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
AUSTRALIAN ABORIGINES BRANCH
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PREFACE

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S 1984
0. 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 Kollig 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 (1973:36). 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, Walmajari 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 northwards, 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 Julbaridja have since advanced further and crossed the Fitzroy River as a consequence of the Pastoral Award. Each of these groups, Julbaridja, 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.

Map of Languages in the Fitzroy Area

1.2 LAI
La and sou language
The terr Fitzroy souther language
Th gra the north
are pref (English govern-
W W.A. G
the Gold language
northern example
the Yulk In actual speak it
Sc They are sound s
British of Fitz western

Unrelate lingua f has deve vernacu as New English but the Aborigh
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.1 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.

own. written a in war-
It is from predom-
terned ng
ngs erge
rences sh and

range nowl-
dies and

Yiltlala palunya ngalany miyl janlyaja kuyi
wirlka kuyi wirlkaja jurnta miyl jurnta.
Lizard meat lizard and bush food (spec) food bush food (spec)

Yiltlala palunya ngalany. Ngarlka miyl ngarlka palunya
wet season they-them eat food bush food (spec) and meat

ngalany. Jiljina palu ngunangani kujartukarra palu piyrrn nguja
eat at sandhills they were like this they men were

jaru jiljina. Ngarnai palunya kuylja miyl. Mylywarni
before at sandhills 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, kitanganai palunya
all foods all foods they-them were eating all until they-them

ngarnani weapiny waapiny ngarni palunya miylaja kuyi WALL
were eating finish finish ate they-them food and meat alright

kuylmpa palunya ngarni waapiny. Piyrrnwarni palu yani
only meat they-them ate finish men they went

mirnuwu miylwarlanykarti kartyakurakarti.
this way to other food to white man's

Wall yartarni piyrrn yangka palu yanani kailili
alright also men those they were going north

mayurakarti. Yankala palunya miyl yungani piyrrn
to station then they-them food were giving men

jiljirraja. Nyanarti piyrrn palu nylrnparni yanani,
from sandhills that men they permanently were going

5
ngajirtarni tikirrk. Wali palu yanani wurna milykarti
not to return alright they were going journey to food

kartiya kurakarti, yangkata palu niyirnjarrinyani piyirr. Walirni
to white man's then they remained man so

mily palu ngarnan kartiya kurak, walirni palu lamajarrinyani
food they were eating white man's so they stayed

piyirr, ngajirtarni tikirrk, 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 kurrarnan kurilla yapa yinya Kurrapakuta. At sandhill he was sitting south child name name

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

miyl. Ngamajirrulu ngarpungu palurra yitikani. Nyanartilangkarla food mother food they for him put After that

palu terrpartarni. Kurilla pa yani, pilyrn manyu, purpanpani they grabbed south he went man he-them collected

kurilla, Nyanartilangka pa tikirryani. Wall nyanartirlarni pa south After that he returned alright there he

pilyrnjarrinya ngarpayljarrinya. Nyanartilangka pa kitpungani, became man became-initiated man after that he travelled

Kurrarni pa nyanartirla, stayed he there

Wall walimpawarlany pa pinakarrinya, ”Wurna marna alright later he thought journey 1

yanku mayarukarti.” Nyantukurwarnti palurra kakawarntija jaja will go to a station those they uncles and grannie

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

jaja kajalu. Nyanartilangkarlu pa yani, piriinyani manyanta grannie first after that he went came he

mayarurla Timpakurrija, station at Timber Creek

and

Wall nyanartilangka kayili pa yani, wanyjani pa jaja, alright after that north he went where he grannie

Timpakurrija pa warrkammarnani. Nyanartilangka pa yani kayili, at Timber Creek he was working after that he went north
Rirriyani manyanangurla pilyirnta takmanta. Kaparn palu jilykarra came he to them man stockman middle they brand

lanani yawartajawurlu. Nyangani manya karuwarra yalartu pierced with horse were seeing he-them afternoon that

palu yawarta ngampurrikarni karuwarra yawartawarniti. Nyantu they horse mustered afternoon horses he

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

kurilila.

south

Nyanartjjangkara pa takirriyani wallipa, karuwarra la pa after that he returned later afternoon he

yanani manyanangu pilyirnku yanyantjiwuyu takmanku. Yanani manyanangu was going he to them man that stockman was going he to them

kaylll. Mungangkurrwa manyanangurla pilyirnyu purangu karla tartayanujangkara. north darkness he to them came sun west set

Wall pilyirnwarnitirlu yanyantjjangkara palu kurumangnani alright men those they released

yawartawarniti, yankala palu turtangkarrakanya. Yawartarlu palu horses so that they got up and went horse they

marni wangi. Wall yanyantjjangkara paluira warralpungani. said word alright from that they laughed

Jingkirtiwata palura warralpungani. Ranyji yanyantji palu mirth they laughed hidden that they

warralpungani, laughed

Wall rayinjarriyayu palu, kartiya pilyirnyu, alright became afraid they white man came

Nganjirwarnti palu kirrarnni pajajinyangu. Martarnani manya men they were sitting many was keeping he-them

takmanwarniti kartastra. Nyanartjjangkara paluna yiparni. Marni stock men white man, after that they-them sent said

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

kujaartirri, Kaylll wantlwu manta warntarri. Ngapa manta like this north go you road water you

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

nyanar those palu they

Marnil then s wirrriy whirl

martu from r

mutlike motor

mutlike car

ranyji hid

ngurrj Ignore

Mutlike car

mutlike in car

kaninj under

pa li it p

Parnit half s

pa n he ti

nyang was s

Kurra name
yanatalwarmiluru, Ngapa yanaltil ynli paral Parratayil. Yanila
those water that name it Paradise then went
palu kayili, parlipnya palu mana karrinuyangka. Nyananti palu,
you north found they thing standing saw they
Marnila palu, "Ngana ynaltil nysapartujiarrinyanaparta ynaltil
then said they what that doing that
wirriwirrimarnamara," Ngurrapangu palu nyangani wirriwirrimarnmuyangka,
whirling ignorant they were seeing the whirling thing
Nyanantijangka palu puranyeni, karlaka palu ngarni
after that they went past honey they ate
martuwarrajangka, Tikirrinyunungurla palu jinamani ngurti jina
from river returning they tracked vehicle footprint
mutika, Yukanga palurlinyanta yani kurlila jinamanta nganya
motorcar on grass they went south might track he-them
mutikarlu miljarriarlu, Karla palurlinyanta laparnkangurla
car with two eyes west they ran
ranyiwejintunya mutikawu,
hid from car
Yamantini palurta yanani kakarra, Yant pa nayaku
again they were going east yard he will see
ngurrapangu Kurrarpkutarlu, Yanunga pa tartayani kaninykakiny yarta.
ignorant name went he entered inside yard
Mutika kakarrangku pa nyanya, pirrilaparni palu pylirn paja
car from east he saw ran they man many
mutikarla, Tikurrilaparni pa. Nittingju pa paru lani minya
in car ran under he wire it back pierced this
kaninyinarrangku pa tirrinyani. Lapurtawintunya pa kaniny. Nittingju
underneath he went through fell flat on face he down wire
pa lani paru. Murtaylmurtaylkarrara yanl pa rayin.
it pierced back crawled went he afraid
Parntakarrinyani pa kayirrara. Nyanantijangka pa tartapinya. Marni
half stood he north after that he arose said
pa ynaltili, "Mutika ynaltil ynganjillny pirriyanku marna
he that car that like what will come I
nyangani tirritirrinyanani karlampal," marni pa ynaltili
was seeing going through in the west said he that
Kurrarpkutarlu, Pylirnwarnitilru palu mampatipnya 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 Jarrsparnta, Kirrarnani lay one came they morning at Cherrabun stayed palu. Mayaru palu nyangani ngurpangu, they station they were seeing ignorant

As he was in cattle sta
Station.

He stockmer
in the aft
away in f

La
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friends li
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La
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Th
he went a
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through t
He fell fi
was so a
"What w:

He
arrived sta
station h
As a child, Kurrarakuta 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. Kurrarakuta 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 Kurrarakuta 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. Kurrarakuta 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

"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 ngapayljaa yapu pilu yanani karrarrara
alright man and child they two were going to the west

pintirrirrilj, Karuwarraria pilu yanani, "Wali," marni
on the plain afternoon they two were going alright said

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

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

kulkuru, Lanta ngarlinyalu purlumanu. Kulkuru parlaj yananku, "
quilt pierce they-us bullock quiet we will go

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

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

Ngapaylju parlaj marni, "Ngajirja. Pirrlikjawalu ngarlinyalu
man he to him said no with horns they-us

lanta pirrawurrja pajangu lanujuwal palu, " Marni parlaj
pierce to death many always pierce they said he to him

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

parlaj ngapaylju, "Yarr parlipangul Julalany purlirru,
he to him man just they to us tell man

Kujartukarra palu Julalany purlirru pajangu palu Jularnana
like this they tell man many they tell

lanujuwal, purlin lanujuwal pa purluman. Yangka parlaj
always pierce man always pierce he bullock when we

kulkuru yananku, Ngajirja ngarlji wangki marnungkarranganta. Yarr
quiet will go not we word must speak just
parli yananku kulkuru. Pinakarri ngarilnyalu wangki marnujangka. "
we will go quiet hear they-us word talking

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

Wali nyanartijajga pilia yanani karla wurna,
right after that they two were going west walking

puwuwarlanykarti pilia yanani kariarrara. Wali nyanya
to another bore they two were going to west alright saw

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

kaparnwarlanyparri. Munganga pilia yanani warntarrirlal
half way darkness they-two were going on the road

ngurtikurral, Wali ngarpayirlu 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 l-them Okay quiet

parli yanku wangkimulu," we will go without talking

Wali nyanartijajga pilanya nyanya purlumanuwarnti,
right after that they two-them saw bullocks

yangkala pilia karrartajarrinya pilia purlumanuwarntikarrara,
so that they two became afraid they two because of the bullocks

Nyanartujerra ngarpayijaa yapa pilia laparnkarrakanya kakarra
those two man and child they two ran away east

manakarti yangkala pilia mananga paralparli. Kankarni pilia
to tree so then they two tree climbed up they two

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

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

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

also afraid Okay said he to him child this

palu lanujuwal jularri marni piyirntu palu jularlany piyirn
they always piercing tell man they tell man
Wali juturni parla wakngi manikarrangani alright continued he to him word was speaking

yapangu, "Pirlawurra ngartalayi lanujwali Purluman palu child to death they always piercing bullock they

jularnana piyirntu wanyjarrarlu palu jularnani purulum man where they tell bullock

Lanujwali palu julalany, ngajirlala parilinyalu lantarla always piercing they tell not then they-us pierced

ngariljarra jalarr, "Jangkumani manyanta nganpayirlu yapang us now answered he-him man child

"Ngajirta ngani manya kujartukarra, Pinakiri ngartaluyi purlumantu, not you speak like this hear they-us bullock

yangkala ngarilinyalu pirlakajawurru lanta pirlawurra, "so that they-us with horns might pierce to death

Jangkumani manyanta yapangu, "Ngajirta. Ngariljarrlaru ngarilinya answered he-him child not we we-them

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

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

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

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

karrirnujuwal limpa. Wanjurru ngununy nyanartu limpa, "always tells policeman where is that policeman

Marni parla nganpayirlu, "Ngurrpaalru, Kunyungurla kayill said he to him man I don't know maybe north

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

yapangu. "Wali ngajirta ngartli luwa, "child alright not we hit

A r afternoon Finally ti and gone cattle alv us with ti people." 

The said the we walk "Alright-

Aft plain a lo bore. It child. "D "We'll ju:

Aft east to th "Come or. "Yes," ti "They ce; are alway

The the goring pe people bu "Don't tal The child

The I'm too a really alv live?" "} People th "Is that s
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 kalpurra. Ngarni paja parranga
I I know water snake ate it-me hot season

ngapangajintara. Walypa marna nyanya kakarrangu yanani
no rain wind I saw from east came

jiwina wirlwirtikarra. Nyinkarrara wantinyani marnalu pilyrri
water moving moving dive fell we men

paja ngapangaja Kalpururlu paja ngarni, nyumukwantinya marna
many in water water snake it-me ate dived I

Yiyanjai pajaalu winamanalni marnilunyangu, "Wanyjarrarla
saw they-me they said to one another where

turtapungku". Kalpururlu lamparnte nyantu pirljingga turtawayani,
will rise water snake small it body of snake entered
Minyarti nyangana manta pij. Waangurla paja waramani kakangu. this see you picture followed it-me dragged uncle

Nyanartirliu paja muntanga ruwarramani kalpururlu lampungu. that it-me in abdomen dragged water snake Lamboo

Paja palu piyirirmwarnti ngu. Nyanartijangka marna yarr. many they people were after that I nothing

Pinarri marna nguniny ngapanga kaninykeniny 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

Martuwarraja marna yani kaniny, lujimani pajitu. In river I went down lost they-me

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

Tikiri marnalu yani kaninykeniny kaparn paju yutukani. "Jawu back we went below middle they-me put swim

Ngajirra marna ngaju. Ngaju marna pujman. Ngajirra marnari not I I I bushman not I

Pinarri martuwarrawu," ngarnila paja, kaninykeninypala marna know river they then ate it-me then below I

Ngapanga yani kerla walyarra marna nyanya, nyanartiuw marnari In water went west sand I saw there I

Yani kaninykeniny munku wilayilapanurala Ngajangula paja went below dark go round then brother he-me

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

Karalala pajalu parlipinya marlamaminyanguriru jirrimartarni then west they-me found helped showed

Kugurti, nyangungu paja kutupananiwarlanyarni Payitarlu, like this he he-me got Spider

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

Yani. Wali lunganli palu. Jamurn palunyanu pajarraja went alright cried they almost they-themselves cut

Parlipinya pajalu turtapungujainga karla marri, found they-me after rising west distant

Yarntarni Kurungailjangka marna julawu, Again from Christmas Creek I will tell
Kurungaljangka marna yani tirriny. Kuyijarti larna wirlijarti from Christmas Creek I went through then I with meat on a stick
yanani. Yani marna ngapa minyarljulany, minya ngapa marnpa went went I water like this this water nearby
ngunangana nyanartljulanyjarna 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
ngapengu. nyarna pa. wali ngaji pinarri marnarla. water deep it alright I know I

I ka got me.
the last come was swing me down
I have le:

We out and the middle of
I don't ka took me
the sand, saved me

Th I was de: out of the
themselves
I was a

Ye the cree
my shou
deep wat
still had me this
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 kanganinya were going we long ago long ago they-us carried
ngamajirnuja ngarpungu, Kangani marnapanyalu jarnaka kurtangarrli mother and father carried they-us on back naked
marna jarlaka kirrarnani ngamajirna ngarpunga. Yanani marnalu, I on back sat on mother on father were going we
Turitil marnapanyalu yungani yapawarnitirli Nukurpaajangkarpu, Turitil dress they-us gave children from Noonkenbah dress
marnapanyalu yungani, jarlu marnalu yanani kurtangarrli, they-us gave long ago we were going naked
Yanani marnalu, kurtajpanani marnalu turitil nyanarrli, were going we remove we dress that
kurraparliya marnalu kanganinya pujmantjangkan. Kurraparli then in hand we took because we were bushmen in hand
marnalu kanganinya ngajirna marnalu wirrimkujuirrntarrli jirrkiri, we took not we wear properly
Yarrpela marnalu tarrapungurlakanani yarr marnalu yanani just we threw just we were going
kurtangarrli walyarra walyarra. Yanani marnalu wally naked sand sand were going we alright
nyumukmananin marnalu, "Yapawarni kuji manta ngalku," marnani bathed we children meat you eat were saying
marnapangulu, Walu jarti marnapangulu juwumpjuwumkujuirnani they to us alright in vain they-us showed
turiti wirrimkujuirrnuwu yapawarnitirli kanarlinywarnitirli, dress to wear children other
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.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1 Walmatjari word</th>
<th>2 or more English words</th>
<th>Comment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>nganyja</td>
<td>eat, drink</td>
<td>The same Walmatjari verb is used for eating solids and drinking fluids.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>pukarr</td>
<td>cooked, ripe</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>pungka</td>
<td>hit, kill</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>kuyi</td>
<td>meat, edible animal</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>warlu</td>
<td>fire, firewood</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>mana</td>
<td>tree, thing, stick</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>kirranyja</td>
<td>sit, stay, live</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>nyaka</td>
<td>see, look</td>
<td>as in 'I am staying at Fitzroy Crossing.'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>pinakarri</td>
<td>hear, listen</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>kurrara</td>
<td>arm, hand, finger, thumb</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ngamarna</td>
<td>milk, breast</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>lilra</td>
<td>mouth, teeth</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 English word</td>
<td>2 or more Walmatjari words</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>food</td>
<td>miyi</td>
<td>vegetable food</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>kuyi</td>
<td>meat</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sister</td>
<td>ngapurlu</td>
<td>older sister</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>ngaja</td>
<td>younger sister or brother</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>hit</td>
<td>pungka</td>
<td>hit, from nearby (using stick, stone, club, hand)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>luwa</td>
<td>hit with a missile (using stone, boomerang or some dull object)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>lanta</td>
<td>hit with a sharp instrument such as a spear,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>hole</td>
<td>kurrku</td>
<td>hole in the ground</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>kirlingirri</td>
<td>hole which goes through to the other side (as a doorway)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
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.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>English terms</th>
<th>Walmatjari equivalents</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>lizard</td>
<td>'four-footed reptile'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>wirlka</td>
<td>'sand goanna'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>wakura</td>
<td>'gecko'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>kayuku</td>
<td>'frilled lizard'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>lungkura</td>
<td>'blue tongue lizard'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>and others</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>food</td>
<td>'what one eats'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>kuyi</td>
<td>'any edible animal'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>'egg'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>'meat'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>miyi</td>
<td>'any edible vegetable food'</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(includes fruit, grain,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>processed flour, roots, etc.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>rock</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>rocky hill</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>pebble</td>
<td>pamarr</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>coin</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

26
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-ngu tirrinyyani ear-at through-went 'He did not listen'
- pina-rri ear 'knowledgable'

27
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'
- **pukanja** 'night, when it is dark'
- **rackarra** 'half light of dawn'
- **jalara** 'now, presently'
- **jarlu** 'in the past'
- **warra** 'in a little while. Also used as a type of command when it means wait!'
- **walimpa** sometime later, bye and bye.

The word jalara 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', **yitilal** '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: **wilik** '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  pirlji 'red ochre'
- yellow  karntawarra 'yellow ochre'
- white  mawanti 'white ochre'
- black  pirrki 'charcoal'
- 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 directional 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)'
- kayilungujangkawarnti 'the ones from the north'
- kayilungujarti '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.

ri jap '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-purr ru 'tape recorder'
word-purpose

wirrim-purr ru 'clothes'
wear-purpose

jina-purr ru 'shoe'
foot-purpose

wajapungu-purr ru 'eraser'
wipe out-purpose

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  pukurr  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. Kartu '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 ngarlpa '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.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Person referred to</th>
<th>English term</th>
<th>Walmatjari term</th>
<th>Person referred to</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>female parent</td>
<td>mother</td>
<td>ngamaji</td>
<td>female parent &amp; all her sisters</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>male parent</td>
<td>father</td>
<td>ngarpu</td>
<td>male parent &amp; all his brothers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>male offspring</td>
<td>son</td>
<td>walaku</td>
<td>male offspring</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>son of a man's sibling</td>
<td>nephew</td>
<td>walaku</td>
<td>son of a man's brother</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>son of a woman's sibling</td>
<td>nephew</td>
<td>walaku</td>
<td>son of a woman's sister</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>female offspring</td>
<td>daughter</td>
<td>kurntal</td>
<td>female offspring</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>daughter of a man's sibling</td>
<td>niece</td>
<td>kurntal</td>
<td>daughter of a man's sister</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>daughter of a woman's sibling</td>
<td>niece</td>
<td>kurntal</td>
<td>daughter of a woman's brother</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>mother's brother</td>
<td>uncle</td>
<td>kaka</td>
<td>mother's brother</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>father's brother</td>
<td>uncle</td>
<td>ngarpu 'father'</td>
<td>father's brother</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>father's sister</td>
<td>aunty</td>
<td>pimiri</td>
<td>father's sister</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>mother's sister</td>
<td>aunty</td>
<td>ngamaji 'mother'</td>
<td>mother's sister</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>male sibling</td>
<td>brother</td>
<td>papaji</td>
<td>older brother</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>female sibling</td>
<td>sister</td>
<td>ngapurlu</td>
<td>older sister</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>offspring of parent's siblings</td>
<td>cousin</td>
<td>ngaja</td>
<td>younger sibling</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>There are many terms equivalent</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
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**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Walmatjari reciprocal terms</th>
<th>person referred to</th>
<th>English equivalent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>jaja</td>
<td>mother's mother</td>
<td>grandmother</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>woman's daughter's offspring (male &amp; female)</td>
<td>granddaughter</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>grandson</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ngawiji</td>
<td>father's mother</td>
<td>grandmother</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>woman's son's offspring (male &amp; female)</td>
<td>granddaughter</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>grandson</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>jamirti</td>
<td>mother's father</td>
<td>grandfather</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>man's daughter's offspring (male &amp; female)</td>
<td>grandson</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>granddaughter</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>kilaki</td>
<td>father's father</td>
<td>grandfather</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>man's son's offspring (male &amp; female)</td>
<td>grandson</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>granddaughter</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**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  
nangala

2. JUNGKURRA  
nanyjili

3. JUPURRU  
nyapurruru

4. JAWANTI  
nyapana

5. JAPALYI  
nyapajjarri

6. JAKARRA  
nakarra

7. JANGKARTI  
nangkarti

8. JAMPIYIRNTI  
nampiyirnti

Everyone within the tribe and in neighbouring tribes is classified into two distinct divisions or moieties. "Moietly 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**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Moieties and Generation Levels</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>JANGALA nangala = nanyjilli JUNGKURRA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>JUPURRU nyapurru = nyapana JAWANTI</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>JAPALYI nyapajarri = nakarra JAKARRA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>JANGKARTI nangkarti = nampiyirnti JAMPIYIRNTI</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Matrilocal 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 nanyjilli 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 nanyjilli 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

Walmartjari 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 Walmartjari people. The following are particularly helpful:

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.


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.


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, 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:


For general reading on Aboriginal culture:


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.


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.

Marninwarni palu ngunangani jarlu yininga Kunajawurla ngapanga,  
women they were before at name at Kunajarti at water

Jumunga palu ngarika ngarnani,  
at soak they nut were eating

Nyanartjalangkarlu pilangu marnani, "Kayilli  
After that she to them was saying North

nyakanyakajipla marajinyalinyukjarra. Kayilli nyakanyakajipla  
you two look for me North you two look for me

pimarlawurra marajinyalinyukjarra. Kayilli  
distant flashes of lightning North

nyakanyakajipla pimarlawurra marajinyalinyukjarra, "  
you two look for me distant flashes of lightning

Wall marni pilaria, "Ngena man jularnana,"  
Alright said they to her What you telling

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

pilaria marninjarrawarlu. Turtangkarraikunya pila ngarikakartli.  
they to her two women got up and went they two to nuts

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

Kayilli marni kangany parlanyanu ngarika mapirrimi. Nyanarti  
north far carries she for herself nut also that

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

mamayimarnarri. Jininyarajaa pukanyja pa mamayimarnani. Nirra  
flashes day time and night it flashes always

kumanta warlany kumanta warlany pa mamayimarnani jininyarajaa  
each morning each morning it flashes day time and
pukanyja nira nyanartj. Marrin pa yanany puran. Ngapa night always that woman she goes past rain

nejjita nyakarta marnintu. Ngenga pa yanany, not saw woman astray she goes

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

gapa lurrjawurlu. Wall tarlakurrjawurlu pa pajani ngapa rain thirsty alright with axe she chopped water

manajangka ngapa nyanartj. Ngapa pa ngunangani manang from tree water that it was in tree

purikanga, yankalpa pajani marnintu ngapa yyanartj. big so that chopped woman water that

Wall turrapungani ngapa manajangka, yankalala alright arose water from tree so that

yimpirlamarnani ngapa. Nyanartjjangkarlu pa marnintu ngartakani spilled water after that she woman made

yini parla Jiljiriminti ngartakani marnintu. Wall ngapa yyanartj name its Jiljiriminti made woman alright water that

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

ngapangu, water

Wall marnintu pa luka ngartakani wamarn. Yutukani alright woman she mud made around put

luka yyanartj pa ngapangu ngarni luka. Nyanartjjangkarlu pa mud that she water ate mud. After that she

jalji ngartakani luka marnintu. Yininga Tilayiyrarlpa in vain made mud woman at name at Tilayiya she

ngunangani. Nyanartjjangkala pa ngapangu karratukujirni, wurnala was after that it water scared then move

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

Parraalunurla manyanu jurumani. Wall jakerni pa karla, at hill at Paradise she waited alright started she west

jawumarni karlarrara wurna. swam west move

Wall yantarni manyanu jurumani kaparn yininga Alright again she waited half way at name
Pilla manyanu jurumani ylinga Pilla Wumpumirrirla yini.
at PII she waited at name at PII at Wumpumirriri name

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

Turtangkarra kanya wurna karla. Yarrarni pa jawumani karlarrara
got up and went move west again she swam west

ngapanga purlkanga. Ngapanga pa jawumani. Yapawarni
in water big in water she swam children

mapirriri manya kanya yapa lumanguylingu
also she-them carried child blue tongue lizard name

lumanguylingu manya kanya. Jarra kanya manya yapawarni,
also she-them carry on back child children

luma ylingu manya jarra kanya yapa. Wali yarntarni manyanu
she them carry on back she-them children

Parunga manya jarra kanya yapa. Wali yarntarni manyanu
on back she-them carry on back child alright again she

jurumani ylinga Mulumanta yini Mulumanta. Wali jurumani
waited at name Mulumanta name Mulumanta, alright waited

manyanu nyawurla Mulumanta pamarra. Laymirri manyanu
she there Mulumanta at rock once she

jurumani, nyarntijangka turtangkarra kanya kurilla jawumarni
waited after that got up and went south

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

nyarnti marnin. Nyanartuwarni yapawarni 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

42
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 ngarika nuts and the other woman walked off to the north to get ngarika 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 Jiljimirni.

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.
When a Relative Died

written by Pompy Siddon

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.

Kukajartji palurla pilirriyan ngamajiju. Marni palurla with bad news they to her came to mother said

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

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

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

karuwarrajaaj pukanyajaa rakarreria. Kuyiwarntji manja afternoon and night and at sunrise animals she-them

ngarnni pujuri walak. Pirtinykani manja kuyiwarntji was eating frog species frog species she-them animals

pukawa jilpirrįjarti wilka. Nyanarti jaminjawardu ngalany, snake lizard that one under taboo eats

Jaminjarti parrangawarntji murrkurnjaaj makurrarawarntji murrkurnjaaj one under taboo hot seasons few and cold seasons few and

yiltiwarntji murrkurnngunangupurrul jaminjarti nira. Wet seasons few to be under taboo always

Walimpawarlanji palu warrayanany wangkipuru marrupuru. They gather for words to talk much later

Yutantilany nganimpirrwalany nganimpirrwarlanji. Nyanarti they sit group group that

wangkipuru jaminjartijii palurla malany. Layi for words about one under taboo they to her say one

nganpayi turtangany wangkipuru. "Wali karrkanyjaru. Malku man gets up for word alright be quiet will speak

44
marna. Minyarti mannin nguja jaminjarti jarluwarlany jarluwarlany. I this woman was under taboo long ago long ago

Wayila mantarla yawilyjarriilany. "Yu," malany palu nukarni. query you for her are sympathetic yes say they all

Wurnala palu yanany kujangkurra, then walk they go to this

Wallimpa pukanyja palu pirriyanany. Nukarnini palurila later night they come all they to her

yanany jirajawurlu manyan kurrapa mapalany. Jirajawurlurnila go with fat he self hand spreads then with fat

mapalany mannin llraja janginy. Lungany palu nukarni. spreads woman on mouth face cry they all

Karrkaalany palu nukarni. Kuyi ngillyki palanta llrrangakujilany. stop they all meat flesh they-her put into mouth

Taki-ngu ngalany, Nyangany palu pajangu. Malany palurila acceptably eats see they many say they to her

"Well, Pungankula manurlanyanu nyuntungu," alright then kill you for yourself 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."
Kinship Complexities

written by Olive Bieundurry

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 ngarpun kayanmirri, yarr kaka ngajirla ngarpun, my father once just uncle not father

ngajukurawu ngajirla parla, nganayi parlipinya kartu for mine young brother his er found wife

kayirrapaljarti minya, Kunyungurla punapajarti, marpa nganayi from north this maybe Bunaba maybe er

parla, Kayirrapaljarti parlipinya kartu, Nangkartinyulartin, anything from north found wife really Nangkarti

yangkala ngajukura kaka manyanta marriptjarrinya nyawanurla so that my uncle he married there

nangkartinyugurla. Walli nangalajaa jangala nyantarliwarnti into the Nangkarti group alright nangala and jangala those

yapawarnti palurla turtapinya. Walli ngajukura pajli nyantarliwarnti children his grew up alright my mine those

yapawarnti parnikwarntila nguniny ngajarliwarntijaap papajjarwarnti, children then cousins are younger siblings and older brothers

Nyantarli pajji marri binjamantji ngunarla, jalarra pajji pimirrila that my woman grandmother should be now my aunty

nguninyngamajjajajipajji nguniny, purrku nyantukura papaji is mother my is old man my older brother

pajji jamantji nguniny. Marrinmipa nyantarli pajji ngamajjajajipajji my grandfather is only woman that my mother

nguniny, tumaj pajji ngajukura kaka marriptjarrinya, is because my my uncle married

Kanarlanpy nganpayiwarlany jupurrungurla yalarti nguniny other man really jupurr there is

punapajarti, ngajurla marna ngilyki nakarra. Walli nyantin Bunaba I certainly I flesh nakarra alright he
jupurrjal. Wali nyanartl jupurrungu ngajuwu jupurrur certainly alright that really jupurruru my my

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

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

jamirtl nguja rungjayitwarnnti manya wajilpinyangurra grandfather was wrong he-them followed

nyapurrurjaa Jupurrur, ngajukurarli jamirtirlu. Kujartirlni palu nyapurrurru and jupurruru my grandfather like this they

nguniny paja, yangka parlipangulu, are many those ours

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

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

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

Wali nyana ngajukuramparnti papajjaa, ngajirta kanarlany. alright that only my older brother and not other

Kanarlany kanarlany marna jarntu julalany papa j 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 namplyirrintijilinyarnnti. really jakarra grandfather my is that like namplyirnti

Yannta namplyirnti pajlul nganayi nguniny ngajajaa also namplyirnti my er is younger sister and

ngapurlu. Nganayiljanga ngarpungu marrirtimkujirri warnarni older sister er father married got

kartu parliyanu ngajukurarlu ngarpungu. Marpti nganayirlu wife he for self my father maybe er

jupurrururu marpti warnarni nanjili kartu. Nyanartljla paji jupurruru maybe got nanjili wife then that my

nguniny ngaja nyanartj namplyirrintinyungu. Yangka paji is younger sister that really namplyirnti when my

nguniny jaja namplyirrintinyungu ngajuwu nakarrawu, wall is grandmother really namplyirnti my nakarra alright
nyanartl pa, Ngarayl jukungu pa warntani juku warntani paji
that it er child he got child got my
nanyillinyungu nganayiru juku paji warntani nanyillinyungu
really nanyilll er child my got nanyill
jawanirru kunyungurla kujarti Yarnja ngamaji palu nguniny
jawanti maybe like this also mother they are
nanyillinyungu marrpangulu nakarra, yarnta juku marrpangulu
really nanyilll our nakarra also child our
nguniny kanarlany kanarlany, Yarnja marrpangulu nyapananyungu
are others others also our really nyapana
nguniny juku, yarnta marrpangulu nyapananyungu ngamaji nguniny
are child also our nyapana mother is
kanarlany kanarlany, Juku marrpangulu nguniny ngapurlujangka,
others others child ours are from older sister
yangka ngapurlu nguninyjangka marrpangulu napmiyirrni walli,
when older sister is our napmiyirrni finish

but s or fr som
sub been an at only aunti

I am to m be m
subs

as g: is a
ejaka:

to m
gran daug
a to m
coulk way
Or to daug
naka daug
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 jupurruru subsection. I am really nakarra and he is jupurruru 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, nyapurruru. 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 nampiyirrnti subsection who are my grandmothers. Those of the nampiyirrnti subsection can also be my sisters depending on who my father married. If a jupurruru man (my father) marries a nanyjilli wife, then their nampiyirrnti children are in sister relationship to me.

For a nampiyirrnti to be related to me (nakarra), as grandmother, it could be that my daughter, nanyjilli, married a jawanti man. That is one way it could happen. Then again a nanyjilli 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 nampiyirrnti can be a daughter to me (nakarra) when she is a daughter of someone I call "sister". That's all.
Collecting Ant eggs  
told by Adeline Wanangini

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 yan mungukarti pinga yanany  
then will see we this went to anthill ant goes

tarotumurra warnarri parla nguniny yanka, Wali to opening track his is that alright

pingakurara nguniny kiriingirri wamarnkujarra.  
at the ants is opening all around

Wali lanany parliparla milkinjawurlu. Tarapungany alright poke we with digging stick throw

parlipa minyarti mungku kaninykaninyjangka, Wall purlpungany we this ant bed from inside alright gather together

parlipa minyarti ngurtikarti, Jarri lay parlipa, warapungany we this to coolamon pan we squeeze

parlipa, yutukarralany parlipa, kurrtukkarraalanyapa parlipa,  
we put we then winnow we

Nyanartijangkala kakara nyarrangkujirnurlu. Yangka parlipa after that clean having wet it when we

kujarti murrkarta parlipa, jarri lay parlipa,  
like this winnow then shake we

Wali kunyungartala parlipa yutukarra kaniranyja  
althight maybe we put in another

gurtung kakara, kangany parlipanyanangu kaninyjurrara  
coolamon clean carry we for them down

kaniranywarntiuru, Ngarrungkarrangurra parlipa kangany,  
to others eating we carry
Puju parliparla pajarralany lamanta warrpula, if we chop hollow log warrpul tree

nguninywarilyparni pa ngilarn, Pajarralany parlipa nyanarti is also it ant eggs chop we that
tarilakurrumawurlu. Purlpungany parlipa nyanartijangkawarilyparni, with axe gather together we from that also
Kakananjingu mapun lamanta nguniny kaninyjarti warrpula really clean true hollow log is inside warrpul tree
mananga. Jaralalany parlipa, kakarakujilany parlipa, tree shake we clean we
Kinkjartijinjygula parlipa plrrikangany kaniny ngurranga, then really satisfied we carry down to camp
Ruwajangkarlu parlipanya yungany kuyjiya 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.
Bush Medicine for sores

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.

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.
Bush Medicine for the catfish sting  told by John Charles

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.

Nyanartjingga yangka piyirn lanany kapingu kulumarlu, after that that man pricks fish fin

luumenany palu parntapi, jangalany palu, kuyurrpunganypala palu, tear off they bark they they spit

Wall nyanartjingga lamajarrilanyapala nyanartjingga after that then becomes still that

wurlwurlmannjangka, Lamajullanyapala nyanartjingga pain then stops that majala

Majala palu leyi nyanartiwu kepiwu 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             kumantha

day after tomorrow   kumantawurlany

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            ngurrpa

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

ekakarra
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.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>English</th>
<th>Walmatjari</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>afternoon</td>
<td>karuwarra</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ant</td>
<td>pinga</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ant egg</td>
<td>ngilarn</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>arm</td>
<td>kurrupa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ate</td>
<td>ngarni</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>back</td>
<td>palpu, paru</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bait (small fish)</td>
<td>lakarr</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>barramundi</td>
<td>parlka</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>beard</td>
<td>ngulyku, ngarnkurr</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bed</td>
<td>pangk</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>billabong</td>
<td>pirra</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bird</td>
<td>jiriki</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>black</td>
<td>kurnkurn</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>blanket</td>
<td>pilangkirr</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>blood</td>
<td>nungu</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bone</td>
<td>kampukampu, kuji</td>
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<tr>
<td>boomerang</td>
<td>karli</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>boy</td>
<td>parri</td>
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<tr>
<td>breast, milk</td>
<td>ngamarna</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>brolga</td>
<td>kuyartu</td>
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<tr>
<td>bullock</td>
<td>purluman</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>butterfly</td>
<td>pirrpintipinti</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>buttocks</td>
<td>puku</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
calf (of leg)  warlarrpirti
came  yani
camp  ngurra
car  ngurti, mutuka
cat  pujikat, miyawu
catfish  kulamajarti
cave  naji
centipede  kanparr
chest  tukutuku
cold  yapa
cold season  kuluwuj, palya
come here  ngumuru, yurnturr
cooked  makurru
cold  makurra
cocktail  mirnu yanta!
cool  kamparni
coolamon  kirtily

cough  ngurti
creek  kuntilypinya
cried  palma

crocodile (freshwater)  linya
crocodile (salt water)  kwarniya
cut  linykurra

damper  jungani
darkness  pulawa, tampa
dawn, dusk  munga
dingo  rkarra

dog  marrany
down  kunyarr
dress  kaniny
dust  turiti

dust  jutu
eagle  wamulu, wapurna
ear  pina
earth  nguwa
east  kakarra
eat  nganyja!
eel  lanyi
egg  kampiny
emu  karnanganyja
eye  mil
face
faeces
father
fence
fingernail
fire, firewood
fish
flame
floodwater
fly
food (vegetable)
foot, footprint
forehead
frog
gecko
girl
goanna
go now
grass
grass hopper
hair
hand
hung (as clothes on line)
hawk
head
headache
hot
hot coals
hot season
hornet
horse
house
jilgie
kangaroo (river)
kangaroo (plains)
kangaroo (rock)
knee
later
laughed
lay down
janginy
miyijangka, kura
ngarpu
parrik
miljarn
warlu
kapi
tili
warrampa
ngurriny
miyi, mangarri
jina
janginy
walak, pujurl
wakura
manga
kakaji
wall yanta!
yuka
jarrjurn
ral
kurrrapa
tarnikani
likjarti
jurlu
ngalak
parrparr, putpara
pirrki, yawu
parranga
munurrmunurrku
yawarta, timana
mayaru
jarrampa
wanyjirri
marlu
jamarnnti
nimirti
walimpa
warralpinya
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
wirlka
nyaka!

purru
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
pirlji
martuwarra
warntarri
pamarr
lapanyja!
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  manyan
smoke  nganyjurr
snake  jilpirtijarti
soak water  jumu
soon  juup
sore  warra
south  mimi
spear (bamboo)  kurlirra
spear (wooden)  jirnal
spear thrower  mangul
spinifex  ngapaliny
spat  jijapuru
spoke, said  juwatpinya
star  marni
stand up!  wil
store  turtangka!
stork  tuwa
stomach  mayarta
sugar  munta, ngaru
sun  juga
swam  purangu

tea  jawumarni
teeth  tiyi, naliya
thigh  lirra
throat  kanyji
toenail  kangkurl
tongue  miljarn
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  
gurti  
kurlpuk  

nyumukmanija!  
wajimmarni  
ngapa  
yara  
yani  
karla  
yitilal  
walypa  
jintipirriny  
mawanti  
ngakalyalya, lapa  
kartiya  
marnin  
parnany  

karntawarra  
pingkayi
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.

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<th>Walmatjari</th>
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<td>camp</td>
<td>puru</td>
<td>muwe</td>
<td>ngurra</td>
<td>ngurra</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>mother</td>
<td>kuya</td>
<td>ngarranyi</td>
<td>yipija,</td>
<td>ngamaji</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>father</td>
<td>wulu</td>
<td>ngawungu</td>
<td>tilypu</td>
<td>ngarpu</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>child</td>
<td>pawa</td>
<td>puka</td>
<td>jiji</td>
<td>yapa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>man</td>
<td>wampa</td>
<td>kurama</td>
<td>wati</td>
<td>piyirn</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>woman</td>
<td>marnin</td>
<td>wiyi</td>
<td>tuju</td>
<td>marnin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>go</td>
<td>kaliyangama</td>
<td>wartpara</td>
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<td>yanta</td>
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