

Banjalang Transcript for a Language Course

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- * incomplete draft only
- * most vocabulary verified
- * most spelling standardized

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- * Banjalang language from Michael Walker
- * Middle Clarence dialect
- * project date : 1983

D E D I C A T I O N

This course in Banjalang is dedicated to an idea. The idea is that a living language must be open to all who wish to use it.

Language is a living thing which is nourished by constant use. Like all living things it can grow or it can die. Like all living things it must change over time. That tongue spoken by a parent is never quite the same as that spoken by the child. Strong, healthy languages always borrow or invent to meet new needs. Every year on the planet earth many human languages die because they no longer serve the needs of those who spoke them. Every year new languages are born. And just occasionally old languages are reborn by a great effort of will. The future of Banjalang is in the balance. You may help to choose it.

<p>BANJALANG - INTRODUCTORY COURSE IN AN AUSTRALIAN EAST COAST ABORIGINAL LANGUAGE</p>
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INTRODUCTION

Banjalang is a twilight language. Only a handful of speakers remain who can claim it truly as a mother-tongue. Other, younger people, may know a few words or phrases. Nevertheless the Aboriginal communities on the North Coast of N.S.W. are resurgent, partly as the result of new educational opportunities and a fresh sense of political hope. One can only wish them well. Both Aboriginal people and other Australians have expressed interest in preserving and relearning the Banjalang dialects. This book has come into being as a result of that pressure.

Readers should be clear about what a course such as this claims to do, and what it cannot attempt. Firstly, virtually no-one, including Michael Walker who contributed most of the Banjalang used here, has spoken the language with daily fluency for a generation. Much therefore has been forgotten, and reliable colloquial judgements of what remains are impossible. Speakers often differ among themselves about what is the 'right' way to say this or that. Also, of course, no one is used to seeing Banjalang written down, and the instinct may be to deny that the written form is 'the same language'.

Secondly, there are at least twenty dialects of Banjalang known or inferred. Many usages have been borrowed and mixed in towns like Lismore, even with other languages. One must also expect the all-pervasive English language to have affected Banjalang utterances, for example, in word-order preference and phonology. This is especially true of this book which (for reasons mentioned below) is largely based on translations from English into Banjalang. Many a reader with some knowledge of a dialect may cast this book away with derision for not choosing the forms that he knows. My only defence is that some choice had to be made and some consistency maintained. Michael Walker's Middle Clarence Dialect (Wahlubal, mixed with a bit of Gidabal and Wiyabal) seemed as good a choice as any, particularly since Terry Crowley's work (The Middle Clarence Dialects of Banjalang; 1978) is based upon the same dialect. Others should feel free to substitute in their favourite dialect forms.

The general outline should still serve its purpose.

Thirdly, I have approached the language as an outsider, grabbing a few spare hours from a busy lecture schedule and with no real chance of acquiring personal fluency. This has forced me to design an outline in English and seek Banjalang translations. It is a far from ideal solution, but better than nothing (the alternative in this case). I have been thrown back upon my instincts as a linguist and a teacher to avoid serious absurdities but students, as they progress into a proper analysis of the language may find much here that needs to be modified or even abandoned in favour of a more natural Banjalang way of saying things. Ideally, a true Banjalang speaker turned linguist-teacher will eventually write a proper sequel, and consign this work to the memorabilia collection. In the meantime it may offer a first, modest access to the language of the Banjalang people.

Thor May,
Lismore,
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Sounds of Banjalarig and Spelling Conventions

(Extracted from An Introduction to The Banjalarig Language And Its Dialects, Margaret Sharp, 1978.)

6.1 Consonants

- b* roughly as in English; at the beginnings of words
sometimes like *p*, in the middles of words sometimes
softer and a little like *v*.
- d* as in English except between vowels in Gidabal, when
it is pronounced like *th* in *weather*.
- j* for some dialects as in English, in other dialects
lighter, a little like *dy*, *ty* or *ah*. between vowels
it can sound a little like the *zh* sound in *measure*.
- g* roughly as in English; at the beginnings of words
sometimes like *k*, in the middle of words particularly
sometimes softer (can be mistaken for *w* at times).
- l* like English *l*, but sometimes begins with a slight
d sound before other consonants or at the ends of
words (i.e. a flapped *l*).
- m* as in English at the beginnings of words, but sometimes
has a slight *b* sound before it at the end or middle
of words.
- n* as in English, but sometimes has a slight *d* sound
before it at the end or middle of words.

- ny* a little like English *ny* in *canyon*; sometimes has a slight *j* sound before it at the end or middle of words.
- ng* as in English *sing*, *singer*; also occurs at the beginning of words. Sometimes has a slight *g* sound before it at the end or middle of words.
- r* between English *r* and Italian flapped or trilled *r*. Trill tends to be more pronounced at the end of syllables (i.e. after vowels), and before other consonants.
- ɹ* as in English.
- ɻ* as in English.

Further details on sounds can be obtained by referring to Geytenbeek (1971), Crowley (1977) or Cunningham (1969).

6.2 Vowels

Short Vowels

- ʌ* usually as *ʌ* in *but*; between *j*, *ny* or *y* and *l* or *r*, and before *y* in stressed syllables it can sound more like *a* in *pat*, and between *w* and *l*, *r*, *g* or *ng*, a little like *o* in *pot*.
- e* as in *pet*.
- i* as in *pit*.
- u* as in *put*. When next to *n*, *ny* or *y*, it is a bit like *o* in *port* (but shorter) or *oo* as in Eastern Australian *school*.

Long Vowels

- aɪ* as in *palm*.
- eɪ* as in Australian English *there*.
- iː* as in English or American English *bee*.
- uː* as in English or American English *boot*.

6.2.1 Vowel length

- h* indicates vowel length. We sometimes need to use this length sign as though it were a sound by itself.

6.3 Stress

Stress (extra loudness) occurs on the first syllables of words and on long syllables. Sometimes you hear the stress more than the length on long vowels.

6.4 Where the sounds occur

6.4.1 Sounds which may begin words

Bundjalung words never begin with *l*, *r* or vowels, and not many words begin with *n*. If a word sounds as though it begins with *i*, it begins with *yi*; and if a word sounds as though it begins with *u*, it begins with *wu*.

6.4.2 Sounds which may end words

Bundjalung words can only end in long or short vowels, or in the consonants *m*, *n*, *ny*, *ng*, *l*, *r*, *w*, and *y*. A very few words end in *d* in Gidabal or *j* in other dialects, e.g. *wud-wud* (Gid) and *wuj-wuj* (Bj) 'butcherbird'.

6.4.3 Consonants in the middle of words

In Gidabal, *d* occurs between vowels but *j* doesn't. In other dialects, *j* occurs between vowels but *d* doesn't. Suffixes which begin with *d* in Gidabal begin with *j* in the other dialects.

e.g. *-jam* 'without' is *-dam* in Gidabal,

-jahng 'very' is *-dahng* in Gidabal.

Except in Gidabal examples, I will write this sound *j*.

In the middle of words, you can have two consonants together, but the first is always one of the consonants that can end a word, and the second is one that can start a word. You never

get two of the same consonants together. Two vowels never occur together. The consonant *y* can occur at the end of a syllable after *a*, *ah*, *u*, *uh*, but not after other vowels, although it can begin a syllable after other vowels, e.g. *jeyang* (Y) 'mouth', *daʔany* (Wa, We) 'dog', *guygum* (G, Wi, Wa) 'sand'.

6.4.4 Short e sound

In most if not all dialects, short *e* only occurs at the end of words, or in words made by adding affixes to other words ending in *e*, or when a long *eh* is shortened (see below under long vowels^{6.5}). Except when *e* occurs from shortening *eh*, it can be replaced by *a* (in some dialects at least), e.g. *nyule/nyula* 'he', *nyulagan* (Y,G) 'she', *male/mala* (Wi) but *malɛ/male* (Y, Gl) 'that' *nyahlalah/nyahlilah* (all dialects, from *nyah-li-hla*) 'sowing'.

6.5 Long vowels and lengthening i

You hardly ever get long vowels in successive syllables. This is useful to remember when certain words have suffixes added to them. To keep this law, these rules are used:

1. If there would be two long syllables together, the second long syllable is usually shortened.
e.g. *nyulajahnɛ* 'self-important'
cf. *gijumyjang* (Wi) 'very big'
bugalweɪn 'improved, got better'
cf. *gijumywen* (Wi) 'got big'
2. Instead of rule 1, with one verb affix, *-hla* (present tense 'now') the length jumps from before the *l* to after it in *Gidabal*, *Yugambah* and *Wiyabal*, if this will stop the word having two long syllables in a row. In *Wahlubal* the length disappears and doesn't jump. Sometimes the 'jumping' length gets left out in the other dialects too.

e.g. *bira-* + *-hla* → *birahla*
 throw pres throws
jama- + *-hla* → *jama(h)*
 stand pres stands
juma- + *-hla* → *jumala(h)*
 smoke pres smokes

3. The length, *h* in *-hla* (present tense), and in *-hr* (past indefinite tense), *-hny* (future tense 'will') and *-h* (imperative) makes an *i* in the verb stem change to *eh* not *ih*. This change of vowel only occurs with these suffixes; all other suffixes or words changed with lengthening will change *i* to *ih*. Sometimes this *h* in *-hla*, *-hr*, *-hny* and *-h* (imperative) changes *u* to *eh* also. Most verbs end in *a*, and some end in *ah*, *i* or *eh*.

e.g. *bira-* + *-hla* → *birahla*
 throw pres throws
baji- + *-hla* → *bajehla*
 hit pres hits
baji- + *-li* + *-hla* → *bajilehla*
 hit repet pres is hitting

4. When you have to shorten an *eh*, the resulting vowel is *e*, however the long *eh* was derived, except in Wakhubal verbs for the imperative, and sometimes in all dialects with *-lehla* (*-li* + *-hla*). In Wakhubal this change of *i* to *e* only happens if the vowel can be made long.

e.g. ngahri + -h → ngahre (in Gid, etc.)

play imper play!/dance!

ngahri + -h → ngahri (wa)

play imper play!/dance!

5. No extra length can be added to a vowel which is already long.

e.g. nyah- + -h → nyah

see imper look!, see it!

nyah- + -hla → nyahla

see pres sees

6.6 A spelling convention

When the sounds *n* and *g* occur one after the other, we will at present place a dot between them, like this *yan.gahla* 'goes'. This is so that we don't get confused between *n+g* and *ng*. Also, if the *ng* sound is followed by a *g* sound, the spelling is *ngg*. Using this convention for some English words we would write *singer*, *finger*, *in.growing*.

5. GREETINGS and FAREWELLS

Note: Except for the first two items on this page the greetings given here are very much English translations. This does not mean that they will never be heard (almost all speakers are influenced by English habits) but they are probably not the traditional way of saying things.

Yilahgu wude!

'Where are you going?'
(i.e. How are you going?)

Ngaybal gala!

It's only me! (Hi!)

Gala guhgara yangguwal

Come in!

Jinggiwahla wida bayahny?

How is your day? ("How are you going?")

Bugal numgir, Michael.

Good morning, Michael.

Bugal numgir. Jinggiwahla wida?

Good morning. How are you going?

Ngai gala bugal.

I'm fine, thanks.

Jinggiwahla wungah gungan?

How is your family?

Jyulangam bugal.

They are well, thanks.

Ngay gala yanbaliwahny.

I have to go now.

Nyahny wihnyi [not colloquial]
Nyahnybugen [colloquial]

See you later.

Nyahnybu.

Goodbye.

Milanmilanyina nguy.

Look after yourself (take care).

Bugal yawun.

Good afternoon.

Bugal yawun yawun.

Good evening.

Bugal jubuny.

Good night.

8. WHO IS HE? WHAT IS THAT?

Ngihn mala (nyari)?

Who is he?

Nyulawal Tim.

He is Tim.

Ngihn nyulagan (nyari)?

Who is she?

Nyulagan Rose.

She is Rose.

Ngihn wida?

Who are you?

Ngay gala Terry.

I am Terry.

Ngingarah blagan?

Who are you (two)?

Ngali ganya Terry ngeh Rose.

We are Terry and Rose.

Ngihngarah gahnyu?

Who are they?

Mahnyu jaguhr.

They are strangers.

Nyang mala (gujim)?

What is that (animal*)?
(* wild game, snake)

Malanguy Rose-na bujigen.

That is Rose's cat!

Nyang mala nyangbu?

What is that (object)?

Mala Terry-nga behng.

That is Terry's bag.

Nyangahny ngali?

What will we do?

Yanah ngali jagun.gu.

We will go home.

9. FEELINGS and EMOTIONS

Ngay gala gabir.

I'm hungry.

Ngay gala jugalihgi.

I'm thirsty.

Mala bijanggay jugalihgi.

The baby is thirsty.

Dabay ganya gabir.

The dog is hungry.

Nyula ganya marahng.

He is tired.

Nyula nguy janguy.

He is angry.

Nyula yagambe mijung.an.gahla.

He is unhappy.

Nyulawal mijung.an.gala.

He is happy.

Nyulawal nyundu.

He is sad.

Nyulagan gijirwehn.

She is sorry.

Nyulagan ganya dunggahla.

She is crying.

Nyulagan nguy guyir.

She is afraid.

Nyulawal yagambe guyir.

He is not afraid.

Nyulagan nyundu.

He is worried.

Nyula mayu nyang.gahla.

He is doing something.

Nyulangam yagambe wahngmalehny.

They won't work.

10. DESCRIBING SELF and OTHERS

Gan.ngahleh!	Listen!
Ngay gala Banjalang.	I'm Banjalang.
Ngay gala Jabulam-bari.	I come from Tabulam.
Gaji ngay yehn.gala bayahny Lismore-yi.	I live in Lismore now.
Ngay wahngmalehla gaji gahnyu jahjam-bahyi.	I work here with these small children.
Ngay nguyaymalehla Banjalang ngeh Yirilingah nguyay.	I speak Banjalang and English.
Wajehgalah:	Say this:
Nyula mala Banjalang.	He's Banjalang.
Nyula mala Jabulam-bari.) Nyula yangwahla Jabulamngu.)	He comes from Tabulam.
Gaji nyula yehn.gala bayahny Lismore-yi.	He lives in Lismore now.
Nyula wahngmalehla gaji gahnyu jahjam-bahyi.	He works here with these young children.
Nyula nguyaymalehla Banjalang ngeh Yirilinga nguyay.	He speaks Banjalang and English.
Gan.ngahleh:	Listen!
Ngay gala Banjalang ngule.	I'm Banjalang too.
Ngay gala Kempsey-bari.	I come from Kempsey.
Gaji ngay yehn.gala bayahny Lismore-yi.	I live in Lismore too.
Ngay wahngmalehla gaji gahnyu balihng ngeh dubahygir.	I work with young men and girls.

Ngay gala.	I'm a teacher.
Ngai "teach" yirilingah nguyay.	I teach English.
Ngay gala mihnbalehla Banjalang.	I'm learning Banjalang.
Wajehgalah (gun.ngahleh ngeh nyaribahbu):	Now say this (listen and repeat):
Nyulagan "Australian" nguleh.	She's Australian too.
Nyulagan gala Kempsey-bari.	She comes from Kempsey.
Nyulagan yehn.gala bayahny Lismore-yi nguleh.	She lives in Lismore now.
Nyulagan wahngmalehla gaji gahnyu balihng ngeh dubahygir.	She teaches these young men and girls.
Nyulagan gala "teacher".	She's a teacher.
Nyulagan "teaches" yirilinga nguyay.	She teaches English.
Nyulagan mihnbalehla Banjalang.	She's learning Banjalang.
Gun.ngahleh:	Listen!
Ngay gala baygal.	I'm Aboriginal.
Gahnyu nganyah gungahn Gurigay-bari.	My people come from Coraki.
Nganyah nanahng ngeh ngay yehn-gala bijanggay-yi.	My sister and I live in a small house.
Ngali yehn-gala Lismore-yi.	We live in Lismore.
Ngay wahngmalehla maji "garage"-yi.	I work in a (motor) garage.
Nyulagan wahngmalehla maji "shop"-yi.	She works in a shop.
Ngali nguyaymalehla yirilingah nguyay ngeh Banjalang.	We speak English and Banjalang.

Wajehgahah (gun.ngahleh ngeh
nyaribahbu):

Now say this (listen and repeat):

Nyula mala Banjalong.

He's Aboriginal.

Nyulangah gungahn yangwahla
Coraki-ngu.

His people come from Coraki.

Nyula ngeh nyulangah nanahng
yehngala bijang.gay ngumbinji.

His sister and he live in a small
house.

Mahn'u yehn.gala bayahny
Lismore-yi.

They live in Lismore.

Nyula wahngmalehla "garage"-yi.

He works in a (motor) garage.

Nyulagan wahngmalehla "shop"-yi.

She works in a shop.

Nyulahgam ngayaymalehla yirilingah
nguyay ngeh Banjalong.

They speak English and Banjalong.

11. THE TEACHER QUIZZES A STUDENT

Gun. ngahleh:

Listen!

Jinggiwahla, wida bayahny?
Ngihn wungah nyari?

Teacher: Hello. How are you?
What's your name?

Bill Roberts.

Student: Bill Roberts.

Bugal. Maji yehna Bill.
Nganyah nyari Walker.
Jununu wida yangwahla?

Teacher: Good. Sit there Bill.
My name's Walker.
Where do you come from?

"Myrtle Creek"-bari.

Student: From Myrtle Creek.

Jiyah wida yehn.gala?

Teacher: Where do you live?

Lismore-yi.

Student: In Lismore.

Wida yehn.gala wungah bijangbihny
ngeh wajungjargan?

Teacher: Do you live with your father
and mother?

Yagambe.
Ngay yehn.gala ngaruny-bahyi.

Student: No I don't.
I live with my aunt.

Jiyah wida gurihbu?

Teacher: Where were you previously?

Ngaywal gagahba "Myrtle Creek
School"-a.

Pupil: I was at Myrtle Creek School.

Nyang "class" wida gahba?

Teacher: What class were you in?

Ngaywal yabur "5th class"-a.

Pupil: I was in 5th class.

12. DESCRIBING ROSE ROBERTS

Wajehgaleh (gun.ngaleh ngeh
nyaribahbu):

Now say this (listen and repeat):

Rose Roberts yangwahla Myrtle
Creek-ngu.

Rose Roberts comes from Myrtle Creek.

Nyulagan yehn.gala Lismore-yi.

She lives in Lismore.

Nyulagan yagambe yehn.gala
bi.jangbihny ngeh wajunjargan-bahyi.

She doesn't live with her father and
mother.

Nyulagan yehn.gala ngaruny-bahyi.

She lives with her aunt.

Gurihbu nyulagan "pupil" Myrtle
Creek School-yi.

Previously she was a pupil at Myrtle
Creek School.

Nyulaganwal "5th Class"-a
gagahba.

She was in 5th class at that time.

Now answer these questions:

(Ngihn mala nyari?)

(What is his name?)

Ngihn mala dubay nyari?

What's her name?

Jununu yangwahla nyulagan?

Where does she come from?

Jiyi yehn.gala nyulagan?

Where does she live?

Nyang mala yehn.gala bi.jangbihny-
bahyi ngeh wanyagan-bahyi?

Does she live with her mother and
father?

Nyihn-bahyi nyulagan yehn.gala?

Who does she live with?

Jiyah nyulagan gurihbu?

Where was she previously ('long ago')?

Ngangah "class" nyulagan?

What class was she in?

13. PERSONAL QUIZZ

Wajehgalah:	Now tell me about yourself:
Ngin wida nyari?	What's your name?
Jununu wida yangwahla?	Where do you come from?
Jiyi wida yehn.gala?	Where do you live?
Nyang.gala wida?	What do you do?
Nyang wida baygal?	Are you Aboriginal?
Nyang wida "Australian"?	Are you Australian?
Wida yehn.gala "city"-yi, "town"-de, "village"-yi?	Do you live in a city or a town or a village?
Ngihn-bahyi wida yehn.gala nguy?	Who do you live with?
Ngihmba mahnyunah mumunah nyari.	Ask your neighbours the same questions.
Gunugunu nguyay mamalani:	Here are some answers: ('Here is how you talk back')
Ngay-be-gala yehn.gala gaji.	I live ..alone
Ngay yehn.gala gungahn-bahyi.	..with my family
Ngay yeyhn.gala bijangbihny ngeh wanyagan-bahyi.	..with my father and mother
Ngay yehn.gala wuyang/wuyang.girgan- gahyi.	..with brother-in-law/sister-in- law
Ngay yehn.gala banahm/nanahng-bahyi.	..with my brother/sister
Ngay yehn.gala nguyan-bahyi. (sg. or pl.)	..with a friend
Ngay yehn.gala banibihnygan-bahyi.	..with my wife

14. LIKES and DISLIKES

Gun.ngale:

Listen to this:

Jinggiwahla,

Hello,

Ngay nyari Jim.

My name is Jim.

Ngay gunuhgi jagun.gi.

I like this place.

Ngay gahny.gi baygalgi gaji.

I like the people here.

Ngay gunuhgi yalgan.

I like the sun.

Ngay galahgi balun gila juwida.

I like that river down there.

Ngay galahgi ganyahli gaji.

I like fishing here.

Wajengalah:

Now say this:

Nyula nyari Jim.

His name is Jim.

Nyulawal gajigur jagun.gi.

He likes this place.

Nyula mahny.gi baygalgi gaji.

He likes the people here.

Nyula galahgi yalgan.

He likes the sun.

Nyula galahgi balun gilah juwida.

He likes that river down there.

Nyulawal galahgi ganyahli gaji.

He likes to fish here.

Gun.ngale:

Listen to this:

Jinggiwahla,

Hello,

Nganyah nyari Anna.

My name is Anna.

Ngay gunuhgi-wahr nganyah,
banibihny yagambe.

I like this place, (but) my husband
doesn't.

Nyulawal Kempsey-gi-wahr, ngaywal
yagambe.

He likes Kempsey, (but) I don't.

Ngay yanbihgi-wahr, nyulawal
yagambe.

I like travelling, (but) he doesn't.

Nyulawal ganyahgi-wahr, ngaiwal
yagambe.

He likes fishing, (but) I don't.

Ngay guybalingi-wahr, nyulawal
yagambe.

I like cooking, (but) he doesn't.

Ngaliwal gulgi gunuhgi.

We like different things.

Wajehgalah:

Now say this:

Nyang.gana nyari Anna.

Her name is Anna.

Nyulagan gunuhgi-wahr, banibihny
yagambe-wal.

She likes this place, (but) her
husband doesn't.

Nyulawal Kempsey-gi-wahr, nyulawal
yagambe.

He likes Kempsey, (but) she doesn't.

Nyulagan yanbihgi-wahr, nyulawal
yagambe.

She likes travelling, (but) he
doesn't.

Nyulawal ganyahgi-wahr, nyulagan
yagambe-wal.

He likes fishing, (but) she doesn't.

Nyulagan guybalingi-wahr, nyulawal
yagambe.

She likes cooking, (but) he doesn't.

Nyulangam gulgi gunuhgi-wahr ...

They like different things.

Gun,ngale:	Listen to this:
Jim, wida gunuhgi Lismore-gi?	Jim, do you like Lismore?
Yagambe-wal. Wida gunuhgi?	No I don't. Do you?
Yaway-wal.	Yes I do.
Ngaywal gunuhgi Lismore-yi-wahr, wida-wal yagambe-gi.	I like Lismore, but you don't.
Ngay gijir.	I'm sorry (about that).
Ngaywal ganyahlggi. Wida-ga?	I do like fishing. Do you?
Yagambe-wal. Ngaywal gala yanbihgi-wal.	No I don't. I do like travelling though.
Ngay jangwal yanbihgi ngeh (ngay jang) guybalihgi.	I hate travelling and I hate cooking.
Ngaliwal gulgi gunuhgi, ngi?	We like different things, don't we?
Ngali bulahbu galahgi mujumgi.	We both like our son.

Now answer these questions:

Jim munugi Lismore-yi?	Does Jim like Lismore?
Ann-ga?	Does Ann?
Ann-mala ganyahlggi?	Does Anna like fishing?
Nyang mala Jim ginlehlahgi?	What does Jim like doing?
Nyang mala Ann ginlehlahgi?	What does Ann like doing?
Nyang mala mahnyu bulahbu ginlehlahgi?	What do those two (both) like doing?

15. PROXIMITY

The idea of 'proximity' in Banjar (and in Aboriginal languages generally) is extremely important. Objects are marked according to whether they are close (proximate), intermediate or distant. They are further divided into those that are visible, those invisible but formerly visible, and those which have never been visible. Both of these dimensions (distance and visibility) are conveyed together by noun markers which very roughly translate as 'this', 'that', 'these', 'those' etc. In fact these noun markers have a variety of other dimensions such as animate/inanimate, singular/plural, and the grammatical case of their referent noun. The result is that there are well over two hundred noun markers. The main ones are summarized for reference in the tables reproduced from Crowley (1978) below.

There is also a set of verb markers similarly concerned with proximity. Luckily they are not marked for grammatical case, so there are far fewer of them. They are tabulated below too.

It is beyond the scope of this book to explore the full uses of grammatical markers like these, even though they occur in one form or another in the vast majority of Banjar sentences. Obviously it is also beyond the ability of any beginning student to memorize and properly use over two hundred markers. Nevertheless, some will quickly become familiar. We must accept that the first task of language learning is to be understood, however crudely. The refinements can come later.

<u>Examples 1.</u>	
gunu	this here (proximate)
gala	this here (proximate)
munu	that over there
mala	that over there
gila	that way over there; yonder
mayu	that there
gahre or gahba	that which is now out of sight
<u>Examples 2.</u>	
[Gunu] jugalihgu nganyah-war.	This drink is mine.
[Munu] jugalihgu gahrenda wudaya, Terry, wangah-wal.	That drink next to you, Terry, is yours.
[Mahny] jugalihgu ngambil table-a bandang.gahya-wal.	Those drinks over there on the table are for the others.

Noun Markers in Wahlupal

(Extracted from Terry Crowley, The Middle Clarence Dialects of Bandjalang, Aust. Inst. of Aboriginal Studies, 1978.)

Any noun marker can be used as a third person pronoun, replacing *pula* 'he', *pa:ngan* 'she' and *pulaman/pulanam* 'they'. For example:

(109) *gaware:-n* *ma:n*
run fut those-S kill all
They will run towards the hills.

(110) *na:du* *ma:-ni* *pa:-ni*
I-A that O see past def
I saw him/her.

Generally, it is *ma:* (sg) and *ma:nu* (pl) that are used as pronouns, rather than any of the other noun markers that are found in the language (see Tables 17-19), these being semantically the least marked, 'he' is visible rather than invisible and intermediate rather than proximate or distant.

The noun markers almost always agree in case with the noun with which they are associated, or the pronoun they are replacing. Since the case forms are partly irregular in the noun marker series (rather, they have their own regularities), the full paradigms for each series are presented below.

8.1 Visible series

The visible series of noun markers (as for the other series also) have different morphological behaviour according to the kind of noun they are associated with. If they are marking an inanimate noun or a noun referring to the smaller animals and birds, they decline according to the following paradigms (see section 7 of this chapter where the same semantic distinction is drawn into play in the choice of noun paradigm):

TABLE 17 - Wahlupal 'visible' series of noun markers (non-human)

	PROXIMATE		INTERMEDIATE		DISTANT	
	Singular	Plural	Singular	Plural	Singular	Plural
S/O	<i>ga:</i>	<i>ga:p(u)</i>	<i>ma:</i>	<i>ma:p(u)</i>	<i>gi:</i>	<i>ga:m(u)</i>
A/Inst	<i>galiyu</i>	<i>ga:pulu</i>	<i>ma:lyu</i>	<i>ma:pulu</i>	<i>gi:lyu</i>	<i>ga:mulu</i>
Loc	<i>ga:ya</i>	<i>ga:pula</i>	<i>ma:ya</i>	<i>ma:pula</i>	<i>gi:ya</i>	<i>ga:mula</i>
Gen	<i>ga:na</i>	<i>ga:puna:</i>	<i>ma:na</i>	<i>ma:puna:</i>	<i>gi:na</i>	<i>ga:muna:</i>
Abi-Nu	<i>ga:nu</i>	<i>ga:punu</i>	<i>ma:nu</i>	<i>ma:punu</i>	<i>gi:nu</i>	<i>ga:munu</i>
Abi-nl	<i>ga:ni</i>	<i>ga:ni</i>	<i>ma:ni</i>	<i>ma:ni</i>	<i>gi:ni</i>	<i>ga:mpi</i>
Ben	<i>ga:gaya</i>	<i>ga:ngaya</i>	<i>ma:gaya</i>	<i>ma:ngaya</i>	<i>gi:gaya</i>	<i>ga:mgaya</i>
Desid	<i>ga:gi</i>	<i>ga:ngi</i>	<i>ma:gi</i>	<i>ma:ngi</i>	<i>gi:gi</i>	<i>ga:ngi</i>
Def/All	<i>ga:gu</i>	<i>ga:ngu</i>	<i>ma:gu</i>	<i>ma:ngu</i>	<i>gi:gu</i>	<i>ga:ngu</i>

If the noun which the marker is associated with has human reference (or refers to the larger animals and birds), then many of the case forms differ. However, we need only note the following three central facts to be able to account for these differences:

- (1) The *O* form differs from the *S* form in that it has the paradigm below:

(Crowley, p.71)

PROXIMATE		INTERMEDIATE		DISTANT	
Singular	Plural	Singular	Plural	Singular	Plural
gala:ní	ga:nuni	mala:ní	ma:nuni	gila:ní	ga:muni

(ii) The allative form differs from the dative form above in that it has the following paradigm:

PROXIMATE		INTERMEDIATE		DISTANT	
Singular	Plural	Singular	Plural	Singular	Plural
gala:ba	ga:nba	mala:ba	ma:nba	gila:ba	ga:mba

(iii) The ablative -Nu, ablative -ní and the desiderative are derived regularly, but from an allative (or oblique) base. Thus, the paradigms are:

PROXIMATE			INTERMEDIATE		DISTANT	
	Singular	Plural	Singular	Plural	Singular	Plural
Abl-Nu	gala:banu	ga:nbenu	mala:banu	ma:nbanu	gila:banu	ga:mbanu
Abl-ni	gala:bani	ga:nbani	mala:bani	ma:nbani	gila:bani	ga:mbani
Desid	gala:bagi	ga:nbagi	mala:bagi	ma:nbagi	gila:bagi	ga:mbagi

This series of noun markers is used to indicate that the referent of the noun can be seen by the speaker. Alternatively, if the speaker wishes to make no reference to visibility at all, this series will be used rather than either of the other two series. In this sense, this is the least marked of the three noun marker series.

Examples of these noun markers in use in sentences in Waalubal are given:

- (111) gedu gala bilar bira:n bum-bi:
 I-A this-vis-O spear-O throw fut kill purp
 ma:n qa-bi:-gu
 those-vis-O eat part dat
 I will throw the spear (that I can see) to kill those things (that I can see) to eat.
- (112) mali-yu guyba:la bulan ga:m-gu
 that-vis A cook pres meat-O those-dist-vis dat
 nariq-ga:-gu
 across loc dat
 He (who I can see) is cooking some meat for those men across there (who I can see).

8.2 Invisible series (formerly present)

Rather than complicate the presentation by giving the noun markers referring to inanimate (and lower animate) nouns in separate tables in this section (and also in the following section), the table below includes the special *O* form and allative form used only with human nouns (and higher animate nouns generally). It should be remembered that for nouns which

(Crowley, p. 72)

TABLE 1B - Waialabal 'invisible (formerly present)' series of noun markers

	PROXIMATE		INTERMEDIATE		DISTANT	
	Singular	Plural	Singular	Plural	Singular	Plural
S	guna:	guna:mir	muna:	muna:mir	ga:ba	ga:bamir
A/Inst	guna:yu	guna:miru	muna:yu	muna:miru	ga:bayu	ga:bamiru
Loc	guna:ya	guna:mira	muna:ya	muna:mira	ga:baya	ga:bamira
O (hum)	guna:ni	guna:mirni	muna:ni	muna:mirni	ga:beni	ga:bamirni
Gen	guna:na	guna:mirna:	muna:na	muna:mirna:	ga:bana:	ga:bamirna:
Abl - <u>Nu</u>	guna:nu	guna:mirnu	muna:nu	muna:mirnu	ga:bans	ga:bamirnu
Abl - <u>ni</u>	guna:pi	guna:mirpi	muna:pi	muna:mirpi	ga:baji	ga:bamirpi
Ben	guna:ga:ya	guna:mirga:ya	muna:ga:ya	muna:mirga:ya	ga:baba:ya	ga:bamirga:ya
Desid	guna:gi	guna:mirgi	muna:gi	muna:mirgi	ga:bogi	ga:bamirgi
Dat	guna:gu	guna:mirgu	muna:gu	muna:mirgu	ga:bogu	ga:bamirgu
All (cum)	guna:ba	guna:mirba:	muna:ba	muna:mirba:	ga:baba:	ga:bamirba:

(CROWLEY, p. 73)

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TABLE 19 - Waalubai 'invisible (not formerly present)' series of noun markers

	PROXIMATE		INTERMEDIATE		DISTANT	
	Singular	Plural	Singular	Plural	Singular	Plural
S	gayu	gani:	mayu	napi:	mayu:	ga:ní
A/Inst	gayulu	gani:lu	mayulu	napi:lu	mayu:lu	ga:nílu
Loc	gayula	gani:la	mayula	napi:la	mayu:la	ga:níla
O (hum)	gayuni	gani:ni	mayuni	napi:ni	mayu:ni	ga:níni
Gen	gayuna:	gani:na	mayuna:	napi:na	mayu:na	ga:nína:
Abl - <u>nu</u>	gayunu	gani:nu	mayunu	napi:nu	mayu:nu	ga:nínu
Abl - <u>ni</u>	gayuní	gani:ní	mayuní	napi:ní	mayu:ní	ga:níní
Ben	gayuga:ya	gani:gaya	mayuga:ya	napi:gaya	mayu:gaya	ga:níga:ya
Desid	gayugi	gani:gi	mayugi	napi:gi	mayu:gi	ga:nígi
Dat	gayugu	gani:gu	mayugu	napi:gu	mayu:gu	ga:nígu
Alf (hum)	gayuba:	gani:ba	mayuba:	napi:ba	mayu:ba	ga:níba:

(Crowley, p.76)

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PLURAL MARKING

Number in Waalubai is generally indicated by the set of noun markers which in all series have singular and plural forms:

TABLE 7 - Number marking in Waalubai noun markers

		Proximate	Intermediate	Distant
visible	sg	gala	nəla	gila
	pl	ga:nu	ma:nu	ga:mu
invisible formerly present	sg	guna:	muna:	ga:pa
	pl	guna:mir	muna:mir	ga:banir
invisible not formerly present	sg	gayu	mayu	mayə:
	pl	gani:	mani:	ga:ni

(There is a detailed discussion of the behaviour of noun markers in section 8 of this chapter.) However, some Waalubai nouns do have morphologically distinct plural forms. The elicitation of plural forms proved rather difficult in the field because the Waalubai speaker consulted on this matter pointed out that although she knew that many nouns originally did have plural forms, she herself learnt only a simplified version of the language, in which plurals were rarely overtly marked. This in fact sounds like the process of language simplification that is apparently taking place between the older and younger generations in some Australian languages today, for example, Guugu-Yimidhir and the Thursday Island language. (See Bani (1976) where it is mentioned that Yagar-Yagar spoken in Torres Strait is spoken in simplified form as Langgus or Ap-ne-Ap by the younger generation.)

(Crowley, p.39)

VERB MARKERS

In Chapter 3, section 8 the system of noun markers was discussed. Related to these in form and in the semantic dimensions they recognise, Waailubai also has a system of verb markers. These differ from the noun markers in that they do not normally take case inflections, whereas noun markers always do, and in that they further specify the location of the action of the verb and not of any particular noun. The verb markers are set out in Table 31.

TABLE 31 - Waailubai verb markers

		Proximate	Intermediate	Distant	Interrogative
particular place	visible	gaqi	maqi	ga:	diya:
	invisible	gaqunun	maqunun	ga:qun	
general area	visible	gunu	munu	gunda:	qunu
	invisible	gayu	mayu	ga:ri	
any direction		gala:	maja:	gila:	yila

Examples of sentences using verb markers from each set are presented below:

- (74) gay yuna-ni gaqi da:gam-ta:-ya
 I-S lie past def here-vis child obl loc
I slept in this place with the children (where you can see).
- (75) yana:- nall gaqunun nama-li-ya: wagan
 go imp we-S here-invis catch anti-pass prep catfish-O
 guran
 perhaps
Let's go over here to perhaps catch some catfish (in the water in this place, where you can't see the catfish).
- (76) munu gayal nedu wana:-yu dali-yu
 there-invis ground-O I-A you-gen inst stick inst
 duwa-ni
 dig past def
I dug the ground with your stick there (in that area where you can see).
- (77) ga:nga-n mali-yu gula:r-u ga:ri duwi
 take fut that-A flood-A there-invis down
The flood will take you a long way down there (in that area which cannot be seen).
- (78) gay gala mara:n ye:-nun gila: gaba:-a
 I-S this-S tired stay time there scrub loc
I'm tired of staying out there in the scrub.

(Crowley, p.103)

16. DIRECTIONS and PROXIMITY

Ngehyuh,	Excuse me, ("Yes! + Listen!")
Yilah balun?	Where's the river?
Nyah gila muli?	See that hill?
Yaway,	Yes.
Yanah babargu muligu.	Go to the top of the hill.
Iyahny (-nguy) balun.	You will see the river then.
Malanguy balun nyahny warambil juwdah.	The river will be (seen) below on your left.
<hr/>	
Ngay gala wuhbilehn.	I'm lost.
Yilah gah waybar.	Where's the camp?
Nyah mahnyu jali?	See those trees?
Yagambe.	No.
Nyah! Gahmu gimbala.	Look! Over there.
Mahnyu jali gurahr juwdah.	The trees are tall down there.
Ngeh yaway.	Oh yes. O.K.
Yanah guhgar mahnyu jalingu.	Go through the trees.
Malanguy waybar nyahny junimba.	The camp will be (seen) on your right.

17. OBSERVATIONS of PROXIMITY

Nyah! Mala jarahny gahrenda Terry-bahya.	Look! That is a frog over there near Terry.
Yagambe. Mala bin.gihng.	No. That is a river turtle.
Nyah, gala. Gala jarahny gahrenda ngali-bahya.	Look, here. This is a frog near us.
Gala balahya gujanda.	It is under this stone.
Nyang mala nyangbu walanggi wahla jinangga?	What is that thing crawling on your foot?
Ae! Gala gumuhm.	Ouch! That was a bull-ant.
Yanbihba ngali gununu!	Let's get out of here!
<hr/>	
Ae, nyah gila miwin babara.	Hey, look at that eagle way up there.
Mayu marahn babara-jahng yagambe ngadu-wahlnyahla.	That bird is too high for me to see.
Nyang mayu miwin wehlu nyahla?	Is it an eagle you see?
Yaway, guram mayu miwin.	Yes, maybe it was an eagle.
Gahre muna marahn ngagehn.	That bird has disappeared now.
Mayu guram muna miwin numbihla gilahya dagamba.	Maybe it is behind a big cloud.
Ngathu gurambe nuhmala yila muna miwin-ya jindi .	I think I know where that eagle's nest is.
Yilah gur?	Where is it?
Gila babara dugunda.	It is way up on that mountain.
Gurihbu ngay gila wandehn.	Once before I climbed up there.

18. LOCATION of INJURY

Ngaywal yagambe nuhmala.

I don't understand.

Jih mala barahnywen?

Where did she get hurt?

Maji guybalinyun.

Where she was cooking.

Junugur (malahni guybani
(Lyn-ni guybani

Where was Lyn burnt?

nyulagani guybari (jambay
(mahny bulahbu
jambay

She was burnt on (the hand
((those two) hands

fihnyu muna nangany nyulagandu
namani?

Where is the food she was holding?

Mahnyu nangany ngayala.

The food is on the ground.

19. IMPLIED and STATED INABILITY

Mala muna mani gulihl wehny.	That old kangaroo must be clever. (... too clever to catch ...)
Mala gehr mihlamihlan wehnbu; yagambe namahny.	There's that cockatoo again. (He) can't be caught.
Mala waybar gajang galgalihgu.	That wood is too hard to cut.
Mahnyu mangarehm babarajahng jaliyah.	Those eggs are high up there in the tree. (... too high to climb ...)
Mala garbeh walungjahng baramgahya.	That creek is too wide to jump.
Mala ganyahl magijam	That line (cord) is too weak.
Harry-nga buramburam gila gimbalah-jang yanbihgu.	Harry's (camp) is too far to walk to.

20. ASKING and GIVING PERMISSION

Ngaywal nguyaymalihgi wihnyi.	I'd like to talk to you.
Wida gala guhgar yangwah.	You can come in.
Ngay mala-gubih.	I'd like to have some of that.
Ngay mahnyu-gubih.	I'd like to have some of those.
Wida gan.ngaliwah munu.	You can have some of that.
Ngay gala yanbilihgu-bami.	I'd like to leave right now.
Wida nguy yanbiliwah.	You can leave.
Ngihna gala jagun?	(Whose is this land?) Who owns this land?
Patrick-nga mala jagun.	Patrick owns the land.
Nyang nyuliyu nyulangamah bamaynyah nganyah gala yaraman maji guhgara?	Will he let me put my horse in there on his flat-land?
Ngihmba nulangi.	Ask him.
Pat, ngaju junamahgi nganyah yaraman gahba gimballa.	Pat, I'd like to put my horse over there.
Wujang bugal gundeh.	The grass is good over there.
Yaway, yunamah yang malahya garbehji.	OK, but put him this side of the creek.
Mala wangan garbeh juwja?	(Is that your creek down there?) Do you own that creek down there?
Yaway. Nyahgu?	Yes. Why?
Ngahwal gagahbah ganyahl-biralihgi?	Could I do some fishing there?
Yaway, wanah mahnyu gahnga mulany.	OK, but don't take the crayfish.

21. TALKING ABOUT OTHER PEOPLE

Wehlu nuhmala George-ni?

Do you know George?

Yaway, ngajudwal nuhmani nyulangi warahy.

Yes, I've known him for a long time.

Nyuliyu nyulawal nguyaymalehla yagambe-wal (yabur-yabur mala)?

He talks a lot, doesn't he?

Yaway. George-mala nganjarmalehla.

Oh yes. George tells lies.

Nyulawal mala jang nuhmilihgu.

He's too stupid to know.

Nyulangah nanahng nganjarmalehla nguleh.

His sister tells lies too.

George-na bijangbihny bugalwahla-nguy.

George's father was a good man.

Jahngbil wulalehla-wal nyula.

He would always ("immediately") give (you anything).

Ngajuwal wulalehn nyulangi yuhgu.

I gave him something (i.e. some money) a few times.

22. I'VE BEEN AWAY (... on a trip)

Jivahwal muna, Harry?

Where have you been, Harry?

Ngaywal yehni gununu.

I've been away (from here).

Yilah wida yehni?

Where did you go?

Ngai yehni nyahbi gahm jagurni.

I went to see some people (strangers).

Nyulangamwal yehn.gala juw.wal
wahng-ganda.

They live down south.

Wehlu yagambe wajini nganyi wida
yan.gi.

You didn't tell me you were going.

Ngaywal yagambe nuhm.gi yan.gi.

I didn't know I was going.

Nyuliyu jawgani ngada buyahy.

He sent a message.

Nyuliyu nganyi nyahnigiwehn
ngabermahni.

He wanted to see me quickly.

Gilanguy bagar jahng yahnbi.

That's a long way to go.

Nyuliyu nyahnigi nganyi.

Yes. He wanted to see me.

Gurihbu nyuliyu nyumbani nganyi
gagahmu jurbihi.

Last time ('before') he showed me
some sacred places.

23. BACK IN THE OLD TIMES

Mayah gurihbu nyulangambu wulimajahn nangany.	In the old times, people found their own food.
Nyulangambu gahng.gan ngaruhn mahnyunu balunu.	They got mullet from the river.
Nyulangam guhgar gujim guhgari gabali.	They hunted animals in the scrub.
Nyulangambu wulimajahn yirimbahm balayi baquli.	They found locusts under the bark.
Nyulangambu wulimajahn jubar gilih wayanjar jalinga nguleh.	They found wichetty grubs between the roots of trees also.
Nyulangambu gahngun biriju mahnyu yalangu gunde babarnu garang- garang.	They got honey from bees up in the branches.
Nyulangambu gahngun mangarehm mahnyu marahnu gunde babarnu garang- garang nguleh.	They got eggs from birds up in the branches also.
Nyulangam muhwajahn buhnyi ngeh burajhn nangany guhgara.	They collected nuts and extracted the food inside.
Nyulangam muhwajahn pipi ----- ngeh jahnjan bulang guhgara.	They collected pipis (from the beach) and ate the meat inside.
Nyulangambu namajahn marahn ngeh yamba ngeh mani garin gahwonga yawun-yawuhnda ngeh yalgun-baiya.	They caught birds and snakes and kangaroos beside the lagoons at sunset and sunrise.
Miruhngmir dibajahn wahribi mahnyunu nuruyngu.	The women made dilly bags from vines.
Bayalu jarwajahn bilar mahnyunu wombarnu.	The men made spears from sticks.

24. MEMORIES : HE WAS A GREAT MAN WHEN HE WAS YOUNG

Note: This story (like all the other Banjalang in this book) is a translation from English. Thus the selection and organization of ideas is "Australian English", which you will find deceptively familiar; (it makes your language-learning task easier). Be aware especially of metaphors such as "climb like a cat". Hopefully the story will illustrate some useful language, but on no account should it be taken as an example of the way in which a story might be told in Banjalang. Banjalang society, like all cultures, has its own unique pattern of story-telling (which can be extremely confusing for outsiders).

Ngihn mala dandaygam?	Who is that old man?
Nyulawal jeyirwahnguy baling.gah.	He was a great man when young.
Wajah nyanyi jing.gehn-wal nyula.	Tell me how he was.
Nyulawal gurahrwal mangar jali ganyehr.	He was as tall as a gum tree.
Nyulanga bulun wulu jali ganyehr.	He had a chest like a tree trunk.
Wanah gingi* wajileh.	Don't kid me! ("Don't tell lies.")
Ngay yagambe nganyah-malehla.	I'm not telling lies.
Nyulangayu jambayju mujarahla buhnyi.	His fingers could crush a bunya nut.
Nyulawal wandehla bujigeh ginyehr ngeh gawirehla buyan ginyehr.	He climbed like a cat and ran like the wind.
Nyulangah gang.gil ngeh banjar gurahr ngeh magi.	His arms and legs were long and powerful.
Minjehn yalgan ginyehr.	His smile was like sunshine.
Nyulawal janguy-wehna ngayalu-nguy jihgalehn.	When he was angry the ground trembled.
Miruhngmir bujar nyulagai.	Women loved him.
Baygal-wal-nguy guyir wehn nyula-bahyi.	Men feared him.
Bayahny walnguy-mahny nyulangah darigan ngeh nundai weiwei-wehn.	Now his bones are old and bent.
Nyulangah yulany ninduhny.	His skin is wrinkled.

* /gingi/ perhaps from /nyaligin-i/, 'to tell a lie'.

Nyulawal yehn.gala garinda wabara
nguyaymalehla nyulangigu.

He sits beside the fire talking to
himself.

Nyulangah nguy ginyin ginyehr.

His voice is like a mosquito.

Baygalu yagambe gan.ngahla nyulangi
bayahny.

People don't listen to him now.

Nyulawal baribunbe gan.ngalehla
bayahny.

He hears his dreams now.

Gurambe nyuliyu nguy mahny wihnyi.

Maybe he will talk to you.

Nyulawal wajahla jing.gehn nyula
gayehn guhgar gabalnu ngeh
wulungu gujimgu.

He tells many stories of how he went
hunting in the rainforest and the
bush.

(Note: Very close kin have a variety of names, not all given here.)





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REFERENCE:

2nd December, 1983

Thor May
Northern Rivers CAE
P.O. Box 157
LISMORE 2480

Dear Thor

Herewith the suggested phonemicising of your language course. Though a long fiddly job, it was interesting, especially noting the variation in the intervocalic j/d phoneme, which you have variously recorded as j, th and z. There were few items which I couldn't track down somewhere. I get the impression Mick's dialect is not quite Wahlubal as recorded by Crowley - it has features of Gidabal and of Wiyabal (Lismore).

I am rather suspicious of some of the items - they seem to me and my experience to have been forced by English meanings in places, rather than following Bundjalung/Aboriginal ways of saying things. I've noted this in a few of the more 'blatant' examples. But without knowing how you and Mick worked them out I can only guess at this. All I know is that even up to the present (a month back at Tabulam) in talking around how things are said in Banjalang with Banjalang speakers, that certain things are very unlikely to be talked about in the forms you have in places. On the other hand, I also have some evidence of English influence on Banjalang greetings: bugalbeh (Gidabal) as a greeting (= 'good'), nyahnybu-gen ('see you again' in Wahlubal at Tabulam).

There's certainly a lot of good stuff in it, and it was interesting to note the frequent use of particles like gala, -wal and -nguy, and at times of -be(h), all of which have little translatable meaning. They are a lot commoner than the grammar books would suggest, and having no clear English translation are clear evidence of Banjalang patterns. I've picked up evidence of a few lexical items not attested elsewhere, or not well attested, and with acknowledgement of their source from you and Mick Walker, they will in time find their way into the all-Bundjalung dictionary.

Enclosed also the Alawa Case Relations paper.

Best wishes

Margaret Sharpe
Margaret Sharpe



THE UNIVERSITY OF NEWCASTLE
NEW SOUTH WALES, 2308

DEPARTMENT OF LINGUISTICS

TELEPHONE 88 0401

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15th January, 1983

Dr Margaret Sharpe,
Armidale C.A.E.,
Armidale 2350

Dear Margaret,

Thank you exceedingly for your work on the Banjalang transcript. It must have taken you ages. The draft enclosed is amended pretty well according to your conventions (though you will note at once that I haven't yet standardized the d, j, th allophones for spelling).

This third draft has been put together in a more or less presentable form so that the handful of interested people have something tangible to think about. To give them a lead I have temporarily lifted some of your 1978 notes on pronunciation and spelling, and a few pages from Terry Crowley's book about noun markers. Hope you don't mind.

My formal contract with NRCAE is finished now, and I suspect that the Banjalang will have to be put on ice for most of this year while I finish my thesis.

It is probably important, since you have a continuing association with the Banjalang communities, for you to have a little background to this language course. Rob Davidson, Gordon MacLeod and, I had thought, Mick Walker, were anxious to have a course in Banjalang which would be accessible to the kind of people going through the Aboriginal Studies Program at NRCAE: people who might not be willing or able to intellectualize about linguistic theory, but who might still come to some appreciation of the nature of Aboriginal languages /2

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by seeing one actually work with believable dialogue followed up by explanations. Banjalang was the obvious choice in Lismore.

I expressed initial apprehension about the exercise to Gordon, Rob and Mick on several counts. Firstly, I just wasn't being given enough time to do the job properly; (though having started, I'll try to produce something useful eventually). More importantly, it seemed to me that no dialect of Banjalang remains a viable language in the sense of having a regenerating domain of use in an identifiable language community. I was concerned that many people "doing a course" would persuade themselves that they were reviving the language, and indeed this seems to be the general community motivation (both black and white). I had to wish such intentions well with the foreknowledge that language maintenance for its own sake is almost always doomed to failure; (maybe history will prove me wrong with Banjalang ??).

My most serious apprehension was that nobody else in the College, or the Banjalang community, could really grasp the implications of what they were getting into, particularly the magnitude and complexity of the task if language revival was their real objective. Indeed, at a simpler level, it has emerged that there is a good deal of ambivalence about passing on the language. I'm sure you are acquainted with this. The issue has been greatly confused locally by Eve Fesl.

I had met Eve informally a couple times at conferences, where she seemed pleasant enough. As soon as I knew I was coming to Lismore (February, 1983) I wrote to her for advice. None was forthcoming. However, when she got wind of what I was up to in the Spring semester she did write, somewhat shrilly. Eventually she made a trip to

Lismore (without my knowledge) to denounce me to the local Aboriginal community. Apparently I was defended rather warmly by some unexpected allies and Eve left somewhat abashed. However she evidently did persuade Mick Walker first to demand payment, and then to terminate any cooperation with me. (You probably know that she has been flying him down to Melbourne for a couple of years). This has made things rather difficult since other people are reluctant to work with Mick's corpus. Eve's motivation remains obscure to me, though Rob speculates that she is terrified my "course" will hit the market before her own closely guarded masterpiece.

Well, I'm not interested in a vendetta with Eve. Life is too short. But it did seem important that you were backgrounded in the situation.

Best wishes,




Thor MAY

p.s. Thanks for your article on Alawa Case Relationships. It is a good illustration of where my own analysis begins. That is, you assume (at least as a working hypothesis) certain nuclear case forms, which suggest, as a first point of analysis, the question of just how coextensive are the morphemically marked cases of a language like Alawa and Fillimore's semantic 'deep' cases. My own approach has been slightly different. I have questioned the elemental nature of case frames themselves and decided that concepts such as 'agent' cannot be considered indivisible, primitive operators at any level in producing or interpreting language. Rather, they are generalized statements about concatenations of features which have much in common with Chomsky's selectional and subcategorization restrictions. The particular concatenations of features applying to any two given N,V sets may both broadly equate with our intuitive

/4

notion of ,say, /+AGENT/, but close examination will certainly reveal subtle differences in the feature mix, and any adequate grammar must come to terms with this. There may be a good argument for dispensing with crude case labels in sophisticated analyses and being more explicit about the feature mix itself.





Mouth of the Clarence River at Yamba [photo courtesy of the NSW Dept. of Land & Water Conservation]

End