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PREFACE

These Work Papers are being produced in two series by the Summer Institute of Linguistics, Australian Aborigines Branch, Inc. in order to make results of SIL research in Australia more widely available. Series A includes technical papers on linguistic or anthropological analysis and description, or on literacy research. Series B contains material suitable for a broader audience, including the lay audience for which it is often designed, such as language learning lessons and dictionaries.

Both series include both reports on current research and on past research projects. Some papers by other than SIL members are included, although most are by SIL field workers. The majority of material concerns linguistic matters, although related fields such as anthropology and education are also included.

Because of the preliminary nature of most of the material to appear in the Work Papers, these volumes are being circulated on a limited basis. It is hoped that their contents will prove of interest to those concerned with linguistics in Australia, and that comment on their contents will be forthcoming from the readers. Papers should not be reproduced without the authors' consent, nor cited without due reference to their preliminary status.

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INTRODUCTION TO SERIES B VOLUME 8

SIL is primarily an applied-linguistics organisation, with goals in translation and literacy. As such, it cannot ignore the cultural context of language, particularly since SIL fieldworkers carry out their research and goals in an ongoing language-culture situation. For these reasons it is appropriate that SIL-AAB personnel share some ideas and insights in a 'language-culture' work papers volume. We are also pleased to include two papers by non-SIL contributors, Judith Stokes and John Harris, both of whom have had much experience in the Aboriginal language-culture context.

In the first paper Jean Kirton shares insights she has gained during the dual process of learning Yanyuwa language and culture at Borroloola. Though not claiming that she is expressing an emic (insider's) viewpoint, Jean has been careful to check out her observations and tentative conclusions with a Yanyuwa speaker, Nero Timothy. In exploring the interrelationships between language and culture, there are always the dangers of stating the obvious and/or making unwarranted statements of causation. Jean has aimed to underscore the importance of relating language study to the local culture, demonstrating that linguistic data can be better understood when its cultural context is known.

Long before the use of such interdisciplinary labels as 'cognitive anthropology', 'sociolinguistics' and 'anthropological linguistics', both linguists and anthropologists were interested in kinship terminology as an interface of language and culture. Helen Geytenbeek's paper on Nyangumarta kinship has grown out of her need as a field linguist to speak and act correctly in the Nyangumarta community. Helen shares the view of Nyangumarta kinship which she has had to learn—that of a female member of the group.

Cross-cultural education in mathematics has often been a frustrating experience for both teachers and students. Part of the problem has been the lack of knowledge of, or appreciation for, non-Western approaches to mathematics. Judith Stokes' paper is an extensive description of Anindilyakwa mathematical language and its cultural context which refutes popular generalisations about the limited counting ability of Aboriginal people. Judith is to be commended for the amount of data she has collected and for her efforts to gain due recognition for Anindilyakwa mathematical language and concepts.

John Harris believes that Judith's paper is 'the first substantial discussion of the mathematical concepts of an Aboriginal group which has ever been published', and he finds fault with linguists and anthro-

pologists who have had access to such data for other Aboriginal groups but for various reasons have not made it known. Their neglect has allowed prejudiced views of Aboriginal mathematics as 'primitive' to continue unchecked, often with the accompanying view that 'primitive mathematics' is primary evidence of cultural inferiority. John's paper outlines how biased statements about Aboriginal mathematical abilities have developed and continued to the present day, and he cites data from several Aboriginal languages to correct such biases.

However, a deeper understanding of Aboriginal mathematics does not mean that differences between Western and Aboriginal approaches to mathematics are henceforth discounted. As Barbara Sayers' paper recognises, there are still frustrations and problems for many Aboriginal children learning mathematics in school. Barbara believes that the 'problems' are primarily cultural rather than linguistic: a hunting and gathering people have no need for highly developed and precise mathematical calculations and therefore should not be expected to have developed them. The perceptual and cognitive skills will be in different areas more appropriate to a hunting and gathering way of life. Barbara offers several suggestions to those teaching mathematics to Aboriginal children, suggestions which take into account the concepts and teaching styles of Aboriginal culture. Though their approaches are quite different, both John and Barbara are concerned that Western educators know more about Aboriginal culture and that they accept Aboriginal mathematical concepts and language on their own merit rather than judging them from a Western ethnocentric viewpoint.

As this introduction has indicated, the first five work papers in this volume illustrate the interdependence of language and culture. The reader will have to judge how much the final paper illustrates that same interdependence. It is a partial report of a research project undertaken to find out to what extent the development of colour terminology is culturally determined. The data gathered from five Aboriginal languages by SIL fieldworkers are inconclusive as to the relationship between culture and colour vocabulary, but they certainly illustrate the complexity of language-culture research.

Susanne K. Hargrave
Volume Editor

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SOME THOUGHTS ON YANYUWA LANGUAGE AND CULTURE

Jean Kirton, with Nero Timothy

Language reveals the culture of its speakers. The work of learning a language effectively involves learning something of the culture simultaneously, and one of the joys of learning Yanyuwa¹ has been to discover aspects of the people's way of life and thought reflected in the language. The tentative analysis offered here is based primarily on the author's linguistic data and her observations of the Yanyuwa people's way of life. Nero Timothy has verified the linguistic data in the paper and has expressed his agreement with the approach taken.

The paper is presented in two parts. The first part briefly considers seven areas in which traditional Yanyuwa culture has influenced the language to a significant extent, and presents an eighth area in which traditional beliefs may well have exerted an influence. The second part discusses in greater detail one particular area of the Yanyuwa language, that of possession marking, which reflects the Yanyuwa way of life and world view. The material presented is summarised in two charts at the conclusion of the paper.

PART I: OVERVIEW OF SOME LANGUAGE-CULTURE RELATIONSHIPS IN YANYUWA

1. RELIGION

Initiated Yanyuwa men have responsibility for religious ceremonial life and they hold the sacred knowledge of their people. Part of this special knowledge is a secret vocabulary — alternative names used exclusively by the men for objects known to the women only by their common names, and sacred names for objects which are secret from the women. As a woman, the author does not know this vocabulary and so is unable to illustrate it (nor would she wish to, since this would be unethical). The presence of this alternative vocabulary is merely noted.

2. KINSHIP AVOIDANCE

In the social life of the people there is formal avoidance of certain relatives. Avoidance relationship occurs between sons-in-law and mothers-in-law, fathers-in-law and sons-in-law, brothers and sisters, men in brother-in-law relationship, and women in sister-in-law relationship. If speech is permitted in the specific relationship, then avoidance speech must be used. This involves a separate set of stems for the general content words. The same syntax and morphology applies as in normal speech, that is, sentences and words are constructed in the same way, and generally the prefixes and suffixes of common speech are used.

In the following two examples the avoidance utterance is asterisked. (Examples are given throughout in the Yanyuwa practical orthography.)²

Kanda-atharri rra-ardu.

* *Kanda-mardungka rra-kuyaji.*

(She-be:cold) (f-child)

'The girl was cold.'

Kilu-arrkanu lhuwa nyu-rduwarralu.

* *Kilu-nguthuma mimarnu nyu-marrurulu.*

(it:he-spear) (snake) (m:nom-initiated:man-erg)

'The initiated man speared the snake.'

3. CONTRASTIVE ROLES OF MALE AND FEMALE

The physical development of both boys and girls was observed to determine when they were ready for introduction to adult responsibilities, girls for marriage and domestic responsibilities,

boys for initiation and entrance into manhood and the commencement of religious training. Men were hunters of game — sea turtle and dugong (sea-cow), kangaroo, wallaby and emu. Women were food gatherers and hunted for smaller creatures — goanna and lizards, lagoon turtle. The roles of men and women were strongly contrastive.

These contrastive male and female roles in society are paralleled in the language by contrastive dialects used by male and female speakers (the sex of the hearer is irrelevant). The same word stems are used in both dialects, but class-marking prefixes for the male and masculine noun classes (Kirton 1971) are affected. Not only noun prefixes are affected but also prefixes on noun modifiers and verbs, and pronominal morphemes, all of which mark agreement with the class of the noun. In the following examples the women's dialect is given first followed by the men's.

Nya-ja nya-yalkuyi nya-wukuthu, kiya-alarri baji ji-wurnda-a.

Jinangu Ø-yalkuyi Ø-wukuthu, ka-alarri baji ki-wurnda-a.

(This m-young:man m-short he-stand there msc-tree-by)

'This young man, the short one, stood there by the tree.'

Ki-wingka kari-a Ø-babalu. Kanyinju-athama ji-babalu-ngku.

Ka-wingka kari-a Ø-babalu. Kilu-athama ki-babalu-ngku.

(It-come from-west msc-buffalo him:it-chase msc:nom-buffalo-erg)

'A buffalo came from the west. The buffalo chased him.'

The contrastive roles of males and females are further paralleled in the language by separate male and female noun classes which are then in contrast with the other noun classes in the language: (female class) *rra-nhanawaya* 'woman', *rra-bardibardi* 'old woman', *rra-ardu* 'girl'; (male class) *nya-mirningiya* 'man', *nya-malbu* 'old man', *nya-ardu* 'boy'.

4. CONSERVATION OF SPECIES

Within the culture there is an awareness of the need to conserve those species endangered by hunting. Certain Yanyuwa men have a *jungkayi* manager relationship to particular species related to the *yijan* 'dreaming' beings. The *jungkayi* relationship involves a protective responsibility. In practice, for example, the *jungkayi* associated with the groper fish 'dreaming' has a responsibility to see that only those groper needed for food are taken from the river.

In the language, living species are normally assigned to masculine or feminine classes. Generally the whole species is classified as

masculine or feminine, regardless of the sex of specific members of the species — additional reference can be made to distinguish male or female if this is in focus. But certain species, including those which are depleted by hunting, are distinguished in the language according to the male and female of the species. As the Yanyuwa learn the language they are simultaneously learning to distinguish the male and female of the species endangered by hunting:

<i>Ø-nangurruwala</i>	'male mountain kangaroo'
<i>a-jurnabu</i>	'female mountain kangaroo'
<i>Ø-ngardarda</i>	'male coastal wallaby'
<i>a-malurrungkurru</i>	'female coastal wallaby'
<i>Ø-warrikundayangu</i>	'male sea turtle'
<i>a-tharra</i>	'female sea turtle'
<i>Ø-waliki</i>	'male dugong (sea-cow)'
<i>a-kurlakurlawija</i>	'adult female dugong'
<i>a-wurduwu</i>	'pregnant dugong'
<i>a-bayawiji</i>	'dugong cow holding her young'

The language, then, draws attention to the sex of these creatures in two ways — by providing separate stems for the male and for the female, and by further marking the stem with the relevant masculine or feminine prefix.

5. KINSHIP RELATIONSHIPS

Classification of kin into three separate noun classes and an additional subclass highlights some of the contrastive roles assigned to groups of kin within the culture. The classification is described in Part II of this paper. There is much additional complexity in the kinship system, but what is marked on the language is significant.

6. MARKING CULTURAL SIGNIFICANCE

In his paper on 'Noun Classes', Dixon (1968) postulates that 'transfer' of an items class membership away from other entities of the same kind may mark some 'important property . . . most often "harmfulness"'. This explanation has helped the author understand what appeared to be erratic classification in Yanyuwa. For example, it explained why the stinging jellyfish *na-walkurrarra* appeared in the *na-* arboreal class primarily consisting of inanimate items, and not in the masculine or feminine classes with the other animate creatures.

Similarly the verb stem *tha* 'bite, eat (flesh)' is erratic in its occurrence. Verbs which take objects normally occur in the transitive verb class and are constructed as transitive verbs marking both subject and object. The stem *tha*, however, is normally constructed as an intransitive verb marking subject only, although it occurs in a transitive clause construction with potential for an object. However, if it is a living person who is bitten or the flesh of a dead person which is eaten, the verb is then constructed as a transitive verb. The significance of eating or biting a human has thrown *tha* into a small subclass of verbs, generally constructed as intransitive verbs but occurring in transitive clause constructions:

Kiwa-tha ni-warnnyi. 'He ate some meat.'

(he-eat msc:its-flesh)

Kanyila-tha niya-warnnyi. 'He ate/bit his flesh.'

(him:he-eat his-flesh)

This principle of transfer or displacement out of the expected class or out of normal position in an utterance functions throughout the language to indicate what Yanyuwa speakers regard as focal.

7. SIGNIFICANCE OF LOCATION AND DIRECTION

For a people whose law required death of those who trespassed into sacred areas, it was essential to know and remain in safe territory. In an area where months may pass without rainfall, it is essential to survival to remain within reach of available water. As a number of non-Aborigines have discovered to their cost, to be lost in out-back Australia may well mean to perish.

For the Yanyuwa, the very process of hearing and speaking their language trains the people to be consciously aware of their location, relative location and directions. When the author was learning to speak Yanyuwa, her teachers were constantly and patiently prompting her to add essential locative or directional information which she had omitted. If she commented, *Nya-bardarda jiya-warrkanji*, 'The baby is crawling', a Yanyuwa friend would hasten to add *akarramba* 'on the east side'. And her statement, *Julaki ki-yibanda*, 'The plane landed', was completed by her companion's addition, *ngamala* 'in the south'. When she would have said that a dog they were watching ran around the house, her Yanyuwa teacher commented that it went southwards on the east side. These statements in the language are linguistically incomplete until the locative and/or directional information is included.

In the author's culture, time is of great significance and English is

rich in its capacity to detail time. In Yanyuwa culture time is of minimal significance and references are fewer and more general. But in Yanyuwa culture it is vital to be oriented to the physical environment and the language is rich in its capacity to detail location and direction.

8. SIGNIFICANCE OF THE 'DREAMING'

The Yanyuwa concept of *yijan* 'dreaming' includes an eternal realm and eternity as a time period which overlaps with this world and time. There is an interrelating of spiritual beings and physical ones (such as people, birds or animals, reptiles or fish, trees or plants, winds), and there are focal *yijan* sites and a surrounding area of the country.

It seems that 'dreaming' versus 'non-dreaming' may be associated with two first-order verb suffixes (suffixes which immediately follow the verb stem), *-nthā* and \emptyset . Yanyuwa verb suffixes carry meanings associated with tense and mood (Kirton 1978), and *-nthā* and \emptyset are described as mood orientation suffixes and are labelled 'recountive mood' and 'conversative mood'. Suffix *-nthā* is the mood of leisurely recounting of things of significance, \emptyset is the mood of casual conversation and interchange. This is an over-simplification — the meaning cannot be so clearly defined — but *-nthā* seems to have *yijan* 'dreaming' overtones and \emptyset 'non-dreaming'.

The recountive mood is basic to *yijan* narratives, to discourses telling of traditional and customary activities. It is the mood of those things that always were and those things that are expected always to be. It is the mood of the continuing things outside the present or of the things people are exhorted continually to do. It is the mood when focus is on the state of being rather than on the action of the subject.

Conversative mood generally refers to individual actions that are associated with the past, present or future, those actions with minimal eternal significance. This is the mood most frequently used in describing everyday personal experiences, the mood of general conversation and gossip, the mood of single completed actions (including single completed actions in 'dreaming' stories). This is the mood of the domestic details of life, of the actions which have an immediate significance to individuals but which have little relevance to eternal considerations or which are incidental to them. Specifically, recountive mood suffix *-nthā* co-occurs with past and future customary tenses, with the immediate future (prediction based on what is customary perhaps?), with prohibition, and with exhortation to always act in a certain way. It also co-occurs with all participle forms. The conversative mood suffix \emptyset co-occurs with

general past, present and future tenses and with present imperative.

It is the writer's conjecture, then, that these two suffixes may well function to label life's actions as significant or insignificant insofar as they relate to the eternal.

PART II: SEVEN KINDS OF POSSESSION IN YANYUWA

The Yanyuwa language distinguishes seven kinds of possession. Possession marked within the word indicates the closest kind, inalienable possession. The use of a free pronoun or possessive pronoun within a phrase indicates possession which is potentially transferable, alienable possession. There are five categories of inalienable possession and two categories of alienable (see chart 2 at end of paper). The purpose of this section is to describe the Yanyuwa view of possession as it is demonstrated by the language.

1. INALIENABLE POSSESSION

Inalienable possession is marked by attaching a pronominal possessor affix to the possessed noun stem (Kirton 1971). Different sets of pronominal possessor affixes (Kirton 1970) demonstrate five kinds of alienable possession. Body-parts are owned in a different way from kin, and kin are grouped into four different categories which partly define the kind of behaviour appropriate to the relationship.

1.1 BODY-PART POSSESSION

A living person or animal possesses body-parts in a unique and individual way and this fact is marked by using a distinctive set of possessor prefixes. These prefixes distinguish all the persons (first, second and third persons singular, dual and plural) and all the noun classes except the abstract class: male, female, masculine, feminine, food, aboreal. The latter four classes include inanimate entities but some of these possess 'body-parts' in an extended sense. A cave has a mouth: *na-ajinja narnu-mulu* (arb-cave arb:poss-mouth) 'cave mouth'. A tree possesses its bark: *∅-wurnda ni-yirra*² (msc-tree msc:poss-skin/bark) 'tree bark'. A fruit tree possesses its fruit: *ma-mungku nu-wulaya* (fd-mango fd:poss-head) 'mango fruit'. A wave possesses its spray: *a-rumu nanda-rayal* (fem-wave f/fem:poss-sputum) 'sea-spray'.

Body-part meanings have been usefully extended to describe parts of vehicles, planes, buildings and other introduced items: *∅-mudika ni-rarrama* (msc-car msc:poss-upper:leg) 'car wheel'; *∅-barrawu ni-mulu* (msc-house msc:poss-mouth) 'door'. The central meaning of body-part class items, however, is shown in their possession by animate beings: *ngarna-mulu* (my mouth); *nda-wulaya* (your:s-head); *rra-ardu nanda-rarrama* (f-child f/fem:poss-upper:leg) 'the girl's leg'; *nya-malbu niya-mayi* (m-old:man m:poss-tooth) 'the old man's tooth/teeth'; *∅-mardumbarra ni-mayi* (msc-crocodile msc:poss-tooth) 'the crocodile's tooth/teeth'; *a-wangka nanda-ngurru* (fem-crow f/fem:poss-nose/beak) 'the crow's beak'.

The body-part list also includes certain additional items which are possessed in the same kind of way and so are included in the same category, for example, *wini* 'name', *ngalki* 'social group, "skin" group' (Kirton and Timothy 1977): *ngarna-wini* 'my name', *ngarna-ngalki* 'my "skin" group'.

1.2 KINSHIP POSSESSION

Possession of one's kin is a communally-shared possession. Others also possess the same people in the same or in a different relationship. A man's brother is brother to the other men in the same 'skin' group. But that brother is also an uncle, cousin, father, brother-in-law or some other kin to each other member of the community to which he belongs. Kin are inalienably possessed but each has an identity apart from the possessor and so the possession is in contrast to body-part possession and the language marks it contrastively.

Yanyuwa also indicates four different categories of kin by using different sets of possessor affixes, three sets of prefixes and one of suffixes. These categories have been labelled to identify something of the attitude of the possessor to the kin of each category.

1.2.1 INFORMAL KIN POSSESSION

A distinctive set of possessive prefixes, similar in form to possessive pronouns, is used to mark kin to whom one relates in a more informal way. These kin include mother, father, younger sibling, son, daughter, spouse. A slight irregularity in case-marking for *wangu* 'spouse' may indicate that there is a singularity in this particular relationship. Informal kin basic nouns (that is nouns in nominative case which have zero case-marking) consist of a class-marking prefix (to mark male, female, dual or plural), a possessor prefix, the class-marking prefix repeated in most occurrences, and the noun stem:

<i>rra-ngatha-rra-wibi</i>	(f-my-f-mother)	'my mother'
<i>ny-inku-nya-biyi</i>	(m-your:s-m-father)	'your father'
<i>rr-iku-rra-ardu</i>	(f-his-f-child)	'his daughter'
<i>l-alunga-li-wangu</i>	(pl-their:pl-pl-spouse)	'their spouses'

1.2.2 RESPECTFUL KIN POSSESSION

The kin to whom one relates with greater respect than to one's informal kin are those who have a greater measure of responsibility for one's training and discipline, and in major decisions affecting one's life — decisions relating to marriage for a woman and to initiation and ceremonial life for a man. These kin include older sibling, mother's brother, father's sister, and all grandparent categories (separate stems for mother's mother, mother's father, father's mother, father's father). It is noted that the possessor prefix set for this category is almost identical with that for informal kin possession but there is contrastive prefixation for first person singular possessor 'my'. The respectful kin possession noun then changes so that the two prefixes adjacent to the stem, marking possessor and class of kin, are replaced by the single prefix *ja*. Although this difference affects only this one person possessor, the co-occurrence of this change with the significantly different group of kin is taken to differentiate a separate category:

<i>nya-ja-baba</i>	(m-my-elder:sibling)	'my elder brother'
<i>my-inku-nya-ardiyardi</i>	(m-your:s-m-mother's:brother)	'your uncle'
<i>rr-iku-rra-rnarna</i>	(f-his-f-father's:sister)	'his aunt'
<i>l-alunga-li-murimuri</i>	(pl-their:pl-pl-paternal:grandfather)	'their paternal grandfathers'

1.2.3 FORMALLY-RESPONSIBLE KIN POSSESSION

The kin in the formally-responsible kin possession category are those in reciprocal relationship to the respectful kin, but excluding younger sibling (already included in informal kin). These therefore include niece and nephew (a man's sister's child or a woman's brother's child) and all categories of grandchildren.

Basic nouns referring to kin of this kind are constructed of a class-marking prefix, a possessor prefix similar in form to certain verb subject prefixes, and a noun stem. When the possessor prefix is *ka* 'your (s)' then an additional suffix *-nhu* is added to that construc-

tion. (This parallels the verb suffix *-nhu* which co-occurs only with second person singular subject for a verb with general past tense. It is the noun class-marking prefix and the function of the construction which defines the resultant form as a noun.):

<i>nya-karna-ardima</i> (m-my-nephew/niece)	'my nephew'
<i>nya-ka-ardima-nhu</i> (m-your:s-nephew/niece-nhu)	'your nephew'
<i>rra-kilu-marrini</i> ³ (f-his-daughter's child)	'his grandchild'
<i>li-kalu-wuthayi</i> (pl-their-daughter's:child)	'their grandchildren' (of women)

1.2.4 FOCUS AVOIDANCE KIN POSSESSION

In the traditional Yanyuwa community there are a number of reciprocal avoidance relationships requiring that there be no direct speech communication or that an avoidance vocabulary be used. These relationships are brother and sister, brothers-in-law, sisters-in-law, father-in-law and son-in-law, and mother-in-law and son-in-law. The one relationship of these focused on by distinctive marking of the noun is the mother-in-law—son-in-law relationship, and in this one instance in the language possession is marked by a suffix. The suffix is similar in form to the allative form of the free pronoun, for example, *yilalu* 'to him', *andalu* 'to her'. The noun marked for focus avoidance possession is constructed of a class prefix, noun stem and possessive suffix:

<i>rra-kayibantha-ngathangkalu</i> (f-mother/son:in:law-my)	'my mother-in-law'
<i>rra-kayibantha-yindalu</i> (f-mother/son:in:law-your:s)	'your mother-in-law'
<i>nya-kayibantha-andalu</i> (m-mother/son:in:law-her)	'her son-in-law'

2. ALIENABLE POSSESSION

Possession of things is a very different kind of possession from that of body-parts or kin. Things are exchangeable and may have only a limited period of usefulness. Ownership may be a much more temporary thing. In Yanyuwa this kind of possession is expressed in a phrase so that separate words express the possessor and the possessed. Alienable possession is also the relationship with people to whom one does not relate as kin, to outsiders, strangers, foreigners,

enemies. Two kinds of alienable possession are signalled in the language, loose possession and firm possession. The list of nouns which are possessed in either of these ways is basically a single list for both.

2.1 LOOSE POSSESSION

The loose kind of possession is expressed in a phrase consisting of the possessed noun and the possessor in the form of a free pronoun in the genitive case, for example, *alu-nga* (them-of/for) 'for them'. Things marked for possession in this way include food, clothing, radios, shelters, animals. Animals which live with the family group may be classified as kin, and also creatures which have a 'dreaming' affiliation are classified as kin. This again illustrates how cultural significance leads to a change from the linguistic class expected according to physical nature of the entity.

<i>na-langundu ngatha</i> (arb-shelter of/for:me)	'a shelter for me/my shelter'
<i>∅-wabuda yiku</i> (msc-water of/for:him)	'water for me/my water'
<i>∅-ariku alu-nga</i> (msc-fish them-of/for)	'fish for them/their fish'

2.2 FIRM POSSESSION

Firm possession is expressed in a phrase consisting of the possessed noun and the possessor in the form of a possessive pronoun. A possessive pronoun is similar in form to the genitive free pronoun but it is additionally marked for the class of its referent. The singular possessive pronouns for 'your(s)', 'his' and 'her' additionally take the suffix *-ngu* which serves to mark this firmer degree of possession.

Firm possession describes both ownership of personal property and also a close association which may not necessarily be a permanent one. The relationship between a stockman on a cattle-station and the horse assigned to him by the 'horse-tailer' was expressed by firm possession. Things firmly possessed also include allotted portions of food, firesticks (traditionally used to make a fire), a woman's digging stick:

<i>ma-ngarra ma-ngatha</i> (fd-food fd-of/for:me)	'my food'
<i>∅-wawi ny-iku-ngu</i> (msc-horse m/msc-his-ngu)	'his horse'

narnu-yuwa narn-alu-nga

(abs-law/custom abs-them-of/for) 'their law/their customs'

3. FINAL COMMENTS

In literature on Australian languages there is record of a suffix 'having' which occurs with various forms in a number of languages. This could be viewed as indicating a kind of possession. The comparable suffix in Yanyuwa is *-wiji* (which has variant forms according to the phonological context). It seems to the writer that its primary meaning in Yanyuwa is 'bearing' or 'carrying' rather than 'possessing', but another analyst may view *-wiji* as a further kind of marking for possession. In the following examples all the nouns are in the masculine class and the \emptyset prefix has been omitted for simplicity:

arlku jamuka-wiji
(fish whisker-*wiji*)

'a whiskered fish'

buluki wungu-wiji
(bullock fat-*wiji*)

'a fat bullock'

waliyangu mulirli-wiji
(island kangaroo-*wiji*)

'an island with kangaroos on it'

The significance of possessive marking is demonstrated by the noun stem *nganji*. The stem marked for possession occurs in the informal kin class and means 'kin, relation'. The stem unmarked for possession occurs as a simple noun and means 'stranger, foreigner, enemy':

nya-ngatha-nya-nganji
(m-my-m-*nganji*)

'my kinsman'

nya-nganji
(m-*nganji*)

'a stranger/an enemy'

li-wulanga-li-nganji
(pl-their:d-pl-*nganji*)

'their kinsmen/their relatives'

li-nganji
(pl-*nganji*)

'strangers/enemies'

In conclusion, a list of examples of the seven kinds of possession is given using a first person singular possessor, the one which displays the maximum contrast:

ngarna-manka
(my-body)

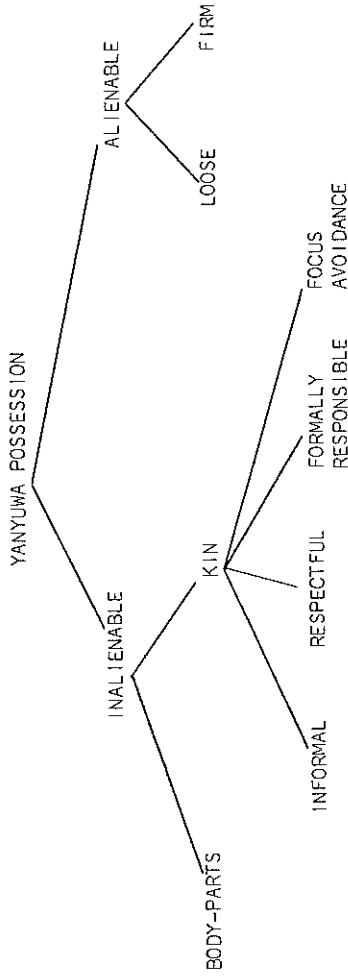
'my body'

nya-ngatha-nya-biyi
(m-my-m-father)

'my father'

<i>nya-ja-baba</i> (m-my-elder:sibling)	'my elder brother'
<i>nya-karna-ardima</i> (m-my-niece/nephew)	'my nephew'
<i>nya-kayibantha-ngathangkalu</i> (m-mother/son:in:law-my)	'my son-in-law'
\emptyset -awara ngatha (msc-country of/for:me)	'country for me/my country'
\emptyset -awara nya-ngatha (msc-country m/msc-of/for:me)	'my country/my own country'

CHART 2: SEVEN KINDS OF YANYUWA POSSESSION



NOUN CLASS POSSESSED	Class 8	Class 10 subclass	Class 10 subclass	Class 10 subclass	Class 11	Class 12	Classes 1 - 7
POSSESSOR AFFIX	Prefix set 1	regular	Prefix set 2	ja- 'my' variant	Prefix set 3	Suffix set	---
EXAMPLES OF POSSESSED ENTITY	head arm leg name fruit (of tree) wheel (of car) door (of house)	mother father son daughter younger sibling - - - - spouse	elder sibling mother's brother father's sister grandparent great-uncle/ aunt	grandchild niece nephew great-niece/ nephew	mother-in-law son-in-law	food clothing radio shelter animal stranger/ enemy	allotted portion of food horse allocated to rider woman's digging stick man's firestick (for making fire)

FOOTNOTES

- 1 The Yanyuwa or Anyuwa people of Australia's Northern Territory are also known as the Yanyula (the name given them by their Garawa neighbours from the east) and the Wadiri (the name given them by their Mara neighbours from the north-west). Their traditional territory was the coastal strip from the Limmen River to an area opposite the Sir Edward Pellew Islands and including the islands. There are approximately 150 speakers of Yanyuwa and the Yanyuwa community is now centred at Borroloola, a small outback township on the MacArthur River.

The author, a field worker with the Summer Institute of Linguistics, has spent about 84 months with the Yanyuwa during the years 1963 - 1980. During that time Nero Timothy has contributed much to the author's understanding of Yanyuwa language and culture, and has co-authored a paper with her (Kirton and Timothy 1977). The author thanks the Yanyuwa people who have so generously shared their language and information about their culture. She is grateful to Dehne McLoughlin (formerly a field anthropologist with the Department of Museums and Art Galleries) for defining for her the role of *jungkayi* in the Yanyuwa community. Any errors in the record or in interpretation are the author's entirely.

- 2 Hyphens are used, beyond those in the practical orthography, to mark morpheme breaks. Examples are given in the women's dialect which shows the linguistic distinctions most clearly. The Yanyuwa phonology is described in Kirton 1967, Kirton and Charlie 1978.
- 3 A single English translation is given for most of the kin nouns, but several of them do have additional alternative meanings. For example, the stem *marrini* refers to a man's daughter's child and also to a woman's brother's daughter's child.

ABBREVIATIONS

abs	abstract (class 7 noun)
arb	arboreal (class 6 noun)
d	dual
erg	ergative case (marking transitive subject)
f	female class (class 1 noun)
fd	food (class 5 noun)
fem	feminine (class 3 noun)
m	male (class 2 noun)
msc	masculine (class 4 noun)
nnom	non-nominative case
poss	possessor
pl	plural
pres	present tense
s	singular
∅	zero morpheme (that is, a significant lack of marking in a position in a word where marking otherwise occurs)
/	or
-	morpheme boundary
:	separates two or more words which combine to translate a single language morpheme

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