YOUNG PEOPLE'S DYIRBAL:

An example of language death from Australia

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This thesis is the original work of the author unless otherwise acknowledged.

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To nyaywi, what more can I say?

ABBREVIATIONS

A	transitive subject (function)
ABL	ablative (case)
ABS	absolutive (case)
ACC	accusative (case)
ADJ	adjective
ADV	adverbal
ALL	allative (case)
ANT	antipassive
ASP	aspectual (affix)
AVERS	aversive (case)
C	consonant
COMIT	comitative (nominal or verbal affix)
DAT	dative (case)
DU	dual (number)
EMPH	emphatic (affix)
ERG	ergative (case)
FUT	future (tense)
G	Girramay dialect
GEN	genitive
H	stop homorganic with preceding nasal
IMP	imperative (verbal affix)
INST	instrumental (case)
INT	interjection
INTR	intransitive
J	Jirrbal dialect
JE	Jambun English

LOC	locative (case)
M	Mamu dialect
MIL	mother-in-law speech style of TD
MSS	manuscript
MU	Murray Upper (place)
N	noun
NEG	negative
NOM	nominative (case)
NONFUT	non-future (tense)
NP	noun phrase
O	transitive object (function)
PART	particle
PC	personal communication
PCC	purposive clause conjunction
PL	plural (number)
PREP	(English) preposition
PRIV	privative (nominal affix)
PURP	purposive (verb affix)
RECIP	reciprocal
REDUP	reduplicated
REFL	reflexive
REL	relative clause marker
S	intransitive subject (function)
SAE	Standard Australian English
SG	singular (number)
TD	Traditional Dyirbal
TR	transitive
TS	speaker of Traditional Dyirbal

V	vowel
V	verb
VZR	verbalizer
YD	Young people's Dyirbal
YS	speaker of YD
ø	zero
øS	non-Dyirbal speaker (0-15 years)
I	noun class 1
II	noun class 2
III	noun class 3
IV	noun class 4
1	first person
2	second person
3	third person
#	number of -
....	some text omitted

ORTHOGRAPHY USED

Dyirbal has 16 segmental phonemes: 13 consonants and 3 vowels. These are represented by practical orthography in this thesis.

	BILAB.	APICO-ALV.	LAMINO-PAL.	DORSO-VELAR
STOP	b	d	j	g
NASAL	m	n	ny	ŋ
LATERAL		l		
ALVEOLAR TRILL		rr		
RETROFLEX CONTINUANT		r		
SEMI-VOWEL	w		y	

The following orthographical differences to Dixon (1972) should be noted:

		Dixon 1972	
j	=	ɟ	(lamino-pal. stop)
r	=	ɽ	(retroflex)
rr	=	r	(trill)
ny	=	ɲ	(lamino-pal. nasal)

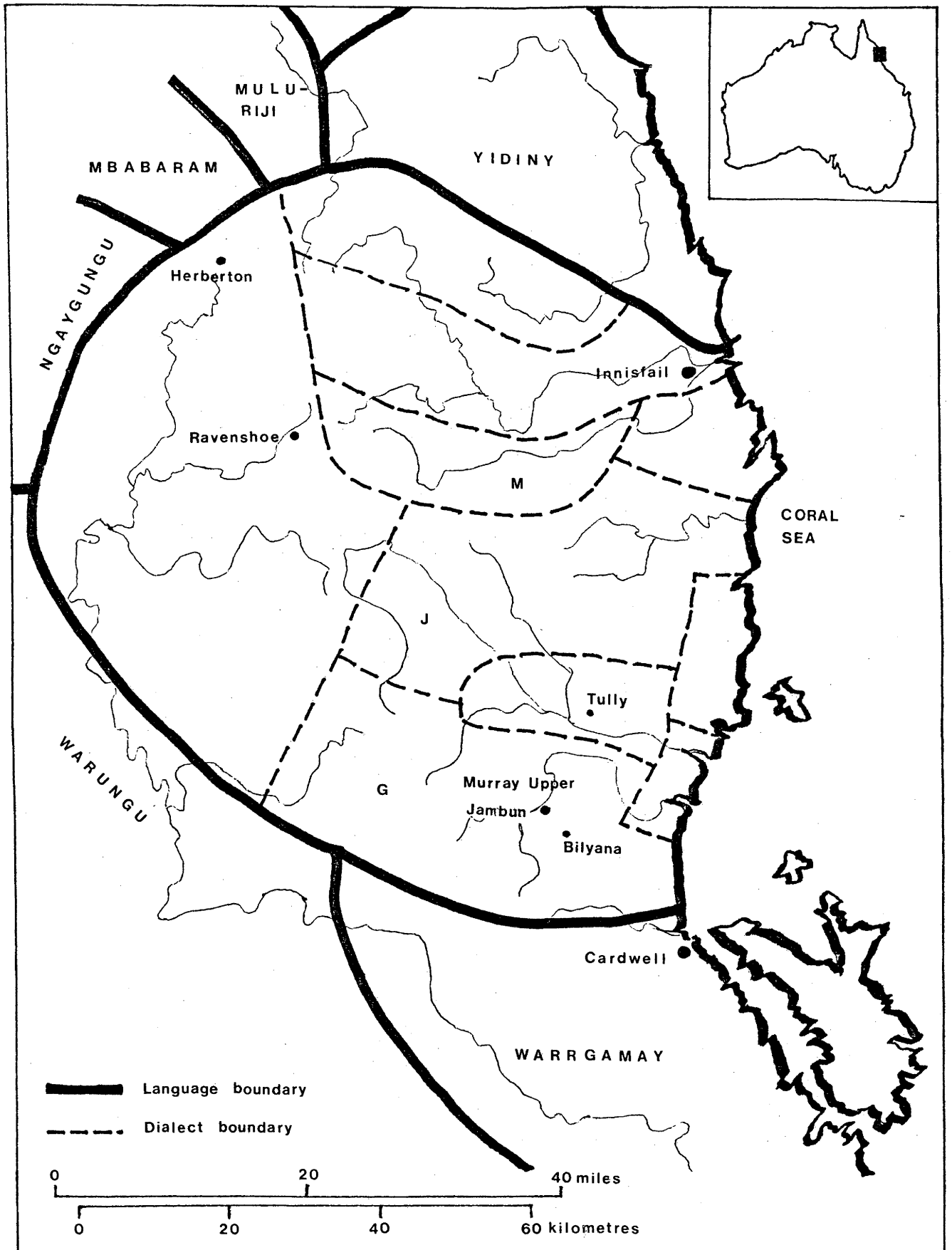
VOWELS u, i, a are close back rounded, close front rounded, and open vowels.

In addition, young Dyirbal speakers have mid-vowels e, [e] and o, [o] in pidgin and loan items.

eg mo̲daga : motorcar

eg alugu̲da : 3PL pronoun

The sign / is used in transcribed texts and examples to separate impressionistically recognized "intonation groups".



DYIRBAL DIALECTS and NEIGHBOURS.

1. INTRODUCTION

The extinction of language is a common phenomenon. The demise of such languages as Sumerian, Egyptian and Etruscan in the course of history illustrate this. In more recent times, numerous examples have been attested of languages going out of use as a result of vast expansion of a relatively few languages of enormous political and cultural potency like English, Russian, Spanish and Mandarin Chinese. Indeed, the loss of American and Australian Aboriginal languages well exemplifies the effect of a technologically advanced society impinging upon an indigenous community.

> "Of the 200 or so languages spoken in Australia before the European invasion about 50 are now extinct... there are probably around 100 languages that are on the path towards extinction... perhaps 50 languages are in a relatively healthy state..."
>
> (Dixon 1980 :18)

Today language death is found in virtually every part of the world: in Scotland (eg Gaelic - Dorian 1981); in Western Europe (eg Breton - Dressler 1972); in the Middle East (eg Parāči, Ōrmuṛi - Kieffer 1977); North and South America (eg Yahi - Swadesh 1948; Luiseño, Cupeño - Hill 1973); in Australia (eg Gamilaraay - Austin MSS); South Asia (eg Limbu - Miller, 1969:438); in Africa

(eg Bom, Mmani, Shebro - Sapir, 1971:63); in the Soviet Union (eg Batsbi - Lewis, 1972); Kamas (a Uralic language) - Comrie 1981:15). Hill (1978:69) estimates that "at least half the languages in the world have disappeared in the last 500 years".

Despite the widespread nature of the language death phenomenon, surprisingly little attention has been given to language death as a subject worthy of study in its own right. Two major reasons for this neglect have been:

a) the preference of the investigator to work with the oldest, most fluent speakers in order to capture the structure of the language in its most "uncontaminated" form — the imperfect speaker, as imperfect representative of the cultural group in question, was consequently avoided.

b) pressure from within the speech community for the investigator to deal with its most knowledgeable members.

1.1 PREVIOUS WORKS

The first monograph of the subject of language death is thought to be How does a language die? by Coteanu 1957. Other works on dying languages can be grouped into three categories. Firstly, studies dealing with socio-cultural aspects of language death. These include: Swadesh 1948; Darnell 1971; Miller 1971; Schlieben - Lange 1977; Kieffer 1977; Grassi 1977; Denison 1977.

In the second category are studies describing changes in the linguistic system:

a) in phonology, rule loss in a dying Breton dialect is discussed by Dressler (1972); Dressler & Wodak-Leodolter (1977).

Other works include Kieffer (1977) and Austin (MSS).

b) Morphophonological rules are simplified and lost in a way revealing the structure of the morphophonology. eg Dorian 1973:418ff, 1977b; Dressler & Wodak-Leodolter 1977; Dressler 1972.

c) Loss of morphology proper is discussed by Dorian 1973, 1978a and Dressler 1977 (cited in Dorian 1981:3).

d) Changes in syntactic structure are noted by Hill 1973, 1978; Dorian 1973, 1977a; and Kieffer 1977.

e) Many works have appeared on the lexicon. Among these are: Austin (MSS) on Gamilaraay; Hill & Hill (1977) detailing the impact of Spanish on Nahuatl vocabulary. Kieffer (1977) deals with changes in the vocabulary of Iranian languages in Afghanistan.

f) Stylistic shrinkage and loss of stylistic options are discussed by Dorian (1977a); Hill (1973:43-6).

Comparisons of language death with language acquisition (Voeglin & Voeglin 1977), and with pidginization (Samarin 1971; Dorian 1978a; Trudgill 1976-7) have emerged as a result of the reduction process evident in both.

Thirdly, the work of Nancy Dorian thoroughly documents both social and linguistic conditions of East Sutherland Gaelic in its terminal stage. Her volume, Language Death - the Life Cycle of a Scottish Dialect (1981) is recognized as the first detailed analysis on the subject of language death.

1.2 DEFINITIONS OF LANGUAGE DEATH

The term "language death" has been accorded various definitions. Certain scholars view the phenomenon in terms of internal coherence of the linguistic structure and ability of the language to change.

> "a language must be regarded as dead as soon as it stops developing"
>
> (Vachek in a lecture on the Prague School in Graz, cited in Denison 1977:14)

The problems of such a definition are reflected in the following paradox: on the one hand a no-longer-developing language is seen as a "dead" language; and on the other hand a language which changes too rapidly (or, if over a long period, even gradually), is often no longer regarded as the "same language".

Most definitions focus on diminishing social function. Denison (1977:21) states that a language disappears when:

> "there is nothing left for them [it] appropriately to be used about".

According to Schlieben-Lange (1977:102-3):

> "every time a language no longer performs a function, it will be abandoned, and if this abandonment extends to the whole geographic area, where the language is spoken, it will die."
>
> "As a language loses its dual function of establishing common actions on the one hand and establishing identities on the other, it stops functioning as a language."

The words "death", "die" should not necessitate the view of language as a biological organism. Indeed as Denison (1977:13) remarks:

> "It is of course not languages which live and die,
> but those who speak them."

A dying language does not simply fade away due to old age; rather, it will die in one of two circumstances:

1) if all speakers of that language die, eg the extermination of speakers of Tasmanian, and Yahi in California. This has been referred to as "language murder" (Dressler & Wodak-Leodolter 1977:5).

2) if the language is gradually replaced by another more prestigious one, ie language shift process. For detailed discussion of language maintenance and shift, see Williamson & Van Eerde ed, 1980.

Various other terms have emerged for describing the disappearance and diminishing function of a language, eg "linguistic cannibalism", "language suicide". These are discussed by Denison (1977).

The definition of language death in this study is:

> "the reductio ad absurdum of the narrowing of function, where a new language replaces the older one over its entire functional range"
>
> (Hill 1973:33)

The diminishing social function of a dying language is often accompanied by reduction in linguistic form. Dorian (1977a: 29) observes this in terminal Gaelic:

> "Certainly the performance of all the semi-speakers in my sample indicates the accuracy of Haas' assumption that reduction in the use of a language will be matched by reduction in its structure."

Similar observations have been made earlier, albeit impressionistically, by scholars such as Bloomfield. Like many earlier accounts of language in its terminal stages, Bloomfield's description involves

generalized comments rather than specific accounts of reduction in linguistic form, eg In the tribe of Menomini Indians of Wisconsin, Bloomfield found "... men who speak little English, yet bad Menomini". Birdhawk's speech is described thus:

> "...he spoke with bad syntax and meagre, often inept vocabulary".

Of another Menomini speaker it was noted that:

> "... his Menomini is atrocious. His vocabulary is small; his inflections are barbarous; he constructs sentences on a few threadbare models. He may be said to speak no language tolerably"
>
> (Bloomfield 1927:437)

While reduction in linguistic form is common to many dying languages, it is important to note that the rapidity of the death process varies greatly. eg Green (PC) reports that Marithiel (North Australia) is dying out fairly quickly, in two to three generations. The Dyirbal language is also dying relatively quickly: linguistic death changes are compressed into a limited timespan of about 25 years. In contrast, the Gaelic death process is much more gradual; Gaelic's demise has extended over hundreds of years.

1.3 QUESTIONS OF DEBATE TO BEAR IN MIND

A study of language death necessitates certain questions important to current linguistic debate. The questions are of two kinds:

a) those dealing with the grammatical specifics of the language concerned, eg Which linguistic features show change? Are certain features more resistant to change than others? Is a

loss in the language system compensated for by changes elsewhere in the grammatical system?

b) the second set of questions deal with universal implications of change in dying languages. Considerations such as direction, processes and rate of change in terminal stages of various languages are grounds for comparison. Specifically, can grammatical change in the final stage of a language facing extinction be shown to proceed in much the same orderly way as grammatical change in less drastic phases of linguistic evolution? Which features of language structure generally indicate tendency to change?

As yet there is insufficient empirical evidence about terminal language stages to provide definite answers to these questions and establish universal implications about the process of language extinction. Lehmann notes this need for further empirical studies:

> "Numerous instances are attested of languages going out of use: Cornish in the eighteenth century, Dalmation in the nineteenth, and today many indigenous languages throughout the world. Thorough documentation of the stages leading to their extinction would be of great interest to historical linguists. Many languages we know about are now extinct; the steps to their extinction may be understood more clearly if we have thorough descriptions of languages now on the way to extinction."
>
> (Lehmann 1962:107)

2. AIM and METHOD

This thesis investigates language death in Dyirbal. Originally this language of at least 10 dialects was spoken over more than 8,000 square kilometres in the rainforest area of north-east Queensland. Today, Dyirbal is virtually limited to isolated pockets of the Jambun community at Murray Upper.[1)] Even within this closed group, Dyirbal is currently being replaced by a variety of English. The aim of this thesis is to examine the sociolinguistic situation at Jambun, and provide an account of linguistic changes taking place in the last phases of Dyirbal. The Dyirbal situation was ideally suited to a case study of language death. A thorough documentation of the traditional language had been made by Dixon (1972). By comparing young people's Dyirbal with this traditional data, it is possible to identify changes as the language moves toward extinction.

2.1 METHOD OF DATA COLLECTION

SETTING. The data on which this analysis is based was collected in the course of six months fieldwork (January - June 1982) at Murray Upper. Most Murray Upper Aborigines live at Jambun, but a few live some 7 kms away at Bilyana and Warrami.

The Jambun Aboriginal community is located approximately 180 kms south of Cairns. It has a resident population of about 100, and is the last area where Dyirbal is spoken in a sizeable community. (Further details of the sociolinguistic situation are given in Chapter 3.)

2.2 PROBLEMS

It is necessary to be aware of various problems associated with data collection of a dying language for such problems influence the outcome of a field study. The first set of problems stem from the stigma associated with a language in its terminal stage. Unlike older traditional Dyirbal speakers, many of the younger speakers held their own "simplified" brand of language in low esteem. They considered their "bits an' pieces" Dyirbal unworthy of investigation. This negative impression presented initial difficulties in the availability of informants and the elicitation of data. eg It was two to three months before certain younger speakers, my peers of 20-24 years, addressed me in Dyirbal. Until then, ability to speak their language was rigorously denied.

Secondly, the presence of an outside investigator in an indigenous group may well affect the "naturalness" of social and linguistic behaviour, thus influencing observations.

The third problem involves the importance of natural context in data collection. There is likely to be considerable difference between speech recorded in formal elicitation and that of more natural, informal contexts. In dealing with language in

its terminal phase, it is often possible to elicit isolated grammatical structures in formal elicitation sessions. This data indicates the informant's more careful speech style, and ability to form such structures. However, the actual frequency of the particular linguistic feature in the informant's natural speech is quite a different matter. eg EH's careful speech consistently lacked ergative inflection. In contrast, in informal conversation to a peer, EH frequently used ergative case affix -gu. Thus it is important to distinguish between how the informant thinks Dyirbal should be spoken, ie careful, elicitation speech, and the way she/he actually does speak in informal situations.

2.3 DATA COLLECTION PLAN

In order to study Dyirbal in its terminal stages, data was collected according to the following plan:

1) A set of stimulus sentences for translation into Dyirbal was presented to the speaker. The 200 approximately sentences were designed to include, when translated, many of the significant morphological and syntactic features of Dyirbal (eg ergative case marking; S-O pivot syntactic operations; verb tense system). To check for consistency, the same stimulus sentences were repeated at the end of my six months work, and inconsistencies noted. Such data enables us to identify and observe linguistic change ceteris paribus (ie without complication of variation triggered by social variables such as setting, interlocuter, topic), as the language moves towards extinction.

2) Texts were recorded in the casual context of "story-telling" sessions within the ingroup. These texts included a wide range of topics including traditional stories, events of everyday life and situations in which the speaker was in great danger. (I also taped texts from two fluent young speakers who were not peergroup members.)

3) Informal conversation between various members of the speech community was recorded, with notes of the particular social variables involved.

4) A lexico-statistic count was taken using a 500-item list. Informants were asked to give Dyirbal equivalents for English words.

5) Understanding skill was tested by: a) playing traditional texts told by older fluent speakers, and asking the informant to retell them in his own Dyirbal. b) (more successfully) presenting a set of 10 Dyirbal sentences for response or translation into English.

6) Questions on attitudes and use of Dyirbal were asked in informal context.

7) During my six months visit to Jambun, informal observations were made of socio-cultural and sociolinguistic features of the community.

In the following, Chapter 3 provides a sociolinguistic account of terminal Dyirbal, describing the historical setting and contemporary language situation at Jambun. In Chapter 4, structural changes in the language system are described. Chapter 5 deals with the use of Dyirbal in a natural context, and details characteristic speech features of two peergroups within the community. Chapter 6 focuses on semantic change in noun class membership. Lexicon is dealt with in Chapter 7. Lexicostatistic counts and areas of

resistance in vocabulary are detailed. Chapter 8 gives brief mention of phonology. Chapter 9 describes distinctive linguistic features of Jambun English and the influence of the Dyirbal language system upon this non-standard English variety. Chapter 10 views the findings of this thesis in light of current linguistic debate, taking issue with various claims. General summary and prognosis for the future of Dyirbal is provided in Chapter 11.

CHAPTER 2 NOTES

1 There are a few other Dyirbal speakers at Mt. Garnet, Ravenshoe, Boogan, Malanda, Milla Milla, Kennedy who remember the language and use it occasionally.

3. SOCIOLINGUISTIC PERSPECTIVE

3.1 SOCIO-HISTORICAL SETTING

3.1.1 PRE WHITE CONTACT 1860 - TRIBES AS ISOLATED UNITS WITH SEPARATE LANGUAGES

Before the arrival of European civilization, Dyirbal was spoken by at least six contiguous tribes in north-east Queensland. Each tribe was basically endogamous and functioned as a political unit. The traditional tribal territories are indicated on the map. It is likely that each tribe had about 500 members. There were a number of local groups within each tribe named after the terrain in which their members lived for the major part of the year. As hunters and gatherers, local groups would move about within the tribal boundary. Certainly the tribe formed a cohesive unit. Social interaction between tribes was infrequent, perhaps limited to occasional gatherings such as corroborees. To cross over tribal boundaries without due cause such as a message stick, was to risk death by spearing. (See also Dixon 1976a). There was a name for each tribal "language" - Ngajan, Gulŋay, Girramay, Dyirru, Jirrbal and Mamu. Mamu speakers were divided into Waribarra, Dulgubarra and other groups; the tribe speaking Jirrbal was divided between Gambilbarra and Jabunbarra groups. In this way,

at least 10 dialect units may be distinguished.

For members of each tribe, language served an important identity function: speakers recognized the speech of the neighbouring tribe to be a different "language". To the linguist, however, the tribal "languages" are clearly varieties of a single language. These dialects have almost identical grammar and neighbouring dialects have 80-90% common vocabulary. On these grounds, Dixon (1972) uses the name "Dyirbal" to cover the "languages" of all six tribes. The Dyirbal language situation may be likened to that in Scandinavia: by linguistic criteria, Swedish, Norwegian and Danish are dialects of a single language, yet to speakers, each is a separate language manifesting national identity.

The language resource of the Dyirbal speaker was rich. Each speaker had at his disposal two separate styles: Jalŋuy or "mother-in-law" speech style which was used in the presence of certain taboo relatives; and an everyday style - guwal - used in all other circumstances. In addition to this, certain lexical items were unique to song styles (Dixon, PC). A full description of the traditional Dyirbal language situation is given in Dixon (1972). For further discussion of the socio-cultural situation of a neighbouring tribe in the early days of white contact, see Lumholtz (1889).

3.1.2 1860-1960 - EUROPEAN CONTACT AND DISINTEGRATION OF TRIBE

The Dyirbal tribes' first contact with white men was in 1848 with the Kennedy expedition into north-east Queensland. The white invasion proper began later in the 1860's. The town of

Cardwell was founded in 1864 and in the following decades Europeans claimed territory for the growing of crops and cattle grazing. A detailed account of the expansion of white settlement is given by Dorothy Jones in Cardwell Shire Story, 1961.

A fundamental contradiction existed between the 19th Century European commitment to territorial expansion and the interests of the indigenous people. The Aboriginal people had exercised total hegemony over the area for tens of thousands of years; - the Europeans with an ethic of progress and a self-confident belief in their own innate superiority, viewed themselves as bearers of "civilization":

> "When savages are pitted against civilization, they must go to the wall; it is the fate of their race. Much as we may deplore the necessity for such a state of things, it is absolutely necessary, in order that the onward march of civilization may not be arrested by the antagonism of the aboriginals."
>
> Cooktown Herald, 1874, cited in Reynolds ed (1978:283).

Violent conflict marked early years of cultural contact as the gradual but relentless European invasion was met by desperate, but ultimately futile resistance. In the long term, the numerical preponderance of the Aborigines was no match for the superior weapons and mobility of white man. As one observer commented:

> "There can be little doubt however, about the final result, as for every white man killed, six blackfellows on the average bite the dust."
>
> cited in Reynolds ed (1978:86)

Such violence and antagonism resulting from Aboriginal resistance in defending tribal territory from the European settler was a decisive factor guiding the future of white-Aboriginal relations in Queensland.

The impact of European occupation upon Aboriginal society was overwhelming. The original way of life was broken down with tribal territory invaded, religious sites desecrated, and the physical environment deeply bruised by the impact of clearing the land for pasture and "progress". As the Aborigines were driven into alien territory, intertribal fighting increased. Malnutrition, abuse, disease and psychological alienation continued the decimation process. Another major reason for the early extinction of coastal Aborigines was the effects of opium charcoal introduced by Chinese immigrants.

Tribal differences were often not recognized by the Europeans: Aboriginal people were transported to settlements such as Palm Island, and the consequent "melting pot" effect resulted initially in violence due to traditional tribal antagonism. In the long term, tribal differences along with cultural heritage were lost by groups on Palm Island. Today on the island, a form of English is the primary language (Dutton 1969).

Some members of the tribes avoided transportation by fleeing to the hills overlooking the plains on which Europeans had settled. However, population was seriously depleted and rules of the kinship system weakened; return to the original way of life was not possible. Gradually, surviving members of the tribes shifted to scattered European properties where they were allowed to live on a minor wage in exchange for work.

Disintegration of the tribal unit went hand-in-hand with dislocation of institutions, customs and traditional values. Such disruption in the socio-cultural sphere caused upheaval with respect to the tribal language. Jalŋuy (the mother-in-law style) ceased to be used around 1930 (Dixon 1972). Everyday style Dyirbal was spoken among tribal members, even in the presence of taboo relatives. For communication with Europeans, English was used.

3.2 CONTEMPORARY JAMBUN - FORMATION OF A CLOSED COMMUNITY

In 1977, the surviving members of the Jirrbal and Girramay tribes formed a community on Girramay land at Jambun (bought for them by the Federal Government's Aboriginal Land Fund Commission). As mentioned, other Dyirbal speakers and their families live close by at Bilyana and Warrami, some 7 km from the community. There is constant interaction between these groups.

The deculturalization process is far advanced at Jambun. The Aboriginal people are dependent on white man's food and supplies which they purchase daily at a store 10 kms away. Guns have replaced spears on hunting trips. Only a few older people have knowledge of artefacts and song styles. The main occupation at Jambun is working land: growing bananas or grazing cattle. Murray Upper has a white population of 200-250 approximately, a Torres Strait Islander population of 15, and 110 Aborigines.

LIMITED INTERACTION BETWEEN BLACK AND WHITE

After the Jambun community was formed, interaction between black and white people at Murray Upper was severely lessened.

Contact with outside white society was limited to school, buying provisions at the local store, and the occasional work situation on white man's farms. Jambun is a closed community with its members preferring to mix among themselves rather than in broader white society. This new isolation is noticeable to the white population at Murray Upper:

> "And so the gap is growing bigger, where before when they [MU Aborigines] used to live - have their little places on the farms, - white person used to support them. White person used to give them their house, an' they used to mix a lot more, because they used to work for white people an' they used to be the only [black] person in that small area, the only coloured family an' they used to mix alot more."
>
> "You know, they're not as outward as they were before. It's really changed and it's not all that long, you know. It's only since the community's been there, which is only 3-4 years."
>
> PW 21 years, white female resident, MU.

Today, members of the Jambun community appear passive and unconfident upon interaction with white people. Contact with white Murray Upper residents is resisted:

> "I've never been inside their houses. They don't let you go near their houses because I think they're sort of ashamed... They just won't let you go near the place."
>
> "... an' it can be really important, you know, they've got to call an ambulance or something. They come down [to our house] an' tiptoe right up to the place...Even

> though they're fully grown, they're just not game. Even though they've known us for years an' years, they're just not game to stand up there an' face you straight, face to face."
>
> JO 32 years, white female resident, MU.

The school situation provides the main opportunity for black and white interaction. The Murray Upper State primary school has a mixed population: 22 coloured and 41 white students. Secondary school in Tully (30 kms away) has 43 coloured students of a total 495. 8 of these are from Jambun. The closed nature of the Jambun community is reflected in the school sphere in two distinct ways:

a) initial adjustment problems face Jambun children in their first months at school. As one MU teacher noted:

> "These shy Aboriginals - they take about 2 months to get used to the other kids and see what you're like...but you'll find most of these kids are from parents who aren't sort of game to face up to a white person."
>
> JA 29 years, white female teacher, MU school.

b) interaction between white and black students is limited. Children from Jambun prefer to stay in their own group rather than mix with peers. One teacher's aid remarked that this preferred isolation has become evident particularly since Jambun was formed:

> "[Before Jambun] even in the school here there was hardly any difference with colours, you know. We treated the coloured people same as whites, you know, we'd all go out an' play together whereas now, I've noticed a big difference. The coloured people all go down an' play their cricket. Soon as a white person comes along - "Oh we'll leave that. Let them [white students] play that [cricket]. We'll go an' play soccer". - An' this sort of thing..."
>
> PW, 21 years, white female teacher's aid, MU school.

In the organized classroom situation, the preferred isolation is noted:

> "You can have a class here, a music class, an' the three of them [Jambun students] will sit right at the back an' completely cut themselves off from everybody else, you know. Even in sport you notice it, they'll go an' do something all on their own. But it's not that they [Jambun students] don't want to be with them [white peers]. It's just that they prefer to be in their own little circle...an' I think 'cause they live up there [at Jambun] altogether an' everything you can understand it, you know. [At Jambun] they're with each other all the time."
>
> JA, 29 years, white female school teacher, MU.

As one Jambun resident described the limited interaction:

> "I'm only just used to talkin' to this one mob of people down here [at Jambun], you know, because I've never been around to talk to other people, you know."
>
> CH, 36 years, Aboriginal female, Jambun.

One major reason for the preferred isolation of the Jambun group is the ascribed status of the Aborigine in white society, and the associated restrictions that this places on assimilation and mobility in that society. Skin colour is a marker of ascribed status of the aboriginal in white society. As Liebe-Harkort (1980:71) notes:

> "...It becomes obvious that the decision of an individual to give up his ethnic background must coincide with a disposition of the society to allow him to participate as an equal. When the dominant society discriminates against such unalterable human features as skin color, those minorities whose skin color precludes their acceptance in the dominant society do not have the option of leaving one group and moving into the other. They may choose to leave their group, but they become outsiders with respect to the dominant society and must accept the status accorded them."

Rather than remain, bound by unalterable skin colour, as outsiders in white society, the Jambun people have chosen to consolidate their own separate community, using the feature of skin colour as bond.

Other social features mark Jambun as a distinct group:

a) there is a marked difference in value and possession of material wealth between the Jambun people and the more affluent white society.

b) education in tertiary level is rare. Only one Murray Upper Aborigine has attended a tertiary institution. It is common for Jambun youth to fulfil compulsory education requirements until 15 years of age, and then work on farms at Murray Upper.

c) power and authority is associated with the white man. With the disintegration of the tribe, the traditional pattern important for maintaining social stability and harmony was disrupted. Consequently, the Jambun group now relies on white society for maintaining law and order within the community. To cite one incident, members of the community were threatened when a gun was drawn following a domestic argument. The Tully police received an anonymous phone call informing where the gun could be found, and asking for its removal from the community. Not wishing to incriminate members of the group, the Jambun residents hid while the police came to remove the gun. One white resident described the link with power and authority and dominant white society thus:

> "The white people teach in the schools - the white people who run everything you know. An' the white people could come and take this over, you know - more authority. An' they [Aborigines] don't know what the white people can do, and so all white people are treated warily... they [Aborigines] are inquisitive. - "What are they [white people] going to do to me now? What are they here for? What have they come to look at?""
>
> PW, 21 years, white female resident, MU.

In short, rather than an independent community, Jambun is more realistically viewed as a closed group, differentiated by physical and social features, and formed against the backdrop of dominant white society on which the community is reliant.

3.3 ATTITUDES TO DYIRBAL - A STIGMATIZED LANGUAGE

Dyirbal is stigmatized on two different levels:

a) by dominant white society whose language is English;

b) within the Jambun group, where young people's Dyirbal is viewed as "imperfect".

3.3.1 WHITE ATTITUDES TO DYIRBAL

> "the importance of a language is derived from the people who have used it - their number, wealth, mobility, economic and cultural production, factors the accumulation of which contribute the innate status or force... of a language."
>
> W Mackey 1973:4, cited in Dorian 1981:38.

According to newly established European dominance, English was the prestigious, "civilized" language. Dyirbal, as manifestation of the Aboriginal culture, represented barbarity. Murray Upper Aborigines were encouraged to speak English.

> EM: "She [a white MU resident] reared me up then, an' started me off to school. [She] tell me not to talk guwal up in the house so...she straightened me up - up there.
>
> INVESTIGATOR: What do you mean by 'straightened you out'?
>
> EM: oh jus', you know, keep us in English."
>
> EM, 31 years, Aboriginal female, MU.

Today, there are mixed attitudes in white society toward Aboriginal language. Certainly the negative impression of Aboriginal language

is still evident in some white attitudes. On the other hand, some members of the white society were quite neutral in their view of Dyirbal language, while others regarded it with curiosity.

There are also various misapprehensions regarding the structure of the Dyirbal language. As one school teacher at MU stated when explaining to me why she thought Jambun students "speak English differently" (ie non-standard English):

> "Well their language is faster than ours anyhow, see, they - Aboriginal language is faster than ours - so they sorta keep their same pace and just leave out bits so they can catch up to where they were, you know."
>
> JA, 29 years, white female
> school teacher, MU.

Dyirbal speakers are well aware of the low status accorded their language in white society. Thus, in dealing with white people, there is much caution in using Dyirbal. One fluent Dyirbal speaker told of asking for a white man's permission to speak Dyirbal to his mates at work:

> "Yeah, my boss, he's a good fella. We asked him for 'mission to talk guwal [at work] and he said "yeah". He didn't mind."
>
> RM, 47 years, Aboriginal male, Jambun.

A few younger speakers adopted dominant white society's attitude toward Dyirbal and were heard to denigrate the language. When questioned further of his feelings toward the language, one

man explained:

> "talking guwal to a waybala [white man] - it's like singing an' you're ashamed of your voice. I don't talk it at Winton."
>
> PH, 39 years, Aboriginal male, Jambun.

For most of the Dyirbal speakers, the language was associated with the traditional way of life. Both young and old speakers recognized its diminishing function at Jambun.

3.3.2 ATTITUDES TO YOUNGER SPEAKERS' "IMPERFECT" DYIRBAL

Within Jambun, many of the older fluent speakers recognized younger people's Dyirbal as error-ridden, spoken in "bits-an-pieces", and "all mixed up with English". This results in pressure from members of the speech community upon the investigator to deal only with older fluent speakers. eg Upon hearing a young speaker teach me pidginized pronoun forms instead of traditional Dyirbal forms, an older fluent speaker objected thus:

> "That Phyllis, she don't talk guwal right. She mixes [Dyirbal] up [with] the English. Margaret [talks] better than her. [Phyllis] she got it wrong."
>
> NM, 39 years, Aboriginal female, Jambun.

THE CORRECTIVE MECHANISM

Older traditional speakers (in particular a few "purists") often correct younger speakers when their Dyirbal departs from traditional Dyirbal norms. One young man described such a situation:

> "If I'm talkin' to Lenny an' say: 'galga ban daman' [leave-IMP NOM II child = leave that child (alone)] or anything she'll probably say: 'that's not [correct]; you can't say that. You gotta say this. You gotta say other word.'"
>
> EJ, 23 years, Aboriginal male, Bilyana.

Another younger speaker commented:

> "[If] you make mistake, she [TS] always correct it."
>
> EH, 24 years, Aboriginal female, Jambun.

The corrective mechanism limits the Dyirbal communication network. Because of constant correction from older speakers, less-fluent Dyirbal speakers may hesitate to use Dyirbal when conversing with older members of the community. One group of "imperfect" speakers once explained that they preferred to use English when talking to older traditional speakers because it was 'easiest', and as the more efficient code of communication, did not involve constant correction by the older speaker. For further discussion of the corrective mechanism, see 3.7.5.

3.4 FACTORS CONDUCIVE TO DIMINISHED LANGUAGE LOYALTY

Major factors linked with the replacement of Dyirbal by English are:

1) introduction of radio and colour television. Many of the houses at Jambun have stereo sets, colour t.v. and radio. Watching t.v. is the main pastime for the family at night and for those not working during the day.

2) absence of Dyirbal literature. All-English literature not only confirms English as a prestigious language, but also glossy magazines and books create desires, images and expectations that conflict with traditional culture.

3) increased contact with white man upon fragmentation of the tribe resulted in English as code for communication in this domain.

4) compulsory education in English schools.

This factor is recognized by older members of Jambun as the main reason for the death of Dyirbal. One fluent speaker complained thus:

> "They [young people] won't think [in Dyirbal]. They sorta can't get round their own language - wrong sorta talk altogether. Yeah, school buggered everything up. [I don't know] why they don't learn their own language."
>
> NM, 39 years, Aboriginal female, Jambun.

Schools provide a destructive force for Dyirbal on various levels:

1) English education instills a negative impression of the utility and value of Dyirbal;

2) They provide another context for communication in English;

3) By an all-English curriculum, the Jambun students are denied the option of learning the Dyirbal language which is a basic manifestation of their cultural identity. The present curriculum is oriented only towards white society and its values. In other words, rather than education enhancing/enriching cultural identity, it replaces Dyirbal with English and creates an impression that Dyirbal is unimportant.

Such lack of institutional support triggers a "Dyirbal draining process" which severely affects the role of Dyirbal in the Jambun community.

The "Dyirbal draining process" involves the following stages:

1) English is spoken in many homes to prepare Jambun children for school, thus becoming the primary socialization language. (see 3.5.3)

2) On beginning school, the Jambun student has English reinforced as the prestigious language, and primary code of communication.

3) The child is faced with the conflict of education in English and association with dominant white society on the one hand, and belonging to the less-prestigious and socially-isolated Jambun community on the other. The people with whom he identifies are from Jambun where primary socialization has taken place.

4) When the student reaches approximately 4-5 grade, his school performance drops back. Teachers at Murray Upper School comment:

> "[Jambun] kids in grade 1, 2 [are o.k.]. - 'bout grade 4 they start to change, you know. If they were really bright in grade 1 and 3, then they just seem to slow down [in grade 4-5]."
>
> "You never see many really bright Aboriginal kids in grade 5, 6, 7."

Education and associated white society values lose credibility for the Jambun student. This may be triggered by realization that older Jambun people with whom he identifies are not utilizing education for mobility in white society.

> "You notice alot of them, by the time they get to grade 7 or 8 - they don't worry about school anymore because they can see all their brothers and sisters are not getting jobs because they're coloured or something so they just sort of ..[lose interest]."
>
> JA, 24 years, white female school teacher, MU.

5) Because of poor performance at school after grades 4-5 (and other deterents such as ascribed status of skin colour) the Jambun student rarely uses education for mobility and acceptance in white society.

6) The young student solidifies ties with the closed community and remains within the socially-isolated group.

7) The result is that Jambun society remains closed, but impoverished by the loss of its language of identity.

One major counterforce to diminishing Dyirbal loyalty is the pattern of settlement. The formation of Jambun gathered people together to live on original Girramay territory, creating a socially and geographically defined unit. The formation of the community is likely to influence the language situation. As Liebe - Harkort (1980:72) states:

> "When... the speakers of a minority language come into increasing contact with speakers of other languages, the pattern of settlement is important. If the minority language speakers retain a territory for their own use..., they will be able to continue to use their native language in communication with their neighbors. If, however, they lose their land base or if their lands are separated by land belonging to speakers of other languages..., there will be pressure to use the dominant language with the neighbors as well as decreasing contact with other speakers of the minority language."

Certainly, the formation of the Jambun community was conducive to group consciousness and preferred social isolation, (see 3.2). However, the success of Dyirbal as a language of identity for the group is dubious. As indicated in 3.5.3, a variety of English is now the primary socialization language. The forces promoting replacement by English appear to be winning out at this stage in the Jambun speech community. (This is illustrated by Diagram 1, 3.5.1.)

3.5.1 THE LINGUISTIC SITUATION AT JAMBUN

At the time of the investigation, Jan-June 1982, the Jambun community was undergoing the process of "language shift", ie a new language, English, was gradually replacing Dyirbal, the original language of the people. Each stage of the language shift process was evidenced with older people speaking fluent traditional Dyirbal, younger members (15-39 years) who spoke "imperfect" Dyirbal, and children in the 0-15 year age group who "couldn't talk guwal".

Diagram 1 indicates: a) distribution of the population in age groups;

b) which age groups speak Dyirbal.

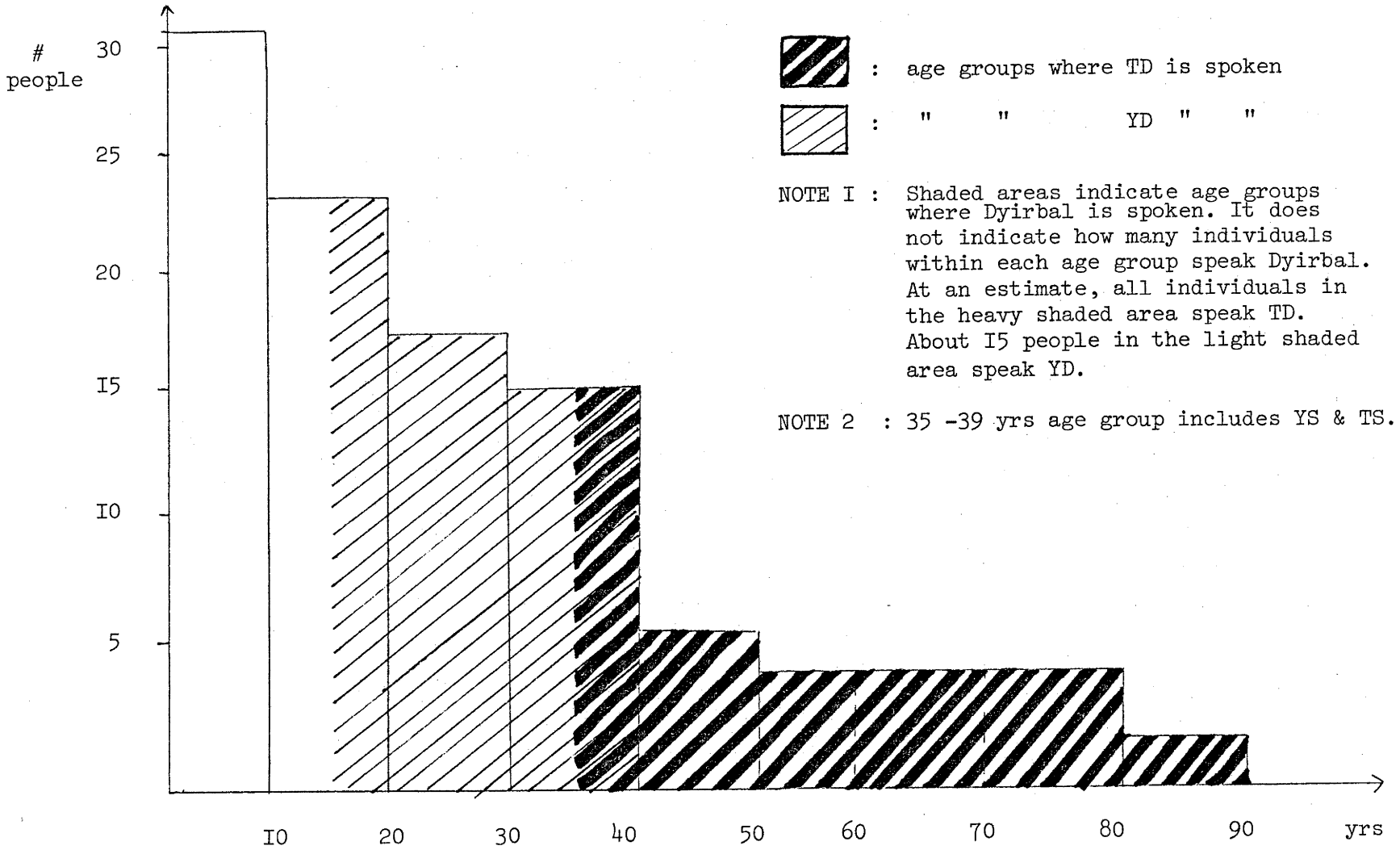
a) POPULATION DISTRIBUTION PER AGE GROUP

The diagram shows that the Jambun community has a predominantly young population. The age group with smallest membership is the 80+ years, with only two people. The largest age group is the 0-10 years; 30 of the 100 Jambun residents are 10 years of age or below. Thus the Aboriginal population at Jambun appears to be increasing with each decade.

b) AGE GROUPS WHERE DYIRBAL IS SPOKEN

The shaded areas on the diagram indicate which groups speak Dyirbal. It is necessary at this stage to distinguish between "traditional" and "young" Dyirbal. By "traditional" speech, I mean speech consistent with traditional grammatical norms as detailed in Dixon (1972). "Young" Dyirbal speech involves departure from traditional linguistic norms.

DIAG. I : AGE GROUPS WHERE DYIRBAL IS SPOKEN



As the shading indicates, traditional speakers (TS) ranged in age from 35-80+ years. Young Dyirbal speakers (YS) were between 15-39 years. No individual in the 0-15 year age group could construct a Dyirbal sentence. Other members of the community confirmed this, stating that: "these younger kids, they talk jus' all English". Note, however, that about 10 of the children in the 0-15 year group could recall some Dyirbal words. (see 7.4). Thus, Diagram 1 confirms the impression that Dyirbal is on the path to extinction.

3.5.2 UNDERSTANDING SKILL

Speaking and understanding are distinct linguistic skills. It has been reported that in a language death situation, individuals who cannot produce certain structures (speaking skill) still may have the skill of understanding. eg Dorian (1981:155) notes a discrepency between the two skills in semi-speakers' Gaelic:

> "While most of the ESG semi-speakers produce a Gaelic with very evident deficiencies, their receptive control of the language is outstanding."

The discrepancy in understanding and speaking skills is also evident at Jambun. As one 28 year woman explained to me when an older fluent speaker addressed her in Dyirbal:

> "I can understand what she saying but I can't talk much, you know, talk back. I don' know much [Dyirbal]. I jus' talk back in English."
>
> GH, 28 years, Aboriginal female, Jambun.

In order to gauge the extent of this phenomenon at Jambun, a simple understanding test was carried out. The test involved 10 sentences: 5 information-seeking questions and 5 statements for translation. The vocabulary in test sentences consisted of high-frequency items, and all but 2 of the 10 sentences were simple in structure. I administered this test to a cross-section of the Jambun people, taking care to include those individuals in the 15-40 year group who "couldn't talk guwal", and those in the 5-15 year group who recalled some lexical items. (This test is detailed in the appendix at the end of this chapter.) The results of the understanding test are shown on Table 1.

There are two important points to note from the Table:

a) 91% of the people in 15-35 year group registered 100% understanding score. Among these were 7 of the 9 people who could not construct a Dyirbal sentence.

b) There was an abrupt drop in the understanding score in the 5-15 year group. Only one individual registered 100% success. (This rapid decrease in Dyirbal understanding among the youngest group is perhaps due to use of English as primary socialization language in the home.)

3.5.3 PRIMARY AND SECONDARY SOCIALIZATION

A factor associated with the loss of Dyirbal among younger people is the current use of English for primary and secondary socialization. Denison (1977:21) recognizes this as a major factor in the language extinction process:

TABLE I : UNDERSTANDING TEST RESULTS

AGE GROUP	TOTAL # PEOPLE TESTED	# PEOPLE ∅ PROFICIENCY SPEAKING	# 100% SUCCESS	AVERAGE SCORE
35 yrs +	15	0	15 100%	10
15 - 35 yrs	22	9	20 91%	9.2
5 - 15 yrs	15	15	1 7%	2

TABLE 2 : PRIMARY SOCIALIZATION LANGUAGE SHIFT

AGE GROUP	# PEOPLE	LANGUAGE AS CHILD		
		DYIRBAL ONLY	BOTH DYIRBAL & ENGLISH	ENGLISH ONLY
35 yrs +	16	16 100%	0 0%	0 0%
15-35 yrs	36	20 55%	9 25%	7 20%
5-15 yrs	22	0 0%	3 14%	19 86%

> "It is as though a culture, in the sense of the totality of structured activity of a speech community, sometimes "decides", for reasons of functional economy, to suppress a part of itself in the process of onward transmission... there comes a point when multilingual parents no longer consider it necessary or worthwhile for the future of their children to communicate with them in a low-prestige language variety, and when children are no longer motivated to acquire active competence in a language which is lacking in positive connotations ... The languages at the lower end of the prestige scale retreat from ever increasing areas of their earlier functional domains, displaced by higher prestige languages."

Liebe-Harkort (1980:76) states that:

> "Primary socialization in a minority language, followed by secondary socialization in the dominant language, often leads to conflicts and an identity crisis, the result of which may be the decision of the adult to teach the children only the dominant language."

At Jambun, the current generation of parents aged 17-40 years chooses not to transmit Dyirbal as a primary language to their children. (As mentioned, a main reason given for this by the Jambun parents is that English prepares the children for school.) Many parents expressed enthusiasm for their children to learn Dyirbal, but only after English had been mastered. English is regarded as the primary language by which Dyirbal could be taught to the children.

> "Oh we talk in English most of the time ... with these kids here about. ... [we] jus' want them to grow up a bit more. -Then they know what we talkin' about [when we teach them Dyirbal]."
>
> EM, 31 years, Aboriginal female, Warrami.

> "Mostly I was talkin' to them [children] in English, you know, till he's got older, enough to understand [when I explain Dyirbal words]. ...Well he [10 year son] didn't know much about guwal an'... when he got older I started talkin' to him [in Dyirbal], you know, an' told him this an' that [Dyirbal word], you know. Well he know a few words, but you gotta keep talkin' [Dyirbal] to him all the time, you know, 'cause he forget [Dyirbal] quick."
>
> CH, 36 years, Aboriginal female, Jambun.

In the case of one family at Jambun, the older children were taught Dyirbal while the younger siblings had greater exposure to English in the home. (Hill & Hill (1977:60) observe a similar situation in the terminal stages of Tlaxcalan Nahuatl.) This difference in exposure is reflected in the proficiency and confidence in speaking Dyirbal. Of the seven siblings I met, the three eldest who had greater exposure to Dyirbal in the home spoke the language fluently. In contrast, two of the younger siblings "jus' don't talk guwal", and two speak Dyirbal with radical differences from the traditional norm.

Table 2 illustrates the increase in use of English as primary language in Jambun homes. None of the 16 people asked (over 35 years) had English as primary language in the home.

Only 20% of the 15-35 years group sampled, had only English. In contrast, 86% of the 0-15 years group sampled were exposed only to English in the home.

3.5.4 FOUR LANGUAGE VARIETIES

The Jambun community is notable for its linguistic heterogeneity. There are four distinct language varieties:

1. TRADITIONAL DYIRBAL (TD) is spoken by older members of the community (35-80+ years). It is used when speaking among themselves or to a younger speaker whose understanding of Dyirbal is certain. For many older speakers who have witnessed the decimation of the tribal lifestyle, TD has an important identification function associated with pride in traditional heritage and nostalgia for the pre-white contact way of life.

2. YOUNG PEOPLE'S DYIRBAL (YD) is spoken by 15-39 year age group. It is not the common code used over the entire YS population; rather it is restricted to fixed networks of interaction. YD is spoken in two distinct spheres: a) to older members of the community; b) within the ingroup. The communication network for YD is discussed in detail in 3.7.3.

As indicated earlier in this chapter, the more proficient members of the speech community accurately identify YD as distinct from TD. One YS realistically pinpointed the onset of reduction in form and proficiency in terminal Dyirbal:

> "Well one thing about this language [Dyirbal] I found is that when I often talk to the old people... you get the very very precise language. Then you get the younger generation which is roun' about my age group

> an' a little bit older than I am [30 years]. Then you get the younger ones in school an' roun' about the 16-17 age group an' younger. You get their level of language as just- um- bits an' pieces of the language. English is put in there because they cannot really find the right words in Girramay [Dyirbal's most southerly dialect] or Jirrbal."
>
> MJ, 30 years, Aboriginal school teacher, Bilyana.

Another 31 year old young speaker noted:

> "I think they [TS speak Dyirbal] alright. - yeah it's alright. Only from my age down I think. Oh yeah, from us down anyway. [But] we [proficient YS] be a bit similar to the older ones. Old people they got more [Dyirbal] - more on their side where they never been to work for the white people, you know, before they come in. With us [YS] we got all mix up."
>
> EM, 31 years, Aboriginal female, Warrami.

The same YS describes the difference in proficiency between YS and TS:

> "They [YS] put their own [English] sentences in. Like me, I stutter [ie hesitate], you know. I gotta get a hold onto what I'm saying and then say it again. They [TS] can say it straight ahead."

Ability of the speech community to identify language reduction has been noted in other language death situations. eg Bloomfield (1927) shows that the illiterate community of the Menomini Indians can evaluate itself linguistically to the extent of identifying

the imperfect speaker. Dorian (1977:30) observes the same in Gaelic.

(YD is described in detail in Chapters 4 and 5.)

3. JAMBUN ENGLISH (JE) is the variety of English used within the Jambun community. In that it is distinct from standard English associated with white society, Jambun English has an important identity function symbolizing membership of the community. All people at Jambun can speak and understand Jambun English. As the common code shared by all members, JE is widely used and fills all communicative functions not filled by TD and YD. The communication network Diagram 2 (p51) illustrates the high functional load that JE has for communication within the community.

Because JE is spoken and understood by all Jambun members, there is a heavy reliance upon it by the imperfect Dyirbal speakers for effective communication. eg JE is used by YS to fill in gaps of their communicative competence when speaking Dyirbal. As one YS described her reliance on JE:

> "If you don't know word [when you're talking Dyirbal] ...gotta turn round an go back on the English side"
>
> EM, 31 years, Aboriginal female, Warrami.

Another YS described Dyirbal conversation within her in-group thus:

> "If we have trouble understanding each other, that's when English comes in."
>
> PG, 19 years, Aboriginal female, Jambun.

(Structural features of Jambun English are described in 9.2.)

4. STANDARD AUSTRALIAN ENGLISH (SAE) is rarely spoken within Jambun. It is the language of classroom instruction and communication with white people in the outside society. Mass media (radio and television) also provides exposure to SAE. However, because children have primary socialization in JE, they have not mastered SAE when they begin school. As one Murray Upper teacher commented:

> "They [Jambun students] won't talk proper English. [They] sort of talk the jargon, you know, an' they leave their s's off things an' all that sort of thing."
>
> JA, 29 years, white female teacher, MU.

> "It's [Jambun students' English is] just like a sort of slang."
>
> PW, 21 years, white female, teacher's aid, MU.

The role of JE in the lives of Jambun students is rarely recognized by the school, and JE is discouraged in the classroom as "incorrect" (see 9.3). Jambun students' "mistakes" in using English are corrected. In the first two years of school, Jambun children are given practice SAE dialogues designed for migrant education programs. [Learning English in Australia - Reader: Susan and David]. In this way, the SAE of white society is promoted.

Young Jambun people, who have experienced English education, command both Standard and Jambun varieties of English. These individuals accurately identify the difference in the two varieties, associating SAE with white society, eg one of my peers (EH), when discussing the difference between JE and SAE, described my SAE as:

"talkin' flash - like a waybala [white fellow]."

EH, 24 years, Aboriginal female,
Jambun.

LANGUAGE VARIETY AND THE NOTION OF SPEECH COMMUNITY

In the light of the linguistic variety evident within the Jambun group it is necessary at this stage to define the term "speech community". The term has been accorded a variety of meanings. eg Bloomfield (1933:29) defines the term thus:

> "A group of people who use the same system of speech-signals is a speech-community."

By such a definition, the Jambun society, characterized by use of distinct language systems for communication scarcely qualifies as a "speech community".

On the other hand, Bloomfield (1933:42) later gives the term another quite different meaning:

> "A speech-community is a group of people who interact by means of speech."

According to this definition, the Jambun members undoubtedly form a "speech community".

These two distinct conceptions have been noted by Silverstein (1972:623) who differentiates by using the term "language community" to cover the first definition, ie a group whose members have an essentially shared grammatical system. "Speech community" is taken to mean "a group of people who interact

by means of speech". By this distinction, the Jambun people can be said to form a "speech community" but, as a language shift situation involves the co-existence of two distinct language systems, the contemporary Jambun group cannot be described as a "language community".

3.6 LANGUAGE ALLOCATION

3.6.1 SOCIAL FUNCTION OF DYIRBAL IN EARLY DAYS OF CONTACT

When two languages first come into contact, it is often the case that each language becomes associated with certain spheres of activity, to the exclusion of the other language, ie in the initial stages of language contact, domains are quite clearly defined. Dorian notes this in her investigation of Gaelic (1981:75):

> "In the early years of the twentieth century, the domains which were significant for the East Sutherland fisherfolk, in terms of distinct language choices correlated with distinct spheres of activity, were home, work, religion, recreation, national secular institutions..., local public life, and the medium of print. Gaelic was strongly associated with the first three domains; English with the last three."

Similarly, in the initial stages of contact between Aboriginal and European culture at Murray Upper, domains were clearly defined. Dyirbal was spoken among tribal members and English was used for communication with, and often in the presence of, white people. Certainly on the scattered farms, English was actively encouraged:

INVESTIGATOR: "Did white people mind you talking language [Dyirbal] on the farms?"

EB: "Yeah, they'd make us talk English."

INVESTIGATOR: "Did you ever talk guwal [everyday Dyirbal] to each other around a white fella?"

EB: "No."

INVESTIGATOR: "Why not, Elsie?"

EB: "Was just frightened I suppose - wasn't too sure to talk guwal in front of them - mainly English."

EB, 30 years, Aboriginal female, Jambun.

It appears that language domains remained distinct until recently. As one 36 year old woman described her childhood:

> "Well, you know, we used to have to play with all the white kids an' that. Well... English, you know. And when we go back to all our mob we talk guwal all the time."
>
> CH, 36 years, Aboriginal female, Jambun.

Another 31 year old noted:

> "We had to look after - play with Gregy and Reagen [white children] - keep them apart [because] they was fightin' all the time. So ol' [white] lady tell us to go up there an' she tell us to talk English. - But when we get down the paddock I teach them [white] kids the other way [Dyirbal]. ...Oh yeah it was good talking English an' then when got back to camp talk guwal."
>
> EM, 31 years, Aboriginal female, Warrami.

As English infiltrated, gradually replacing Dyirbal over its functional range, the domains of the two languages became less well defined. Within Jambun, JE has assumed the role of primary socialization language. Dyirbal is no longer the standard code of communication among these Aboriginal people.

3.6.2 SOCIAL VARIABLES AFFECTING LANGUAGE CHOICE

Today within Jambun, the choice of Dyirbal or English by the Dyirbal young speaker is governed by a complex network of factors including domain, setting, interlocutor and topic and the speaker's confidence and ability at Dyirbal. The interaction of all of these factors is complex. It is not always the case that only a single function is represented at one time, and it may be that setting "requires" one language choice while interlocutor "requires" another. eg a YS speaks to an in-group member [interlocutor requires DYIRBAL] in the presence of white people [setting requires ENGLISH]. Despite the complexity of interaction of these factors at work in language choice, it is possible to identify dominant rules:

INTERLOCUTOR is a major factor in language choice. There are two interlocutor rules almost universally obeyed at Jambun.

a) Jambun bilinguals will defer linguistically to a white English monolingual by switching to his code, eg when I first arrived at Jambun my peers spoke only Standard or Jambun English in my presence. This exemplifies the automatic switch to English, when a white person joins the group. Such conscientious observance of interlocutor etiquette is based on both: the necessity of a

common code of communication; and the English monolingual's suspicious attitude toward any conversation he cannot understand. One Jambun YS explained the need to switch to English:

> "They probably think we talk saying something rude if we talk guwal."
>
> EB, 30 years, Aboriginal female, Jambun.

When the white person present is not acting as interlocutor, the YS might resist pressure to switch to English. In this way, Dyirbal serves an important solidarity function, expressing the social bond of the Dyirbal speakers against the backdrop of white society. eg Two YS explained to me that they sometimes speak to each other in Dyirbal at school, so that their white peers cannot understand them. In this way, social distance is maintained.

b) The second interlocutor rule applies between Jambun members. It is simply that the speaker must modify his Dyirbal speech to suit the understanding and/or communicative ability of the hearer. This rule of speech adjustment may involve:

1) an absolute switch between Dyirbal or Jambun English, or it may involve:

2) modifying the degree of morphological complexity and English intrusion in Dyirbal speech.

1) An excellent example of the Dyirbal-Jambun English switch is two versions of the Ginyju-Ginyju story told by a YS (MJ). In the first version MJ is telling the story to her mother, a TS. In the second version, MJ tells the same story to Jambun children (5-10 years) of limited Dyirbal understanding and proficiency.

The difference in language form between the two versions is striking. When speaking to her mother, MJ uses "straight" Dyirbal. This is characterized by little English intrusion; ergative case marking; and high incidence of Dyirbal bound forms. In the second version, MJ adjusts her speech to suit the children's understanding ability which is limited to recognition of certain lexical items. The code of speech used is JE. The vocabulary is basically English except for a few Dyirbal nouns; there is no ergative inflection - core NPs are grouped on an SA-O pattern shown by word order; there are no Dyirbal bound forms. Version 1 (MJ to TS) is in the general appendix at the end of this thesis. Version 2 (MJ to children) is presented in the appendix to Chapter 9.

2) Speech style adjustment may involve switching between different levels of complexity in the Dyirbal language. eg In the Buckaroo peergroup, a simplified variety of YD is the common code of communication, (see Chapter 5). When I first joined the Buckaroo group, I was unaware of this, and spoke in TD. After some weeks, a member explained that I "talk too flash". I had broken the interlocutor rule by not modifying my Dyirbal speech to suit the communicative ability of all members of the in-group. A simpler level of Dyirbal with some English intrusion was required. (Recall from 3.5.4 that I also talked "too flash" when I used SAE instead of JE!)

TOPIC is a less prominent factor affecting language choice. The younger Dyirbal speakers favoured the use of English for subjects associated with white society institutions such as church and education. On the other hand, Dyirbal is normally used for topics relating to the traditional lifestyle and legends.

The important point is that the clearly defined domains of language choice that characterize initial stages of language contact break down as JE gradually replaces Dyirbal over its functional range within the Jambun community. Today, the YS is faced with a complex network of factors in his choice of language. Interlocutor appears to be by far the dominant factor.

3.7 DYIRBAL COMMUNICATION NETWORK

Dyirbal is limited to fixed networks of interaction within the community. While the TS speak TD freely among themselves, YS do not use YD to all other young speakers. Rather, there are set lines of Dyirbal communication for these YS.

3.7.1 PRIMARY RELATIONS - A DEFINITION OF THE TERM

It is useful at this stage to introduce the term "primary relations". This is a sociological term referring to the closeness of relationships within family or in-group. Charles Horton Cooley first used the term to refer to social groups:

> "...characterized by intimate face-to-face association and co-operation. They are primary in several senses, but chiefly in that they are fundamental in forming the social nature and ideas of the individual. The result of intimate association, psychologically, is a certain fusion of individualities in a common whole... Perhaps the simplest way of describing this wholeness is by saying that it is a "we"; it involves the sort of sympathy and mutual identification for which "we" is the natural expression."
>
> C. Cooley (1909:23)
> cited in Broom & Selznick (ed)1973:132

Defining features of "primary relations" are further discussed in Broom & Selznick (1973:132-5).

3.7.2 PRIMARY RELATIONS IN DYIRBAL COMMUNICATION

Young speakers may use Dyirbal to certain other members of the community with whom they share primary relations. This may be a family or peer-group tie. Outside the primary relationship, Jambun English is used. Dorian (1981:110) also notes that the use of terminal Gaelic is restricted to primary relations:

> "Most of the semi-speakers seem to have rather fixed networks of Gaelic interaction, such that they use the language with a certain group of older bilinguals, mostly or wholly their own kin. They do not volunteer Gaelic with bilinguals outside this network...".

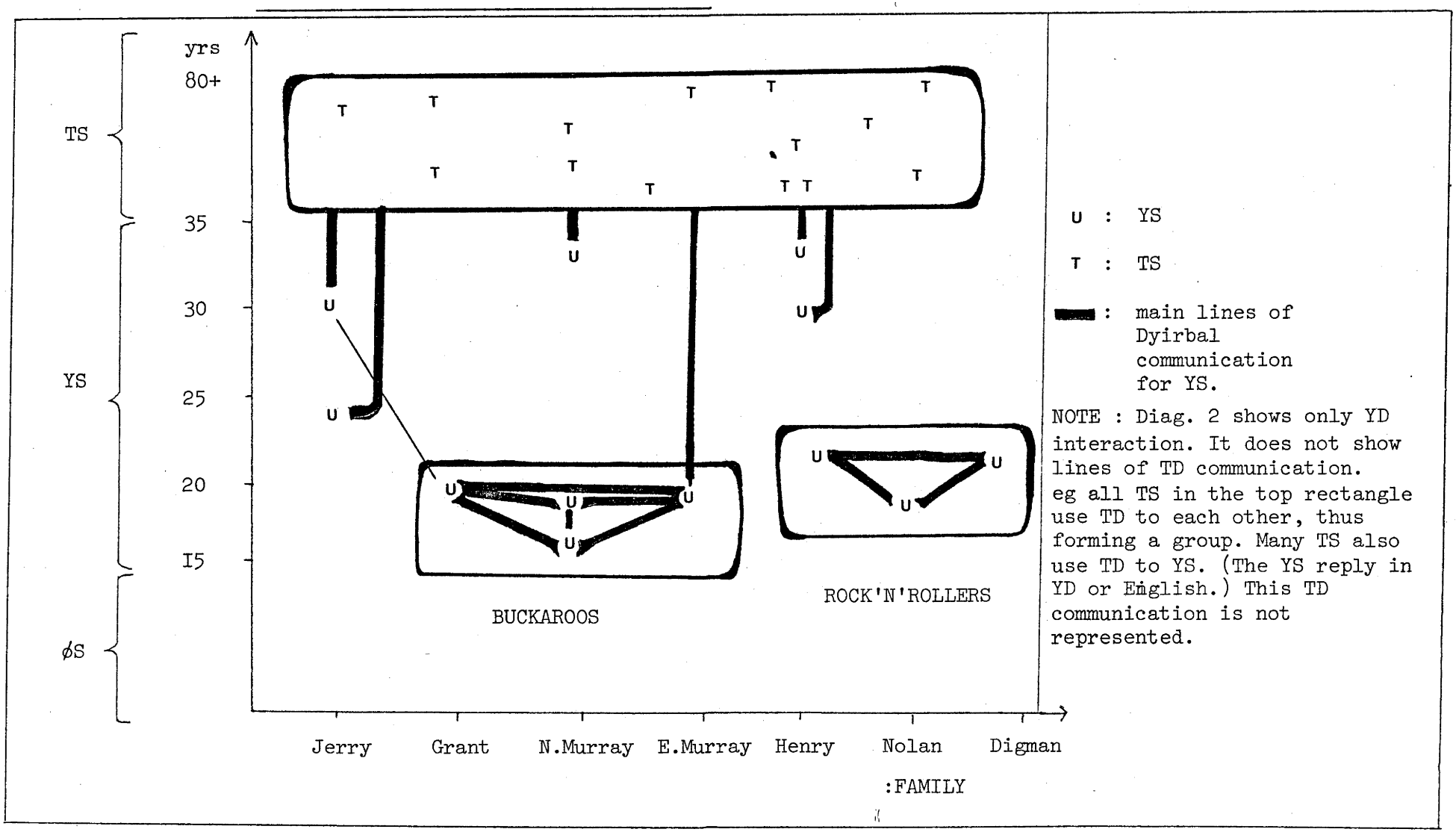
3.7.3 DYIRBAL COMMUNICATION STRUCTURE

Diagram 2 indicates lines of communication where YD is spoken. To guage the communication network, I asked (and observed) 12 YS (my main informants) who they spoke to in Dyirbal. Note that in all cases, Dyirbal was used only between those sharing primary relations. There are three important points to note from the diagram:

1) YS do not used Dyirbal freely among themselves, in the way that TS do. Rather the network of YD communication is much more limited.

2) YS in the 24-35 year age group use Dyirbal mainly to older members of the community. There is much vertical communication

DIAG. 2 : YOUNG DYIRBAL COMMUNICATION NETWORK



between the older YS and TS.

(There was only one instance of a horizontal Dyirbal link between an older and younger YS. These YSs, MJ (30 years) and PG (19 years) were close friends.)

The dominance of vertical communication in older YS population is also evidenced in the following conversations:

INVESTIGATOR: "So when would you talk guwal?"

CH: "Only if I'm talkin' to Mum an' Dad, you know."

INVESTIGATOR: "Would you talk [Dyirbal] to young people, like your age?"

CH: "No well they don't bother 'bout talkin' [Dyirbal] to me, you know. They only talk English."

GH, 29 years, Aboriginal female, Jambun.

INVESTIGATOR: "Who do you talk guwal to, Em?"

EM: "Daisy an' Ida [each aged 60+], specially them old people I talk guwal to. [I talk guwal] when I get in the mob [of TS]."

EM, 31 years, Aboriginal female, Warrami.

In terminal Gaelic, Dorian (1981:152) also notes the dominance of vertical communication networks:

> "it is not the case that horizontal communication networks are generally stronger than vertical. Many speakers and most especially SSs [semi-speakers], use their Gaelic more frequently with older kin or neighbours...than with peers or siblings near in age."

Because older traditional speakers are often upholders of former way of life and closely associated with traditional culture and

language, dominance of vertical communication is not surprising.

3) In contrast to this, the younger set of imperfect speakers (15-24 years) use YD to their peers in isolated in-groups, bound by primary relations. Thus communication at this level is predominantly horizontal. The two in-groups formed by horizontal ties are indicated by smaller boxes on the diagram.

Vertical networks of Dyirbal communication are weak for these younger groups. Primary relations within the family unit were rarely used for Dyirbal communication by these younger imperfect speakers. Although parents (TS) speak to their children (YS) in TD, the YS often reply in English. eg

INVESTIGATOR: "Do EH, DH [her children, YS] ever answer you in guwal?"

IH: "Lil'bit. Not much. Most of it's English."

IH, (TS) 60+ years, Aboriginal female, Jambun.

Only one younger YS (MM, 18 years) claimed to reply in Dyirbal[1)] when conversing with her mother and father. This is indicated by the single vertical link on the diagram between the Buckaroo and TS groups. Other peer-group members recognized the in-group as the main domain of Dyirbal communication.

3.7.4 IN-GROUPS AT JAMBUN

In the course of my investigation at Jambun, I was able to join in the activities of those of my peers who formed two separate in-groups. One group identified themselves as "Buckaroos". There were four female members in this group whose ages ranged from 15-19 years. The second group, called "Rock'n Rollers", comprised

three females, 19-24 years. For these sub-groups within the young Jambun population, Dyirbal played an important role by symbolizing membership of the in-group. Each group had its own distinct brand of Dyirbal. A detailed description of peer-groups and distinctive speech features is given in Chapter 5.

The phenomenon of sub-groups in a society maintaining separate linguistic norms is also noted by Dorian (1981). The East Sutherland fisherfolk form a socially separate group which maintains a distinctive speech form. The utility of Gaelic, in marking social separateness and identity of the group, plays an important role in its survival in East Sutherland. As Dorian (1981:72) reports:

> "social separateness can provide a kind of isolation which is perfectly capable of maintaining distinctive speech forms."

(For further discussion of network structures and language maintenance, see 5.8.)

3.7.5 FACTORS IN THE BREAKDOWN OF DYIRBAL COMMUNICATION

As Diagram 2 illustrates, the young Dyirbal speakers at Jambun do not form an homogenous group using Dyirbal as common code of communication. Various forces are at work in the community which are conducive to this breakdown of Dyirbal interaction. Two major factors are:

a) the important identity function that Dyirbal has for the in-group. Due to its binding role within the group, use of Dyirbal to individuals outside the group may be resisted.

b) CORRECTIVE MECHANISM. Older speakers attempt to uphold traditional linguistic norms by constantly correcting less proficient young speakers. As noted in 3.3.2 the less proficient YS often prefer to use Jambun English when speaking to TS. Certainly Jambun English is acceptable as a distinct language that does not involve violation of Dyirbal traditional norms. By using JE to TS, less fluent YS can communicate more effectively and also avoid the constant upgrading of their "imperfect" Dyirbal.

The main objection by TS appears to be contamination of YS's Dyirbal with English forms. The following is an example of the corrective mechanism in a conversation between a YS and TS. PG (19 years) is speaking her brand of "imperfect Dyirbal" (on my request) to BJ (50+ years). Because she cannot recall the Dyirbal term for "cook", PG substitutes the English term as root and adds the Dyirbal verbal transitivizer [-iman] to incorporate it into the Dyirbal sentence. BJ corrects her, saying that she's become a white woman by using English words. Note that the TS relies on English terms in order that PG understand the explanation.

PG: ŋanaji gotta cook - iman bala you know
1PL - TR.VZR NOM IV
We've got to cook that, you know.

BJ: ɲyajun!
cook! [Dyirbal form]

PG: ⎧ ŋyajun / cook - iman baŋgu / ŋyajun bala
⎪ cook - TR.VZR INST IV cook NOM IV
⎩ *cook* / / *cook it*

BJ: ⎧ ŋinda mijiji - bin
⎩ 2sg-NOM white woman - INT.VZR
You've become a white woman [using English words like that].

PG: ⎧ wayi ! nomo
⎩ INT NEG
Hey, no I haven't !

BJ: ⎧ ŋaja ŋina buwanyu you say banyin see that's cut-im/
⎩ 1sg-NOM 2sg-ACC tell slice
I'll teach you. You say 'banyin', that means 'cut'.

⎧ banyin bayi ŋanaji barri-ŋgu ŋyaju-li buni-ŋga
⎪ slice NOM I 2PL-NOM axe-INST cook-PURP fire-LOC
⎩ jaŋga-ny
eat-FUT
We slice it with an axe, and cook it in the fire to eat.

⎧ not cook - iman ! [laughter]
⎩ - TR.VZR
Not "cook-iman" !

Another YS commented on the corrective mechanism:

> "When we talkin' to her [TS] in language, sometime we don't know what the word mean an' we say it in English. She'll probably - she'll say - thing [= what-do-you-call-it] 'Gee, you talk half an' half. Half English, half guwal'."
>
> EJ, 23 years, Aboriginal male, Bilyana.

Some TS are extremely meticulous in upgrading YS speech. eg the Dyirbal kinship system is a complex one. One YS described his mother's (TS) reaction to his collapsing the terms: mother's younger brother and mother's elder brother:

> "When I talkin' say when I talk to Uncle, Uncle or anything [like that], when I talk to Mum there, if I say 'Oh, that's my gaya [m.y.b] there.' She'll probably say 'You can't say gaya to me. That's thing. You gotta say mugu [m.e.b] to me.' It still mean uncle but."
>
> EJ, 23 years, Aboriginal male, Bilyana.

The corrective mechanism was also tested by another indirect method. I selected a tape of a YS text in "imperfect" Dyirbal, which involved marked departures from the traditional grammatical norm, (eg NOM-ACC case system; English intrusion; allomorphic reduction). The TS was asked to help me transcribe the text by repeating YS speech, word-for-word. The result was striking. The TS could not repeat the YS Dyirbal without upgrading it to her own norms:

a) ergative case marking was added, and correct noun class membership was assigned: eg

YS:	bayi	ganibarra	budin	baŋun	gujarra
↓	NOM I	dingo	take	GEN II	baby
TS correction:	baŋgun	ganibarra-gu	budin	baŋun	gujarra
	ERG II	dingo	-ERG		

The dingo took her baby.

b) YS allomorphic reduction was corrected to the traditional allomorph: eg

YS: naŋgay - ŋga
↓
TS: " - ja
rock - LOC

c) English and pidgin forms were replaced by Dyirbal items: eg

YS: 'e bin bungin
↓
TS: waybala bungin
white man lie down
The white man lay down.

The noticeable occurrence of the corrective mechanism at Jambun runs counter to Dorian's (1981:54) hypothesis that "relaxation of internal grammatical monitoring is typical of language communities approaching extinction". See 10.3.4 for further discussion of Dorian's hypothesis.

Summarizing, the corrective mechanism appears to limit vertical communication between less-fluent YS and TS. The less Dyirbal a speaker has, the less likely he is to use it with TS (because of constant correction); rather he reserves it for the in-group. In contrast to less-fluent YS, the more-proficient YS often use Dyirbal to TS. They appear to be less subject to the corrective mechanism. A possible reason for this is that their speech is closer to traditional norms.

3.8.1 SEMI-SPEAKER PHENOMENON

As a language moves towards extinction, a group of imperfect speakers characteristically appears who have not had sufficient exposure to the indigenous language, or who have been more intensively exposed to another language. The speech of such individuals

is markedly different in form from the fluent-speaker norm. These imperfect speakers are called semi-speakers. (This term, I believe, was coined by Dorian, 1973).

The semi-speaker phenomenon is quite common to language death situations. Dorian (1977a:24) observes of the coastal East Sutherland area of mainland Scotland:

> "In a total pool of Gaelic speakers which numbered about 140 in 1972, there were at the upper end of the spectrum a few individuals who were more comfortable and proficient in Gaelic than in English, in the middle range many who were skilled bilinguals, fluent in both languages, and at the lower end some who could make themselves understood in imperfect Gaelic but were very very much more at home in English. These I have called semi-speakers."

Semi-speakers have also been found: among Australian Aboriginal communities - Nakkara (Bronwyn Eather, PC); Ngiyambaa (Donaldson 1980); Gamilaraay (Austin, MSS); and in American Indian communities - Menomini (Bloomfield 1927).

However, in some language death settings, there is no evidence of the semi-speaker phenomenon. eg Swadesh (1948) reports that there were no imperfect speakers of Yahi. Similarly, J Hill (through PC with Dorian, 1981:115) reports that in dying Luiseño and Cupeño in California, she found no semi-speakers. It appears that the semi-speaker phenomenon is closely related to rapidity of the death process. Where the death is abrupt and involves group extinction or disintegration, the last remaining speakers may be proficient speakers of the traditional language.

eg In Yidiny, Dyirbal's northerly neighbour, the last speakers of the language speak fairly fluently. Due to social and psychological pressures (eg they are all married to non-Yidiny speakers), these last fluent speakers have chosen not to transmit the language to their children (Dixon, PC). On the other hand, where the language death is more gradual, and the dominant language replaces the indigenous language of a community over a period of time, it is common to find semi-speakers of quite different ability among the population.

JAMBUN'S SEMI-SPEAKER

As mentioned in 3.5.1, Jambun's semi-speakers fall in the 15-39 year age group. I estimate that there are 15-20 semi-speakers at Jambun. During the course of investigation, I was able to work with 12 of these. The Dyirbal proficiency of the imperfect speaker varies. Two older YS could communicate fluently in Dyirbal. Other YS were much less proficient; they could make themselves understood in Dyirbal on some topics, but were much more at home in English, (see 4.1).

3.8.2 FRAGMENTATION OF TRADITIONAL DYIRBAL NORMS

As indicated, the Dyirbal-speaking population at Jambun does not share a standard grammatical norm. While TS share one traditional norm, the variation in YD styles is striking. One YS remarked on the variety in YD:

> "They all the same [Dyirbal language] but they got a different way of sayin' it. It different to mine, anyway."
>
> EM, 31 years, Aboriginal female, Warrami.

Another YS described the variation thus:

> "Each one speaks with their own flavour."
>
> MJ, 30 years, Aboriginal female, Bilyana.

The fragmentation of Dyirbal norms is directly associated with the breakdown in Dyirbal communication network. As demonstrated in 3.7.3, YD is limited to restricted networks of interaction. eg for many less-fluent YS, Dyirbal communication was limited to a few people within the in-group. There was little Dyirbal interaction between in-groups or to non-member YS. This leads to lack of standardization, which in turn is conducive to variation in YD. In short:

reduced social function $\xrightarrow{\text{leads to}}$ lack of standardization $\xrightarrow{\text{leads to}}$ fragmentation of grammatical norms

APPENDIX - UNDERSTANDING TEST

The test sentences were administered in casual speech context. Where possible, I interspersed them in everyday conversation.

INFORMATION-SEEKING QUESTIONS

1. wunyjan wuygi
   where-NOM II old person

   Where's the old lady?

2. ŋumbuŋga wunyjarru yanu, ŋinda
   yesterday where-ALL go 2sg

   Where did you go yesterday?

3. minyay ŋinda Tully - gu yanu - li
   when 2sg place - ALL go - PURP

   When are you going to Tully?

4. wanya yalay ŋyinanyu
   who-NOM here sit

   Who's sitting here?

5. modaga - gu wanya dalinyu
   car - ERG who-NOM knock down

   Who was run over by the car?

STATEMENTS FOR TRANSLATION

6. wuygi - ŋgu yugu nudin
   old person - ERG tree cut

   The old person cut the tree.

7. yara - ŋgu buran midi ŋyalŋga
   man - ERG see small child

   The man saw the small child.

8. jugumbil baninyu yuri - gu bura - lay - gu
woman come kangaroo-DAT see-ANT-PURP

The woman came to see the kangaroo.

9. gilu marri gamba - ru biji - li
later today perhaps rain-ERG punch-PURP

Perhaps it'll rain later.

10. ŋaja baninyu jaŋgay - gu yalay *
1sg come eat-PURP here

I came here to eat.

---

*

Unlike sentences 1-9, 10 is ungrammatical in TD: the transitive verb jaŋgay 'eat' does not undergo antipassive derivation although it follows intransitive verb baniy 'come'. (See 4.7.3.) No YS corrected this ungrammaticality; the sentence was acceptable to all YS.

CHAPTER 3 NOTES

1) Presumably, MM adapted her speech towards her parents' TD style. Unfortunately, I have no further evidence to clarify which style MM actually used.

4. STRUCTURAL CHANGE IN YD

4.1 INTRODUCTION

In the terminal phase of Dyirbal, systematic change is currently underway in the grammar of YD speakers. At first, my impression of "imperfect Dyirbal" was of a dismal patchwork of inconsistencies and (from the point of view of TD) mistakes, haphazardly distributed over speakers and situations. It was easy to suppose that this motley picture reflected a sporadically disrupted stage in the decay of TD. However, I gradually became aware that the apparent "mistakes" of the YS were not ad hoc errors: rather, each individual had his own grammatical system for Dyirbal communication, that involved simplification of the traditional grammatical norm to a greater or lesser degree.

YS may be placed on a continuum according to the degree to which their Dyirbal has been simplified. The availability of such a continuum provides an outstanding opportunity to identify and follow changes in the grammar of Dyirbal as it moves toward extinction.[1)]

The selection of YS for the investigation of structural change was restricted by two factors:

a) the small size of (T and Y) Dyirbal-speaking population at Jambun;

b) the availability and willingness of YS to act as informants. (Some YS were too shy to speak YD to a white person.) In all, 12 YS emerged as informants (although I estimate the YS population to be 15-20).

In order to gauge structural change, the same set of stimulus sentences (described in Chapter 2) was presented to each informant for translation into Dyirbal. Elicitation took the form of a language lesson: the informant was requested to teach me to say the sentence in his best, "straight" Dyirbal. In this way, the careful speech of each YS was directly comparable, without the complication of variation triggered by sociolinguistic variables.

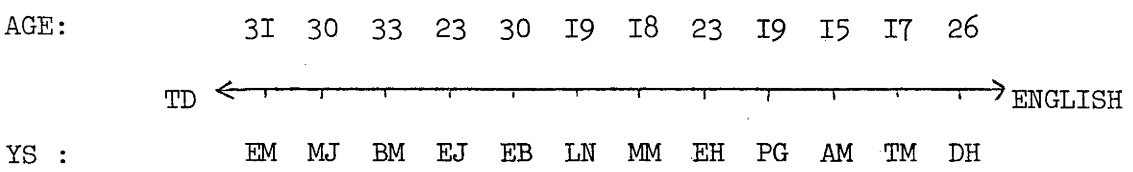
Before describing patterns of change in terminal Dyirbal, two important points should be noted:

1. The proficiency of the 12 YS varied greatly. Older YS at the TD end of the continuum were confident and fluent in YD conversation, and regarded translation of the English sentences as a challenge that could be met. In contrast, less fluent YS towards the English end of the continuum experienced considerable difficulty and frustration in constructing some sentences and in recalling some Dyirbal words. Where ignorance of lexical items hindered YS response I either supplied the Dyirbal word or simplified the lexicon slightly.

2. The placement of YS on the continuum correlates roughly with age. Fig. 1 shows age variation of the 12 YS. While the overall correlation of age and continuum position shows inconsistencies (eg EJ, 23 years, is ranked above EB, 30 years), a break-

down of YS into family membership reveals that older siblings are usually higher on the continuum than younger siblings (see 3.5.3). (DH is an exception. Although 26 years, she occurs much later on the continuum than her sister EH 23 years. Attitude to Dyirbal is a possible factor here. In contrast to her younger sister, DH considers English to be more prestigious code, and rarely uses YD.)

FIG. 1



CHANGES IN MORPHOLOGY

In the following, structural changes in YD are traced along the continuum, as YS depart from the TD grammatical norm. In this thesis, only a brief sketch of TD is provided at the beginning of each section. For more detailed analysis of TD, the reader is referred to relevant pages of Dixon 1972.

4.2 NOMINAL MORPHOLOGY

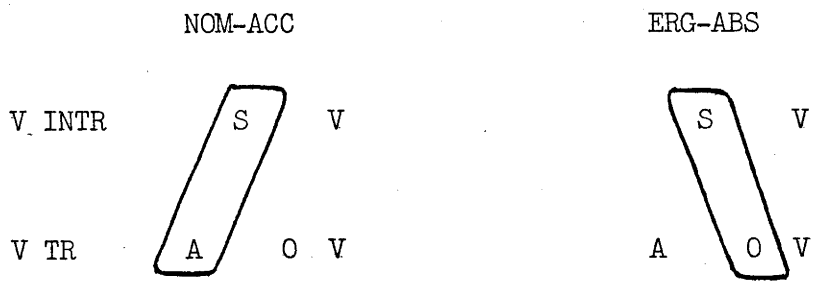
4.2.1 INFLECTIONAL AFFIXES - THE CASE SYSTEM (Dixon 1972:42-4; 236-9)

The Dyirbal case system provides an excellent opportunity to observe morphological change in the terminal phase of a language. Case in TD is marked by the addition of an inflectional affix to the stem of a noun or adjective. Furthermore, the case marking system is rich in allomorphic variation: five of the ten TD cases[2)] have allomorphs. This enables investigation of changes in morphophonemic rules as Dyirbal heads towards extinction.

CORE CASES IN TD

Morphologically, TD is a split-ergative language, ie nouns, adjectives and noun markers (which fulfil the functions of 3 pronouns) inflect on an ergative-absolutive pattern, while 1 and 2 pronouns inflect on a nominative-accusative pattern.

(Pronoun paradigm is discussed in 4.6.1). In an ERG-ABS case system, the subject of an intransitive verb (S), and the object of a transitive verb (O), are in the absolutive case, while the subject of a transitive verb (A) is in the ergative case. The difference between NOM-ACC and ERG-ABS systems may be illustrated thus:



For further discussion of the ergative phenomenon, see Dixon 1979; Silverstein 1976.

In TD, nominals in absolutive case have ø marking. Ergative case is formally marked by suffix -ŋgu and a wide range of allomorphs. TD ergative allomorphs are shown in Table 3.

CHANGES IN CORE CASES IN YD

Following changes along the YD continuum, ergative case marking undergoes allomorphic reduction before the category is lost to a NOM-ACC system. This is illustrated in Table 3, which shows how 12 YS marked core cases in responding to the set of stimulus sentences. Each individual was highly consistent in response over the set of sentences. (I did detect some variation in casual YD but this was minimal. eg MJ occasionally pronounced TD allomorph -ru rather than -du which she used in formal elicitation. The forms shown on Table 3 are those used by YS when teaching me to "say it properly". These were rechecked thrice.)

Table 3 indicates that the reduction is systematic. As the continuum progresses, certain allomorphs are generalized to cover a greater range of environments. The morpho-phonological rules which determined the wide range of ergative allomorphs in TD are gradually simplified. This reduction process involves 5 stages:

STAGE 1.

The separate TD allomorphs: -ŋgu following a disyllabic stem ending in a vowel, and -gu following trisyllabic or longer stem ending in a vowel, are collapsed. YS use -gu or -ŋgu or both

TABLE 3 : ERGATIVE CASE MARKING IN YD

Environment	TD Allomorph	YD Reduction											
2 syl +V-	-ŋgu (1)	-(ŋ)gu	-(ŋ)gu (2)	-(ŋ)gu									
3 syl +V-	-gu (1)												
y-	-ju	-ju											
r-	→ø -ru	-ru	-du (3)		-du (4)								
rr-	→ø -ru	-ru											
l-	→ø -ru	-ru											
m-	-bu	-bu	-bu										
n-	-du	-du	-du										
ny-	-ju	-ju	-ju										
YS continuum:		EM	MJ		BM	EJ	EB	LN	MM	EH	PG	AM	TM	DH

5 -gu → ø (NOM-ACC)

in free variation on a vowel-final stem, thus neutralizing the TD conditioning environment.

ie

TD						YD				
-ŋgu	/	2 syl	+	V -	→	-gu ~ ŋgu	/	V -		
-gu	/	3+ syl	+	V -						

The examples below show -ŋgu ~ -gu in free variation following vowel-final stems in EM's speech.

eg girimu - gu ~ girimu - ŋgu jugumbil bajan
snake -ERG woman bite-NONFUT

The snake bit the woman.

eg guda - gu ~ guda - ŋgu nyalŋga bajan
dog-ERG child bite-NONFUT

The dog bit the child.

STAGE 2.

In this stage of ergative allomorphic reduction, the allomorph -(ŋ)gu attached to vowel-final stems is extended to stems ending in semi-vowel -y.

ie

TD						YD				
-ju	/	y -								
-ŋgu	/	2 syl	+	V -	→	-gu ~ŋgu	/	{ V, Y }	-	
-gu	/	3+ syl	+	V -						

eg TD: walguy - ju jugumbil bajan
↓
YD(MJ): walguy - ŋgu " "
taipan-ERG woman bite-NONFUT

The taipan bit the woman.

Because the continuant -y and vowel-final stems take the same allomorph, it could be hypothesized that -y has been reanalyzed as a vowel, at this stage of YD.[3] (Note that as there are no Dyirbal words ending in -w, it is not possible to test this hypothesis for other continuants. I have no further evidence concerning this.)

At STAGE 3. the ergative allomorph attached to liquid-final stems is changed from -ru to -du, and the form of the stem is not altered. (In TD, the stem-final liquid is deleted before -ru addition.) In YD, ergative case is marked simply by the addition of -du suffix to -l, -rr, or -r -final stems.

ie

TD		YD
-ru / {l, r, rr} -;	→	-du / {l, rr, r} -
and {l, r, rr} -- ø		no liquid deletion
with liquid deleted		

The examples given below illustrate the Stage 3 innovation of -du affix following -l, -rr, -r final stems:

eg

TD: gubu - ru

YD: guburr - du bajan jugumbil
bee-ERG bite-NONFUT woman

The bee bit the woman.

eg

TD: guga - ru

YD: gugar - du bajan jugumbil
goanna-ERG bite-NONFUT woman

The goanna bit the woman.

eg

TD: jugumbi - ru

YD: jugumbil - du nyalŋga buran
woman-ERG child see-NONFUT

The woman saw the child.

This exemplifies the loss of morpho-phonemic rules operating over morpheme boundaries. The YD morphological structure has become more agglutinative, with each morpheme retaining its own form. Suffixation of ergative affix no longer alters the form of the stem.

STAGE 4 involves collapsing the phonologically-conditioned allomorphs of nasal-final stems. In TD, if a stem ends in a nasal or y, the ergative allomorph is a homorganic stop +u. At Stage 4 of YD, the phonological assimilation to preceding nasal is dropped: -du becomes the unvarying form of the ergative suffix on nasal-final stems.

ie

TD			YD		
-bu	/	m-			
-du	/	n-	⟶	-du /	Nasal -
-ju	/	ny-			

(There are no ŋ-final words in TD.)

The following examples show that the unvarying -du affix does not assimilate to stem-final nasal:

eg

mugiyam - du guda buran
NAME

midin - du " "
possum

binyjirriny - du " "
lizard-ERG dog see-NONFUT

The lizard saw the dog.

STAGE 5.

In the final stage of allomorphic reduction, -gu is the single variant marking ergative case on all stems. LN is the YS exemplifying this stage of the reduction process.

ie

$$\text{-gu} \quad / \quad \left\{ \begin{matrix} V \\ C \end{matrix} \right\} \quad -$$

(Only one example of -ŋgu allomorph was found in LN's speech.)

The examples below show the unvarying affix -gu in LN's response to the stimulus sentences:

eg

a)	girumu-	gu	buran	guda	:snake-ERG saw dog.
b)	walguy-	gu	"	"	:taipan- " " "
c)	mugiyam-	gu	"	"	:Name- " " "
d)	binyijiriny-	gu	"	"	:lizard- " " "
e)	jugumbil-	gu	"	"	:woman- " " "
f)	guburr-	gu	"	"	:bee- " " "
g)	gugar-	gu	"	"	:goanna- " " "

Due to the simplification of the morphophonemic rules in 5 stages described above, the number of ergative allomorphs gradually reduces along the continuum. eg EM, the YS highest on the continuum, has a wide range of ergative allomorphs, with only slight variation from the TD norm. (Only Stage 1 applies at this point of the continuum.) YS at later points of the continuum further diminish the range of ergative allomorphs. eg BM and EJ (where Stages 1, 2, 3 have applied) have only 2 allomorphs. LN's allomorphic reduction has been subject to all 5 stages. She has one unvarying ergative suffix -gu.

It may be hypothesized that allomorphic reduction in YD reveals underlying forms. In TD there is no evidence of these underlying forms: each allomorph occurs in one environment. Therefore, there is no real reason to predict an underlying form from TD data. However, other Australian languages show striking similarity to the generalized YD allomorphs. eg In Yidiny, Dyirbal's northerly neighbour, the basic ergative allomorphs are:

-ŋgu after a vowel

-du after a consonant *

* d assimilates in place of articulation to a stem-final nasal or y, but remains -du after l, rr, r and n. (Dixon 1977). This suggests that -du is the underlying post-consonant form. The important point is that these two underlying forms posited for Yidiny (-ŋgu, -du) are identical to generalized YD allomorphs for BM, EB, EJ, as shown in Table 3.

LOSS OF ERGATIVE CATEGORY

YS occurring after LN on the continuum lose the ergative inflection and mark syntactic function by word order on a NOM-ACC system. ie these YS drop the SO-A grouping of TD, and regroup core elements on an SA-O pattern as in English. Word order is rigidified by placing both transitive and intransitive subject before the verb, and the object of the transitive verb after the verb. (Rigidification of word order is detailed in 4.7.2.)

There is no evidence of the ergative distinction being indicated by other linguistic devices such as cross-referencing on the verb. (In Samoan, Ochs reports that although children's speech is characterized by absence of morphological ergative marking of formal adult speech, Samoan children do make the ergative distinction by word order strategy. See Ochs 1982.) Because there is no cross-referencing device in Dyirbal, it can be stated that, at the point of the continuum where morphological ergativity is lost, a NOM-ACC type system is adopted. The following examples illustrate the SA-O grouping by word order used by YS towards the English end of the continuum:

eg	gugar	buga-bin
	goanna	dead-INTR VZR
	S	V

The goanna is dead.

eg	gugar	bajan	ban	jugumbil
	goanna	bite	NOM II	woman
	A	V	O	

The goanna bit the woman.

CHANGES IN PERIPHERAL CASES

LOCATIVE CASE in TD differs from ergative case form only in having final -a in place of -u. ie apart from the difference in the suffix vowel, the pattern of allomorphic variation is parallel to ergative. Table 4 shows the range of TD locative allomorphs. All YS were presented with a set of stimulus sentences designed to elicit LOC marking in all environments, and the responses were recorded in Table 4. The Table demonstrates the following changes in YD LOC marking:

1. Reduction in the range of locative allomorphs operates on the same principles as ergative allomorphic reduction. ie the five stages of ergative allomorphic recution apply also to LOC case.

2. Some YS who did not mark ERG case (MM - AM on continuum), do keep the LOC inflection: they simplify the TD LOC allomorphs by the same 5 stages of ERG allomorphic reduction described above. eg PG has no ERG case, but her LOC allomorph range undergoes stages 1, 2, 3, 4 of the reduction process:

$$\text{-ŋga} \;/\; \left\{ \begin{matrix} \text{2, 3+ syl.} \quad \text{V} \\ \text{y} \end{matrix} \right\} \; \text{-}$$

$$\text{-da} \;/\; \text{C}$$

3. Toward the bottom of the continuum, suffixation is lost as a means of marking locative case; instead locative case is shown by English prepositions preceding the NP:

eg

jugumbil	nyinanyu	on	yugu
woman	sit-NONFUT		log

The woman sat on the log.

TABLE 4: LOCATIVE CASE MARKING IN YD

	2syl +V-	3syl +V-	y-	l-	r-	rr-	m-	n-	ny-	AVERSIVE
TD AFFIX	-ŋga	-ga	-ja		-ra		-ba	-da	-ja	=LOC
EM	-(ŋ)ga		-ja		-ra		-ba	-da	-ja	=LOC
MJ	-(ŋ)ga				-da		-ba	-da	-ja	=LOC
BJ	-(ŋ)ga						-da			=LOC
EJ	-ŋga						-da			=LOC
EB	-ga						-da			=LOC -nujin
LN	-(ŋ)ga									=LOC -nunu -gu (DAT)
MM	ŋga			-ga			-ga	-da	-ga	?
EH	-(ŋ)ga ; -(ŋ)gu									-gu (DAT)
PG	-ŋga						-da			=LOC -gu (DAT)
AM	-ŋga						-da			=LOC
TM	PREP									PREP
DH	PREP									PREP

eg

gujarra	bungin	in	mija
baby	lie down-NONFUT		house

The baby is sleeping in the house.

This loss of the locative suffix is characteristic of the lack of suffixation toward the English end of the continuum. YS at this late stage have sharp reduction in the use of bound morphemes. eg core cases are marked by word order; peripheral cases are marked by English preposition. (The degree of morphological simplification in YD texts is quantified in 5.5.3.)

ALLOMORPHIC REDUCTION. Having observed reduction in the range of ERG and LOC allomorphs in YD, it is interesting to note other dying Australian languages where allomorphic reduction has been reported. Paul Black (MSS) reports that in Koko-Bera and Kurtjar (Cape York Peninsula, North Australia) the last speakers of the language tend to collapse the traditional allomorphic variation by generalizing the suffix -əyəmp (or -nyəmp after liquids) to mark ERG/LOC of any non-human noun.

Similarly, Donaldson (1980) notes that in Ngiyambaa, younger speakers (50-60 years) reduce the allomorphic range of ergative, locative, and circumstantive affixes. Traditional Ngiyambaa, like TD, has a number of phonologically - conditioned allomorphs determined by the final consonant of the stem to which they were attached. In young Ngiyambaa, locative and ergative case allomorphy is greatly simplified thus:

ENVIRONMENT	T. Ngiyambaa *ERG. ALLOMORPH	Y. Ngiyambaa *ERG. ALLOMORPH
V(V)	-gu	
V(V)N	-ŋgu	
y	-dhu	with y deletion → -gu (no y deletion)
yN	-ndhu	with y deletion
n	-du	
l/rr	-u	

* LOC = ERG but with final a instead of u

It is important to note the striking similarity between allomorphic collapse between YD and young Ngiyambaa:

1. young speakers of Ngiyambaa and Dyirbal (LN) generalize the same allomorphs as unvarying suffix forms (-gu: ERG; -ga: LOC)

2. like YS, young Ngiyambaa speakers eliminate the morphophonemic rule of final y deletion in ERG and LOC suffixation.

Upon further empirical investigations, it will be interesting to see if other typologically similar Australian languages follow this direction of allomorphic collapse in the extinction process.

CHANGES IN OTHER PERIPHERAL CASES

INSTRUMENTAL CASE in TD is realized by the same inflection as ergative. (Dixon 1972:93 notes, however, that there are strong syntactic reasons for distinguishing the two cases.)

YS were tested for instrumental case marking and their responses recorded in Table 5. In YD response, there is an

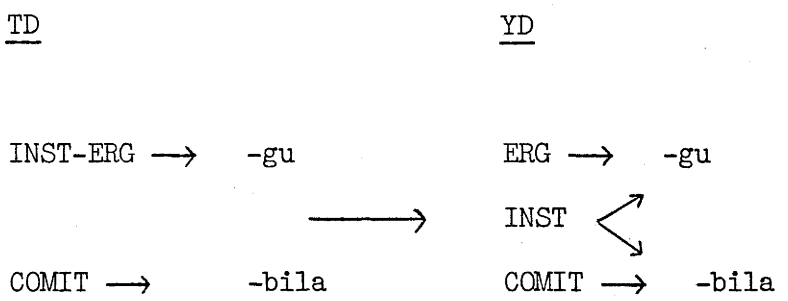
TABLE 5: PERIPHERAL CASE MARKING IN YD

	INSTRUMENTAL		DAT - ALL		ABLATIVE	
TD AFFIX	-ŋgu -gu -Hu =ERG (allomorphic variation)		-gu (no allomorphs)		-ŋunu	
		innovation		innovation		innovation
EM	-gu	-bila	-gu		-ŋuŋu	
MJ	-gu		-gu		-ŋunu	
BM		-bila	-gu		-ŋunu	
EJ	-gu	-bila	-gu		-ŋunu	
EB		-bila	-gu		-ŋunu	
LN	-gu	-bila	-gu		-ŋunu	
MM	-gu	-bila	-gu	-du*	-ŋunu	∅
EH	-gu	-bila	-gu	-du*	-ŋunu	-gu ∅
PG		-bila -ŋga(LOC)	-gu	∅ -du* -ŋga		-ŋga(LOC)
AM		-bila		-ŋga (LOC)		-ŋga(LOC) ∅
TM		-bila PREP		∅ PREP		∅ PREP
DH	-gu	-bila PREP	-gu	-du* ∅ PREP		-gu ∅ PREP

NOTE: This table gives the full range of forms, given in response to stimulus sentences.

* : Allomorphic variation introduced for DAT-ALL affix.

extension innovation: an established comitative suffix -bila is used in free variation with the original ERG-INST affix to mark instrumental function. As Table 5 indicates, the -bila affix innovation is evidenced in responses of 11 of the 12 informants:



The YD innovation is presumably triggered by analogy based on literal translation of the English preposition "WITH". In English, the preposition "WITH" has both instrumental and comitative function.

eg

(i) I hit him WITH a stick [INST]

(ii) I went WITH the woman [COMIT]

In TD, -bila is the comitative derivational affix and would be used in translation of (ii). In YD, YS analogize on the English model, using -bila to cover both instrumental and comitative function. The result is the dual function of the affix -bila.

AVERSIVE CASE

Aversive is a recurrent case function in Australian languages which marks a noun phrase whose referent is feared or to be avoided.

eg

Don't go there FOR FEAR OF THE SNAKE !

For more detailed description, see Dixon 1981b:299ff. In TD, AVERS and LOC cases are covered by the same inflectional affix. Dixon does not treat aversive as a separate case function: rather it is listed among the peripheral uses of the locative affix form (Dixon 1972:237-8). It would be more consistent to treat AVERS and LOC as two separate case functions, both marked by the same affix, in the same way as Dixon treats ERG-INST. Therefore, in this thesis, aversive is regarded as a 10th (cf Dixon's 9) case, which is marked by suffixation to nominal root, like other case roles.

In YD, aversive case undergoes formal changes as various new means are introduced to mark aversive function. YS responses are given in Table 4. As the Table indicates, the aversive marking varied, depending on the YS. New forms of aversive marking are:

-ŋunu	:	ablative affix in TD
-gu	:	dative affix
-English prepositions	:	'of'; 'from'
-ŋujin	:	genitive + catalytic affix[4] (See Dixon 1972:105ff, 244ff)

ABLATIVE CASE in TD is indicated by a single alternant -ŋunu. YS ablative case marking in response to stimulus sentences is shown in Table 5. Speakers on the top half of the continuum retain the TD form. Towards the bottom of the continuum, the -ŋunu suffix is lost and ablative case is marked by ø, -gu (DAT) or English preposition. Note the variation in individual styles of ablative marking.

DATIVE and ALLATIVE CASES in TD are marked by the unvarying suffix -gu. (Dixon 1972:236 notes that there are syntactic reasons for distinguishing the two cases.) Table 5 shows YS dative-allative case marking in response to the stimulus sentences. There are two important points to note in the YS marking of DAT-ALL case:

1. YS retain the -gu TD form until a late stage of the continuum -(MM). At the PG point of the continuum, there is formal change in DAT-ALL marking. New forms - English prepositions; ∅; LOC affix - are used.

2. Four YS (MM, PG, EH, DH) who have lost the ergative case apply the range of ergative allomorphs in free variation with DAT - gu to mark DAT function.

eg

yara	wurbanyu	jugumbil -	{du / gu}	(EH)
man	talk-NONFUT	woman-DAT		

The man talked to the woman.

eg

ŋaja	wuju	wugan	jugumbil -	{du / gu}	(MM)
1SG	food	give-NONFUT	woman-DAT		

I gave the food to the woman.

Recall that ERG and DAT have similar underlying forms in TD:

ERG -ŋgu ~ allomorphic variation

DAT-ALL: -gu ~ no variants

On surface realization, ergative (the core case) has allomorphic variation while dative (peripheral case) has unvarying form. At the point of the YS continuum where the ergative case is lost, the peripheral dative case assumes a range of allomorphs, including

original dative and ergative forms.

ie

	EM				MM
ERG	-ŋgu	/	V -	⟶	∅
	-du	/	C -		
DAT	-gu			⟶	-(ŋ)gu / throughout -du / C -

One possible factor in the transference of allomorphic variation to DAT case is that phonological allomorphy is likely to make articulation of forms easier (ie homorganic nasal and stop sequence). Because ergative case is dropped, DAT affix -gu can safely assume allomorphic variation for ease of articulation, without risking confusion with another case. In short, once the ergative case as a category is lost, the forms formerly used to mark it are still remembered, and they are reassigned to a different category.

The peripheral case affixes (ABL, DAT-ALL, INST, LOC-AVERS) are collapsed by YS toward the English end of the continuum. (As previously mentioned, the form that covers the collapse varies according to individual style.) It would appear that collapsing peripheral case forms could severely affect the communicative efficacy of YD. eg PG extends the locative affix to cover instrumental, dative-allative, and ablative functions.

eg

balan	muŋan	- <u>da</u>	waymbanyu	:ALLATIVE
NOM II	mountain-LOC		walkabout-NONFUT	

The woman walked to mountain.

eg

ŋaja	balgan	yara	yugu - ŋga	:INSTR
1SG	hit-NONFUT	man	stick-LOC	

I hit the man with a stick.

eg

ŋaja	yanun	mija - ŋga	:ABLATIVE
1SG	go-NONFUT	house-LOC	

I went from the house.

This would be expected to lead to inevitable confusion. To the YS, however, there is no possibility of misinterpretation: PG expressed surprise that I should confuse the meaning, and indicated that the semantic import of the verb indicated the underlying case function thus:

eg

sit	-	a stative verb	-	takes a LOCATIVE case NP
go	-	motion away from speaker	-	takes an ALLATIVE NP
come	-	motion towards speaker	-	takes ABLATIVE NP

(because the allative NP is understood to be the place of the speaker)

By PG's Dyirbal communication system, if the meaning is still not clear from context, the English preposition is supplied.

(Because the problem is a complicated one, I cannot state at this stage if the YD collapsing of peripheral case affixes involves grammatical as well as formal change. eg although the Dyirbal case forms are collapsed, the case functions are often distinguished by English prepositions.)

POSSESSION marking in TD is based on the following distinctions:

1. Inalienable possession (eg part-whole relationship) is shown by juxtaposition.

2. Alienable possession is formally marked in two groupings:

a) simple genitive: indicating actual possession of X.

b) general possessive: indicating that the person used to own X, but does not actually have X in his possession.

The forms marking the TD genitive distinctions are given in the Figure below.

YS were presented with a set of stimulus sentences designed to test marking of inalienable, simple and general possession categories. Quantification of the overall YS response is given in Table 6. The Table indicates the following changes in YD possession marking:

1. the simple - general possessive distinction of TD is collapsed under the simple possessive form -ŋu. No YS used general possessive affix -mi.

2. the alienable - inalienable distinction is neutralized: 15 of 17 responses used -ŋu to mark inalienable possession (marked ø in TD).

3. allomorphic variation of simple possessive affix:

-ŋu / Non-nasal

-u / Nasal

is reduced to a single variant -ŋu. (ie the three examples with stem-final nasal took affix -ŋu. YS did not use the TD allomorph -u.)

The change in genitive case marking from TD to YD is illustrated thus:

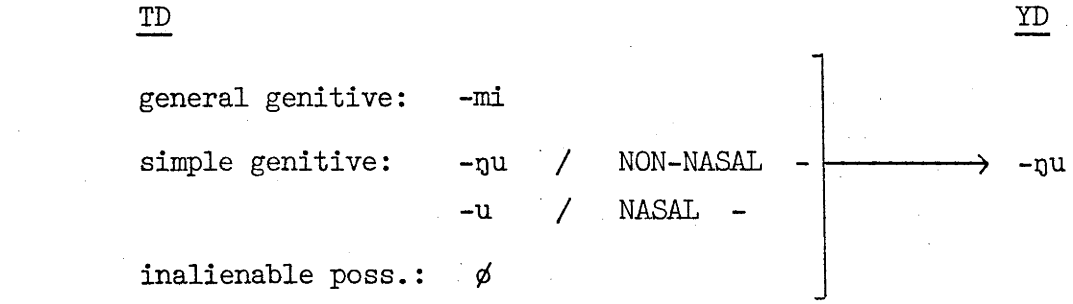


TABLE 6: CHANGES IN GENITIVE CASE MARKING IN YD

	INALIENABLE POSSESSION	GENERAL POSSESSION	SIMPLE POSSESSION
TD form	∅	-mi	-ŋu /non-nasal -u /nasal
YS response	#	#	#
	∅ 2	-mi 0	-u 0 :3
	-ŋu I5	-ŋu I2	-ŋu 28
			∅ 2
			blondu I

NOTE : The striking feature of this table is that affix -ŋu has been extended to cover inalienable and general possessive categories.

SUMMARY OF CHANGES IN YD CASE SYSTEM

Both formal and grammatical changes are evident in the YD case system.

-Grammatical change is evidenced in the loss of morphological ergativity and the regrouping of core elements on an SA-O (NOM-ACC) pattern shown by word order.

-Formal changes include: allomorphic reduction of ERG-INST, LOC-AVERS, and GEN case affixes; transference of allomorphs from ERG to DAT case; generalizing a single affix to cover various peripheral case functions; loss of suffixation as a means of marking peripheral case roles. The alternative role marking device is English preposition, or lack of marking. These strategies characterize the isolational tendency (ie lack of bound morphemes) in the speech of less-fluent YS.

Certain changes in YD case system appear to be triggered by English interference. Weinreich (1968:30) states that there are three types of grammatical interference possible in the contact of two languages A & B. The YD case system displays all three types of interference:

1. "The use of A-morphemes in speaking language B"

eg Use of English prepositions to express peripheral cases in YD.

2. "The application of a grammatical relation of language A to B morphemes in B-speech, or the neglect of a relation of B which has no proto-type in A."

eg YS adopt the English grammatical relation of word order to mark S, A and O functions. The ergative distinction of TD, which does not occur in English, is lost.

3. "Through the identification of a specific B-morpheme with a specific A-morpheme, a change in the function of the B-morpheme on the model of the grammar of language A."

eg YS analogize on the English preposition "WITH" by extending the TD comitative morpheme -bila to cover both instrumental and comitative functions.

4.2.2 DERIVATIONAL AFFIXES

1. In TD, a noun or adjective may be verbalized in two distinct ways:

a)	-bin	forms an intransitive verb
b)	-man / 2 syl -mban / 3+ syl	derive a transitive verb stem

In YD, the two affixes -man (trans. verbalizer) and -bin (intrans. verbalizer) are retained. All 12 YS used these derivational suffixes productively.

eg

bayi	yara	guyi - bin	[INTR]
NOM I	man	dead-INTR VZR	

The man died.

eg

yara - ŋgu	nyalŋga	guyi - man	[TR]	:EM (fluent YS)
man-ERG	child	dead-TR VZR		

yara	guyi - man	nyalŋga	:DH (least-fluent YS)
man	dead-TR VZR	child	

The man killed the child.

I have no data on the -mban / 3+ syl. allomorph in YD; only 2 syllable root forms were used in stimulus sentences.

2. TD also has about a score of derivational suffixes which form nominal stems from nominal roots. These are described in Dixon 1972:221-232. These forms were not studied in detail in my investigation. However, impressionistically, it seems that the more fluent YS retain some of these affixes in contrast to less-fluent YS who recall many fewer. Among the forms frequently used by YS in the TD half of the continuum were:

-bila: comitative

eg ban jugumbil ŋyalŋga - bila (EM)
NOM II woman child-COMIT

That woman has children.

-ŋaŋgay: privative

eg ŋaja mani - ŋaŋgay (BM)
1SG money-PRIV

I have no money.

-bajun: 'really, very'

eg ŋanaji - bajun jilbay - bajun wagi - bi - li
2PL-really do well-really work-INTR-PURP
VZR
ŋanaji garri - baji - baji
2PL sun-fall-fall

We are going to work really well "until the cows come home".

-jilu: intensifier

eg baga - jilu
don't know-INTENS

I really don't know (in response to stimulus sentence!)

4.3 VERB MORPHOLOGY

The TD verb consists of a lexical root and an obligatory final inflection, indicating tense and mood. Between the root and inflection there can optionally intervene one or more derivational affixes (showing aspect or syntactic function). The structure of the TD verb is thus:

ROOT (+ DERIVATIONAL AFFIXES) + INFLECTION

TD has two allomorphs that roughly correlate with transitivity value: 80% of y-conjugation verbs are intransitive and 80% of l-conjugation verbs are transitive. (YS' treatment of "exceptions" in conjugation membership is detailed in 4.5.2). The point to be taken here is that the form of the inflectional affix is determined by the conjugation of the verb root. Some of the most important inflectional suffixes are shown in Table 7.

TABLE 7. TD INFLECTIONAL AFFIXES

	-y class	-l class
future	-ny (J); -njay (G)	-ny (J); -ljay (G)
non-future	-nyu	-n
imperative	∅	∅
neg. imp.	-m (J); -mu (G)	-m (J); -lmu (G)
purposive	-ygu ~ -gu	-li
participial	-y-muŋa	-l-muŋa
'lest'	-m-bila (J);-n-bila (G)	-l-bila
'ŋurra'-type	-ŋurra (J); -ŋarra (G)	-ŋurra (J); -ŋarra (G)

(see Dixon 1972:246-7)

The following traces change in these TD inflectional suffixes.

4.3.1 INFLECTIONAL AFFIXES

-THE VERB TENSE SYSTEM

As Table 7 indicates, TD has a two-term tense system, with an unmarked term referring to past and present time, and a marked term for reference to future time. In order to test YD verb tense system, YS were presented with 12 stimulus sentences for translation: 6 designed to elicit future tense, 6 for non-future tense. Table 8 gives the response of YS.

The Table illustrates that:

1. Five YS high on the continuum retain the TD suffix -ny to mark future for all 6 stimulus sentences.
2. Only two YS (EM, LN) used both -ny future affix and the unmarked suffix in their response. These two YS appeared to use -ny interchangeably with the unmarked form, relying on context or a separate time word to indicate tense.
3. At the bottom of the continuum, YS lose the TD future suffix -ny as a tense indicating device.

YS responses indicate the following innovations in the tense marking system:

1. The unmarked (NON FUT) affix becomes the unvarying form for verb ending. The future affix -ny is dropped.
2. The tense distinction is indicated by a separate time word, which specifies when the action/event takes place, ie the inflectional affix loses its tense distinction function. This function is transferred to a separate time word as the language

TABLE 8 : TENSE MARKING IN YD

	FUTURE		NON-FUTURE	
TD FORM :	-ny		-nyu ω -n	(unmarked)
		innovation : unmarked suffix		innovation
EM	3	3	6	-
MJ	6	-	6	-
BM	6	-	6	-
EJ	6	-	6	-
EB	6	-	6	-
LN	2	4	6	-
MM	6	-	6	-
EH	-	6	6	-
PG	-	6	6	-
AM	-	6	6	-
TM	-	6	6	-
DH	-	6	6	-

NOTE: The G dialect future affix -(n)jay does not occur in YD nor in YS parents' speech (younger TS). It does occur in older TD (Dixon PC).

becomes more isolational:

eg

TD:	yara	bani - ny	
	man	come-FUT	
YD:	yara	bani - nyu	ŋulga
	man	come-NONFUT	tomorrow

The man will come tomorrow.

PURPOSIVE AFFIX in TD is -li on -l stems, and -ygu on -y stems. The responses of YS to eight stimulus sentences is given in Table 9. As indicated, there is no change in form or distribution of these two purposive affixes. (In YD, a new affix -laygu marks the verb in purposive clause conjunctions. The fossilization of this affix is discussed in 4.7.3.)

IMPERATIVE. TD has both positive and negative imperative constructions. YS were tested with four negative and four positive imperative sentences. Responses are given in Table 9.

1. POSITIVE IMPERATIVE in TD is formed by deleting the final -l or -y from any verbal stem:

eg

ŋinda	jaŋga ∅ !
2SG	eat-IMP

You eat!

yalay	bani ∅ !
here	come-IMP

Come here!

There is no change in the YD IMP construction.

TABLE 9 : INFLECTIONAL AFFIXES IN YD

TD FORM :	POSITIVE IMPERATIVE		NEGATIVE IMPERATIVE			PURPOSIVE			
	V + ∅	innovation	galga V-m	-m dropped	'nomo' used	-y stem -gu	innovation	-i stem -li	innovation
EM	4	-	4	-	-	4	-	4	-
MJ	4	-	4	-	-	4	-	4	-
BM	4	-	4	-	-	4	-	4	-
EJ	4	-	4	-	-	4	-	4	-
EB	4	-	4	-	-	4	-	4	-
LN	4	-	I	2	3	4	-	4	-
MM	4	-	2	2	2	4	-	4	-
EH	4	-	-	4	4	4	-	4	-
PG	4	-	-	4	3	4	-	4	-
AM	4	-	-	4	4	4	-	4	-
TM	4	-	-	4	4	4	-	4	-
DH	4	-	-	4	4	4	-	4	-

2. NEGATIVE IMPERATIVE in TD is formed by: placing particle galga (J), ŋarru (G) before the verb; and adding inflectional affix -m (J), -mu (G) to the verb stem.

eg

galga bani - m (J)
NEG come-NEG IMP

Don't come!

In YD, one or both of the following changes occur in NEG IMP marking:

a) The particle galga/ŋarru is replaced by the YD negative particle nomo.

b) The inflectional suffix -m/-mu is dropped. Instead, either the unmarked (NON FUT) or imperative form of the verb is used.

Consequently, there was considerable variety in NEG IMP forms used in YS response sentences:

a) galga V-m:

This J dialect form was the only TD NEG IMP form used by YS. ŋarru V-mu (G) did not occur.

b) galga V ∅:

Many Australian languages which have no NEG IMP inflection form NEG IMP in this way, by adding NEG particle to IMP stem, eg Yidiny (Dixon 1977).

c) galga V-(NON FUT)

d) nomo V-m eg nomo bani-m

e) nomo V-∅ eg nomo bani-∅

f) nomo V-(NON FUT) eg nomo bani-nyu
NEG come
Don't come!

Although examples of all possibilities were recorded, the two predominant types were a) and f). As Table 9 illustrates, YS toward the TD pole maintained the TD NEG IMP construction, (a) above. Innovations were introduced around the middle of the continuum with LN, MM and PG as pivotal figures in the change. These YS only sometimes retained TD features of -m inflection and galga particle. Less-fluent speakers at the English pole invariably employed both innovations. ie they used NEG IMP form f) for all test sentences.

PARTICIPIAL AFFIX: y/l-muŋa: do a lot; do habitually (Dixon 1972:81) and the inflection marking 'LEST' constructions: n/m/l-bila (Dixon 1972:112) appear to have dropped from YD. None of the 12 YS produced these affixes successfully, and only two YS recognized the forms as belonging to TD.

TD has a -ŋurra CONSTRUCTION. In two successive clauses, if the A NP (ERG) of the first, is correferential with NP in S or O function in the second, then the verb of the second clause is given inflection -ŋurra in place of any tense ending. Semantically, the event of Clause 2 must follow immediately after the clause 1 event. An example of the -ŋurra construction is given below:

eg [olman-du yugu nudin] + [olman waynyjin]
A S

olman-du yugu nudin / waynyji - ŋurra
oldman-ERG tree cut-NONFUT go uphill

The oldman cut the tree and immediately went uphill.

(For further detail, see Dixon 1972:77ff.)

YS were tested for the -ŋurra construction and the response revealed that:

a) 11 of 12 YS failed to use -ŋurra inflection. In all test sentences, these YS simply juxtaposed the two clauses, or joined them by conjunctions 'an'; 'then'.

b) Only one fluent YS (MJ) used the -ŋurra inflection, and then only in two of six opportunities. (In the other four cases, clauses were linked by juxtaposition.) These two examples of -ŋurra construction in MJ speech are:

eg

gugar - du	bayi	yara	bajan	/	balu - gala
goanna-ERG	NOM I	man	bite-NONFUT		there-up

bayi	waynyji - ŋarra
NOM I	go uphill

The goanna bit the man and went uphill.

eg

ŋuma - ŋgu	yugu	bala	gunban	/	balay	bayi
father-ERG	tree	NOM IV	cut-NONFUT		there	NOM I

nyina - ŋurra
sit

Father cut the tree and sat down there.

Note that MJ uses both -ŋurra (J) and -ŋarra (G) affix forms.

In short, these findings suggest that there is widespread weakening of -ŋurra marking in YD.

A summary of changes in inflectional affixes in YD is given in Table 10.

TABLE IO : SUMMARY OF YD INFLECTIONAL AFFIXES

	TD		DESCRIPTION OF CHANGE	YD	
	-y class	-l class		-y class	-l class
future	-ny	-ny	Affix replaced by NONFUT. Distinction transferred.	-	- -
non-fut.	-nyu	-n	-	-nyu	-n
purposive	-(y)gu	-li	-	-(y)gu	-li
imperative	∅	∅	-	∅	∅
neg. imp.	-m	-m	Affix replaced by NONFUT. Distinction transferred.	-	-
participial	-y-muŋa	-l-muŋa	Loss of category & form	-	-
'lest'	-m/n-bila	-l-bila	Loss of category & form	-	-
-ŋurra type	-ŋurra	-ŋurra	" (except MJ)	-	-

4.3.2 DERIVATIONAL AFFIXES

TD has various derivational devices which change the transitivity value of the verb. Four syntactic derivational affixes in TD are:

REFLEXIVE	-yirry; -marriy; -(m)barriy; -rriy	derives INTRANS stems
RECIPROCAL	-(n)barriy	
ANTIPASSIVE	-lŋay;- nay	
COMIT / INST	-m(b)al	derives TRANS stems

YS were tested for their command of these derivations: their response is given in Tables 11, 12.

REFLEXIVE CONSTRUCTION

TD indicates reflexive by adding the following affixes to a transitive verb root:

-l class	-y class	
-rriy (G)	-marriy	/ 2 syl
-yirriy; -rriy (J)	-(m)barriy	/ 3+ syl

(For further discussion of TD reflexive, see Dixon, 1972:89ff.)

In their responses detailed in Table 11, YS used -yirriy (J dialect affix) invariably as the reflexive marker for -l class verbs. There were no occurrences of -rriy (G), and no new affix forms were introduced. Furthermore I have no data on -y stem reflexive affix forms: -marriy; -(m)barriy. I was unable to elicit reflexive forms of transitive -y root verbs; there aren't many transitive -y root verbs and the ones YS were familiar with didn't take a reflexive.

TABLE II : DERIVATIONAL AFFIXES IN YD

TD FORM :	REFLEXIVE			RECIPROCAL	
	-l stem -yirriy	-y stem -(m)barriy -marriy	innovation	-(n)barriy +REDUP	innovation -yirriy (REFL)
EM	4	?	-	4	-
MJ	4	?	-	4	-
BM	4	?	-	4	-
EJ	4	?	-	4	-
EB	4	?	-	-	4
LN	4	?	-	I	3
MM	4	?	-	*	*
EH	4	?	-	2	2
PG	4	?	-	I	3
AM	*	*	-	*	*
TM	*	*	-	*	*
DH	4	?	-	-	4

? : no response
* : not tested

(The only occurrence of the reflexive -marriy affix in the YS response corpus was a fossilization. YS have an intransitive verb root gunimarriy: 'search', in which -marriy affix has been reanalyzed as belonging to the verb root guni-y (TR) 'search'. See 7.6.1.)

Thus, YS still command the reflexive derivation. Their response sentences indicate that the -yiriy form is the only form used for marking reflexive in YD.

RECIPROCAL CONSTRUCTIONS in TD are formed by:

1) reduplicating the root

2) adding -(n)barriy to the verb stem

As Table 11 indicates, YS high on the continuum maintain this TD norm. Towards the middle of the continuum, the following innovations occur:

1) TD affix -(n)barriy is replaced by reflexive -yirri form.

2) Dual pronoun or a numeral becomes obligatory.

3) Root reduplication remains.

The YS innovation in reciprocal constructions is exemplified below:

eg

EM (like TD)	bayi - bawal	yara	bural - bural - barri - nyu
	NOM I -long way	man	look-REDUP-RECIP-NONFUT

The two men looked at each other.

EB	bulay	yara	bura - bura - yirri - nyu
	two	man	look-REDUP-REFL-NONFUT

The two men looked at each other.

Note that the numeral indicating number of participants is crucial in maintaining the reciprocal reflexive distinction in YD. If the

numeral 'bulay' were omitted from the above example, the sentence would have a reflexive reading:

'The man looked at himself.'

Thus the reciprocal affix -(n)barriy is lost towards the bottom of the continuum but the reciprocal distinction is made by an alternative device. It is interesting that some other Australian languages also have a single affix form covering both RECIP and REFL. eg Guugu Yimidhirr, Yolŋu, Bardi. (See Dixon 1980 :433).

COMITATIVE AFFIX in TD derives a transitive stem from an intransitive verbal stem. The forms of this suffix are:

-mal: next but one after a stressed syllable

eg
nyinay - man
sit-COMIT
sit with

-mbal: in all other cases

eg
balbali - mban
roll-COMIT
roll with

(See also Dixon 1972:96ff.)

In YD, the comitative suffix -mal is used productively by all YS. It does not undergo any formal or functional change.

eg	ŋaja	wurrbanyu	jugumbil - gu	[INTR]
	1SG	talk-NONFUT	woman-DAT	
	ŋaja	wurrbay - man	jugumbil	[TR]
	1SG	talk-COMIT	woman	

I talked to the woman.

eg	jugumbil	yanu		[INTR]
	woman	go-NONFUT		
	jugumbil	yanu - man	wuju	[TR]
	woman	go-COMIT	food	

The woman took the food.

I have no data on the -mbal / all other cases, comitative affix form: YS did not appear to be familiar with any 3+ syllable verbs which take -mbal affix.

INSTRUMENTIVE AFFIX of TD is phonologically identical to the comitative affix described above. It derives a ditransitive verb from a transitive stem (by shifting the INST NP to nominative, and replacing the nominative inflection of O NP with dative inflection.) Detailed description and examples of instrumentive affix is given in Dixon (1972:95ff.) I have no data on the m(b)al affix being used in instrumentive function in YD.

-lŋay ANTIPASSIVE DERIVATION

In TD there is a transformation (which has become known as 'antipassive') that derives an intransitive stem from a transitive verb root by the addition of antipassive suffix -lŋay[5]. The transformation may be stated as:

NP_A	NP_O	VERB + TENSE	[TR]
NP_S	NP $DAT_{/ERG-INST}$	VERB + -lŋay + TENSE	[INTR]

The TD antipassive suffix has two allomorphs:

-lŋay: following -l root verb

eg bura - lŋa - nyu
see-ANT-NONFUT

-nay: following -y root verb

eg buwa - na - nyu
tell-ANT-NONFUT

(There is also dialectal variation in the antipassive affix form. This is described in 4.7.3.)

YS were tested for the -lŋay derivation. The 15 stimulus sentences contained 5 -y class and 10 -l class transitive verbs. Table 12 quantifies YS response for:

a) form of the antipassive allomorph: -lŋay; -nay

b) demotion of O NP to dative case (In YD data, there was no evidence of demotion to ERG-INST, as occurs in TD.)

The Table indicates that:

1) Allomorphic distinction of -lŋay, -nay is maintained for all 12 YS. (The -lŋay, -nay allomorphy on 'exception' transitive y-class verbs is further discussed in 4.5.2.)

2) O NP is successfully demoted to dative case in the responses of most YS.

Only AM toward the English pole lacked dative demotion in 100% of her responses. This suggests that the -lŋay antipassive derivation process remains intact for most YS.

It is important to note that although the -lŋay affix form remains in YD, its function is restricted to within the clause as an intransitivizing device. In TD, the antipassive derivation operates on inter-clause level as a clause co-ordinating device. In YD, the -lŋay affix form does not have this function. Nevertheless,

TABLE I2 : -lŋay ANTIPASSIVE DERIVATION

	VERB SUFFIX				DATIVE DEMOTION	
	-nay		-lŋay		$O_{NP} \rightarrow$ DAT	
	#	innovation	#	innovation	%	innovation: no DAT demotion
EM	5	-	I0	-	I00	-
MJ	5	-	I0	-	I00	-
BM	*	-	*	-	*	-
EJ	5	-	I0	-	I00	-
EB	I "	-	5 '	-	I00	-
LN	3 "	-	I0	-	94	6%
MM	4 "	-	I0	-	I00	-
EH	2 "	-	I0	-	I00	-
PG	4 "	-	I0	-	87	I3%
AM	?	-	I0	-	0	I00%
TM	*	-	*	-	*	-
DH	5	-	5 '	-	x	

* : not tested

? : no response to stimulus sentences

' : only 5 sentences were asked

x : only one response by DH contained an O referent. This was demoted to DAT case.

" : YS not familiar with all -y root TR verbs, but successfully retained -nay allomorph for all recognized forms.

in its capacity as an intransitivizing device within the clause, the YD -lŋay affix maintains two functional properties of the TD antipassive derivation:

1) Syntactically, it is commonly used by YS as a means of deriving intransitive structures.

eg

yara - ŋgu	barrgan	jaŋga - nyu	[TR]
man-ERG	wallaby	eat-NONFUT	
yara	barrgan - gu	jaŋga - <u>na</u> - nyu	[INTR]
man	wallaby-DAT	eat-ANT-NONFUT	

The man ate wallaby.

b) Semantically, in its aspectual function, -lŋay affix indicates an ongoing action that actually takes place.

eg

yuray !	ŋaja	bura -<u>lŋa</u> - nyu
quiet	1SG	see-ANT-NONFUT

[Be] quiet! I'm concentrating.

(Dixon 1972:91 reports the aspectual function of -ŋay affix in TD.)

In accordance with these two functions, the -lŋay derivation may be viewed as a stylistic option in YD, which acts as a verb-focusing device. In their loyalty to the -lŋay construction, YD differs from other language death situations where stylistic shrinkage and loss of stylistic options have been reported, (Dorian 1977a:27; Hill 1973:43-46). eg Dorian describes loss of passive and negative imperative constructions among the semi-speakers of terminal Gaelic.

Various factors may be hypothesized for the survival of the -lŋay construction in YD:

1) The rapidity of the death process in Dyirbal is conducive to a proficient group of YS, who command many TD constructions. Had the death process been less rapid, (as in Gaelic), the last speakers may well have lost more stylistic options.

2) As a derivational affix, the -lŋay form is more resistant to change than inflectional affixes, which occur on the periphery of word structure.

3) The -lŋay derivation has a direct parallel with English. In English, the O NP can be deleted with certain transitive verbs.

eg The woman is eating dinner. ⟶ The woman is eating ø.

In YD, all YS used the -lŋay construction to derive Dyirbal equivalents of the above English stimulus sentences.

eg

jugumbil-(du)	wuju	jaŋganyu	⟶	jugumbil	jaŋga-<u>na</u>-nyu
woman-(ERG)	food	eat-NONFUT		woman	eat-ANT-NONFUT

Thus, the parallel English method of expression may have some influence on YS need to maintain the -lŋay derivation.

At this stage, it is necessary to mention that another form of the antipassive affix -lay also survives in YD, but with a different function to the intransitivizing device -lŋay. ie There is a split in the function of antipassive affix forms in YD: -lŋay is maintained as an intransitivizing device within the clause. -lay is used in clause linkage, and usually followed by purposive affix -gu. Further description of the -lay affix and -lŋay, -lay split is given in 4.7.3.

ASPECTUAL AFFIXES

In additionto the syntactic derivational affixes described above, TD has four stem-forming "aspectual" affixes:

-nbal, -galiy: do quickly
-ganiy : do repeatedly
-yarray : do a bit more; start to do
-jay : repeated action; action involving many objects

(Dixon 1972:248ff.)

I found difficulty in eliciting these aspectual affixes by stimulus sentences. For all four aspectual meanings, most YS would simply give the reduplicated form of the verb. eg PG gave the single form balga-balgan 'hit-REDUP' in response to all sentences which tested various aspectual readings of the verb balga-l 'hit'.

It is important to note, however, that all four aspectual affixes were used by YS in more natural speech context. Even less-fluent YS (TM, AM, PG: of the Buckaroos) commonly used aspectual affixes in relaxed peer-group speech, (see 5.5.3). Examples of aspectual morphemes in the speech of these YS are given below:

eg bayi balay bural - ja - nyu (PG)
NOM I there see-ASP-NONFUT

He stared and stared at that place.

eg ŋaja miyanda - gali - nyu dubala (AM)*
1SG laugh-ASP-NONFUT 3DU

I laughed at those two.

eg they bin nyinan - gani - nyu back there (TM)
PAST sit-ASP-NONFUT

They sat for a long time back there.

* (The form -galiy was used to cover "do quickly". I found no occurrences of the alternative -l class affix -nban in YD.)

eg George bin banaga - yarra - nyu down there (TM)
PAST return-ASP-NONFUT

George started to return down there.

Thus, despite poor performance in test sentences, YS casual speech suggests that, like syntactic derivational affixes, the aspectual morphemes are not abandoned; rather they remain as useful linguistic devices in YD.

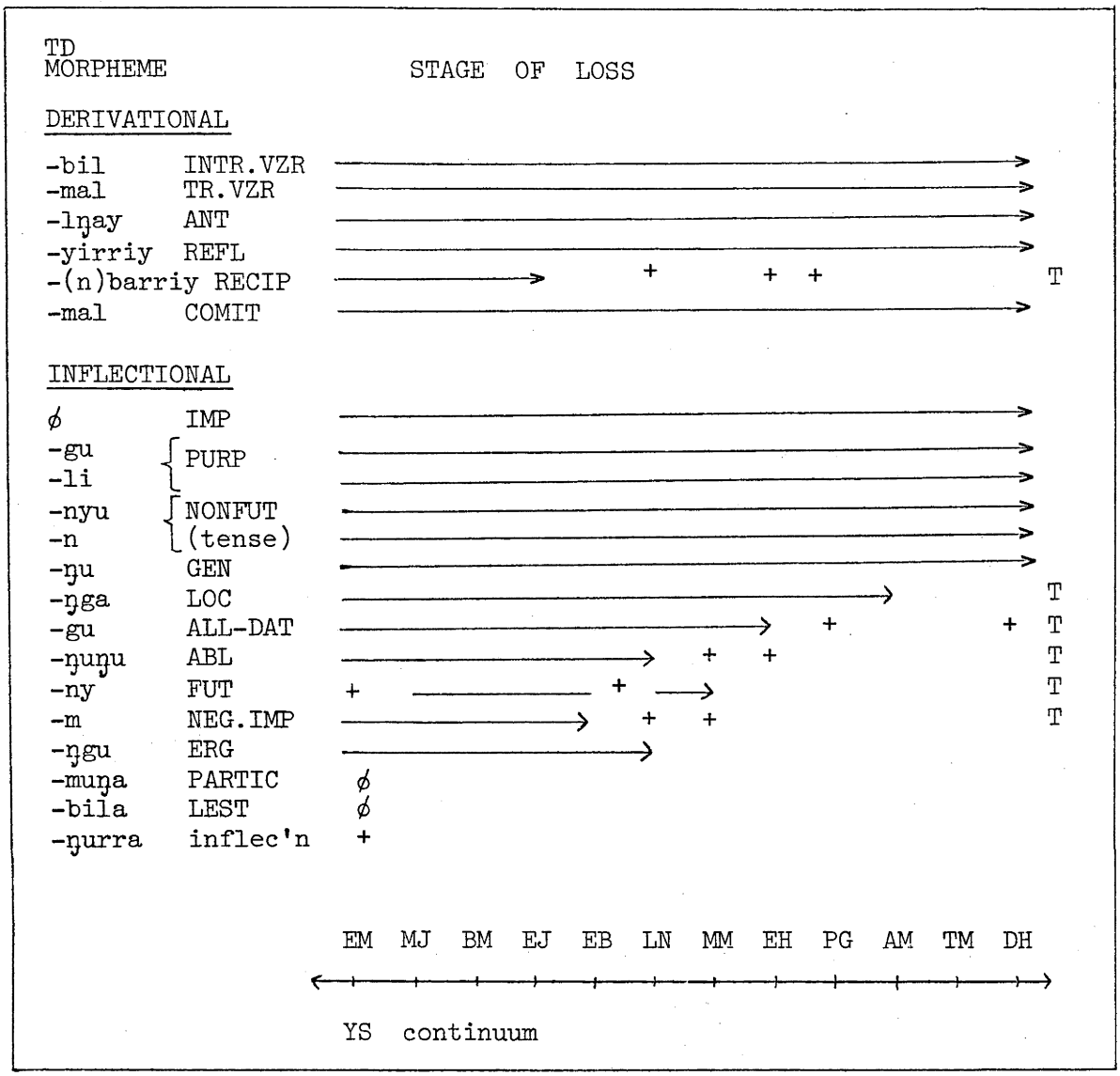
4.4 MORPHOLOGICAL HIERARCHY

Morphological changes in the noun and verb structure have been described above. It is useful at this stage to view this morphological change in general perspective, by placing the morphemes on a hierarchy according to their resistance to formal change. Table 13 maps formal change in TD bound morphemes. If the function of the "dying" morpheme has been transferred to an alternative Dyirbal linguistic device, the symbol T is marked.

The most striking feature of the Table is that all but one derivational affix (RECIP: -(n)barriy) have been retained in YD, whereas inflectional affix forms show signs of decay at earlier stages of the YD continuum. eg future, negative imperative, participial, 'lest', and -ŋurra verb inflections and noun case affixes have been dropped at various stages of the YD continuum.

Various reasons can be posited for this pattern of morphological decay. The answer does not lie solely in the morphological structure of the Dyirbal word; the explanation that inflectional affixes are more peripheral and therefore more susceptable to

TABLE I3 : MORPHOLOGICAL HIERARCHY



\+ : YS use morpheme interchangeably with another device.

T : Transfer of function

change is inadequate because such reasoning focuses only on the formal structure of the dying language. Other important factors that must be considered are: the frequency of the particular morpheme in TD; the function of the morpheme and its importance in the YD communication system; the proficiency of YS; patterns of interference from English in the language structure.

While the reasons for the pattern of morphological decay remain obscure, the resistence of derivational and certain inflectional morphemes to decay indicates that these forms still function as useful devices in the YD communication system.

4.5 AREAS OF IRREGULARITY

4.5.1 IRREGULAR VERB yanu 'go'

In TD the irregular verb yanu provides extra complexity to the language system. This verb does not behave like other -y or -l conjugation verbs: it has two roots, yana in positive imperative forms; yanu in all other forms including negative imperative. The unmarked tense form is yanu and not *yanu-n. Apart from this, the two roots behave like -l conjugation verbs, taking -l conjugation set of inflectional affixes (Dixon 1972:251). TD forms of yanu 'go' are shown in Table 14.

YS were presented with stimulus sentences designed to elicit yanu forms. The results, given in Table 14, show that the two main irregular features of the TD verb - two roots and a unique unmarked form - are altered in YD:

TABLE 14 : IRREGULAR VERB 'yanu' : go

	NON-FUTURE	FUTURE	PURPOSIVE	IMPERATIVE	NEGATIVE IMPERATIVE
TD FORM :	yanu	yanuny	yanuli	yana	galga yanum (J)*
EM	yanu	innovation yanu +T	yanuli	yana	galga yanum
MJ	-n	yanuny	"	"	innovation galga yanun
BM	-n	"	"	yanu(n)	galga yanun
EJ	-n	"	"	yanu	"
EB	-n ~ -nyu	"	"	"	galga yanam
LN	-n ~ yanan	" ~ yanun +T	"	"	galga yanu(m) / yanan
MM	"	"	"	"	nomo yana
EH	"	yanu +T	" ~ -laygu	yanu	nomo yanu
PG	-n ~ -nyu / yanan	yanun +T	" ~ -laygu	yanu	nomo yanu / yanan
AM	-n	yanun +T	"	yanu	nomo yanu
TM	?	?	?	?	?
DH	-nyu	yanunyu +T	"	yanu	nomo yanu

* : Other dialect forms are : ŋarru yanulmu (G) ; ŋarru yanam (Ngajan, Wari).

T : Time word indicates when the event /action took place.

1. YS innovate on the TD roots - yana, yanu - in three ways:

a. 4 YS extend the positive imperative form yana, as the root of the negative imperative form.

eg	TD			YD			
POS IMP:	yana		⟶	yana		*go!*	
				go!			
NEG IMP:	galga	yanu - m	⟶	galga	yana - m		(EB)
	NEG	go-NEG IMP		NEG	go-NEG IMP		
				Don't go!			

In the above, the negative imperative root form is analogized on the positive imperative root yana. It is interesting that the Ngajan and Wari dialects of TD have yana as root for negative imperative (Dixon PC). This similarity may be due to:

i) direct influence of these TD dialects forms on YS speech. This is dubious, however, as the Jambun community Dyirbal comprises only Dyirbal and Girramay dialects. There is little other evidence of interference from other TD dialects.

ii) The Ngajan and Wari dialects and YD may have independently analogized imperative root yana as the negative imperative root.

b. 6 YS dropped the TD imperative root yana, and used yanu as the single root. For these YS, the imperative form of 'go' is: yanu! There is no confusion between imperative and unmarked forms as the YS in question have changed the TD unmarked yanu to:

yanu - $\left\{\begin{matrix}\text{nyu}\\ \text{n}\end{matrix}\right\}$.

ie	TD		YD
IMPERATIVE:	yana	⟶	yanu
UNMARKED:	yanu	⟶	yanu- $\left\{\begin{matrix}\text{n}\\ \text{nyu}\end{matrix}\right\}$
	go		go-NONFUT

Thus the distinction between imperative and unmarked forms is maintained for these speakers.

c. Two YS (PG, LN) used the TD roots yana ~ yanu interchangeably.

eg bayi olman {yanan / yanun} (UNMARKED)
NOM I oldman go-NONFUT
The old man went.

For both speakers, yanu- was by far the most common root form.

2. The UNMARKED[6] (non-future) form of TD yanu- is retained by only three YS. In the responses of other YS, two distinct types of analogic remodelling occur:

a. Five YS analogized the unmarked form on the -l conjugation, which most forms of the verb resemble. These YS attached the -n affix of the -l conjugation thus:

eg bayi olman yanu - n (TD form: yanu)
NOM I oldman go-NONFUT
The old man went.

b. One less fluent YS analogized the unmarked form according to its syntactic function ie intransitivity. This YS placed yanu with the majority of intransitive verbs in -y conjugation by adding the unmarked -y conjugation affix -nyu.

eg bayi olman yanu - nyu
NOM I oldman go-NONFUT
The old man went.

Two YS used the -l and -y conjugation affixes interchangeably for the unmarked form:

eg	bayi	olman	{yanu - n / yanu - nyu}
	NOM I	oldman	go-NONFUT

The old man went.

For the purposive, future and negative imperative forms, yanu 'go' shows the same YS innovations as other -l conjugation verbs. Because the changes are detailed in 4.3.1, YS treatment of these yanu forms is given only brief mention below:

i) PURPOSIVE affix -li was retained by all YS.

eg	ŋinda	yanu - li	janyja
	2SG	go-PURP	now

You'll go now.

(Note that two YS also used -laygu as purposive affix in their response. See 4.7.3.)

ii) FUTURE is shown by the TD affix -ny for fluent YS, and by unmarked verb form and separate time word for less-fluent YS.

eg

TD:	olman	yanu - ny	
	old man	go-FUT	

YD: (PG)	olman	yanu - n	ŋulga	
	old man	go-NONFUT	tomorrow	

The old man will go tomorrow.

iii) For the NEG IMP form of yanu, as in other verbs, two fluent YS retain the particle: galga and -m inflection of the TD Jirrbal dialect.

eg galga yanu - m

Other YS innovate by 1) changing the TD particle galga to nomo, and/or 2) replacing the TD affix -m with their unmarked or imperative verb form.

eg

(AM)	nomo	yanu	(yanu = AM's IMP)
(PG)	nomo	yana - n	(yanan = PG's unmarked form)
	NEG	go-NONFUT	

Don't go!

The important point is that YS show analogic remodelling of the two irregular features of the TD verb 'go' - the unmarked form and yanu, yana roots.

4.5.2 "EXCEPTIONS" IN CONJUGATION MEMBERSHIP

TD has two conjugations which approximately correlate with transitivity value. Very roughly, 80% of -y conjugation verbs are intransitive, and 80% of -l class are transitive. Thus each conjugation has "preferred transitivity" but there are a fair number of exceptions. eg intransitive roots like yambi(l) 'fly' and mayi(l) 'come out' in the -l class, and transitive roots like bulga(y) 'swallow' and nyuga(y) 'grind' in the -y conjugation.

UNMARKED INFLECTION ON EXCEPTION VERBS

YS were presented with stimulus sentences designed to elicit 13 -y class transitive verbs and 12 -l class intransitive "exception" verbs in unmarked form. The results are presented in Table 15. The Table indicates how many of the TD exceptions each YS retains.

At the TD end of the continuum, YS do not alter TD conjugation membership for any of the 25 verbs tested: MJ and EM retained 13/13 transitive verbs in -y class and 12/12 intransitive verbs in -l conjugation, thus keeping 100% of TD conjugation "exceptions".

TABLE I5 : CONJUGATION 'EXCEPTIONS' IN YD

	UNMARKED INFLECTION				PURPOSIVE INFLECTION				ANTIPASSIVE AFFIX
	TR -y class		INTR -l class		TR -y class		INTR -l class		Retention of -nay
	# unchanged :# recog	%	# unchanged :# recog	%	# unchanged :# recog	*	# unchanged :# recog	**	# unchanged :# recog
EM	I3 : I3	I00	I2 : I2	I00	6 : 6	-	I2 : I2	-	I2 : I2
MJ	I3 : I3	I00	I2 : I2	I00	I2 : I2	-	I2 : I2	-	I2 : I2
BM	?		?		?	-	?	-	?
EJ	I2 : I3	92.3	I0 : I2	83.3	I : I	-	I0 : I2	-	5 : 5
EB	7 : II	63.6	2 : II	I8.2	6 : 6	3	II : II	I0	I : I
LN	2 : I0	20	7 : I3	53.8		-	I : I	-	3 : 3
MM	8 : 9	88.9	II : II	I00	-	-	II : II	-	4 : 4
EH	6 : II	54.5	3 : II	27.3	-	-	-	-	2 : 2
PG	2 : II	I8.2	3 : I2	25	3 : 3	3	-	-	4 : 4
AM	3 : 8	37.5	6 : II	54.5	0 : I	-	I0 : I0	4	I : I
TM	?		?		?		?		I : I
DH	3 : I2	25	2 : II	I8.2	3 : 3	I	I : I	I	7 : 7

* : # of verbs where unmarked (NONFUT) = -l class ; PURP = -y class.

** : # of verbs where unmarked " = -y class ; PURP = -l class.

In contrast, YS from later in the continuum regularise TD conjugation membership by placing some of the intransitive verbs in -y class and some transitive verbs in -l conjugation. The striking feature of Table 15 is that, as the continuum progresses, more exceptions are regularized. eg Fluent YS EJ retains 92% of TD -y class exceptions and 83% of intransitive -l class exceptions. This percentage diminishes towards the opposite pole: DH keeps only 25% of transitive -y root and 18% intransitive -l root exceptions. This redistribution is exemplified below. TD verb yambi (1) 'fly' is reanalyzed as -y class, like the majority of intransitive verbs. This is signalled by the -y conjugation affix -nyu.

eg

TD:	dundu	yambi - n̲	: -l conjugation affix
YD:	dundu	yambi - n̲yu	: -y conjugation affix
	bird	fly-NONFUT	

Similarly, "exception" verb jaŋga(y) 'eat' changes its unmarked affix from -y class -nyu to -l class -n, thus becoming like most transitive verbs.

eg

TD:	yara - ŋgu	jaŋga - n̲yu	wuju	: -y class affix
YD:	yara - ŋgu	jaŋga - n̲	wuju	: -l class affix
	man-ERG	eat-NONFUT	food	

The man ate food.

PURPOSIVE INFLECTION ON EXCEPTION VERBS

I tested YS for purposive inflection on these 25 "exception" verbs to see if YS changed both unmarked and purposive affixes when regularizing conjugation membership. (The purposive affix also varies with conjugation: -gu on -y class verbs; -li in -l conjugation.) Unfortunately, most YS seemed familiar only with the unmarked form. The limited data I have on YS purposive inflection for these "exception" verbs is presented in Table 15. The Table shows the total number of purposive responses, and the number of responses which retained TD purposive forms. Beside this is noted the number of verbs in which the purposive and unmarked affixes belonged to different conjugations. The most striking feature was that in all cases where there was a conjugation discrepancy between purposive and unmarked affixes, it was the unmarked form which had changed; the purposive form remained as the conservative TD affix form. Taking an example from AM's speech:

eg	dundu	yambi - nyu	:	y-class unmarked affix
		-NONFUT		
	dundu	yambi - li	:	l-class purposive affix
	bird	fly-PURP		

From the available data, it would appear that YS alter the unmarked NON FUT affix in regularizing conjugation membership before the purposive inflection.

ANTIPASSIVE AFFIX ON "EXCEPTION" VERBS

In TD the antipassive affix is -ɭŋay on trans -l class verbs, and -nay for "exception" verbs in -y class. YS were tested for the shape of the antipassive affix on "exception" verbs but the response was poor. Only the most fluent YS were able to respond to all 12 sentences; other YS answered to only a few. The results, presented in Table 15, indicate that:

1) No YS extended the -l class affix -ɭŋay to any of the exception verbs. For the less common verbs, YS gave no Dyirbal response to the English stimulus sentences. All YS produced the -nay affix on high-frequency forms such as jaŋga-na-nyu 'eat', buwa-na-nyu 'tell'. The retention of -nay allomorph on TR -y class verbs noted above is consistent with results of a similar test for form on ANT affix described in 4.3.2 (Table 12).

2) From the limited data, it would appear that the derivational antipassive affix is most resistant to the regularizing of conjugation membership. In 7 sentences where there was a discrepancy between conjugation of unmarked and antipassive affixes, it was the unmarked form which had changed.

eg	ŋaja	yara	buwa - n̲ (TD - nyu)	: unmarked -y class affix -nyu changed to -l class -n.
	ŋaja	yara - gu	buwa - n̲a̲ - nyu	: antipassive -y class affix -na- remains unchanged.
	1SG	man-DAT	tell-ANT-NONFUT	

I told the man.

In short, in regularizing the conjugation membership of "exception" verbs, YS alter the unmarked NON FUT affix before PURPOSIVE. The derivational ANTIPASSIVE affix does not evidence this change in conjugation.

The 'ironing out' of exceptions in conjuation membership has been noted in other Australian languages. Haviland (1979:232) reports that in modern Guugu Yimidhirr there is a tendency to reorganize conjugation membership so that the form of the verb corresponds to its transitivity. Dixon (1981:110) reports that Warrgamay also shows an "elimination of exceptions" that led to an exact coincidence of conjugation and transitivity classes. Donaldson (1980:157) observes that in Ngiyambaa, the complex traditional conjugation system has been subjected to reanalysis by younger speakers.

It is interesting that YS actually reorganize conjugation membership rather than dropping the conjugation distinction altogether by using -y and -l class affixes interchangeably. A check of the total YD data responses showed that only two YS confused the conjugation affixes on "regular" roots. This collapsing was minimal: LN used the -y class affix -nyu on transitive -l class verbs for only 5 of 200 sentences; EH did so for 11 of 200 responses. In all other responses, -y and -l conjugation affixes were used according to TD norms. The fact that YD retain the conjugation contrast and with greater correlation to transitivity value suggests that the transitive - intransitive distinction is a significant feature of the YD language system.

Summarizing, YS show a tendency to eliminate areas of unnecessary complication in the TD language system. Verb conjugation membership is rearranged so that conjugation corresponds with transitivity value to a greater degree. For the irregular verb yanu 'go', YS reorganize the two TD roots, and alter the unmarked form to become like other regular verbs. Thus, in these two areas, YD seems to be shifting in the direction of greater regularity.

4.6 CLOSED WORD CLASSES

4.6.1 PRONOUN PARADIGM

TD pronominal paradigm operates on a NOM-ACC (SA-O) basis. There is a three-way number distinction (SG, DU, PL) and 1 and 2 person categories. TD has no 3 person pronouns but the Dyirbal dialect has forms balagara and balamaŋgan that have some similarities to 3 DU and PL pronouns in other Australian languages (Dixon 1972:51). Also, noun markers bayi (NOM I) and balan (NOM II) have some of the functions of 3 SG pronouns in other languages (See 4.6.2).

YS were tested for the pronoun paradigm and the following points noted:

1. All 12 YS retained the three-way number distinction (SG, DU, PL).
2. SA-O distinction on 1 and 2 pronouns in TD was not altered. (The Girramay dialect of TD has 3 separate S-A-O categories for 1 and 2 pronouns. This does not occur in YD.)
3. In their response to English 3 pronouns, all 11 YS tested gave the following S forms:

3 SG masc.	:	bayi*
" " fem.	:	balan ~ ban*
" DU	:	dubala
" PL	:	alugeda

* bayi and balan ~ ban are noun markers in TD. The non-SG forms dubala, alugeda do not occur in TD.

These YD 3 person forms operate on an A-SO basis for those YS who mark the ergative case, and on an SA-O grouping for less-fluent YS who mark common nouns on SA-O pattern.

eg

alugeda - gu -ERG	buran	buliman	:	fluent YS
alugeda ø 3PL	buran see-NONFUT	buliman policeman	:	less-fluent YS

They saw the policeman.

In YD, (as in TD), these 3 person forms are not "proper" pronouns because, unlike 1, 2 pronouns they inflect on the same A-SO basis as common nouns and noun markers for fluent YS. On the other hand there is a similarity between 1, 2 pronouns and 3 pronoun forms: Like 1 and 2 pronouns, 3 pronouns in TD and YD can accompany a noun or occur alone.

eg	(yara)	alugeda	baninyu
	man	3PL	come-NONFUT

They (those men) came.

In this respect, the YD forms dubala, alugeda are functional equivalents of TD forms balagara, balamaŋgan (resp.) mentioned in the first paragraph of this section.

In short, there is no evident categorical change in the YD pronominal system: the TD person, number and case categories are kept.

The following formal changes are shown in the YD pronoun paradigm:

1. All YS use pronoun forms of the Dyirbal dialect. There were no Girramay dialect forms given in the YS response. (G & J dialect differences are presented in Dixon 1972:50).

2. There is an intrusion of pidgin pronoun forms in YD. The newly-introduced forms are:

	DUAL	PLURAL
1	min-dubala	wi-fela*
2	yun-dubala	yu-fela*
3	dubala	alugeda

* Note the intrusion of alien English fricative 'f'. (See Chapter 9)

These pidgin forms have replaced only dual and plural TD items. TD singular forms remain unaltered for all 11 YS. There are two important points to make regarding these pidgin pronouns:

1. The intrusion is systematic. As the YD continuum progresses, YS use more pidgin forms. Moreover, the susceptibility to pidginization is ordered: some pronoun categories give way to pidgin forms before others. This ordering is illustrated in Table 16 [7]. The susceptibility of pronouns to change is:

(3 PL) 2 DU (3 DU) 1 DU 2 PL 1 PL

[CHANGES FIRST] [CHANGES LAST] [8]

The ordering of 1 and 2 pronouns in their susceptibility to change is covered by two simple rules:

a. DUAL changes before PLURAL.— This ordering is in accordance with Greenburg's (1963:94) observation of markedness in pronoun number:

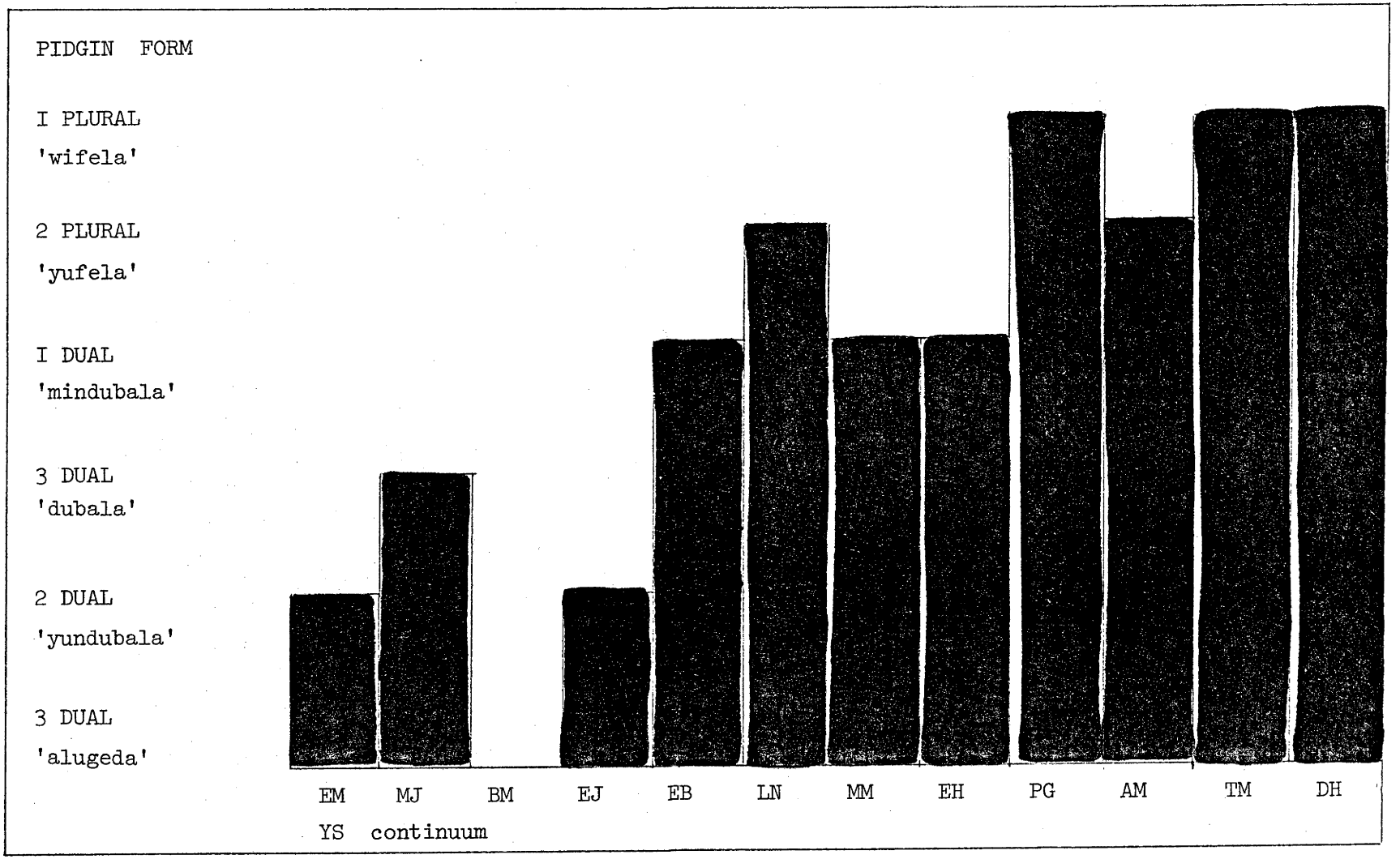
> "No language has a dual unless it has a plural... Non-singular number categories are marked categories in relation to the singular."

In YD, the most marked DUAL changes before PLURAL leaving the unmarked SG forms unaltered.

b. Within each number category, 2 person forms alter before 1 person forms.

This suggests that, in Dyirbal, 1 person is a more basic category. (Note that other languages vary in this. Some languages

TABLE 16 : ORDER OF PIDGIN PRONOUN INTRUSION IN YD



place 1 above 2.eg In Hua, a PNG language, Haiman (1979) reports that 2 and 3 person non-SG pronouns fall together, leaving 1 person separate. In contrast, some other languages place 2 above 1.) Nevertheless, the main point to be taken is that in YD, 1 SG and 2 SG resist change and therefore are at the top of the hierarchy. ie like other languages, 1, 2 →3.

Third person pronouns do not follow the above rules. Certainly, the suggested number hierarchy (dual→ plural→ sg) does not apply to 3rd forms: 3rd PLURAL alugeda is the first to change, whereas we would expect a DUAL form. According to the 2 rules, 3rd PLURAL form should change at a later stage, after DUAL forms had pidginized. I have no explanation for this but suggest that 3rd person forms are not "proper" pronouns. As noted earlier in this section, they behave differently from 1 and 2 pronouns.

The weakening of marked pronoun forms has been reported in other language death situations. Lee (1981:201) reports the loss of marked dual forms in young people's Tiwi, and the development of a sg-plural pronominal system. Dorian (1981:116) describes the weakening of marked feminine gender as a pronominal category in terminal Gaelic.

2. The second important point is that YD pidgin pronouns are strikingly similar to pronoun forms in other Australian creoles. The genesis of these similar forms is possibly independent; the languages are separated by thousands of miles. Table 17 compares dual and plural pronoun forms in YD with Fitzroy Valley Kriol (Hudson 1981) and Cape York Creole (Crowley and Rigsby 1979:178-180):

TABLE 17. COMPARISON OF PIDGIN PRONOUN FORMS

		YD	F.V.K.	C.Y.C.
DUAL	I inc.	mindubala	minyu ~ wi	yumi ~ yumtu
	I exc.		mindupala	mitu
	2	yundubala	yundupala	yutupala
	3	dubala	dupala	tupela
PL	I inc.	wifela	wilat ~ wi	mipela ~ wi
	Iexc.		mela ~ wi ~ mipela	mitupela ~ wi
	2	yufela	yupala	yu(pela)
	3	alugeda	dei ~ ol ~ olabat	dem(pela)

YD has no voicing distinction: d and b could equally be pronounced and written as t and p respectively, making YD forms strikingly similar to dual pronoun forms in Fitzroy Valley Kriol and Cape York Creole. It is interesting that dual forms show most similarity; plural forms have less resemblance.

In short, changes in YD pronoun paradigm are formal rather than categorical. There is a systematic intrusion of pidgin forms which replace dual and plural pronouns of TD.

4.6.2 NOUN MARKERS

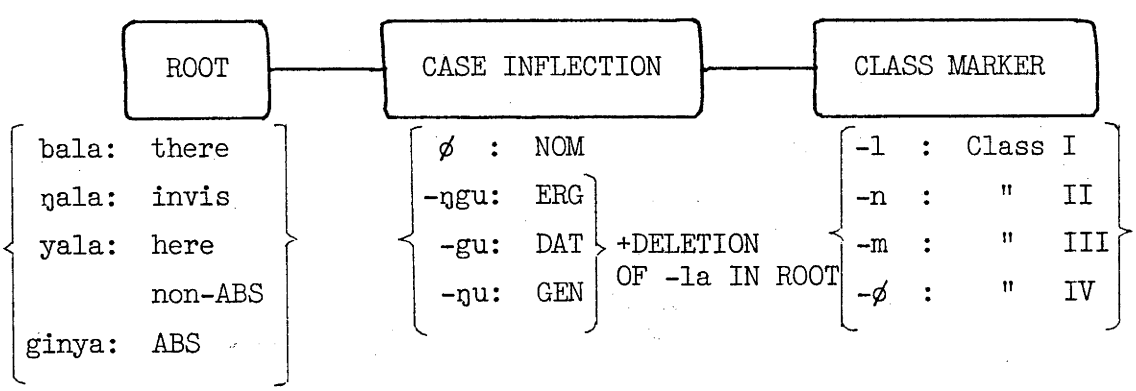
In TD there is a morphologically complex unit called (by Dixon) "noun marker" which normally accompanies a noun but can also occur alone with pronominal-like anaphoric function. The noun marker has heavy functional load: it shows the class of the noun, agrees with it in case, and yields information on the location of the referent.

eg	baŋgun	jugumbi-ru	balam	mirrany	budin
	there-ERG-II	woman-ERG	NOM III	black bean	take-NONFUT

The woman took the blackbeans.

In this example, the noun marker indicates that its referent jugumbil is 'there' in agentive function (ERG case), and class II.

The morphological structure of the TD noun marker is:



ROOT MORPHEMES

YS were tested for root forms: bala- ŋala- yala-. The results are shown in Table 18. The Table indicates that, as the continuum progresses, ŋala- 'invisible' root is lost first; then ginya ~ yala- 'here' is dropped from YS speech, leaving only the unmarked TD root bala- 'there' for less fluent YS. (To my knowledge, the 'invisible' 'here' distinction is not transferred to other linguistic devices in Dyirbal. The less fluent YS who have lost these forms express the 'here' distinction in texts by English deictic 'this ~ dis'.) The important point is that the unmarked root bala- becomes the generalized root form in the final stages of Dyirbal.

Using the unmarked root bala-, YS were tested for their command of noun markers along the dimensions of class and case. To illustrate the innovations in YD, Table 19 shows the TD bala- paradigm and beside it the same paradigm given by YS, TM. TM is a less-fluent YS placed on the right end of the continuum. I selected her paradigm because it exemplifies all of the changes that occur in YS bala- paradigms.

The most striking innovations in TM's paradigm are:

1. The ergative-absolutive (SO-A) case distinction is dropped and the unmarked nominative form is extended to cover all S-A-O categories. This innovation is associated with the loss of ergative case distinction (to a NOM-ACC system shown by S-V-O word order) in the noun case system of less-fluent YS (See 4.2.1). Case agreement between the noun marker and its noun is detailed in 4.7.1.

2. Class III and IV, are collapsed under Class IV noun marker forms. This noun class neutralization is discussed in detail in Chapter 6.

TABLE I8 : NOUN MARKERS IN YD

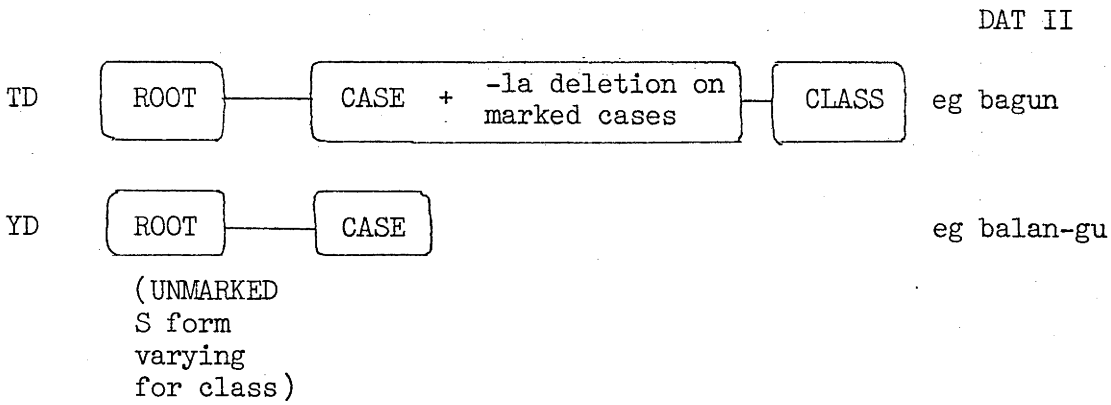
	RETENTION OF ROOT		
	ŋala- 'invisible'	yala- ginya 'here'	bala- 'there'
EM	✓	✓	✓
MJ	✓	✓	✓
BM	✓	✓	✓
EJ	✓	✓	✓
EB	ø	✓	✓
LN	ø	✓	✓
MM	ø	✓	✓
EH	?	?	✓
PG	ø	✓	✓
AM	ø	✓	✓
TM	ø	ø	✓
DH	ø	ø	✓

TABLE 19

BALA- 'THERE' NOUN MARKER PARADIGM

TD:CLASS	ABS	ERG-INST	DATIVE	GENITIVE
I	bayi	baŋgul	bagul	baɲul
II	balan	baŋgun	bagun	baɲun
III	balam	baŋgum	bagum	-
IV	bala	baŋgu	bagu	baɲu
YD:CLASS	S O A		DATIVE	GENITIVE
I	bayi		bayi-gu	bayi-ɲu
II	balan		balan-gu	balan-ɲu
III, IV	bala		bala-gu	bala-ɲu

3. The forms in TM's paradigm are more regular. The marked dative and genitive forms become more morphologically simple: the unmarked S-O-A form is used as root and noun case inflection is added. The change in morphological structure is:

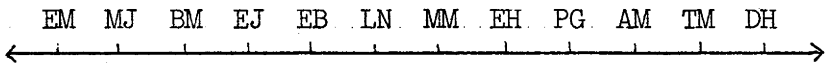


There is no loss of information due to this simplification of morphological structure: the reanalyzed S root bears class and deitic information.

In short, TM's paradigm is a radical simplification of the TD version. Certain categories of case and class are collapsed and the number of morphemes and associated structure is reduced to make the surface form more regular.

Having described the type of innovation that occurs in YD noun marker paradigms, it is necessary to detail which YS employ these changes. All 12 YS were tested for ERG, GEN, DAT noun markers in class I and II. (I have no data on these case forms for class III, IV.) The results are presented below:

ERGATIVE form of TD noun markers I, II: baŋgu-l/n are kept by all 6 YS who mark the ergative case on common nouns. YS later on the continuum who lost the ergative case affix, also dropped the ergative noun marker. This is illustrated in the following figure:



ERG.
CASE AFFIX ⟶
ON NOUN

ERG. I
NOUN MKR ⟶
"baŋgul"

ERG. II
NOUN MKR ⟶
"baŋgun"

ie in the YS response, ERG marking on common nouns corresponded exactly with the retention of TD ERG noun marker forms. YS who dropped ERG noun marker used the nominative form for all S-A-O functions; the below examples illustrate the SA-O grouping shown by word order:

eg (baŋgul :TD) (MM-DH)
ERG I

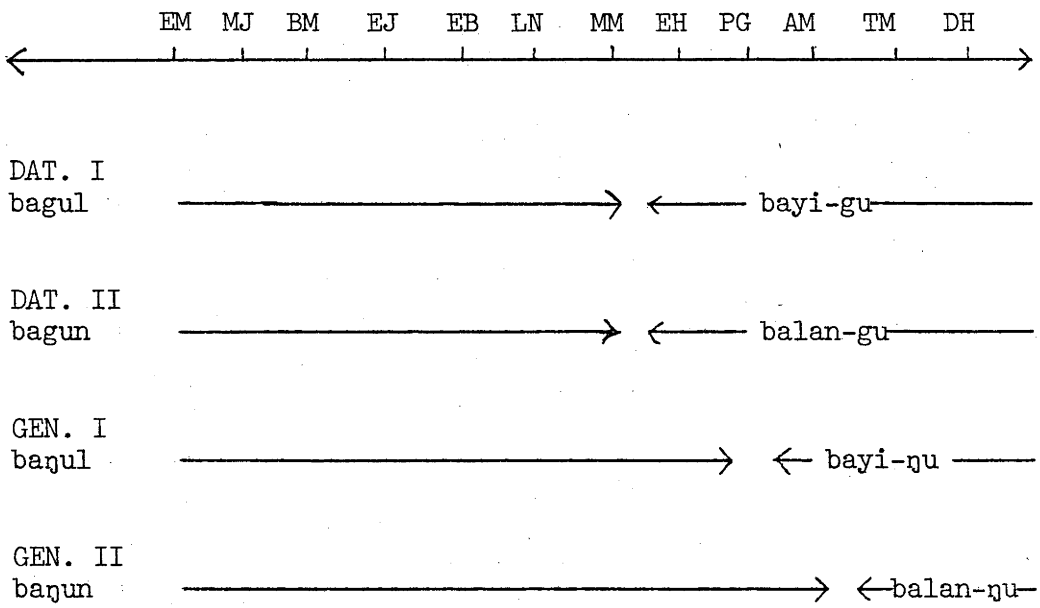
bayi minban yara
NOM I shoot-NONFUT man
A
He shot the man.

eg ŋaja buran bayi
1SG see-NONFUT NOM I
O
I saw him.

eg bayi ŋyinanyu
NOM I sit-NONFUT
S
He sat.

In other words, YS had either no ergative distinction, or both ergative inflection and ergative noun marker forms.

DATIVE and GENITIVE. The YS retention of these TD forms is shown in the figure below.



The figure illustrates that TD DAT I, II forms are retained by the 7 most fluent YS. 5 less fluent YS used morphologically

restructured forms bayi-gu: DAT I; ban-gu ~ balan-gu: DAT II, as described in TM's paradigm above.

eg
ŋaliji wugan wuju bayi-gu
(bagul: TD)
1DU give-NONFUT food DAT I
We two gave food to him.

eg
nyalŋga wurrbanyu ban-gu
(bagun: TD)
child talk-NONFUT DAT II
The child talked to her.

The TD GENITIVE I form: baŋul was retained by 9 YS. The GENITIVE II form: baŋun was most resistant: it was used by 10 of the 12 YS. YS who dropped these TD forms replaced them with morphologically simple forms:

eg
modaga balan-ŋu
(baŋun: TD)
car GEN I
Her car.

eg
bayi-ŋu guda
(baŋul: TD)
GEN I dog
His dog.

-BAYJI - TYPE AFFIXES. TD has a set of bound forms which can be added to any noun marker to specify the location of the noun's referent. These are described in Dixon (1972:48). No systematic study of bayji-type affixes in YD was undertaken.

4.6.3 INTERROGATIVES

wunyja- 'WHERE'

In TD the interrogative root wunyja- 'where' corresponds to noun markers ŋala-, bala-, yala- discussed in 4.6.2. Table 20

gives the TD wunyja- 'where' paradigm and below it the reduced YD version.

TABLE 20. wunyja- 'where' paradigm

TD CLASS	NOM	ERG-INST	DAT	SIMPLE GEN
I	wunyjiny	wunyjaŋgul	wunyjagul	wunyjaŋul
II	wunyjan	wunyjaŋgun	wunyjagun	wunyjaŋun
III	wunyjam	wunyjaŋgum	wunyjagum	-
IV	wunyja	wunyjaŋgu	wunyjagu	-
				(Dixon 1972:49)
YD				
I	wunyjiø			
II	wunyjan			
III	(wunyjam)*			
IV	wunyja			

* : All YS gave the above paradigm in their response, the only variation being collapse of class III-IV for 8 less-fluent speakers.

The following changes are evidenced in YD:

1. Marked case categories, ERG, DAT, GEN, are lost for most YS. The YD wunyja- paradigm is reduced to a set of unmarked NOM forms. Only one proficient YS gave one occurrence of a marked TD form: MJ used TD DAT II form wunyjagun once in her response. In all other instances, YS used unmarked NOM forms to cover TD marked case categories (ERG, DAT, SIMPLE GEN).

eg

TD	wunyjagun	jugumbil - gu	ŋinda	wurrbanyu
	(DAT II)	woman-DAT	2SG	talk-NONFUT
YD	wunyjan	jugumbil - gu	"	"
	(NOM II)	woman-DAT		

Where is the woman you talked to?

In the above example, YS use the NOM II interrogative form although the noun referent is in dative function. Because of the absence of case categories in the YD wunyja- paradigm, the TD case agreement between the interrogative form wunyja- and its noun is lost in YD: the interrogative is expressed by the unmarked NOM form, (but word order shows that it enquires about the location of "jugumbil", not of "ŋinda").

2.* The TD four-way noun class system is collapsed by less fluent YS. Only the four most proficient YS maintained the TD four class system; 8 YS (EB - DH) who occur later on the continuum, collapsed class III and IV, and extended the class IV interrogative form wunyja to cover nouns of both TD classes. This class III - IV collapse is also evidenced in the YD noun marker bala- paradigm (4.6.2). The same YS collapse class III and IV in bala and wunyja paradigms except EB: she collapses wunyjam/wunyja but not balam/bala. (See also 6.3).

3. There is a formal change in the YS wunyja paradigm. The irregular TD NOM I form, wunyjiny, is changed to wunyji ∅ by all 12 YS.

eg (wunyjiny: TD)

wunyji	∅	yara	miyandanyu
where	I	man	laugh-NONFUT

Where is the man who's laughing?

The deletion of the -ny affix may result from analogic remodelling on NOM I forms of bala-, yala- ~ -ginya, ŋala- noun markers. The NOM I forms of these noun markers have final vowel -i. It is possible that YS drop -ny affix from the TD NOM I form wunyjiny, to parallel these other noun markers.

ie

	TD NOM I	YD INNOVATION
there	bayi	
here	giyi	
invis.	ŋayi	
where	wunyji(ny)	→ wunyji ∅

Thus in YD, the wunyja- "where" paradigm evidences analogic remodelling of the irregular NOM I form, and loss of certain marked class and case categories. (It is difficult to determine whether such loss is due to a) the influence of the English linguistic system, or b) decay of a dying language system.)

WHO: wanya in TD inflects for case and shows a three-way S-A-O distinction, except in G. The wanya forms (Dixon 1972:53) are given in Table 21. YS were tested for the wanya paradigm and results are also presented in Table 21. The Table illustrates the following changes in YD:

1. The three-way S-O-A distinction and TD dative and genitive forms are kept for three YS high on the continuum.

2. As the continuum progresses, the S-A-O distinction is collapsed: EH and EB collapse the S-O categories under the unmarked form wanya, leaving A as the marked form. Less fluent YS (PG-DH) collapse all S-A-O and DAT categories under the unmarked form, wanya. For these YS word order and verb semantics indicate the role of the interrogative referent.

TABLE 2I : INTERROGATIVE 'wanya' -who IN YD

	CASE MARKING				
	A	S	O	DAT	GEN
TD FORM J:	wanyju	wanya	wanyuna	wanyungu	wanyunju
G:		wanyunya	wanyunya		
EM	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
MJ	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
BM	?	?	?	?	?
EJ	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
EB	✓	wanya		✓	✓
LN	?	?	?	?	?
MM	wanya			✓	✓
EH	wanyuna*	wanya		?	?
PG	wanya				wanyanju
AM	"				"
TM	"				"
DH	"				"

* : EH consistently used 'wanyuna', theTD object form, to mark A function. Because she uses a different form, 'wanya', to mark S-O function, the A-SO distinction is successfully maintained in her Dyirbal system.

eg

jugumbil	buran	wanya
woman	see-NONFUT	who (O)

Who's the woman watching?

jugumbil	wurrbanyu	wanya
woman	talk-NONFUT	who (DAT)

Who's the woman talking to?

There is no confusion of DAT - O case reading: the complement of intransitive verb wurrba-y 'talk' is DATIVE: transitive verb bura-l 'see' takes an O NP.

This category collapsing has been noted in other language contact situations, along the dimensions of case and gender and person. Weinreich (1968:42-43) gives various examples of the abandonment of obligatory distinctions. eg German speakers in Texas neglect the DAT - ACC distinction; in Gurage, a South Ethiopian language, the gender of the adjective is no longer expressed consistently.

3. There is a formal change: the four less-fluent YS alter the TD genitive form, by taking the unmarked S form wanya as root and adding a case affix -ŋu.

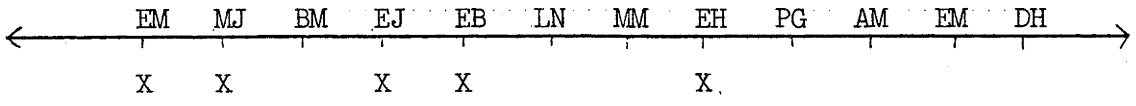
eg

TD	bala	wanyuŋu	modaga
YD	"	wanya-ŋu	"
	NOM IV	who-GEN	car

Whose car is that?

In short, less fluent YS simplify the TD wanya paradigm by collapsing certain case categories under the unmarked form, and by using the unmarked form as root for genitive.

WHAT interrogative form for all YS is minya. This is the TD Dyirbal dialect form (Dixon 1972:49). There were no occurrences of the Girramay dialect form wanya in the YS responses or texts. I have no data on case inflection for minya 'what' forms in YD, except minya-gu (DAT) 'why'. This form was produced by all YS. WHEN minyay in TD was successfully produced by all 12 YS. HOW MANY minyany, the interrogative member of the adjective class, was recalled by only 5 fluent YS. Other YS were unable to express this meaning in Dyirbal: they simply repeated the English form. The speakers who recalled the TD form are marked by X in the figure below.



POLAR INTERROGATIVES in TD are indicated by one or both of:

a. interrogative clitic ma which is added to the first word of a sentence as a question marker of that sentence.

b. rising questioning intonation as in English (Dixon 1972:122).

In YD, rising intonation is the only device for marking polar interrogatives. The TD ma clitic has been dropped from YS, and only 2 YS recognized it as a TD form. A typical YD yes-no question is marked thus:

ŋinda janyja bungi-li
2SG now sleep-PURP
You'll sleep now?

QUASI-INTERROGATIVE NOUN in TD ŋambiya "what's it called" was used by all 12 YS in elicitation sessions. YS appeared to use ŋambiya

interrchangeably with a pidgin form thiŋ whenever they could not immediately recall the TD term wanted. This form occurred frequently in YS texts and conversations.

eg

olman	nudin - ŋambiya	bala
oldman	cut-what	NOM II

The old man cut - what-do-you-call-it?

eg

MJ:	ban	jananyu	now	balay	/	minyagu	ban	thiŋ
	NOM II	stand		there		why	NOM II	what
	She stood there now.				/	*Why was she what's-the-word?*		

BJ:	mijuyirrinyu
	wait
	waiting
MJ:	yeah.

In the above conversation, MJ cannot recall the verb form, and substitutes 'thiŋ'. The older speaker, BJ, interprets MS's use of thiŋ as a signal for assistance, and so supplies the appropriate TD form.

PARTICLES

TD has about a score of particles, most of which do not inflect in any way, but which provide modal, logical or similar qualification for a complete sentence. These are described in Dixon 1972:116.

No systematic study of these particles was undertaken for YD. However, impressionistically, it seems that fluent YS use about half; less-proficient YS were familiar with many less than this. The following particles were observed in YS texts and conversations. (Examples are provided from the least-fluent YS who used the particle form.)

1. gaji - 'try (to do it)'

eg
yilbun dat yarra ! there now gaji ! gaji now !
pull fishing line try try
Pull that fishing line! There now try! Try now! (PG)

2. gulu - NEG

eg
gulu ŋamban
NEG hear
I didn't hear. (AM)

3. galga - NEG IMP

eg
galga wurrba - m
NEG IMP talk-NEG IMP
Shut up! (PG)

4. warra - 'wrong person/thing involved in event'

eg
warra bayi miyandanyu
PART NOM I laugh
He's the wrong one to laugh. (MJ)

5. mugu - 'impossible to avoid doing something that is quite unsatisfactory'

eg
mugu ŋaja galgan
PART 1SG leave
I had to leave it (because I could eat no more). (MJ)

6. marri - 'perhaps'

eg
marri bayi bani-ny
PART NOM I come-FUT
Perhaps he will come. (MJ)

(This form is not listed in Dixon 1972. I found no instances of alternative yamba 'perhaps' in YD.)

7. ŋara - 'couldn't do'

eg
ŋaja bayi barrgan ŋara jaŋganyu
1SG NOM I wallaby PART eat
I couldn't eat the wallaby. (MJ)

8. birri - 'could have happened but didn't'

eg
birri baŋgun ŋinuna ŋamban
PART ERG II 2SG-ACC hear
She could have heard you.

9. jamu - 'just'

eg
ŋaja jamu bala - bawal yanu - ny
1SG PART there-long way go-FUT
I'm only going over there.

10. ŋurri - 'in turn; redress balance'

eg
baŋgun ŋayguna ŋurri waŋal - du wugan
ERG II 1SG-ACC PART boomerang-DAT give
She, in turn, gave me a boomerang.

Note that 7 of these 10 particles occurred only in the speech of very proficient YS.

To sum up the situation with regard to closed grammatical classes, YS showed radical simplification of TD paradigms (except pronouns). This simplification involved abandonment of certain categorical distinctions: Certain TD case categories were collapsed for noun marker bala-, and interrogative members wunyja 'where' and wanya 'who'. The four-way class distinction is also weakened: many YS collapsed class III and IV in the bala- 'there' and wunyja 'where' paradigms. Formal changes to make paradigms more regular involved morphological restructuring: YD bala- 'there' and wanya 'who' paradigms used the unmarked nominative form as root for case inflections, thus replacing morphologically complex marked forms of TD.

In all paradigms the resistance of unmarked forms to change is striking: singular forms of pronouns; unmarked noun marker root bala-; nominative case forms of bala-, wunyja 'where'

(except irregular NOM I form), and wanya 'who' remain unaltered in YD. It is the marked forms of these closed classes which show a high tendency to change.

4.7 SYNTAX

4.7.1 CONSTITUENT AGREEMENT - NOUN PHRASE

In TD there is case agreement on all words of an NP. -ie in a NP containing a noun marker, a noun and any number of adjectives, each element is marked for case.

eg	bangun	jugumbi - ru	marrgi - ŋgu	mirrany	babin
	ERG IV	woman-ERG	thin-ERG	blackbean	slice-NONFUT

The thin woman sliced the blackbeans.

YS were tested for case agreement within the NP. Table 22 shows the frequency of noun marker and adjective agreement with the head noun in YS response to stimulus sentences. The following changes in YD are indicated:

1. For YS high on the continuum, the noun marker is frequently marked for case. After the LN point of the continuum, the noun marker agreement pattern drops abruptly. YS at the bottom of the continuum rarely marked case on a noun marker.

2. Adjective agreement is generally less frequent than noun marker agreement. For YS who show both adjective and NM agreement, NM agreement is far more common. This is exemplified in the following, where only the noun marker shows case agreement.

eg	bangun	marrgi - ∅	jugumbil - du	babin	mirrany
	ERG II	thin	woman-ERG	slice-NONFUT	blackbean

The thin woman sliced the blackbeans.

TABLE 22 : AGREEMENT OF CONSTITUENT ELEMENTS - NOUN PHRASE

	NOUN MARKER AGREEMENT			ADJECTIVE AGREEMENT		
	# agree	# opportunity	%	# agree	# opportunity	%
EM	23	25	92	8	I4	57
MJ	32	32	I00	6	28	2I
BM	I	3	-	0	4	0
EJ	7	7	I00	2	5	40
EB	I	2	-	0	5	0
LN	44	45	98	0	I7	0
MM	3	I2	25	I	8	I2.5
EH	0	5	0	0	8	0
PG	2	26	8	0	I6	0
AM	0	4	0	0	2	0
TM	0	5	0	0	4	0
DH	0	5	0	0	2	0

3. For less-fluent YS, case marking on either noun marker and adjective is rare. AM, EM and DH show no occurrences of case agreement.

eg ban jugumbil jananyu balaḡ midiḡ girimu - ŋga
NOM II woman stand-NONFUT NOM IV small snake-LOC
The woman stood on the small snake.

Significantly, lack of constituent agreement is accompanied by rigidification of word order. In TD word order is exceptionally free, although there are preferences. (Dixon 1972:291). This goes with separate case marking on each constituent element. In contrast, YS (EH ~ DH) have rigidified word order. (See 4.7.2). For these YS the constituents of each phrase are rarely interrupted by other forms. (In transformational terms, the scrambling rule does not apply.) Therefore, there is no need to mark each word separately for case. This innovation may be due to English interference.

VERB COMPLEX

In TD, the verb complex also shows agreement between constituent elements. The adverbal agrees with the verb in two ways:

a) in transitivity value - most adverbals are unitransitive and require a derivational affix (-lŋay: antipassive; -yirriy: reflexive; or -mal: transitive verbalizer) to change transitivity value. eg In the following, transitive adverb 'wirrja-l' 'quickly' is intransitivized by reflexive affix -yirriy, thus agreeing in transitivity value with the intransitive verb.

eg jugumbil wirrja - yirri - nyu jiŋgali - nyu
woman do quickly-REFL-NONFUT run-NONFUT

The woman ran quickly.

Two exceptions are wiyama - y/l 'do how' and yalama - y/l 'do like this' which have both transitive and intransitive forms.

b) TD adverbs also show agreement by taking the same inflection as the verb. For example, an adverbal accompanying a verb in NON FUT inflection will take a NON FUT affix:

eg ban jugumbil yalama - nyu wurrbanyu
NOM II woman do like this-NONFUT talk-NONFUT

The woman talked like this.

In the YD investigation, transitivity agreement was not tested. Ideally, this would have involved unitransitive adverbal such as wirrja-l 'quickly'.

YS were tested for inflection agreement using two adverbals: yalamay 'do like this'; wiyamay 'do how'. Note that some YS were unable to respond because they were not familiar with these adverbals. These YS are marked as * on the table. As Table 23 indicates, only the four most fluent YS showed verb-adverbal agreement: other YS used an unvarying adverbal inflection on both -l and -y class verbs.

	yalaman	bayi	miyanda - nyu
-y class verb:	do like this	NOM I	laugh

He laughed like this. (DH)

	yalaman	bayi	bungi - n
-l class verb:	do like this	NOM I	lie down

He slept like this.

Note that among these YS, there is no standard adverbal inflection. Each YS who has lost the agreement rule has a different way of inflecting the adverbal.

TABLE 23 : VERB - ADVERBAL AGREEMENT

	wiyama-y/l :do how		yalama-y/l :do like this	
	INTR VERB	TR VERB	INTR VERB	TR VERB
Form of TD adverbal affix	-nyu	-n	-nyu	-n
EM	-nyu	-n	-nyu	-n
MJ	-nyu	-n	-nyu	-n
BM	-nyu	-n	-nyu	-n
EJ	-nyu	-n	-nyu	-n
EB	*	*	*	*
LN	-nyu		-n	
MM	*		*	
EH	-nyu		-nyu	
PG	-nyu		-nyu	
AM	*		*	
TM	*		*	
DH	-n ; -nyu		-n	

* : Informant not familiar with these adverbals.

Summarizing, at phrase level there is a breakdown in agreement rules operating in the noun phrase and verb complex. Case agreement of NP elements and inflection agreement between verb and adverb are lost among less fluent YS.

4.7.2 WORD ORDER

In TD, word order is exceptionally free although there are some preferences (Dixon 1972:291). I quantified word order in YS response sentences. The results are presented below:

INTRANSITIVE SENTENCES

In TD, the preferred word order in intransitive sentences is S-V. This is maintained in YD. All intransitive construction in YS response were S-V order.

eg
jugumbil nyinanyu
woman sit-NONFUT
S V

The woman sat.

TRANSITIVE SENTENCES

TD transitive sentences show two preferred word orders:

i) O-A-V when the A NP is a nominal.

eg
bayi baŋgun buran
NOM I ERG II see-NONFUT

She saw him.

ŋayguna baŋgun buran
1SG ACC ERG II see-NONFUT
O A V

She saw me.

ii) A-O-V when the A NP is a pronoun

eg
ŋaja bayi buran
1SG (A) NOM I see-NONFUT
I saw him.

ŋaja ŋinuna buran
1SG (A) 2SG ACC see-NONFUT
A O V
I saw you.

These TD preferences were checked in YS response sentences and the results shown in Table 24. The striking features of the Table are:

1. The O-A-V preference of TD is dropped by YS. In the total YS response, only two YS (MJ and EJ) used O-A-V order, and then in only 3 of 120 examples. (Moreover, one of MJ's O-A-V examples does not reflect the TD O-A-V preference because the A NP is a pronoun. In TD, A NP pronouns have A-O-V order preference.) The two MJ examples of O-A-V order are:

eg
O A V
bala -bala baŋgul yara - ŋgu budin
NOM IV-REDUP ERG I man-ERG take-NONFUT
The man took that (thing).

eg
O A V A = pronoun
yuri bayi ŋaja jinban
kangaroo NOM I 1SG spear-NONFUT
I speared the kangaroo.

2. The A-O-V preference of TD is used quite frequently by some fluent YS, eg EJ, MJ: 80%; BM: 93%.

It is important to mention, however, that in YD this ordering is used for both pronominal and nominal A NP's. For example, in all of EM's 110 responses, A NP occurred clause-initially (ie A-O-V, A-V-O). In only 24:110 was the A NP a

TABLE 24 : WORD ORDER IN YS RESPONSE - CORE NP'S

	A - O - V			A - V - O			O - A - V			O - V - A & other		
	#	: total	%	#	: total	%	#	:total	%	#	: total	%
EM	38	: II0	34.5	72	: II0	65.5	0		0	0		0
MJ	60	: 75	80	I2	: 75	I6	2	: 75	3	I	: 75	I
BM	28	: 30	93	2	: 30	7	0		0	0		0
EJ	36	: 45	80	8	: 45	I8	I	: 45	2	0		0
EB	24	: 5I	47	27	: 5I	53	0		0	0		0
LN	II	: II2	I0	I0I	: II2	90	0		0	0		0
MM	2	: 36	5.5	34	: 36	94.5	0		0	0		0
EH	4	: 38	I0.5	34	: 38	89.5	0		0	0		0
PG	4	: I02	4	98	: I02	96	0		0	0		0
AM	0	: 45	0	45	: 45	I00	0		0	0		0
TM	0	: 40	0	40	: 40	I00	0		0	0		0
DH	3	: 34	9	3I	: 34	9I	0		0	0		0

pronoun. Similarly 72 of MJ's examples were A- initial, but only 19 of these 72 constructions had A pronouns. (This information is not tabulated, but the same pattern does emerge for other YS.) In short, YS appear to have dropped the preferences in word order which depended on the pronoun-noun distinction. Instead, YS place both pronominal and nominal A NP's in clause-initial position.

eg
ŋaja bayi buran
1SG (A) NOM I see-NONFUT
I saw him.

baŋgun bayi buran
ERG II NOM I see-NONFUT
A O V
She saw him.

(MJ and EJ were the only YS who did not use A NP clause-initially in 100% of responses. In 3 of 75 sentences, MJ placed A NP in non-initial positions; in 1 of 45 sentences, EJ placed A NP in non-initial positions.)

3. The two dominant word orders of YS response sentences were:

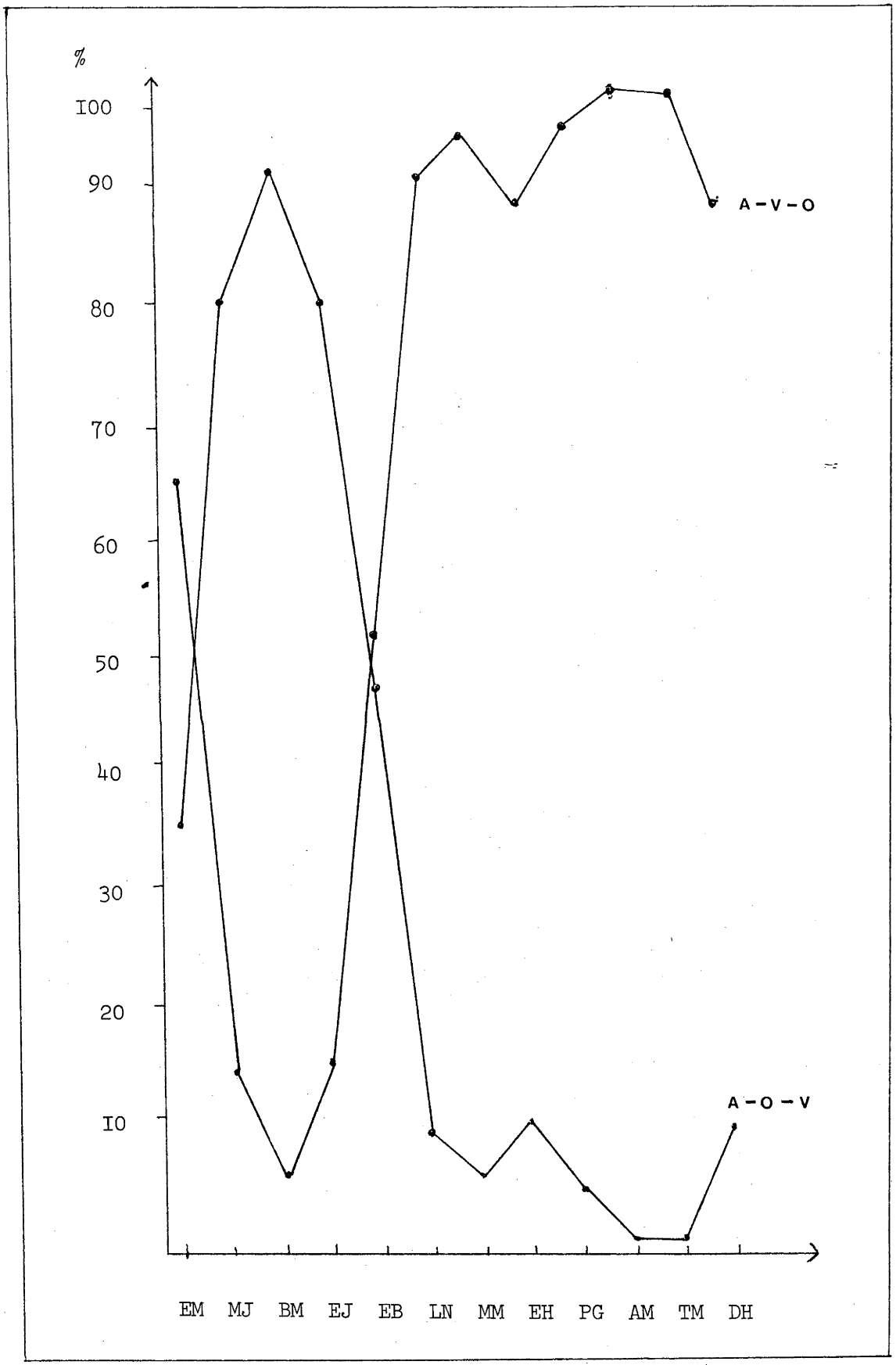
A-O-V eg jugumbil - du nyalŋga buran (EB)
woman-ERG child see-NONFUT

and

A-V-O eg jugumbil buran nyalŋga (PG)
woman see-NONFUT child
The woman saw the child.

Graph 1 traces the frequency of these two orders along the continuum. As the graph indicates, there is an increase in A-V-O order as the continuum progresses. The 7 YS at the bottom of the continuum used A-V-O order for at least 89% of their responses. YS earlier on the continuum used A-V-O order much less frequently.

GRAPH I : WORD ORDER IN YS RESPONSE SENTENCES



It is interesting that there is unusual variation in word order patterns at the TD end of the continuum - the most fluent YS (EM) has an unusually high frequency of A-V-O order, whereas we would expect a lower frequency of A-V-O innovation at this stage of the continuum. (For most other linguistic features, MJ and EM retain the conservative TD norm.) Checking through response sentences, there appears to be no syntactic or semantic reasons for this aberrance. The pronominal-nominal distinction was not a factor in placement of O NP before or after the verb: Unfortunately, the O NP was pronominal in all but one of EM's 110 response sentences.

One possible factor in the contrasting word order patterns for fluent YS may be the sociological factor of sex. BM and EJ, the only two male YS, are most conservative in having lowest frequency of A-V-O order. In contrast, all but one female YS used A-V-O innovation to a greater degree. It is possible that the variation in word order pattern is associated with female YS adjusting their speech towards the A-V-O order of English stimulus sentences, to a far greater extent than the two male YS. This speech adjustment in female speech has been noted in other socio-linguistic writings:

> "Woman ... are often significantly more language conscious and use more hypercorrections than men; they are more inclined to give in to social pressures toward adaption."
>
> (Dressler & Wodak-Leodolter 1977:8)

The suggestion that the word order variation is sex-linked must be treated with caution for two reasons:

1. The ratio of 2 males to 10 females is hardly a proportionate sample. Unfortunately, BM and EJ were the only two male YS I was able to work with.

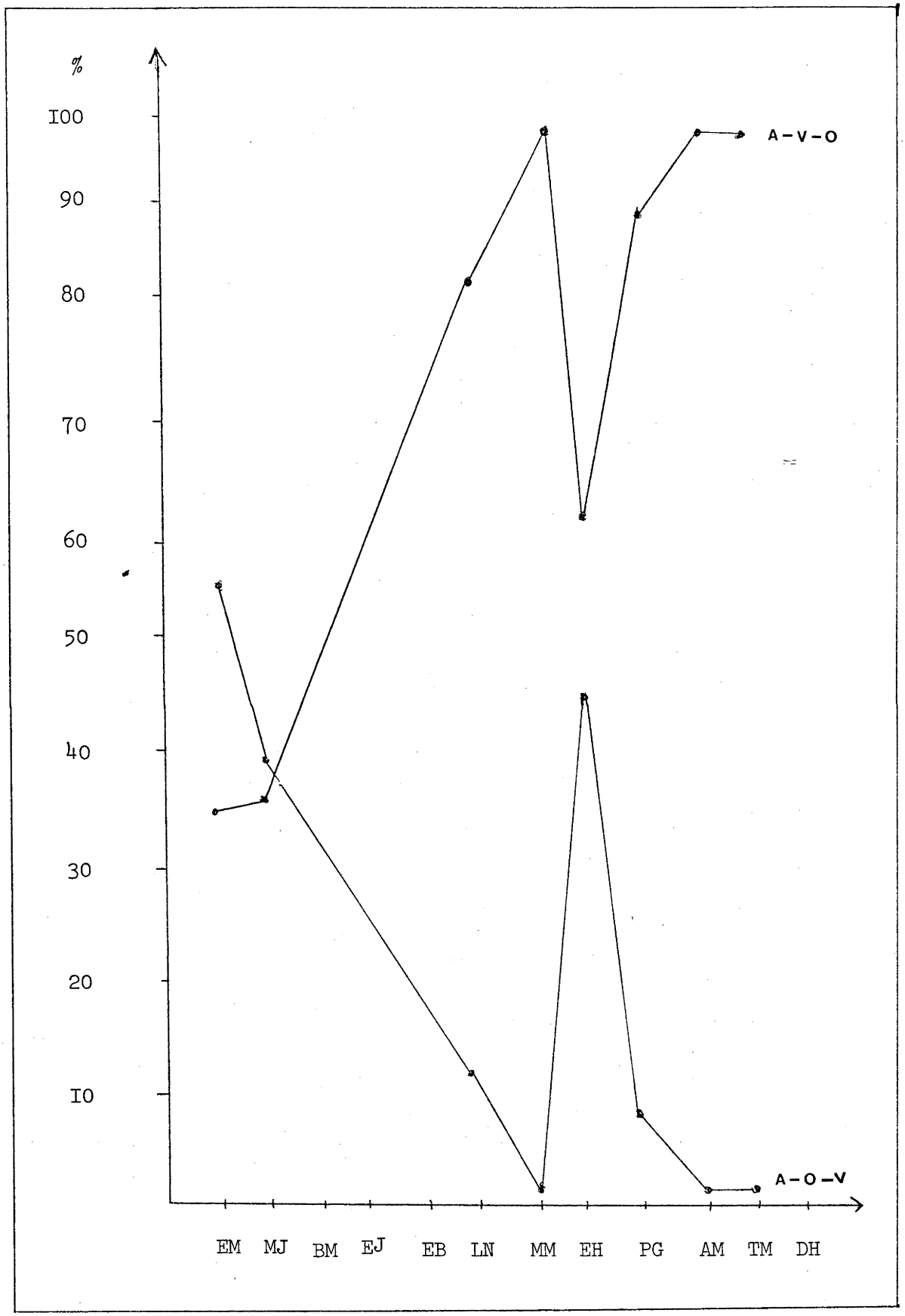
2. Word order is the only linguistic feature which appears to correlate with sex in this way. It is possible that word order is the primary level for female speech accommodation.

Due to the possibility that word order in YS response was affected by A-V-O order of English stimulus sentences, a word order count of YS texts was taken. (I was able to record texts from 8 female, but no male, YS.) The word order patterns in YS texts are given in Graph 2. The important point to note is that YS texts are similar to response sentences in showing a high incidence of A-V-O order toward the bottom of the continuum. A second point of interest is that EM uses A-V-O word order to a lesser extent in texts. Her A-V-O frequency falls from 65% in elicitation to 35% in texts. This suggests that EM was adjusting her speech to the A-V-O English word order.

Summing up changes in YD word order, there is evidence of rigidification of two dominant patterns: A-O-V for most fluent YS, and A-V-O for less fluent YS at the English end of the continuum. In other words, there has been a gradual move toward English word order along the continuum. The changes in YD order are best described in two stages:

STAGE 1: The TD preference of placing only pronominal A NP's clause-initially is lost. Both pronominal and nominal A NP's are placed clause-initially. Most YS at the TD end of the continuum evidence only stage one, through their preference for A-O-V order.

GRAPH 2 : WORD ORDER IN YS TEXTS



STAGE 2: The O NP is placed after the verb, in this second stage. YS occurring late on the continuum employ both stages 1 and 2 of word order rearrangement. Their resultant word order is A-V-O as in English.

ie TD: FREE WORD ORDER, BUT PREFERENCES:

		A-O-V	:for pronominal A NP's
		O-A-V	:for nominal A NP's
STAGE 1:	FLUENT YS:	A-O-V	:for all A NP's
STAGE 2:	LESS FLUENT YS:	A-V-O	= English word order

4.7.3 CLAUSE CO-ORDINATION

TD is well known for its syntactic ergativity. The S-O pivot is a common clause linkage device. It requires that co-ordinate constructions must show a common NP that is in S or O function in each clause. If the common referent of two clauses is in S-O function in clause 1, but in A function in clause 2, then clause 2 undergoes an antipassive -lŋay or false reflexive derivation, which places the common referent NP in S function. (The intransitivizing function of the antipassive derivation is discussed in 4.3.2. The allomorphs of the affix are detailed in 4.5.2.) In TD the antipassive derivation is used in clause linkage thus:

If we have two clauses:

1.	buliman	baninyu	2.	buliman-du	Lillian-nya	budin
	policeman	come-NONFUT		policeman-ERG	-ACC	take-NONFUT
	The policeman came.			*The policeman took Lillian.*		

these can be conjoined since they share NP: buliman. But in order to co-ordinate the two clauses, clause 2 undergoes an antipassive

derivation that places buliman in S-O position in both clauses:

eg	buliman	baninyu	Lillian-nya-n-gu	budi-lŋa-nyu
	policeman	come-NONFUT	-ACC-DAT	take-ANT-NONFUT

The policeman came and took Lillian.

(For further details, see Dixon 1972:71ff.)

YS were tested for the S-O pivot device in 20 stimulus structures: 10 in purposive clause conjunctions (PCC) and 10 in non-PCC. The results are presented in Table 25. The Table illustrates that:

1. The antipassive affix occurred predominantly in PCC. Most YS scored 100%. The following example illustrates ANT affix in PCC:

eg	buliman	baninyu	Lillian-nya-n-gu	budi-lay-gu
	policeman	come-NONFUT	-ACC-DAT	take-ANT-PURP

The policeman came in order to take Lillian away.

2. Non-PCC were rarely joined by the S-O pivot device. (Only once in the entire YS response, was the antipassive affix used in non-PCC. EM, the most fluent YS, gave this single occurrence.) In all other instances, YS linked these clauses by a single conjunction word: an; then ~ den; baŋum 'then'; or juxtaposition.

eg	buliman	baninyu	an then ~ den baŋum: 'then' #	budin	Lillian
	policeman	come-NONFUT		take-NONFUT	Lillian

The policeman came and took Lillian.

TABLE 25 : S-O PIVOT IN CLAUSE CO-ORDINATION : YS RESPONSE SENTENCES

	OCCURENCE OF ANTIPASSIVE AFFIX				DEMOTION OF O_{NP} TO DATIVE
	PURPOSIVE CLAUSE CONJUNCTION		NON-PURP CLAUSE CONJ.		
	Max score : IO	%	Max score : IO	%	%
EM	IO	IOO	I : IO	IO	IOO
MJ	IO	IOO	-	0	IOO
BM	IO	IOO	-	0	IOO
EJ	IO	IOO	-	0	IOO
EB	IO	IOO	-	0	90
LN	IO	IOO	-	0	IOO
MM	IO	IOO	-	0	90
EH	IO	IOO	-	0	IOO
PG	IO	IOO	-	0	70
AM	8	80	-	0	0
TM	9	90	-	0	0
DH	IO	IOO	-	0	50

3. YS high on the continuum have an intact antipassive derivational process in PCC: O NP's are demoted to dative case with 100% success.

4. Less-fluent YS have less success with the antipassive derivation: the rate of dative demotion falls (DH: 50%; TM, AM: 0%). (In addition, there is evidence that the antipassive affix -lay and purposive affix -gu become fossilized as a single affix form for these less-fluent YS. This fossilization of -laygu is discussed later in this section.)

FREQUENCY OF ANTIPASSIVE AFFIX IN TEXTS

The above data from stimulus sentences indicates a decline in the use of the antipassive derivation is YS clause conjunction. However, it is possible that such figures are misleading as YS may model their response on English stimulus sentences. Thus it is necessary to observe the antipassive derivation in a more natural speech context: the texts of 8 YS were quantified for the occurrence of the antipassive affix. The results, shown in Table 26, indicate that:

1. The antipassive affix occurs far more frequently in PCC than in other clause conjunctions in YD. Of the total YS texts, there were 66 occurrences of ANT affix used as a clause linkage device. In 62 of the 66 instances (94%), the ANT affix was used in PCC. The first example below illustrates the use of S-O pivot in PCC in YS texts. The second example typifies clause linkage in non-PCC: the S-O pivot does not apply. Instead, the clauses are juxtaposed.

TABLE 26: FREQUENCY OF ANTIPASSIVE IN TD TEXTS

	NON-PURPOSIVE CLAUSE			PURPOSIVE CLAUSE		
affix form :	-lŋay -nay	-lay	# used in clause linkage	-laygu	inapprop. use on INTR V	DAT Demotion
EM	7	I	4	I7	-	I00%
MJ	4	I		I2	-	I00%
LN	I	-	-	I2	-	92%
EH	2	-	-	9	I	I00%
PG	I	-	-	II	-	9I%
MM	-	-	-	-	-	-
AM	-	-	-	-	-	-
TM	-	-	-	I	-	0%

COMPARISON OF ANT. AFFIX FREQUENCY IN TD & YD TEXTS

	# PCC	:	# TOTAL	%
TD :	I20	:	2II	57
YD :	62	:	66	94

eg a.
guɣŋgun banaganyu ban wawu-lay-gu
female ghost return-NONFUT NOM II fetch-ANT-PURP

guɣi-gu
male ghost-DAT

The female ghost returned in order to fetch the male ghost.

eg b.
bayi-m-bawal bayi ɲyinanyu buran ŋanajina
NOM I-long way NOM I sit look 1PL ACC

He is sitting over there looking at us.

(no S-O pivot used in clause linkage)

There were only four clear instances of the antipassive affix as a clause linkage device outside the PCC. These occur in the texts of 2 fluent YS (EM, MJ):

eg
bayi alugeda jananyu juyju-lŋa-nyu bagul (EM)
NOM I 3PL stand-NONFUT stare-ANT-NONFUT DAT I

They stood and stared at him.

eg
ganibarra nomo jaŋga-na-nyu yalamanyu (MJ)
dingo NEG eat-ANT-NONFUT do like this-NONFUT

nomo budi-lŋa-nyu yalamanyu nyalŋga-
NEG take-ANT-NONFUT do like this-NONFUT child-

nyalŋga-gu
REDUP-DAT

Dingoes don't eat like that - they don't take children like that.

(Note that there were 12 other occurrences of -lŋay, but these were not used for clause linkage; they simply served an intransitivizing function within the clause. (4.3.2))

2. A comparison revealed that the ANT affix occurs far more frequently in PCC in YD texts than it does in TD texts. In TD texts, there was only a slight tendency for the ANT affix to be

followed by purposive affix -gu: 57%-PCC; 43%-elsewhere.

In contrast to this, 94% of YS use of the S-O pivot clause linkage device was in PCC. Thus, the slight tendency in TD for ANT affix to be followed by the purposive affix develops in YD to the use of PCC as an almost exclusive environment.

In short, both YS texts and response sentences indicate that the ANT derivation as a clause linkage device is avoided in YD, and (except for 2 fluent YS - MJ, EM) survives only in the favoured syntactic environment of PCC.

INTERPRETATIONS OF ANT AFFIX OCCURRENCE IN YD

There are various interpretations of the survival of the ANT affix in PCC.

1. Syntactic ergativity remains in YD, but with the additional constraint that it occurs only in PCC. ie the S-O pivot is triggered only if: a) core NP's are coreferential (as in TD)

b) the two verbs are semantically linked in an action chain.

ie VERB 1 $\xrightarrow{\text{leads to}}$ VERB 2.

2. Alternatively, it could be claimed that the ANT affix does not signal the operation of the S-O pivot. Rather, YS reanalyze the [V - $\left\{\begin{matrix}\text{naygu}\\\text{laygu}\end{matrix}\right\}$ + NP DATIVE] as an irrealis subordinate clause which follows an intransitive matrix realis clause.

ie

CLAUSE 1 (matrix)		CLAUSE 2 (subordinate)		
S - V	+	V - $\left\{\begin{matrix}\text{naygu}\\\text{laygu}\end{matrix}\right\}$	+	NP DATIVE
X Y		Z		

	X	Y	Z		
eg	buliman	baninyu	budi-laygu	+	Lillian-gu
	policeman	come-NONFUT	take-ANT PURP		-DAT

The policeman came in order to take Lillian.

The semantic formula of the construction is:

X did Y in order that X could do Z.

In the irrealis clause Z, the verb is marked by -laygu; -naygu, and the NP by dative affix.

THE FORM OF THE ANTIPASSIVE AFFIX

In TD, the shape of the ANT affix varies from dialect to dialect.[9)]

eg M : -lŋa-y
J : -lŋa-y ~ -la-y
G : -la-y

(Dixon 1972:67)

Both affix forms occur in YD but with separate functions. For YS, -lŋay: is used as an intransitivizing device within the clause. (4.3.2)

eg
ŋaja	bura-lŋa-nyu.	
1SG	see-ANT-NONFUT	
I'm watching.		

-lay: is used in clause linkage and is usually followed by the purposive affix -gu, in the form -naygu, -laygu, as described above.

eg
ŋaja	baninyu	bura-laygu
1SG	come-NONFUT	see-ANT-PURP
I came to see.		

In other words, there is a split in the function of TD antipassive affix forms. YS utilize the formal differences in the shape of

the TD -lŋay affix, by giving each form a separate function[10].

ie	TD (J)	YD	:	FUNCTION	
		-lŋay	:	INTR'g device	(Non-PCC link for MJ, EM only.)
	-lŋay ~ -lay	-lay + gu	:	marker of PCC	

YS appear to recognize -lŋay and -lay + gu as different affixes with separate functions. Quantification revealed that YS rarely used the -lay; -lŋay forms interchangeably. In only two instances of YD (EH) data was the -lŋay affix used in PCC, eg bura-lŋay-gu: see-ANT-PURP. There were no examples of the -lay form in non-PCC.

FOSSILIZATION OF THE -laygu AFFIX

Towards the bottom of the continuum, -laygu becomes a fossilized purposive affix form. The two separate morphemes of TD are analyzed as a single morpheme by less fluent YS.

ie TD

budi - lay - gu (budi = take)
ROOT - ANT - PURP

YD

budi - laygu
ROOT - PURP

There are three main points which evidence this fossilization:

1. -lay does not occur outside the -laygu affix. It cannot be analyzed as a separate affix for these less-fluent YS.

2. -laygu replaces -naygu as the purposive affix on 'exception' transitive -y class verbs. In TD, the 'exception' verbs take ANT affix form -nay. Thus in TD, the affix form on these verbs in

PCC would be V-naygu. However, less fluent YS do not use -naygu on these 'exception' verbs; they mark the verb with the unvarying -laygu form. It emerged that 5 YS used the -laygu, -naygu forms correctly. 4 YS used -laygu ~ -naygu interchangeably, and 3 less fluent YS dropped -naygu form and used -laygu as the unvarying affix on all PCC verbs.

eg (TD - naygu)

jugumbil	nyinanyu	bulga - laygu	wuju - gu	(AM)
woman	sit-NONFUT	swallow-ANT PURP	food-DAT	

The woman sat down to swallow the food.

It is interesting that the replacement of -naygu by -laygu is not accompanied by conjugation collapse of the single ɲaŋay ~ -nay ANT affixes described in 4.5.2. As mentioned, in YD there is no neutralization: the -nay affix remains on high frequency verbs. The important point is that less fluent YS retain the single -nay form, but in PCC replace the -naygu form with the unvarying affix -laygu.

eg

bayi	jaŋga - na - nyu	(AM)
NOM I	eat-ANT-NONFUT	

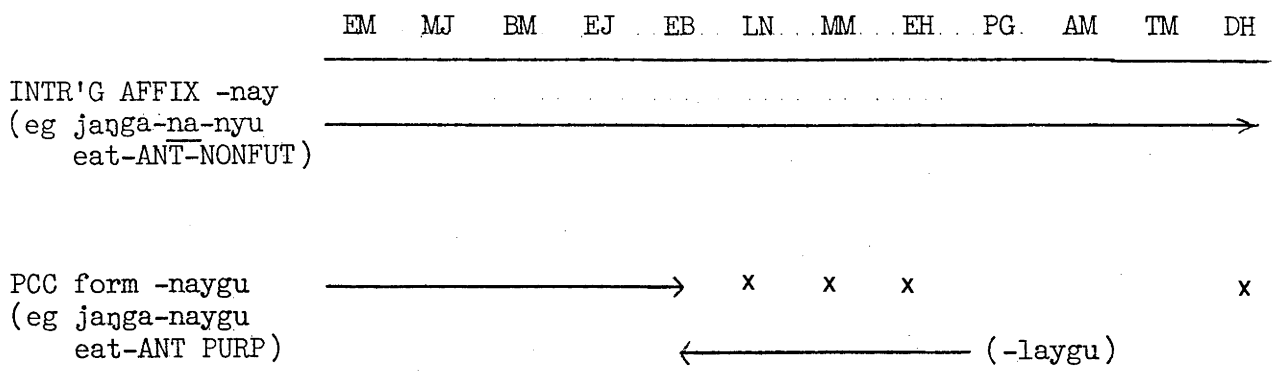
He's eating.

eg

bayi	baninyu	jaŋga - laygu
NOM I	come-NONFUT	eat-ANT PURP

He came to eat.

The following figure demonstrates the point of the YD continuum where the -nay, -naygu discrepancy occurs.



(x : marks interchangeable use of -naygu and -laygu)

3. The third feature which suggests -laygu fossilization is that the -laygu affix is extended to intransitive verbs as a marker of purposive action. (In TD, because of the very nature of the -lŋay derivation, the ANT affix can only follow transitive verbs). YS use -laygu on intransitive verbs, thus replacing TD purposive forms -li, -gu. This is exemplified below:

(yanu - li : TD)

eg { ŋaja yanu - laygu bulaji - gu (EH)
1SG go-PURP two-DAT
I will go to the two of them.

(yanu - li : TD)

eg { ŋaja barban ban jugumbil yana - laygu (PG)
1SG ask-NONFUT NOM II woman go-PURP
I asked the woman to go.

It is important to note that fossilization of -laygu does not occur in the speech of all YS. For example, fluent YS toward the TD pole frequently interrupted the -lay+gu sequence by inserting other affixes between the two morphemes.

eg { ŋanaji baninyu bura - la - n - jay - gu wuju - gu [EM]
1PL come-NONFUT see-ANT-ASP-PURP food-DAT
We came to watch the food.

-laygu fossilization appears to occur among less-fluent YS towards the English end of the continuum.

Summarizing the YS use of S-O pivot in clause linkage, what appears to be an additional constraint for fluent YS (ie S-O pivot only in PCC) develops to a fossilized purposive affix in the final stages of YD.

It is interesting that Dyirbal's southerly neighbour, Warrgamay, has a similar purposive affix -lagu. Like -laygu in TD, the Warrgamay form is a fossilization of antipassive and purposive affixes.

> "The diachronic hypothesis explains the modern intransitive allomorph -lagu as being derived from the conjugation marker -l-, plus -a- as a residue of an original antipassive derivational affix, plus the original intransitive allomorph of purposive -gu."
>
> (Dixon 1981 :109)

Thus both Warrgamay and YD have independently reanalyzed antipassive and purposive forms as a single purposive affix (-laygu YD; -lagu Warrgamay.)

4.7.4 CLAUSE SUBORDINATION

In TD the verb of a relative clause is marked by

a) a relative clause marker -ŋu.

b) case-marking affix agreeing with case of the relativized NP of the matrix clause. For details, see Dixon 1972:99.

Clause subordination operates on an S-O pivot: a clause can be embedded as a relative clause if it contains an SO(ABS)NP which is correferential with any NP of the matrix clause.

YS were tested for their ability to form relative clause constructions, according to three indices:

case marking of the embedded V;

use of antipassive derivation;

occurrence of relative clause marker;

Table 27 indicates that:

1. case marking on the verb of the relative clause is lost for most YS. Only 2 YS marked case agreement with the matrix NP: MJ 8%; MM 23%. (Of the four occurrences of case agreement in YD data, two were DAT case, one ERG, one LOC.) In YD, because the embedded clause directly follows the embedded NP of the matrix clause, case agreement on the embedded verb is unnecessary.

eg	baŋgul	yara-ŋgu	ban	jugumbil	balgan
	ERG I	man-ERG	NOM II	woman	hit-NONFUT

(maŋga - ŋu - rru : TD)

yugu-ŋgu	ŋaja	maŋga - ŋu ∅
stick-INST	1SG	pick up-REL

The man hit the woman with the stick that I picked up.

In the above, the embedded clause directly follows INST NP yugu 'stick' which it qualifies. There is no case agreement.

The syntactic constraint of SO pivot in clause subordination is dropped by most YS. 3 fluent YS (MJ, EM, MM) show a degree of SO pivot operation, but other YS did not employ this device, and simply marked the relative clause by verb marker -ŋu and pause phenomenon. The following example illustrates this. Note the use of SO pivot in the TD version.

TABLE 27 : RELATIVE CLAUSE CONSTRUCTION IN YD : RESPONSE SENTENCES

	CASE MARKING ON VERB		S-O PIVOT CONSTRAINT		-ŋu RELATIVE MARKER		ALTERNATIVE CLAUSE LINKAGE DEVICE USED	
	occurrence :opportunity	%	occurrence :opportunity	%	occurrence :opportunity	%	JUXTAPOSITION	%
EM	0 : 33	0	4 : 6	67	I6 : 2I	76	3 : 2I	I4
MJ	I : I2	8	6 : 6	I00	23 : 24	96	I : 24	4
BM	0 : 3	0	0 : 6	0	6 : 27	22	20 : 27	74
EJ	?		?		?		?	
EB	?		?		?		?	
LN	0 : 3	0	0 : 5	0	I3 : 20	65	7 : 20	35
MM	3 : I3	23	2 :II	I8	28 : 46	6I	9 : 46	20
EH	0	0	0	0	4 : 53	8	48 : 53	9I
PG	0	0	0	0	2 : 4I	5	39 : 4I	95
AM	0	0	0	0	0 : 28	0	28 : 28	I00
TM	?		?		?		?	
DH	0	0	0	0	0 : II	0	II : II	I00

YD: wuygi / baŋgun buni nyaju - ŋu / wurrbanyu yara - gu
old lady ERG II fire light-REL / talk-NONFUT man-DAT

TD: wuygi wurrbanyu yara - gu buni - gu nyaju - lŋa - ŋu
old lady talk-NONFUT man-dat fire-DAT light-ANT-REL

The old lady who lit the fire, talked to the man.

3. Less-fluent YS avoided subordinate constructions. Their responses consisted of juxtaposed clauses:

YD: bayi yara / ∅ bijin guda / baninyu
NOM I man hit-NONFUT dog come-NONFUT

TD: bayi yara biji - lŋa - ŋu guda - gu baninyu
NOM I man hit-ANT-REL dog-DAT come-NONFUT

The man, who hit the dog, came.

As the Table shows, the frequency of juxtaposition increases along the continuum. The most fluent YS, (EM) used only 14% juxtaposition in her response. At the opposite pole of the continuum DH had 100% juxtaposition: no instances of subordination was recorded for this least-fluent speaker.

The above YS response to stimulus sentences indicates the YS ability to form subordinate constructions. The actual frequency of subordination in more natural speech context is a very different matter. Table 28 quantifies embedded clause marker -ŋu in YS texts. The Table indicates that:

1. For fluent YS, rate of embedding is about the same as TD, eg TD: 7%; EM: 7.5%; MJ, LN: 6%.

2. The frequency of embedded clause marker -ŋu diminishes among less-proficient speakers: EM used the relative marker on 7.5% of verbs in contrast to less-fluent AM and TM who had no occurrence of the relative clause marker throughout their texts.

TABLE 28 : RELATIVIZATION IN YD TEXTS

	FREQUENCY OF RELATIVE CLAUSE MARKER -ŋu		
	# -ŋu	# verbs	%
TD :	35	495	7
EM	I8	24I	7.5
MJ	I0	I70	6
BM	*		
EJ	*		
EB	*		
LN	7	II4	6
MM	0	4I	0
EH	2	2I3	I
PG	3	2II	I.5
AM	0	90	0
TM	0	I25	0
DH	*		

* : No texts available from these YS.

Two other points were revealed from observation of YS texts:

1. YS avoided complex subordinate constructions requiring case marking on the embedded verb. ie mainly S-function NP's took relative clauses. Only two opportunities emerged for the embedded verb to agree with case marking on the matrix NP: MJ and EM did not show case agreement for these examples.

2. YS also avoid subordinate constructions that require the TD S-O pivot operation. Of the total embedded clauses in YD texts, only one opportunity and correct use of the S-O pivot occurred. (In all other instances, where S; O NP's were correferential with A NP, no S-O pivot was used.) The single example of S-O pivot is:

eg	milga - ny	marri	baŋgul	ŋayguna	gulu	budi - lŋa - ŋu
	growl-FUT	perhaps	ERG I	1SG-ACC	NEG	take-ANT-REL

He might growl at me, who didn't take [it].

Thus YS appear to avoid complex clause subordination strategies that involve case agreement and antipassive derivation operations in TD.

The above illustrates that in YD, subordination, co-ordination and the associated S-O pivot operation are affected by simplification and English interference processes in terminal Dyirbal. Similar reduction at interclause level has been reported in other language death situations. eg Hill (1973:34) demonstrates the diminishing frequency of subordination in dying Cupeño and Luiseño:

> "...there has been a dramatic reduction in the frequencies of subordinate clauses of all kinds: complements, relative clauses, gerunds, conditional clauses.... modern speakers use them at extremely low frequencies in actual speech."

Other examples of reduction in subordination are reported in: Yokuts by Stanley Newman 1940. "Linguistic aspects of Yokuts style" in Hymes ed. (1964:376); in Tonga: Jones & Carter 1967 ; and in Yanomama: Ernst Migliazza 1972, cited in Hill 1973:46-7.

It is necessary at this stage to ask why reduction occurs in clause linkage devices in language death situations. I have no complete answer to this question, but offer the following suggestions: Simple sentences or co-ordinate sentences joined by a conjunctor are "simpler" than sentences containing ANT. derivation or subordinate clause material on three counts:

1. In YD, the S-O pivot in clause linkage involves a complex syntactic operation: case marking is reassigned and the verb takes a derivational affix -lŋay (if one instance of common NP is in A function).

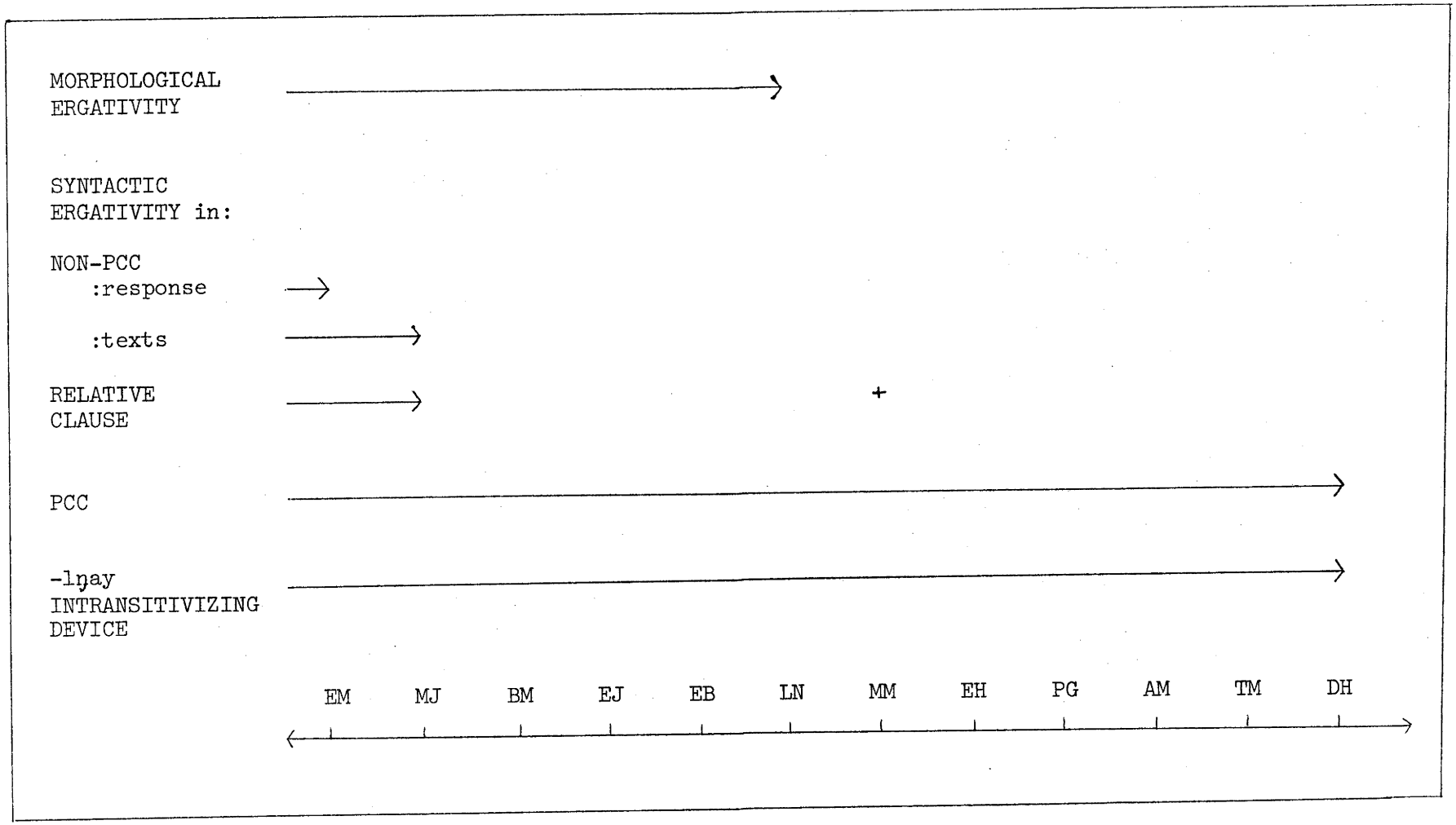
2. MORPHOLOGICAL STRUCTURE. The use of S-O pivot for clause conjunction and relativization involves a good deal of morphological complexity which can be avoided if the speaker uses simple clauses in juxtaposition or linked by a single conjunctor.

3. COGNITIVELY, the conjoined TD clause is more complex than the simple main clause. Although the conjoined clause has the same underlying semantic structure as the matrix clause, the semantic equivalence is obscured by different surface machinery of the subordinate or SO pivot derived clause. Although this is not a problem for fluent OS and YS, less-proficient YS, whose primary language is English, showed considerable difficulty in both producing and translating embedded clause constructions.

4.8 SUMMARY OF MORPHOLOGICAL AND SYNTACTIC ERGATIVITY IN YD

A summary of structural change in YD is provided in 11.1. Because Dyirbal is well known for its ergativity, the following briefly compares changes in morphological and syntactic ergativity in YD. Table 29 sums up the situation with regard to YD ergativity. There is evidence of weakening of both the ergative case affix and the SO pivot operation, but to different degrees along the continuum. Ergative case marking survives about half way along the continuum, before the affix is dropped. For syntactic ergativity, the SO pivot in non-PCC and relativization is lost at a much earlier stage of the continuum. In contrast, the PCC is the favoured syntactic environment for the antipassive affix for all YS. It extends all the way along the continuum, in the form: lay + gu (ANT + PURP). There has been a split: another form of the antipassive affix -lŋay survives with the function of intransitivizing device within the clause. All 12 YS retain this -lŋay affix.

TABLE 29 : SUMMARY OF ERGATIVITY IN YD



CHAPTER 4 NOTES

1 For ease of reference, I will label poles of the YD continuum as 'TD' and 'English', the rationale for this being that YS who are closest to the TD pole deviate least from the TD norm. In contrast, YS ranked toward the 'English' end of the continuum are less-proficient and have an increasing reliance on the English language system.

2 10 cases are recognized in this thesis but there are only 7 different forms. ERG/INST; DAT/ALL; LOC/AVERS are collapsed.

3 This is plausible in light of the fact that English, the replacing language, has dipʰthongs ending in I. eg ɔɪ as in 'choice'; aɪ as in 'price'.

4 Only one YS (EH) used the form -ŋujin. The only explanation I have for its occurrence is confusion with the formally similar ablative affix -ŋunu. In TD, -ŋujin would be followed by LOC affix. In EH's usage, there is no following LOC affix.

5 In this thesis, -lŋay is treated as a single affix form. This differs from Dixon 1972, where the form is segmented into two parts:

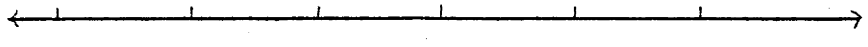
-l	+	-ŋay
conjugation marker		ANT

6 There are various interpretations of the terms "marked - unmarked". The notion may be used SEMANTICALLY. eg Jakobson 1971b:136 describes the marked - unmarked opposition as "'statements of A' vs 'no statement of A'". Alternatively, the notion may apply to FORMAL markedness. (For further discussion, see Jakobson 1971b:211-219.) In this thesis, a different criterion is used: an unmarked form is recognized as being "the basic form that is employed in citation". Thus for example, the citation form of the verb, NONFUT inflection, is recognized as "unmarked", as opposed to other inflections which are considered "marked".

7 Most YS used either the TD or the pidgin form. Only occasionally did YS give both TD and pidgin pronouns. eg EB gave two forms for 1DUAL: mindubala; ŋaliji. In the case of such alternation, the occurrence of pidgin form is registered as pidgin intrusion in Table 16.

8 This ordering of pronouns is based on the final placement of YS on the continuum. However, if the YD continuum is altered slightly, by exchanging positions of MJ and EJ, then the pronominal ordering becomes more systematic: 3 pronouns change first; then 2 and 1DUAL; then 2 and 1PLURAL.

ie 3PL 3DU 2DU 1DU 2PL 1PL



CHANGE FIRST

CHANGE LAST

9 As mentioned in Note 5, in this thesis, -lŋay form is treated as a single affix. This differs from Dixon's analysis, which segments this form into two parts. Similarly, I have analyzed -lay (G) as a single affix whereas Dixon divides this as:

-l (conjugation marker) + -ay (ANT).

10 It appears that TD had a tendency this way. In J and G texts recorded at Murray Upper by Dixon (PC), the -lay allomorph was used more often before purposive inflection, and -lŋay allomorph was used more frequently before other inflections.

5. YD IN NATURAL CONTEXT

5.1 CAREFUL vs CASUAL SPEECH

It is important to distinguish between speech of formal elicitation and that used in informal 'everyday' activities. The main purpose of this chapter is to view Young Dyirbal in a more natural speech context. In the previous chapter, the "careful" speech of YS was described. Such formal elicitation is useful in revealing the YS notion of "straight" Dyirbal; it enables direct comparison of individual systems of Dyirbal communication. Furthermore, such standardized procedure is necessary for observing and quantifying structural change ceteris paribus without the additional complication of variation triggered by sociolinguistic variables such as interlocutor, topic, setting.

However, while this data is useful in investigating grammatical change, the controlled formal speech of elicitation sessions is hardly representative of YD in a more natural context. There is a big difference between the way a person thinks he SHOULD talk, the way he talks in CAREFUL speech, and the way he talks in a CASUAL setting.

The discrepancy in data collected in formal elicitation and in more natural contexts is evident in the results of other empirical studies. eg In investigating relexification in dying Tlaxcalan Nahuatl (Central Mexico), Bright & Thiel (1965) used formal, one-to-one sessions. They reported a low percentage of Spanish loan words. In contrast to this, Hill & Hill (1977) collected data through recording traditional texts. Their results showed massive use of Spanish loan words in normal speech. This demonstrates the need to recognize the influence that data collection procedure has on results.

5.2 THE PEER-GROUP

In order to investigate YD in a more natural context, I joined in the activities of my peers, as participant observer in two in-groups. The two mutually-exclusive groups, called the Rock'n'Rollers and the Buckaroos[1)] were mentioned in 3.7.4. Because YD was the common code of communication for members within each group, this provided an excellent opportunity to observe YS speech in an informal casual situation.

DESCRIPTION OF IN-GROUP

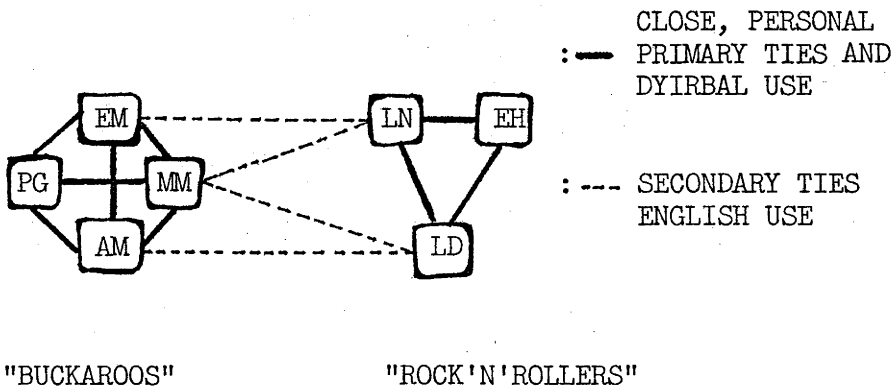
The two in-groups were mutually-exclusive, set apart by distinct aims and aspirations. The Rock'n Roller group consisted of three female members, whose ages ranged from 19 - 24 years. All three (LN, EH, LD) lived together in a small humpy. As they were unemployed, during the day they spent much time listening to rock'n'roll music. The three had various rock'n'roll idols

as their figures of reference. (I was only able to record 2 of the 3 members: part way through my field study LD was sentenced by white law to 12 months gaol.)

The Buckaroos were a younger group of 4 members (15-19 years). These YS lived with relatives in two neighbouring houses. The common interest of members was buckarooing and working on farms. (Buckarooing involves cattle mustering and similar horse-back work performed on cattle stations.)

Although the two youngest members were high school students, and the two eldest worked during the day, the interaction between members was intense. All spare time was spent together, watching t.v. at night, and in activities such as fishing and swimming.

Thus, each group formed a close-knit network. (There were no peripheral members or "lames" as described by Labov, 1972). Each in-group was tightly bound by close personal ties. Group loyalty was symbolized by the use of Dyirbal. Across in-group boundaries, a variety of English was used. (3.5.4.) The association between close-knit networks and language use is illustrated in the following figure:



5.3 PROBLEMS and METHODOLOGY

It is important to be aware of the problems and limitations of participation observation in the YS in-group, for this influences the outcome of such a study.

1. One disadvantage of focusing on two small in-groups is that the collected data represents the speech of only a small cross-section of the community. It does not represent the speech of the whole community, or other YS outside the peer-groups. Another restriction in sampling is that all members of both groups were female. I was unable to record male YS in a natural context because of the tendency to switch to English in the presence of a white person (3.6.2), especially a white female.

2. OBSERVER'S PARADOX. The very presence of a stranger will influence speech of the group under observation. In the case of the Jambun study, the physiological difference in skin colour was a constant reminder of the presence of an outsider. At first, this presented a real problem, as my peers would constantly switch to English in my presence. However, after about two months, I was able to establish close personal ties with these YS, and join in their casual daily activities such as fishing, swimming, camping. The YS were well aware that I was interested in their language. This awareness was quite advantageous because, in partaking in group activities, members encouraged me to speak the Dyirbal style which was a shared code of communication.

3. Shyness of the tape recorder was less of a problem than I had anticipated. Because these YS were quite familiar with the use of cassette recorders in everyday life, they were not nervous at the idea of speech recording. In order to minimize

awareness of the machine, I carried the recorder in a shoulder bag on group activities.

TECHNIQUE

In investigating the casual speech of each in-group, I taped both conversations and texts. In particular, story-telling sessions around the camp-fire, or on fishing trips were ideal. The sessions involved members chatting among themselves, relating bits of gossip or stories. The atmosphere of these sessions was relaxed. YS were often unaware that the sessions were being recorded at the time. To ensure consistency, I taped YS story sessions on various occasions over a period of four months.

My initial impression upon hearing in-group speech was that certain YS used a more simplified style of Dyirbal, which differed from their notion of "straight" Dyirbal taught to me in elicitation sessions. ie YS did not use their best Dyirbal in the peer-group situation. Rather, they adjusted their speech toward a shared norm of the group. eg In formal sessions, MM taught me the sentence, using TD future tense affix -ny. She rejected sentences in which future tense affix was dropped.

eg	ŋanaji	jaŋga - ny	wuju	"BEST DYIRBAL"
	1PL	eat-FUT	food	

We will eat food.

*ŋanaji	jaŋga - nyu	wuju	now	
1PL	eat-NONFUT	food		

We'll eat food now.

In contrast, when we joined the peer group, MM produced the very sentence which she had rejected in teaching me her "best" Dyirbal:

wifela	gonna jaŋga - nyu	now	PEER-GROUP SPEECH
1PL	eat-NONFUT		

We're going to eat now.

It is therefore necessary to distinguish between a) what the YS considers to be correct according to his individual Dyirbal system. b) what is contextually appropriate in conversing with members of the in-group.

In the following, I will demonstrate that the careful speech of individual YS systems is modified in more natural context, as peer-group members adjust their speech towards a standard norm. First, evidence of "focusing" in peer-group speech is observed. Secondly, we will observe how individual YS "careful" speech is adjusted toward the in-group norm.

5.4 FOCUSING

It is necessary at this stage to explain the sociolinguistic term, "focusing". This term refers to the adjustment of individual speech towards a standard linguistic norm shared by members in a close-knit network structure. Le Page (1968:192) remarks that:

> "The individual creates his system of verbal behaviour so as to resemble those common to the group or groups with which he wishes from time to time to be identified."

(For more detailed discussion of this concept and its broader implications for sociolinguistic theory, see LePage 1975, 1977, 1979.)

The Jambun material provides some interesting evidence of linguistic focusing. YS of each group adjust their speech to a recognizable set of linguistic norms, thus using language variety functionally to express group loyalty and identity.

5.5 QUANTIFICATION

In order to confirm this impression of focusing, it is necessary to quantify linguistic features in in-group texts. Because the speech adjustment involved morphological simplification and intrusion of English and pidgin forms, I arrived at the following indices for quantification:

1. frequency of peripheral cases marked by affixation
2. number of A NP's marked by ergative case
3. frequency of bound morphemes ie morphological complexity
4. occurrence of pidgin form "bin" (past tense indicator)
5. intrusion of English forms (both grammatical and lexical)

5.5.1 PERIPHERAL CASE AFFIXES

Peripheral cases in TD are marked by suffixation to the nominal stem (see 4.2.1). In peer-group YD, there is evidence that some YS drop these case affixes and indicate peripheral case by English preposition. ie The TD sentence:

bayi olman nyinanyu yugu - ŋga
NOM I old man sit-NONFUT log-LOC

The old man sat on the log.

becomes in YD:

bayi olman nyinanyu on yugu
NOM I old man sit-NONFUT log

The old man sat on the log.

I quantified peripheral case affixation in YS in-group speech. The results are presented in Table 30. The Table clearly indicates that:

TABLE 30 : PERIPHERAL CASE MARKING IN YD

		METHOD OF MARKING		TOTAL OPPORTUNITY	% OF PERIPHAL CASE BY AFFIXATION	AVERAGE %
		# AFFIX	# PREPOSITION			
R & R	LN	48	I	49	98	92.8
	EH	63	9	72	87.5	
BUCK.	MM	I	I8	I9	5.3	II.2
	PG	I	9	I0	I0	
	AM	7	34	4I	I7.I	
	TM	3	2I	24	I2.5	

1. In the Rock'n'Roller group, both members retain a high degree of affixation. LN: 98%; EH 87.5%.

2. In contrast, all YS in the Buckaroo group rarely used affixation to mark peripheral case. Group scores ranged from 5.3 - 17.1%. In this group, English preposition was commonly used.

3. There is a radical difference in the average scores of the two groups: Rock'n'Rollers: 92.8%; Buckaroos: 11.2%. Thus YS appear to focus their speech on distinct group standards: Rock'n'Rollers retain peripheral case affixes; in the Buckaroo group, English preposition is a common means of marking peripheral case.

5.5.2 ERGATIVE CASE MARKING

In the response to stimulus sentences, only one YS (LN) belonging to a peer-group marked the ergative case. Others used a NOM-ACC system (4.2.1). It is interesting to observe if these YS did mark ergative case in a more natural context. YS casual texts were quantified for ergative case marking on the A NP. The results are presented in Table 31. The Table indicates that:

1. In the peer-group situation, both members of the Rock'n' Rollers frequently marked ergative case: LN: 93.8%; EH: 83.9%. It is important to note that EH adjusts her speech when speaking to peer-group members, by adding ergative case marking. In her response to stimulus sentences, EH did not mark ergative case.

eg	buliman ∅	ŋanban	ban	bulaji	: RESPONSE SENTENCE
	policeman	ask-NONFUT	NOM II	two	

The policeman asked those two.

TABLE 3I :

	MORPHOLOGICAL COMPLEXITY				ERGATIVE CASE MARKING				
		# bound forms : # total items	%	average score	ERG. MARKED # ERG noun marker	# ERG case affix	total opport.	%	average
TD		268 : 613	43						
R & R	LN	166 : 432	38.4	33.3%	3	12	16	93.8	88.9%
	EH	240 : 851	28.2		0	26	31	83.9	
BUCK.	MM	8 : 151	5.3	4.6%	0	0	4	0	3.2%
	PG	8 : 249	3.2		2	0	19	10.5	
	AM	27 : 640	4.2		0	0	11	0	
	TM	76 : 1304	5.8		1	0	41	2.4	

However, in the in-group situation, she marked A NP by YD ergative affix -gu.

eg	buliman - gu	ŋanban	ban	bulaji	: IN-GROUP SPEECH
	policeman-ERG	ask-NONFUT	NOM II	two	

The policeman asked those two.

The form of ergative allomorphs used by EH differs slightly from LN. LN used an unvarying affix form -gu in both in-group speech and response sentences (see 4.2.1). Although EH also used -gu in all environments, in 3 instances in peer-group speech, she varied by using allomorph -du, phonologically assimilated to preceding -n. The examples below illustrate EH's interchangeable use of du ~ gu in peer-group conversation.

eg	buliman - du	gulban	bayi
	policeman-ERG	block-NONFUT	NOM I

The policeman stopped him.

eg	buliman - gu	buran	gambi
	policeman-ERG	see-NONFUT	clothes

The policeman saw the clothes.

In all cases, EH marked ergative case by an affix attached to the noun. I have no instances of EH indicating ergative on the noun marker.

At this stage it is necessary to mention an innovation evident in Rock'n'Roller speech, but not detected in the response sentences. In the peer-group context, LN and EH would sometimes extend the ergative case affix to 1 and 2 pronouns. (In TD, 1 and 2 pronouns are NOM-ACC.)

eg (ŋanaji ∅ : TD)

ŋanaji - gu	buran	bayi	waybala
1PL-ERG	see-NONFUT	NOM I	white man

We saw the white man.

(See 4.2.1 for ergative case inflection in YD.)

This analogic remodeling is also detected in texts (but not elicitation) of older YS (MJ, EM).

eg yugu - ŋunu giyi - n - bawal ginyju - ginyju
tree-ABL NOM I-long way name

ŋaliji - n - du jaŋgay - gu
1DU-ERG eat-PURP

We two (will take) Ginyju-ginyju from the tree to eat him.

Thus in YS natural speech, there is evidence of weakening of the pronominal-nominal distinction as the ergative affix is extended to 1 and 2 pronouns.

2. Table 31 also shows that in the Buckaroo group, ergative case marking was rarely used. There were only three instances of ergative in 75 opportunities in the entire Buckaroo speech samples. In all three cases, the ergative marking was shown by noun marker and not by affixation to the noun.

eg baŋgul baŋgan / baŋgan bugal jaban girimu bali
ERG I paint paint bream eel snake to there

baŋgul bali baŋgan bala
ERG I to there paint NOM IV

He painted bream, eel, snakes.

eg ŋanaji reckon ŋaa / so baŋgun get-im
1PL yes ERG II

ŋanaji something to jaŋganyu
1PL eat

We said 'yes', so she got us something to eat.

Because these are the only instances of ergative noun marker forms, it may be argued that these YS do not productively mark the ergative distinction, and that these isolated occurrences of ergative noun marker are merely relic forms, picked up from TD parents.

In short, Rock'n'Roller members frequently mark ergative case. In contrast, Buckaroo speech drops the ergative inflection and marks syntactic function on SA-O pattern shown by word order.

5.5.3 MORPHOLOGICAL COMPLEXITY

The above findings indicate that there is a loss of affixation in YS natural speech, especially in the Buckaroo group where case affixes are rarely used. In order to confirm this impression of morphological simplification, I quantified the number of morphemes in peer-group speech. The degree of morphological complexity was calculated as follows:

$$\frac{\#\text{ bound morphemes}}{\#\text{ words}} \times 100$$

Thus a high score indicates high frequency of bound morphemes.

Before observing the incidence of bound forms in YD, it is necessary to describe the method of quantification. Bound forms were counted according to the following principles:

1. Unmarked form of the noun and verb was counted as ∅.

ie the NON FUT unmarked verb form: bani - nyu (come-NONFUT) = 0

but FUT form counted as 1 point: bani - ny (come-FUT) = 1

Similarly, the nominative form of noun: yara = 0

and DATIVE form scored 1 point yara-gu (man-DAT) = 1

2. Reduplicated morphemes were not counted as bound forms.

eg bayi-m-bayi (NOM I-REDUP) = 0

3. Because the aim was to observe the productive use of bound morphemes in open classes, the closed word classes (noun markers, interrogatives and pronouns) were not included in the quantification.

Table 31 indicates the degree of morphological complexity in YS peer-group speech. The striking features of the table are:

1. All YS used less bound forms than TD score of 43%, indicating that YD is morphologically simpler than TD. (The TD count is based on texts from 5 TD speakers.)

2. Within each group, YS used a similar degree of bound morphemes. eg In the Buckaroo group, this varied from 3.2 - 5.8%. Rock'n'Roller members registered 28.2 and 38.4%. Thus, members of each group appear to level their speech on a group standard of morphological complexity.

3. There is considerable difference in the group standards of morphological complexity. The average Rock'n'Roller score was 33.3% in contrast to 4.6% average of the Buckaroo group. This indicates contrasting norms of morphological complexity between the two groups.

Having established that there is morphological simplification, especially in the Buckaroo group, it is necessary to investigate if any type of bound forms are more resistant to dropping than others. In order to do this, I quantified the number and type of bound morphemes per 100 words in random samples of TD and YD texts. The results are presented in Table 32. In comparing TD with YD figures, the Table suggests that:

1. Derivational affixes survive with remarkable tenacity in Buckaroo speech. eg One Buckaroo member, TM, used aspectual affixes even more frequently than TD speakers. : TM: 4; TD: 2-3.

TABLE 32 : TYPE OF BOUND MORPHEMES (PER I00 WORDS) IN PEER GROUP SPEECH

		NOMINAL AFFIX		VERBAL AFFIX			NOUN MKR AFFIX	TOTAL BOUND FORMS per I00 words *
		case inflection	other	aspect deriv.	syntactic deriv.	inflectional	-bayji type	
TD	sample I	I3	I2	2	8	8	5	48
	sample 2	2I	6	3	8	6	2	46
R & R	LN	I8	2	-	7	5	3	35
	EH	I0	4	-	I0	3	2	29
BUCK.	MM	2	-	I	2	I	-	6
	PG	I	-	-	I	2	-	4
	AM	2	-	2	3	-	-	7
	TM	-	-	4	I	-	-	5

* : Note that total bound forms per I00 words confirms the pattern of morphological simplification in Table 3I. The two tables measure morphological complexity in different ways, but the results are the same:

I. YD has less bound morphemes than TD.
2. In contrast to R & R, all Buckaroos have very low frequency of bound forms.

2. Similarly, syntactic derivational affixes also appear quite resistant in YD, especially in Rock'n'Roller speech, eg TD:8; R&R:7-10; Buckaroo:1-3.

3. There is a general decline in other bound morphemes in YD: case inflections, other nominal affixes; verb inflections; -bayji type affixes. This tendency is particularly evident in the speech of Buckaroo members. eg the frequency of case inflections reduces from TD: 13-21 to 2-0 in Buckaroo speech. Similarly, TD texts had 2 and 5 -bayji-type affixes per 100 words. Buckaroo sample speech had none.

The important point is that, while YS use generally less bound morphemes than YD speakers, verbal derivational affixes appear more resistant to dropping than others. The tenacity of aspectual affixes in YD is particularly noticeable. The following sample of TM's speech illustrates the retention of these aspectual affixes in an utterance characterized by radical simplification and English intrusion.

eg George bin banaga - yarra - nyu with ban
PAST return-ASP-NONFUT NOM II

back to ban - ban now / an 'e bin
NOM II-REDUP PAST

ŋandan - gani - nyu for ban - ban
call out-ASP-NONFUT NOM II-REDUP (TM)

George started to return with her$_1$ back to her$_2$ now, and he was calling out to her$_2$.

eg she bin lilbit wuygi-bin / ban bungi-gani-nyu
PAST sick-INTR VZR NOM II lie down-ASP-NONFUT

waymban-gani-nyu oh she baji-baji-yarra-nyu down
walkabout-ASP-NONFUT fall-REDUP-ASP-NONFUT

She was a bit sick. She lay down, then she got up.

Oh! She fell down!

Thus, aspectual affixes provide areas of morphological complexity in otherwise simplified YD utterance. I shall return to this feature in 10.2.1 when comparing YD with pidgin structures.

5.5.4 OCCURRENCE OF PAST TENSE INDICATOR "BIN"

In YD there is evidence of intrusion of pidgin forms. The form "bin" was selected for quantification because, as past tense indicator, it has high occurrence possibility. Table 33 shows the occurrence of "bin" in peer-group speech. The striking feature is that all members of the Buckaroo group used this form frequently. The following illustrates PG's use of "bin" in Buckaroo conversation:

eg ŋanaji bin muguy jananyu an' wuygi
1PL PAST too much stand-NONFUT old lady

bin wurrbanyu hey
PAST talk-NONFUT EXC

We stood there for ages, and the old lady talked, hey.

In contrast, the Rock'n'Roller group registered no occurrences of "bin". Past tense was indicated by the unmarked form of the verb and a separate time word which specifies when the event took place.

eg ŋurugun-da gunyja-gunyja-yirri-nyu ŋanaji
dark-LOC drink-REDUP-REFL-NONFUT 1PL

We drank at night.

TABLE 33 : FREQUENCY OF ' BIN ' & ENGLISH INTRUSION

		'bin' AS PAST TENSE INDICATOR	NON-ASSIMILATED ENGLISH FORM			
		# 'bin' : total words	# English : total words		%	ingroup average
R & R	LN	0 ; 432	35 : 432		8.I	9.5%
	EH	0 : 85I	92 : 85I		I0.8	
BUCK	MM	I3 : I5I	80 : I5I		53	47.8%
	PG	I4 : 249	II0 : 249		44.2	
	AM	25 : 640	295 : 640		46	
	TM	99 : I304	627 : I304		48	

Thus, "bin" as indicator of past tense is commonly used by Buckaroo members, but not by the Rock'n'Rollers.

5.5.5 ENGLISH INTRUSION

In YS casual speech, there is a noticeable intrusion of English words. This is associated with a limited Dyirbal vocabulary (see Chapter 7). When a YS cannot recall a Dyirbal term, the English equivalent is substituted to fill in gaps in communicative competence.

eg ginya wind lilbit gimbin / ŋanaji bin come
NOM IV blow-NONFUT 1PL PAST

down on the jigay
ground

The wind was blowing a bit so we landed (the plane) on the ground.

It is important to note that the English intrusion in YD is predominantly lexical substitution, ie the English term is not phonologically assimilated to the Dyirbal sound system.

eg bayi yanun hospital - gu (LN)
NOM I go-NONFUT -ALL

He went to hospital.

In the above, LN uses the English pronunciation rather than the phonologically-assimilated loan word 'ŋabidal'.

Two major reasons for the lack of phonological assimilation are:

1. YS have a perfect command of the English sound system. English is their primary language.

2. English is a prestigious code. To the YS, there is no stigma attached to the English pronunciation of English forms.

Had the YS attitude been more resistant to the encroaching culture and English language, it is possible that new words would be:

a) adapted to the indigenous sound system; or

b) coined from the original Dyirbal language base (see 7.7.1).

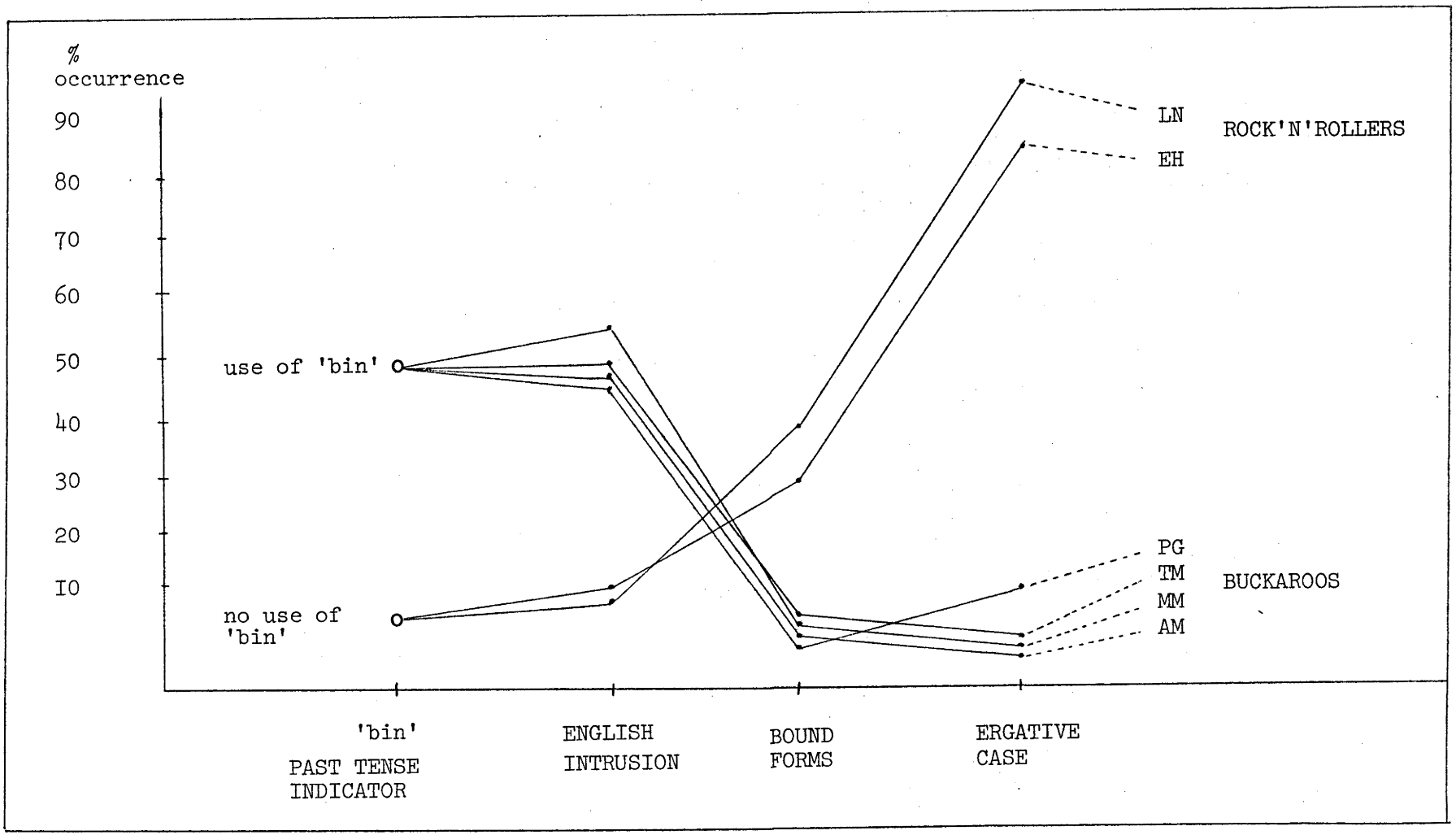
YS in-group speech was quantified for non-assimilated English forms. (English place names were not included in the count.) The results are presented in Table 33. The table clearly indicates that:

1. Within each group, members used a similar degree of English substitution. Deviation from the group average was only slight. Rock'n'Rollers registered 8.1% - 10.8%; Buckaroos range was 44.2 - 53%.

2. The Rock'n'Rollers rely much less on English forms than the Buckaroo group. Average Rock'n'Roller score was 9.5% contrasting with 47.8% lexical substitution in the Buckaroo group. Thus, there is a noticeable difference in the degree of English substitution between the Rock'n'Roller and Buckaroo peer-groups.

Summarizing, in the in-group situation YS focus their speech around a group standard. This is clearly illustrated in Table 34 which summarizes YS scores for four of the linguistic features described above. As the table shows, there is only slight variation within each group. In contrast, between the groups, the scores are radically different, ie the groups have different norms. Speech within the Rock'n'Roller group was characterized by morphological complexity, ergative case affixation; absence of pidgin form 'bin'; and slight English intrusion. In contrast, the Buckaroo speech contained few bound forms; no ergative case affixation; frequent use of "bin" to indicate past

TABLE 34 : FOCUSING OF LINGUISTIC FEATURES IN IN-GROUP SPEECH



tense; and high degree of English forms.

In order to exemplify the difference in peer-group Dyirbal styles, sample speech of the Buckaroo and Rock'n'Roller members is given in the appendix at the end of this chapter.

(It is important to mention that despite the high degree of English and pidgin forms in Buckaroo speech, members of the group were adamant that their speech be classified as Dyirbal, and not pidgin or English. Certainly, lexicon was the main level of awareness in language classification. For these YS, the occurrence of Dyirbal lexical items signalled the Dyirbal language. eg I played Buckaroo members a tape of their speech in which 46% of the words were unassimilated English forms. Although they recognized individual items as English, YS classified the utterance as Dyirbal. Interestingly, the Rock'n'Rollers YS classified the same sample of Buckaroo speech as "Dyirbal mix" [with English].)

5.6 MAINTENANCE OF IN-GROUP NORM

It is important to note the capacity of a close-knit network to impose linguistic norms upon its members. Within each group, members were persistent in maintaining the group standard. It was contextually inappropriate to speak a level of Dyirbal that was too simple or too complicated. eg As mentioned in 3.6.2, when I first joined the Buckaroos, I was unaware of a group norm, and so spoke TD. After about a week, one member explained that my Dyirbal was "too flash". Evidently, I had overstepped the group norm. It was necessary to modify my Dyirbal in accordance with the shared group norm.

Similarly, if the speech was too simple, or contained too many English forms, YS were also corrected by peers. eg TM was least-fluent YS in the Buckaroo group. She often relied on English forms to fill gaps in her communicative competence. In the following, she is telling PG about a book she'd read. Because TM's speech contains mostly English items, PG reprimands her. TM then introduces more Dyirbal and pidgin forms.

TM: They bin ŋyinan-gani-ŋyu (sit-ASP-NONFUT) back here. / George went out - George is the head ranger of Kenya./ That's over in Africa somewhere an' George went out with what's-his-name--Steven./ dubala (3DU) went out/ dubala (3DU) lookin' for the lions an' they shot this one lion.

PG: Don't talk in English!

TM:

dubala	bin	minban	/	dubala	bin	see lion /
3DU	PAST	shoot		3DU	PAST	

dubala	bin	minban
3DU	PAST	shoot

They two shot (the lion). They saw the lion and they shot it.

Similarly, when YS used forms which were morphologically simplex, they were also corrected. eg In the following, TM uses the simple form of the GEN I noun marker, bayi-ŋu, rather than the complex TD form, baŋul. (This simplification is discussed in 4.6.2.) MM corrects TM, and supplies the complex form. TM then repeats the correction and continues her story:

TM:

ŋanaji	took	ŋagi		back	to	bayi-bayi-ŋu
1PL		grandfather				NOM I-REDUP-GEN

mija	/	ŋanaji	bin -
house		1PL	PAST

We took grandfather back to his house. We...

MM: baŋul!
GEN I

TM: --baŋul mija / ŋanaji bin waymban-gani-nyu
GEN I house 1PL PAST walkabout-ASP-NONFUT

...His house. We walked about...

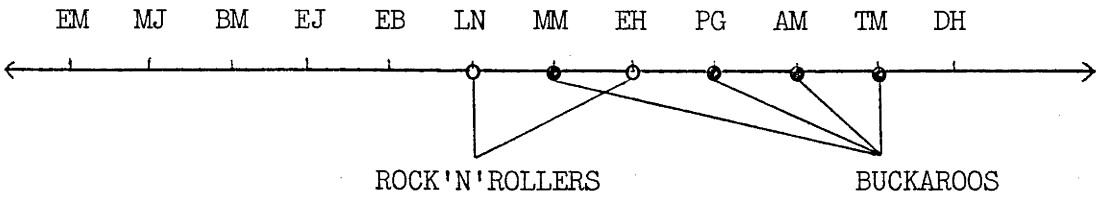
(It is difficult to state the extent to which my presence influenced these corrections.)

In this way, YS uphold a shared norm for Dyirbal communication within the group. The strong control exercised by peer-groups over the vernacular has been noted in other linguistic investigation. eg Labov, 1972 reports that among Harlem peer-group members, supervision is so close that a speaker making a single departure from group norms may be taunted for years afterwards.

5.7 INDIVIDUAL vs IN-GROUP DYIRBAL

Having established that members of each in-group focus their speech on a shared group norm, it is interesting to observe discrepancies between the individual's careful speech and his speech in the peer-group situation. In the following, we will investigate how YS accommodate careful Dyirbal speech to demonstrate allegiance with their in-group.

As Chapter 4 illustrated, there is much variation in 'careful' individual Dyirbal styles. This variation is demonstrated by the fact that YS are ranked on a continuum according to the degree to which their Dyirbal has been simplified. The figure below shows where Buckaroo and Rock'n'Roller members were ranked on the continuum.



Although all 6 YS occur consecutively, there are essential differences in their individual Dyirbal styles, with each YS simplifying more as the continuum progresses.

In order to compare 'careful' and peer-group speech, I asked PG to tell me a story in her 'best' Dyirbal. Table 35 compares this 'careful' text with PG's in-group speech. The striking feature of the Table is that, for all features, PG's in-group speech is much closer than her 'careful' Dyirbal to the group norm. eg In careful speech, PG marked peripheral case by affixation 91.7%. In contrast, when speaking to peers, this was radically adjusted to 10% which is similar to the group norm of 11.2%.

-PG used the past tense indicator bin much more frequently in the peer-group situation. 12.5%: careful speech; 53.8%: peer-group.

-In careful speech, PG used many more bound morphemes (16.6%) than when speaking to her peers (3.2%). This is similar to the group average of 4.6%.

-Similarly, English substitution in PG's careful text was only 26.8%. In the peer-group context, PG used far more English forms, 44.2%, which is close to the group average of 47.8%.

The above clearly illustrates that in the peer-group situation, PG adjusts her speech toward the group norm.

MM's speech also well exemplifies the difference between 'careful' and peer-group Dyirbal styles. In response to stimulus

TABLE 35 : COMPARISON OF PG'S 'CAREFUL' & 'INGROUP' SPEECH

	BOUND MORPHEMES	ENGLISH INTRUSION	PERIPHERAL CASE AFFIX	'BIN' OCCURRENCE # 'bin' : # opport. %
CAREFUL SPEECH	I6.6	26.8	9I.7	2 : I6 I2.5
IN-GROUP SPEECH	3.2	44.2	I0	I4 : 26 53.8
GROUP NORM	4.6	47.8	II.2	✓

sentences, MM demonstrated her command of TD features and complex constructions. eg future affix -ny; neg imperative -m; noun marker and adjective agreement with case of head noun; case marking on embedded verb, S-O pivot in relative clauses, (see Chapter 4).

However, in the in-group situation MM radically modified her speech; there was no evidence of the above-mentioned TD features. The following contrasts MM's peer-group speech with the same sentences translated by MM in formal elicitation.

CAREFUL SPEECH

balay-bawal alugeda nyinanyu / ganibarra budin
there-long way 3PL sit dingo take

wuda gujarra /
small baby

They were way out there. / The dingo took the little baby.

alugeda gunimarrinyu / yimba / gulu jaymban
3PL search no NEG find

They searched but didn't find (him).

IN-GROUP SPEECH

out Ayers Rock there dey bin / dingo bin
they PAST PAST

budin the little gujarra /
take baby

They were out at Ayers Rock. / The dingo took the little baby./

they	bin	gunimarrinyu	but	they	never	bin	
	PAST	search				PAST	
find-im	hey	nomo					
	EXC	NEG					

They looked for him but they never found him, hey.

Note the English substitution; past tense indicator 'bin'; and absence of bound forms in MM's peer-group speech, but not in her careful Dyirbal. The important point is that MM has command of TD morphological constructions, but does not use them in the in-group situation. Rather, she adjusts her speech to the norm shared by all members of her peer-group.

It is interesting that the norm of each in-group is similar to the careful Dyirbal style of the least fluent member (ie "lowest common denominator" effect). This suggests an interlocutor rule that: speakers of the in-group modify their Dyirbal to a level that all members can respond in. The norm must be within the competence of all peer-group members. This rule explains, in part, the contrast between Rock'n'Roller and Buckaroo norms. Because R&R members (LN, EH) are quite fluent speakers, it is unnecessary to simplify their common code below EH's competence. In contrast, the Buckaroo group contains much less fluent YS (TM, AM), and the group norm is set according to this low level of proficiency.

5.8 OTHER STUDIES

The association between close-knit network structure and adherence to a vernacular norm has been reported in other linguistic investigations. eg In his study of three adolescent peer-groups

in Harlem, Labov (1972) shows that Black English Vernacular [BEV] is an important mark of group identity, and that within the group, BEV norms are maintained in the teeth of strong counter pressures from standard varieties of English.

> "It [BEV] defines and is defined by the social organization of the peer groups in the inner city."
>
> (Labov 1972:xii)

Lesley Milroy's (1980) investigation of three Belfast communities also demonstrates the relationship between social network structure and language use. In her network analysis approach, Milroy examines social network structures (ie the intensity of social relationships contracted by the individual), and then correlates this with aggregated linguistic scores. The major hypothesis of the Belfast study was that the closer an individual's network ties are with his local community, the closer his language approximates to localized vernacular norms, ie close-knit network structures maintain vernacular norms in a highly focused form.

Gumperz (1971) makes the point that individuals whose networks are close-knit often share general "communicative preferences" of a non-standard kind. eg In describing verbal repertoire in Khalapur, Gumperz reports that non-standard dialect use marks membership in localized close-knit groups.

> "The official standard language is Hindi and villagers list themselves as speakers of Hindi for census purposes....Educated persons, village leaders, business men and all those who deal regularly with urbanites speak it. ...Purely local relationships, on

> the other hand, always require the dialect and everyone, including highly educated villagers, uses it to symbolize participation in these relationships."
>
> (Gumperz 1971:160-161)

Although there are essential differences between these studies (eg Milroy 1980:167 discusses crucial differences between her own work and Labov's), the important point is that each demonstrates an association between close-knit network structure and the adherence to a vernacular norm.

5.9 CONCLUSION

Summarizing, although YS deviate from the TD grammatical norm, they maintain definite norms of their own within each in-group. Certainly, the social subgrouping in the Jambun community is conducive to the maintenance of distinct speech norms. For both peer-groups, YD is an important symbol of loyalty and identity. However, there is a marked difference in the Dyirbal standards of each group. Buckaroo speech is characterized by high English intrusion; frequent use of pidgin form "bin"; use of prepositions to mark peripheral case; and low incidence of bound morphemes. Such characteristics do not occur in Rock'n' Roller speech.

The shared norm of each group was maintained in a highly-focused form. There was only slight variation among group members. In adopting the verbal habits of their peer-group, the more proficient YS did not speak their "best" Dyirbal, but rather adjusted their speech toward the shared standard. There appear

to be two major reasons for this linguistic focusing within close-knit network structures. One factor is that a highly focused set of language norms is able to symbolize solidarity and loyalty to the group. Second is the capacity of a close-knit network to exercise control over its members so as to ensure that they maintain this set of norms. Certainly, in the YS cliques, there is evidence of constant supervision and control to uphold the group standard.

APPENDIX

PEER-GROUP SPEECH SAMPLES

ROCK'N'ROLLER SPEECH - EH (24 years)

ŋaja	ban	bungin	balay-bawal	/	bungin	naŋgay-ŋga	/
1SG	NOM II	lie down	there-long way		lie down	rock-LOC	

I was lying down over there, sleeping on a rock.

garri	manyjin	ŋaja	bungin	/	bayi-dayi	waybala	bani-ŋu	
sun	shine	1SG	lie down		NOM I-short way off	white man	come-REL	

The sun was shining. I was sleeping. / A whiteman came.

ŋaja	gulu	buran	bayi	bani-ŋu	/	ŋaja	walma-walmanyu
1SG	NEG	see	NOM I	come-REL		1SG	get up-REDUP

I didn't see him coming. / I got up.

buran	bayi	waybala	/	ŋaja	walmanyu	gambi	gunda-yirri-nyu /
see	NOM I	white man		1SG	get up	clothes	enter-REFL-NONFUT

- saw the white man. / I got up and put on my clothes.

bayi	waybala	nyinanyu	bayi
NOM I	white man	sit	NOM I

The whiteman was sitting [there].

BUCKAROO SPEECH - AM (15 years)

muŋan-da	ŋanaji	yambin	/	ŋaygu	mugunan	bin	lilbit
mountain-LOC	1PL	fly		1SG GEN	sister	PAST	

bira-bin /
scare-INTR VZR

We were flying around the mountains. / My sister was a little scared.

BUCKAROO SPEECH (CONTINUED)

ginyan one girl Phyllis ginyan ban-ban
here-NOM II here-NOM II there-NOM II-REDUP

lilbit bira-bin gen /
scare-INTR VZR also

Phyllis here was a bit scared too.

dubala bin nyima-nyima-yirri-nyu in the aeroplane there /
3DU PAST squeeze-REDUP-REFL-NONFUT

Those two were holding on tight in the aeroplane.

oh ŋaja miyanda-gali-nyu dubala / dubala roun' the muŋan there
1SG laugh-do quick-NONFUT 3DU 3DU mountain

I laughed and laughed at them. / [We went] around the mountain.

an ŋanaji bin see all the modaga all the dundu they're
1PL PAST car bird

flyin' roun' /

an' we saw all of the cars, all of the birds flying around.

ŋanaji happen to buran bayi helicopter
1PL see there-NOM I

waymban-gani-nyu gen
walkabout-do repeatedly-NONFUT also

we happened to see a helicopter going around also,

up in the muŋan
mountain

up in the mountain.

CHAPTER 5 NOTES

1 Many Jambun residents outside the peer-groups were unaware of these titles. The group name often functioned as "password" for group members.

6. A TOPIC IN SEMANTICS: changes in noun classification

The main purpose of this chapter is to observe semantic changes in YD by focusing on shifting membership in the noun class system. Changes in the meanings of lexical items are not dealt with here. The little data I have on shifts in lexical meaning is presented in Chapter 7. The Dyirbal noun class system provides an excellent opportunity to observe semantic change, because it involves noun categorization according to culturally-relevant semantic principles. Before observing changes in YS classification, it is necessary to describe the original TD system.

6.1 TD NOUN CLASS SYSTEM

In TD, there are four noun classes. These classes are recognized on morphological grounds, the class of each noun being signalled by the accompanying noun marker. The forms listed below show the difference in NOM forms of bala - 'there' noun marker, indicating different class membership.

CLASS	I	:	bayi	yara	:	man
	II	:	balan	jugumbil	:	woman
	III	:	balam	wuju	:	food
	IV	:	bala	yugu	:	tree

The semantic basis of TD noun classes is complex to the non-native speaker. It depends on an intimate knowledge of the beliefs and myths associated with the cultural heritage. TD class membership involves (as explained by Dixon 1972:306-311):

a. certain basic concepts associated with various classes.

b. rules for transferring class membership.

The concepts associated with each class are:

CLASS	I	:	animateness; (human) masculinity
	II	:	(human) femininity; water; fire; fighting
	III	:	edible fruit and vegetables
	IV	:	residue class for everything else

The rules by which membership can be transferred are:

1. MYTHOLOGICAL ASSOCIATION. Even if a noun bears some feature A (by which it would be expected to be classified), but is through belief or myth associated with feature B, then it will be assigned to a class corresponding to feature B (by mythological association), rather than feature A. eg It is expected that birds, by virtue of their animateness should belong to Class 1. However, because birds are believed to be the spirits of dead human females, birds are Class II in TD. Many areas of unpredictability in noun class membership are explained by mythological association.

2. MARKING OF HARMFULNESS AND OTHER IMPORTANT PROPERTIES. In order to show that certain nouns have some particular property that other nouns of the group do not have, TD nouns are classified according to that important property. eg Fish are mostly Class I, but two dangerous fishes (stonefish and garfish) are categorized differently in Class II, in order to mark their harmfulness.

Another area of complexity in the assignment of TD class membership is that classification of certain words appears to be without explanation. eg dog, platypus, bandicoot, echidna are classified as Class II, and not Class I as their animacy predicts. (Although the explanation is unknown today, it is probable that there was an explanation at an earlier stage, but this was lost as the language altered.)

In short, the semantic basis of TD noun classification is quite complicated. Many intricacies of the system are based on knowledge of traditional cultural heritage and associated concepts. For YS not familiar with relevant beliefs or myths, the TD system contains many areas of non-functional complexity. In the following, YD noun classification is investigated to see if membership is shifting toward a more predictable system.

6.2 METHOD OF TESTING

In order to gauge changes in YD system of noun classification, I selected 35 items for YS to categorize. (A lot of words were asked, but 35 words were taken as test items. These are listed in Table 36.) The test items were chosen with the aim of covering all of the basic concepts and transference rules of the TD system. The main problem associated with the test was the

TABLE 36 : TD & YD NOUN CLASSIFICATION

TD:

I BAYI			II BALAN						III BALAM	IV BALA
animate	masc.	myth assoc	female	fire	water	fighting	myth assoc	danger	edible veg. & fruit	residue
kangaroo	man	rainbow	woman	fire	water	fighting -spear	bird	stone -fish	vegetable food	tree
possum		moon		coals	swamp	shield	sun	garfish	black bean	
snake		storm		fire -stick	river		star	stinging -nettle	wild fig	
goanna				firefly	whirl -pool					
fish										
fishing -line										
fish -spear										

unexplained exceptions

dog
bandicoot
platypus
echidna

YD:

I BAYI

animate male (unmarked)

kangaroo	: yuri	bandicoot	: bingu
possum	: midin	platypus	: gugula
snake	: girimu	echidna	: gumbiyan
goanna	: gugar	stone -fish	: jangan
fish	: jabu	garfish	: garam
man	: yara	bird	: dundu
dog	: guda	firefly	: bulal

II BALAN

animate female

woman : jugumbil

IV BALA (including III)

inanimate

veg. food	: wuju	fire	: buni
black bean	: mirrany	coals	: jilin
wild fig	: banba	firestick	: jiman
tree	: yugu	firefly	: bulal
rainbow	: yamani	water	: bana
storm	: gunyju	swamp	: burba
moon	: gagara	river	: malan
sun	: garri	whirlpool	: barin
star	: girnyja	fgt spear	: bangay
fish line	: yarra	shield	: bigin
fish spear	: barrban	stinging -nettle	: bumbilam

limited vocabulary of some YS. YS were often unfamiliar with the Dyirbal terms for species of snakes and fishes etc which were "exceptions" in TD. Thus, special care was taken to include TD items with which YS were familiar.

6.3 CHANGES IN YD NOUN CLASSIFICATION

YS response revealed that noun class membership was radically altered. In the following, I will describe the noun classification system used by less-fluent YS toward the English end of the continuum. This system exemplifies all of the changes that occur in YD. The innovations of less-fluent YS are illustrated in Table 36 which compares TD and YD systems of classification. The principles for categorization are encircled. To exemplify the difference between TD and TD, the test items are categorized underneath according to the principles of each system.

The Table reveals that less-fluent YS have reorganized the system of noun classification as a clear-cut gender system based on animacy and sex. (This contrasts with the more complex TD system whereby nouns are categorized into classes according to their association with culturally-important concepts.) Less-fluent YS principles for noun classification are simple. All nouns belong to one of two groups: animate or inanimate. All inanimate nouns are grouped under the Class IV form: bala. Animate nouns are grouped according to sex: Class I - male; Class II - female. For animate nouns, Class I is unmarked, ie if the sex of the referent is unspecified, the Class I noun marker is used.

eg bayi yuri (sex unspec. or male) kangaroo

balan yuri (female) kangaroo

In YD, as in TD, humans are always specified for sex; for other animate beings, specification of sex is optional.

It is important to realize that the reorganization of TD noun class membership is more than a surface reallocation of "exceptions". The resultant YD system differs markedly from TD noun classification principles. There are five basic differences between the TD and YD systems:

1. NEUTRALIZATION OF CLASS III and IV. In YD, Class III and IV are collapsed under Class IV noun marker forms. (This noun class neutralization was mentioned in 4.6.2 and 4.6.3 in association with the reduction of wunyja - 'where' and bala - 'there' paradigms.) In TD, edible fruit and vegetable foods were categorized as Class III; Class IV was a residue class for all nouns not belonging to Class I, II, III. In contrast, YS classify all inanimate objects under Class IV form bala. (The Class III form balam does not occur in less-fluent YS system.)

The following example illustrates the YD classification of edible matter under Class IV form bala:

(balam : TD)

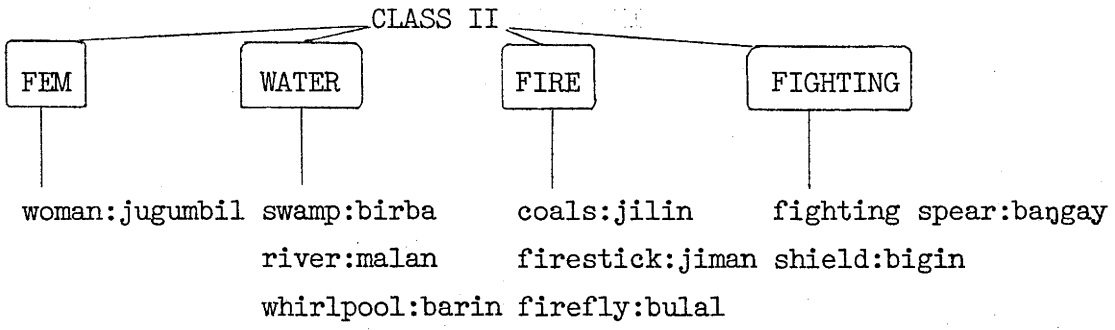
eg	ŋinda	ŋaygungu	wuga	bala	wuju
	2SG	1SG DAT	give-IMP	NOM IV	food

You give that food to me!

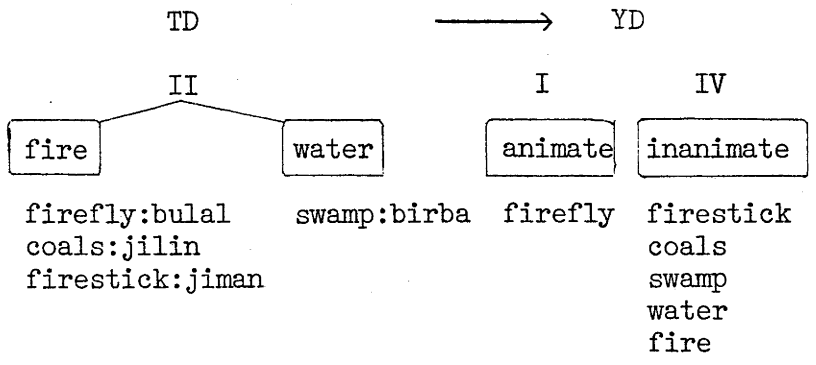
Other test items which were affected by this noun class collapse were:

TD	⟶	YD		
balam mirrany		bala mirrany	:	black bean
balam banba		bala banba	:	wild fig

2. REDUCTION OF CONCEPTS ASSOCIATED WITH CLASS III. In YD, the range of concepts associated with Class II is diminished. Recall that in TD Class II concepts included femininity, water, fire, fighting. Thus, TD Class II nouns can be subgrouped according to the concept associating them with that class. ie swamp : birba is subgrouped under 'water'; firefly : bulal, coals : jilin, firestick : jiman are placed under 'fire'. Subgrouping within TD Class II is illustrated below.



In YD, the concepts of water, fire, fighting are no longer associated with Class II. Only the basic concept, femininity, remains as criterion for classing nouns as Class II. ie nouns are no longer grouped according to their association with concepts such as water, fire, fighting. Instead, they are classified by ± animacy feature. The figure below shows the reorganization of some TD Class II nouns according to the YS system.



In short, there is a reduction in the number of concepts associated with Class II. YS drop the TD Class II concepts of fire, water, fighting, and base Class II membership on the sole criterion of femininity.

3. CATEGORIZATION BY CONCEPT - ASSOCIATION is also dropped. eg In TD, fishing line : yarra; fishing spear : barrban were placed in Class I, because they were linked with the Class I term, fish : jabu.- YS drop this concept association: fish : jabu remains with animate nouns in Class I, but fish line : yarra, and fish spear : barrban, are placed in Class IV with other inanimates.

ie TD ⟶ YD

CLASS I	CLASS I	CLASS IV
fish:jabu	fish	fish spear
fish spear:barrban		fish line
fish line:yarra		

4. The two TD rules for transferring class membership are also abandoned:

a. MYTHICAL ASSOCIATION as a basis for classification is dropped in YD. eg as mentioned above, in TD birds are believed to be the spirits of dead human females and therefore classed by the characteristic of femininity in Class II. This mythical association is dropped by less-fluent YS, who classify birds with other animates in Class I.

eg (balan : TD)

bayi	dundu	yambin	balay - gala
NOM I	bird	fly	there-above

The bird's flying up there.

Similarly, according to TD folklore, moon and sun are husband and wife. Thus in TD, the moon : gagara is Class I, and the sun : garri Class II. YS do not categorize according to this mythic principle. Instead they classify both sun and moon as inanimate objects in Class IV. This reallocation is illustrated by the form of the noun marker in the following example:

(bayi : TD)

ŋurugun-da	dubala	juɣjun	bala	gagara
dark-LOC	3DU	stare-NONFUT	NOM IV	moon

At night they two stared at the moon.

b. Less-fluent YS also drop the rule by which certain nouns are assigned a different class to the rest of their group, in order to mark a particular important property. YS were tested for this rule by three terms:- stinging nettle : bumbilam; stonefish : jaŋgan; garfish : garram. (Recall that, in TD, these terms belong to Class II by virtue of their harmfulness.) For these YS, none of these terms were classified in Class II. Instead, they classed stonefish and garfish in Class I with other animates, and stinging nettle as inanimate in Class IV.

ie TD ⟶ YD

CLASS II	CLASS I	CLASS IV
HARMFUL	ANIMATE	INANIMATE
garfish:garram	garfish	stinging nettle
stonefish:jaŋgan	stonefish	
stinging nettle:bumbilam		

Thus in YD, both rules of membership transference are dropped.

5. UNEXPLAINED EXCEPTIONS. Certain nouns whose class assignment in TD appears to be without explanation (Dixon, 1972:310) are also reorganized in YD. eg In TD, the unmarked form of dog : guda; bandicoot : bingu; platypus : gugula; echidna : gumbiyan are Class II, whereas the majority of animates had Class I as their unmarked form. Less-fluent YS "ironed out" these exceptions by placing the 4 terms with other animates in Class I.

ie

	TD			YD
CLASS:	I	II	⟶	I
	MOST ANIMATES	EXCEPTIONS	———	ALL ANIMATES
		dog:guda		(including TD exceptions)
		bandicoot:bingu		
		platypus:gugula		
		echidna:gumbiyan		

ie There is analogic remodelling of the unexplained TD exceptions, based on Class I as the unmarked category for all animate nouns.

As a result of these five changes in noun classification, the YD system is a much more regular, simple one:

ie

		CLASS	NOUN MARKER FORM
animate	masc :	I :	bayi
	fem :	II :	balan
inanimate	:	IV :	bala

It is important to note that, although YS do not exploit mythical associations and traditional concepts in the noun classification system, this does not mean that YS have totally lost traditional beliefs and associations. It is possible that YS are familiar with some of these beliefs but do not codify them linguistically. Unfortunately, I am unable to clarify this issue because no

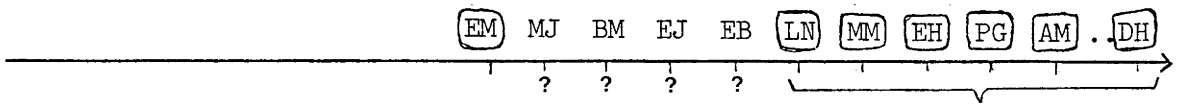
systematic study of YS familiarity with traditional beliefs and myths was undertaken. (Impressionistically, many less-fluent YS appeared to be unfamiliar with various aspects of traditional folklore.)

There is evidence in other languages that shifts in noun classification reflect changes in cultural beliefs and social attitudes. eg Khaidakov (1963, 1966) suggests that in Lak (a Caucasian language), historically there was a straightforward semantic basis for classification:

CLASS 1 : names of all human males
2 : names of all human females
3 : animals; some inanimates
4 : inanimates

However, due to changes in the attitudes toward women, these classification principles have been partly abandoned. eg Modern etiquette requires that in addressing women outside one's own family the indicators of Class 3 be used; those of Class 2 are considered impolite in this case. Thus, changes in Lak noun classification is closely linked with changes in the socio-cultural situation. Irvine (1978) also stresses the importance of socio-cultural factors in changes in Wolof noun classification.

Having described the type of innovation that occurs in YD noun categorization, it is necessary to detail which YS employ these changes. I was only able to test 7 YS for classification of all 35 terms. The placement of these YS on the continuum and features of their noun classification systems are shown in the figure below.



CLASS III-IV SEPARATE	⟶	(CLASS III-IV NEUTRALIZED)
VARIOUS TD CONCEPTS ASSOCIATED WITH CLASS III	----⟶	(FEMININITY AS SOLE CRITERION FOR CLASS II MEMBERSHIP)
MEMBERSHIP TRANSFERRED BY MYTHOLOGICAL ASSOCIATION	⟶	(LOSS OF TRANSFERENCE RULES MARKING MYTHOLOGICAL ASSOCIATION)
MEMBERSHIP TRANSFERRED TO MARK HARMFULNESS	⊣	(LOSS OF HARMFULNESS MARKING)
UNEXPLAINED EXCEPTIONS KEPT IN CLASS II	⟶	(ANIMATE EXCEPTIONS SHIFTED TO CLASS I)

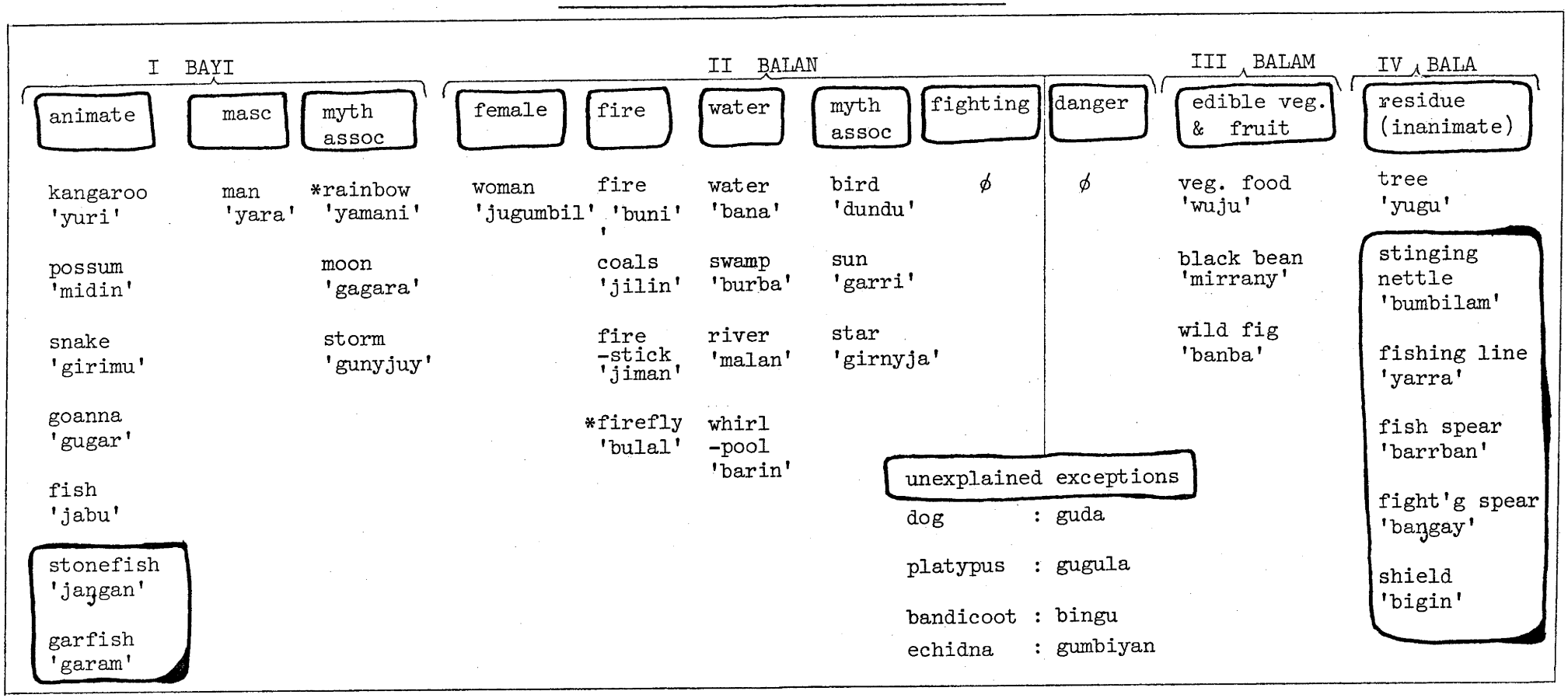
---:TD feature retained for only some items.

The important point is that 6 of the 7 YS used the radically simplified system described above. Only the most fluent speaker (EM) did not employ all of the innovations of this system. In effect, EM is the pivotal stage in the transition from the TD to less-fluent YS system. She deviates from the TD noun class system only slightly, by shifting membership of only a few items. The rules of noun classification in less-fluent YS system are only tendencies for EM.

Table 37 illustrates the alternations which EM makes to the TD system in classifying the 35 test items. EM's categorization of the 35 items suggests that:

1. EM loses the 'fighting' concept from Class II. eg fighting spear : baŋgay and shield : bigin (TD Class II) are shifted to Class IV with other inanimate nouns. (Like other YS, EM did not seem familiar with any other TD Class II 'fighting' nouns, eg fighting ground : buya).

TABLE 37 : EM SYSTEM OF NOUN CLASSIFICATION



circled items : indicate alteration to TD membership

* : EM uncertain of class

2. Categorization by concept-association is dropped. eg EM does not categorize fishing line : yarra or fish spear : barrban in Class I because of the TD association with the Class I term 'fish'. Instead she places fish line and fish spear in Class IV with other inanimates.

3. The "harmfulness" transference rule seems to be dropped eg dangerous animates stonefish : jaŋgan and garfish : garam are not transferred to Class II as in TD. Rather, EM groups them with other animates in Class I. Similarly, the harmful stinging nettle is placed in Class IV like all other trees. It is not transferred to Class II by virtue of its harmfulness.

The Table also indicates that EM retains the following features of TD system:

1) Class III and IV are kept as separate classes. EM does not neutralize the two classes like other YS.

2) The unexplained TD exceptions bandicoot : bingu; dog : guda; platypus : gugula; echidna : gumbiyan are kept in Class II.

3) The TD "mythical association" transference rule is retained by EM. eg moon : gagara, and storm : gunyjuy are kept in Class I; birds : dundu; star : girnyja; sun : garri are associated with femininity and placed in Class II. (Recall that the other harmfulness rule is lost.)

4) The concepts of fire and water are still linked with Class II. eg EM retains TD classification principles by grouping water : bana, swamp : burba; firestick : jiman; coals : jilin, and fire : buni in Class II. (Recall that "fighting" concept is lost.)

It is important to note that the observed changes in EM's classification system are based only on 35-item test. A check of additional randomly-selected items revealed that EM's classification

system was not so neat. For example:

1. The "harmfulness" transference rule is not entirely dropped as the 35-item test implies. eg In TD, hawks are transferred to Class I, in contrast to the majority of birds in Class II, in order to mark their harmfulness. (Hawks are the only birds that eat other birds.) EM maintains this TD markedness feature for hawks, by classifying them as Class I. eg bayi bariny-bariny
NOM I eaglehawk

(Recall, however, that EM drops the "harmfulness' transference rule for stinging nettle, stonefish, and garfish.)

2. Although EM groups most birds in Class II as in TD, she also shifts certain TD Class II birds into Class I. eg In TD, curlew : guyibarra, and kingfisher sp : jijulurruy are Class II. However, EM places them in Class I. It is possible that EM's regrouping of some birds in Class I represents the initial stages of YD innovation whereby all animates are categorized as Class I. (Recall that for less-fluent YS, this regrouping is complete : all unmarked animates are Class I.)

3. A similar partial shift appears to take place in EM's categorization of TD unexplained "exceptions". eg Although EM retains TD exceptions dog, platypus, bandicoot and echidna in Class II, she shifts TD "exception" dingo : ganibarra from Class II to Class I (like less-fluent YS do for all animates).

ie balan ganibarra : TD
(dingo)

bayi " : (EM) YD

Thus, EM's system of noun classification does not appear to operate on such clearly-defined principles. Rather, her categorization represents a gradual weakening of TD concepts and transference rules,

with tendency towards less-fluent YS classification principles. In short, EM is a medial figure in TD and YD systems of classification.

INTACTNESS OF YD GENDER SYSTEM

It was suggested above that the six less-fluent YS have a radically simplified system based on animacy and sex. However, this is based only on a categorization test of some 35 items. In order to guarantee that these YS use the gender system productively, I randomly selected other items for classification. In all cases, the six YS categorized the nouns according to animacy and sex, thus confirming that YS did have an intact gender system.

The intactness of YD system is also illustrated by the fact that many YS expressed surprise that I should ask them to classify such long lists of words when the principles of classification were so simple and productive. In the words of one YS:

> "I don't know why we're doin' all this. It's jus' simple. If it's male it's bayi [NOM I form] an female is ban [NOM II form], an' things - just bala [NOM IV]."
>
> PG, Aboriginal female, 19 years.

6.4 PERSISTENCE OF GENDER CATEGORY

It is significant that a gender system is actually retained in YD. This suggests that the category "gender" is quite basic to the YD communicative system. Two major factors for the survival of a gender system in YD are:

1) male/female, animate/inanimate are highly salient features, which are often distinguished in classification systems. eg In Indo-European languages, grammatical genders show a strong correlation

with the semantic categories of animacy and sex. Similarly, in YD, the complex TD system is abandoned in favour of a system using only these basic, salient features of animacy and sex. It is interesting that the three-way male/female/neuter distinction adopted by YS is the most common gender system across hundreds of languages in many language families.

2) The survival of gender in YD may be linked with the fact that in English 3 pronouns mark the masc-fem-neuter distinction. It is possible that the YS gender system resulted from analogic remodelling on English pronouns - he, she, it. Certainly, YS noun marker forms correspond to English pronominal distinctions:

ie		YD		
Male	: he	bayi	I	: male
Female	: she	balan	II	: female
Neuter	: it	bala	IV	: inanimate

The suggestion that YS analogize noun markers on English 3 pronouns is plausible in light of the fact that Dyirbal lacks a 3 pronoun category. It is possible that, in order to fill in this 'gap', YS (like TS) use noun marker forms in the capacity of 3 pronouns. Note, however, that there are essential differences between YD noun markers and English 3SG pronouns. These differences are discussed in 4.6.1.

While there is no conclusive evidence that changes in YD categorization do, in fact, result from semantic analogic remodelling on English 3SG pronouns, the congruency of the YS gender system and English pronouns - he, she, it - cannot be ignored.

The persistence of the gender category has been noted in other language death situations. eg Dorian (1981) reports

gender shows a striking resilience in terminal ESG. Gaelic has two grammatical genders - masc and fem - which are signalled by various devices. Dorian's study revealed that there was marked decay in some gender-signalling devices (pronoun replacement; adjective lenition), but not in others (diminutive suffix; noun mutation). The important point is that even though some signals indicating gender are missing, there is:

> "A surprising tenacity of gender marking in some form for even a very low proficiency level."
>
> (Dorian 1981: 129)

Similarly, in her investigation of changes in Tiwi, North Australia, Jenny Lee reports that the traditional Tiwi gender system (based on masc/fem, human/non-human distinctions) is maintained by younger speakers.

> "Considering the overall picture in MT and UT, it would seem that older children and younger people do retain the same semantic categories as TT, though there is some confusion with regard to loan words for some introduced items, as to where they fit into the system."
>
> (Lee 1981:184)

The important point is that the category "gender" is relatively persistent in Gaelic, Tiwi and YD. This suggests that the distinctions made by the gender system are quite important in all three languages.

6.5 CONCLUSION

Summing up the situation with regard to noun classification, all YS deviate from the complex TD system to a greater or lesser degree. The most-fluent YS (EM) deviates from the TD noun class system only slightly. EM maintains the TD four-class distinction and changes membership of only a few items by:

1 loss of 'fighting' concept for Class II;

2 weakening of transference rules marking harmfulness and mythological association;

3 reallocation of unexplained TD "exception", ganibarra:dingo;

4 categorization by concept-association also weakens. eg fish spear and fish line are no longer classed according to their association with fish.

Thus EM's system represents a gradual weakening of TD concepts and transference rules. In effect, EM is a pivotal figure in TD and less-fluent YD systems of classification.

Less-proficient YS radically simplified the semantic principles of categorization by:

1) neutralizing Class III and IV;

2) reducing the four concepts associated with Class II to one: femininity;

3) dropping transference rules marking harmfulness and mythological association;

4) analogizing all unexplained exceptions.

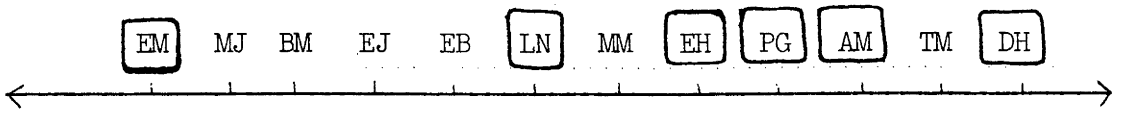
The resultant YD noun classification system is based simply on the principles of animacy and sex.

7. LEXICON

Loss of vocabulary is a commonly-recognized form of reduction associated with language death. (See Hill & Hill 1977; Keiffer 1977; Austin MSS; Trudgill 1976.) The main aim of this chapter is to investigate various aspects of lexical reduction in YD including diminishing size of vocabulary; lexical zones resistant to loss; formal and semantic changes.

7.1 VOCABULARY TEST - OPEN CLASSES (NOUN, VERB, ADJ)

In order to gauge the degree to which YS vocabulary was diminished, YS were asked to give Dyirbal equivalents of English words in a 498-item word list: (322 nouns; 62 adjectives; 114 verbs). The test was based upon a standard vocabulary test used for Handbook of Australian Languages, Dixon and Blake ed. It included basic core vocabulary and culturally-important lexical distinctions. Six YS from various points of the YD continuum were selected for the vocabulary test. The figure below shows the placement of YS on the continuum:



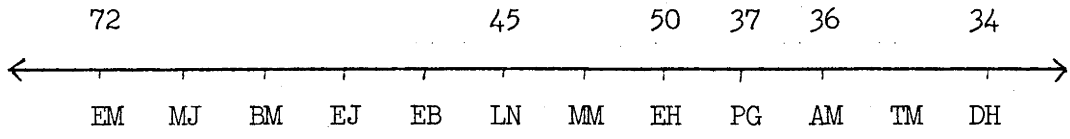
It is important to realize that YS response to vocabulary test does not represent the absolute ability of the YS. eg In various instances, YS could not recall an item in lexical lists, but some hours later, used the same Dyirbal term in casual conversation. Similarly, it was contextually inappropriate for YS to produce certain taboo words (eg certain body parts and functions) in elicitation. In a more casual context, these items were frequently used. Thus, the results presented below may well under-represent the YS knowledge of vocabulary. What the test does indicate is the relative YS retention of Dyirbal words.

7.2 RESULTS OF YS VOCABULARY TEST

YS scores for the lexical test are presented in Table 38. The Table indicates that:

1. There is noticeable reduction in YS vocabulary. None of the YS recalled all 498 items. YS scores ranged from 170-356 words.

2. Reduction in vocabulary correlates roughly with grammatical proficiency. The figure below indicates a gradual decline in YS score as the YD continuum progresses.



eg EM, the most fluent YS, had the highest score, 72%. LN and EH, placed in the middle of the continuum, recalled 45 and 50% respectively of the total items. The least-proficient YS (DH) scored

TABLE 38 : VOCABULARY TEST : YS

	NOUN		VERB		ADJECTIVE		TOTAL		YD AVERAGE
	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	
# tested:	322		II4		62		498		
EM	2I5	66.8	93	8I.6	48	77.4	356	7I.5	
LN	I33	4I.3	70	6I.4	23	37.I	226	45.4	
EH	I52	47.2	7I	62.3	27	43.5	250	50.2	227.2 items = 45.6%
PG	I00	3I.I	57	50	26	4I.9	I83	36.7	
AM	I09	33.9	48	42.I	2I	33.9	I78	35.7	
DH	90	28	48	42.I	32	5I.6	I70	34.I	

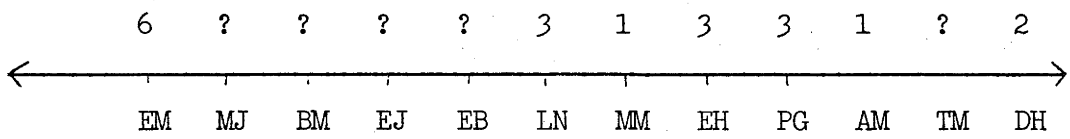
lowest, 34%.

The correlation between vocabulary retention and grammatical proficiency has also been investigated by Dorian in her study of terminal Gaelic. Dorian (1981:145) reports that:

> "Lexical recall did not correlate well with grammatical conservation for fluent speakers. ...On the other hand, SS [semi-speaker] scores correlated very well with the individual speakers' grammatical abilities."

7.3 ADVERBALS

TD has a small class of adverbals (Dixon 1972:301-2). (For YD verb-adverbal agreement, see this thesis, 4.7.1.) YS were tested for 15 adverbal forms. These were not on the 498-item list; they are listed in the appendix at the end of this chapter. In testing adverbals, simple English sentences were presented for translation. In cases where YS were hesitant, different common noun and verb items were substituted to facilitate the translation task. The figure below gives YS response:



(? = YS not asked)

As the figure indicates, YS have lost many adverbal forms:

1. The most-fluent YS (EM) has the highest score. She retained 6 adverbals:

gudin TR do too much
wirrjan TR do quickly
garrjun TR do properly

(cont.)

ŋarambanyu INT couldn't do
yalaman/$_{nyu}$ TR/$_{INT}$ do like this
wiyaman/$_{nyu}$ TR/$_{INT}$ do how

2. Other YS scored much less. Their scores ranged from 1-3 forms. The three commonly retained adverbals were:

wirrjan : do quickly (7 YS)
yalaman : do like this (5 YS)
wiyaman : do how (4 YS)

It is important to note that although YS produced these forms in elicitation sessions, they rarely used adverbals in a more natural speech context. A check of all YS texts and conversations revealed that only the two most-fluent YS (EM, MJ) used adverbals in casual speech. In all cases, the adverbals were yalaman: 'do like this'; wiyaman: 'do how'. Two possible reasons for the retention of these forms are:

1) yalaman and wiyaman also function as interrogative and deictic verbs (resp) in TD (Dixon 1972:55).

2) They are among the 12 commonest verbs in TD texts. This contrasts with most other TD adverbals which have quite low frequency.

7.4 VOCABULARY RETENTION IN 5-15 YEAR AGE GROUP

It is interesting to investigate how many Dyirbal words are retained by non-Dyirbal speakers. Although no Jambun children in the 5-15 year age group could construct a Dyirbal sentence, several of them could recall some Dyirbal words. (I estimate 7-10 of 40 children). I tested 7 of these children for vocabulary retention, and the results are presented below.

TABLE 39 : VOCABULARY TEST : 5 - I5 AGE GROUP (ϕS)

	NOUN		VERB		ADJECTIVE		TOTAL		AVERAGE
# tested:	322		II4		62		498		
AGE	#	%	#	%	#	%	#	%	
9 LL	76	23.6	6	5.3	I	I.6	83	I6.7	
I2 NB	64	I9.9	6	5.3	I	I.6	7I	I4.3	
9 DB	48	I4.9	4	3.5	2	3.2	54	I0.9	
I0 CB	44	I3.7	2	I.8	3	4.8	49	9.8	49.9 items = I0%
I0 JD	38	II.8	2	I.8	2	3.2	42	8.4	
8 ND	29	9.0	0	0	2	3.2	3I	6.2	
6 AD	I9	5.9	0	0	0	0	I9	3.8	

OPEN CLASSES - NOUN, VERB, ADJ

Table 39 presents the children's score for the 498-item vocabulary test. The table indicates that all children had very low scores, ranging from 19-83 items. The average score was 50 words (10%). This contrasts to the YD average of 227 words (46%).

It is worth noting that the child with the highest score (LL:83) had quite extensive exposure to TD from his maternal grandmother. Although neither of LL's parents speak Dyirbal, LL's grandmother (a TD "purist") constantly spoke Dyirbal to him at home. Consequently, LL can "understand but not talk". (LL scored 100% in the understanding test (3.5.2).)

The Dyirbal words which the children recalled were high-frequency "core" items. eg

NOUNS: body parts (eg diŋgal: head; mala: hand; jina: foot; gayga: eye)

: well-known animates (eg yuri: kangaroo; guda: dog; gujagay: crocodile)

ADJ: human propensity (banyjal: stupid; burrmu: deaf)

VERBS: actions (miyandanyu: laugh; wurrbanyu: talk; gunyja-yirri-nyu: drink; nyinanyu:sit; bungin: lie down, sleep; balgan: hit)

SMALLER WORD CLASSES

The children were also tested for the following small classes: adverbals; pronouns; noun markers; interrogatives; particles. Only one child could recall a few items from these categories. (This child NB had a second highest score for the N, V, ADJ test: 71 items.

The Dyirbal forms which NB recalled were nominative pronouns and interrogatives:

PRONOUNS:

	1	2	3
SG	ŋaja	ŋinda	bayi/ban
DU	-	-	dubala
PL	ŋanaji	yufela	alugeda

INTERROGATIVES:

wanya: who
minya: what
wunyjan*: where

* It is interesting that NB retains the Class II form wunyjan, rather than the unmarked NOM I form wunyjiny. See 4.6.3. I have no explanation for this.

** Note also that LL, the child with the highest vocabulary score, did not recall any items in the smaller word classes. It is important to realize, however, that although LL and other ØS did not produce these items in elicitation, they may recall some in a more natural context.

The Jambun children utilize their limited Dyirbal vocabulary in their primary language, JE, (see 9.2.3). However, they have very little ability to use these words productively in Dyirbal sentences. This suggests that a good deal of lexicon lingers on in the community after the language, which provided the lexicon, has effectively died out. A similar phenomenon is noted by Dorian (1981:146). Dorian reports that a near-passive bilingual, who had minimal ability to construct a Gaelic sentence, nevertheless recalled 150 words of a 220-item list. Unfortunately,

Dorian does not specify which items were resistant to loss.

Summarizing, Jambun children in the 5-15 age group recalled only a few Dyirbal words. The terms belonged to the open classes - noun, verb, adjective. Small word classes were recalled by only one child. This result suggests that in the final stages of vocabulary reduction, the smaller, closed classes may be more susceptible to dropping.

7.5 VOCABULARY AREAS RESISTANT TO LOSS

While there is overall reduction in YS vocabulary, there are some zones of maximum resistance. ie areas of the lexicon where quite a few Dyirbal forms are retained. In the following we will observe 1) parts-of-speech, and 2) islands of lexemes which are resistant to loss.

7.5.1 PARTS-OF-SPEECH

Of the three parts-of-speech, nouns were more successfully recalled than verbs or adjectives. Seen from Table 38, the 498-item word list contained a higher percentage of nouns than verbs or adjectives, (N:322, V:114, ADJ:62). However, adding 50 extra verbs and adjectives to the list showed no extra increase in total score. Therefore, it appears that YS have more nouns than verb or adjective items. eg Of EM's total score (356), 215 were nouns, 93 were verbs, and 48 adjectives. Similarly, AM recalled 178 items: 109 of these were nouns, (48 verbs and 21 adjectives). The same pattern applies for all other YS and 7 children.

This result suggests that in a vocabulary loss situation, it is the noun items with real-world referents that are most resistant. In contrast, YS have a much smaller number of verbs and adjectives, which describe actions, states, and qualities.

7.5.2 ISLANDS OF LEXEMES

Within the noun class, islands of lexemes are preserved. YS displayed a tendency to recall items referring to:

i) human body (eg hair: murray; tooth: dirra; heart: rulgu; eye: gayga)

ii) human classification (eg Aboriginal man: yara; Aboriginal woman: jugumbil; child: nyalŋga; male ghost: guwuy; female ghost: guyŋgun)

iii) well-known animates (eg generic terms for fish: jabu; snake: girimu; birds: dundu. Names of well-known species were also commonly recalled: eg taipan: walguy; carpet snake: maguy; black bream: bugal.)

Areas where informants scored poorly were:

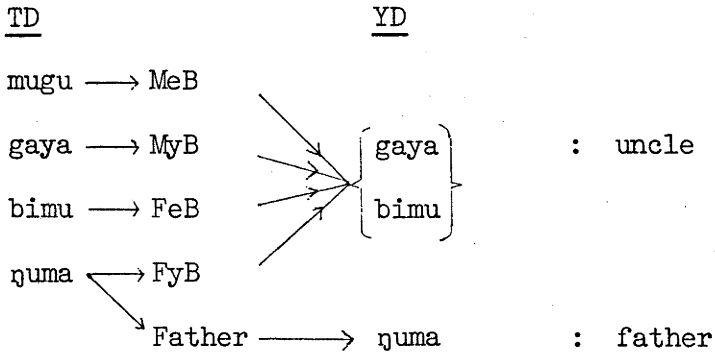
i) specific terms referring to types of animals and trees

In identifying pictures and live examples, YS were able to give the specific English terms, but not the Dyirbal equivalent. eg On a bush excursion, EH named various tree species in English: ironbark; bottlebrush; candlenut; blackbean, but when asked the Dyirbal terms, she gave only the generic form: yugu 'tree gen.' for all items.

ii) terms referring to inanimates or culture-specific items were also prone to loss. Many YS missed items in the following categories: artefacts (eg yamstick; nullanulla; spear);

ceremony (eg fighting ground; various song styles), weather (eg wind; cloud; storm), geography (eg plain; cave; sand). Although most YS did recall a few more common terms, (eg boomerang, mountain, sun), their overall knowledge of Dyirbal terms from these categories was poor.

iii) Kinship was another area affected by vocabulary loss. (I tested kinship terms by asking "What do you call X [person]?", rather than asking for Dyirbal equivalents of abstract English titles.) Of the 22 kinship items tested, most YS could recall only the more basic of these such as father, mother, husband, wife, uncle etc, older/younger sister etc. Many of the YS appeared very uncertain of the complicated TD kinship system. Often distinctions of the TD system were collapsed by YS. eg In TD, there are four different terms equivalent to the English word 'uncle'. These are shown in the figure below:



No YS retain the TD four-way distinction. Instead they use either bimu: FeB, or gaya: MyB, or both interchangeably to refer to general relation 'uncle'. ie as the figure illustrates, there is semantic extension of TD terms, gaya (MyB) and bimu (FeB): these items are generalized to cover categories of MeB and FyB. As a consequence, the TD term ŋuma (in TD covering father and FyB) becomes semantically limited to "father" in YD. In this way,

reorganization of the kinship system involves semantic extension of some TD terms, and semantic restriction of others. (A few less-fluent YS lost the TD terms bimu and gaya altogether and simply used the English term "uncle".)

The loss of kinship terms is associated with the disintegration of the tribal unit and upheavals in the traditional social fabric. In the Jambun community, only the older speakers have detailed knowledge of the TD kinship system. Most YS could not place members of the Jambun community in the TD kinship network. These YS commonly used English-based terms to refer to the kinship tie. In the following text, a fluent YS (MJ) uses English loan form ŋandi: 'aunty', instead of a TD kinship term:

eg	ban	ŋandi	Sally	- nya	ŋanaji	ŋanban
	NOM II	aunty		- ACC	1PL	ask-NONFUT

We asked Aunty Sally.

Other language death studies have also reported that some areas of the vocabulary, are more resistant to loss than others. eg Keiffer (1977:78) observes that in the Ōrmuṛi language of Afghanistan:

> "...islands of lexemes are preserved, referring to the family, the house, the human body, nature, the stars, rural life, the animal kingdom, time divisions - various utensils; colors, religion and moral feelings."

Austin (MSS) reports that in dying Gamilaraay, there were islands of lexemes which fall into the following semantic fields: human classification; body parts; names of animals and plants, especially items of high gastronomic interest to Aboriginal people; items of material culture and human habitation; natural elements and forces; a few adjectives, mainly those relating to qualities

of human beings; a few verbs mainly those denoting human activities carried out around the camp. It is interesting that Gamilaraay and Dyirbal have certain islands of resistant lexemes in common. eg human classification; body parts; well-known animates.

In YD, verbs and adjectives were evenly distributed across semantic types eg the small number of adjectives covered a wide range of semantic fields eg human propensity (banyjar: mad; giyan: ashamed); numerals; physical property (jami: fat; midi: little); value (garrja/jigil: good); temperature (biŋgir: hot; dinu: cool; mungin: cold). Similarly, verbs ranged across categories of motion, rest, induced position, affect, attention, talking and corporeal. One interesting point was that only one fluent YS recalled verbs of want and like and propensity, eg ŋuyminyu: like; jiwan: dislike; yilbinyu: be glad about something.

Summarizing, certain areas of the YS vocabulary are more resistant to loss than others: comparison of parts-of-speech revealed that nouns are more commonly recalled than verbs and adjectives; within the noun class, items referring to the human body, human classification, and generic and well-known animates form islands of lexical resistance.

7.6 FORMAL CHANGES IN YD LEXICON

There are certain lexemes in YD which vary from the TD form. Two types of variation are: 1) affix fossilization 2) reduction.

7.6.1 AFFIX FOSSILIZATION For a few YD verbs, TD derivational affixes appear to have become fossilized into the verb root. This fossilization appears to be idiosyncratic ie a matter of individual

style. Examples of fossilization are listed below, along with YS who employ this innovation.

TD VERB ROOT +	AFFIX ⟶	YD VERB	:YS USING FORM
guni-y : search	-marri : false refl.	guni-marri-nyu	:all YS
miju-l : take no notice of	-gani : 'do repeatedly'	miju-gani-nyu	:LN
nyina-y: sit	-gani : " "	nyingani-ny	:PG, AM, TM, MM

Evidence of affix fossilization is:

1) TD verb root and affix form a non-segmentable unit in YS texts and elicitation.

2) The affix segment of the fossilized form bears no meaning. eg For PG, the meanings of TD nyinanyu and her fossilized nyinganinyu forms are identical. She rejected my suggestion that nyingani-nyu meant 'sit repeatedly' as it does in TD.

Of the above-listed items, gunimarri-nyu 'search' is by far the most widespread: all YS invariably used this fossilized form. The widespread acceptance of this fossilization may be attributed, in part, to the fact that in TD the root guni-y is frequently followed by affix -marri-y. The other fossilized items (mijuganinyu, nyinganinyu) are less widely accepted: only some YS use these forms. (Unlike guni +marriy, the roots nyina-y: "sit" and miju-l: "take no notice of" are not so frequently accompanied by affix -gani in TD texts.)

The YD fossilization, nyinganinyu, is of particular interest. This form does not occur in TD. Rather it appears to be a contraction of the TD root + affix combination: nyinan-gani-nyu. The form nyinganinyu was detected only in the speech of Buckaroo members. (Recall from 5.5 that various other linguistic features

were also shared by Buckaroo YS.) An example of this form in Buckaroo speech is:

eg ŋanaji get up / manjanyu / an ŋanaji nyinganinyu
1PL eat 1PL sit

now wurrbanyu
talk (AM)

We got up, ate, and we're sitting, talking now.

7.6.2 REDUCTION

A second way in which YD forms differed from TD items involves shortening the TD word by dropping segments/syllables. The only example I have is commonly used by 3 YS (DH, LN, EH). These YS delete the -ga segment of the TD form banaganyu 'return'.

ie TD → YD

banaga-nyu → banaø-nyu

eg

ŋaja yanu police station-da / mugiyam-nya budin
1SG go -LOC name-ACC take

bananyu home
return

I went to the police station to take mugiyam back home.

It is worth noting that the reduced form - bana-nyu - is not homophonous with any other YD form. (In TD, there is a similar root bana-l "break off" TR, -l class, but this verb does not occur in YS vocabulary.) Thus, the deletion involved no risk of confusion with other YD items.

7.6.3 INTRUSION OF PIDGIN FORMS

In YD, there is noticeable intrusion of 'pidgin' forms. ie items which do not occur in SAE or TD. The pidgin forms in YD with which I am familiar are listed below:

PARTICLES:

nomo	: negative
gen	: 'again', 'also'
lilbit	: 'do/be a little'
maitbi	: irrealis marker
bin	: past tense indicator
blonḍu	: genitive
thiŋ	: 'what's-it-called'
orait	: ok

PRONOUNS:

	1	2	3
DU:	mindubala	yundubala	dubala
PL:	wifela	yufela	alugeda

(see 4.6.1)

It is particularly interesting that all of the TD forms which these pidgin items replace are from closed word classes or grammatical categories. This contrasts with YS treatment of open class items: nouns, verbs, and adjectives are anglicized by devices of lexical substitution or loan words. In other words, in the transition from Dyirbal to English, the closed word classes are characterized by intrusion of pidgin forms; larger open classes are not. (As yet I have no explanation for this.)

7.7 LEXICAL ACCOMMODATION AND THE ACCULTURIZATION PROCESS

7.7.1 TYPES OF LEXICAL ACCOMMODATION

There are various ways in which a lexicon accommodates new concepts and items of a foreign culture. These include:

1. extension of old meanings
2. coining of new words using the original language base
3. use of loan words
4. lexical substitution of the foreign word, without assimilation to the native system

The following describes the occurrence of these types in TD and YD.

1. SEMANTIC EXTENSION. There is a lot of semantic extension in TD and maybe even more in YD, though I am not certain of this. The following examples of semantic extension occur in both TD and YD.

a) In pre-white contact Dyirbal, the term bulmban referred to 'grass spread out for a mattress'. TD and fluent YS extend this original meaning to cover a European-style bed.

b) Similarly, the term buŋgu originally meant 'knee' and 'wave'. In TD and YD, the term is used to cover 'wheel of motorcar'. This extension is based on the association with 'that part of a body whose movement is the major factor in propelling the entire body along the ground'. (Dixon 1980 :123).

c) waguy 'sand' is extended to cover European-introduced sugar (a similar granular substance).

2. COINING NEW WORDS is extremely rare in TD and YD. This may be due to the fact that in Dyirbal, noun compounding is rarely used as a word formation device. The only TD example with which

I am familiar is:

spectacles: gayga gilaji (eye, glass)

I have no evidence of coining new words in YD.

3. LOAN WORDS. Like many languages in a culture contact situation, TD and YD have a fair number of loan words ie English forms which have been assimilated to the Dyirbal sound system. In the following, noun and verb classes of loan words are discussed separately:

(i) In TD and YD, nouns are commonly borrowed from English and phonologically-assimilated. eg

juwa : store

jugijugi : chook, chicken

bujigan : pussycat

dagida : doctor

ŋandi : aunty

There appeared to be no new loan words in YD: all of the YD loan forms with which I am familiar also occur in TD. From the available data, I was unable to distinguish between TD and YD phonologically assimilated loans. However, more extensive research may reveal that some YD loans are less-thoroughly integrated than TD loan forms.

It is interesting that the linguistic device of reduplication is sometimes employed to avoid confusion between a loan item and an original TD form. eg The English word 'chook'/'hen', when phonologically assimilated to the Dyirbal sound system, is expected to become 'jugi'.

ie chook → jugi

However, this form is identical to the TD adjective 'big' : jugi.

In order to avoid confusion, the loan term is reduplicated. Hence, the distinction is maintained.

ie big : jugi

chook : jugi-jugi

(The YD noun loans with which I am familiar are listed in appendix II at the end of this chapter. The majority of loans had constant form. Any variation is included in the list.)

(ii) VERBS. In TD, English verbs were borrowed into the nominal class, and then verbalized by the derivational affixes:

-bin : TD intransitive verbalizer

-man : TD transitive verbalizer

YS also incorporate English verbs into the verb class in this way, the only difference being the form of the transitivizing affix:

TD: -man YD: -iman

It is highly probable that the -man segment of -iman is the TD transitive verbalizer -man (see 4.3.2). The -i- form may be a filler segment used to link English and Dyirbal morphemes. An alternative analysis of the -iman form is:

Verb	+	im	+	man
		PIDGIN AFFIX		TR VZR

The following examples from YS texts demonstrate the addition of -bin and -iman affixes on to English verb forms.

-bin attached to intransitive verb:

bayi-m-bayi	reckon / oh	nomo	worry-bin	nyuraji
NOM I-REDUP		NEG	INTR VZR	2PL

He said (to us): "Don't worry you fellows!"

-iman added to transitive verb:

modaga bala / drive-iman not registered
car NOM IV

buliman-gu bayi summons-iman
policeman-ERG NOM I

The policeman summonsed him.

d. LEXICAL SUBSTITUTION. In YD, the intrusion of non-assimilated English forms is common. YS frequently depend on English words to bridge gaps in their Dyirbal communicative competence. The following example illustrates English intrusion in YS speech:

eg ŋanaji happen to buran bayi helicopter waymban-gani-nyu
1PL see NOM I walkabout-ASP-NONFUT

We happened to see a helicopter travelling around.

Of the four devices - semantic extension; coining new words; loan words; and lexical substitution - lexical substitution is by far the most common in YD, followed by loan words. It is significant that the devices of lexical substitution and loan words rely on English vocabulary. (Semantic extension and coining new words do not.) The predominance of lexical substitution in YD seems to confirm that, in the terminal phase of the language, speakers become increasingly dependent on the linguistic resources of the replacing code, English.

7.7.2 COMPARISON WITH OTHER CULTURE CONTACT SITUATIONS

Studies of linguistic acculturation indicate that the degree to which foreign words infiltrate a native lexicon is associated with the nature of cultural contact. eg Dozier (1964) reports two contrasting examples of linguistic acculturation:

the Yacqui of Sonora and Arizona, and Tewa of New Mexico. The Yacqui tribe had a history of non-violent assimilation with the Spanish culture. As a result, Yacqui speakers accepted many Spanish loan words; their language is a mixture of well-integrated Spanish and Yacqui forms. In sharp contast to this, the Tewa tribe violently resisted the encroaching Spanish culture. In both cultural and linguistic spheres, the Tewa rejected Spanish influence. This is reflected by the fact that there is a marked absence of Spanish forms in Tewa. Instead, the Tewa relied on native linguistic resources, and coined new words from their original language base.

Similarly, in his investigation of the Kiliwa response to the Hispanic culture, Mixco (1977) reports a striking paucity of loan words. Rather than introduce foreign words, the Kiliwa rely on native linguistic resources. Mixco attributes this resistance to loan words to the psychological response to an alien Spanish presence in their country.

It is likely that in the initial period of white contact, the Dyirbal people also resisted the encroaching European influence. Certainly violent conflict marked early years (1860-1920) of culture contact. See 3.1.2. In such a climate, there was probably high resistance to European cultural and linguistic influence. This contrasts to the current situation where replacement of Dyirbal by English is far advanced. In YD, there is little resistance to the intrusion of English words: loan words and lexical substitution are common devices. Thus, the degree to which foreign words infiltrate a native lexiçʃon appears to be linked with the nature of culture contact.

7.8 SEMANTIC COLLAPSE

In the above, it was established that YS have a diminished Dyirbal vocabulary. It is necessary to ask at this stage if this reduction results in assigning wider meanings to some words. In the following, some examples of semantic collapse in YD are given. Then we will compare semantic collapse in YD with the mother-in-law style of TD.

7.8.1 EXAMPLES OF SEMANTIC COLLAPSE

ADJECTIVES. In TD there are various forms which are semantically equivalent to the English adjective 'big'. The adjective form varies depending on the type of animal. eg one form is used to refer to big size of water goanna, and another is used to describe 'big' as in carpet snakes. Some of the TD forms for 'big' are listed below:

		YD
jugi	big (gen)	jugi : big
wayja	big water goanna	
yuŋuy J yirrawuru G	big carpet snake	
maŋara J / wulmbin G :	big kangaroos and wallabies	
gunuji J / mubarray G :	big eel	
wagala	big scrub turkey	
milgu	big bream	

In YD the animate-specific forms are lost. All YS neutralize the TD distinctions by collapsing the specific terms under the unmarked TD form 'jugi'; this form is extended to cover all nouns.

VERBS. In TD there are a number of verbs referring to climbing upwards action including:

bilinyu : climb tree
waynyjin : climb uphill
bumiranyu : climb with loya-vine
nyadinyu : climb frog-like fashion

One fluent YS (EM) collapsed these distinctions and used two forms bilinyu and waynyjin interchangeably to refer to 'action upwards'. (EM was not familiar with the other 2 TD forms.)

eg	bayi	yara	{bilinyu / waynyjin}	muŋan-da
	NOM I	man	climb	mountain-LOC

The man climbed the mountain.

In order to specify whether the action was tree-climbing or going uphill, EM simply includes the appropriate noun: muŋan-mountain; yugu-tree. (Other YS did not collapse the forms in this way: they kept the separate TD forms and meanings.)

NOUNS. YS often collapse a range of TD nouns by extending the unmarked generic term, or a form referring to a common species, to cover other specific forms. eg

TD		YD
marbu : lice		
niwan J / niyan G : nits	→	marbu
jaban J : spotted eel		
girriŋan : black eel	→	jaban
gunyin : spotted with white belly sp.		
gurril : old "jaban" sp.		

Such semantic collapse is conducive to extreme parsimony in YD lexicon.

7.8.2 COMPARISON WITH SEMANTIC COLLAPSE IN MOTHER-IN-LAW STYLE

Like YD, the Jalŋuy or M-I-L speech style of TD is characterized by extreme parsimony. There is a many-to-one correspondence between TD and Jalŋuy words: TD items are collapsed into more general semantic groupings in Jalŋuy. On the basis of Jalŋuy semantic collapse, Dixon (1982) divides Dyirbal verbs into two categories: nuclear and non-nuclear. He hypothesizes that TD non-nuclear items are collapsed under more general 'nuclear terms'. Before investigating if YS collapse TD items under the same semantic groupings as MIL, it is necessary to briefly explain the notion of nuclear - non-nuclear.

NUCLEAR words are the most important items of a language, with the encompassing generic meanings. NON-NUCLEAR words have more limited meanings - each effectively provides a rather detailed specification of some aspects of the nuclear meaning ie non-nuclear terms can be defined in terms of nuclear items. Nuclear items cannot be defined in terms of any more general words. eg 'hit' is a nuclear verb, whereas 'slap' is non-nuclear. 'slap' could be defined in terms of the more general term 'hit' ie slap = hit with open hand. In contrast, 'hit' cannot in the same way be defined in terms of some more general verb. (For detailed discussion of nuclear/non-nuclear distinction, see Dixon, 1982:63ff).

A comparison of YD and MIL revealed that YS collapse according to the MIL nuclear/non-nuclear distinction only when the meaning of the non-nuclear verb is totally encompassed by the nuclear term. The first set of examples illustrate YS collapse based on the same semantic groupings as MIL. Note that

the collapsed non-nuclear items are totally included in the nuclear meaning.

TD (all transitive)

buran	:	see, look at	MIL: nyuriman
waban	:	look up at	YD: buran
barrmin	:	look back at	'see, look at'
walginyu	:	look over/round at	
ruyginyu	:	look in at	
wamin	:	look at someone without person aware that he's being looked at	
gindan	:	look with aid of artificial light	

2.

TD

buwanyu	:	tell	MIL: wuyuban
jinganyu	:	tell a particular piece of news	YD : buwanyu: 'tell'
gindimban	:	warn	
ŋarran	:	tell someone hasn't a certain thing (eg food) when she actually does have	

3. Similarly, the example of semantic collapse cited in 7.8.1 also occurs in MIL, (EM collapsed the distinction between waynyjin 'climb uphill' and bilinyu 'climb tree'.)

The important point is that such examples of YD semantic collapse are very similar to these of MIL.

In contrast, YS do not collapse terms according to MIL semantic groupings if the non-nuclear meaning is not totally covered by the nuclear meaning. eg In MIL, TD speakers collapse the following 3 TD words under a single 'nuclear' term. Note that jalŋinyu "to imitate a person's voice and words" is not obviously associated with the nuclear term "pick up".

TD

maŋgan	: pick up	MIL:	mulwan 'pick up'
naŋginyu	: scrape about picking up crumbs		
jalŋinyu	: imitate a person's voice or words = pick up language		

YS do not collapse jalŋinyu under the nuclear item maŋgan: 'pick up' as in Jalŋuy. Instead YS either a) extended a different word miyandanyu 'laugh', to cover the meaning, or b) expressed the meaning in English.

It is important to note that although Jalŋuy and YD are characterized by extreme parsimony, YD vocabulary reduction is much less dependent on semantic collapse based on the non-nuclear distinction. In YD, if a non-nuclear term is lost from the vocabulary, the YS will often substitute the non-nuclear English equivalent, rather than collapse the meaning under a more general Dyirbal nuclear term.

eg	jugumbil-gu	kick-iman	wuda	guda
	wuman-ERG		small	dog

The woman kicked the small dog.

In the above example, LN could not recall the specific TD term for 'kick' jilwan. Rather than use a more general Dyirbal 'nuclear' term such as bijin 'hit with rounded object', LN substitutes the specific English form 'kick'. Similarly in the vocabulary tests, YS tended to give English terms, rather than use semantic collapse. As one YS commented when she could not recall various specific Dyirbal words:

"jus' say the English [equivalent], that's all"

In short, the vocabulary reduction in YD is met by semantic collapse, and lexical substitution of English forms. YS appear to collapse specific terms according to Jalŋuy semantic

groupings, only when the meaning of a specific term is entirely covered by the corresponding nuclear item.

7.8.3 SEMANTIC SHIFT

In YD data, I have one clear example of semantic shift, ie the original TD meaning is lost, and the form assumes new meaning in YD.

TD: guŋgari ⟶ north

YD: ↘ 'far out!'

In TD, guŋgari is an adjective meaning 'north'. However, for PG it does not have this meaning. PG reinterprets the TD directional adjective form guŋgari as an exclamation, which translates into English as 'Far out!'.

eg	guŋgari !	nyarrgali	jiŋga-jiŋgali-nyu
	far out !	name of car	run-REDUP-NONFUT

Far out! Nyarrgali is speeding along.

7.9 CONCLUSION

Summarizing, there is noticeable vocabulary loss in YD. The vocabulary test revealed that this lexical reduction correlates roughly with grammatical proficiency: the most-fluent YS (EM) recalled the largest number of Dyirbal items; the least-proficient YS (DH) had the lowest score. Some items appear more resistant to dropping than others: YS recalled more noun items than verbs and adjectives; islands of lexemes referring to body parts, human classification and well-known animates form zones of resistance.

There is evidence of some minor formal changes in YD lexicon: eg For a few YD verbs, the TD derivational affix is incorportated into the verb root. There is also an innovation of intrusion of pidgin forms in closed word classes.

The extreme parsimony of YD is dealt with by two main devices: semantic collapse and lexical substitution. Semantic collapse tends to occur when the meaning of a specific Dyirbal word is totally covered by a more general Dyirbal term. Lexical substitution is a more common device: In order to fill in gaps in their Dyirbal competence, YS often substitute English words. Certainly there is little resistance to the intrusion of English forms in YD. This indicates that, in the terminal phase of a language, the speakers come to rely on the linguistic resources of the replacing language.

APPENDIX 1 - ADVERBAL TEST

	ENGLISH MEANING	TD FORM
1.	finish	:jaybin J, munyaman M, (TR) wudanyu (INT)
2.	start doing/do first	:ŋaynyin J, ŋunin M, jambin J, ŋunbiran (TR)
3.	do too much	:gudin (TR)
4.	do too soon	:nyinbin (TR)
5.	do quickly	:wirrjan, gaynbin (TR)
6.	do slowly	:gurrgimbarrinyu, wundinyu (INT)
7.	do over and over, within a short time span	:dayin (TR)
8.	do again, at intervals	:ŋabimban (TR), galamban J, (TR)
9.	do properly	:nyuyman, garjun (TR)
10.	do badly	:darran, ganbin (TR)
11.	do something that shouldn't be done	:gulman, rurrman (TR)
12.	can't do	:ŋarambanyu (INT)
13.	help do	:miwan (TR)
14.	do like this	:yalama-n/nyu J (TR/INT)
15.	do what/do how	:wiyaman/nyu J (TR/INT)

APPENDIX II - LOAN WORDS IN YD

barinaybul	pineapple
binana	banana
biba	paper; book
bigibigi	pig
bilayŋgirr	blanket
binydil	pencil
bujigan	pussycat
buliman	policeman
buraybun	breakfast
burin	bread
budida	potato
banigan	cup ('panikin')
bada	butter
bandara	bottle
dagida	doctor
dagidagi	duck
daga	tucker, food
juwa	store
jugijugi	hen, chook
jigarrin	cigarette
jija	sister
jinayga ~ ganaga ~ ginayga	kanaka
jilin	cheque ('shilling')
gawmara	cow
gurugu	grog
maja	boss
mijiji	white woman
mani	money
naybu	knife
modaga	motorcar
ŋandi	aunty
ŋigila ~ nigila	Islander
ŋarinyji	orange
raway	rice
wayin	wine
waybala	white man

NOTE: most of these loan words occurred in the speech of fluent YS. Less-proficient YS often did not phonologically assimilate English form.

8. PHONOLOGY

The main purpose of this chapter is to note instances of phonological interference in YS Dyirbal pronunciation which results from incongruencies in TD and English sound systems. (Influence of the Dyirbal sound system upon Jambun English is described in 9.2.1.) Detailed phonological investigation is not within the scope of this thesis.

8.1 TD SOUND SYSTEM

TD has a fairly straightforward phonemic system, with just 13 consonant and 3 vowel phonemes. The consonant phonemes are listed in the figure below:

(As mentioned in orthographical notes (preface), I employ a practical orthography in this thesis.)

	BILABIAL	APICO-ALV.	LAMINO-PAL.	DORSO-VELAR
STOP	b	d	j	g
NASAL	m	n	ny	ŋ
LATERAL		l		
ALV. TRILL		rr		
RETROFLEX		r		
SEMI VOWEL	w		y	

The three vowels are: high front i
high back u
low a

This chapter focuses on consonant interference; I will not deal with vowel quality in YD.

8.2 YD SOUND SYSTEM

8.2.1 TWO PHONOLOGICAL REGISTERS

Observation of YS texts, data and vocabulary revealed that the TD sound system was kept more or less intact by all 12 YS. These YS command both English and Dyirbal phonological registers. This co-existence of registers is well exemplified by the intrusion of non-assimilated English forms in YS texts. The following example demonstrates lexical substitution in TM's speech:

eg ŋanaji happen to buran bayi helicopter
1PL see NOM I

We happened to see a helicopter.

TM pronounces the English forms - happen; helicopter; to; according to the English phonological register. (In TD, there are no fricatives; the h sound does not occur.)

8.2.2 PHONIC INTERFERENCE

While the YS has two phonological registers at his disposal, there is some minor evidence of English interference in the pronunciation of Dyirbal words. This interference results from two areas of incongruity in the TD and English sound systems: a) rhotic contrast; b) absence of fricatives in TD.

a) RHOTIC CONTRAST. As the figure above indicates, TD has phonemic contast between retroflex r and trill rr. This is shown in the minimal pair: yara : man
yarra : fishing line.

English has no such rhotic contrast; r and rr are alternate realizations of one phoneme in most dialects of English.

In YD, the rhotic contrast is maintained in minimal pairs, but for words not belonging to minimal sets, there is often phonetic insecurity in the r - rr distinction.

MINIMAL PAIR. I tested all 12 YS by asking for Dyirbal equivalents of the English forms: man (yara) and fishing line (yarra). In all cases, YS were careful to maintain the rhotic distinction. To confirm this, I presented YS with short Dyirbal sentences in which the rhotic sounds were deliberately confused, by substituting yarra 'fishing line' for yara 'man'.

eg	*yarra	baninyu	mirrany-gu
	(fishing line)	come	blackbean-DAT

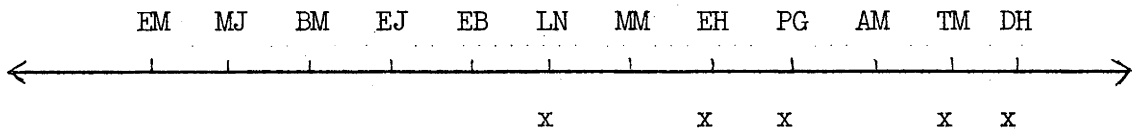
X came for blackbeans.

All 12 YS corrected me by replacing yarra with yara 'man'. This demonstrates that the rhotic contrast is maintained in minimal pairs. The survival of rhotic contrast in this context is not surprising: the r - rr distinction is the only feature which distinguishes items of the minimal set, and so it is an unlikely context for collapse.

WORDS NOT ENTERING INTO A MINIMAL PAIR

In contrast, for non-minimal set items, there was noticeable phonetic uncertainty for the rhotic distinction. For some words (both common and low-frequency terms), YS were often uncertain if the rhotic sound was a trill rr, or retroflex r. Consequently, there was frequent "wavering" in the realization of the two phonemes.

For example, in her pronunciation of ganibarra 'dingo', EH used rr and r interchangeably. When I asked her which was better, she replied "both". This "wavering" of phonemes occurred mainly in the speech of less-fluent YS. The figure below shows where on the YD continuum this phonetic insecurity was detected:



The weakening of rhotic distinction has been noted in other dying Australian languages. Donaldson (1980:21) reports partial rhotic collapse in the speech of young Ngiyambaa speakers. Austin (MSS) notes the same phenomenon in Gamilaraay, albeit at a more advanced stage and instantiated in a slightly different way.

Weinreich (1968:18) refers to this type of interference as "under-differentiation of phonemes". It occurs when two sounds of a secondary system [Dyirbal] whose counterparts are not distinguished in the primary system [English], are confused. Phonetic uncertainty has been noted in other language death situations. Keiffer (1977:71) reports the "wavering in the realization of several phonemes", among the Ōrmuṛi speakers of Afghanistan.

The important point in YD data is that the rhotic contrast survives in minimal pairs, but shows signs of weakening in other environments. This is in line with Dressler's notion of "lexical fading" whereby a rule is not dropped immediately from all contexts. Rather it "is slowly dropped by successfully withdrawing words from its input" (Dressler 1972:452). For description of lexical fading in dying Breton, see Dressler (1972).

b) INTRODUCTION OF FRICATIVES. Another area of English interference is the introduction of fricative sounds in YD pidgin pronoun forms. (As mentioned in 8.1, fricatives do not occur in TD.) In YD, the English phone f (but no other fricatives) occurs in the following pronouns:

1 PL : wi̲fela

1 PL : yu̲fela

YS recognize these forms as Dyirbal words. This suggests that the English phone f has been incorporated into YD phonological inventory.

8.2.3 CANONICAL FORM

All YS maintained the TD phonological structure:

$C_1\ V\ \ C_2\ V\ \ (C_2V)(C_3)$ where C_1, C_3 = one consonant

C_2 can be one, two or three consonants

(Dixon 1972:272)

One difference between English and TD phonological structures is the occurrence of ŋ word-initially in TD, (eg ŋaja: 1SG). All 12 YS maintained ŋ in this structural position; there was no sign of weakening.

8.3 ENGLISH INTERFERENCE IN 5-15 AGE GROUP

Children in the 5-15 year age group (øS) do not command the TD phonological register. Their pronunciation of Dyirbal words is distorted by the English sound system. These children perceive and reproduce the sounds of Dyirbal in terms of the English system, which to them is primary. As one TS described the phonic interference:

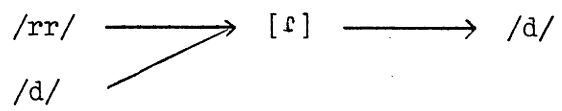
> "they can't get their tongue round it, the proper way"
>
> NM, Aboriginal female, 40 years, Jambun.

8.3.1 PHONIC INTERFERENCE

In øS response to vocabulary tests, there were two recurrent instances of interference. These involved adaption of TD rhotic sounds rr and r.

a) TD trill /rr/ is perceived as /d/ phone. (Note that all occurrences of /rr/ in øS vocabulary were intervocalic. øS recalled no items where /rr/ was word-final or in consonant cluster.) The rendering of TD /rr/ by reference to English /d/ is plausible as both /rr/ and /d/ sometimes have phonetic realization as [ɾ] in intervocalic position.

ie TD ØD



eg	yarraman	⟶ yadaman	:	horse
	baŋgurru	baŋgudu	:	turtle
	ganibarra	ganibada	:	dingo
	barri	badi	:	axe

The children rejected my pronunciation of TD trill [rr] for the above items. eg when I pronounced ganibarra 'dingo', with trill, they would correct me by substituting [d]: ganibada. (To TS, both [ɾ] and [rr] are acceptable.) This confirms the impression that ØS reinterpret the TD /rr/ in terms of the English phone /d/. (A similar merging of rhotic rr with alveolar stop d has been reported in other dying Australian languages: Gamilaraay (Austin MSS); Koko Bera (Black MSS).

b) TD retroflex /r/ is perceived as /l/ in word-final position. eg In their pronunciation of r-final TD forms, the children replaced /r/ with /l/ sound. Furthermore, when I produced the r-final TD words, they corrected me by substituting /l/. The examples below illustrate this interference.

TD	⟶	YD		
r		l		
gugar		gugal	:	goanna
jujar		jujal	:	urine
banjar		banyjal	:	mad (ADJ)

The fact that ØS interpret word-final r as l phone is feasible in that these two liquids are auditorily similar in word-final position.

The r → l interference occurs only in word-final position. Elsewhere, in intervocalic position, øS pronounced TD r as a continuant /ɹ/ phone. (I found no øS items where TD /r/ occurred word-initially or in CC.)

eg gi̲ɹ̲imu : snake

gawma̲ɹ̲a : cow

gaga̲ɹ̲a : moon

ma̲ɹ̲u : mud

So, in short, the TD rhotic contrast is lost. øS have only one rhotic. øS interpret TD rhotic sounds in terms of the English system thus:

TD		øS				
r	⟶	ɹ	/ V - V	eg	gawma̲ɹ̲a	: cow
	↘	l	/ - #		gugal̲	: goanna
rr	⟶	d	V - V		ganiba̲da	: dingo

Note that the resultant øS pronunciation is congruent with the English sound inventory.

8.3.2 CANONICAL FORM

There were two instances of interference in phonological structure in øS pronunciation.

a) In TD, velar nasal ŋ occurs in word-initial position. Most øS drop this TD canonical feature by changing ŋ to alveolar nasal n.

	TD		øS	
eg	ŋ̲angu	⟶	n̲aŋgu	:mouth

(This is the only example I have of øS recalling an ŋ-initial TD word.)

b) In TD there are non-homorganic nasal-consonant clusters, (eg bungi-l "lie down"; ŋangu "mouth") which do not occur in English. øS tend to drop non-homorganic clusters, by phonologically assimilating the nasal to the following velar consonant, as in English.

ie TD ⟶ øS

ŋangu	nangu	:	mouth
bungin	bungin	:	lie down [1]
banjar	banyjal	:	mad

(I have no data on øS treatment of TD clusters: nm, nb.)

In short, there is much English interference in øS pronunciation of Dyirbal words, in terms of both phones (øS lose rhotic contrast completely by reinterpreting TD sounds in terms of the English sound system); and phonological structure (word-initial ŋ, and non-homorganic cluster ng are dropped in accordance with English canonical form.)

Interference of phonological systems is common in language contact situations. McQuown (1982) describes phonological interference in Tzeltal and Tzotzil-speaking Indians and Ladino bilinguals. Keiffer (1977) reports phonological interference in the Ōrmuṛi speakers of Afghanistan.

8.4 CONCLUSION

Summarizing, all YS maintain the TD sound system more or less intact. There is only slight English interference on the YD phonological system:

a) English fricative f occurs in YD pidgin pronouns - yufela: 2PL; wifela: 1PL. (There is no evidence of other fricatives in YD forms.)

b) Less-fluent YS sometimes collapse the rhotic contrast. The rhotic distinction survives in minimal pairs, but shows signs of weakening in other environments. ie There is phonetic insecurity in the realization of the rhotic for non-minimal pairs as YS "waver" in the realization of the two phonemes /r/ and /rr/. The important point is that uncertainty in TD rhotic contrast does not immediately result in the adoption of the victorious English phonological system. Rather, it results in free variation of rr ~ r in certain contexts.

Only the non-Dyirbal speakers in 5-15 age group adopt aspects of the English phonological system in their Dyirbal pronunciation. These children perceive and reproduce the TD sounds in terms of the English system. The TD rhotic contrast is totally lost; TD word-initial ŋ, and non-homorganic consonant cluster ng, are eliminated in accordance with the English canonical structure.

CHAPTER 8 NOTES

1 In TD, there is a minimal pair: buŋgil 'wallaby sp.'
: bungi-l 'lie down'
However, as øS are not familiar with one of the minimal set items (wallaby sp.), the occurrence of homorganic CC in bu<u>ŋg</u>i-l 'lie down' causes no confusion.

9. JAMBUN ENGLISH

9.1 INTRODUCTION

Jambun English (JE) is a non-standard variety of English used as common code of communication within the Jambun society. It is the primary language of most younger Jambun residents in the 0-35 year age group, (see 3.5), and second language for older people. The JE code may be seen as an expression of a people torn between two cultures, segregated from their traditional heritage, lifestyle and language on one hand, and voluntarily isolated from white European society on the other. Certainly, JE is an important vehicle of identity. It symbolizes membership in the closed Aboriginal community. JE is distinct from Standard English[1)] (SAE) which is rarely used within Jambun. Although most Jambun residents do command SAE, they reserve it mainly for discourse with whites and the school situation.

The main purpose of this chapter is to describe features of JE which distinguish it from SAE. Then, problems associated with this stigmatized variety of English in the school situation are discussed. (Detailed analysis of JE is not within the scope of this thesis. Features of JE noted in this chapter occur in limited data corpus. This list is by no means complete.)

Before describing features of JE, there are two important points worthy of note:

1. There is much variety in JE. JE may be viewed as a continuum carrying all degrees of variation from JE proper to a style very similar to SAE. The form of JE used by an particular speaker is dependent upon various factors: Speech adjustments are made according to topic, setting and hearer etc. eg when speaking to older resident in JE, EM used more Dyirbal forms than she did when speaking with a child (10 years) whose knowledge of Dyirbal items is much less certain. Another factor is the degree of exposure to European culture. eg some older individuals, who did not experience the English education system, speak a style of JE markedly different from SAE. They command a very small span of the JE - SAE continuum.

2. Secondly, although the title "JE" suggests that this code is based on the English language, it is important to realize that many of the features of JE result from the influence of structural properties of TD. It is necessary to distinguish between the structural and lexical aspects of JE. For the Jambun residents, the lexicon appears to be the main level of awareness: the people classify JE as "English" on the grounds that etymologically, JE consists predominantly of English lexemes (with only a few Dyirbal and pidgin forms).

However, in terms of grammatical structure, there is evidence of mutual interference from TD and English grammatical systems. Many of the features of JE result from the influence of structural properties in TD ie its grammatical structure is a blend of English and TD features. (The problem of mutual interference upon a grammatical system has been discussed by Silverstein (1972) in his investigation of Chinook Jargon. Silverstein demonstrates that Chinook Jargon is neither broken-down Chinook nor broken-down English. ie Its syntax is not based on the grammar of either component language. Rather, Chinook Jargon has a unique grammatical structure with multiple genetic links.)

9.2 FEATURES OF JAMBUN ENGLISH

In the following, I will observe characteristic phonological, grammatical and lexical features of JE, many of which result from TD influence.

9.2.1 PHONOLOGY

The form of JE which is most divergent from SAE shows the following TD interference:

REPLACEMENT OF FRICATIVES BY STOPS. TD lacks fricatives. In JE, SAE fricative sounds are sometimes pronounced as stops. Thus, unvoiced interdental 'th' becomes 't':

	SAE	JE
eg	think	→ tink
	thing	→ ting

Voiced 'th' is often rendered as 'd':

	SAE	JE
eg	that	→ dat
	there	→ dere

'V' may become 'b':

	SAE	JE
eg	over	→ ober

In my JE data, other fricatives - s, f, v, ʃ - and affricates - ch, j - were rarely altered. This may well be due to the limited corpus.

'h' DELETION. In JE, the fricative 'h' is sometimes dropped from word-initial position.

eg bloody 'ell he → 'e

'ow dat

'undred dolla

dat's 'im

(I found no examples of hypercorrection, ie pronunciation of 'h' word-initially on SAE words starting with vowels, as reported by Elwell 1979 in Milingimbi English eg on → hon.)

REDUCTION OF CONSONANT CLUSTERS. In JE, the final consonant in word-final CC is often dropped:

eg	aroun'	:	around	wil'	:	wild
	foun'	:	found	ol'	:	old
	don'	:	don't	jus'	:	just
	an'	:	and			

Utterance final and medial CC are also reduced. In the following example 't' is dropped from the 'tl' clusters:

eg dat lil one, 'e can talk a lilbit

I found no instances of CC reduction by insertion of epenthetic

vowel between consonants, as reported by Elwell 1979.

OMISSION OF INITIAL VOWEL. JE speakers sometimes drop the initial vowel of some words.

eg 'nother : another eg you got 'nother one

'bout : about eg what 'e talkin 'bout

Note that these unstressed initial vowels are dropped in many varieties of English. I have no JE examples of the omission of stressed initial vowels. (TD has no voiced-voiceless contrast. Although this is a source of interference in other varieties of Aboriginal English, eg Kaldor and Malcolm 1979, in JE I found no evidence of voiced-voiceless sound interchanges.)

9.2.2 GRAMMAR

NOUNS AND NOUN PHRASES

TD GENITIVE AFFIX -ŋu occurred in a limited corpus of two examples. Note that this affix is exactly equivalent to SAE-s.

eg Isn't dat Sandra-ŋu modaga.

Isn't that Sandra's car?

I have no examples of other TD affix intrusion in JE.

OMISSION OF PLURAL 'S'

In JE, the SE plural marker 's' is often dropped. Number is only occasionally marked. A possible influence is that in TD, number marking on nouns is not compulsory. Note from the following examples that the notion of plurality is often conveyed by other words in the sentence, eg number words:

eg three grubs anyway - got different name ø

eg 'undred dolla ø still here

eg Danny want them photo ø.

ABSENCE OF PREPOSITION

Prepositions may be omitted from JE, especially when the reading of the peripheral function is clear from context.

eg I gonnna go ∅ town now.
=

DELETION OF ARTICLES (both definite and indefinite) is also evident in JE:

eg olman come back from ∅ river
=
How much for ∅ tin?
=
If you don' know ∅ word ...
=

Due to limited data corpus, it is not possible to state under what circumstances the preposition and articles are retained. Retention of these elements is unlikely to be purely random. Factors such as definiteness may be of some bearing.

RULES FOR CONTRACTION AND ELISION differ from SAE. In JE, there is optional assimilation of the article to the preceding consonant of a preposition or verb:

eg	you gotta milk?	:	Have you got the milk?
	she inna shop	:	She's in the shop.
	'e onna modaga	:	It's on the car.
	see alla dundu	:	See all of the birds.

GENERALIZATION OF PRONOUN 'e

In JE, the masculine form of 3SG pronoun 'e, is sometimes used to cover SAE forms 'she', 'it'.

ie 'e ← { he, she, it }

In the following example, MJ refers to the female ghost by pronoun 'e.

eg 'e fell down an that mummy guyi 'e thought it was
ginyju ginyju / 'e flogged the wrong one.

Similarly, SAE form 'it' is replaced by 'e in JE:

eg 'e cost about forty dolla

DEMONSTRATIVE 'those' is often replaced by pronoun form 'them' ~ 'dem' (just like many non-standard varieties of English).

eg they wanna see them photo.

RELATIVE CLAUSE MARKERS. In JE, the form 'what' may be generalized to cover structures where 'which' or 'that' occur in SAE:

eg I tell a story what Chloe Grant mix-im-up all them
Girramay an' Jirrbal.

Note that relative clauses were rare in JE corpus. JE speakers tended to avoid these and tell stories by stringing simple short sentences together by juxtaposition or conjunction word "an'".

VERB COMPLEX

PIDGIN AFFIX -im is common in JE. It functions as a transitive verb marker. (This affix does not occur in TD or SAE.)

eg we mix-im-up there

eg all these young boys, young girls / teach-im to talk guwal.

(This suffix -im is found in other varieties of Aboriginal English and creoles: Crowley and Rigsby (1979); Hudson (1981).)

OMISSION OF COPULA TD does not use copula. Similarly in JE, the copula is frequently omitted.

eg son ø at home with the father

eg she ø crook

eg that stick ø too short

Although we cannot be certain of conditions for copula deletion from such limited data, it does appear that the copula is retained to emphasize:

a) tense eg Gee I was sick yesterday.

This is quite plausible because the copula is a dummy verb which functions as a tense marker. There is no need for its inclusion otherwise, when tense is indicated by alternative means.

b) the predicate eg she is gamin [joking].

When copula is used to emphasize predicate, its form is stressed and not contracted.

OMISSION OF AUXILIARY VERBS The following examples illustrate the frequent absence of auxiliary verbs in JE:

eg I ø goin' in the grass.

eg they ø got a different way of sayin' it.

eg I think they ø keep goin'.

(Most auxiliaries did occur in the limited data corpus. Forms which did not were 'shall' and 'should'.)

TENSE In JE, tense is not always indicated by SAE devices. For example: The SAE past tense affix -ed is frequently dropped and present tense form of the 1 and 2 person verb is used:

eg It rain ø here before.
=

eg We were kids then / we knock ø about alot up there.
=

Similarly, the irregular past and participle forms of SAE are replaced by analogized regular forms in JE:

eg Before when 'e bin first come (came), well I never see (saw) him.

eg She give (gave) us everything [years ago].

eg We go (went) up the house to Mrs Cowan [referring to past event].

This deviation from SAE tense inflection does not imply an inadequate JE system. In JE, tense is indicated by a rich variety of devices:

a) - time word

eg other day I tell a story.

eg she come tomorrow.

b) - understood from context. This device is commonly used in narratives, where the past tense of the story is understood.

eg so ol' lady tell us to go up there an she tell us to talk English. but when we get down the paddock I teach them kids the other way.

c) - formal tense indicators. BIN - the past tense indicator - is placed before the verb.

eg she bin like that / she bin come here / she bin talk

eg we mostly bin talk English here

Future action is indicated by: gonna; or enclitic 'll. (These forms also occur in other English varieties.)

eg we'll die here.

eg how you gonna come up?

eg I gonna bash you.

ABSENCE OF NUMBER AGREEMENT ON VERB In JE, there is often lack of concord between the verb and S-A NP: singular-plural agreement is not always shown on the verb. Note that TD also lacked verb-subject concord. The following examples demonstrate this omission of number agreement.

eg we was born here, reared up here, an' we'll die here.

eg they was all sorta scattered aroun' the place.

eg well 'e know ø a few words.

eg Danny want them photo.

9.2.3 LEXICON

Lexically, JE is characterized by the intrusion of a few TD and pidgin forms. The degree of TD and pidgin intrusion is influenced by:

a) size of speaker's Dyirbal vocabulary

b) estimation of hearer's Dyirbal understanding.

Substituted DYIRBAL ITEMS are usually high frequency adjectives and nouns.

eg you wuygi (old lady) /hey/ we forgot one thing /burin (bread)/ I'll get it.

Note that the Dyirbal word may be incorporated in a JE sentence by the addition of an English affix:

eg you're the buyju-est kid I ever seen.
(stubborn/ "thick-headed")

PIDGIN FORMS which occur in JE include:

nomo : NEG eg nomo talk like dat.

get : also eg you gotta blue an'white dress gen like the lil modaga.

bin : PAST TENSE eg she bin go. (see 9.2.2)

bloŋdu : GENITIVE eg all that mess bloŋdu yundubala, you gotta pick it up.

: PRONOUNS eg yundubala sit down there!

(Pidgin pronoun forms are listed in 4.6.1 and again in 7.6.3.)

In short, Jambun English is markedly different from SAE of white society on all phonological, grammatical and lexical levels. Much of this difference appears due to influence of the Dyirbal language system. (Samples of JE speech are given in the appendix at the end of this chapter.)

9.2.4 OTHER STUDIES OF ABORIGINAL ENGLISH

A number of studies (varying in detail) have been carried out on other varieties of Aboriginal English. These include Alexander (1965; 1968); Douglas (1976); Dutton (1969); Flint (1968; 1973); Kaldor & Malcolm (1979); Sharpe (1977; 1979). See also Elwell (1979) for English as a second language for Milingimbi Aborigines; and Eagleson (1978) and Sutton (1975) for description of non-standard English varieties where influence of traditional Aboriginal language is minimal.

JE bears strong resemblance to these other varieties of Aboriginal English. All phonological, grammatical and pidgin features listed above for JE have been reported in some or all varieties of Aboriginal English, elsewhere in the continent. This similarity may be attributed, in part, to influence from typologically-similar vernacular Australian languages.

It is also interesting to note that black English vernacular in America bears some resemblance to JE. eg Labov (1973) reports copula deletion in BEV. Much more research is required in comparison of black English vernaculars. It is not within the scope of this thesis to attempt this. This chapter is meant to provide a short sketch to add perspective to the central topic - the structure of YD.

9.3 JAMBUN ENGLISH AND EDUCATION

9.3.1 JE - A STIGMATIZED CODE

According to the Queensland education system, JE is a deviation from the desirable SAE norm. Teaching attitudes, methods

and expectations are geared toward SAE as "correct", and JE as an aberrant form. ie JE is not regarded as a linguistic system in its own right with particular linguistic properties. eg When Jambun children speak JE, their language of primary socialization, in the classroom, they are corrected for their "mistakes". In order to iron out these "distortions" in their speech, in the first two years at school Jambun children are given practice English dialogues designed for migrant education programs (see 3.5.4). In this way, JE is associated with language "deficit" and "impoverishment". The failure of the education system to recognize the Jambun child's own language experience in non-standard English and different socio-cultural background is conducive to problems in the classroom situation.

9.3.2 PROBLEMS EXPERIENCED BY THE JAMBUN CHILD IN CLASSROOM

In investigating problems encountered by Jambun students, I interviewed two teachers from the Murray Upper primary school. The interview revealed the following:

- Jambun students' participation in class is low:

> "None of them really talk much. If you've got a discussion time in class, you know, you're sure its the whites who are going to take the lead... They're the ones who put forward the ideas. The other ones [Aboriginal students] are content to sit back."
>
> JA, 29 years, white female teacher, MU.

This may be attributed to social and psychological pressures associated with the alien school environment and failure of Jambun student to identify with the formal classroom situation.

In terms of ability, Jambun students were reported as equal to white children:

> "Those [Jambun] kids are bright. Their mind ticks faster than mine sometimes."
>
> PW, 21 years, white teachers' aid, MU.

> "They're just as good or even better some of them than the white kids."
>
> JA, 29 years, white female teacher, MU.

Reasons for Jambun students' poor classroom performance are discussed in 3.4.

The teachers reported the following problem areas in the Jambun students' English. Note that these "problems" are, in fact, features of JE described in 9.2:

OMISSION OF PLURAL 's'

> "When they read they leave their s's off too. If it's hats, they'll just say hat, you know. They leave their s' off." (PW)

OMISSION OF COPULA AND AUXILIARIES

> "They leave out 'is' alot. Like 'she is going to town' [becomes] 'she go to town'. Something like that. It's just like a sort of slang." (JA)

OMISSION OF PREPOSITIONS AND CONJUNCTION WORDS was reported.

WORD ORDER I have no examples of word order alterations in JE data, but MU teachers reported thus:

> "They cut off a word that should be at the front, or they cut off a word that should be at the back." (JA)

> "They don't put their words the right way around, and they'll leave out a word here." (PW)

(This may be due to TD influence: TD also has exceptionally free word order and elision.)

PRONUNCIATION OF SAE FORMS was said to present "no problems".

The above language "problems" occurred mainly in the initial years of schooling. Teachers reported that Jambun children soon developed competence in SAE, but appeared to reserve it for the classroom situation and communication with whites.

For further discussion of problems encountered by the Aboriginal child in the classroom situation see Kaldor & Malcolm (1979); Fesl (1979); Douglas (1977).

9.3.3 PLAYGROUND SPEECH

In the school playground, Aboriginal children use JE. Of particular interest in playground JE is the intrusion of Dyirbal words. Recall from 7.4 that these children (5-15 years) have extremely limited Dyirbal vocabulary. Their use of Dyirbal terms has two important functions:

a) for referring to "taboo" items such as body parts or functions. As one MU teacher described:

> "Language [ie YD] is just for talking about something that they want to keep secret, - for talkin' 'bout something like that... If they wanna go to the toilet they say - "I wanna do a [kuna] or whatever it is." (JA)

b) as an isolation mechanism from white students. In the playground there is limited interaction between black and white students, (see 3.2). The use of Dyirbal words in Jambun children's speech, in effect, functions as a secret code, while at the same time marking their Aboriginal identity. Teachers described the Jambun children's use of Dyirbal as follows:

> "If coloured kids want to keep to themselves, coloured boys tease the [white] girls. They [white kids] don't know what they're saying. They [coloured boys] think its a big joke. Or they'll say something an' they [white kids] don't understand. ...They say "you're a such-an-such" [Dyirbal word] an' then the [white] girls say "What's that?", you know, an' get all embarrassed, 'cos all the boys are laughing, an' they don't know what they're on about". (PW)

> "The [Aboriginal] girls will say to the white boys, you know, some [Dyirbal] word or something they'll giggle about, you know, an' the white kids don' know what it is, you know, an' they sorta go red 'cos they don't know if it's a swear word or if it's a private word or what it is. They try to find out what it is, you know, an' they go on like that for a few weeks an' eventually they [Jambun kids] tell 'em what the word is, an' then the white kids start talkin' to them an' sayin' [Dyirbal] words what they heard. An' then, next few weeks, they [Jambun kids] come up with another [Dyirbal] one." (JA)

In this way, the Jambun students utilize their limited Dyirbal vocabulary to maintain their Aboriginal identity as distinct from white peers in the playground situation.

9.4 CONCLUSION

Although Dyirbal is not spoken by young Jambun residents in 0-15 year age group, its influence is still markedly evident in many phonological, grammatical and lexical aspects of their Jambun English. On the phonological level, there is replacement of fricatives by stops; reduction of consonant clusters; and deletion of word-initial vowel. Grammatical TD influence includes: omission of plural 's'; absence of number agreement on the verb; deletion of copula and auxiliaries; absence of prepositions and articles. Other distinctive features of JE are: -im affix as a transitive verb marker; bin: past tense indicator; tense not always formally marked; generalization of pronoun 'e to cover SAE forms he, she, it. Lexically, JE is characterized by intrusion of Dyirbal and pidgin forms. These features have been reported in other varieties of Aboriginal English throughout the continent.

As a non-standard variety, JE is stigmatized by the education system. It is not regarded as a linguistic system in its own right; rather it is viewed as an aberrant form of SAE. Jambun children whose primary language is JE, develop competence in SAE, but reserve it for the classroom situation and communication with whites. In the playground, JE is used. The Jambun students utilize their limited Dyirbal vocabulary as a secret code not shared by white peers, thus maintaining their Aboriginal identity.

APPENDIX - SAMPLE JE TEXTS

I GINYJU-GINYJU STORY MJ, 30 years, Aboriginal female

dat ginyju-ginyju dat lil boy 'e bin go for banba wil' fig every mornin' 'e go / dat mornin' 'e bin go dis mummy ghos' an' daddy ghos' bin find-im / 'e was up də tree an' dis guyi now dis mummy guyi tell dat daddy guyi: you go an' you climb up for that ginyju-ginyju / so dey can take-im 'ome to eat-im / nomo / when dat - 'e bin - who bin come first ~ that daddy guyi bin find-im or mummy guyi ? / anyway that guyi bin climb up də tree / no good / 'e fell down an' that mummy guyi 'e thought it was ginyju-ginyju / 'e flogged the wrong one.

GLOSS: ginyju-ginyju : name of mythical being
guyi : ghost

II JE CONVERSATION

The following conversation was taped on a fishing trip. The two speakers are members of the Buckaroos: PG (19 years); AM (15 years).

AM: Dat stick too short / I chop a bit longer one.

PG: Oh I see where it's caught.

AM: Where about?

PG: How can I yarra (fish) bujanyu without a yarra (line). Come on Ali!

AM: Hold on! I won' be long.

CHAPTER 9 NOTES

1 The term SAE used here is a cover term for styles of English spoken by white Australians. Hence, substantial variation is encompassed by the term. The abbreviation SAE is the convention adopted by Kaldor & Malcolm, 1979.

10. LANGUAGE DEATH and GENERAL LINGUISTIC ISSUES

The main purpose of this chapter is to relate the Dyirbal death process to general linguistic issues concerning language death. As yet, there is insufficient empirical evidence about terminal language stages to establish universal principles about the process of language extinction. Much more empirical research and comparative investigation is necessary before this will be possible. In this chapter, two fundamental linguistic questions are investigated:

a) Is there anything peculiar about change in the Dyirbal death process?

b) How does a dying language compare with other reductive systems such as pidgins and child language?

Following this, I will deal with various misapprehensions associated with the language death phenomenon.

10.1 LANGUAGE DEATH vs CHANGE IN HEALTHY LANGUAGES

This section investigates how change in the Dyirbal death process differs from change in normal healthy languages.

In terms of the type of change, there is not much difference between dying Dyirbal and other normal languages. YD shows much the same sorts of change we are familiar with in perfectly healthy languages. eg There is allomorphic reduction of ergative and locative affixes. Ironing out of irregularity occurs: irregular verb yanu 'go' and exceptions in conjugation membership were regularized (analogized) towards a more productive system. There is a split: two forms of the TD antipassive affix are given separate functions in YD. -laygu is used in purposive clause conjunctions; -lŋay form is an intransitivizing device. Separate morphemes blend to form a single affix:

-lay (ANT) + -gu (PURP) ⟶ -laygu (marker of verb in PCC)

Interference typical of language contact situations (Weinreich 1968: 30) also occurs: YS drop TD ergative case marking and adopt the English grammatical relation of word order to mark NOM - ACC case; English prepositions are used to express peripheral cases; YS analogize on the English preposition 'with', by extending the TD comitative morpheme -bila to cover both instrumental and comitative function (4.2.1).

Thus, the type of change that occurs in dying Dyirbal is not unusual. Dorian (1981:151) has noted a similar thing in terminal Gaelic:

> "Dying languages, to judge by ESG, show much the same sorts of change we are familiar with from perfectly ordinary change in 'healthy' languages: distinctive case structures are replaced by prepositional structures...; analogical leveling reduces the number of allomorphs for some morphemes...; separate syntactic structures with a single semantic function are merged...; a native distinction not shared by the speakers' second language is given up..."

While the type of change in YD is not unusual, the quantity of change certainly is. A great amount of change is occurring in YD that does not occur with such intensity in normal healthy languages ie one distinguishing feature of the Dyirbal death situation is that vast amounts of change are compressed into a short timespan of about 25 years. (This is the age difference between the oldest and youngest YS. Note, however, that the death process varies greatly from situation to situation.) As this thesis demonstrated, changes occurring in this short period are certainly widespread, affecting: nominal case system; verb tense; some derivational affixes; conjugation membership and irregular verb yanu; pronoun paradigm; noun markers and interrogative members; constituent agreement in NP and verb complex; word order; S-O pivot clause linkage device.

Another distinctive difference between language death and change in healthy languages is that reduction in the dying language is not always compensated for by structural expansion elsewhere in the language system. In normal language change (eg see Antilla 1972), if a linguistic form is dropped or altered, then its function is usually transferred to alternative linguistic devices within the system, and the original distinction is maintained. This is

not so in YD. Often, due to gaps in YS Dyirbal competence, YS lose TD distinctions and do not replace them. They rely on English linguistic resources to fill these gaps. eg YS lose verbal affixes (-muŋa: participial; -bila: lest) and do not express the distinction by other Dyirbal devices; rather they switch to English to express this. --Some less-fluent YS collapse peripheral case affixes, and use a single affix to cover ablative, locative, dative, instrumental (4.2.1). Thus these YS lose a distinction which is of quite fundamental communicative importance. When the meaning is not clear from context, YS use the suitable English preposition to clarify.

Thus, in short, two major differences between language death and change in healthy languages are:

a) vast amounts of change are occurring in a limited time-span.

b) YD is losing certain features and not replacing them by alternative Dyirbal linguistic devices. ie There is reduction in the Dyirbal language system.

10.2 COMPARISON WITH OTHER REDUCED SYSTEMS

10.2.1 PIDGINIZATION

Language death is often equated with "pidginization". There appear two major reasons for this association. Language death involves a) reduced social use b) reduction in linguistic form, eg limited vocabulary; morphological simplicity. On this basis, many scholars appear to regard death and pidginization as

different aspects of the same phenomenon. eg

> "Language death therefore can be looked at as a sort of pidginization: obligatory rules change to variable ones, the polystylism of a normal language ... moves to monostylism ..."
>
> [Dressler and Wodak-Leodolter 1977:37]

However, we should be cautious in equating language death with other language contact phenomenon involving reduction and simplification, for two reasons:

a) there is, as yet, insufficient empirical description of language death situations.

b) the very term "pidginization" and its defining characteristics are not widely agreed upon. eg Some linguists limit the term to apply to language contact situations. According to Mühlhäusler (1974:21):

> "pidginization refers to the reduction in structure and language mixing which occur when language becomes a functionally-restricted second language."

In contrast, other linguists use the term synonymously with 'simplification' or 'reduction'. eg Samarin's general use of the term covers language loss through lack of use and restricted codes. He goes so far as to link the Dyirbal mother-in-law language with 'pidginization' (1971:132). According to Samarin:

> "Pidginization should be seen as any consistent reduction of the functions of language both in its grammar and its use."
>
> [Samarin 1971:126]

Language contact phenomenon involving reduction in linguistic form and social function covers a diverse range of socio-cultural and linguistic situations. Because of such diversity alone, we should be cautious in stereotyping the language death process as "pidginization".

Just as language death is equated with pidginization, a dying language is often referred to as a "pidgin". Many scholars pay heed to Hall's (1962) notion of "linguistic lifecycle": first of all a pidgin, then evolution to a creole language, and finally reduction to a pidgin (ie a dying language). There has been little agreement by linguists regarding the definition of pidgins. In this thesis, I adopt De Camp's definition:

> "A pidgin is a contact vernacular, normally not the native language of any of its speakers. It is used in trading or in any situation requiring communication between persons who do not speak each other's native languages. It is characterized by a limited vocabulary, an elimination of many grammatical devices such as number and gender, and a drastic reduction of redundant features."
>
> [De Camp, 1971:15]

(For detailed discussion of characteristics of a pidgin, see Mühlhaüsler 1974:C2.)

In the following, I wish to demonstrate that it is oversimplistic and erroneous to equate a dying language with a pidgin. Although there do exist certain formal and functional similarities, there are also some very striking differences.

First it is necessary to note FORMAL SIMILARITIES between terminal Dyirbal and a pidgin. At first glance, the Buckaroo

peer-group speech bears striking resemblance to a pidgin. eg The following sample would probably be classed as 'pidgin':

dubala bin see lion / dubala bin minban
3DU PAST 3DU PAST shoot-NONFUT

They two saw the lion. They shot (it).

Formal similarities between YD and 'pidgin' include: limited vocabulary; morphological simplicity; little clause subordination; emergence of simpler more regular surface structures; similar word forms eg bin: past tense indicator; nomo: negative; pidgin pronoun forms.

However, there are also striking formal differences between terminal Dyirbal and pidgin. eg In terminal Dyirbal, there are areas of morphological complexity which remain. The following speech sample illustrates the noticeable resistance of bound aspectual affixes in speech otherwise characterized by morphological simplicity and English intrusion.

eg she bin lilbit wuygi-bin / ban bungi-gani-nyu
PAST ill-INTR VZR NOM II lie down-ASP-NONFUT

waymban-gani-nyu
walkabout-ASP-NONFUT

She was a little bit sick. She lay down, (then) got up.

oh she baji-baji-yarra-nyu down
fall-REDUP-ASP-NONFUT

oh she started to fall down!

Thus, aspectual affixes provide areas of morphological complexity in an otherwise simplified YD utterance.

Dorian also reports that dying Gaelic has marked formal differences from pidgin:

> "radical morphological simplification, as found in many pidgins, is not characteristic of ESG, even among its most halting speakers, and even very near the point of extinction."
>
> [Dorian, 1977:606]

> "Not only is the quantity of morphological complexity much greater than one would expect to find in 'classical' pidginization, but the variety of allomorphs PROVIDING the quantity is fairly astonishing."
>
> [Dorian, 1977:607]

Thus in the terminal stages of both Dyirbal and Gaelic, there are areas of resistance to morphological simplification, which is not typical of a "pidgin".

There are also essential FUNCTIONAL DIFFERENCES between pidgin and a dying language:

a) Pidgin, by definition, is the first stage of a new language, which grows through the needs of two or more mutually-exclusive groups to communicate. ie a pidgin is the embryonic stage of language evolution.

In contrast, language death involves an extinction process that results from one of the two contact languages dominating and gradually replacing the less prestigeous language over its entire functional range. Thus, although both dying language and pidgin result from the language contact phenomenon, each involves a radically different network of political, socio-cultural and psychological factors.

b) A second difference is CONTEXTS OF USE. Pidgins typically begin in formal situations between strangers for purposes that often relate to commerce and trade. In contrast, dying Dyirbal

is spoken in informal situations between people sharing close personal ties.

c) A third difference is that of loyalty. It is likely that few people feel the sense of loyalty to an emerging pidgin that certain speakers do for a dying language which is associated with pride in cultural heritage and nostalgia for pre-contact way of life.

d) The main utility of a pidgin is its communicative function. Pidgins tend to spring up rather quickly to suit the communicative needs of two mutually-exclusive groups. In contrast, speakers of dying Dyirbal use the language mainly for its identity function. Within the peer-groups, YD has 'integrative' rather than 'instrumental' role. For members, YD is an important mark of group membership. The communicative function is secondary for these less-fluent YS: they can communicate much better in English.

In short, there are important formal and functional differences between a pidgin and a dying language. Because of these differences, we should be cautious in making general statements in language typology, equating pidginization and the death process. It is not enough to say that because both involve reduced social function and reduction in linguistic form, that they are the same or even closely related phenomenon. Many more studies of language extinction are needed before we can speculate on the relationship between language death and other forms of linguistic reduction and simplification.

10.2.2 CHILD LANGUAGE ACQUISITION

It is interesting to ask how dying Dyirbal compares with child language. In that the "imperfect" speech evident in a dying

language often results from incomplete acquisition history of the semi-speaker, the processes of language acquisition and language death are inextricably linked[1)]. Two factors in the semi-speaker's incomplete language acquisition are:

1) INSUFFICIENT EXPOSURE. In their childhood, YS at Jambun have had insufficient exposure to the TD system; they have been more frequently exposed to English as a language of primary socialization. Consequently, their command of TD is imperfect.

2) ATTITUDE. Even though two YS siblings have had equal exposure to Dyirbal in childhood, one is much more fluent than the other because of different language attitudes. eg EH is a fluent YS: she is proud of her Dyirbal and uses it often in peer-group. In contrast, her elder sister (DH) rarely uses YD, because she is "too ashamed". DH considers English far more prestigious. She is the least proficient of the 12 YS.

In the following, I will deal with two topics:

1. the role of 'baby talk' in influencing YS imperfect speech.
2. the notion that language death is, in a sense, language acquisition in reverse.

Unfortunately, I have no empirical data on stages of Dyirbal child language acquisition, simply because the present generation of parents are not transmitting the Dyirbal language to their children.

1 ROLE OF 'BABY TALK'

The suggestion that YS speech is resemblant of a simplified model of Dyirbal that YS were exposed to in their childhood is worth consideration. Various studies of child language acquisition demonstrate that adults systematically modify their speech when

addressing young children, by reducing the complexity of what they say. eg Laughren (1982) reports a marked difference between Walpiri 'baby talk' and adult language. Ochs (1982) reports that low incidence of ergative case marker in "caretaker" speech in Samoan also occurs in children's speech.

Although there is no data on the model of language to which young Dyirbal children were exposed, the suggestion that YS speech is influenced by a modified Dyirbal 'baby talk', cannot be discounted. eg It is possible that 'baby talk' included allomorphic reduction and morphological simplicity, like YD. Much further investigation into the simplified model of language used in addressing children and simplification in a dying language is necessary before an association between the two can be drawn with any certainty.

2 MIRROR IMAGE

Despite the lack of empirical data on Dyirbal child language, it is worth noting that certain features of YD are characteristic of stages in child language acquisition. Both low-proficiency speakers of a dying language and children in less-advanced stages of language acquisition tend not to use complex linguistic devices in expressing their ideas.

In language acquisition, Clark & Clark (1977:337-338) note that:

> "Children learn the simplest structures and functions first, and work up to more complex ones later"... "The more complex a linguistic device is, the longer children will take to learn it."

Similarly, in dying Dyirbal, YS do not command complex TD linguistic features. Recall from 4.7.4 that YS had considerable difficulty in producing and translating constructions such as S-O pivot in relative clauses, and case marking on the embedded verb. It could be argued that these areas of formal complexity in TD may well be among linguistic devices last acquired by children; YS do not command them, simply because they did not reach that stage of sophistication in childhood acquisition.

Other features of YD also noted by Clark & Clark (1977) for child language are: low frequency of clause subordination; absence of inflections; absence of irregularities; reduced vocabulary.

On the basis that there does exist some formal similarity, and that some complex linguistic features acquired in the last stages of acquisition, are among the first dropped by speakers of a dying language, it is often assumed that language death and child language acquisition are mirror images. However, such a claim should be treated with caution for the following reasons:

1. There is, as yet, insufficient formal evidence in hand to conclude that the order in which linguistic features are acquired, is actually reversed in language death.

2. Functionally, the processes of language death and acquisition are quite different. Language death involves the gradual replacement of an original language over its entire functional range. It applies to the status of a language in a <u>whole community</u> which is undergoing a process of 'language shift'. In contrast, child language acquisition is an <u>individual</u> phonomenon referring to the internalization of a code of linguistic principles as part of the primary socialization process. (From this point of

view, Jakobson's view (1971a) that language acquisition can be compared with, and may constitute a mirror-image of aphasia (rather than language death) seems more justified.)

The forces of primary socialization and cognitive development that the child experiences in language acquisition are radically different from the complex interplay of psychological, socio-cultural and communicative needs which face the speaker of a language in its terminal stage. The primary language acquisition process is an essential part of the child's cognitive and social development. The child has to figure out how to map ideas and general knowledge onto propositions which they can express as single words or groups of words. Then the child has to find out how to communicate speech acts and thematic information along with the propositional content of their utterances. Clark & Clark (1977:337) note the close association between the order in which features are acquired, and the child's cognitive development.

> "Children's ideas about their world, its organization, and its structure are clearly far from complete at the age of one or two years. Their ideas about objects, properties, relations and events continue to develop for many years to come... The complexity of these ideas appears to affect the order in which children acquire different structures."

In contrast, the adult speaker of dying Dyirbal has already experienced cognitive and social development; the YS has mastered mapping and communicative techniques in the acquisition of the primary language, Jambun English. To claim that language death is the mirror image of language acquisition could under one interpretation imply that YS mental faculties

are resemblant of a child's in the first stage of language acquisition.

In association with this, another important difference is that, unlike children in the initial stages of acquisition, the terminal speakers of Dyirbal are able to supplement gaps in their Dyirbal competence with English linguistic resources. ie YS' imperfect command of TD does not reflect lack of cognitive development or inability at verbal communication, as is the case with early stages of child language acquisition. Rather it involves an increased reliance on the English language system, in which YS are fluent.

Summarizing, although there is some formal similarity between YD and child language, in that speakers of both favour cognitively and formally simple constructions, there is as yet insufficient evidence to claim that a terminal language simplifies in the same direction as child language. There exist essential functional differences between child language acquisition and death processes which challenge the suggestion that the death of a language is the mirror image to its acquisition. The material examined in this thesis also suggests several other avenues of further inquiry, which cannot be dealt with here. For instance, one might compare language death process with other reductive phenomena such as second language acquisition; bilingualism among the elderly (Clyne, 1976); and aphasia (Jakobson, 1971a).

10.3 MISAPPREHENSIONS

This section deals with misapprehensions associated with the language death process.

10.3.1 "ERROR-RIDDEN"

It is commonly assumed that a dying language is error-ridden, filled with mistakes haphazardly distributed over speakers and situations. eg Bloomfield (1927) describes the speech of a Menomini as "atrocious" and "barbarous, (see Chapter 1). In contrast to this view, Chapter 4 of this thesis demonstrated that, although YD deviates markedly from TD grammatical norms, this variation is by no means a smattering of ad hoc errors. Rather each YS has his own individual Dyirbal system, which is, like other languages, a structured means of communication. YS are ranked on a continuum according to the degree to which the individual Dyirbal system deviates from TD norm, and variation along the continuum is systematic. Synchronically, points along the continuum indicate relative distance from TD norms. Diachronically, these points on the continuum represent changes in 'real' time, as the Dyirbal language heads toward extinction.

10.3.2 GRAMMATICAL INTERFERENCE

A second misapprehension involves grammatical diffusion. Many distinguished linguists have questioned the possibility of morphological and grammatical influence. eg Meillet (1921) states:

> "The grammatical systems of two languages ... are impenetrable to each other."

Such a view is erroneous. The YD data demonstrates that there is indeed diffusion of grammatical categories between unrelated Dyirbal and English. eg Less-fluent YS drop the ergative-

absolutive (SO-A) pattern of case marking. Instead, they mark syntactic function by word order, on a SA-O (NOM-ACC) pattern as in English. English prepositions are frequently used in Dyirbal sentences to supplement gaps in YD competence. In Jambun English, TD morphological influence also occurs. eg the TD genitive affix -ŋu is used in the following 'English' utterance:

eg Isn't that Sandra-ŋu modaga?
-GEN car

Evidence of grammatical diffusion has been noted in other language contact situations. Heath (1978) describes morphological and morphosyntactic diffusion in Arnhem Land languages of North Australia. Silverstein (1977:154) reports that in both pronominal and tense-aspect categories:

> "Proto-Chinookan must have been under heavy categorical influence from languages surrounding on the coast."

Also, Silverstein (1977:154) attributes the "adventitous rise of gender categories" in Chinookan to external influence. Clyne (1980) discusses grammatical convergence in speech of Dutch and German immigrants in Australia. Thus the claim that grammatical and morphological diffusion does not occur in language contact situations is quite unfounded.

10.3.3 ADAPTION OF VICTORIOUS LANGUAGE SYSTEM

Third, the claim that a language dies by adapting successively to the inventory, structure and model of the victorious language is only partially true. While English interference does play some part in structural changes of YD,

it is not a clearcut role and it is not sufficient to account for general patterns of change and areas of retention of certain features. eg noun markers survive with remarkable tenacity in YD, even though English has no such category. The conjugation contrast is maintained in YD, but English has only one productive conjugation. The collapsing of peripheral functions under a single affix form can scarcely be attributed to directly English interference. Thus not all change in YD is attributable to influence of the English language system.

The same has been reported in other language death situations. In her study of terminal Gaelic, Dorian (1981:152) states that:

> "Language contact can be assumed to play some role in the grammatical changes of ESG... although it is.. not sufficient to account either for all the general trends or for the differences in retention within given categories."

Dorian notes that the Gaelic vocative is better preserved than the genitive, although English has a genitive but no vocative.

Similarly, Dressler & Wodak-Leodolter (1977:9) observe that dying languages are often characterized by disorganization, individual variation and overgeneralization of rules which cannot be attributed to the impact of the victorious language. As Dressler (1972) and Denison (1977) demonstrate, a disintegrating language is often characterized by fluctuations and uncertainties of its speakers, rather than immediate adOption of features of the replacing language. Thus, the pattern of breakdown and decay in a dying language cannot always be attributed to interference from the replacing language.

This leads to the broader question: Can we predict what type of change will occur and when, in language death or in language contact situations generally? Various scholars have turned their attention to contact-induced language change. The most complete and authoritative study to date is Weinreich's work Languages in Contact. However, even this impressive work gives us no means of predicting, however roughly, what types of contact-induced language change will occur when. As Werner Winter ((1973:135) cited in Thomason) commented on contact-induced language change:

> "The inspection of a wide array of observations made... leads to the conclusion that in this field nearly everything can be shown to be possible, but... not much progress has been made toward determining what is probable."

Many scholars stress that the nature and extent of contact-induced change cannot be predicted by the nature of linguistic systems alone. The complex network of socio-cultural factors which determine the contact situation must also be examined in order to understand the nature and degree of change which occurs. Thomason (MSS) upholds this view:

> "Linguistic interference is conditioned in the first instance by social factors, not linguistic ones: both the direction of interference and the extent of interference are socially determined, not linguistically determined. Linguistic factors are of strictly secondary importance in the determination of the actual linguistic results of contact-induced language change."

Empirical studies confirm this. eg In describing the language contact situation of English and French with New World languages, Alleyne (1971:182) states:

> "Socio-cultural factors everywhere determined the degree of interference, from one territory to another, and also within a single territory."

Irvine (1978) notes that linguistic considerations alone are not suffice in explaining the course of change in Wolof noun classification. Socio-cultural factors are vital in explaining this change.

The Jambun situation also well exemplifies the importance of socio-cultural factors in determining the extent to which the victorious code is adopted. Jambun residents do not adopt the standard English (SAE) of white society. Rather they speak a non-standard English variety which differs markedly from SAE. Thus it cannot be said that Jambun residents, in gradually abandoning their traditional language, successively adopt the inventory, structure and model of SAE. The maintenance of non-standard JE has important social function: it symbolizes membership in the closed Jambun community.

10.3.4 RELAXATION OF INTERNAL MONITORING

One common assumption which the Dyirbal data contradicts is Dorian's suggestion that:

> "relaxation of internal grammatical monitoring is typical of language communities approaching extinction."
>
> [Dorian, 1981:154]

While this may be true of Gaelic and certain other language death situations it does not apply to terminal Dyirbal. In dying Dyirbal, there is little evidence of relaxation of internal grammatical monitoring. Older TD speakers are grammatical 'purists'. As self-appointed monitors of TD grammatical norms, the TD speakers constantly correct the speech of YS. (see 3.3.2, 3.7.5). (Furthermore, even within the R & R and Buckaroo peer-groups, there is evidence of constant supervision and control to uphold the group's linguistic standard.) Thus it cannot be maintained that relaxation of internal monitoring is common to all language death situations.

One important factor influencing the degree of grammatical monitoring in a community may be the rapidity of the death process. Where the process is gradual, the oldest most-fluent speakers may be themselves "imperfect" speakers, and so lack proficiency and confidence to correct younger speakers' language. In contrast, where the extinction process is more rapid (eg Dyirbal), the older members are speakers of 'pre-decay' language. As original members with affinity for traditional linguistic and cultural standards, they attempt to maintain traditional language norms.

10.3.5 DOMINANCE OF VERTICAL COMMUNICATION

Another widely-held belief is that when a dying language becomes limited to fixed networks of interaction, it is the vertical link (eg between YS and TS) where the language survives. Certainly this may be so in many cases of language extinction. eg Dorian (1981:152) reports that it is the vertical communication networks which are strongest in dying Gaelic. Many younger speakers use their Gaelic most frequently to the older kin rather

than with peers their own age.

However, the Dyirbal situation contrasts with this. Among the less-fluent YS of dying Dyirbal, it is the horizontal networks of Dyirbal communication which are strongest. These less-fluent YS use the language mainly within their in-group and not so much to older TS, (although they are addressed in TD by TS, and can understand them). As mentioned in 3.7.5, there are sociolinguistic reasons for the survival of horizontal Dyirbal links - such as avoidance of corrective mechanism by TS, and use of Dyirbal as a symbol of in-group identity.

The important point is that much further investigation is required into terminal language situations before sociolinguistic generalizations can be drawn. Each death situation is characterized by a complex configuaration of socio-cultural, psychological and linguistic factors, and these factors are not necessarily uniform for all cases of extinction.

CONCLUDING REMARKS

Much more data is required from many typologically-different languages and different social situations before we can speculate much on the direction and pattern of change involved in the language extinction process. Because the configuration of socio-cultural and linguistic features may vary radically from one language death situation to another, we should advance with caution in proposing a general model for the language death phenomenon.

CHAPTER 10 NOTES

1 Imperfect speakers do not always have incomplete acquisition histories. Dorian (MSS) reports the case of one imperfect Gaelic speaker who was a once-fluent adult, but ceased to use the language. I am not familar with such a phenomenon occurring in YD.

11.1 SUMMARY OF YD INVESTIGATION

"I am always sorry when any language is lost,
because languages are the pedigree of nations."

[Samuel Johnson - Letter to Boswell]

This chapter recapitulates some of the main socio-cultural and linguistic features of Dyirbal's demise, and gives a prognosis for the future of the language. The disappearance of Dyirbal appears imminent due to a gradual shift to more prestigious English code. In the past 200 years of white contact, the original domains of Dyirbal have receded as the indigenous culture was overwhelmed by influence of the hegemonic white civilization. Today the language is virtually limited to restricted networks of interaction within the Jambun community, namely the family or the in-group. Factors conducive to diminished language loyalty are social and psychological: parents see little value in teaching their children a stigmatized code which has limited social function and is associated with a dying traditional lifestyle. Introduction of radio and tv, and absence of Dyirbal literature

are other reasons. Perhaps the most important factor for Dyirbal's decline is compulsory education in English schools. Lack of institutional support has severe consequences for Dyirbal. Rather than education enhancing the Aboriginal cultural identity, it replaces Dyirbal with English and creates the impression that Dyirbal is unimportant or even inadequate. In this way, the intense contact with white European civilization has resulted in the gradual abandonment of Dyirbal as a viable means of communication.

In the process, widespread changes have taken place in the structure of YD affecting phonology, morphology, syntax, semantics and lexicon.

On the phonological level, changes are comparatively minor, with only slight evidence of English interference. The English fricative /f/ occurs in YD pidgin pronouns: wifela: 1PL; yufela: 2PL. There are signs of phonetic insecurity as the rhotic contrast weakens in non-minimal pairs: YS "waver" in the realization of the TD phonemes /rr/ and /r/.

Changes on the morphological level are much greater. Innovations in the YD nominal case system include:

1) Less-fluent YS abandon TD morphological ergativity and regroup core elements on an SA-O (NOM-ACC) pattern shown by word order as in English.

2) There is allomorphic reduction of ERG-INST, LOC-AVERS and GEN affixes.

3) The TD distinction between alienable and inalienable possession is neutralized. YS extend alienable possession affix -ŋu making it a general genitive affix.

4) Peripheral case distinctions are collapsed by less-fluent YS. They often generalize a single case affix to cover various peripheral case functions.

5) Sometimes, less-proficient YS abandon suffixation altogether as a means of marking peripheral case. Alternative role marking devices are English preposition, or lack of marking.

There is a similar tendency to drop verbal inflectional affixes. The functions of these dying verb inflections are sometimes transferred to alternative linguistic devices: eg less-fluent YS lose future tense -ny and negative imperative -m affixes, but the notion of future and negative imperative is conveyed by other words in the sentence. On the other hand, the function of some dying verbal morphemes is not always transferred to alternative linguistic devices. eg -bila: lest; -muŋa: participial. (This exemplifies a distinctive feature of the language death process. ie reduction in the structure of a decaying language is not always compensated for by structural expansion and elaboration elsewhere in the system.)

A morphological hierarchy which ranks Dyirbal affixes according to their resistance to formal change reveals that, unlike inflectional affixes, nominal and verbal derivational morphemes show marked resistance to change. Most of the derivational affixes observed in this investigation remain as useful linguistic devices in YD. The only evidence of change in derivational affixes was the collapsing of the reciprocal and reflexive categories under what was originally the reflexive affix form.

YS show a tendency to eliminate areas of unnecessary (ie non-functional) complication in the TD language system. Verb conjugation membership is rearranged so that conjugation corresponds to transitivity value to a greater degree. The irregular verb yanu 'go' undergoes analogic remodelling to become like regular verbs. In these two areas, YD seems to be shifting in the direction of greater regularity.

Changes in YD pronoun paradigm are formal rather than categorical: TD person, number and case categories are maintained. Formally, there is a systematic intrusion of pidgin items which replace dual and plural pronouns of TD.

In the closed grammatical classes of noun-marker and interrogative, YS showed radical simplification of TD paradigms. Categorically, this simplification involved the abandonment of certain case and class distinctions. Formal changes to make paradigms more regular involved morphological restructuring: In bala- 'there' and wanya- 'who' paradigms, YS abandon morphological complex TD forms and use the unmarked nominative form as a root for case inflections. In all paradigms, the resistance of unmarked forms to change is striking: singular forms of pronouns; unmarked noun marker root bala- 'there'; unmarked nominative forms of bala- 'there', wunyja- 'where'; wanya 'who' remain unaltered in YD. It is the marked forms of these closed classes that show a high tendency to change.

Widespread changes occur on the syntactic level:

1) There is a breakdown in agreement rules operating in the noun phrase and verb complex.

2) The exceptionally-free TD word order is rigidified in YD on an A-V-O pattern as in English.

3) The TD clause linkage device - S-O pivot - has been frequently abandoned in clause subordination and co-ordination. It survives predominantly in purposive clause conjunctions in the speech of all YS.

4) There is a weakening of casemarking on the verb of a relative clause.

5) The overall frequency of clause subordination also diminishes in YD.

Lexically, there is a reduction in vocabulary, correlating roughly with YS grammatical proficiency. Some items appear more resistant to dropping than others. eg islands of lexemes referring to body parts, human classification, and well-known animates form zones of resistance.

Semantic change is evident in the noun classification system. Most YS radically simplify the complex TD noun class system by reallocating noun class membership along a system based simply on the principles of animacy and sex.

Because such widespread changes have occurred on all levels of the language system, it is difficult to isolate any particular aspect which is less prone to change than others. Nevertheless, the following points regarding the direction and pattern of decay are worthy of note:

a) UNMARKED forms show a noticeable resistance to change. As mentioned above, there is survival of unmarked forms in closed categories of bala 'there', wanya 'who', wunya 'where' and pronoun paradigms. In addition, the unmarked (NON-FUT) affix becomes the unvarying form for verb ending when the marked affix forms - FUT, NEG IMP - are dropped.

b) YD shows a tendency to morphological simplicity as many inflectional morphemes are dropped. In casual texts and conversation, YS also avoid morphologically complex constructions.

c) The pattern of change in YD is characterized by extreme asymmetry. On one hand there is a pattern of morphological simplification as YS drop inflectional affixes. On the other hand, there is retention of morphological complexity eg YS retain derivational syntactic and aspectual affixes. Certainly, one striking feature of YD is the complexity of the picture: not all linguistic features show equal rate of weakening. eg NEG IMP and FUT affixes are lost, but PURP inflection remains. eg In regularizing conjugation membership of "exception" verbs, YS altered the NON FUT affix first; the PURP affix was much less sensitive to conjugation reorganization; and the ANT affix did not register conjugation reallocation at all.

d) The pattern of decay and breakdown in YD cannot be entirely attributed to English influence. Although English interference does play some role in the grammatical changes of YD, it is not a simple role and does not account either for all the general trends or retention of certain TD features. eg The conjugation contrast is maintained, even though English has only one productive conjugation.

On the socio-linguistic level, many less-fluent YS reserve their YD for communication within the peer-group. For the two in-groups described in this thesis, YD is an important symbol of loyalty and identity. Such social subgrouping in the community is conducive to the maintenance of distinct speech norms. Although YS deviate from the TD grammatical norm, they uphold their own peer-group linguistic standard in highly focused form: among the

members of each group, there is only slight variation. The more proficient group members did not use their 'best' Dyirbal in the peer-group situation. Rather they accommodated their speech toward the shared norm.

There is a marked difference in Dyirbal standards between the Buckaroo and Rock'n'Roller groups. Unlike Rock'n'Roller speech, the YD style spoken by Buckaroos is characterized by high English intrusion; frequent use of pidgin form 'bin'; low incidence of bound morphemes.

Although this simplified Buckaroo speech bears some formal similarity to a pidgin, there are important formal and functional differences between a pidgin and terminal Dyirbal. The data suggests that language death should not be stereotyped under the general term 'pidginization'. Rather it should be added as a source of data on simplification, reduction and confluence in language contact. The language death phenomenon is a complex one and many more richly detailed studies are needed before we can make firm generalizations of any kind regarding the process of language extinction.

FUTURE OF DYIRBAL

Dyirbal bears all the symptons of a language whose death is imminent. It is a language of low social and political prestige which - as current trends indicate - is gradually being replaced by English over its entire functional range. Dyirbal is associated with a dying traditional lifestyle; consequently, many of the Jambun residents find little utility for the language. The culmulation of such adversive socio-cultural factors is the common language death syndrome: Jambun parents have ceased transmitting the Dyirbal language to their offspring, and/or the children have stopped learning it from their parents.

While current attitudes and socio-linguistic trends in the Jambun community indicate the inevitability of Dyirbal's extinction, this cannot be stated with absolute certainty. As Liebe-Harkort (1980) demonstrates, factors influencing the survival of minority languages are varied and complex. Ultimately, the survival of Dyirbal rests with the attitudes of the speakers and their estimation of its social and political value.

The Jambun social situation is a highly transient one. In the past 200 years since white contact, the traditional socio-cultural fabric has undergone radical changes. The current Jambun community, established only four years ago, is in a state of flux. Even during the six month period of my investigation, social upheaval was evident: some YS left the community for employment in outside white society; the Rock'n'Roller in-group disintegrated after the loss of one member. As a result of this peer-group disintegration, yet another social context for Dyirbal communication was lost,(although others are likely to develop).

It is a consoling thought that, in such a transient social climate, political and social factors may emerge which are conducive to an upsurge of language loyalty. Indeed, change in linguistic fortunes is not unusual. eg English itself was once a minor language of the European periphery, which vied for two centuries with Anglo-Norman. (As Pope (1934:426) states, the factors which determined the demise of Anglo-Norman and survival of English are not fully understood.)

For Dyirbal, an increased awareness of Aboriginal identity, political rights and related issues may well give the language new life blood.

This leads to certain fundamental questions: Are factors of language death manipulable ? What steps can be taken to aid Dyirbal's survival? Efforts to improve Dyirbal's plight should include: Firstly, a bilingual education program, which enhances the traditional cultural heritage of the Jambun children, and promotes Dyirbal language as a viable and worthwhile code of communication. Secondly, availability of Dyirbal literature to

create a more positive impression of the language. Thirdly, an intensive campaign - through radio, television and newspaper - which cultivates greater understanding of the richness of the Aboriginal cultural and linguistic heritage. In this way, stigma and negative connotations associated with the Dyirbal language may be diminished.

The cultural identity of a group is closely tied to its distinctive linguistic habits. With language loss, human cultural heritage is diminished accordingly. However, the impoverishment of the TD language system does not necessarily mean the loss of cultural identity. (Dixon 1980:476 suggests that it does.) The Jambun people have maintained their Aboriginal identity, despite overwhelming socio-cultural, economic and political pressures from white European society. They have formed a geographically and socially separate group, which remains distinct from dominant white society. For the non-Dyirbal speakers at Jambun, Aboriginal identity is codified linguistically by some surviving Dyirbal lexical items and Jambun English.

GENERAL APPENDIX

The following three texts were selected from varying points of the YD continuum. Note the difference in YD styles between Text 1 (fluent YS) and Text 3 (less-fluent YS).

TEXT 1: GINYJU-GINYJU STORY

(MJ, 30 years, female, Bilyana)

(MJ is a fluent YS at TD end of the continuum.)

ginyju-ginyju	ŋuma-ŋga	yabu-ŋga	nyinanyu /	bayi	
name	father-LOC	mother-LOC	sit	NOM I	
banba-gu	yanul-gani-nyu	bayi	yanul-gani-nyu		
wild fig-DAT	go-ASP-NONFUT	NOM I	go-ASP-NONFUT		

Ginyju-ginyju lived with his mother and father. / He used to go (looking) for wild figs

bayi	garri	ginyan	yinyja	yinyja-ŋga	barra-ŋarra /
NOM I	sun	NOM II	not yet	not yet-LOC	sun begin to rise-

just as the sun was beginning to rise.

bayi	yanul-gani-nyu	yimba-ŋana	bayi	yanun /
NOM I	go-ASP-NONFUT	no-EMPH	NOM I	go

He went many times, never (missing). /

yanun	bayi	bali	waynyjin	bayi	bagum	banba-gu
go	NOM I	to there	climb up	NOM I	DAT III	wild fig-DAT
yimba-ŋana						
no-EMPH						

He went and climbed up for wild figs.

baŋgun guyŋgan-du bayi jaymban banba-ŋga gunimarrinyu/
ERG II female ghost-ERG NOM I find wild fig-LOC search

(One morning) a female ghost found him, searching around the wild fig trees. /

waynyji-waynyjin bayi ŋanban bayi baŋgun guyŋgan-du
climb up-REDUP NOM I ask NOM I ERG II female ghost-ERG

As he was climbing up, the female ghost asked him:

wanya bayi ŋimba / ginyju-ginyju yalu bani !
who-NOM NOM I 2SG name to here come-IMP

yalu bani !
to here come-IMP

"Who are you? / Ginyju-ginyju come here! come here!

ŋaja ŋinuna ŋaji-mba-li banagay-mba-li
1SG-NOM 2SG-ACC shoulder-TR VZR-PURP return-COMIT-PURP

yabu ŋuma-gu /
mother father-ALL

I'll carry you home on my shoulders to your mother and father."

bayi ginyju-ginyju nomo bayi yalamanyu / baŋgun
NOM I name NEG NOM I do like this ERG II

guyŋgan-du
female ghost-ERG

Ginyju-ginyju didn't do so (because he knew that) the female ghost

bayi jaŋga-ny banagay-mban jaŋgay-gu /
NOM I eat-FUT return-COMIT eat-PURP

would take him home to eat him. /

balay ban guyŋgan ŋara-ŋara ŋiba-na-nyu
there NOM II female ghost pull down-REDUP call out for-ANT-NONFUT

bayi /
NOM I

The female ghost called out to Ginyju-ginyju (trying to) pull him down. /

balan guyŋgan walŋga-walŋga-may-gali-nyu ban
NOM II female ghost breath-REDUP-TR VZR-ASP-NONFUT NOM II

The female ghost got really annoyed.

guyŋgan banaganyu ban bagul wawu-lay-gu
female ghost return NOM II DAT I fetch-ANT-PURP

guyi-gu /
male ghost-DAT

The female ghost returned to fetch the male ghost. /

wawun bayi yalu-bawal :
fetch NOM I to here - long way

She fetched him from far away (saying):

ŋinda bani yagul-bawal bundi-lay-gu /
2SG come DAT I-long way pull down-ANT-PURP

yugu-ŋunu giyi-n-bawal ginyju-ginyju
tree-ABL NOM I-long way name

ŋaliji-n-du jaŋgay-gu
1DU-ERG eat-PURP

"You come to pull Ginyju-ginyju down from the tree so that we can eat him!

yimba ban guyŋgan galgan bayi ginyju-ginyju /
no NOM II female ghost leave NOM I name

The female ghost left Ginyju-ginyju (and couldn't find him again). /

ban ŋandan-gani-nyu : ginyju-ginyju. /
NOM II call out-ASP-NONFUT name

The female ghost called out repeatedly: "Ginyju-ginyju!" /

yaŋgul ginyju-ginyju-ŋgu ŋaril-gani-nyu : giyi-m-bawal
ERG I name -ERG answer-ASP-NONFUT NOM I-long way

giyi-m-bawal /
NOM I-long way

Ginyju-ginyju kept on answering: "Over here, over here!" /

ginyju-ginyju /
name

(Again the female ghost called: "Ginyju-ginyju", (and so on.))

orait / jaymban bayi guyi-nya banagay-mban
NEW TOPIC find NOM I male ghost-ACC return-COMIT

Alright. / (The female ghost) found the male ghost and returned

bayi balu-bawal yugu-gu bagul ginyju-ginyju-gu
NOM I to there-long way tree-ALL DAT I name -DAT

ŋuna bulga-nay-gu /
think swallow-ANT-PURP

with him to the tree in order to swallow Ginyju-ginyju. /

bayi giyi ginyju-ginyju bayi janyja banaganyu /
NOM I NOM I name NOM I now return

(It seemed that) Ginyju-ginyju had gone home. /

ban guyŋgan mambu-bin bayi mambu-bin
NOM II female ghost back-INTR VZR NOM I back-INTR VZR

ginyju-ginyju
name

The female ghost and Ginyju-ginyju had backs turned to each other.

bayi banaganyu /
NOM I return

"He's gone home", (said the female ghost). /

giyi maŋa jananyu /
NOM I ear stand

Ginyju-ginyju's ears were pricked up: /

jaŋga-ny gilu ŋayguna yaŋgun guyŋgan-du ...
eat-FUT soon 1SG-ACC ERG II female ghost-ERG

(Ginyju-ginyju thought:) "This female ghost is going to eat me later."

...balay bayi jananyu now /
there NOM I stand

He was standing there now. /

baninyu bulaji guyi guyŋgan-garra /
come two male ghost female ghost-one of pair

The male and female ghost came (towards Ginyju-ginyju). /

yimba-ŋana / ginyju-ginyju-ŋu walŋga bala galgan
no-EMPH name -GEN breath NOM IV leave

bayi-m-bawal janyja bayi ginyju-ginyju /
NOM I-long now NOM I name

Ginyju-ginyju held his breath now. /

giyi yaŋgun guyŋgan-du bayi guyi gigan:
NOM I ERG II female ghost-ERG NOM I male ghost tell

The female ghost told the male ghost:

gala ŋinda waynyji ! balu-gala bagul
upwards 2SG climb up-IMP to there-upwards DAT I

bulga-nay-gu /
swallow-ANT-PURP

"You climb up there to swallow him (Ginyju-ginyju)!" /

yimba-ŋana bayi guyi munu-dayi waynyjin
no-EMPH NOM I male ghost tail-short way uphill climb up

bulga-nay-gu /
swallow-ANT-PURP

The male ghost climbed up tail first to swallow (Ginyju-ginyju). /

walŋga galgan now baŋgul ginyju-ginyju /
breath leave ERG I name

Ginyju-ginyju held his breath now. /

waynyjin bayi guyi / finish /
climb up NOM I male ghost NEW TOPIC

The male ghost climbed up.

baŋgul ginyju-ginyju-ŋgu walŋga-ŋgu bayi bilmban baji-gu /
ERG I name -ERG breath-INST NOM I push fall-PURP

(By blowing) with all of his breath, Ginyju-ginyju pushed him so that he fell. /

giyi - ginyan [self correction] guyŋgan jiŋgali-gali-nyu
NOM I NOM II female ghost run-ASP-NONFUT

bagul guyi-gu balga-lay-gu
DAT I male ghost-DAT hit-ANT-PURP

The female ghost ran over quickly to hit the male ghost.

marri baji marri marri galga ŋinuna yaŋgul guyi-ŋgu ...
perhaps fall perhaps perhaps leave 2SG-ACC ERG I male-ERG ghost

(MJ becomes excited in story telling - exuberant speech.)

bayi guyi baji-ŋu 'e thiŋ 'e baŋgun
NOM I male ghost fall-REL she thought ERG II

guyŋgan-du bayi ginyju-ginyju baji-ŋu /
female ghost-ERG NOM I name fall-REL

The female ghost thought that the male ghost who fell was

Ginyju-ginyju. /

ginyju-ginyju bayi bayi-ŋga-bawal janyja miyandanyu marri /
name NOM I NOM I-LOC-long way now laugh perhaps

Ginyju-ginyju was probably laughing now out there.

bali bayi balgan guyŋgan-du bayi
to there NOM I hit female ghost-ERG NOM I

guyi-nya janyja warra balgan. /
male ghost-ACC now wrong person hit

The female ghost was hitting the male ghost, the wrong one. /

TEXT 2: LILLIAN STORY

(LN, 19 years, female, Jambun)

(LN is ranked on middle of the YD continuum.)

ban mugiyam nyinanyu here jigul-gu yanu-ŋu
NOM II name sit school-ALL go-REL

ban mate-bila /
NOM II -COMIT

Lillian lived here and went to school here with her mates. /

ban walmanyu one mornin' yanun buliman-gu
NOM II get up go policeman-ALL

bura-lay-gu /
see-ANT-PURP

She got up one morning and went to see the policeman. /

baŋgun ring-iman bayi ...bani-gu bagun
ERG II -TR VZR NOM I come-PURP DAT II

budi-lay-gu guwut-gu /
take-ANT-PURP court-ALL

She phoned him (to tell him) to come to take her to court. /

bayi buliman baninyu juwa-gu budin ban mugiyam-nya /
NOM I policeman come store-ALL take NOM II name-ACC

The policeman came to the store and took Lillian,

Eileen-garra budin Innisfail-gu guwut-gu /
-one of pair take place-ALL court-ALL

and Eilleen to Innisfail Court. /

ban Eileen banaga-yirri-nyu nyuwala /
NOM II return-REFL*-NONFUT alone

Eileen returned alone. /

[* I have no explanation for the use of REFL affix -yirri on INTR verb.]

ban mugiyam yanun buliman-gu budin ban jayil-gu /
NOM II name go policeman-ERG take NOM II jail-ALL

Lillian went and the policeman took her to jail. /

baŋun yabu ŋinyan-bawal nyinanyu /
GEN II mother NOM II - long way sit

Her mother was far away. /

baŋun teacher mugirray baŋun bayi-m-bawal
GEN II older brother GEN II NOM I-long way

nyinanyu alugeda. /
sit 3PL

Her teacher and brother were all far away (from her). /

ban mugiyam yanun jayil-gu ban banaganyu next year /
NOM II name go jail-ALL NOM II return

Lillian went to jail. She'll return next year. /

ban wirru-gu dubala nyina-ŋu balay-balbulu
NOM II boyfriend-DAT 3DU sit-REL at there-long way down river

mija-ŋga before. /
place-LOC

She lived with her boyfriend a long way down river before. /

dubala baga-yirri-nyu dubala baga-yirri-nyu down there /
3DU spear-REFL-NONFUT 3DU spear-REFL-NONFUT

The two of them fought and fought down there. /

baŋgun jurrganyu bayi / bayi yanun hospital-gu dagida-gu
ERG II spear NOM I NOM I go -ALL doctor-DAT

bura-lay-gu /
see-ANT-PURP

She stabbed him. / He went to hospital to see the doctor. /

baŋgul dagida-ŋgu buran bala buran bayi yara nyinay-gu
ERG I doctor-ERG see NOM IV see NOM I man sit-PURP

hospital-ŋga /
-LOC

The doctor saw it (the wound) and sent the fellow to hospital.

ban banaganyu buliman-gu budin budin ban jayil-gu /
NOM II return policeman-ERG take take NOM II jail-ALL

She came home and the policeman took her to jail. /

one night ban nyinanyu then banaganyu ban yanun
NOM II sit return NOM II go

jigul down here Murray Upper. /
school place

She stayed (in jail) for one night and then returned. She went down to the school at Murray Upper. /

baŋun ŋuma guyi-bin ban wiyamanyu banyjar-bin
GEN II father dead-INTR VZR NOM II do what mad-INTR VZR

gunyja-yirri-nyu /
drink-REFL-NONFUT

Her father was dead. What would she do? She became mad, drinking. /

gulu nyinanyu / manu-bin /
NEG sit desolate-INTR VZR

She didn't sit down; she was desolate. /

ban alugeda-gu budin / duruŋgu /
NOM II 3PL-ERG take drunk

They came and took her (to Brisbane jail). / She was drunk. /

TEXT 3: FISHING

(PG, 19 years, female, Jambun)

(PG is a less-fluent YS ranked towards the English end of the continuum.)

ŋanaji bin thiŋ waymbanyu down at Scroona. /
1PL PAST what-do-you-call-it walkabout

We were -what's the word- going walkabout at Scroona. /

ŋanaji yarrabujanyu ŋanaji an' Aunty Daisy hey ban wuygi /
1PL fish 1PL NOM II old lady

We went fishing, us and Aunty Daisy, the old lady. /

went down an' we bin - dis waybala-waybala bin baninyu dat way
PAST white man-REDUP PAST come

(We) went down and we were - these white men came towards us.

wagi-bin an' ŋanaji bin muguy jananyu an' dat
work-INTR VZR 1PL PAST too long stand

wuygi bin wurrbanyu hey /
old lady PAST talk INT

working, and we were (just) standing and standing there and the old lady was talking, hey /

dat bloomin' - dat line gen ban wuygi wurrbay-gu /
also NOM I old lady talk-PURP

(She was talking about that) bloomin' (fishing) line too /

we tryin' to warn ban wuygi nomo wurrbay-gu
NOM II old lady NEG talk-PURP

We were trying to warn her not to talk [Dyirbal]: /

cut it out wuygi /
old lady

"Stop talking, old lady!"

them waybala-waybala bin right dere workin' /
white man-REDUP PAST

(Because) those white men were right there working. /

how 'bout when that um what you call that platypus?

when that gugula bin pop out of the water / yeah /
platypus PAST

when that platypus popped up out of the water, yeah. /

when 'e bin come up ban wuygi bin gen ŋarban hey
PAST NOM II old lady PAST also get fright INT

When it (platypus) came up, the old lady got a fright too, hey.

ŋanaji juyman miyanday at dat wuygi oh no
1PL crawl laugh old lady

We were crawling on the ground (from) laughing at that old lady, on no!

just as well too but when dat wuygi bin miyandanyu she went -
old lady PAST laugh

When that old lady was laughing

she bin miyandanyu low when dem waybala bin
PAST laugh white man PAST

finish up 'nother end wagi-bin / wayi! /
work-INTR VZR INT

she was laughing softly when those white men finished up

working at the other end (of the river) / hey! /

ŋanaji bin just wild but nomo dat - we had to miyandanyu at her
1PL PAST NEG laugh

We were really annoyed (at her talking Dyirbal) but not for long -

we had to laugh at her. /

ban lilbit burrmu hey ban wuygi /
NOM II a little deaf NOM II old lady

The old lady's a bit deaf, hey?

yufela ! / so hey ? / das right /
2PL

that's other one / yarrabujay-gu /
fish-PURP

You lot! / Isn't that true? / That's right. / That's the other (story) about fishing. /

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