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# WORK PAPERS OF SIL-AAB

Series B Volume I

## **THE WALMATJARI: AN INTRODUCTION TO THE LANGUAGE AND CULTURE**

Joyce Hudson & Eirlys Richards  
with Pompy Siddon, Peter Skipper  
and others

SUMMER INSTITUTE OF LINGUISTICS  
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## PREFACE

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SIL  
P.O. Berrimah  
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Australia



## O. INTRODUCTION

Articles are available for the anthropologist or linguist who wishes to know about the Aborigines of the Fitzroy Crossing area, but for those whose work in the community is of a more pragmatic kind there is need for less technical relevant material. This book is an attempt to provide such material. It is intended for the use of school teachers, nurses, missionaries, Government officers and others who are closely associated with the Aborigines of the Fitzroy Crossing area, and who need to understand and communicate with them. School teachers of the area have used a previous draft and their comments have been considered in the writing of this revision.

The authors, working under the auspices of the Summer Institute of Linguistics have studied the Walmatjari language from 1967 to 1975, and so the book is written from a background knowledge of the language. Although other languages are spoken at Fitzroy Crossing, many of the problems which the Walmatjari speaker faces when learning English are problems to all Aborigines whose mother tongue is not English. Many of the anthropological comments are based on observations by us but the writings of Erich Kolig have been referred to also.

The division into two parts is done with the hope that the book will be of more use that way. Part One contains general information about the people and languages of the Fitzroy Crossing area while Part Two is a fairly detailed description of the Walmatjari language. Part One is a suitable introduction to anyone new to the area, while Part Two is for those who desire a more detailed study of the language. It is written for those without linguistic training, so no previous knowledge of Aboriginal languages is necessary for understanding it. Sections 5 and 6 are relevant to those who need to hear Aboriginal names and who wish to pronounce them correctly. A cassette recording of the words in Sections 3 and 5 accompanies this workpaper. Sections 7 and 8 are designed for those who will be involved in teaching English as a second language. Sections 6 and 8 present the difficulties of transferring to English. They have been presented in separate sections for the benefit of school teachers.

For those who desire to communicate with the Aborigines via Walmatjari and so require a speaking knowledge of the language, a careful study of the whole, especially Sections 5 and 7, will be necessary along with a detailed drill programme.

Terms used have been non-technical wherever possible. Some have been difficult to choose because of the various overtones which they carry. European is used throughout to refer to those who have been brought up in the European-Australian culture, in contrast to the Aboriginal who has grown up in the traditional Aboriginal camp situation where English is not the mother tongue.

Although some would prefer not to acknowledge the Aboriginal English of Fitzroy Crossing as a language, there is no doubt that linguistically this is a well developed pidgin. To discuss Walmatjari in relation to English and ignore Pidgin would be to leave a large gap in the description of the Fitzroy Crossing situation. Pidgin has therefore been referred to wherever it was relevant.

The contribution to this work by Walmatjari speakers has been considerable. Several have given generously of time and effort over the years to teach their language to us and share their stories with us. Those whose contribution was vital to the analysis of the language and therefore to this book are Limerick Malyapuka, John Charles, Olive Bieundurry, Pompy Siddon, Tommy May, and Peter Skipper. Some of these have also been responsible for the stories in Sections 1.3 and 2.4, along with Adeline Wanangini, Amy Vanbee and Emily Sullivan. Some stories were recorded on tape and transcribed but others were written by the story tellers who are literate in Walmatjari.

The manuscript was taken for approval to a meeting of the Councillors and Elders of the Fitzroy Crossing area. The Nyigina and Bunaba word lists (Section 4) were added as a result of that meeting.

Few Walmatjari adults beyond the age of 25 years are literate, never having had the opportunity to go to school. We have designed a set of four reading books for the teaching of reading skills for the Walmatjari language. Up to this time, 12 adults have learned to read for the first time in Walmatjari. Another ten young adults have transferred their English reading skills across to Walmatjari. Fifty booklets have been printed, the contents ranging from Aborigines' personal experiences and culture to translated selections from the Bible. Though many booklets contain oral stories transcribed from a tape recording, there are three or four adults who have begun expressing themselves in writing. Three booklets of stories have been printed from these efforts and there is the potential for the development of an indigenous Walmatjari literature.

One of the aims of this publication is to encourage mutual appreciation of the two races in the Fitzroy Crossing area. We have attempted to do this by pointing out the reasons behind some of the 'different' behavioural patterns which may offend or amuse those with a European-Australian background.

Joyce Hudson and Eirlys Richards

Fitzroy Crossing (1976)

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# PART ONE

## 1. THE FITZROY CROSSING AREA

It is estimated that there were about 500 Aboriginal languages spoken in Australia at the time of the first European settlement. (Berndt & Berndt, 1964:40) Of these, the majority were to be found in the fertile coastal areas. Details can be found on the map by O'Grady, Wurm and Hale (1966). Most of these languages have become extinct and Aborigines who live in these areas now speak mainly English. Among the Aborigines who still retain their tribal identities there are probably up to 100 languages still spoken.

### 1.1 HISTORY

The history of Aborigines in the Fitzroy Crossing area is described by Kolig (1973:38). Note that throughout this quote the languages referred to by Kolig as Njigina, Wolmadjeri and Julbaridja are the same as those referred to as Nyigina, Walmatjari and Yulbaridja respectively.

First intensive contacts between Aborigines and Europeans in the Fitzroy River region occurred in the last decade of last century. The clash of societies resulted in the partial annihilation of Aboriginal groups originally having inhabited the Fitzroy area. Descendants from these groups identify today as Bunaba, Njigina and Gunian.

... The small numbers remaining were subject to stringent acculturative influences. In particular early European settlers gave little consideration to the cultural separateness of Aborigines and enforced compliance and conformity with a heavy hand.

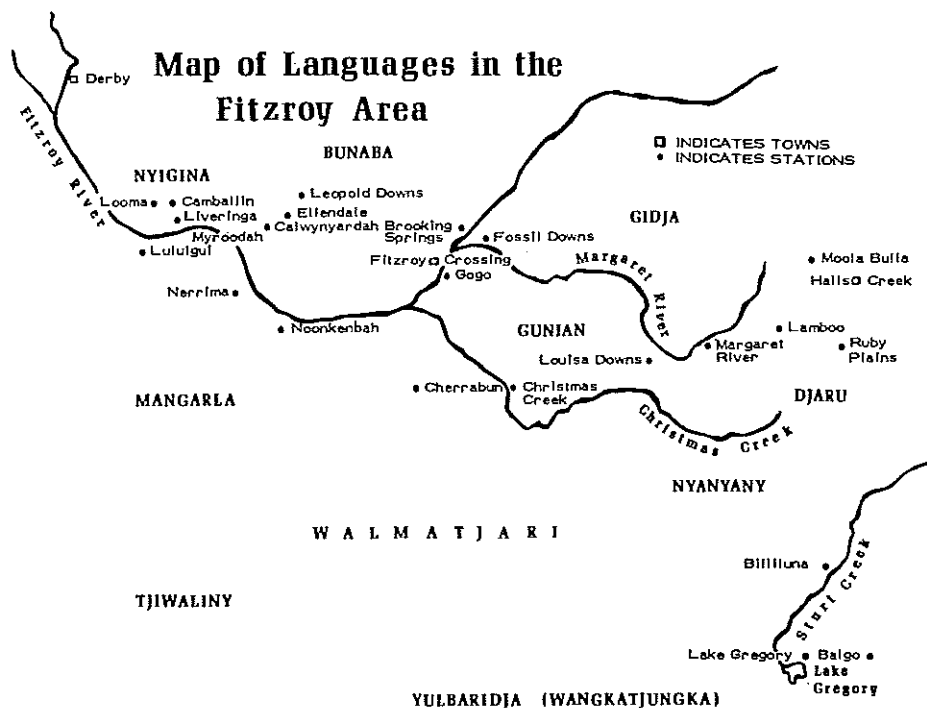
Already in an early phase of contact groups of Desert Aborigines began to infiltrate the area. Initially, these stemmed from the Desert fringe areas and the northern-most parts of the Desert. They were called Wolmadjeri. ... Wolmadjeri settled at first on pastoral stations in the South of the Fitzroy area, some of which do not exist any more. Wolmadjeri then gradually moved north-wards, but in general (sic) did not cross the Fitzroy River in great numbers.

The remains of the indigenes, Njigina and Gunian, succumbed to the influence of the immigrants and culturally were absorbed. Parts of the Njigina moved to Derby and parts of the Gunian took refuge at Fossil Downs, places where they were able to retain their respective identities in the face of the Desert invasion. The remaining indigenes became Wolmadjerized and Wolmadjeri became the dominant element among Aborigines.

Approximately twenty years ago another wave of Desert Aborigines, in general stemming from areas farther South in the Desert, arrived in the Fitzroy area. These are called Julbaridja, southerners, by the Aboriginal population. The Julbaridja who gained a footing on the southern stations in the Fitzroy area, pushed the Wolmadjeri northwards and these advanced and crossed the Fitzroy River now in greater numbers. There Bunaba and Wolmadjeri lived side by side.

The Yulbaridja have since advanced further and crossed the Fitzroy River as a consequence of the Pastoral Award. Each of these groups, Yulbaridja, Walmatjari, Bunaba, Gunian and Nyigina are now represented in the town of Fitzroy Crossing. A few Gidja (Taylor's spelling Kitja) speakers also live in the town. In a survey in 1973 the authors found Walmatjari people spread in a crescent shaped area on stations and in towns from La Grange Mission, Derby, along the Fitzroy River, Fitzroy Crossing, along Christmas Creek, Halls Creek town area and along the road from Halls Creek to Balgo Hills Mission.

In the following map, language names (written in capitals) are placed approximately over the original tribal territory of the group.



## 1.2 LANGUAGES

Languages of the Fitzroy Crossing area can be divided into northern and southern groups. In this paper the term southern languages means those languages which were spoken south of the Fitzroy River and Christmas Creek. The term northern refers to those languages which were spoken north of the Fitzroy River and Christmas Creek. Yulbaridja and Walmatjari are southern languages. Bunaba, Gunian, Nyigina and Gidja are northern languages. <sup>1</sup> Spelling of language names is taken from Wurm (1972).

The northern and southern languages differ in sound systems and in grammar. For example, southern languages have a three vowel system and the northern languages may have four or five vowels. Those from the north are prefixing languages while those from the south are suffixing languages. (English has both prefixes, as dis- in dis-satisfy and suffixes, as -ment in govern-ment.)

Walmatjari is distantly related to languages spoken as far away as the W.A. Goldfields area, though few Walmatjari speakers know the dialects of the Goldfields. People often speak more than one language within their own language family but there is very little bilingualism between the southern and northern languages, which are from different language families. For example, a Walmatjari speaker will frequently also speak the language of the Yulbaridja but is less likely to speak Bunaba, Gunian, Nyigina or Gidja. In actual fact, Walmatjari has become the prestige language so many people speak it as a second language.

Sometimes people will speak of their language as "hard" or "soft". They are usually referring to dialects, the main differences being in the sound system. The same type of difference occurs in English between British and Australian speech. The Walmatjari spoken by those from east of Fitzroy Crossing is slightly different from that spoken in the west. The western dialect is also referred to as Tjiwaliny.

Because of their contact with non-Aborigines and Aborigines of unrelated languages, it became necessary for the Aborigines to develop a lingua franca to communicate with their neighbours. The language which has developed is a pidgin which includes features of both English and the vernacular languages of the area. Fitzroy Crossing Pidgin is not the same as New Guinea Pidgin, but it shares some features with that language. The English spoken by many of the older people is rather an Aboriginal English, but the children's speech (except in school and when talking to non-Aborigines) is becoming a well-developed pidgin.

This pidgin has a sound system and a grammar of its own. Jill Fraser of the Summer Institute of Linguistics has written a paper on Fitzroy Crossing Children's Pidgin (1977). Pidgin warrants recognition as a meaningful way of communication. It is not simply a matter of omitting prepositions and articles from English; Pidgin has a distinct grammar. Vocabulary is predominantly English, but grammar and the sound system are patterned after the Aboriginal languages. Of the English vocabulary that is used, many words are assigned slightly different meanings from English. For example, drown in Pidgin means to submerge and does not imply dying. (See also section 2.1.) Differences such as these can lead to misunderstandings between English and Pidgin speakers.

There are differences in the children's speech which range from full speaking knowledge of Walmatjari to a passive knowledge where they understand it but do not speak it. Examples and analysis throughout this paper are based on adult speech.

### 1.3 STORIES OF NEW EXPERIENCES IN STATION COUNTRY

In this section first-hand accounts by Walmatjari people have been included. These stories tell of new experiences as the people moved from the desert to cattle stations and towns. They are written in Walmatjari with an English translation.

#### Leaving the Desert

written by Peter Skipper

Why did the desert Aborigines move to the cattle stations? The possibility of a severe drought has been suggested by some. Peter Skipper's story supports this.

Yitilala palunya ngalany miyi janiyajaa kuyi  
wet season they-them eat food bush food (spec) and meat

wirika kuyi wirikajaa jurnta miyi jurnta.  
lizard meat lizard and bush food (spec) food bush food (spec)

Yitilala palunya ngalany. Ngarika miyi ngarika palunya  
wet season they-them eat bush nut food bush nut they-them

ngalany. Jiljinga palu ngunangani kujartukarra palu piyirn nguja  
eat at sandhill they were like this they men were

jarlu jiljinga. Ngarnani palunya kuyijaa miyi. Miyiwarnti  
before at sandhill were eating they-them meat and food foods

palunya ngarnani nganapartu nganapartu palunya ngarnani  
they-them were eating various various they-them were eating

miyipartu miyipartu palunya ngarnani, kitangarni palunya  
all foods all foods they-them were eating until they-them

ngarnani waapiny waapiny ngarni palunya miyijaa kuyi Wali  
were eating finish finish ate they-them food and meat alright

kuyimipa palunya ngarni waapiny. Piyirnwarnti palu yani  
only meat they-them ate finish men they went

mirnuwu miyiwarlanykartl kartiyakurakarti.  
this way to other food to white man's

Wali yarntarni piyirn yangka palu yanani kayili  
alright also men those they were going north

mayarukarti. Yangkala palunya miyi yungani piyirn  
to station then they-them food were giving men

jiljikarraji. Nyanarti piyirn palu niyirnporni yanani,  
from sandhills that men they permanently were going

ngajirtarni tikirrku. Wali palu yanani wurna miyikarti  
not to return alright they were going journey to food

kartiyakurakarti, yangkala palu niyirnjarrinyani piyirn. Walinni  
to white man's then they remained man so

miyi palu ngarnani kartiyakura, walinni palu lamajarrinyani  
food they were eating white man's so they stayed

piyirn, ngajirtarni tikirrku.  
man not to return

In the wet season people eat such foods as the janiya, the wild onion and the bush walnut and meat such as the lizard. They used to eat this sort of food when they lived in the desert. They used to eat a great variety of bush foods. They ate these until there were none left. Then they ate animals until they were finished. The people then came this way north to get the white man's food.

The desert people went to the stations in the north and people there gave them food. They stayed on there and did not return to the desert. They moved north to the white man's food and stayed on. They didn't go back.

First visit to a station

told by Peter Skipper

A first visit from the desert to station country provided a multitude of new things to see. Many of them were frightening because of their size, mobility or just because they were unknown. This story describes one man's first impressions when he saw horses, cars, windmills and white men.

Jiljinga pa kurrarnani kurlila yapa yini Kurrapakuta.  
At sandhill he was sitting south child name name

Yapajangka pa kurrarnani kitangarni puluru palurla yitikani  
from a child he was sitting until food they for him put

miyl. Ngamajirlu ngarpungu palurla yitikani. Nyanartijangkarla  
food mother father they for him put After that

palu tarrpartarni. Kurlila pa yani, piyirn manya purpanani  
they grabbed south he went man he-them collected

kurlila. Nyanartijangka pa tikirryani. Wali nyanartirlarni pa  
south After that he returned alright there he

piyirnjarrinya nganpayijarrinya. Nyanartijangka pa kitpungani.  
became man became initiated man after that he travelled

Kurrarni pa nyanartirla.  
stayed he there

Wali walimpawarlany pa pinakarrinya, "Wurna marna  
alright later he thought journey I

yanku mayarukarti." Nyantukurawarnti palurla kakawarntijaa jaja  
will go to a station those they uncles and grannie

parla yani mayarukarti Jarraparnkarti. Kurrarnani nyantukura  
his went to a station to Cherrabun stayed his

jaja kajalu. Nyanartijangkarlu pa yani, pirriyani manyanta  
grannie first after that he went came he

mayarurla Timpakurijja.  
station at Timber Creek

Wali nyanartijangka kayili pa yani, wanyjani pa jaja.  
alright after that north he went where he grannie

Timpakurijja pa warrkammarnani. Nyanartijangka pa yani kayili.  
at Timber Creek he was working after that he went north

Pirriyani manyanangurla piyirnta takmanta. Kaparn palu jilykarra  
came he to them man stockman middle they brand

Ianani yawartajawurlu. Nyanganj manya karuwarra yalartu  
pierced with horse were seeing he-them afternoon that

palu yawarta ngampurnikanani karuwarra yawartawarnti. Nyantu  
they horse mustered afternoon horses he

pa rayin pirrilaparnkanya kurlila. Rayin pa pirrilaparnkarranya  
he fear ran away south fear he ran away

kurlila.  
south

Nyanartijangkarla pa tikirryani walimpa, karuwarrala pa  
after that he returned later afternoon he

yanani manyanangu piyirnkun nyanartiwu takmanku. Yanani manyanangu  
was going he to them man that stockman was going he to them

kayili. Mungankurra manyanangurla pirriyani purangu karla tartayanujangkarla.  
north darkness he to them came sun west set

Wali piyirnwartirli nyanartiwarntirli palu kurtamani  
alright men those they released

yawartawarnti, yangkaia palu turtangkarrakanya. Yawartarlul palu  
horses so that they got up and went horse they

marni wangki. Wali nyanartijangkarla palurla warralpongani.  
said word alright from that they laughed

Jingkirtiwata palurla warralpongani. Ranyji nyanarti palu  
mirth they laughed hidden that they

warralpongani.  
laughed

Wali rayinjarrinya palu, kartiya pirriyani.  
alright became afraid they white man came

Nganpayiwarnti palu kirrarnani pajajinyangu. Martarnani manya  
men they were sitting many was keeping he-them

takmanwarnti kartiyarlul. Nyanartijangka palunya yiparni. Marni  
stock men white man. after that they-them sent said

palunyanangu, "Karla yantalu Jarraparnkarti. Yanku manta  
they to them west go to Cherrabun will go you

kujartirni. Kayili wantiwu manta warntarri. Ngapa manta  
like this north go you road water you

parlipungku, ngalkula manta," palunyanangu jularni piyirnwartirli  
will find then will eat you they to them told men



nyanartiwarntirlu. Ngapa nyanarti yini parla Parratayij. Yanila  
those water that name it Paradise then went

palu kayili, parlipinya palu mana karrinyujangka. Nyangani palu.  
they north found they thing standing saw they

Marnila palu, "Ngana nyanarti nyapartujarrinyanaparta nyanarti  
then said they what that doing that

wirriwirrimarnana." Ngurrpangu palu nyangani wirriwirrimarnujangka.  
whirling ignorant they were seeing the whirling thing

Nyanartijangka palu puranyani, karlaka palu ngarni  
after that they went past honey they ate

martuwarrajangka. Tikirryanungurla palu jinamani ngurti jina  
from river returning they tracked vehicle footprint

mutika. Yukanga palurlanyanta yani kurlila Jinamanta nganya  
motorcar on grass they went south might track he-them

mutikarlul miljarrarlul. Karla palurlanyanta laparnkangurla  
car with two eyes west they ran

ranyjiwantinya mutikawu.  
hid from car

Yarntarni palurla yanani kakarra. Yart pa nyaku  
again they were going east yard he will see

ngurrpangu Kurrapakutarlu. Yanunga pa tartayani kaninykaniny yarta.  
ignorant name went he entered inside yard

Mutika kakarrangu pa nyanya, pirrilaparni palu piyirn paja  
car from east he saw ran they man many

mutikarla. Takurrlaparni pa. Nitingju pa paru lani minya  
in car ran under he wire it back pierced this

kaninymarrangu pa tirrinyani. Lapartwantinya pa kaniny. Nitingju  
underneath he went through fell flat on face he down wire

pa lani paru. Murtayimurtayikarra yani pa rayin.  
it pierced back crawled went he afraid

Parntakarrinyani pa kayirrara. Nyanartijangka pa turtapinya. Marni  
half stood he north after that he arose said

pa nyanartirlu, "Mutika nyanartu nganajiliny pirriyanku marna  
he that car that like what will come I

nyangani tirritirriyanani karlampal," marni pa nyanartirlu  
was seeing going through in the west said he that

Kurrapakutarlu. Piyirnwarntirlu pelu mampatpinya pajangu.  
name men they waved many

Wali karla pa yani, karuwarra yanunga palu ngurra  
alright west he went afternoon went they camp

yukarni kaparn. Pirriyani palu kamanta Jarraparnta. Kirrarnani  
lay one came they morning at Cherrabun stayed

palu. Mayaru palu nyangani ngurpangu.  
they station they were seeing ignorant

As a child, Kurrapakuta lived in the South. When he was old enough, he was initiated into manhood there. One day he thought, "I will go to a cattle station." His uncle and grandmother had already gone to Cherrabun Station. So he set off and came to the station called Timber Creek.

He went on from Timber Creek further north and came upon some stockmen. They were riding horses and branding cattle. He first saw them in the afternoon when they were mustering the horses. Kurrapakuta ran away in fear.

Later, after dark, when the sun had set, he came back to the stock camp. The stockmen had turned the horses loose and they were wandering around free. They made a noise in the darkness and Kurrapakuta and his friends laughed because they had not heard that noise before. They laughed at the horses. When a white man appeared they were afraid. He was in charge of the stockmen.

Later the stockmen sent them away. "Go west to Cherrabun," they said, "and you will find the road going north. There is a windmill there where you can get water." The name of that bore is Paradise.

They went north and found the windmill. They thought, "What's this thing whirling around?" They didn't know what a windmill was.

They went on and found wild honey near the river. Then they found the tracks of a motor car. They walked on the grass because they thought that the car might be able to track them using its headlights as eyes. They ran away and hid from the car.

They went east again. Kurrapakuta wanted to see the cattle yard so he went and climbed into it. Then he saw a car coming from the east with a lot of men in it. They waved to him. He raced back and forced himself through the fence so that the barbed wire tore his back as he went under it. He fell face down on the other side, then crawled away quickly because he was so afraid. He hid in the north. Later he stood up and said to himself, "What was that thing I saw running along in the west?"

He went west and joined his friends. They camped one more night and arrived at Cherrabun the next day. That was the first time they had seen a station homestead.

"First Contact with Cattle" was written by Peter Skipper. It describes an amusing incident in the days before he moved from the desert to live on a station. He and an inquisitive boy were travelling together when the boy had his first encounter with cattle.

Wali nganpayijaa yapa pila yanani karlarrara  
alright man and child they two were going to the west

pintirriala. Karuwarrarla pila yanani. "Wali," marni  
on the plain afternoon they two were going alright said

parla yapangu, wurnanga parla marnukarrangani  
he to him child while walking he to him talk

yapangu. Jangkumani manyanta nganpayirlu, "Yarr yanana kuli  
child answered he to him man just go angry

kulkuru. Lanta ngarlinyalu purlumantu. Kulkuru parli yananku."  
quiet pierce they-us bullock quiet we will go

Marni parla yapangu, "Ya. Lanujuwal ngartalu  
said he to him child Okay always piercing they

nyanartuwarnti purlumanuwarnti. Nganajawurlu parlinyalu lanku."  
those bullocks with what they-us will pierce

Nganpayirlu parla marni, "Ngajirta. Pirriikajawurlu ngarlinyalu  
man he to him said no with horns they-us

lanta pirlawurra pajangu lanujuwal palu." Marni parla  
pierce to death many always pierce they said he to him

yapangu, "Mapun ngartalu lanujuwal purluman. "Yu," marni  
child truly they always pierce bullock Yes said

parla nganpayirlu. "Yarr parlipangul julalany piyirntu.  
he to him man just they to us tell man

Kujartukarra palu julalany piyirntu pajangu palu julannana  
like this they tell man many they tell

lanujuwal, piyirn lanujuwal pa purluman. Yangka parli  
always pierce man always pierce he bullock when we

kulkuru yananku. Ngajirta ngarli wangki marnungkarranganta. Yarr  
quiet will go not we word must speak just

parli yananku kulkuru. Pinakarri ngarlinyalu wangki marnujangka. "  
we will go quiet hear they-us word talking

"Yu. Yananku parli kulkuru. Walimparli marni. "  
yes will go we quiet later talk

Wali nyanartijangka pila yanani karla wurna.  
alright after that they two were going west walking

puwuarlanykarti pila yanani karlarrara. Wali nyanya  
to another bore they two were going to west alright saw

pilanya karla marri pintirri. Purangu pilangurla tartayani  
they-them west afar on the plain sun on those two went down

kaparnwarlanyparni. Munganga pila yanani warntarrirlal  
half way darkness they-two were going on the road

ngurtikurarlal. Wali nganpayirlu parla wangki marni  
on the vehicle road alright man he to him word said

yapawu, "Yangkartuwarnti purlumanuwarnti nyanya nganunya. " "Yu, "  
to child those bullocks saw you-them Yes

marni parla yapangu, "Nyanyajal marnanya. " "Ya. Kulkuru  
said he to him child saw I-them Okay quiet

parli yanku wangkimulu. "  
we will go without talking

Wali nyanartijangka pilanya nyanya purlumanwarnti,  
alright after that they two-them saw bullocks

yangkala pila karrartajarrinya pila purlumanuwarntikarrarla.  
so that they two became afraid they two because of the bullocks

Nyanartujarra nganpayijaa yapa pila laparnkarrakanya kakarra  
those two man and child they two ran away east

manakarti yangkala pila mananga paralaparni. Kankarni pila  
to tree so then they two tree climbed up they two

karrinyani. Marni parla yapangu, "Pa! Wurnawu. Wanyjurla  
stood said he to him child Come on let's go where

palu purlumanuwarnti laparni. Yarr ngartalu karla laparni. "  
they bullocks ran just they west ran

"Yu, " Marni parla nganpayirlu. "Karlajal palu laparni  
yes said he to him man west they ran

karrartawarlanyparni. " "Ya, " marni parla yapangu. "Muria  
also afraid Okay said he to him child this

palu lanujuwal julannani piyirntu palu julalany piyirn  
they always piercing tell man they tell man

lanujuwal purlumanu. Wanyjarrarlinyalu lani ngarlijarra,  
always piercing bullock where they-us pierce us

murlalu jularnani lanujuwal. Ngajirtala parlinyalu lanantarla  
this tell always piercing not-then they-us pierced

ngarlijarra purlumanuwarntirlu."  
us bullocks

Wali juturni parla wangki marnukarrangani  
alright continued he to him word was speaking

yapangu. "Pirlawurra ngartalu lanujuwal. Purluman palu  
child to death they always piercing bullock they

jularnana piyirntu wanyjarrarlu palu jularnani purluman.  
tell man where they tell bullock

Lanujuwal palu julalany, ngajirtala parlinyalu lantarla  
always piercing they tell not-then they-us pierced

ngarlijarra jalarra." Jangkumani manyanta nganpayirlu yapanga  
us now answered he-him man child

"Ngajirta ngan manyja kujartukarra. Pinakarri ngartalu purlumantu,  
not you speak like this hear they-us bullock

yangkala ngarlinyalu pirraikajawurlu lanta pirlawurra."  
so that they-us with horns might pierce to death

Jangkumani manyanta yapangu, "Ngajirta. Ngarlijarrarlu ngarlinya  
answered he-him child not we we-them

luwa mukurrajawurlu pirlawurra." Marni parla nganpayirlu,  
hit with throwing stick to death said he to him man

"Nyuntungukuj nganunya luwarnanta kayantu nyuntungu. Ngajirta  
you you-them hit one you not

ngaju. Ngajungajal karrpi limpangu. Ngaju marna  
I me might tie up policeman I I

karrantajuwal." Marni parla yapangu, "Mapun ngarta  
afraid said he to him child true he

karrpirnujuwal limpa. Wanyjurta nguniny nyanartu limpa."  
always ties policeman where is that policeman

Marni parla nganpayirlu, "Ngurrapajalu. Kunyungurla kayili  
said he to him man I don't know maybe north

nguniny palu julalany yininga limpajartirla." "Ya," marni parla  
are they tell name police place Okay said he to him

yapangu. "Wali ngajirta ngarli luwa."  
child alright not we hit

A man and a child were travelling across a plain in the west. It was afternoon. As they were travelling along the child kept talking to the man. Finally the man said, "We must move along quietly. The cattle might attack and gore us. We must travel quietly." The child said, "Okay. Do those cattle always gore people? What will they gore us with?" "They could gore us with their horns and kill us," the man replied. "Bullocks often gore people."

The child again asked, "Does the bullock really gore people?" "Yes," said the man. "People say so. They say that cattle often gore people. If we walk along without talking they won't hear us. So let's not talk." "Alright we'll talk later," said the boy.

After that they went west to another bore. They saw the cattle on a plain a long way off in the west. The sun had set before they reached the bore. It was dark as they walked along the road. The man spoke to the child, "Did you see those cattle?" "Yes," the child said. "I saw them." "We'll just keep walking," the man said. "Don't talk."

After that they saw the cattle again and were afraid. They ran away east to the trees and climbed a tree. As they sat up there, the child said, "Come on! Let's climb down. Where did those cattle go? Did they go west?" "Yes," the man said, "They went west alright. They were afraid too." "They certainly were," the child said, "How come people say that cattle are always goring people? They didn't gore us. Why do they say that?"

The child talked on persistently. "Do they say that cattle are always goring people? How do they talk about cattle? They say they always gore people but they didn't gore us this time." The man answered the child. "Don't talk like that! The cattle might hear us, and attack and kill us." The child answered, "No. We will kill them with a spear."

The man said, "Okay. You go ahead and spear them yourself. I won't. I'm too afraid because the policeman might tie me up." "Does the policeman really always tie people up?" the child asked. "Where does that policeman live?" "I don't know," the man answered. "Maybe they are in the north. People there talk about policemen at a place called the police station." "Is that so?" the child said. "If that's how it is we'd better not kill cattle."

Those who came from the desert had never seen large quantities of water such as there are in the waterways of the river country. Learning to swim was one of many new skills that had to be acquired if one was to stay alive in this new country. The story of David Downs' mastery of the water is given in graphic metaphor as he describes his encounters with the mythical water snake which is believed to inhabit waterholes and streams. The illustrations are also by David Downs. Illustration A shows the three scenes of the man going under, being swept along by the current and later being helped out of the water. Illustration B illustrates the same event from a different perspective. Here the man is shown as passing through the water snake.

Ngaju	marna	pinarri	kalpurtu.	Ngarni	paja	parranga
I	I	know	water snake	ate	it-me	hot season
ngapangajirtarla.	Walypa	marna	nyanya	kakarrangu	yanani	
no rain	wind	I	saw	from east	came	
jiwina	wirtiwartikarra.	Nyinkarra	wantinyani	marnalu	piyirn	
water moving	moving	dive	fell	we	man	
paja	ngapanga	Kalpurturlu	paja	ngarni,	nyumukwantinya	marna
many	in water	water snake	it-me	ate	dived	I
Nyangani	pajalu	winamanani	marnilunyanu,		"Wanyjarrarla	
saw	they-me		they said to one another		where	
turtapungku".	Kalpurturlu	lamparnta	nyantu	pirnjinga	turtayani.	
will rise	water snake	small	it	body of snake	entered	



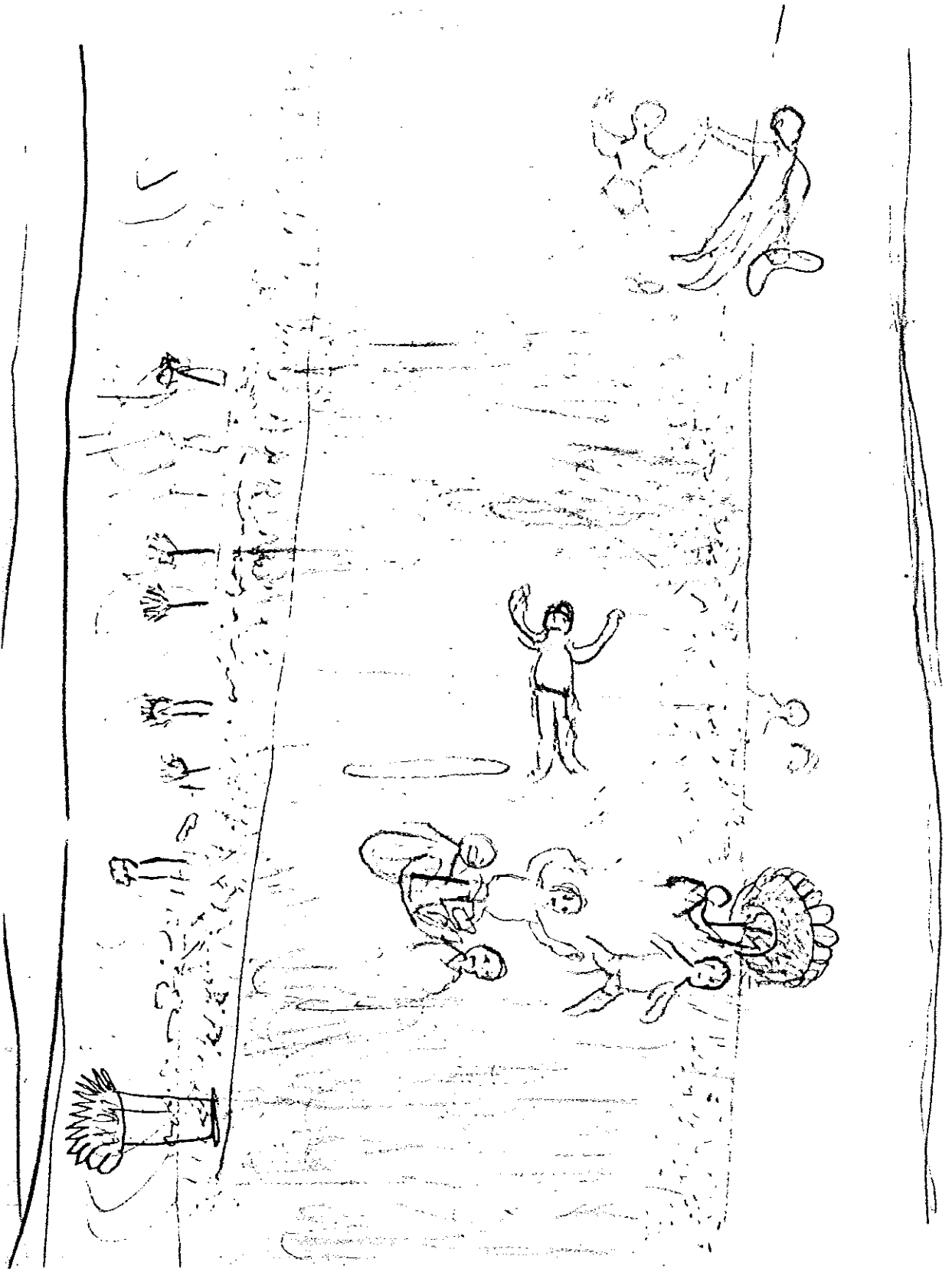


Illustration A



Illustration B

Minyarti nyangana manta pija. Waangurla paja waramani kakangu.  
 this see you picture followed it-me dragged uncle

Nyanartirlu paja muntanga ruwarramani kalpurturlu lampunga.  
 that it-me in abdomen dragged water snake Lamboo

Paja palu piyirwarnti nguja. Nyanartijangka marna yarr.  
 many they people were after that I nothing

Pinarri marna nguniny ngapanga kaninykaniny marna yanku,  
 know I am in water below I will go

marri marna turtapungku. minyartijulany paja ngarni.  
 distant I will rise like this it-me ate

Martuwarrarla marna yani kaniny, lujimani pajilu.  
 in river I went down lost they-me

Lawupinya marnarlul kulila mananga marnalu parayani,  
 clung we south on tree we climbed

tikirr marnalu yani kaninykaniny kaparn pajalu yutukani. "Jawu  
 back we went below middle they-me put swim

ngajirta marna ngaju. Ngaju marna pujman. Ngajirta marnarla  
 not I I I I bushman not I

pinarri martuwarrawu," ngarnila paja, kaninykaninypala marna  
 know river then ate it-me then below I

ngapanga yani karla walyarra marna nyanya, nyanartiwu marnarla  
 in water went west sand I saw there I

yani kaninykaniny munku wilayilapanurla Ngajangula paja  
 went below dark go round then brother he-me

waramani Payitarlu minyarti palunyanu jamurn pajarla,  
 dragged Spider this they-themselves almost cut

karlala pajalu parlipinya marlamaninyangurla jirrimartarni  
 then west they-me found helped showed

kujarti. nyantungu paja kutupananiwarlanyparni Payitarlu,  
 like this he he-me got Spider

marnpala nyana turtapinya ngarrpirtimanila paja, wurnala pajarra  
 near that rose took by the hand he-me then move we two

yani. Wali lungani palu. Jamurn palunyanu pajarrarla  
 went alright cried they almost they-themselves cut

parlipinya pajalu turtapungujangka karla marri.  
 found they-me after rising west distant

Yarntarni Kurungaljanga marna julawu.  
 Again from Christmas Creek I will tell

Kurungaljanga marna yani turriny. Kuyijartilarna wirtijarti  
from Christmas Creek I went through then I with meat on a stick

yanani. Yani marna ngapa minyartijulany, minya ngapa marnpa  
went went I water like this this water nearby

ngunangana nyanartijulanyjarna tartayani munkunga, yani, turtapinya  
is I like that descended to dark went rose

yarr wurnarni marna yanani kuyijarti. Ngajirta paja nganyjarla  
just move I went with meat not he-me ate

ngapangu. nyarna pa. wali ngaji pinarni marnarla.  
water deep it alright I know I



Illustration C

I know all about the water snake (mythical). One dry season he nearly got me. It was a day when a group of us were bathing in the creek. I was the last one to go into the water. The others saw me and said "Where will he come up?" The water snake took me (you can see it in the picture) and I was swept away. My uncle followed me but the water snake was dragging me down into its stomach (it was eating me). Since I had that experience, I have learned about rivers. I can now dive in and come up again.

We were playing in the water that day near a tree. We would climb out and onto the tree then go back into the water. They threw me out into the middle of the stream and I called out, "No. Not me. I'm from the desert. I don't know anything about swimming in rivers." Then the water snake took me and I went down into the water. I was swept away and I could see the sand. I was a long way down in the deep water. My brother Spider saved me.

The others were about to cut themselves in sorrow because they thought I was dead when they saw me downstream. Spider came to me and pulled me out of the water. The other people were crying. They were ready to cut themselves when they saw me a long way off where I had come to the surface. I was a long way off.

Years later I was travelling from Christmas Creek station and crossed the creek. I had been hunting and was carrying the meat on a stick across my shoulders. The creek was like Brooking Creek in size. I went into the deep water and came out on the other side and kept going on my journey. I still had the meat. Though the water was deep, the water snake didn't get me this time. Now I am familiar with rivers and know how to cross them.

The First Time We Wore European Clothes

told by Emily Sullivan

Many new things encountered by those who came from the desert to cattle stations were the things taken for granted today. Emily Sullivan's story shows something of the difficulties of adjusting to the white man's habit of wearing clothes.

Yanani marnalu jarlu Jarlu marnapanyalu kangani  
were going we long ago long ago they-us carried

ngamajirlujaa ngarpungu. Kangani marnapanyalu jarnaka kurtangarri  
mother and father carried they-us on back naked

marna jarnaka kirrarnani ngamajirla ngarpunga. Yanani marnalu.  
I on back sat on mother on father were going we

Turiti marnapanyalu yungani yapawarntiriu Nukunpajangkarlu. Turiti  
dress they-us gave children from Noonkenbah dress

marnapanyalu yungani, jarlu marnalu yanani kurtangarri.  
they-us gave long ago we were going naked

Yanani marnalu, kurtajpanani marnalu turiti nyanarti,  
were going we remove we dress that

kurraparjala marnalu kangani pujmantujangka. Kurraparla  
then in hand we took because we were bushmen in hand

marnalu kangani, ngajirta marnalu wirrimkujirnantarla jirrkiri.  
we took not we wear properly

Yarrpala marnalu tarrapungurlakanani yarr marnalu yanani  
just we threw just we were going

kurtangarri walyarra walyarra. Yanani marnalu wali  
naked sand sand were going we alright

nyumukmanani marnalu. "Yapawarnti kuyi manta ngalku," marnani  
bathed we children meat you eat were saying

marnapangulu. Wali jarti marnapangulu juwumjuwumkujirnani  
they to us alright in vain they-us showed

turiti wirrimkujirnuwu yapawarntiriu kanarlanywarntiriu.  
dress to wear children other

Wirrimkujirnanı marnalunyanta rungjayit kujangkurra marnalu  
wore we wrong way like this we

kangani yapangu.  
wore child

Pujman marnalu nguja Nukunparla Nyanarti  
bushmen we were at Noonkenbah that

marnapanyalu juwumkujirnanı jirrkiri mintimmarnani marnapangulu  
they-us showed correct sewed they for us

turiti parnanywarntirlu. Wali pinarripinarrijarrinyani marnalu  
dress old women alright learned we

kangani marnalu.  
wore we

Long ago when we lived in the desert my mother and father used to carry me on their backs. I was naked as I sat on their backs. Then we went to the cattle station country and the people from Noonkenbah Station gave us clothes to wear. They gave us clothes because we were naked. But we would take them off and carry them because we were from the desert. We didn't know what to do with them. When we were out in the bush, we would carry them or throw them away and go naked. We would go swimming. They could get us to eat the meat but they couldn't make us wear clothes. We used to wear them upside down or inside out. We were just out of the desert when we were at Noonkenbah. The women from the station made clothes for us and they taught us how to wear them. After a while we got used to them.

## 2. LANGUAGE AND CULTURE CONTRAST

Some of the major differences between Aboriginal and European society can be seen by examining meanings of words, social organisation of the community and cultural activities.

### 2.1 MEANING DIFFERENCES

There are very few, if any, words that have a single restricted meaning. Consider the word chair. As well as the normal meaning, 'a piece of furniture', this word includes the electric chair, the chair-man of a meeting and the chair of a faculty at a University. In all languages words have this type of secondary or peripheral meaning. Because the secondary meanings vary widely, there are very few words with direct equivalents between languages.

#### Translation Differences

No one Walmatjari word can necessarily be equated with one English word. The same is true when finding a Walmatjari equivalent for an English word. The following lists show some examples of meaning differences between the two languages.



<u>1 Walmatjari word</u>	<u>2 or more English words</u>	<u>Comment</u>
nganyja	eat, drink	The same Walmatjari verb is used for eating solids and drinking fluids.
pukarr	cooked, ripe	
pungka	hit, kill	
kuyi	meat, edible animal	
warlu	fire, firewood	
mana	tree, thing, stick	
kirranja	sit, stay, live	as in 'I am staying at Fitzroy Crossing.'
nyaka	see, look	
pinakarri	hear, listen	
kurrapa	arm, hand, finger, thumb	All four are included in the meaning of kurrapa.
ngamarna	milk, breast	
lirra	mouth, teeth	

<u>1 English word</u>	<u>2 or more Walmatjari words</u>	<u>Comment</u>
food	miyi	vegetable food
	kuyi	meat
sister	ngapurlu	older sister
	ngaja	younger sister or brother
hit	pungka	hit, from nearby (using stick, stone, club, hand)
	luwa	hit with a missile (using stone, boomerang or some dull object)
	lanta	hit with a sharp instrument such as a spear.
hole	kurrku	hole in the ground
	kirlingirri	hole which goes through to the other side (as a doorway)

## Generic-specific Words

"All languages have some hierarchies of terms which go from most specific to most general. In English, for example, a tiger is a particular kind of cat, which in turn is a particular kind of mammal, which in turn is a particular kind of animal, which in turn is a particular kind of living thing." (Gudschinsky 1967:28)

Animal is a generic term and tiger is a specific term. English uses many generic terms, e.g. reptile, grain. Walmatjari has a different set of generic terms.

### English terms

### Walmatjari equivalents

lizard      'four-footed reptile'

wirlka      'sand goanna'

wakura      'gecko'

kayuku      'frilled lizard'

lungkura    'blue tongue lizard'

and others

food      'what one eats'

kuyi      'any edible animal'

'egg'

'meat'

miyi      'any edible vegetable food'  
(includes fruit, grain,  
processed flour, roots,  
etc.)

rock  
rocky hill  
pebble  
coin

pamarr

## Idioms and Body Parts

Characteristics of human attitudes and feelings are often considered to be associated with body parts. The choice of body part varies from language to language. The Bible talks of testing the reins (Psalm 26:2 - AV). The reins are the kidneys which the ancient Hebrews considered to be the seat of the innermost emotions. In English today the heart is thought to be the seat of the emotions. In Walmatjari it is not the heart but the stomach.

English builds many expressions around the word heart. For example, heartless, heartfree, heart broken, sweetheart, soft hearted, with all the heart. In a similar way Walmatjari has many idioms which refer to the stomach. Here are some of them.

munta kayan	(one stomach)	'to have a fixed purpose'
munta parrparr	(hot stomach)	'anger'
munta kirtily	(cool stomach)	'at peace, content'

Idioms such as these cannot be translated literally into the second language. To say hard hearted in one language of Brazil means 'to be brave' which is quite different from the English meaning of the same expression. English expressions about the heart cannot be translated literally into Walmatjari. To refer to a linyngurru turlpu 'sweet heart' would not be sweetheart, but would be nonsense.

Another body part which has different associations in Walmatjari and English is the ear, pina.

pina-karri ear-stand	'hear, listen'
pina-pina-karri ear-ear-stand	'think'
pina jata ear blunt	'deaf'
pina rukjarti ear blocked	'deaf, permanent or temporary'
pina-ngu tarrparta ear-subj grab	'memorise it!, listen and absorb it'
pina-nga turrinyani ear-at through-went	'He did not listen'
pina-rri ear	'knowledgable'

## Time Words

Time and seasons are related to natural phenomena such as the position of the sun, moon and stars, darkness and light etc. The words describing time can have quite a different area of meaning from English time words.

kumanta	'morning, also means tomorrow'
jininyara	'middle of the day, when the sun is high'
karuwarra	'afternoon when the sun is low and until dark'
pukanyja	'night, when it is dark'
rakarra	'half light of dawn'
jalarra	'now, presently'
jarlu	'in the past'
warra	'in a little while. Also used as a type of command when it means <u>wait!</u> '
walimpa	sometime later, bye and bye.

The word jalarra means 'now' but it rarely means the specific 'right at this moment' as English often does. It is to be interpreted according to the context in which it is said. It can mean within the hour, sometime today or this week.

Because the Walmatjari are more conscious of events than of time, there will be less confusion in making arrangements if the time is specified as after cup-of-tea, after dinner, before sundown etc. rather than eleven o'clock, two o'clock etc.

## Seasons

The year is broken into three seasons: parranga 'hot season', yitalal 'wet season' and makurra 'cold season'. When referring to a span of time, natural phenomena are used.

month - yakarn 'moon, lunar month'

year - yitalal 'wet season'

Days are measured by the number of sleeps (literally, 'camps'). Since there is no natural phenomenon to equate with week, the English loan word is used for this: wiik 'week, Sunday'.

The custom of celebrating birthdays and counting years is not part of the Walmatjari culture.

## Colours

Although all peoples see the same rainbow, not all languages have the same number of primitive colour terms. Walmatjari colour terms correspond to nature in the desert.

brown	nguwanguwa	'earth'
red	pirłji	'red ochre'
yellow	karntawarra	'yellow ochre'
white	mawanti	'white ochre'
black	pirrki	'charcoal'
	kurnkurn	'black'
green	wurrkal	'green - as leaves of grass and trees'

## Directionals

Whereas time words in Walmatjari are less specific than those in English, the use of compass points is quite the opposite. When movement is described, a direction is almost always included. Yani marna karla 'I went west', is a common expression used for describing travel from Fitzroy Crossing to Derby. Directionals are also used frequently in referring to position so that one speaks of an object to the north rather than to the right or left. The directionals are a set of six words.

kayili	'north'
kurlila	'south'
kakarra	'east'
karla	'west'
kaniny	'down'
kankarral	'up'

Numerous suffixes can be added to these words to vary the meaning slightly.

kayili	'north'
kayirrara	'to the north'
kayinyakayinya	'on the northern side of something (a river)'
kayilungjangkawarnti	'the ones from the north'
kayilungjarti	'the one on the northern side of the reference point'

## Adjustment to the Foreign Culture

The language is constantly adapting to the Western culture in which the Walmatjari speakers find themselves involved more deeply each day. One means of adapting to the new culture is to borrow English words which have no Walmatjari equivalent.

rijap	'reserve'
tuwa	'store'
kuul	'school'

Many new concepts are handled by forming new words, though the English borrowed words are often used as well.

wangki-purru word-purpose	'tape recorder'
wirrim-purru wear-purpose	'clothes'
jina-purru foot-purpose	'shoe'
wajapungu-purru wipe out-purpose	'eraser'

Some words have been borrowed from English but the meaning has not been transferred with the word. That is, the secondary meanings from the Walmatjari equivalent are used with the borrowed word. This can lead to misunderstandings if the English speaker does not understand the adjustments of meaning.

drown	yurranti	submerge - can be used of animate or inanimate and does not include death in its basic meaning.  e. g. This little boy drowned in the creek today. (He got into difficulties and had to be rescued.)
believe	mapunikarra	to take notice, obey, believe.  e. g. He can't believe me. (He won't do as I say.)

die	pirlajarri	die, become a pirla (spirit). This is also used of someone who is unconscious or seriously ill. It does not necessarily mean that the heart has stopped beating, though death is the usual meaning of the word.
paddock	parrik	fence. e. g. Hang the clothes on the parrik (fence).
cooked	pukarr	cooked as of bread, ripe as of fruit. e. g. This melon is cooked.
shamed	kurntayi	shy, shamed.
string	jiluwa	sinew, vein.
wife, husband	kartu, ngumparna	These are kinship terms which are used because of relationship within the kinship system and are not a rigid distinction of sex. <u>Kartu</u> 'wife' can be used to refer to a man in certain circumstances. The English terms have been assigned opposite meanings by some.

It cannot be assumed that the meaning of an English word is accurately understood just because it is recognised and used.

On the other hand, some words in Walmatjari have acquired different meanings as the result of contact with the other way of life. Ngapa 'water' is often used in reference to alcoholic drinks. Context tells which is being referred to. Sometimes alcohol is referred to as ngapa ngarla 'bad water'.

Ngurti 'vessel' is the generic term for coolamons of all sorts. (Each has its own specific name.) The meaning of this word has been extended to cover the car and the boat.

## Numbers

The numbering system in Walmatjari is extremely simple. Words used are:

kayan	'one'
layi	'one'
kurriny	'two'
murrkurn	'three or four, few'
paja	'many'

This system is reflected in the grammar. Suffixes on nouns and pronouns distinguish between one, two, and three or more. (See 7.11)

The numerals can be combined to make larger numbers if required but it will be seen by the examples that this cannot easily go beyond five.

kurriny kurriny	'four'
kurriny kurriny kayan	'five'

This lack of detail and expansion possibility in the numbering system makes for difficulty in understanding any form of mathematics.

## 2.2 KINSHIP

When referring to the Australian Aboriginal social system, two features stand out : kinship and sections or subsections. To outsiders these features may appear strange and difficult to understand. This is to be expected as in the Australian-European society, kinship is much less significant and the feature of sections and subsections is entirely absent. But to Aborigines they are a normal part of social living, part of the very fabric of their society.

### Kinship Terms

Many of the Walmatjari kinship terms cannot be directly equated with English kinship terms. For some terms, Walmatjari is more specific, for others, less specific. Some of the more common terms in English and Walmatjari are listed below for comparison. They are not equivalent, as will be seen by comparing columns 1 and 4.



Chart 1 Comparison of English and Walmatjari Kinship Terms

Person referred to	English term	Walmatjari term	Person referred to
female parent	mother	ngamaji	female parent & all her sisters
male parent	father	ngarpu	male parent & all his brothers
male offspring	son	walaku	male offspring
son of a man's sibling	nephew	walaku	son of a man's brother
son of a woman's sibling	nephew	walaku	son of a woman's sister
female offspring	daughter	kurntal	female offspring
daughter of a man's sibling	niece	kurntal	daughter of a man's sister
daughter of a woman's sibling	niece	kurntal	daughter of a woman's brother
mother's brother	uncle	kaka	mother's brother
father's brother	uncle	ngarpu 'father'	father's brother
father's sister	aunty	pimiri	father's sister
mother's sister	aunty	ngamaji 'mother'	mother's sister
male sibling	brother	papaji ngaja	older brother younger sibling
female sibling	sister	ngapurlu ngaja	older sister younger sibling
offspring of parent's siblings	cousin	There are many terms equivalent	

In Walmatjari there are some kinship terms which are reciprocal. For example, a woman calls her daughter's children jaja, and these children in turn call her (their mother's mother) jaja. Following are some of these reciprocal terms.

Chart 2

Reciprocal Kinship Terms

Walmatjari reciprocal terms	person referred to	English equivalent
jaja	mother's mother	grandmother
	woman's daughter's offspring (male & female)	granddaughter grandson
ngawiji	father's mother	grandmother
	woman's son's offspring (male & female)	granddaughter grandson
jamirti	mother's father	grandfather
	man's daughter's offspring (male & female)	grandson granddaughter
kilaki	father's father	grandfather
	man's son's offspring (male & female)	grandson granddaughter

Social Structure

All Walmatjari people belong to one of eight sub-sections. These are commonly termed "skin groups". Throughout this section they will be referred to as skin groups. By knowing a person's skin group, one can tell his relationship to each other person of the community. Thus it is a difficult concept to the Walmatjari that non-Aborigines are only related to a select number of people.

R. M. & C.H. Berndt (1964:48) say about skin groups, "...a person's section or subsection depends on his (her) mother's, but is not the same as hers ... In the case of sections, everyone in the tribe belongs from the moment of birth, and even before, to one of four named categories. These influence marriage and kinship relations." (As the Walmatjari structure divides into eight subsections, there are eight named categories.)

Each skin group has a name and those belonging to the group may be addressed by this name. Within the skin group there is a different name for the male and female. For example, JAKARRA and nakarra are brother and sister and belong to the same group. Following are the eight skin groups. Capitals are used for male terms, lower case for female terms. (The only significance of the numbers is to make the list easier to follow.)

- |              |                |
|--------------|----------------|
| 1. JANGALA   | 2. JUNGKURRA   |
| nangala      | nanyjili       |
| 3. JUPURRU   | 4. JAWANTI     |
| nyapurru     | nyapana        |
| 5. JAPALYI   | 6. JAKARRA     |
| nyapajarri   | nakarra        |
| 7. JANGKARTI | 8. JAMPIYIRNTI |
| nangkarti    | nampiyirnti    |

Everyone within the tribe and in neighbouring tribes is classified into two distinct divisions or moieties. "Moiety simply means half, but ... we usually restrict the term to a division which is recognized as exogamous - that is, where a person must marry into the opposite moiety and not into his own. This system of dual organisation, as it has been called, provides a clear-cut division for social and ceremonial purposes. The moieties are often named, although the definition does not or should not hinge on this, and often associated with special emblems or totems." (Berndt and Berndt 1964:46)

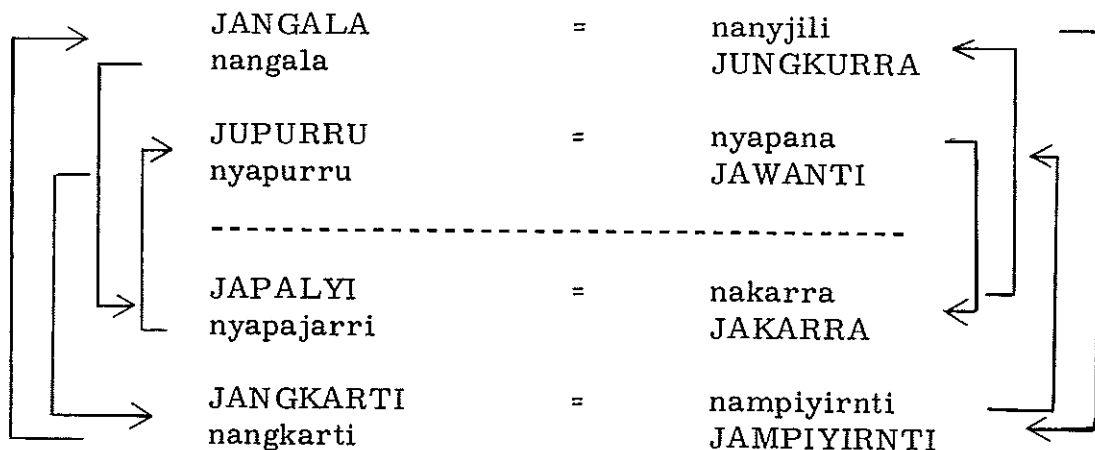
There is another division besides the moiety division. That is the division of generation levels, of which there are two. They are not reckoned in terms of chronological age, but are formal divisions, hinging on relative status. "Within a person's own generation level are to be found, to some extent at least, 'equals'; brothers and sisters, cross-cousins, age-mates and so on. The generation level above him includes those with some authority over him directly or indirectly: father, mother, father's sister, father's sister's husband, mother's brother, mother's brother's wife, perhaps mother-in-law, father-in-law and so on. Deference, and in some cases avoidance, are relevant here." (Berndt and Berndt 1964:88)

The Walmatjari person does not joke with people from the generation level above or below him, but only with those of his own generation level. English culture has restrictions similar to this. One of them is that parents and grandparents should be treated respectfully whereas the attitude to one's peers is a more relaxed one.

The diagram below shows the skin groups of Walmatjari as they relate to these divisions, moieties and generation levels. The columns represent the two different moieties. Generation levels are divided by the dotted line.

Chart 3

Moieties and Generation Levels



Matrilineal descent (choice of a person's skin group according to their mother's skin group), is marked by an arrow. For example: Children from a woman of the nangala skin group will belong to the JAPALYI and nyapajarri groups according to their sex.

Marriage relationships are indicated by the sign =. For example: men of the JANGALA group will marry women of the nanyjili group and women of the nangala group will marry men of the JUNGKURRA group. This is the ideal, but marriage is also allowable with members of the skin group in the opposite moiety as long as it is in the same generation level. For example: men of the JANGALA group may marry a woman of the nyapana group though his preferred wife is of the nanyjili group.

For a full account of the kinship system see the writings of the Berndts (1964: 26-91) or Kolig (1972: 9-12).

## 2.3 CULTURE

Walmatjari Aborigines who first travelled from the desert to the cattle stations, missions and towns found themselves in a different world. It was different in many ways. Clothes were necessary as nakedness was unacceptable. Beef, tea, sugar and flour were new tastes. There was a new language to be learned if communication was to be made. A new economy had to be learned also whereby food was obtained not by hunting, but from the white man. In turn the white man expected work. This kind of work was a new concept, very different from the work involved in hunting and gathering food for subsistence in the desert.

In contrast to the nomadic life and temporary shelters used in the desert, life at the cattle station was more settled and shelters were adjusted to suit. Iron and canvas billies and pannikins have replaced the disposable materials used in the past.

Although many of the ways of life have changed, there are some areas of the culture which have remained; yet even these have undergone some modifications. To a greater or lesser degree the following are still practised in most Aboriginal communities in the Fitzroy Crossing area:

- a. traditional religious life
- b. the kinship system with its obligations and avoidances
- c. use of vernacular languages
- d. hunting - though the rifle has replaced the spear
- e. food preparation which involves cooking on an open fire and baking in ashes
- f. consulting of medicine men for some sicknesses
- g. use of some bush medicines.

Articles have been written on these subjects. One anthropologist, Erich Kolig, was at Fitzroy Crossing between 1970 and 1972. The articles resulting from his research are particularly relevant since they refer to the Walmatjari people. The following are particularly helpful:

KOLIG, Erich. 'Kerygma and Grog'. Newsletter, Vol.1:7, July 1974, pp. 44-52.

A discussion on the re-introduction of traditional punishment methods among South Kimberley Aborigines. Kolig casts doubt on this as a progressive and viable step forward, as Aboriginal youth cannot be tried and judged by the traditional ideas which they do not live by.

KOLIG, Erich. 'Tradition and Emancipation: An Australian Aboriginal Version of Nativism.' Supplement to Newsletter, Vol.1:6, 1973.

Discusses the Aboriginal groups at Fitzroy Crossing with reference to their attempts to build their traditional heritage into the kind of life they are aiming at. This ideal existence would be a co-existence of Aboriginal traditions with opportunities of the Western industrial society.

KOLIG, Erich. 'Bi:n and Gadeja: an Australian Aboriginal Model of the European Society as a guide in Social Change.' Oceania, Vol.43:1, Sept. 1972, pp. 1-18.

Aborigines in the Fitzroy area view European society through the eyes of their own traditions. They see similarities of basic concepts between their own and the European society and so see no reason for systematic effort to assimilate.

AKERMAN, Kim. 'Tjakin-Njikená'. Newsletter, Dec. 1974, pp. 50-55.

Akerman, anthropologist with Community Health Services, writes about the changing patterns of food taboos in the south west Kimberley region of Western Australia. He first describes the traditional practice of meat avoidance, then he discusses changes that have taken place in the interpretation of which foods are to be avoided. He shows this as the reason for the protein impoverished diet of many Aborigines of the area.

Other articles about the Fitzroy area:

AKERMAN, Kim. 'Notes on "conception" among Aboriginal women in the Kimberleys, West Australia.' Oceania, Vol.XLVIII No. 1, Sept. 1977, pp. 59-63.

KOLIG, Erich. 'Progress and Presentation - Some Reflections on "Progress" and "Preservation" in Aboriginal Australia: the Aboriginal View versus Government Policy'. Newsletter, Vol.1:4, Sept. 1973.

KOLIG, Erich. 'From Tribesman to Citizen? Change and Continuity in Social Identities Among South Kimberley Aborigines' in Aborigines and Change: Australia in the '70s. Edited by R.M. Berndt. Social Anthropology Series No. 11, AIAS, Canberra, 1977.

KOLIG, Erich. 'The Future Begins Now - The Role of Catholic Missions in Aboriginal Advancement'. Newsletter, Vol.1:5, Dec. 1973.

PETRI, Helmut and PETRI-ODERMANN, Gisela. 'Stability and Change: Present-day Historic Aspects Among Australian Aborigines'. Australian Aboriginal Anthropology. R.M. Berndt, ed. AIAS. University of W.A. Press, 1970, pp. 248-276.

For general reading on Aboriginal culture:

BERNDT, R.M. and C.H. The First Australians. 3rd edn. Ure Smith, 1974.

ELKIN, A.P. 'The Aborigines of Australia: "One in Thought, Word and Deed"' in Pacific Linguistic Studies in Honour of Arthur Capell. S.A. Wurm and D.C. Laycock, eds.

HARRIS, Stephen G. 'Yolngu Rules of Interpersonal Communication' in Developing Education, Darwin, Vol. 4, No. 5, April 1977.

HART, Max. Kulila: on Aboriginal Education. Sydney: Australia and New Zealand Book Company, 1974.

Pages 8-19 give an introduction to what was involved in the education of the tribal Aborigine and the values that were important to him. The book also gives a good introduction to Aboriginal world view.

STANNER, W.E.H. 'The Dreaming' in T.A.G. Hungerford (ed.), Australian Signpost. (Melbourne; Cheshire, 1956.)

VASZOLYI, Eric. 'Aboriginal Languages: Truths and Fallacies' in Language Problems and Aboriginal Education. Edited by Ed Brumby and Eric Vaszolyi. ATEP, Mt. Lawley, W.A., 1977.

VASZOLYI, Eric. 'Language and World View in Aboriginal Australia'. Ibid.

## 2.4 STORIES ABOUT THE CULTURE

### The story of Looma

written by Peter Skipper

The story from the Dreamtime of how the hills at Looma came to be there is a long one. Peter Skipper has written this condensed version of the flood and the blue tongue lizard (who was at the same time a woman) who drowned at the place known today as Looma.

Marninwarnti palu ngunangani jarlu yininga Kunajawurla ngapanga.  
women they were before at name at Kunajarti at water

Jumunga palu ngarlka ngarnani.  
at soak they nut were eating

Nyanartijangkarlu pilangu marnani, "Kayili  
After that she to them was saying North

nyakanyakajipila marajinyalinykujarra. Kayili nyakanyakajipila  
you two look for me North you two look for me

pimarlawurra marajinyalinykujarra. Kayili  
distant flashes of lightning North

nyakanyakajipila pimarlawurra marajinyalinykujarra."  
you two look for me distant flashes of lightning

Wall marni pilarla, "Ngana man juiarnana."  
Alright said they to her What you telling

Marni, "Ngajirta. Yarr marna marnana ngaju." "Ya," marni  
said No Just I am saying I Oh said

pilarla marninjarrarlu. Turtangkarrakanya pila ngarlkakarti.  
they to her two women got up and went they two to nuts

Ngarlka pila warntarni. Nyanarti marnin pa wurna yanany.  
nut they two got that woman she walk goes

Kayili marri kangany parlanyanu ngarlka mapirrinni. Nyanarti  
north far carries she for herself nut also that

ngapa nyangany mamayimarnanujangka. Nyanarti ngapa pa  
rain sees from lightning flashes that rain it

mamayimarnani. Jininyarajaa pukanya pa mamayimarnani. Nira  
flashes day time and night it flashes always

kumantawarlany kumantawarlany pa mamayimarnani jininyarajaa  
each morning each morning it flashes day time and



pukanyja nira nyanarti. Mannin pa yanany puran. Ngapa  
 night always that woman she goes past rain

ngajirta nyakarla marnintu. Nganga pa yanany.  
 not saw woman astray she goes

Walimpa pa nyanya ngapa, kurnakwantinyurla pa nyanya,  
 later she saw rain, after turning round she saw

ngapa lurrujawurlu. Wali tarlakurrjawurlu pa pajani ngapa  
 rain thirsty alright with axe she chopped water

manangajangka ngapa nyanarti. Ngapa pa ngunangani mananga  
 from tree water that water it was in tree

purlkanga, yangkala pajani marnintu ngapa nyanarti.  
 big so that chopped woman water that

Wali turtapungani ngapa manajangka, yangkala  
 alright arose water from tree so that

yimpirlmarnani ngapa. Nyanartijangkarlu pa marnintu ngartakani  
 spilled water after that she woman made

yini parla Jiljimirnti ngartakani marnintu. Wali ngapa nyanarti  
 name its Jiljimirnti made woman alright water that

pa parayananiwarlanyarni. Ngapangu pa ngirrkarra ngarnani  
 it kept rising water it full up was eating

ngapangu.  
 water

Wali marnintu pa luka ngartakpani wamarn. Yutukani  
 alright woman she mud made around put

luka nyanarti pa ngapangu ngarni luka. Nyanartijangkarlu pa  
 mud that she water ate mud After that she

jarti ngartakani luka marnintu. Yininga Tiyatyarla pa  
 in vain made mud woman at name at Tiyatiya she

ngunangani. Nyanartijangkala pa ngapangu karrartakujirni, wurnala  
 was after that it water scared then move

pa jawumarni karla. Wali jurumani manyanu kaparn yininga  
 she swam west alright waited she half way at name

Parralanurla manyanu jurumani. Wali jakarni pa karla,  
 at hill at Paradise she waited alright started she west

jawumarni karlarrara wurna.  
 swam west move

Wali yarrtarni manyanu jurumani kaparn yininga  
 Alright again she waited half way at name

Pilla manyanu jurumani yininga Pilla Wumpumpirri la yini.  
 at Pii she waited at name at Pii at Wumpumpirri name

Wumpumpirri la pa yukarni. Nyanarti yini parla lungkurra.  
 at Wumpumpirri she lay that name her blue tongue lizard

Turtangkarrakanya wurra karla. Yarrntarni pa jawumani karlarrara  
 got up and went move west again she swam west

ngapanga purlkanga. Ngapanga pa jawumarni. Yapawarnti  
 in water big in water she swam children

mapirri rini manya kanya yapa lumangu yiningu  
 also she-them carried child blue tongue lizard name

lumangu manya kanya. Jarnakanya manya yapawarnti.  
 luma she-them carried carry on back she-them children

Parunga manya jarnakanya yapa. Wali yarrntarni manyanu  
 on back she-them carry on back child alright again she

jurumani yininga Mulumanta yini Mulumanta. Wali jurumani  
 waited at name Mulumanta name Mulumanta. alright waited

manyanu nyanawurra Mulumanta pamarra. Layimirri manyanu  
 she there Mulumanta at rock once she

jurumani, nyanarti jangka turtangkarrakanya kurlii la jawumarni  
 waited after that got up and went south swam

pamarrwarlanykarti purlkakarti pamarra. Wali ngapangu ngarnani  
 to another rock to big rock alright water ate

nyanarti marnin. Nyanartuwarnti yapawarnti palu jawumarni  
 that woman those children they swam

pamarrakarti karlarrara. Nyanartu marnin pa ngapangu ngarnani,  
 to rock west that woman she water ate

yini parla luma ngapangu ngarnani luma Yini luma ngarnani  
 name her luma water ate luma name luma ate

ngapangu. Wali puju.  
 water alright finish

Three women used to live at the waterhole called Kunajarti a long time ago. They used to drink from the soak there. Once one of them said to the other two, "You two watch out for me in the north where the lightning flashes." They said to her, "What are you talking about?" and she answered, "Nothing, I'm just talking."

The two women set off to look for ngarlka nuts and the other woman walked off to the north to get ngarlka nuts for herself. The lightning was flashing in the distance all day and night and the woman went past it. She didn't notice it and went on.

Later when she was thirsty she turned around and saw the lightning. She chopped a big tree with an axe. There was water in the tree and it came up out of the tree and spilled out over the top. The woman then named the place Jiljimirnti.

The water kept on rising until it covered everything. The woman made a wall of mud to try and stop it but the water covered the mud too. It was not enough to stop the water. That place is called Tiyatiya. She was afraid of the water and started to swim west. She paused at Parralanu, then swam again to the west. She stopped again at Pil which is also called Wumpumpirri and she slept there. (This woman was the blue tongue lizard). She moved off again to the west swimming in the flood water. She was carrying her children on her back while she swam. She paused again at the hill called Mulumanta and waited there one day, then she swam south to another big hill. It was there that she drowned and the children swam to a rock in the west (and were saved). The woman, the blue tongue lizard, died there in the water.

Note: The children can be seen as small rocks on top of the large hill at Looma. The woman, the blue tongue lizard, who drowned, is represented by the sandhill nearby.

After a bereavement there is a food taboo which certain close relatives of the deceased observe. Pompy Siddon describes the occasion when his brother died and his mother mourned and subsequently observed the food taboo. The ritual necessary to have the taboo lifted is included.

Kukajarti            palurla            pirriyani    ngamajiwu.    Marni  
with bad news    they to her    came            to mother    said

palurla,            "Walaku    man    marlajarrinya    nyuntu."    Muntala    palu  
they to her    son    you    without            you            abdomen they

parntakujirni            jakuljangkarlu    ngajukura    ngamaji.    Munta    palu  
caused to bow down    from news    my            mother    abdomen they

parntakujirni.            Wali            lungani            kumantajaa    jininyarajaa  
caused to bow down    alright    were crying    morning and    midday and

karuwarrajaa    pukanyajaa    rakarrarla.    Kuyiwarnti    manya  
afternoon and    night and    at sunrise    animals    she-them

ngarnani    pujurl            walak.            Pirtinyikani    manya    kuyiwarnti  
was eating    frog species    frog species            she-them    animals

pukawa            jilpirtijarti    wilka.    Nyanarti    jaminjawurlu    ngalany.  
snake            lizard    that            one under taboo    eats

Jaminjarti            parrangawarnti    murrkurnjaa    makurrawarnti    murrkurnjaa  
one under taboo    hot seasons    few and    cold seasons    few and

yitilalwarnti    murrkurn    ngunangupurru    jaminjarti    nira.  
wet seasons    few            to be            under taboo    always

Walimpawarlany    palu    warryanany    wangkipurru    marnupurru.  
much later            they    gather            for words    to talk

Yutantilany    nganimpirrwalany    nganimpirrwarlany.    Nyanarti  
sit            group            group            that

wangkipurru    jaminjartiwu            palurla            malany.    Layi  
for words            about one under taboo    they to her    say    one

nganpayi    turtangany    wangkipurru.    "Wali    karrkanyjalu.    Maiku  
man            gets up            for word            alright    be quiet    will speak

marna, I	Minyarti this	marnin woman	nguja was	jaminjarti under taboo	jarluwarlany long ago	jarluwarlany. long ago
Wayila query	mantarla you for her	yawiyjarrilany. are sympathetic	"Yu," yes	malany say	palu they	nukarni. all
Wurnala then walk	palu they	yanany go	kujangkurra. to this			
	Walimpa later	pukanyja night	palu they	pirriyanany. come	Nukarnini all	palurla they to her
yanany go	jirajawurlu with fat	manyam he self	kurrapa hand	mapalany. spreads	Jirajawurlurnila then with fat	
mapalany spreads	marnin woman	lirraja on mouth	janginy. face	Lungany cry	palu they	nukarni. all
Karrkalany stop	palu they	nukarni. all	Kuyi meat	ngilyki flesh	palanta they-her	lirrangakujilany. put into mouth
Taki-ngu acceptably	ngalany. eats	Nyangany see	palu they	pajangu. many	Malany say	palurla, they to her
"Walli, alright	Pungankula then kill	manurlanyanu you for yourself	nyuntungu." you			

People came to my mother bringing the bad news. "Your son is dead (You have no son)," they said. My mother was grief-stricken. She cried for days. From then on, she used to eat only small animals such as frogs, snakes and lizards because she was bereaved and so had to observe the taboo for the bereaved. That is what anyone who is bereaved eats. The taboo for the bereaved applies for three or four years.

At the appropriate time after the bereavement some people gather together and talk about the one who has been bereaved. One man stands up to speak. "Be quiet," he says, "I want to speak. This woman has been observing the taboo for the bereaved for a long time. Are you concerned about her?" "Yes," they all say. They then disperse. Later, at night they all return. One of them spreads fat over his hands. Then he smears the fat over the woman's lips and face. Then those in the group cry for a while. Then they put meat into the woman's mouth and she eats it while they all watch. They say to her, "Alright, you are free of the taboo and can eat normally now."

The kinship system, as described in Section 2.2, is the normal and correct way that relationships are worked out. In real life there are many times when the system has to be adjusted to the situation. In this story Olive Bieundurry tells how her uncle married a woman of the wrong skin group and the way it affected the relationship terms she had to use with his immediate family as a result. She also describes alternative relationships she can have to people of certain skin groups according to their parentage. (See end of Section 2.2)

Ngajukura my	ngarpu father	kayanmirri, once	yarr just	kaka uncle	ngajirta not	ngarpu, father	
ngajukurawu for mine	ngajartin young brother	parla, his	nganayi er	parlipinya found	kartu wife		
kayirrampaljarti from north	minya. this	Kunyangurla maybe	punapajarti, Bunaba	martpi maybe	nganayi er		
parta. anything	Kayirrampaljarti from north	parlipinya found	kartu. wife	Nangkartinyulartin, really Nangkarti			
yangkala so that	ngajukura my	kaka uncle	manyanta he	marrintjarrinya married	nyanawurla there		
nangkartinyungurla. into the Nangkarti group	Wali alright	nangalajaa nangala and	jangala jangala	nyanartiwarnti those			
yapawarnti children	palurla his	turtapinya. grew up	Wali alright	ngajukura my	paji mine	nyanartiwarnti those	
yapawarnti children	parnkuwarntila then cousins	nguniny are	ngajawarntijaa younger siblings and	papajiwarnti. older brothers			
Nyanarti that	paji my	marnin woman	jamirti grandmother	ngunarla, should be	jalarra now	paji my	pimirila aunty
nguniny is	ngamaji mother	paji my	nguniny, is	purrku old man	nyantukura my	papaji older brother	
paji my	jamirti grandfather	nguniny. is	Marninmipa only woman	nyanarti that	paji my	ngamaji mother	
nguniny, is	tumaj because	paji my	ngajukura my	kaka uncle	marrintimkujirni. married		
Kanarlany other	nganpayiwarlany man	jupurrnyungu really	jupurru	yalarti there	nguniny is		
punapajarti, Bunaba	ngajujal I certainly	marna I	ngilyki flesh	nakarra. nakarra	Wali alright	nyanti he	

jupurrujal. Wali nyanarti jupurrunyungu paji ngajuwu  
jupurru certainly alright that really jupurru my my

jaja nguniny nganpayi. Nyapartukarra partaji jaja  
grandfather is man How maybe mine grandfather

nguniny. Kunyungurla yarr parta ngajukura rungjayit. Jarlu  
is maybe just maybe he my wrong before

jamirti nguja rungjayitwarnti manya wajilpinyangurra  
grandfather was wrong he-them followed

nyapurrujaa jupurru, ngajukurarlu jamirtintu. Kujartinni palu  
nyapurru and jupurru my grandfather like this they

nguniny paja, yangka parlipangulu.  
are many those ours

Kunyungurla martpi ngajuwu paji jakarranyungu nguniny  
maybe maybe my my really jakarra is

jaja paji nguniny. Wali nyanarti jarntu, jarntu  
grandfather my is alright that relative relative

jaja. Yangka marna julalany jakarranyungu papaji.  
grandfather that I tell really jakarra older brother

Wali nyana ngajukuramiparni papajijaa, ngajirta kanarlany.  
alright that only my older brother and not other

Kanarlany kanarlany marna jarntu julalany papaji  
others others I relative call older brother

jakarranyungu. Kanarlany kanarlany marna jaja julalany  
really jakarra others others I grandfather call

jakarranyungu. Jaja paji nguniny yangka nampiyirntijilinyarni.  
really jakarra grandfather my is that like nampiyirnti

Yarnta nampiyirnti pajilu nganayi nguniny ngajajaa  
also nampiyirnti my er is younger sister and

ngapurru. Nganayijangka ngarpungu marrirtimkujirni warntarni  
older sister er father married got

kartu parlanyanu ngajukurarlul ngarpungu. Martpi nganayirru  
wife he for self my father maybe er

jupurrurlu martpi warntarni nanyjili kartu. Nyanartila paji  
jupurru maybe got nanyjili wife then that my

nguniny ngaja nyanarti nampiyirntinyungu. Yangka paji  
is younger sister that really nampiyirnti when my

nguniny jaja nampiyirntinyungu ngajuwu nakarrawu, wali  
is grandmother really nampiyirnti my nakarra alright

nyanarti pa. Nganayi jukungu pa warntarni juku warntarni paji  
that it er child he got child got my

nanyjilinyungu nganayirlu juku paji warntarni nanyjilinyungu  
really nanyjili er child my got nanyjili

jawantirlu kunyungurla kujarti Yarnta ngamaji palu nguniny  
jawanti maybe like this also mother they are

nanyjilinyungu marmpangulu nakarrawu, yarnta juku marmpangulu  
really nanyjili our nakarra also child our

nguniny kanarlany kanarlany. Yarnta marmpangulu nyapananyungu  
are others others also our really nyapana

nguniny juku, yarnta marmpangulu nyapananyungu ngamaji nguniny  
are child also our nyapana mother is

kanarlany kanarlany. Juku marmpangulu nguniny ngapurlujangka,  
others others child ours are from older sister

yangka ngapurlu nguninyjangka marmpangulu nampiyirnti wali.  
when older sister is our nampiyirnti finish



My father married a wife from the north. (He wasn't my real father but an uncle, my mother's brother.) Maybe she was from the Bunaba tribe or from some other tribe. I don't really know but she was from the north somewhere. She was from the wrong subsection (nangkarti) and my uncle married her. Now their children are all belonging to the nangala or jangala subsections. Those children are cousins to me. My uncle's wife should have been in a grandmother relationship to me but she is an auntie to me. She is an auntie, but her brother is still in a grandfather relationship to me. It is only that one woman whose relationship to me is changed, and she is my auntie now. That has happened because she married my uncle.

There is another Bunaba man who belongs to the jupurru subsection. I am really nakarra and he is jupurru but he is in a grandfather relationship to me. I don't know why he is in a grandfather relationship to me (he should be my father). My own grandfather must have married into the wrong subsection, nyapurru. That is the way it often works for us.

In the case of a man of the jakarra subsection, he can be related to me as grandfather and he will belong to my close relatives. When a jakarra man is a brother to me, then he is my very own brother. But I can call other jakarra men "brother" when they are close relatives.

Some of the jakarra subsection I call grandfather. He is a grandfather to me and is as close to me as the nampiyirnti subsection who are my grandmothers. Those of the nampiyirnti subsection can also be my sisters depending on who my father married. If a jupurru man (my father) marries a nanyjili wife, then their nampiyirnti children are in sister relationship to me.

For a nampiyirnti to be related to me (nakarra), as grandmother, it could be that my daughter, nanyjili, married a jawanti man. That is one way it could happen. Then again a nanyjili may be an aunty to me (nakarra). Or they can be daughters. But again those of the nyapana subsection can be daughters to us nakarra or they (nyapana) can be related as mothers to nakarra. A nampiyirnti can be a daughter to me (nakarra) when she is a daughter of someone I call "sister". That's all.

The women's work of gathering bush foods requires a knowledge of the animals of the bush. Adeline Wanangini describes the way to identify an anthill which will contain ant eggs, a delicacy to be added to the day's menu whenever possible. Once the eggs have been found and taken from the ants, the work of separating eggs and antbed begins. It involves several processes, some of which are difficult to describe with a few words in English, so the generic term "shake" has been used to cover these.

Puju parlipa ruwa yanany, yanujangka parlipa ruwa,  
 if we hunt go going we hunt  
  
 nyakula parlipa minyarti yani mungkukarti pinga yanany  
 then will see we this went to anthill ant goes  
  
 kirlingirrirlurra warntarri parla nguniny yangka. Wali  
 to opening track his is that alright  
  
 pingakurarla nguniny kirlingirri wamarnekujarra.  
 at the ant's is opening all around  
  
 Wali lanany parliparla milkinjawurlu. Tarrapungany  
 alright poke we with digging stick throw  
  
 parlipa minyarti mungku kaninykaninyjanga. Wali purlpungany  
 we this ant bed from inside alright gather together  
  
 parlipa minyarti ngurtikarti. Jarlalany parlipa, warapungany  
 we this to coolamon pan we squeeze  
  
 parlipa, yutukarralany parlipa, kurtukkarralanypala parlipa.  
 we put we then winnow we  
  
 Nyanartijangkala kakara nyanggurakujirnurla. Yangka parlipa  
 after that clean having wet it when we  
  
 kujarti murrkartalany, jarlalanypala parlipa.  
 like this winnow then shake we  
  
 Wali kunyungartala parlipa yutukarra kanarlanya  
 alright maybe we put in another  
  
 ngurtinga kakara, kangany parlipanyanangu kaninyjurra  
 coolamon clean carry we for them down  
  
 kanarlanywarntiwu. Ngarnungkarrangurla parlipa kangany.  
 to others eating we carry

Puju    parliparla    pajarralany    lamanta    warrpula,  
 if    we    chop    hollow log    warrpul tree

nguninywarlanyparni    pa    ngilarn.    Pajarralany    parlipa    nyanarti  
 is also    it    ant eggs    chop    we    that

tarlakurrujawurlu.    Purlpungany    parlipa    nyanartijangkawarlanyparni.  
 with axe    gather together    we    from that also

Kakarajinyangu    mapun    lamanta    nguniny    kaninyjarti    warrpula  
 really clean    true    hollow log    is    inside    warrpul tree

mananga.    Jarialany    parlipa,    kakarakujilany    parlipa.  
 tree    shake    we    clean    we

Kinkijartijinyangula    parlipa    pirrikangany    kaniny    ngurranga.  
 then really satisfied    we    carry    down    to camp

Ruwajangkarlu    parlipanya    yungany    kuyijaa    ngilarn    nyanarti.  
 from hunting    we-them    give    meat and    ant egg    that

Ngalungala    parlipa    kirralany    ngarnungurla.  
 then in shade    we    sit    after eating

When we go food gathering we may see a track that the ants have made going towards an ant hill and into the entrance of the ant's nest. We break the anthill with a digging stick, then discard the antbed (and expose the ant eggs). We scrape the antbed and eggs into the coolamon, then shake it to separate the eggs from the unwanted antbed. Then we squeeze the eggs with our hands so that they become moist (and stick together). This makes it easier to separate the two so that the eggs become quite clean. Then we shake it again and get rid of more antbed.

Sometimes we might put the clean ant eggs into another coolamon and take them to camp to share with the others, but we eat some of them ourselves on the way.

When we chop a hollow coolibah to find ant eggs, that is a good find. We have to chop the log with an axe then gather the eggs into the coolamon in the same way as described before, but because they come from inside a hollow coolibah tree they are already much cleaner than those from the anthill. We shake and clean them, then eat some and take the rest to camp. We share the ant eggs and then sit in the shade and eat them. They are a most satisfying food.

There are many natural medicines available to those who know how to use them. Pompy Siddon describes the method used to prepare the sap from the ironbark tree for use on sores.

Wangki marna julawu mirrijin piyirnkura kiyimi  
word I will tell medicine aborigine's sap

manajangka warlarrijangka. Manajangka kurntupungujangka parlipa  
from tree from warlarri from tree from kurntupungu we

warntalany, yangkala parlipa murrkajarrilany punpunwurra.  
get so that we break up into pieces

Nyanartijangka parlipa kangany ngurtikarti. Ngurtingula palu  
after that we carry to coolamon then in coolamon they

jarlalany yangkarti jukajilinyarni. Tanyji palu yutukarralany  
shake that like sugar hard they put

kanarlanyja ngurti. Kakara palu yutukarralany, wali pika  
in another coolamon clean they put alright ready

ngapangu kunjanupurru. Ngapangu palu kunjarralany, yangkala  
water to sprinkle water they sprinkle so that

palunyanangurla piyirnta miminga yutukarralany. Nyanarturlu  
they on man on sore put that

manyjilany wulyuwurra. Marnpakujilany jarrja mimi.  
burns until healed brings close skin sore

Kumantawarlanyja wulyula nguniny.  
another morning then well is

I will tell the story about how people get kiyimi medicine from the ironbark tree. We take the hard pieces of dried sap which are found on the bark and we hammer it into small pieces. Then we put it into a coolamon for separating. We shake it in the coolamon the same way as we winnow sugar (when we separate sugar from tea). Then we put the hard lumps into another coolamon and put the clean crushed part aside ready to mix with water. When we have mixed it with water, it is ready to put onto sores. It works on the sore and closes up the wound which heals in a few days.

The "majala" tree which grows near water has several uses. John Charles describes two of the ways in which his people make use of the bark when they go fishing.

	Nyanarti	kapi	palu	warntarnani	majalajangka.	Majala
	that	fish	they	were getting	with majala	majala
palurla	tukalany.	Wali	tukalany	palurla	majala,	ngapangala
they	pound	alright	pound	they	majala	then in water
palu	jupukujilany.	Wali	paja	kuyi	palu	pirlajarrilany,
they	dip	alright	many	fish	they	die
						paja
						many
kuyi	purikapurikajaa	kapi	purikapurika	lamparnlamparn	palu	
fish	big ones and	fish	big ones	small ones	they	
warntalany.	Warntalanypala	palu	yarr	pajajinyangu	wali.	
get	then get	they	just	very many	finish	
Kulalu	ningjawurlurni	warntalany,	pajajinyangu	kuyi	nyanarti	
it seemed	with net	get	very many	fish	that	
kapi	tukuwarlany	tukuwarlany.				
fish	heap	heap				
	Nyanartijangka	yangka	piyinn	lanany	kapingu	kulumarlu,
	after that	that	man	pricks	fish	fin
luumanany	palu	parntapi,	jangalany	palu,	kuyurpunganyapala	palu.
tear off	they	bark	chew	they	they spit	they
	Wali	nyanartijangka	lamajarrilanyapala	nyanarti		
	alright	after that	then becomes still	that		
wurlwurImarnujangka.	Lamakujiilanyapala	nyanartirlu	majalarlu.			
pain	then stops	that	majala			
Majala	parla	layi	nyanartiwu	kapiwu	lanujangkawu	kulumajangkawu.
majala	it	one	for that	fish	prick	fin

People once used the bark of the majala tree for getting fish. They would pound the bark of the majala tree then put it into the water. The fish would be stunned (and rise to the surface). They would get lots of fish of all sizes this way. It was just as though they had nets, they got so many fish!

If a man was stung by the catfish fin, he would tear off the bark of the majala and chew it, then spit it on the sting. It stopped the pain. The majala is the best thing to stop the pain from a catfish sting.

### 3. APPROACHING THE ABORIGINAL COMMUNITY

For those who will not have sufficient time to gain a speaking knowledge of the language, there are still good reasons for attempting to speak some of it.

- (a) A person's language is very important to him and interest shown in it is usually appreciated.
- (b) Foreign Walmatjari sounds are very hard for an English speaker to pronounce but no more so than the foreign English sounds (such as f, v, th, s) are to the Walmatjari speaker. An attempt at speaking a second language will give a measure of understanding of the difficulties Aborigines have in learning English.

For the person who has never learned a second language or had contact with an Aboriginal culture, the following points may be helpful as a guide in knowing where to start.

1. 'Firstly, ... the stranger to an aboriginal language should realise that this is not a "primitive" language. It most certainly is not a "hopeless babble of inarticulate sounds" (as an early investigator said). It has all the marks of a Divine origin, and, like the flowers, the crystals and other created things, the closer the scrutiny, the more concentrated the examination, so greater are the discoveries of inner beauty, pattern, adequacy and miracle of structure.

"After the student realises that the aboriginal language is a complete and adequate language, and overcomes any preconceived and erroneous idea that his own language is the only "full" and "proper" language in the world, he will be able to take the next step. A noted linguist has said, "The greatest hindrance to language learning is PRIDE." ' (Douglas 1964: 7, 8)

2. The native Walmatjari speaker is the best tutor. Most will be only too glad to help. You can't learn to speak or hear the language from just reading this book.

3. When asking for Walmatjari words don't tire the person who is giving them to you. If you have difficulty hearing, ask them to repeat it three times but no more. If you still don't have it, ask someone else later.

4. Be willing to be laughed at when you speak incorrectly. In fact, laugh at yourself. You probably sound funny.

5. Remember that you are moving into another culture and although it may be different from yours, it is not inferior.

6. The Walmatjari have no formal greeting or farewell such as Goodday or Goodbye. How are you? is another English expression which does not carry over to the Aboriginal culture and cannot be translated with meaning. Many of the Walmatjari people use English greetings. Others have attempted to adapt their language to make equivalents. The phrase Wulyu kumanta is a literal translation of Good Morning.

7. There is no obligation to speak when passing someone in the street. However the questions Where are you going? or Where have you come from? are often asked. The usual English reaction to this is something like, Mind your own business, but this is a legitimate enquiry and should be answered, though there is no need for the answer to be specific. I am going north is quite an acceptable answer.

8. One thing English speakers take for granted and have been taught since childhood is the use of please and thank you. The Walmatjari (and many other languages of the world) do not have terms for either of these. The reaction of most English speakers is to consider them ungrateful but there are other ways to show gratitude than by saying these words.

9. Whether the camp is a house, tent or even less, the Aborigine you visit will appreciate being treated with the same respect as any non-Aborigine would receive. For example:

- (a) Don't enter a camp or living area without permission.
- (b) If there is no door, warn of your arrival by a noise; cough or call out.
- (c) It is bad manners to eat in front of visitors so avoid visiting at meal times.

10. After a visit or conversation it is usual to tell the visitor to go. Often, if this permission is not given the visitor will not feel free to leave. This applies to meetings and adult classroom situations to some extent. To give such permission one says, Wali yanta. 'Alright, you go now.'

11. Avoid using the names of those recently dead, especially when talking to close relatives of the deceased. Refer to him as 'your son' or something similar.

12. Someone may assign you to a skin group. You can then work out what relationship term you should use for anyone you have contact with, by referring to Chart 3 in Section 2.2. Avoid the presumption of asking for a skin group or assigning yourself to one.



13. Using English for Communication. When using English with those who understand little of it, avoid use of concepts they don't understand.

Alternatives. There is no concept or word for OR. Always ask a straight question, "Do you want one?" NOT "Do you want one or two?". The answer to the alternative will most likely be Yes or No and will cause unnecessary problems. (See also Section 8)

Negative. The negative question is answered differently. (See Section 8) Always ask a positive question. Do you eat that? NOT You don't eat that do you?

Why. Avoid questions that ask why. (See Section 8)

Idioms. Avoid the use of idioms, because each language has its own idioms and the Walmatjari speaker finds it hard to understand English idioms (See 2.1).

Time. Plan appointments in reference to tangible events such as meals and sunrise or sunset rather than referring to the clock. (See 2.1)

Use good English, avoiding the difficult concepts described throughout this paper; e. g. the omission of articles, prepositions and other small words (what you think may be approximating Pidgin) will not make the English easier to understand. To speak Pidgin requires a study of that language.

#### 14. Ideas for conversations.

(a) Learn the Aboriginal skin group of someone you have close contact with. Try to perfect pronunciation of it and always call him/her by that name. If you have occasion to ask someone their name, ask a third person, as it can be offensive for a person to have to pronounce his/her own name.

(b) Ask about people's families. These are very important to them, as they are to all people. Though you may not understand all that is said this subject can be a good 'ice-breaker'.

(c) Apply the relationship terms from Section 2.2 to your own family and discuss it with someone. Use a photograph.

(d) Collect photographs or pictures of local events and make a scrap book. Use this as a talking point for casual conversations.

(e) Learn a selection of the following phrases.

Yes	yuwayi yu
No	ngajirta
tomorrow	kumanta
day after tomorrow	kumantawarlany
What is his name?	Ngana pa nyantu yini?
Give me ...	Yungkaja ...
What's this?	Ngana minyarti?
I will give you money.	Yungku marnanta mani
I have come to talk.	Wangkikarra marna pirriyani.
Are you from the Mission?	mijinkarraji ngan?
Are you from the reserve?	rijapkarraji ngan?
I don't know	ngurrrpa
Say it again	Yarntarni manyja.
Say it slowly	Yaru manyja.
May I sit down?	Kirralku ngarna?
Alright go now	Wali yanta.
Yes go ahead & do it.	Kaj.
Where are you going?	Wanyjurla man yanany?

Possible answers to the last question:

north	kayili
south	kurlila

east

west

to the store

to the camp

to get wood

to the school

to the reserve

kakarra

karla

tuwakarti

ngurrakarti

warlukarti

kuulkarti

rijapkarti

#### 4. WORD LISTS

A Walmatjari word list is included here for reference. As all people do not speak Walmatjari, and to show the contrast between languages, short lists of words in Bunaba, Nyigina, Yulbaridja and Walmatjari follow the Walmatjari list.

##### Walmatjari Word List

This is a small selection of words listed alphabetically. For pronunciation see Section 5.2. Verbs are given in the tenses of their English equivalent. Any change of tense will require a change in the verb (See 7.12). Usually only one of the many possible synonyms is given. Some dialects may use slightly different forms from the words given here. For example, 'sick' can be either mimijarti or mimijartu.

<u>English</u>	<u>Walmatjari</u>
afternoon	karuwarra
ant	pinga
ant egg	ngilarn
arm	kurrapa
ate	ngarni
back	palpu, paru
bait (small fish)	lakarr
barramundi	parlka
beard	ngulyku, ngarnkurr
bed	pangk
billabong	pirra
bird	jiriki
black	kurnkurn
blanket	pilangkirr
blood	nungu
bone	kampukampu, kuji
boomerang	karli
boy	parri
breast, milk	ngamarna
broilga	kuyartu
bullock	purluman
butterfly	pirrpintipinti
buttocks	puku

calf (of leg)	warlarrpirti
came	yani
camp	ngurra
car	ngurti, mutuka
cat	pujikat, miyawu
catfish	kulamajarti
cave	naji
centipede	kanparr
chest	tukutuku
child	yapa
clothes	kuluwuj, palya
cloud	ngumuru, yurnturr
cold	makurru
cold season	makurra
come here	mirnu yanta!
cooked	kamparni
cool	kirtily
coolamon	ngurti
cough	kuntilypinya
creek	palma
cried	lina
crocodile (freshwater)	kuwarniya
crocodile (salt water)	linykurra
cut	jungani
damper	pulawa, tampa
darkness	munga
dawn, dusk	rakarra
dingo	marrany
dog	kunyarr
down	kaniny
dress	turiti
dust	jutu
eagle	wamulu, wapurna
ear	pina
earth	nguwa
east	kakarra
eat	nganyja!
eel	lanyi
egg	kampiny
emu	karnanganyja
eye	mil

face	janginy
faeces	miyijangka, kura
father	ngarpu
fence	parrik
fingernail	miljarn
fire, firewood	warlu
fish	kapi
flame	tili
floodwater	warrampa
fly	ngurriny
food (vegetable)	miyi, mangarri
foot, footprint	jina
forehead	janginy
frog	walak, pujurl
gecko	wakura
girl	manga
goanna	kakaji
go now	wali yanta!
grass	yuka
grass hopper	jarrjurn
hair	ral
hand	kurrapa
hung (as clothes on line)	tarnikani
hawk	likjarti
head	jurlu
headache	ngalak
hot	parrparr, putpara
hot coals	pirrki, yawu
hot season	parranga
hornet	munurmunurrku
horse	yawarta, timana
house	mayaru
jilgie	jarrampa
kangaroo (river)	wanyjirri
kangaroo (plains)	marlu
kangaroo (rock)	jamarnti
knee	nimirti
later	walimpa
laughed	warralpinya
lay down	yukarni

leg  
light a fire  
lizard  
look!

man (old)  
man, Aboriginal person  
man (initiated)  
mat  
meat  
midday  
money  
moon  
morning  
mosquito  
mother  
mouth  
mucous  
mud  
mudlark

nape of neck  
night  
nose  
north  
now

open your mouth!

painful  
pant  
past  
plain, open space  
played  
prick, inject  
will inject  
pus

ran  
red ochre  
river  
road, track  
rock, stone  
run!

kanyji  
jartkujirni  
wirika  
nyaka!

purrku  
piyirn  
nganpayi  
pul  
kuyi  
jininyara  
pamarr, mani  
yakarn, kilinman  
kumanta  
kiwiny  
ngamaji  
lirra  
kungkurr  
luka  
tiyatiya

nyanka  
pukanyja  
punul  
kayili  
jalarra

ngaamanyja!

karrkarr, wurlwurl  
rangrangmani  
jarlu  
pirntirri  
rijikarrinya  
lanta!  
lanku  
kamurru

laparni  
pirnji  
martuwarra  
warntarri  
pamarr  
lpanyja!

sacred song	juju
sandhill	jilji
saliva	jamarnta
sand	walyarra
sat, stayed, lived	kirrarni
sawfish	piyalpiyal
saw	nyanya
sick	mimijarti
sit down!	yutanti!
shade	ngalu
sheep	kukunja
shield	jara, karrpirna
shin	warta
shoulder	linpi
skin	partu
sky	yalkiri
sleep	manyang
smoke	ngunyjurr
snake	jilpirtijarti
soak water	jumu
soap	juup
soon	warra
sore	mimi
south	kurlirra
spear (bamboo)	jirnal
spear (wooden)	mangul
spear thrower	ngapaliny
spinifex	jijapuru
spat	juwatpinya
spoke, said	marni
star	wil
stand up!	turtangka!
store	tuwa
stork	mayarta
stomach	munta, ngaru
sugar	juga
sun	purangu
swam	jawumarni
tea	tiyi, nalija
teeth	lirra
thigh	kanyji
throat	kangkurl
toenail	miljarn
tongue	jalany



tortoise  
track, road  
tree, stick, thing  
trousers  
turkey (bush)  
turned around

up  
urine

vein  
vessel  
vomit

wash! (self)  
washed (clothes)  
water  
well, good  
went  
west  
wet season  
wind  
willy wagtail  
white clay  
white cockatoo  
white person  
woman  
woman (old)

yellow ochre  
young man

jangkurr  
warntarri  
mana  
turawurr  
pinkirrjarti  
kurnakwantinya, kurnakkujirni

kankarra  
kumpu

jilawa  
ngurti  
kurlpuk

nyumukmanyja!  
wajimmarni  
ngapa  
yara  
yani  
karla  
yitilal  
walypa  
jintipirriny  
mawanti  
ngakalyalya, lapa  
kartiya  
marnin  
parmany

karntawarra  
pinkayi

Word Lists for Bunaba, Nyigina and Yulbaridja

The Bunaba word list was given by Alex Herbert; the Nyigina word list was given by Friday Mulamula; Benny Walkartu gave the Yulbaridja list.

<u>English</u>	<u>Nyigina</u>	<u>Bunaba</u>	<u>Yulbaridja</u>	<u>Walmatjari</u>
camp	puru	muwe	ngurra	ngurra
mother	kuya	ngarranyi	yipija, tilypu	ngamaji
father	wulu	ngawungu	mama, yina	ngarpu
child	pawa	puka	jiji	yapa
man	wampa	kurama	wati	piyirn
woman	marnin	wiyi	tuju	marnin
go	kaliyangama	wartpara	yarra	yanta
morning	ngiimpi	manəngarrə	yungunpa	kumanta
afternoon	ngurrangurra	karrwaru	rukangka	karuwarra
night	parin		mungangka	pukanyja
hot	parapara	parrangka	yalingka	parranga
wet	yitilal	pulurru	wuruwurungka	yitilal
cold	kamirniny	mayirre	pirriyangka	makurra
water	wila	karwa	kalyu	ngapa
hand	nimarranga	mingalə	mara	kurrapa
foot	kartijina	tinga	jina	jina
ear	nilapapa	pina	langa	pina
eye	nimilarr	mulu		mil
sick	yikayirany	pirlwilə	mimikurlu	mimijarti