frequently used and such speakers do not often distinguish between Kriol and Standard English, Kriol discourse usually covers a social arena which includes not only Aboriginal matters beyond the community level, but also many other matters relating to a wider social arena of the majority (English-speaking) culture and the social, economic and cultural systems associated with it.

From what has been said about the social functions of W/SEG switching, it might be hypothesised that K will bear a relation to G analogous to that which SEG bears to W, but on a higher level of generality, impersonality and social distance. K-G switches represent moves from relatively impersonal statements or orders to more personal, affective utterances linked to solidarity on a local community basis (joking relationships, traditional or semitradectional obligations, shared identity vis-a-vis other Aborigines or whites). Switches from G to K demonstrate the same kind of differences, moving in the opposite direction.

It has often been pointed out that code is switched to a more 'familiar' language or dialect when joking, swearing, etc. occurs. There are a number of examples of a switch from K to G in order to make some joking or uncomplimentary remark about someone else.

(9) G: I'LL TAKE-IM BOTTOM AND GO BACK; | ngalking-ku kungulu-yawung
greedy DAT blood PROP

J: I'LL HAVE-IM | kungulu-yawung. Nyuntu marntaj
blood PROP you all right

— — —

G: I'LL TAKE THE BOTTOM AND GO BACK; | the bloody meat is for greedy ones.

J: | I'LL HAVE | the bloody meat. You're right.

This second part of G's contribution is a referent to J, who has just expressed a liking for bloody meat; ngalking *greedy* can be interpreted as being fairly abusive. The different style of the two parts of both the above utterances is typical of K and G switches; K often encodes statements about the speakers intentions or attitude, or about the situation, which are relatively impersonal in the sense that they do not refer to another person (interlocutor or other referent). The contrasting G utterance directly (and often bluntly) refers to an interlocutor.

Other examples of K-G switching do not involve joking directed at individual interlocutors, but semihumorous comments on the butchering situation as a whole.

(10) G: THIS ONE MINE

J: CUT-IM | nyawa | LITTLE BIT | wanyji-ka-warla | RIB BONE FIRST
this where LOC FOCUS TIME?

G: Kayili-yin ngutji-ngutji-rla yan-ku-rra-ngala
not ABL haggle REDUP LOC to FUT HORT linclpO

— — —

G: THIS ONE MINE.

J: CUT | this | A LITTLE BIT | where's | THE RIB BONE FIRST?

G: | Let (the helicopter) from north come and see us haggling (over meat).

Here G injects an element from the kartiya (white man's) world into the discussion — the helicopter from the neighbouring station which had been flying around — to throw the butchering scene into relief, as it were. The helicopter is viewed as an outside presence here from the point of view of solidarity with the Gurindji people on the ground (cf. -ngala inclusive *we* used), and this is reinforced by choice of language.

The following example also contrasts the 'we' of the butchers, with a 'they' but the latter is a rather different group from that of the last example:

- (11) J: CUT-IM RUMP, ROAST, CHUCK | ngara-ngala -ngkulu yarriyi marnana
LEST llinclpO 3sP say PRES

J: CUT THE RUMP, ROAST AND CHUCK | so they don't grumble about us.

The first part has J well in the role of head stockman impersonally issuing orders, on the pattern of a white man and using English items for cuts of meat. The switch indicates a more personal concern about the relationship between the people in the camp (ngurra-ngarna *camp people*) and the butchers, about whether they will be satisfied with what they are given (a community level concern). It is interesting to note that a W form is used here (ngara) despite the fact that all the butchers are included in 'us': this, it seems, indexes the fact that J and G (the W speakers) are the senior men present and the higher ranking one in station work, so that most of the blame for any dissatisfaction would come to them, rather than to the SEG speakers.

It must be noted that no particular rhetorical category is necessarily correlated with a particular language. We have seen examples of switching into G to make jokes, but G does not have the monopoly on jokes. Speakers also switch from G into K to make jokes; the jokes however, are of a different kind.

- (12) C: Nyawa-ma jutany ngu man-ku murlu-ngku...
this TOPIC neck bone AUX get FUT this ERG

J: J²- tu
ERG

C: M - kuya-wula
REL 2ds

G: CHICKEN ...FOWL | -U | THEY WANT-IM NECK BEEF
DAT

J: Punyu?
good?

G: YEAH, 'IM FEED-IM CHOOKY-CHOOKIES

C: FOWL LONGA FOWL-SHED GOOD WORKER; HE'LL WAKE-IM UP YOU EVERY MORNING

— — —

C: This neck bone will be got by...

J: J²-

C: M's wife

G: | THEY WANT THE NECK BEEF FOR THE FOWLS.

J: | Good?

G: | YEAH, IT FEEDS THE CHOOKS.

C: THE FOWLS IN THE FOWL-SHED ARE GOOD WORKERS; THEY WAKE YOU UP EVERY MORNING.

C is talking about meat distribution, in G, the normal language for this. J interposes a joke against his joking partner, J². G, as he frequently does, switches up to K to make a more general comment about the use of the neck beef, unrelated to kinship considerations and more in the context of the modern activity of keeping chickens. C then makes a joke on the basis of the worker/non-worker distinction; the chickens are getting beef because they are supposedly good station workers, whereas he is having it withheld because he is supposedly not a 'worker', although he is working. Such a play on concepts relies heavily on being within the type of discourse associated with the economics of 'modern' cattle station operations, for which K is more appropriate.

In some passages there are rapid switches in codes, and it may be hard to find a particular reason for every single switch. Scotton and Ury (1977) regard this pattern as a way by which the speaker can avoid commitment to one or other arena. Analysis of the butchering text seems to bear this out in most cases. A variation of this is where the speaker attempts to relate to two or more arenas at the same time, instead of being non-committal.

Rapid switching can indicate that a speaker or speakers wish to define an interaction or event as belonging in more than one arena simultaneously, which given our 'nesting' model of arenas for the Gurindji situation, is usually possible. In the following example the same underlying assertion — a claim by a speaker to a certain cut of meat, of which we have had a number of examples already — is phrased in three different codes. The order is W, K, SEG.

(13) J: Nyawa-ma ngu-yi ngan^{ing}a
 This TOPIC AUX 1stO mine

G: I WANT-IM THIS SKIRT

K: WHAT ABOUT THE WIRE?

G: Kujarra | THERE | ngayiny-ma, Jangari
 two mine TOPIC = K

— — —

J: This is mine.

G: I WANT THIS SKIRT (meat).

K: WHAT ABOUT THE WIRE?

G: There are two | THERE | that are mine, Jangari (K).

Here J's use of W indicates foregrounding of the relationship between him and G (as discussed earlier). G makes his claim first (in a way which is far removed from this mode), by reporting it as a property of his feelings (I WANT-IM), apparently devoid of social connotations. Gurindji does not have an equivalent of English/Kriol 'want', in fact, and Kriol seems to be the medium for expressing what are in fact claims of a share in a particular group's goods as statements about one's self (I want, I like ..., etc.), overtly devoid of social context. In the last sentence, however, G makes his claim more straightforwardly in terms of the butchering group using SEG. Scotton (forthcoming) has now adopted the position that some types of speech involving numerous small-scale switches like this can be seen as the unmarked style of speech, and that

further detailed analysis of the reasons for switches in this context is unnecessary, since, presumably, much of it is random. I do not hold this position with regard to Gurindji/Kriol switching in the butchering text: the majority of switches, even the rapid ones as in (13) can be seen to reflect assignment by the speaker of statements and events to certain standpoints associated with social arenas.

Shifting to Kriol for middle-aged people means moving into a more inclusive arena with less emphasis on close bonds of kinship or even language group. For the younger people it may have already become the unmarked code: there is further discussion of the position of Kriol in the following section.

CODESWITCHING AND THE FUTURE OF ABORIGINAL LANGUAGES

Uriel Weinreich (1953:73) describes the 'ideal bilingual' as follows:

The ideal bilingual switches from one language according to appropriate changes in the speech situation (interlocutors, topics, etc.) but not in an unchanged speech situation, and certainly not within a single sentence.

Stephen Harris clearly believes that bilingual Aborigines do generally approximate to this ideal. It is however true that the Gurindji of today, and other Aboriginal groups whose language situation is similar, are not 'ideal bilinguals', in Weinreich's sense. They switch languages and dialects in unchanged speech situations, and within single sentences, as we have seen.

Weinreich tended to regard 'abnormal proneness to switching' as an individual psychological problem. But among the Gurindji and many similar groups, this 'deviation' is endemic throughout the group. He does describe a situation in Romansh Sutselva (Weinreich 1953:84) involving 'the use of both languages [French and German] to the same interlocutors'. His explanation runs as follows.

Since this is largely a peasant population with little schooling and a loose social hierarchy, one is led to expect that the type of bilingual who mixes both languages indiscriminately will be relatively frequent.

It is interesting to compare this with Harris' statement (1977:135) that 'Code switching usually involves highly educated bilinguals'. The ideal codeswitcher seems as elusive as the ideal bilingual.

Weinreich and many other observers of bilingualism and codeswitching have an unfortunate tendency to regard language switches which are not organised in a pattern which the observer discerns, as being indiscriminate, unorganised or random. This assumption disregards two rather obvious methodological principles:

- (a) The switches may be determined by external factors of a type which the observer has so far failed to recognise; and
- (b) The switches may be determined by the speaker making meaningful choices between codes, without external determination.

It is no more to be expected a priori that bilinguals will switch strictly in accordance with domains or situations, than that a speaker of one language will always use the same words in the same situation. Once an avenue of expressing meaning is open — in this case the differential social meaning afforded by the

choice of two or more language codes — then it is more or less inevitable that this avenue will be taken, on at least some occasions.

In the model adopted here the speaker decides in which social arena the referent R is to be placed; that decision is not, in most cases, made for him by the type of discourse topic, 'domain', or other aspects of the situation. In the preceding extracts from the text we have seen examples where the choice of language is not dependent on fixed attributes of the interlocutors, situation or topic. Many such examples can however be analysed in terms of the social arenas in which the speaker *wishes to place* his relation to the interlocutor, and/or another referent, for the purposes of the discourse. In this way, *point of view* towards a person, thing or event can be expressed.

Shifting social arenas in discourse can be indexed by language choice amongst the Gurindji as kinship relations between speaker and referents can be indexed by the use of triangular kinship terms. The use of different dialects of Gurindji, and the use of Kriol instead of Gurindji, or Gurindji instead of Kriol, each carries with it a social meaning in terms of the background arena against which the elements of discourse are to be viewed. Such language-related arenas may not be absolutely and rigidly definable, but the differences between them in relative terms is apparent.

This meaning-bearing function of codeswitching is not to be considered necessarily secondary or 'metaphorical' in relation to 'situational' codeswitching. Codeswitching is more or less marked relative to the accompanying social situation. Use of Kriol as a relatively 'unmarked' option in more and more situations may be one way of characterising the progress of language shift amongst the Gurindji.

We have seen that the uses of K(riol) in contrast to G(urindji) can be seen as positive and negative. In its positive form, the use of K stresses that the matter spoken of is viewed from a non-community, non-traditional outlook (such as that of a head stockman or manager in a European model of this role). In its negative form, the use of K indicates that factors associated with the G social arenas (speech community and local origin group) such as pervasive kinship rights and duties, are being ignored or played down. The two may seem to be merely two facets of the same function; it seems important to distinguish them because they reflect the question of markedness of the codes. In this particular text, as has been noted, K and G are about evenly distributed. If K is mainly viewed *negatively* though, it is the *unmarked* code in this type of discourse: it is the neutral language used when there is no particular reason for choosing otherwise. K's position of association with the wider, overarching social arena which includes the smaller community groups, would tend to make it the unmarked form. There is some indication that this is the case for the younger speakers in the present text. They certainly use Kriol slightly more frequently, and they may use it in circumstances where the older ones do not. What is harder to say is whether this may partly result from a gradual change in the field of discourse, as well as in code; perhaps the younger people actually talk less in terms of the kinship and local group ideologies than older people do, and it is partly for this reason that they use less G.

However this may be, the shift from G(urindji) to K(riol) over the last thirty years is unmistakable, and is paralleled in many other areas of Northern Australia. This situation is one which many of the speakers of the languages find confusing and disturbing. They worry that:

- (a) the situation shows that the traditional language is about to be completely lost and replaced by English;
- (b) the younger people are not fully learning either language;
- (c) the linguistic mixing is being caused by, and/or is causing problems in educational and other institutions.

Speakers of Aboriginal languages often come to linguists asking for help and advice in such situations. Educators are often confused about such situations too. Both these groups mainly want to know:

- (a) what is the likely future situation in such a bilingual situation with heavy codeswitching?

Can our approach to codeswitching tell us about the future of Gurindji and Kriol in this area? Can we develop a more satisfactory model of the language changes which are having profound effects on most surviving Aboriginal languages?

- (b) Is there anything which can be done to influence the outcome?

Will a model of language shift and codeswitching assist the Aboriginal groups who are concerned about these changes to maintain their languages? It is the urgency of such requests which has brought home to me the practical importance of linguists understanding such situations as wholes, not simply by being an expert in grammar, or even literacy techniques.

It would be a brave linguist who would give off-the-cuff answers to such questions. Such answers, if available at all, would have to rest on theoretical underpinnings – and there are certainly many differing assumptions and differing emphases available.

The phenomenon itself can be approached from a number of directions:

- (a) through studies of 'language shift', 'language death', 'language decay';
- (b) through studies of 'creolisation';
- (c) through studies of bilingualism.

(a) and (b) are both partial in that they only study one half of the situation, either the traditional language, or the creole/pidgin, and not the functional relations between the two. Moreover they tend to have a historicist approach: phenomena are studied in relation to a hypothesised (and often assumed) end-point: extinction of a language and attainment of 'full language' status, respectively.

Studies of language decay and death have pointed to decline in the functional range of the subordinate language as a symptom of its pathological stage.

The functional range may be considered in relation to the factors of situation or 'domain' already discussed: interlocutors, place or setting, and topic. Certainly in many language shift situations, one might find, for example, use of the minority language first declining and finally disappearing in public functions, and this process only happening later in the home. (This is not always the pattern; it may be partially the reverse as in the case of Maori.)

From our present perspective, such generalisations could be of less interest than the analysis of the actual use of different languages within a single 'domain' or across 'domains'. It is unlikely that the shift in any domain

takes place in a single step from language A entirely, to language B, entirely. An interim period involving codeswitching is likely to occur. If the examples of 'non-situational' codeswitching we have discussed have more general validity, then this 'transitional' codeswitching too will involve expressions of 'social meaning' not determined by 'situational factors' in the above sense.

It is quite possible, indeed likely, that there are changes in the patterns of codeswitching involved in this process of language shift, and that these changing patterns represent changes in the assignment of social meaning to the different languages involved. Thus, in the case we have been examining, the Gurindji situation, there is an apparent shift in progress between Gurindji and Kriol. Not much of this change seems to be related specifically to language domain or function, and even if some statement could be made about this, it would not be particularly enlightening about most of the changes in use of the two languages. As we have seen, the use of Kriol at a certain stage as against Gurindji can signify that an event or relationship being talked about is being seen from a more general, less local and less kin-based viewpoint (perhaps deriving from its original lingua franca status). At a later stage, or among a younger group, the use of Kriol could lose these specific connotations and take on some of the 'social meanings' previously associated with Gurindji. Concurrently, Gurindji would become more highly 'marked' and restricted in social meanings or solidarity, etc. which it expresses.

Such changes could be formulated, in terms of the triangular social arenas model advanced here, as changes in the scope and configuration of the social arenas associated with languages, relative to each other. In terms of an additional 'social-situational markedness' theory associated with the model, use of a particular code could change its markedness value and this could eventually lead to a change in the language-social arena configuration itself. This is in line with a theory of change of social meaning in codeswitching which parallels a theory of change in lexical meaning, in which 'marked' occurrence of lexical items in new environments may precede a change in substantive meaning of the item.

Thus in the Gurindji case, the use of Kriol in an intimate group could be changing from a marked one of detachment, certain types of jokes, talking 'down' to a younger person, etc. to a more neutral one lacking that special set of meanings. Conversely, Gurindji could be becoming more marked as an indicator of arenas of certain traditional relations, involving ritual, etc. The roles of the languages could then be redefined in terms of social arenas. Ultimately such a process would end in total language shift, if these small shifts continued in the same direction. At no intermediate stage would the shift necessarily be obvious as the total loss or gain of a 'domain' for either language.

A further elaboration of a diachronic model of codeswitching bilingualism could be the proposal of hypotheses about which social arena configurations are relatively stable and which relatively unstable, either generally or under particular social conditions.

Some studies of bilingualism tend to have historicist assumptions: a bilingual situation can be portrayed as a 'vanishing' or 'transitional' phenomenon, or as 'stable bilingualism'. It is often not clear whether the distinction can be gleaned from synchronic data, or what kind of diachronic data may be needed to confirm the prognosis, if any. Other writers on bilingualism have been more explicit in advancing hypotheses about what factors in a synchronic bilingual situation lead them to predict either language shift or maintenance of both the

languages. These hypotheses are generally weakly supported by evidence, and may be flawed by not taking into consideration factors of social meaning in language use, such as those discussed in this paper. They are however better out in the open than smuggled into descriptive work as covert assumptions.

Uriel Weinreich (1953) considered an important task in the future of sociolinguistics to establish valid correlations between the type of bilingualism and its diachronic consequences:

It remains to be determined empirically whether habitual switching of this type [within a single sentence or phrase] represents a transitional stage in the shift from the regular use of one language to the regular use of the other. (p.69)

It would be a worthwhile problem in sociolinguistics to determine the correlation between obsolescence [of a language] and the extent of interference in it.

Since then hypotheses have been advanced relating stable bilingualism to functional differentiation of two languages into 'domains'. The strongest form of this hypothesis which I have seen in print is that of Di Pietro (1970:19), which he calls 'Universal Number One':

The presence of multilingualism in a speech community depends on the association of each language involved with specific domains of social interaction.

The diachronic corollary of this is as follows:

A perfect balance of multilingualism in which, say, English and Spanish would be used equally as well for all domains of interaction is highly transitory and represents the step just before a new stage of monolingualism in one or the other language.

This hypothesis is based on the view, attributed to Fishman and Mackey, that no community of speakers needs more than one language to communicate.

Given two or more codes to convey the same set of messages, all but one will be abandoned.

There is undoubtedly a tendency towards simplification by removing redundant codes. This is only one side of the coin, however: there is contradictory tendency towards the development and maintenance of differences, whether these are of dialect, register or language (Labov 1963). The additional resources provided by these different varieties are then available to convey social meaning. We have seen in the Gurindji examples how what are apparently the 'same set of messages' in different dialects and languages are in fact not so, because they contain additional different messages in the channel of language choice. Given this type of bilingualism, it is also doubtful whether the notion of 'domains of social interaction' is adequate in the formulation of hypotheses.

Other writers have framed similar hypotheses more cautiously, for example, Ervin-Tripp (1964):

Bilinguals who speak only with other bilinguals may be on the road to merger of the two languages unless there are strong pressures to insulate by topic or setting.

and Fishman (1972b:115):

if a strict domain separation becomes institutionalised so that each language is associated with a number of important but distinct domains, bilingualism may well become universal and stabilized even though an entire population consists of bilinguals interacting with other bilinguals.

There are well-known cases in which stable bilingualism is reported to go hand-in-hand with separation of language domains, for example, Guarani and Spanish in Paraguay (Rubin 1962). However, there seem to be numerous counter-examples to the strong form of the hypothesis proposed by Di Pietro, for example, French and English in French Canada (Heller, forthcoming); French and Flemish in Belgium (Baetens Beardsmore 1982); Tagalog and English in the Philippines (Bautista 1980). In such places intrasentential codeswitching, and codeswitching apparently unconstrained by domain occurs, yet bilingualism appears to have been fairly stable for some time, and to show no obvious signs of giving way to monolingualism. Denison (1971) uses historical records to show that the pattern of multilingualism observed today between German, Friulian and Italian in Sauris has not changed much probably in the last century at least, despite the fact that switching has more to do with speakers assuming different social identities and viewpoints than determination by domain. He quotes an earlier writer Dorezoui as recording in 1938 that:

the same group of speakers switches from German to Friulian and back again to German without apparent reason, perhaps even without noticing it.

Gumperz, in commenting on Di Pietro's presentation of his 'universals', calls for more ethnography to validate statements made about the supposed links between linguistic and social phenomena:

Too many of our bilingual studies tend to extrapolate from the linguistic to the social phenomena without adequate evidence. (Di Pietro 1970:23)

In discussing 'extreme' codeswitching or 'language mixing', Gumperz and Hernandez-Chavez (1972) note that it is 'held in disrepute', but that it is 'very persistent whenever minority language groups come into contact with majority language groups under conditions of rapid social change'.

Some support for the Di Pietro hypothesis, in a negative sense, could be said to come from linguistic situations in which there is pervasive non-'situational' codeswitching, concurrent with a language shift in progress in the younger generation. This is the situation of the Gurindji and many other Aboriginal language groups in Northern Australia at present. Logically, this is not strong evidence for the hypothesis unless the two factors are always correlated, which, as we have seen, they are not. Also in the light of our previous discussion, it seems likely that codeswitching within domains will be part of the process of language shift. This does not imply, however, that the codeswitching behaviour is necessarily a cause of the shift. It may be that it is, at least in some cases, but a theory along these lines would have to build in mediating factors between the synchronic situation and the diachronic process, such as the theory of markedness discussed above and the analysis of the effect of codeswitching on language acquisition mentioned below.

Despite all the problems with the domain separation/stable bilingualism hypothesis, it has won adherents in Australia, particularly among people connected with Aboriginal bilingual education. It seems to be gaining the status of an assumption with some people, rather than that of a hypothesis. On the basis of this assumption of the intimate connection between domain separation and stable bilingualism is built a set of language maintenance strategies which enforce separation of 'language domains' in education. Apart from Harris (1977) already quoted, I can cite Brown (1983) who rejects translation and the use of the vernacular for mechanics and mathematics, because such practices 'blur the distinction between language domains'; and Sayers (1983) who writes in a similar vein:

As I see it, unless there is a community desire to develop vernacular terminology, as in Anindilyakwa, it would be better if English terms were used and the vernacular left for family life and traditional interest. This could lead to a stable bilingualism, a much more realistic goal than having Aboriginals able to talk about anything under the sun in both languages, as Hale and O'Grady suggested in 1974.

I have elsewhere made a lengthier critique of this line of argument (McConvell 1983). There may well be good arguments, linguistic, social, educational or, as Harris mentioned, simply practical, for language maintenance strategies to emphasise the distinction between 'language domains'. I have argued that the Di Pietro/Fishman hypothesis is not one of the good arguments for this policy, nor does the concept of 'domain' fully explain the reality and subtleties of language choice and language usage in bilingual and multilingual Aboriginal communities.

It is also necessary for a diachronic model of codeswitching to come to terms with the relationship between codeswitching and language acquisition. Among important aspects to be considered are:

- (a) codeswitching behaviour amongst bilingual children;
- (b) codeswitching behaviour of adults addressing, or in the presence of, children and its consequences for their later bilingual development. (Oksaar 1976, Volterra and Taeschner 1978).

Studies seem to indicate that bilingual children's use of a language often corresponds initially to the presence of certain people who typically speak the particular language concerned, but is also metonymically expanded to a place or situation associated with such people (e.g. the apparent association of father and his language and 'outside', in Volterra and Taeschner's examples). The child's conception of such associations is usually different from the adult's conception of social arenas, but may prefigure it. Study of the transition from one to the other could be rewarding.

Where the child's adult models themselves continually codeswitch in a manner not amenable to clear situational analysis, association of a language with a person or fixed situation is not possible.

How the 'social meaning' of the codes is acquired and what changes could be expected in the children's 'social arena' configuration as compared to the adults', is a further matter for investigation. It may be that extreme cases of codeswitching lead to a degradation or lack of analysability of the input to the child, resulting in a radical disjuncture between the adult's and

child's speech. In other cases the use of one of the languages (in the Gurindji case, Kriol) as a child language register could hasten the language shift.

Understanding of these issues and formulation of theory to deal with them could make the framing of language policy and language maintenance strategies of Aboriginal bilingual situations, whether in education or generally, less haphazard, and potentially dangerous, than it is today. Aboriginal people want to control their own language policy, but are asking for help in understanding a rapidly changing situation; applied linguists should take up that challenge.

