

CASE RELATIONSHIPS IN NYANGUMARTA

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ABBREVIATIONS

A	agent (transitive subject)	INST	instrumental case
ABL	ablative case	IRR	irrealis
ABS	absolute case	LOC	locative case
ACC	accusative case	NOM	nominative case
ALL	allative case	NOMLSR	nominaliser
AVERS	aversive case	NF	non-future tense
COM	comitative	NP	noun phrase
CONJ	conjunction	O	transitive object
DAT	dative case	PAST	past tense
DU ~ du	dual	PL ~ pl	plural
EMPH	emphatic	POT	potential
ERG	ergative case	PRES	present tense
excl	exclusive	REMP	remote past
FUT	future tense	REP	repetitive aspect
GEN	genitive case	S	intransitive subject
HORT	hortatory mood	sg	singular
IMP	imperative mood	STAT	stative
incl	inclusive	UNM	unmarked
INCHO	inchoative	VB	verbaliser

0. INTRODUCTION

The Nyangumarta language is spoken by 700 or more people along the north-west coast of Australia, between Port Hedland and Broome and inland around Marble Bar. The majority of the Nyangumarta claim to speak the southern (or inland) dialect, while the rest speak the coastal dialect. (These dialects were called Ngurlibardu and Wanyarli respectively by O'Grady, but I have not found Wanyarli acknowledged as a language name.) Many of the coastal Nyangumarta now live at La Grange, but most of the inland Nyangumarta live at Strelley Station and its outcamps, at Yandeyarra Station, or in Port Hedland.

In Nyangumarta¹ (as in many other Pama-Nyungan languages) syntactic relationships are signalled by case-marking on noun phrases with cross-referencing by bound pronominal suffixes on the verbs.

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There is not a one-to-one correlation between the forms of the case-marking suffixes and their functions. There are more functions than there are suffixes to signal those functions. In this paper I propose to examine the morphology and also the semantics of the case-marking system.

I shall also be looking at the relationship between the case-marking on noun phrases and the bound pronoun system, and how the two systems interrelate to display syntactic relationships.

Most of the illustrations in this paper have been taken from natural text, either written or oral. There are, however, some elicited examples.

1. SYNTACTIC RELATIONSHIPS

Certain relationships in a proposition must be made explicit if that proposition is to be understood. The relationship between an actor and his action is one such. In a transitive construction the object must always be made explicit. Other relationships which are not necessary for the utterance to be understood may be made explicit to give additional information.

Dixon (1980:294-298) suggests that it is useful to divide case functions into core and peripheral functions. Core functions are those which must be included if a sentence is to make complete sense. The ones he lists are intransitive subject (S), transitive subject (A), and object (O).

There are others who would also include as core functions some which are DAT-marked. Later I shall discuss Nyangumarta verbs which need DAT-marked complements and a few which have LOC-marked complements. In the light of these I conclude that in Nyangumarta there are also some core functions which are marked by DAT and some by LOC.

1.1 Core functions

When we examine the literature on core functions of case in Australian languages we find considerable diversity in terminology and description. This is particularly so in the description of the functions of S, A, and O.

In languages whose case systems are similar to that of Nyangumarta there is one type of case-marking on NPs and another displayed by the bound pronoun system. NPs show ERG marking for A, while S and O share a different marking. (This binary distinction is made for common nouns, kinship nouns, personal names, demonstratives, and personal pronouns. Nyangumarta is unusual in not having a distinct ACC form on free pronouns.²) In contrast to nominals, the bound pronoun system shows identical marking for the A and S functions and ACC marking for O.

While analysts have clearly recognised that the functions of S and O are quite distinct, when they have been identically marked the tendency has been to describe this form as one case. This has been variously labelled NOM by Blake (1977) and ABS by Dixon (1980).

Goddard (1982:167), writing later than Blake and Dixon, disagrees with this way of handling the data and argues "that most Australian languages have three core categories - ergative, accusative and nominative - and that the common belief that a typical Australian language has two case systems co-existing within it is mistaken."

Goddard first examines data from languages which have tripartite marking on at least one subclass of nominals and concludes that these languages really have three separate cases (with a fair degree of homonymity) operating throughout the nominals. He then examines some of the languages which do not have tripartite marking and shows how he would analyse many of them as having three core cases.

I find Goddard's reasoning convincing. He has not developed his analysis to show how it would apply to the small group of languages (including Warlpiri, Walmajarri and Nyangumarta) which have only two forms on nominals to distinguish S, A, and O functions but a distinct ACC form in the bound pronoun system. But I believe that his analysis can be developed to fit this group of languages.³

In applying Goddard's analysis to Nyangumarta I am saying that although the S and O functions are identically marked on nominals, yet NPs which are functioning as S really have NOM marking, and those which are functioning as O really have ACC marking. Corroboration for this claim comes from the fact that a NP which is functioning as O is cross-referenced by an ACC bound pronoun. See examples (2) and (3).

Similarly, although the bound pronoun system uses identical forms for the A and S functions they are ERG when functioning as A, and NOM when functioning as S. The fact that one form of the bound pronoun can be cross-referenced to an ERG or NOM NP is further corroboration for this claim. See (1) and (2).

Before giving examples of how the system works it will be helpful to list the bound pronouns.

1.2 Bound pronominal forms

There are three sets of bound pronominal suffixes - ERG/NOM, ACC and DAT/LOC - and these are a part of the verb morphology. They are displayed in Table 1.

The forms given in Table 1 represent the most common forms. The bound pronouns, like the tense markers, are often influenced by a tendency towards vowel harmony. The northern dialect of Nyangumarta once had a complex system of vowel harmony (O'Grady 1964:39-41). It appears that in the southern dialect vowel assimilation was less general than in the northern, and even in the northern dialect it is not used as consistently today as it once was (Fr McKelson in a personal communication).

These suffixes are really person-markers and are usually only cross-referenced to animate nouns, i.e. persons and animals. I have given them case labels to show how they tie in with the case-marking system. Some writers have used labels which show the grammatical functions of the suffixes, e.g. subject or object. But the Nyangumarta system is a complex one, especially when it comes to the function of DAT. It seems that giving case-labels to the person-markers is the simplest solution.

The normal order of occurrence for these suffixes is ERG followed by ACC, with DAT/LOC in third place. However, first person singular ranks higher than second or third person. The result of this ranking is that first person singular accusative -nyi or the dative/locative form -ji precedes any second or third person ergative/nominative form. Also, second person singular ranks higher than third person dual, so that a second person singular accusative -nta or dative/locative -nga precedes third person dual ergative/nominative -pulu.

When the dual and plural accusative and dative forms are compared it is obvious that they consist of a person marker plus *-nyi* 'accusative' or *-ka* 'dative/locative'. Without the accusative or dative suffixes these person markers are either identical to or very close in form to the corresponding free pronouns. However, for greater ease with glosses I have chosen not to break off the accusative and dative markers. That is because in some persons the nominative/ergative form is not closely related to that of the accusative or dative. If, for example, we were to dissect *-ngananyi* the gloss would be very awkward - 'first person plural exclusive non-ergative' plus 'accusative'. It is simpler to leave it as 'first person plural exclusive accusative'. This is not an analytical decision but one made for convenience of writing.

Table 1: Pronominal suffixes

Case:	Ergative and Nominative	Accusative	Dative and Locative
Person-Number:			
1sg	-rna	-nyi	-ji
1du.incl	-li	-ngalinyi	-ngalika
1du.excl	-layi ~ -liya	-ngalayinyi	-ngalayika
1pl.incl	-nyi	-nganyjurrinyi	-nganyjurruka
1pl.excl	-yirni	-nganinyi	-nganaka
2sg	-n ~ -npa	-nta	-nga ~ -ngu
2du	-nyumpulu	-nyumpulinyi	-nyumpuluka
2pl	-nyurru	-nyurrinyi	-nyurruka
3sg	-∅*	-∅	-lu**
3du	-pulu	-pulinyi	-puluka
3pl	-yi	-janinyi	-janaka ~ -janaku
* In word-final position Northern Nyangumarta usually uses <i>-rri</i> for third person singular ergative/nominative.			
** The most common shape is <i>-lu</i> , but it may be influenced by vowel harmony to be manifested as <i>-li</i> or <i>-la</i> .			

1.3 Functions of A, S and O

A noun phrase functioning as A is marked by an ERG suffix (*-lu* ~ *-ju*). It is cross-referenced by an ERG bound pronoun of the appropriate person and number. A NP functioning as S is marked by a NOM suffix (*-∅*) which is cross-referenced by a NOM bound pronoun of the appropriate person and number. A NP functioning as O is marked by an ACC suffix (*-∅*) which is cross-referenced by an ACC bound pronoun.⁴ See (1), (2) and (3).

- (1) *paliny-mila-lu nyupaji-lu-jirri japam ji-ni-kinyi-pulu-∅*
he-GEN-ERG spouse-ERG-DU stop VB-NF-REP-3duERG-3sgACC
His two wives kept trying to stop him.

- (2) partany- \emptyset -jirri wani-kinyi-pulu
child-NOM-DU stay-REP-3duNOM
The two children were staying.
- (3) pulany- \emptyset yirri-rni-rni-pulinyi ngaju-lu
those.two-ACC see-NF-1sgERG-3duACC I-ERG
I saw those two.

In (1) the transitive subject NP with ERG marking -lu is cross-referenced by the ERG bound pronoun -pulu, while in (2) the intransitive subject NP with NOM marking - \emptyset is cross-referenced by the NOM bound pronoun (which is the same form as ERG). In (3) there is the addition of an object NP with ACC marking - \emptyset (same form as NOM) which is cross-referenced by the ACC bound pronoun -pulinyi.

Analysing homophonous forms as separate cases may be seen by some to cause problems. But I believe that it solves more problems than it causes. It recognises clearly separate semantic functions. It also more realistically accounts for the cross-referencing system of the language.

One further comment needs to be made regarding the interrelation between NPs and bound pronouns. Because so much information is carried by the bound pronouns it is possible to omit some or all of the NPs from a clause, providing the referents of the bound pronouns are obvious from the context. A clause may then consist of a verb only, with the appropriate pronominal suffixes.

- (4) kulu-rna-yi-ngalayinyi
meet-NF-3plERG-ldu.exclACC
They met us two.

As the third person singular ERG, NOM and ACC forms are all zero, a clause may actually consist of only a verb without any overt bound pronouns. The absence of overt markers signals third person singular subject (and object in transitive constructions).

- (5) wirla-rna- \emptyset - \emptyset
hit-NF-3sgERG-3sgACC
He hit him.

1.4 Core functions of DAT and LOC

Several verbs are either semitransitive or middle. Each of them requires a DAT or LOC complement. In a semitransitive construction a NP functioning as S is marked by a NOM suffix, which is cross-referenced by a NOM bound pronoun of the appropriate person and number. In a middle construction a NP marked by ERG is cross-referenced by an ERG bound pronoun. Each of these constructions also has a DAT- or LOC-marked complement which is cross-referenced by the appropriate bound pronoun.

- (6) partany- \emptyset mima-ninya- \emptyset -lu pipi-ku
child-NOM wait-PRES-3sgNOM-3sgDAT mother-DAT
The child is waiting for his mother.
- (7) ngaju- \emptyset kuli jarri-nya-rna-lu partany-ku
I-NOM angry INCHO-NF-1sgNOM-3sgDAT child-DAT
I am angry with the child.

- (8) *kamal-ju parrja-rni-kinya-∅-lu partany-ku*
camel-ERG look.at-NF-REP-3sgERG-3sgDAT child-DAT
The camel was staring at the child.
- (9) *yijalmarta ji-ni-∅-li Yayipiramu-lu Ngarrka-nga*
true VB-NF-3sgERG-3sgLOC Abram-ERG God-LOC
Abram believed God.

2. PERIPHERAL USES OF CASE

There are seven cases which have peripheral uses. They are:

DATive	AVERSive
LOCative	INSTrumental
ALLative	GENitive
ABLative	

2.1 Peripheral uses of dative case

DAT is the most versatile and the least specific of the cases, having seven different functions. The shape of the DAT marker is -ku.

(a) indicating kinship relationship

The more usual way of showing kinship relationship is by use of the GEN, but DAT can be used in a stative construction.

- (10) *ngani nyuntu-ku palama*
what you-DAT that
What relationship is that person to you?

(b) indicating possession

Alienable possession is normally marked by GEN, but in a construction where both kinship relationship and possession are marked, possession is shown by DAT.

- (11) *ngulyu ma-rna-∅-lu marrngu-lu yawarta-∅ ngaju-mila-ku*
steal VB-NF-3sgERG-3sgDAT man-ERG horse-3sgACC I-GEN-DAT
mamaji-ku ngaju-ja
older brother-DAT me-ABL
A man stole my older brother's horse from me.

(c) signifying benefactive

- (12) *ngaju-ku yurrrpa-rna-kinyi-ji-∅ mayi-∅ warnku-lu*
me-DAT rub-NF-REP-1sgDAT-3sgERG food-ACC stone-INST
She used to grind food for me with a stone.

(d) signifying indirect object

- (13) *nganarna-∅ muwarr pi-lipi-yirna-lu wirtu-ku*
we-NOM talk VB-FUT-1pl.exclNOM-3sgDAT big-DAT
We will talk to the boss.

(e) signifying indirect referent

- (14) pala-ku jakurn-ngarra miranu ji-ni-kinyi-nya ngaju-mila-lu
that-DAT just-EMPH knowing VB-NF-REP-1sgACC I-GEN-ERG

kanyjayi-lu

grandmother-ERG

My grandmother taught me all about that.

- (15) pala-ku warrarn-ku Mangkikata-Ø miranu
that-DAT country-DAT Mangkikata-NOM knowing
Mangkikata knows about that country.

(f) signifying purpose

Purpose constructions are NPs marked by DAT. The head word of such a NP indicating purpose is a nominalised verb further inflected by DAT. (The nominalising suffix has the same form as the non-future tense marker, but nominalised verbs are distinguished from finite verbs by the permitted suffixation.)

- (16) kurnta-rna-ku jakuli-rna-Ø-Ø
sing-NOMLSR-DAT persuade-NF-3sgERG-3sgACC
He persuaded him to sing.

- (17) muwarr pi-rna-lpa-layi Roebourne-ji jungka-ku yi-nganya-ku
talk VB-NF-REMP-1du.exclNOM Roebourne-LOC land-DAT give-NOMLSR-DAT
At Roebourne we asked (him) to give us land.

(g) signifying unfulfilled purpose

A NP marked by DAT is used in constructions containing walyi *almost* to describe actions which were not completed. In English, *the dog* of example (18) is treated as a direct object, but in Nyangumarta a different perception is shown, no doubt because the action does not carry through.

- (18) ngaju-lu walyi wirla-rna-rna-lu yukurru-ku
I-NOM almost hit-NF-1sgERG-3sgDAT dog-DAT
I almost hit the dog.

2.2 Peripheral uses of locative case

LOC marking has phonologically conditioned allomorphs -ngV following vowels and -ji following consonants. The vowel in -ngV is often affected by vowel harmony, but some speakers use -nga where another vowel would be expected. Among younger speakers -ja is often used instead of -ji. In their speech LOC then becomes homophonous with ABL.

(a) signifying static location

LOC can designate the location where a person or thing is situated, or the location at which one arrives/is put.

- (19) wungku-ngu karta karri-nyi-yirni
windbreak-LOC rest STAT-NF-1pl.exclNOM
We rested in windbreaks.

- (20) wurru-ngu mirran-ji wirri-rni-kinyi-nyi-Ø
bush-LOC shade-LOC put-NF-REP-1sgACC-3sgERG
She put me down in the shade of a bush.
- (21) purlika-nga karnti-nyi-Ø-li mirta-mirta
bullock-LOC climb-NF-3sgNOM-3sgLOC grey-greyUNM.LOC
He climbed onto a white bull.
- (22) ngaju-lu rankurrji-ngi pala jilaman-Ø kalku-rni-kinyi-rni-li
I-ERG bustard-LOC that gun-ACC hold-NF-REP-1sgERG-3sgLOC
I was keeping that gun trained on the bustard.
- (b) signifying means of locomotion
- (23) marrngu-Ø nganarna-Ø ya-rra-yirni-li jina-ngu-pa wankanyu
Aborigine-NOM we-NOM go-IMP-1pl.exclNOM-POT foot-LOC-CONJ alive
 wanta-yi-yirni-li
stay-IMP-1pl.exclNOM-POT
We Aborigines might go on foot and stay alive.
- (24) marrngu-Ø-pa kunymarnakata-lu jinmurntu ka-nganyi-kinyi-yi-janinyi
Aborigine-ACC-CONJ policeman-ERG chained take-NF-REP-3plERG-3plACC
 pala-nga turiyin-ja Ngaru-karti
that-LOC train-LOC Port.Hedland-ALL
The police used to take Aboriginal people in chains on that train to Port Hedland.
- (c) on animate nouns designating those from whom one keeps apart
- (25) kulpa-nyi-yirni-janaku palama-rrangu-ngu
return-NF-1plNOM-3plLOC that-PL-LOC
We came away from them.
- (26) maya-nga kaja-rna-rna-janaku
house-LOC sit-NF-1sgNOM-3plLOC
In the house I sat apart from them.
- (d) signifying indirect object of *show* and *tell*
- (27) jurti ji-na-layi-janaku partanykarrangu-ngu
show VB-NF-1du.exclERG-3plLOC children-LOC
We showed it to the children.
- (28) japartu-ngu wurra-rna-Ø-la kujarra-lu nga-nanya-pulu
father-LOC say-NF-3sgERG-3sgLOC two-ERG eat-PRES-3duERG
He told his father, "Two (emus) are eating".

2.3 Uses of allative case

ALL denotes the place, person or thing to which movement is made. The marking is -kurti on directional nouns such as *up*, *down*, and points of the compass. For other nominals it is -karti.

- (29) palajalu kakarra ya-na-yirni warrura-karti
afterwards eastwards go-PAST-1pl.exclNOM Black.Range-ALL
Afterwards we went east towards Black Range.
- (30) ya-nanya-rna-lu mirtawa-karti partany-jartiny
go-PRES-1sgNOM-3sgDAT woman-ALL child-COM
I am going to the woman who has the child.
- (31) ya-na-yirni-janaku purlika-karti
go-PAST-1pl.exclNOM-3plDAT bullock-ALL
We went to the bullock.

2.4 Uses of ablative case

ABL has four distinct functions. They are motion away from, temporal sequence, temporal overlap (or simultaneous action), and reason. The first two functions of ABL are commonly found in Aboriginal languages. The last two functions are not so common. The shape of the ABL marker is -ja.

(a) indicating motion away from a place

- (32) nyungu-ja ya-na-yirni marlurlu-jartiny
this-ABL go-PAST-1pl.exclNOM initiate-COM
We went from here with young men for initiation.

(b) indicating temporal sequence

- (33) pala-ja pirirri-∅ jarri-nyirni
that-ABL man-NOM INCHO-NF-1sgNOM
After that I grew to manhood.

(c) indicating temporal overlap

- (34) wararr-ja yaka-rni-yirni-pulinyi Tarrki-∅-pupa
standing-ABL leave-NF-1pl.exclERG-3duACC Tarrki-ACC-CONJ
We left those two, Tarrki and the other one, standing there.

- (35) wika-lu kamp-nya-∅-∅ kupalya-ja
fire-ERG burn-NF-3sgERG-3sgACC sleep-ABL
The fire burned him while he was asleep.

(d) indicating reason

- (36) ngani-ja nyuntu-∅ kuli jarri-nyirni-ji-n
what-ABL you-NOM angry INCHO-NF-1sgDAT-2sgNOM
Why are you angry with me?

2.5 Use of aversive case

AVERS denotes something which should be avoided, or a consequence which, it is feared, may happen. The shape of AVERS is that of LOC+-marra. Although some other Aboriginal languages form AVERS in the same way (I know of Walmajarri, Pintupi and Ngaanyatjarra), it is hard to see any connection between AVERS and LOC; in addition, I have not been able to assign any separate meaning to -marra.

I therefore conclude that the similarity in the forms is coincidental. Both nouns and nominalised verbs may be inflected by AVERS.

(37) yija wirnti karri-kinyi-yirni wirla-rna-ngamarra
truly afraid STAT-REP-1pl.exclNOM *kill*-NOMLSR-AVERS
Truly we were afraid of being killed.

(38) kunyayi-ngimarra yama-rnaku pala ngapa-∅ yija-lu
mosquito-AVERS cover-HORT that water-ACC truly-INST
Truly, to avoid mosquitoes you should cover that water.

2.6 Uses of instrumental case

As is common in Australian languages, INST has the same form as ERG (-lu following vowels, and -ju following consonants). INST has two functions which are separate from the agentive function of ERG. It marks the instrument used in an action and it is used in the formation of adverbs. Because ERG and INST are formally identical and because the instrumental use of INST is closely related to the agentive use of ERG, these two cases are sometimes difficult to separate. Compare (39) and (40).

(39) partanykarrangu-lu malya-rni-yi-ngalayika-lu⁵ mungka-∅
children-ERG chop-NF-3plERG-1du.exclDAT-3sgDAT tree-ACC
 kaju-jartiny-ju
axe-COM-INST
The children chopped wood for us with an axe.

(40) wirrka-rna-jartiny-ju wurra-rna-ji
cut-NOMLSR-COM-ERG tell-NF-1sgDAT
The one with the cut told me.

In (40) *jartiny-ju* is suffixed to a nominalised verb, not to a noun as in (39). It is obvious that -ju is marking ERG in (40), but (39) is not so straightforward.

Perhaps -ju is marking ERG in (39) also. If that is so, then *kaju-jartiny-ju* would be in apposition to *partanykarrangu-lu* and the sentence would mean, *The children, the ones having the axe, chopped wood for us*. This would be possible given the prevalence of such appositional phrases in Aboriginal languages. However, this alternative translation of (39) has a different focus from the first translation. It focuses on the children who have an axe, perhaps in contrast to some who don't. In the particular text from which this example is extracted there is nothing to indicate such a distinction.

Hudson, in her analysis of Walmajarri (1978:19-20), has not separated ERG and INST. She states that where the instrument used is an inalienable possession ERG is suffixed directly to the noun. Where the instrument is an alienable possession the comitative suffix is necessary before the ERG marker. Nyangumarta does not present such a clear-cut picture. The comitative suffix is not always used with alienable possession and it can be used with inalienable possession.

With examples involving an instrument which is an inalienable possession I think we have no choice but to say it is ERG marked. The way the language functions clearly shows that the possession is viewed as being part of the possessor and not a separate entity. See (41).

- (41) pani-∅ ngaju-∅ mirrimirri jarri-nya-rna
 eye-NOM I-NOM itching INCHO-NF-1sgNOM
My eyes are itching.

Therefore in (42) and (43) what might appear as instruments must be viewed as being agentive and actually being ERG marked.

- (42) kurr pi-ni-rni-∅ parirr-jartiny-ju jungurr-∅
 crush VB-NF-1sgERG-ACC hand-COM-ERG sugar-ACC
I crushed the sugar with my hand.

- (43) jina-lu jurrka-rna-∅-lu warnku
 foot-ERG tread-NF-1sgERG-3sgLOC stoneUNM.LOC
His foot trod on a stone.

On the other hand these same suffixes without COM are used in the formation of adverbs where it is clearly inappropriate to say we have ERG marking. It is much more appropriate to talk of INST being used in formation of adverbs.

Then there are situations where an instrument is used which is not an inalienable possession. This is the use where there is most potential for controversy. I have chosen to say in these situations that we have INST marking.

(a) INST marking instrument

The instrument used in an action is marked by INST, providing the instrument is an alienable possession. INST may be preceded by the comitative suffix but it often is not. INST is not usually cross-referenced by a bound form. (There are a few unclear examples where it may be cross-referenced by DAT, but where some other explanation may be better.)

- (44) mungka-lu yapan-∅ wirri-rni-rni-li ngarlu-ngu
 tree-INST stone-ACC put-NF-1sgERG-3sgLOC stomach-LOC
With a stick I put a stone in the stomach (of the dead kangaroo).
- (45) kurlu-jartiny-ju malya-ninyi-∅ kaju-lu
 bad-COM-INST chop-PRES-3sgERG axe-INST
She is chopping with a blunt axe.
- (46) wartuwartu ji-ni-kinyi-yi-li parruparru-lu kankarni wirtu-lu
 cover VB-NF-REP-3plERG-3sgDAT net-INST above big-INST
 mangarrjarra-nga
 plane-LOC
They used to cover the planes with big nets.

(b) INST in the formation of adverbs

It is this use of INST which I feel most effectively demonstrates it as a separate case. It can be added to descriptives, interrogative pronouns and time words.

- (47) wararr-ju nga-rna-yirni-∅ mayi-∅
 standing-INST eat-NF-1pl.exclERG-3sgACC food-ACC
We ate food standing up.

- (48) nyampa-lu ka-ngku-luma-n ngaju-karti
quick-INST take-FUT-FUT-2sgERG me-ALL
Bring it to me quickly.
- (49) yinku-lu yaja-lama-n-∅ muwarr-∅
correct-INST follow-FUT-2sgERG-3sgACC talk-ACC
You will follow the talk correctly.
- (50) kanyji-la-lu yirrku-lu paliny-ku
seek-IMP-3sgDAT continuing-INST him-DAT
Keep on looking for him.
- (51) japirr ma-rna-nganyjurrinya wunyjurru-lu kalku-rna-nyi-janinyi
ask VB-NF-1pl.inclACC how-INST keep-NF-1pl.inclERG-3plACC
 kurl-ja partanykarrangu-∅
school-LOC children-ACC
She asked us how we are looking after the children in school.

2.7 Uses of genitive case

There is some controversy among linguists as to whether GEN is really a case or merely a derivational affix. Dixon (1980:300) mentioned the controversy but declined, at least then, to be drawn into it. Certainly GEN functions derivationally, which makes it different from other cases. A nominal may be inflected by GEN to form an adjective, which is always further inflected by another case marker. The basic shape of GEN is -mili but before -lu or -ku it is -mila. The functions of GEN are to show kinship relationship (see (52)) and possession (see (54)).

- (52) miranu ji-ni-kinyi-nyi-∅ ngaju-mila-lu kanyjarri-lu
knowing VB-NF-REP-1sgACC-3sgERG I-GEN-ERG grandmother-ERG
My grandmother used to teach me.
- (53) nganarna-∅ nyungu-nga warli-rni-∅-nganinyi law-lu walypili-mila-lu
us-ACC this-LOC hold-NF-3sgERG-1pl.exclACC law-ERG white.man-GEN-ERG
The white man's law has us in its grip here.

In some situations where the meaning is clear the head word of the NP may be omitted and the derived adjective may stand alone.

- (54) ya-na-yirni marrngu-mili-karti
go-PAST-1pl.exclNOM Aborigine-GEN-ALL
We went to the Aborigines' (camp).

One interesting feature of NPs with GEN marking is that some are cross-referenced by a DAT bound pronoun. This happens when the NP is in S or O relationship.

This form of cross-referencing is different from the rest of the cross-referencing system. In other instances it is really the head word of the phrase which is cross-referenced, but in constructions like (55) and (56) the referent is the modifying word, i.e. the possessor which is cross-referenced.

Bruce Waters, in a personal communication, suggested that there may be a hierarchy of animateness involved. That appeals to me. As I have already stated, the bound pronouns are basically person markers.

(55) ngaju-mili-∅ murtaka-∅ kurlu jarri-nya-ja-∅
 I-GEN-NOM car-NOM bad INCHO-NF-1sgDAT-3sgNOM
My car went wrong for me.

(56) yawarta-∅ ma-na-∅-janaka ngulyu-lu jana-mili-∅
 horse-ACC take-NF-3sgERG-3plDAT thief-ERG they-GEN-ACC
A thief took their horses.

Because of this system of cross-referencing it is possible to omit the GEN-marked modifier without any loss of understanding.

(57) ka-nya-ja-∅ ngulyu-lu murtaka-∅
 take-PAST-1sgDAT-3sgERG thief-ERG car-ACC
The thief took my car.

3. MULTIPLE CASE-MARKING

In Nyangumarta up to three case-marking suffixes can occur on one nominal stem, with the result that a great deal of information can be conveyed by one NP.

It has already been mentioned that other cases co-occur with GEN. Only one additional suffix occurs at any one time following GEN.

In addition nominals inflected by LOC, ALL or ABL may also attract one or two extra case markers. The final marker is the one which shows the case of the NP as a whole. The others which precede it give additional information about the nominal to which they are attached.

Because some constructions with multiple case marking are very complex it is sometimes difficult for those who are not native speakers of Nyangumarta to see how the English translations are derived from the Nyangumarta constructions. The constructions are most easily analysed by first considering the marker furthest from the stem and working backwards towards the stem.

I will give examples of all the different combinations I have found in the data.

LOC + ERG

(58) ngani ji-ninyi-∅ pala-nga-lu
 what VB-PRES-ERG that-LOC-ERG
What is that person over there doing?

ABL + ERG

(59) wika-∅-pa yama-rni-kinyi-yirni-∅ ngurntirri pinakarri-nya-ja-lu
 fire-ACC-CONJ cover-NF-REP-1pl.exclERG-3sgACC rumbling hear-NOMLSR-ABL-ERG
And when we heard the rumbling noise we used to cover the fire. (lit. And we after hearing the noise)

ABL + DAT

(60) mirtawanyjarri-lu kampa-rni-yi-∅ mayi-∅ pala-nga muwarr-ja-ku
 women-ERG cook-NF-3plERG-3sgACC food-ACC that-LOC talk-ABL-DAT
 marrngu-ku
 person-DAT
The women cooked food there for the people, for after the (people had finished) talking.

ABL + LOC

- (61) purlika-lu purri-rni-Ø-puluku mirrilyi-Ø parirr-ja-nga-jirri
bullock-ERG pull-NF-3sgERG-3duLOC rope-ACC hand-ABL-LOC-DU
 marrngu-jirri-ja-nga
person-DU-ABL-LOC
The bullock pulled the rope from the hands of the two men.

ALL + ABL

- (62) murtaka-Ø kulpa-nya-Ø wika-karti-ja
car-NOM return-NF-3sgNOM firewood-ALL-ABL
The car came back after going for (towards) firewood.

ALL + ABL + ERG

- (63) katu ji-ni-Ø-nganinyi marntamarangka-lu pala-nga kakarni
down VB-NF-3sgERG-1pl.exclACC policeman-ERG that-LOC east.from
 jarri-nya-kanu riyijiji-karti-ja-lu
INCHO-NOMLSR-after races-ALL-ABL-ERG
*The policeman made us get down there after he came back from the east where
 he had been to the races.*

ALL + ABL + LOC

- (64) ngurnipali jana-lu jija-lapi-yi-janaku nyirrini-karti-ja-nga
perhaps they-ERG show-FUT-3plERG-3plLOC behind-ALL-ABL-LOC
 partanykarrangu-ngu
children-LOC
*Perhaps they will show it to their children who come after them. (lit.
 ... the children who are towards the back of them.)*

In some of the examples above, the nominal with multiple case-marking is in agreement with another nominal. In (61) there are two elements forming a straightforward NP showing inalienable possession.

Examples (63) and (64) are more complex. The nominals with multiple marking are used adjectivally. By adding extra cases additional information can be added in a compressed space. In (63) it is a particular policeman, the one who had been to the races and come back, who is the A of the sentence. In (64) it is particular children, ones who are yet to be born, who are mentioned.

Example (60) is different again. The nominal with multiple marking is not acting adjectivally, but merely giving additional information.

In (58) the case-markers have derivational function to transform a deictic into a personal noun. Likewise in (59) a nominalised verb becomes a personal noun by the addition of case-markers.

All the examples above of multiple case-marking concern NPs whose final inflection is ERG, DAT or LOC. The question arises as to whether there are in the data also NPs which additionally have NOM or ACC marking. The NOM or ACC marking would not be obvious at first sight since both are zeroes. However, if there are examples which are analogous to those above where NOM or ACC marking could be expected we can confidently assume that the marking is there.

Examples (65) and (66) are straightforward examples of multiple case-marking involving NOM and ACC.

(65) partany-ja-∅ wani-nya-rna wani-kinyi-yi kuwiyi-∅ rapiti-∅
child-ABL-NOM stay-NF-1sgNOM stay-REP-3plNOM animal-NOM rabbit-NOM
 marlu-∅
 many-NOM
When I was a child there were many rabbits.

(66) wika-lu kampa-nya-∅-∅ kupalya-ja-∅
fire-ERG burn-NF-3sgERG-3sgACC sleep-ABL-ACC
The fire burned him while he was asleep.

Example (67) is similar to (64) where two items which are in agreement have a common referent.

(67) ngaju-∅ partany-ja-∅ miranu jarri-nyi-rni station-ji
I-NOM child-ABL-NOM learn INCHO-NF-1sgNOM station-LOC
When I was a child I learned on the station.

I am suggesting that there is also agreement where there is a common locality. In (68) *me* and *back* are in the same location and should probably be viewed as being in agreement.

(68) pipi-lu ngaju-∅ ka-nganyi-kinyi-nyi-∅ jarna-nga-∅
mother-ERG me-ACC take-NF-REP-1sgACC-3sgERG back-LOC-ACC
My mother used to carry me across her back.

In (69) there is no free pronoun, but if there were it would be ACC marked. As *me* and *in the shade of a bush* are in the same location we may view them as both being ACC.

(69) wurru-ngu-∅ mirrarn-ji-∅ wirri-rni-kinyi-nyi-∅
bush-LOC-ACC shade-LOC-ACC put-NF-REP-1sgACC-3sgERG
She used to put me down in the shade of a bush.

4. CATEGORIES OF VERBS

Verbs may be subcategorised according to the set of case markings which occur on core NPs in the clause. In Nyangumarta there are five categories: intransitive, semitransitive, middle, transitive and ditransitive.

4.1 Intransitive verbs

An intransitive clause has one core NP with NOM marking. The NP which functions as S is cross-referenced by a NOM bound pronoun. Because of the presence of the bound pronoun the NP may be omitted. Other peripheral NPs compatible with the semantics of the verb may be present.

(70) partanykarrangu-∅ nyungu-ngu mirti jarri-nyi-yi
children-NOM this-LOC run INCHO-NF-3plNOM
The children are running around here.

- (71) nganarna-∅ muwarr pi-lipi-yirna-lu wirtu-ku
we-NOM talk VB-FUT-1pl.exclNOM-3sgDAT big-DAT
We will talk to the boss.

4.2 Semitransitive verbs

This is a small group. Clauses where the verb has semitransitive functions have two core NPs. A NP with NOM marking which functions as S is cross-referenced by a NOM bound pronoun. A NP with DAT or LOC marking is cross-referenced by the appropriate bound pronoun. (If the referent of the DAT or LOC NP is inanimate there is no cross-referencing.) The NPs may be omitted if the information is recoverable from the context, and if the cross-referencing pronoun is present.

- (72) pala-nga mima-rni-yirni-janaku marrngu-karra-ku
that-LOC wait-NF-1pl.exclNOM-3plDAT person-PL-DAT
There we waited for the people.
- (73) ngaju-∅ kuli jarri-nya-rna-lu ngaju-mila-ku partany-ku
I-NOM angry INCHO-NF-1sgNOM-3sgDAT I-GEN-DAT child-DAT
I am angry with my child.
- (74) wariny-∅ purlika-nga karnti-nyi-li mirtamirta
another-NOM bull-LOC climb-NF-3sgNOM-3sgLOC whiteUNM.LOC
Another person climbed on a white bull.
- (75) partany-∅ karnti-nyi-∅ mungka-nga
child-NOM climb-3sgNOM tree-LOC
The child climbed the tree.

4.3 Middle verbs

This is a small group. Clauses where the verb has middle function have two core NPs. A NP with ERG marking is cross-referenced by an ERG bound pronoun. A NP with DAT or LOC marking is also cross-referenced (if the referent of the NP is animate).

- (76) pipi-lu kanyji-rna-∅-lu partany-ku
mother-ERG seek-NF-3sgERG-3sgDAT child-DAT
The mother is looking for her child.
- (77) yijalmarta ji-ni-∅-li Yayipiramu-lu Ngarrka-nga
true VB-NF-3sgERG-3sgLOC Abram-ERG God-LOC
Abram believed God.

4.4 Transitive verbs

A clause where the verb has transitive function has two core NPs. An ERG NP functioning as A is cross-referenced by an ERG bound pronoun. An ACC NP functioning as O is always cross-referenced providing the referent is animate and other than third person singular. If the referent is third person singular and

inanimate a DAT or LOC NP present in the clause may be cross-referenced instead, as in (80) and (81).

(78) ka-nganyi-kinyi-yirni-janinyi kukurnjayi-∅ ngapi-karti De Grey-karti
take-NF-REP-1pl.exclERG-3plACC sheep-ACC what's.it-ALL De Grey-ALL
We used to take sheep to what's-it's-name - to De Grey.

(79) pipi-lu ngaju-∅ ka-nganyi-kinyi-nyi-∅ jarna-nga-∅
mother-ERG me-ACC take-NF-REP-1sgACC-3sgERG back-LOC-ACC
My mother used to carry me across her back.

(80) ngaju-lu rankurrji-ngi pala-∅ jilaman-∅ kalku-rni-kinyi-rni-li
I-ERG bustard-LOC that-ACC gun-ACC keep-NF-REP-1sgERG-3sgLOC
I kept the gun pointing at the bustard.

(81) ngulyu-lu ma-na-∅-lu ngurnungu-mili-∅
thief-ERG take-NF-3sgERG-3sgDAT that-GEN-ACC
A thief took that person's (money).

There are examples in the data of three bound pronouns on one verb, but there is a restriction on the final inflection. The third person singular DAT form is the only inflection which appears in final position. The possible combinations are ERG + ACC + DAT as in (82), or ERG + DAT + DAT as in (83). See also (39).

(82) ka-ngku-luma-rna-nta-lu japartu-ku
take-FUT-FUT-1sgERG-2sgACC-3sgDAT father-DAT
I will carry you for Daddy.

(83) kalku-lupu-layi-nga-lu⁶
keep-FUT-1du.exclERG-2sgDAT-3sgDAT
We two will look after him for you.

Use of three bound forms on one verb is comparatively rare. An animate referent with ACC marking ranks higher in the cross-referencing system than one with DAT marking. If there is a NP with ACC marking where the referent is animate and not a third person singular it will always be cross-referenced. But compare (56) where a DAT bound pronoun cross-references the NP with GEN marking rather than the NP with ACC marking.

A NP with DAT marking in the same sentence *MAY* be cross-referenced if the referent is third person singular. Otherwise there is no cross-referencing of the DAT NP.

(84) kalku-lupu-layi-janinyi nyuntu-ku
keep-FUT-1du.exclERG-3plACC you-DAT
We two will look after them for you.

4.5 Ditransitive verbs

The verbs *yu-give*⁷ and *mira-take from* are ditransitive. They take two object NPs - one denoting the item given or taken and the other the recipient or the person from whom it is taken. The NP which denotes the recipient of *give* or the loser of *take from* is the one which is cross-referenced by an ACC bound pronoun.

The other object NP is not cross-referenced. *Give* is irregular when the recipient is third person singular. In most of such instances the NP is LOC-marked and is cross-referenced by a LOC bound pronoun. (In a few instances ACC marking is used with third person singular. This may be just a performance variable.)

- (85) paliny-ju ma-na-Ø-Ø narngula-Ø yi-nya-Ø-janinyi
she-ERG get-NF-3sgERG-3sgACC honey-ACC give-PAST-3sgERG-3plACC
 partanykarrangu-Ø
children-ACC
She got honey and gave it to the children.
- (86) yarti yu-ngku-lumi-nyi-mpa wirtu-jartiny-ju
later give-FUT-FUT-1sgACC-2sgERG big-COM-ERG
Later when you have a lot (of meat) you can give me some.
- (87) yi-nya-rna-li kuwiyi-Ø yukurru-ngu
give-PAST-1sgERG-3sgLOC meat-ACC dog-LOC
I gave meat to the dog.
- (88) yarti yu-ngku-lupi-yi-li mirtawa-Ø pala-nga pirirri-ngi
later give-FUT-FUT-3plERG-3sgLOC woman-ACC that-LOC man-LOC
Later they will give the woman to that man.
- (89) kunymarnakata-lu mira-rna-Ø-nganinyi yukurru-rrangu-Ø
policeman-ERG remove-NF-3sgERG-1pl.exclACC dog-PL-ACC
The policeman took our dogs.
- (90) parirr-ja-Ø mira-rna-nya-Ø kuwiyi-Ø yukurru-lu
hand-ABL-ACC remove-NF-1sgACC-3sgERG meat-ACC dog-ERG
The dog took the meat from my hand.

My reason for regarding *from my hand* in (90) as being additionally marked for ACC is that I see *hand* as being in agreement with the first person singular ACC bound pronoun. (My hand is part of me.) A parallel can be seen in other expressions which involve body parts, e.g. as in (91), where the bound pronoun is first person, not third.

- (91) pani-Ø ngaju-Ø mirrimirri jarri-nya-rna
eye-NOM I-NOM itching INCHO-NF-1sgNOM
My eyes are itching.

4.6 Verbs with more than one function

While most verbs seem to fit unambiguously into one or another category there are a few which have more than one function.

There are a few verb stems which can take tense inflections of both first and second conjugations (O'Grady 1970:852-853). When they take Conjugation I inflections they function as intransitive verbs. With Conjugation II inflections they function as transitive verbs. Compare (92) with (93), and (94) with (95).

- (92) wangal-Ø jupa-nya-Ø nawu
wind-NOM abate-NF-3sgNOM now
The wind has died down now.

- (93) mirtawa-lu jupa-rna-Ø-Ø wika-Ø jungka-lu
woman-ERG put.out-NF-3sgERG-3sgACC fire-ACC dirt-INST
The woman put out the fire with dirt.
- (94) wika-Ø kampa-nyi-Ø nawu
fire-NOM burn-NF-3sgNOM now
The fire is burning now.
- (95) pirirri-lu kampa-rna-Ø-Ø warringkura-Ø
man-ERG cook-NF-3sgERG-3sgACC kangaroo-ACC
The man cooked the kangaroo.

There are also a few verbs which have intransitive or middle function. Compare (96) with (97), and (98) with (99).

- (96) partanykarrangu-Ø panyju karri-nyi-ya kurl-karti ya-ninya-ku
children-NOM dislike STAT-NF-3p1NOM school-ALL go-NOMLSR-DAT
The children don't like to go to school.
- (97) pirirri-ku palama panyju karri-nya-rna-lu ngaju-lu
man-DAT thatUNM.DAT dislike STAT-NF-1sgERG-3sgDAT I-ERG
I don't like that man.
- (98) partanykarrangu-Ø nyarru pi-na-yi
children-NOM laugh VB-NF-3p1NOM
The children are laughing.
- (99) ngani-ja-lu nyuntu-lu nyarru pi-na-ji-n
what-ABL-ERG you-ERG laugh VB-NF-1sgDAT-2sgERG
Why did you laugh at me?

I think it is also probable, though difficult to prove, that *cry for someone* functions as semitransitive, though *cry* is intransitive. (It is interesting to note that in Walmajarri *cry* functions as intransitive and *cry for someone* functions as middle (Hudson 1978:52).) Compare (100) and (101).

- (100) partany-Ø wupartu-Ø ngangkurl ji-ninyi-Ø
child-NOM small-NOM cry VB-PRES-3sgNOM
The little child is crying.
- (101) pipi-Ø ngangkurl ji-ninya-Ø-lu partany-ku
mother-NOM cry VB-PRES-3sgNOM-3sgDAT child-DAT
The mother is crying for her child.

The verb *give* can function as a transitive as well as a ditransitive verb. When it has transitive function it seems to convey the idea that what is given is not an outright gift. It may be just a loan, or it may be given in order to be passed on to someone else. There may also be other factors at work which I do not yet control.

When *give* is used as a transitive verb the NP denoting recipient is LOC-marked and is cross-referenced by a LOC bound pronoun.

- (102) nyungu-Ø mirimirli-Ø yu-ngku-luma-rna-ngu nyuntu-ngu nyuntu-mila-ku
this-ACC paper-ACC give-FUT-FUT-1sgERG-2sgLOC you-LOC you-GEN-DAT

partany-ku
 child-DAT
I will give you this paper for your child.

(103) Nyaparu-ngu yi-nya-Ø-lu jipi-rna-ku
Nyaparu-LOC give-PAST-3sgERG-3sgLOC drive-NOMLSR-DAT
He gave the (vehicle) to Nyaparu to drive.

(104) blanketi-Ø-pa pillow-Ø-pa yi-nya-rna-ngu ...
blanket-ACC-CONJ pillow-ACC-CONJ give-PAST-1sgERG-2sgLOC
 ka-nya-ji-npa wurru-karra-Ø
take-PAST-1sgDAT-2sgERG belongings-PL-ACC
I lent you a blanket and pillow ... you took (i.e. stole) my belongings.

5. CONCLUSION

In this paper I have tried to give an overall picture of case relationships in Nyangumarta. The most important conclusion I have drawn is that there is only one system for marking core cases. I believe that it better fits the data to view the bound pronouns as being in agreement with the case-marking on noun phrases, the two parts forming one unified system showing core relationships.

NOTES

1. Most of the data for this paper has been gathered at Port Hedland and Marble Bar. Many of these people have kindly and patiently shared their language with me. I am very grateful for their help. I would also like to express my thanks to Bruce Waters and Jean Kirton for many helpful insights into the workings of the Nyangumarta case system.
2. In Blake 1977:70 Nyangumarta is listed as having a separate ACC form on free pronouns, but this may be based on misinformation or may be a misprint. There is no separate ACC form.
3. Since I wrote the first version of this paper Blake (1985) has expressed doubts about some points of Goddard's analysis. Two related points concern us here. The first is whether the cross-referencing system of bound pronouns should be analysed as part of the case system. Blake feels that it is preferable to analyse the bound system in terms of grammatical relations, i.e. subject versus object pronouns. After due consideration I have decided that at least for Nyangumarta, the data better fits the original theory that the bound pronouns are really in agreement with the case system, especially since Nyangumarta has three, not two sets of bound pronouns.

The second point is that, where the bound pronouns are a set of clitics (as in Djaru), rather than verbal inflections (as in Nyangumarta), and S and O are identically marked, Blake questions the validity of establishing a separate accusative case on the basis of the form of the object clitic. Perhaps this second point does not specifically relate to the analysis of Nyangumarta, as it does not have a set of clitics. But it seems to me that even if it can be established beyond reasonable doubt that subject-object clitics are not

cross-referenced to the case system, S and O must be recognised as having different case marking because of their distinct syntactic functions.

4. Uses of ERG and ACC with hortatory mood are exceptions. There is no cross-referencing at all on verbs in hortatory mood, and free forms must be used if S and O are to be made explicit.

wurru-∅-pa nganirnganirn-∅ kalku-rnaku ngalypa-∅ nganyjurru-lu
clothes-ACC-CONJ other.things-ACC keep-HORT good-ACC we(pl.incl)-ERG
Our clothes and things like that we should look after well.

Verbs in the imperative mood take cross-referencing, but the NOM/ERG forms differ from those in indicative mood. They are -∅ 'singular', -pulu 'dual', -yi 'plural'.

5. I do not know the function of -lu in this sentence. It is tempting to think that it is cross-referenced to the INST NP, as that is the only item in the surface structure which is unaccounted for in the bound pronoun system. Yet it would be very unusual for INST to be cross-referenced in this fashion. I have found a few other examples where INST is *possibly* cross-referenced, but perhaps other explanations would fit better. I also have other examples of this same third person singular DAT/LOC bound pronoun where I am completely at a loss to account for its use. Perhaps it is better to suspend judgment in this example also.
6. kalku- is irregular in that it takes 3rd singular DAT where ACC would be expected. With other persons it is regular.
7. The stem of *give* has two grammatically conditioned allomorphs in the indicative mood: yu- ~ yi-.

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