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WORK PAPERS OF SIL - A AB

Series A Volume 2

**PAPERS ON IWAIJA PHONOLOGY
AND GRAMMAR**

Noreen Pym (with Bonnie Larrimore)

Summer Institute of Linguistics
Australian Aborigines Branch
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PREFACE

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INTRODUCTION TO
SERIES A VOLUME 2

The papers in this volume are descriptions of aspects of the Iwaidja language. Part I contains papers on the phonology and Part II papers on the grammar.

The language is classified by Wurm (1972:113), following O'Grady, Voegelin and Voegelin (1966:29) as constituting the Wargbi Subgroup of the Iwaidjic Group of the Iwaidjan Family. Iwaidja is spoken by about 120 people on Croker Island and by about a further 50 at Coombe Point and Merganella on the adjacent mainland, and at Snake Bay on Melville Island, all in the Northern Territory.

Language data used in these papers was collected under the auspices of the Summer Institute of Linguistics during 1973-75 and 1977. Various Iwaidja people served as teachers in providing this data. Grateful acknowledgment is given to Elsie Indibu, Ada Magurulu, Rae Girribug, Hazel Mamiya, Joy Malwagga and Illyjilly.

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Noreen Pym

Bonnie M. Larrimore

TABLE OF CONTENTS

| | Page |
|---|---------------|
| Preface | iii |
| Introduction to Series A Volume 2 | v |
| Abbreviations | xiii |
| PART I: PHONOLOGY | |
| THE PHONEMES OF IWAIDJA | 3 |
| 1. The Phoneme | 3 |
| 1.1 Consonants | 3 |
| Stops and Fricative | 3 |
| Nasals | 4 |
| Laterals | 5 |
| Rhotics and Semi-Consonants | 5 |
| 1.2 Vowels | 6 |
| 2. Distribution | 7 |
| 2.1 The Syllable | 7 |
| 2.2 The Phoneme | 8 |
| In the Word | 8 |
| In the Syllable | 8 |
| Across Syllable Boundaries | 9 |
| AN ANALYSIS OF DISCOURSE PHONOLOGY | 11 |
| 0. Introduction | 11 |
| 1. Purpose | 11 |
| 2. Detailed Analysis | 11 |
| 2.1 Discussion of Levels | 11 |

| | | |
|-------|--------------------------------------|----|
| 2.1.1 | Level 1 - The Discourse | 11 |
| 2.1.2 | Level 2 - The Phonological Paragraph | 12 |
| 2.1.3 | Level 3 - The Phonological Sentence | 13 |
| 2.1.4 | Level 4 - The Phonological Clause | 13 |
| 2.1.5 | Level 5 - The Phonological Phrase | 16 |
| 2.1.6 | Level 6 - The Phonological Word | 18 |
| 2.1.7 | Level 7 - The Syllable | 19 |
| 2.1.8 | Lengthened Vowels | 20 |
| 2.2 | Summary of Levels | 20 |
| 3. | Corpus of Data | 22 |

PART II: GRAMMAR

| | |
|--|----|
| Orthographic Symbols Used | 43 |
| IWAIDJA WORDS | 45 |
| 0. Introduction | 45 |
| 1. Pronouns | 45 |
| 2. Conjunctions | 47 |
| 3. Demonstratives | 51 |
| 4. Temporals and Locationals | 52 |
| 5. Adverbs | 53 |
| 6. Pre- and Post- Positions | 53 |
| 7. Interrogatives | 54 |
| 8. Exclamations | 55 |
| 9. Nouns | 56 |
| 9.1 Noun Types | 56 |
| 9.2 'to be' or not 'to be'? | 59 |
| 9.3 Reduplicated Forms | 60 |
| 9.4 Nouns With Irregular Plurals | 61 |
| 10. Adjectives | 61 |
| 10.1 Adjective Types | 62 |
| 10.2 Adjectives With Irregular Plurals | 63 |
| 11. Negatives | 63 |
| 12. Verbs | 64 |

| | Page |
|--|------|
| THE IWAIDJA VERB SYSTEM: A DESCRIPTION (Co-authored with Bonnie M. Larrimore) | 65 |
| List of Tables | 151 |
| 0. Introduction | 65 |
| 1. The Stem | 65 |
| 2. Suffixation | 65 |
| 2.1 Tense-Aspect | 65 |
| 2.1.1 The Past Tense | 66 |
| 2.1.1.1 Class 1: Stems That Take <u>-ny</u> For Past Tense | 66 |
| 2.1.1.2 Class 2: Stems That Take <u>-ng</u> For Past Tense | 69 |
| 2.1.1.3 Class 3: Stems That Take <u>-n</u> For Past Tense | 72 |
| 2.1.1.4 Class 4: Stems Which Do Not Change For Past Tense | 72 |
| 2.1.2 Aspect Distinguished in the Past Tense | 73 |
| 2.2 Mood | 74 |
| 2.2.1 Optative | 74 |
| 2.2.2 Frustrative | 76 |
| 2.3 Reciprocal | 78 |
| 2.4 Summary of Verb Stem Classification by Suffixation | 79 |
| 3. Prefixation | 80 |
| 3.0.1 Kinds of Prefixation | 80 |
| 3.0.2 Tables | 80 |
| 3.0.3 Consonant Addition to Prefix With Vowel Initial Stems | 81 |
| 3.1 Person-Number Prefixation | 83 |
| 3.1.1 The Intransitive System | 83 |
| 3.1.2 The Transitive System | 85 |
| 3.1.2.1 Gender | 87 |
| 3.1.2.2 Ditransitive Verbs | 88 |
| 3.1.3 The <u>ang-</u> and <u>mam-</u> Systems | 88 |
| 3.1.3.1 <u>ang-</u> Verbs | 89 |
| 3.1.3.2 <u>mam-</u> Verbs | 90 |
| 3.1.4 Stems Taking More Than One Person-Number Prefixing System | 91 |
| 3.1.5 Direction Prefixes | 92 |

| | | |
|--------|---|-----|
| 3.2 | First Order Prefixes | 94 |
| 3.2.1 | The Future Tense Morpheme <u>mana-</u> | 94 |
| 3.2.2 | The Imperative Prefix <u>ana-</u> | 99 |
| 4. | Combinations of Prefixes and Suffixes | 99 |
| 4.1 | The Imperative Mood | 103 |
| 4.1.1 | Positive Imperatives | 103 |
| 4.1.2 | Negative Imperatives | 104 |
| 5. | Other Affixation | 104 |
| 5.1 | Repetition | 104 |
| 5.2 | Duals | 106 |
| 6. | Compounding | 109 |
| 7. | Verbalization of Adjectives | 109 |
| 8. | Morphophonemic Changes | 110 |
| 9. | An Alternative Analysis of Transitive Person-Number Prefixation | 122 |
| 9.1 | Transitive Subject and Object Prefixes | 124 |
| 9.2 | Order of Prefixes | 124 |
| 9.3 | Morphophonemic Changes | 126 |
| 9.4 | Comparison Prefixes | 127 |
| 9.5 | Transitive Direction Prefixes | 128 |
| 10. | Conclusion | 128 |
| 11. | Appendices | 129 |
| 11.1 | Paradigms of Intransitive Verbs | 129 |
| 11.1.1 | Verb Stems Beginning With a Vowel | 129 |
| 11.1.2 | Verb Stems Beginning With <u>ld</u> | 131 |
| 11.1.3 | Verb Stems Beginning With <u>m</u> | 132 |
| 11.1.4 | Verb Stems Beginning With <u>ng</u> | 132 |
| 11.1.5 | Verb Stems Beginning With <u>w</u> | 133 |
| 11.1.6 | Verb Stems Beginning With <u>y</u> | 133 |
| 11.1.7 | Future Tense of Verbs With Stems Beginning With <u>m</u> , <u>ng</u> , <u>w</u> or <u>y</u> | 134 |
| 11.2 | Paradigms of Transitive Verbs | 135 |
| 11.2.1 | Verb Stems Beginning With a Vowel | 135 |
| 11.2.2 | Verb Stems Beginning With <u>ld</u> | 137 |
| 11.2.3 | Verb Stems Beginning With <u>m</u> | 138 |
| 11.2.4 | Verb Stems Beginning With <u>ng</u> | 139 |
| 11.2.5 | Verb Stems Beginning With <u>w</u> | 140 |
| 11.2.6 | Verb Stems Beginning With <u>y</u> | 141 |
| 11.2.7 | Future Tense of Verbs With Stems Beginning With <u>m</u> , <u>ng</u> , <u>w</u> , <u>y</u> or a Vowel | 142 |
| 11.2.8 | Future Tense of Verbs With Stems Beginning With <u>ld</u> | 143 |



| | Page |
|--|------|
| 11.3 Paradigms of <u>mam-</u> Verbs | 144 |
| 11.3.1 Verb Stems Beginning With a Vowel | 144 |
| 11.3.2 Verb Stems Beginning With <u>m</u> | 144 |
| 11.4 Paradigms of <u>ang-</u> Verbs | 145 |
| 11.4.1 Verb Stems Beginning With a Vowel | 145 |
| 11.4.2 Verb Stems Beginning With <u>ld</u> | 145 |
| 11.4.3 The Verb <u>ldarnagan</u> 'prod, stab' | 147 |
| 11.4.4 Verb Stems Beginning With <u>m</u> | 148 |
| 11.4.5 Verb Stems Beginning With <u>ng</u> | 148 |
| 11.4.6 Verb Stems Beginning With <u>w</u> | 149 |
| 11.4.7 Verb Stems Beginning With <u>y</u> | 149 |
| 11.5 The Irregular Verb <u>nigi</u> 'carry on head' | 150 |
| | |
| IWAIDJA PHRASES | 153 |
| | |
| Preface | 153 |
| 0. Introduction | 154 |
| 1. Noun Phrases | 154 |
| 1.1 Head-Modifier Phrases | 154 |
| 1.2 Possessive Phrases | 157 |
| 1.3 Semantically Determined Phrases | 158 |
| 1.4 Phrases Requiring Context Clues | 159 |
| 2. Verb Phrases | 159 |
| 3. Relator-Axis Phrases | 161 |
| 4. Series of Phrases | 163 |
| 4.1 Lists | 163 |
| 4.2 Phrases Joined by <u>lda</u> 'and' | 164 |
| 4.3 Juxtaposed Phrases | 165 |
| 4.4 Series Containing Both Co-ordination and Apposition | 167 |
| 5. Discontinuous Phrases | 167 |
| 6. Conclusion | 168 |
| | |
| AN IWAIDJA NARRATIVE DISCOURSE | 169 |
| | |
| 0. Introduction | 169 |
| 1. Method | 169 |
| 2. Description of Narrative Structure | 169 |

| | | |
|--|--|------------|
| 2.1 | Participants | 169 |
| 2.2 | Sequence of Events | 171 |
| 2.3 | Grammatical Markers | 173 |
| 2.4 | Other Features Noted | 174 |
| 2.5 | Intonational Features | 174 |
| 2.6 | Simultaneous Events | 175 |
| 2.7 | Outline of Narrative | 176 |
| 2.8 | Changes in Word Order | 177 |
| 3. | Conclusions | 177 |
| 4. | Text of Narrative | 178 |
| 4.1 | Text With Morpheme by Morpheme Gloss | 178 |
| 4.2 | Text With Hypothesised Sentence and Paragraph Breaks | 186 |
| PROCEDURAL DISCOURSE IN IWAIDJA | | 189 |
| 0. | Introduction | 189 |
| 1. | Procedural Discourse | 189 |
| 1.1 | Aboriginal Procedural Discourse | 189 |
| 1.2 | Iwaidja Procedural Discourse | 191 |
| 2. | Outline of Texts | 192 |
| 2:0 | Introduction | 192 |
| 2.1 | Text Outlines | 193 |
| 2.2 | Discussion of Outlines | 207 |
| 3. | Paragraphs and Sentences | 207 |
| 4. | Particles | 209 |
| 5. | Conclusions | 211 |
| 6. | Corpus of Texts | 212 |
| | Text no. 1. | 212 |
| | Text no. 2. | 219 |
| | Text no. 3. | 229 |
| | Text no. 4. | 235 |
| | Text no. 5. | 241 |
| | Text no. 6. | 242 |
| | Text no. 7. | 244 |
| | Text no. 8. | 245 |
| | Text no. 9. | 247 |
| | Text no. 10. | 255 |
| Bibliography | | 259 |

ABBREVIATIONS

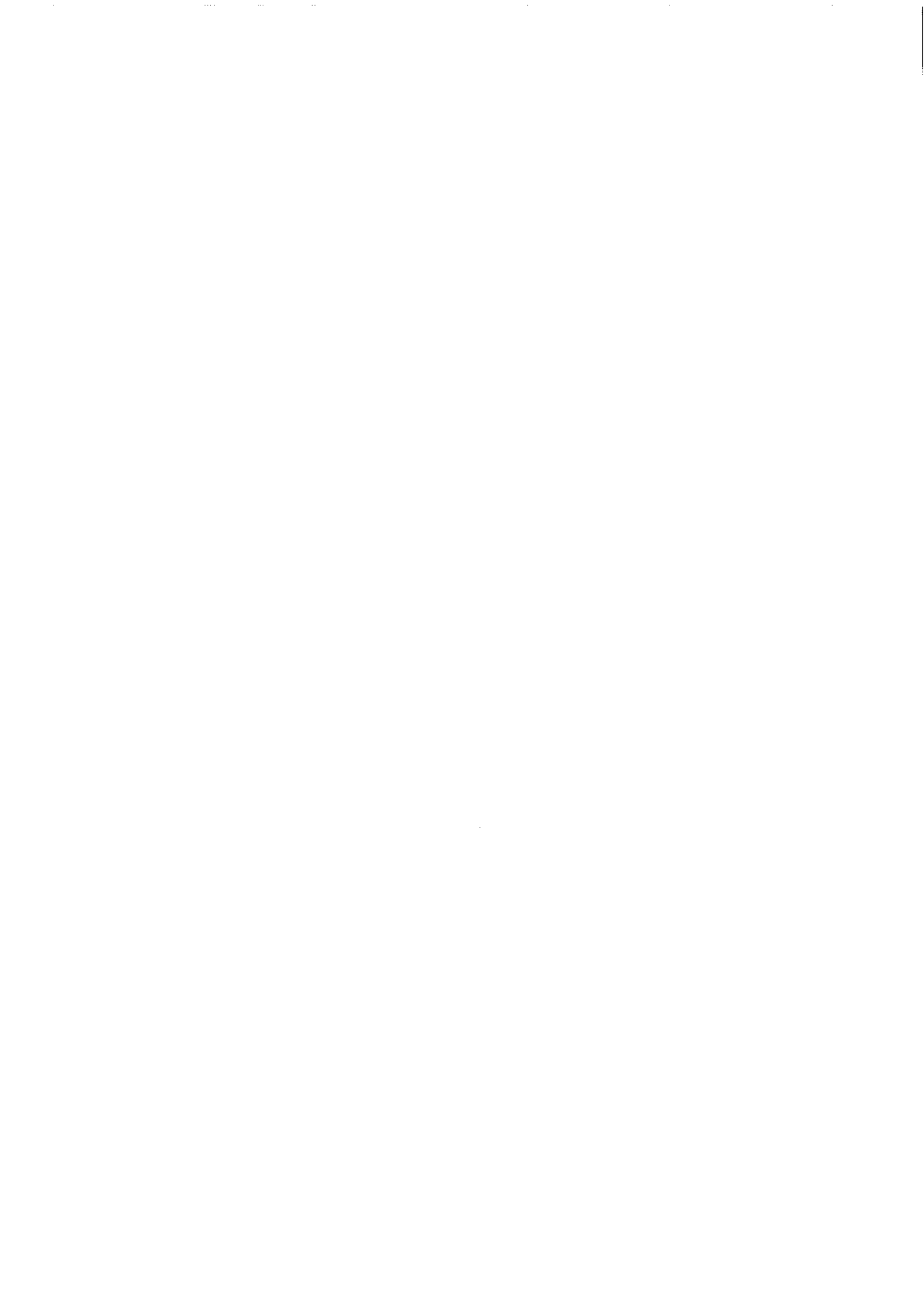
| | |
|-----------------------|-------------------------|
| accomp | accompaniment |
| adj | adjective |
| adv | adverb |
| b. | brother |
| Ben | Benefactive |
| C | any Consonant |
| Cl | Clause |
| C1, C2, ... | Clause 1, Clause 2, ... |
| comp | completed action |
| con | continuity |
| du | dual |
| emph / (emph) | emphasis |
| exc/ex | exclusive |
| fem | female |
| fut | future |
| H | Head |
| (IF) | Indefinite Future |
| imper | imperative |
| inc/in | inclusive |
| interrog | interrogative |
| (io) / (IO) / Ind Obj | Indirect Object |
| IV | Intransitive Verb |
| lit | literally |
| M | Modifier |
| m. | mother |
| N | any Nasal |
| n / (n) | noun |
| neg | negative |

| | |
|--------------------|--|
| (NIF) | Negated Indefinite Future |
| NP | Noun Phrase |
| num | numeral |
| p | past tense |
| p=cont/p cont | continuous or habitual past tense |
| p=habit | habitual past tense |
| pl | plural |
| Poss | Possessor |
| poss | possessive |
| PP | Possessive Phrase |
| quest | question |
| RAP | Relator Axis Phrase |
| R# | break between rhythmic groups when not at word break |
| recip | reciprocal |
| rep | repetitive |
| S1, S2, ... | Sentence 1, Sentence 2, ... |
| s/sing | singular |
| (SP) / Seq of part | Sequence of Participant |
| subj | subject |
| TV | Transitive Verb |
| V | any Vowel |
| veg | vegetable |
| 1s | 1st person singular |
| 1p | 1st person plural |
| 2s | 2nd person singular |
| 2p | 2nd person plural |
| 3s | 3rd person singular |
| 3p | 3rd person plural |
| 3=pers | 3rd person, singular or plural |
| / | or |
| // | intonational pause |
| - | break between morphemes in Iwaidja |

| | |
|--|---|
| = | break between word in English but one morpheme in Iwaidja |
| : | which is (i.e. H:Cl the head which is a clause) |
| ¶ | paragraph |
|  | phonological phrase, rhythmic group |
|  | phonological word |
| /, //, ///, //// | pauses (shortest to longest) |
| o | heaviest stress |
| " | next heaviest stress |
| ' | third degree of stress |
| . | syllable break |
| /b/ | the phoneme <u>b</u> |
| [b] | the phone <u>b</u> |
| → | is interpreted as / is realised as |
| //# | end of text |

PART I: PHONOLOGY

| | Page |
|------------------------------------|------|
| THE PHONEMES OF IWAIDJA | 3 |
| AN ANALYSIS OF DISCOURSE PHONOLOGY | 11 |



THE PHONEMES OF IWAIDJA

1. THE PHONEME

Iwaidja has 20 consonants and 3 vowels.

The consonants consist of 5 stops, 1 fricative, 5 nasals, 4 laterals, 3 rhotics (r-sounds), and two semi-consonants. The active articulators are the tongue tip for the apico-alveolar and retroflexed series, and the tongue blade for the lamino-palatal series.

| | Bilabial | Apico-Alveolar | Lamino-Palatal | Retroflex | Velar |
|----------------|----------|----------------|----------------|-------------|-------|
| Stop | b | d | ɟ | ɟ̣ | g |
| Fricative | | | | | ɣ |
| Nasal | m | n | ɲ | ɲ̣ | ŋ |
| | | <u>Flap</u> | | <u>Flap</u> | |
| Lateral | | l ɭ | | ɭ̣ ɭ̣̣ | |
| Rhotic | | ɻ | | ɻ̣ ɻ̣̣ | |
| Semi-Consonant | w | | y | | |

The vowels contrast as to front, central and back tongue positions.

| Front | Central | Back |
|-------|---------|------|
| i | a | u |

1.1 CONSONANTS

Stops and Fricative.

Stops tend to vary from voiced to voiceless in all positions but the voiced form is more common. Aspiration can occur on the voiceless variants in word initial and final positions. Stops are often voiceless and unreleased before another stop. The fricative is usually lenis.

The retroflexed stop is found medially and finally. All other stops are found initially, medially and finally. The fricative is found only medially.

Contrasts can be seen in the following sets of examples:

| | | |
|---------------|---------------|-------------------|
| Word initial: | /buʔan/ | 'big' |
| | /duwa/ | 'just' |
| | /guʔa/ | 'paper' |
| | /guwa/ | 'true' |
| Word medial: | /babam/ | 'father's mother' |
| | /galadaʔ/ | 'flower' |
| | /galagaʔ/ | 'ear' |
| | /maɖan/ | 'edible grub' |
| | /ɖalagaɖaɖ/ | 'fish spear' |
| | /mulaga/ | 'hermit crab' |
| Word final: | /ɖimudbab/ | 'place name' |
| | /mannulunbad/ | 'sawdust' |
| | /ubaɖ/ | 'fresh water' |
| | /yiʔwaɖbaɖ/ | 'taipan' |
| | /maɳɖawag/ | 'knife' |

Nasals.

The retroflexed nasal is found medially and finally. All other nasals are found initially, medially and finally.

Contrasts can be seen in the following sets of examples:

| | | |
|---------------|-------------|-------------------|
| Word initial: | /magamaga/ | 'father's sister' |
| | /nagi/ | 'dog' |
| | /ña/ | 'here, take it' |
| | /nabi/ | ' ' |
| Word medial: | /guɭumagan/ | 'hip' |
| | /gunag/ | 'camp' |
| | /wuñaʔ/ | 'bad cold' |
| | /guɳaɖ/ | 'name' |
| | /guɳaɳ/ | 'smoke' |
| Word final: | /wilam/ | 'bark canoe' |
| | /buʔan/ | 'from' |

| | |
|---------|------------|
| /malañ/ | 'why?' |
| /yiʃaŋ/ | 'mangrove' |
| /buʃaŋ/ | 'big' |

Laterals.

The alveolar lateral and the alveolar lateral flap are found word initially. All laterals are found medially, but only the alveolar lateral and the retroflexed lateral are found finally.

Contrasts can be seen in the following sets of examples:

| | | |
|---------------|--------------|---------------------|
| Word initial: | /lama/ | 'shovel nose spear' |
| | /l̥a/ | 'and' |
| Word medial: | /galugu/ | 'coconut' |
| | /gaɻulgañin/ | 'she recompenses' |
| | /gaɻu/ | 'no' |
| | /gaɻuʃi/ | 'meat' |
| | /guʃambalg/ | 'house' |
| | /guʃambaɻg/ | 'your(pl) armpits' |
| Word final: | /aŋbaɻ/ | 'hair' |
| | /mayubaɻ/ | 'yam type' |

Rhotics and Semi-Consonants.

Only the retroflexed rhotic, /r̥/, occurs word initially, all rhotics occur medially and only the apico-alveolar rhotic occurs finally. The semi-consonants occur only syllable initial.

Contrasts can be seen in the following sets of examples:

Rhotics.

| | | |
|---------------|-----------|----------------|
| Word initial: | /r̥aʃ/ | 'his cheek' |
| Word medial: | /maʃuñ/ | 'cabbage palm' |
| | /maru/ | 'who?' |
| | /maʃuñ/ | 'bandicoot' |
| Word final: | /galgbiʃ/ | 'shell' |

Semi-Consonants.

| | | |
|---------------|---------|--------------|
| Word initial: | /wilga/ | 'tree type' |
| | /yilgi/ | 'place name' |
| Word medial: | /guwa/ | 'true' |
| | /guyag/ | 'sick' |

1.2 VOWELS

The three vowels contrast as shown in the following sets of examples:

| | | |
|---------------|------------|---------------------|
| Word initial: | /iʔali/ | 'star fish' |
| | /aʔabaɟi/ | 'tick killer' |
| | /uʔagag/ | 'place name' |
| Word medial: | /gindi/ | 'how?' |
| | /gandagiɟ/ | 'kangaroo' |
| | /gundaman/ | 'frill neck lizard' |
| Word final: | /gani/ | 'here' |
| | /gama/ | 'big toe' |
| | /gamu/ | 'mother' |

The allophones of each vowel, together with a phonetic description, are as follows:

| | | |
|-----|-------------------|--|
| /i/ | [i:] | Lengthened voiced high close front unrounded vowel. Occurs before lamino-palatals. /wagiɟ/ [wagi:ɟ] 'finger nail' |
| | [i] | Voiced high close front unrounded vowel. Occurs in all other vowel positions. /ɟigi/ [ɟigi] 'tooth' |
| | [e] | Voiced mid close front unrounded vowel. Occurs only word initial and is rare. /i:/ [e] ~ [e:] ~ [eʔ] 'yes'. |
| /a/ | [a ⁱ] | Voiced vowel gliding from low close central to high front position. Occurs before lamino-palatals. /maɳiɟ/ [ma ⁱ ɳi:ɟ] 'sun' |
| | [æ] | Voiced low close front unrounded vowel. Occurs following lamino-palatals except utterance final, in fluctuation with [a]. /ɳaɾan/ [ɳæɾan] ~ [ɳaɾan] 'I came' |
| | [a ^u] | Voiced vowel gliding from low close central to high back position. Occurs preceding /w/ in fluctuation with [a]. /mawala/ [ma ^u wala] ~ [mawala] 'water lily' |

- [a] Voiced low close central unrounded vowel. Occurs in all other vowel positions. /abanaman/ [abanaman] 'they'll bring it'
- /u/ [uⁱ] Voiced vowel gliding from high back to high front position. Occurs preceding lamino-palatals. /guḡuḡ/ [guḡuḡ] 'white ochre'
- [o] Voiced mid close back rounded vowel. Occurs following velars in fluctuation with [u]. /ḡugug/ [ḡogog] ~ [ḡugug] 'owl type'
- [u] Voiced high open back rounded vowel. Occurs in all other vowel positions. /ulubulu/ [ulubulu] 'mother's brother'

2. DISTRIBUTION

2.1 THE SYLLABLE -

There are five syllable types in Iwaidja which are distributed as follows:

| Word Initial | Word Medial | Word Final |
|--------------|-------------|------------|
| V | | |
| VC | | |
| CV | CV | CV |
| CVC | CVC | CVC |
| CVCC | CVCC | CVCC |

Except in reduplicated words, two CVCC syllables cannot occur in any one word. There is no restriction on CV or CVC syllables.

Two and three syllable words are the most common. Four and five syllable words are quite common. The few one syllable words are all in common everyday use. The longest word found is eight syllables.

/ḡad.ba.ḡag.bu.lag.ban.gi.ḡin/ 'we'll discuss it'

Examples of syllable types are shown below:

V /a.liḡ/ 'spear'

VC /a.li.ba/ 'play'

| | | |
|------|-------------------|------------------|
| CV | /ba/ | 'that' |
| | /na.gi/ | 'dog' |
| | /gu.ga.li/ | 'fire' |
| | /ma.ga.mu.li.řa/ | 'tree type' |
| CVC | /ga/ | 'kurrajong tree' |
| | /ban.bal/ | 'flat' |
| | /gan.buđ.bin/ | 'sunset' |
| | /mam.bad.buŋ.guŋ/ | 'he opened it' |
| CVCC | /mu g/ | 'fly(insect)' |
| | /ma ŋ.ga/ | 'quail' |
| | /gu.řam.balg/ | 'house' |
| | /ŋa.mařg.ban/ | 'I'm happy' |

2.2 THE PHONEME

(i) In the word.

All vowels may occur in any position in the word.

In word initial position the following consonants do not occur:

/d/, /g/, /ŋ/, /l/, /l̥/, /ř/, /ř̥/.

In word final position the following consonants do not occur:

/g/, /l̥/, /l̥̥/, /r/, /ř̥/, /w/, /y/.

(ii) In the syllable.

Excepting as stated above, all consonants may occur as the initial C of a CV or CVC syllable, and all except /l̥/, /l̥̥/, /w/, /y/ and /g/ as the final C of a CVC syllable.

In the CVCC syllable, the initial C may be any consonant, but the fillers of the cluster are very restricted. Only /l̥/, /l̥̥/, /ř̥/ and /ř̥̥/ occur in the first position and only /g/ and /ŋ/ in the second. Thus the CVCC patterns are restricted to CV|g, CV|ŋ, CVř̥g, CVř̥̥g and CV|ŋ. The patterns, CV|ŋ, CVř̥ŋ and CVř̥̥ŋ have not yet been found.

(iii) Across syllable boundaries.

The CC clusters found to occur across syllable boundaries are shown in the table below. The CCC clusters are /lgb/, /!gb/, /řgb/, /řgb/ and /lng/.

| | b | d | ɖ | ɗ | g | ɜ | m | n | ɲ | ŋ | l | l̥ | !l̥ | !l̥ | ř | ř | w | y |
|-----|----|----|-----|----|----|-----|-------|----|---|----|---|----|-----|-----|---|---|-----|---|
| b | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| d | db | | | | | | dm dn | | | | | | | | | | | |
| ɖ | ɖb | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | ɖw | |
| ɗ | ɗb | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| g | gb | | | | | | | gɲ | | | | | | | | | | |
| ɜ | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| m | mb | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| n | nb | nd | | | ng | | nm | | | nŋ | | | | | | | | |
| ɲ | ɲb | | ɲɖ | | ɲg | | ɲm | | | | | | | | | | | |
| ŋ | ŋb | | | ŋɖ | ŋg | | ŋm | ŋn | | | | | | | | | | |
| l | lb | | ld | | lg | lɜ | lm | ln | | lŋ | | | | | | | lw | |
| l̥ | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| !l̥ | | | !ld | | | !lɜ | !lm | | | | | | | | | | !lw | |
| !l̥ | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| ř | řb | | řɖ | | řg | řɜ | | | | řŋ | | | | | | | řw | |
| ř | | | řɖ | | | | řm | | | | | | | | | | | |
| w | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |
| y | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | | |

