DE GRUYTER
MOUTON

Ian G. Malcolm

AUSTRALIAN ABORIGINAL ENGLISH

CHANGE AND CONTINUITY IN AN ADOPTED LANGUAGE

DIALECTS OF ENGLISH

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Australian Aboriginal English

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Editors
Joan C. Beal
Karen P. Corrigan
Bernd Kortmann

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The author and Senior Nyungar Research Consultant, Glenys Collard, 20th November 2016

Foreword

I am proud to write this foreword as it allows me to share with you what I have learnt. I have worked many years with Ole Boy[1] and know that he has treated me with the utmost respect, as I have him. Since I joined Professor Malcolm as his Senior Aboriginal English Consultant, we have spent many years together sharing our views, our thoughts and our ways of doing things.

Through the research in this book Aboriginal people all over Western Australia, in fact all over Australia, have been represented. Now they can feel confident in how they speak and, as the original peoples of this land, can walk tall, knowing that not everything was lost through the many restrictive policies imposed on us in the past. In fact we can now look forward to a better future.

Aboriginal English is the one thing that has enabled me and my family to keep our language and culture alive and respected. I was supported by my mother and father Sylvia and Don Collard to make sure I maintained the validation that had been passed on to me by Pop Tom Bennell and Pop Cliff Humphries. They shared with me from the beginning their Aboriginal English stories, many of which hold cultural knowledge and have sacred significance today.

I knew, as Ole Boy did, how important Aboriginal English was for our people. Through the many years of research and by working with our people in many communities, we were able to share and validate their practice. This book will show the processes of change within Aboriginal English and how Aboriginal English is spoken as the first, if not the second, language by most Aboriginal people in Australia today. It respects us and gives us a choice in how we can talk about our daily lives.

I worked all these years with Ole Boy not to become him but to help him understand me, our people, our voices and our world view. This has enabled me, my family and others to carry on to be strong and proud peoples in our own right. I know that I now can pass this on to my grannies and great grannies to share our stories, our ways, in the same way as our old grannies did many years ago.

This book enables all of us Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people to work together on a daily basis. It will help our schools to make education better for our children and it will ensure that many of the stories told can be understood and take their rightful place in society. I can't thank Ole Boy enough for all his perseverance to understand all of our complexities and putting them down here for all of us to learn. It's the only thing that I know that has substance for our people.

Glenys Collard

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1 "Ole Boy" is the only highest term of esteem I can use in this context. This term is commonly used by Aboriginal people across Western Australia as a term of highest esteem for persons who are not related.

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I am grateful to Joan Beal, Karen Corrigan and Bernd Kortmann for their invitation to contribute to this series and for their encouragement and support as the book has slowly taken shape.

I owe my initiation into Aboriginal English research to my late colleague and former teacher Susan Kaldor of the University of Western Australia, who kindly invited me to collaborate with her in what was to become one of the most widespread and extended studies of the dialect in Australia.

Ongoing support from bodies including the Australian Research Council, the Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies and the Office of Multicultural Affairs, as well as from the Education Department of Western Australia, Edith Cowan University and the University of Western Australia enabled the research initiated in 1973 to continue for several decades, extending into new areas made possible through ongoing developments in linguistics.
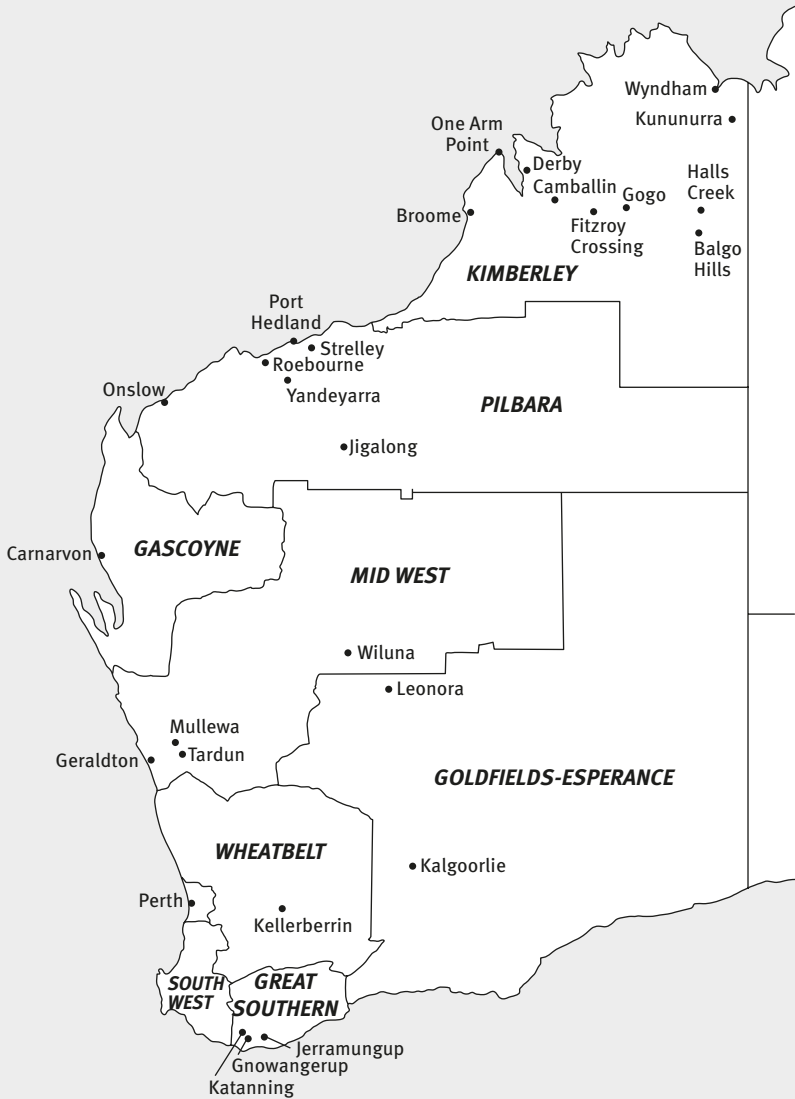
It has been a priceless privilege to be made welcome by so many Aboriginal people into their communities and into their lives. My thanks to the hundreds of speakers who have made this study of their dialect possible. I am particularly grateful to Glenys Collard, from whom I have learned so much down the years, and I greatly value the foreword she has written to this volume. It is my hope that the kind of mutual respect that has pervaded our collaboration will be extended through this volume.

I have been most grateful for helpful feedback, in the course of writing this book, from Patricia Königsberg, Celeste Rodriguez-Louro and Farzad Sharifian as well as from an anonymous reviewer. My thanks go too to Margaret Sharpe for her contribution to the sample texts and to Jacqueline Williams for providing the map of Australia and the photograph. I am also deeply grateful for unwavering support from my wife, Kaye Malcolm.

AUSTRALIA

Port Essington

Maningrida
Milingimbi

Torres Strait

Darwin

Arnhem Land

Groote Eylandt

Cape york

Lockhart River

Ngukurr

Yarrabah

Halls Creek

Kalkaringi
Lajamanu

NORTHERN TERRITORY

Palm Island

QUEENSLAND

Canning Stock Route

WESTERN AUSTRALIA

McLaren Creek

Tennant Creek
Barrow Creek

Woorabinda

Bundaberg

Alice Springs

SOUTH AUSTRALIA

Cherbourg

Wiluna

Coober Pedy

Brisbane
Baryulgil

Moree

Ceduna

NEW SOUTH WALES

Perth Swan River

Adelaide

Wilcannia

Port Stephens
Sydney
Redfern
Botany Bay
La Perouse
Port Jackson

Alberton

VICTORIA

Melbourne

Port Philip

TASMANIA

Cape Barren Island

WESTERN AUSTRALIA

Wyndham
Kununurra

One Arm
Point
Derby
Camballin
Gogo
Halls
Creek

Broome
Fitzroy
Crossing
Balgo
Hills

KIMBERLEY

Port
Hedland
Strelley
Roebourne
Onslow
Yandeyarra

PILBARA

Jigalong

Carnarvon

GASCOYNE

MID WEST

Wiluna
Leonora

Mullewa
Tardun
Geraldton

GOLDFIELDS-ESPERANCE

WHEATBELT

Perth
Kalgoorlie

Kellerberrin

SOUTH WEST
GREAT SOUTHERN

Jerramungup
Gnowangerup
Katanning

Contents

1 Introduction

1.1 English in Australia

For most of its history, the Australian continent has been the domain of languages other than English. In the comparatively short period of about two hundred and thirty years it has been transformed from a land in which some two hundred and fifty indigenous languages prevailed to one in which, overwhelmingly, English has become the dominant language among both immigrant and indigenous populations.

Australian English, the variety spoken most widely in Australia, has been the subject of a good deal of investigation. Emerging from the interaction of a number of overseas social and regional varieties in the environment to which they had been transported, and adapting to the expression of a common history and sense of identity, it eventually went through a process of levelling to become the means of expression of a pan-Australian identity, while accommodating minor markers of regional and social identity in the various states.

What is less well-known is the fact that a parallel but different development took place in those speech communities where indigenous languages had prevailed. Here processes of language contact – in addition to processes of levelling across different English varieties – would leave a permanent mark on the variety of English which was to emerge. Unlike Australian English, Aboriginal English would not have the unifying force of standardization, although it would continue to show continuity in many ways with the indigenous languages which had preceded it, and it would, for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, provide a pan-Australian means of the expression of their identity.

English, then, in Australia, has twofold ownership: on the one hand, as Australian English, it provides a sense of belonging to all who live in Australia because of the way in which it has been moulded to express a distinctively Australian experience; on the other hand, by way of Aboriginal English, it carries a more particular sense of belonging in that it embodies, for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, a continuing link with their contact experience and their age-old cultures through the distinctive features it has maintained at all levels of linguistic description.

1.2 The independence of Aboriginal English

It follows from this that, although Aboriginal English is a form of English spoken in Australia, it would be misleading to call it a form of Australian English, since that name is used for a dialect which represents a different speech community – albeit

a speech community in which many Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Australians may have membership by virtue of family orientation or bidialectalism.

One of the reasons for the writing of this volume is to uphold the independence of Aboriginal English – as, indeed, its speakers have done – in the face of continuing pressure to merge it with Australian English. This is particularly prevalent in education and public life where competence in English is assumed – by those in the majority – to mean competence in Australian English, and where this assumption frequently leads to making unreasonable demands on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander speakers whose English differs in significant ways from that of the majority.

1.3 The unity of Aboriginal English

A second justification for this volume is the fact that Aboriginal English has hitherto been the subject of investigation in many diverse parts of Australia and that there is a need for a co-ordinated presentation of the data from all regions, to enable a fuller picture of this variety and to provide evidence for the view that, though existing in diverse sub-varieties, it is appropriately approached as a single dialect. The present volume attempts to bring together data from some fifty years of research in different parts of Australia, particularly Western Australia, where the bulk of the author's research has been carried out. It is possible that, over these fifty years, Aboriginal English has been changing, however it has not been the focus of this study to trace such change. Indeed, the first substantial study of variation and change in Aboriginal English, headed by Rodriguez-Louro at University of Western Australia[1], is in the early stages of its implementation.

1.4 Aboriginal English research

1.4.1 The role of Aboriginal researchers

Ideally, research on Aboriginal English should be carried out by members of the speech communities who use it. While some such research has indeed been carried out (e.g. Fesl 1977; Enemburu 1989), the majority of studies have been

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1 *Aboriginal English in the Global City: Minorities and Language Change,* research under an Australian Research Council Discovery Early Career Researcher Award, commencing in 2017.

conducted by non-Aboriginal linguists, though, in many cases (e.g. Eades 1983; Harkins 1994; Kaldor and Malcolm 1979; Malcolm et al 1999a) they have been in close association with Indigenous colleagues and consultants.

1.4.2 Queensland

Linguistic study of Aboriginal English, so-called, began in Australia with the Queensland Speech Survey, coordinated by E.H. Flint over the years 1960-1968. This entailed analyses of data gathered from small groups of informants in 30 parts of Queensland. Significant descriptions were provided of varieties spoken in settlements in Cherbourg (Readdy 1961), Palm Island (Dutton 1964, 1965), Torres Strait Islands (Dutton 1970), Yarrabah (Alexander 1965), Woorabinda (Alexander 1968) and North West Queensland (Flint 1971). An educational project employing psycholinguistic testing provided further data on varieties from Cherbourg and Palm Island between 1968 and 1979 (Department of Education, Queensland 1972). The findings at Woorabinda have been re-examined in the light of extensive socio-historical evidence by Munro and Mushin (2016). In 1983 Eades provided exten-sive documentation of the use of Aboriginal English in South-East Queensland. More recently Watts (2009) has focused on the interaction of children in Mareeba in Far North Queensland and Bellingham (2010) has studied adult speaker narra-tives in Cherbourg on the basis of interviews carried out in the 1980s.

1.4.3 Western Australia

The focus shifted to Western Australia in 1968, with Douglas (1978) observing a variety of English he called 'Neo-Nyungar,' used among Aboriginal people in the South-West. In 1973 a state-wide survey of Aboriginal English among Western Australian schoolchildren was initiated by Kaldor and Malcolm (1979). This, together with follow-up projects (Malcolm 1996), would continue until 1982 and include data gathered from over 40 locations in all regions of the state (Kim-berley, Pilbara, Gascoyne, Goldfields, Mid-West, South-West, Great-Southern and metropolitan Perth). Later, with Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal research assistants, studies were produced focused on the Yamatji Lands (Rochecouste and Malcolm 2003) and metropolitan Perth (Malcolm 2002a; Malcolm et al 2002; Malcolm and Rochecouste 2000; Malcolm and Sharifian 2002, 2007; Sharifian 2001, 2002a, 2002b). Gibbs (1998) investigated the use of Aboriginal English in literature and Grote (2004) studied the writing practices of female Aboriginal adolescents at school.

1.4.4 The Northern Territory

A preliminary study in the Northern Territory was carried out by Jernudd (1971) at Bagot Settlement in Darwin. Subsequently, studies were completed in Alice Springs by Sharpe (1977) and Harkins (1994), at Maningrida (Elwell 1977), at Milingimbi (Elwell 1979), at Darwin (Sansom 1980 and Ford 1984), at McLaren Creek (Gillespie 1991) and Barrow Creek (Koch 2000a). Eades (2013, 2014) has also drawn attention to a variety called "Northern Territory English" described by Strehlow (1947). At the time of writing, a study by Mailhammer and associates of the way in which English is used by Aboriginal people on Croker Island is in progress.

1.4.5 New South Wales

In New South Wales, varieties were described (in Darlington, Erskineville, Redfern and La Perouse) by Eagleson (1977, 1978 and 1982) and by Malcolm and Koscielecki (1997) in La Perouse. Fraser-Knowles (1985 [1978]) described the variety spoken in Baryulgil, Sharpe (1990) that spoken in Wilcannia and Hitchen (1992) that spoken in Moree.

1.4.6 Victoria

In Victoria, Fesl (1977) described Melbourne Aboriginal English and Enemburu (1989), "Koori English," though this study drew on sources beyond the Southeast, from which the term *Koori* derives. In 1995 McKenry described some features of what she called "Koorie English" in Goulburn Valley. A training resource edited by Adams (2014) brings together data on Aboriginal English compiled from Aboriginal speakers across Victoria.

1.4.7 South Australia

In South Australia, there were descriptions of varieties spoken in Alberton (Wilson 1996) and Ceduna (Sleep 1996). Aboriginal author Jessie Lennon (2011) provided a useful data base on the Coober Pedy variety by using it in a book-length account of her life experience and Foster, Monaghan and Mühlhäusler (2003) traced early forms of Aboriginal English in South Australia.

1.4.8 Wider studies

Other scholars have reworked some of the data of earlier studies, or provided less region-specific descriptions of the dialect (e.g. Pirola 1978, Allridge 1984, Malcolm et al 1999a,b, Butcher 2008).

Despite the number of studies of Aboriginal English there has been relatively little work attempting to provide a comprehensive overview of what all the data have shown. Partial exceptions to this are Arthur (1996), Eades (1993; 2014) and Malcolm (2004 a, b; 2013). There is also a lack of literature bringing together the contributions of studies from diverse disciplinary perspectives (e.g. linguistic, sociolinguistic, cultural linguistic) to the study and use of the dialect. It is hoped that this volume will help to fill these gaps, though, as noted by Munro and Mushin (2016) there remains a need for ongoing sociohistorical study to clarify the relationship between English and contact varieties.

Another gap which remains unfilled at this time is the description of the English of Aboriginal speakers in Tasmania, although there has been some study of the English of the small population descended from Aboriginal people as well as whalers and sealers in the Furneaux group of islands off the north-eastern tip of Tasmania. The form of English spoken on Cape Barren Island would appear to be better described as a regional dialect of Australian English rather than a variety of Aboriginal English (Sutton 1975).

1.5 This volume

An attempt is made in Chapter 2 to outline the geographic, demographic, cultural and linguistic setting in which Aboriginal English developed and is spoken. There will be consideration of the functions the dialect performs for its speakers and the ways in which it is evaluated both by its speakers and in the wider society. Attention will be paid to the ways in which the dialect intersects with other world Englishes and in particular with its antecedents.

Chapter 3 reviews findings on the phonetics and phonology of Aboriginal English and chapter 4 those on its morphosyntax. Inevitably, comparison will be made with the other prevailing English variety in Australia from which Aboriginal English continues to distinguish itself.

In Chapter 5 attention is given to the lexicon and semantics of this variety of English and to the ways in which its users employ it for purposes of interaction and to create discourse genres.

Chapter 6 brings together information on the more recent field of the relationship of Aboriginal English to conceptualization, drawing especially on the

field of Cultural Linguistics, which has informed much of the investigation reported on.

Having observed the linguistic, sociolinguistic and conceptual features associated with the use of the dialect, an attempt is made in chapter 7 to show the history of its development and the continuities it has with the varieties which have contributed to its formation. An attempt is also made to account for the issue of ownership, whereby English is now being claimed as their own by those to whom it came in the past as a foreign imposition.

Much of the research on Aboriginal English has been motivated by the desire to understand and improve the ways in which English operates to help Aboriginal people to access their human rights. The final chapter considers how the two Australian dialects of English can interfere with one another in public settings, in particular those of service provision, education and the law. Brief reference is made to some of the ways in which attempts have been made to prevent or repair miscommunication.

The appendices include an annotated bibliography of some of the major scholarly sources on the dialect and transcripts of a range of sample texts.

2 Australian Aboriginal English in Context

2.1 Continuity and change

A dialect, as understood in this study, is a linguistic and social phenomenon which arises in response to a particular communication need common to a group of people. The existence of the dialect implies, with respect to the language from which it derives, both continuity and change. In the case of Aboriginal English there is linguistic continuity with other Englishes, since the dialect represents maintenance of English, but there is also change, since the speakers of the dialect also maintain continuity with their cultural origins, with their experience of language contact and with their contemporary life as a speech community, and these necessitate a change in English as they adopt it. The aim of this chapter, then, is to survey the past and present linguistic, social and cultural contexts which bear on the speech community which has brought Aboriginal English into being and is maintaining it.

2.2 Geographic and demographic context[1]

The Commonwealth of Australia, with a land area of 7.692 million square kilometres, is the sixth largest country in the world. Its population, at the time of writing, is approaching 24 million, of whom some 97% are immigrants or descendants of immigrants and 3% are Indigenous. The population density is 2.66 persons per kilometre, by contrast with, for example, the United Kingdom, with 248.25 persons per square kilometre.

Administratively, Australia is a federation of six states and two territories, with some 56% of the population in the south-eastern states of New South Wales and Victoria. The Indigenous population is represented in all states and territories, most numerously in New South Wales (2.9% of the state population), Queensland (4.2%), Western Australia (3.8%) and the Northern Territory (29.8%). More than one third of the Australian Indigenous population live in major city areas and some 20% in remote or very remote areas. The median age of the Indigenous population is 21.8 years, by contrast with that of the non-Indigenous population, which is 37.6 years.

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1 The figures in this section were accessed from the website of the Australian Bureau of Census and Statistics http://www,abs.gov.au.aussstats/abs@nsf/mf, on 5th August 2015.

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Over 80% of Australians claim to speak only English, while some 2% claim not to speak English. Numerous community languages are spoken and one in five Australians claims to speak a language other than English at home. Among Indigenous Australians, there are up to 150 languages in use, though, of these, only 20 are considered non-endangered, and therefore likely to survive into the next generation. Some 13% of Indigenous Australians claim to speak an Indigenous language or creole at home. Thus, English is the language most commonly spoken by Indigenous Australians. For some, this would be Australian English; for many it would be Aboriginal English, though many speakers would switch between dialects depending on the interlocutor.

2.3 Aboriginal social and cultural context

In the perspective of the history of the Aboriginal occupation of Australia, it has been claimed that the period of Western occupation of the continent is but a "tiny blip", perhaps comparable to one and a half minutes out of 24 hours (Price 2012:2). The ongoing influence of longstanding indigenous patterns of conceptualization and of social life is apparent in the ways in which English has been re-formed for Aboriginal use and in the expectations which Aboriginal Australians typically bring to the conduct of speech events.

2.3.1 Tribal and linguistic grouping

Australia's original inhabitants[2] perhaps numbered 300,000 at the time of the coming of the British, and they were organized in about 500 tribal units, each distinguished by a common language or dialect as well as land over which they had religious and hunting rights. Such groups typically regarded one another as relatives and expressed their relationships with one another in terms of kinship.

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2 It is understood that Australia's original inhabitants included people who identify as Aboriginal and as Torres Strait Islander. The perspective taken here is inclusive of both groups, and the term Aboriginal will be used in this sense, except where specific reference is made only to Torres Strait Islanders. The term Indigenous, which has also been used to refer to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people, but which is not identified with by many to whom it applies, will be used sparingly in this volume.

2.3.2 Spiritual connection to the land

Anthropologists R. M. and C. H. Berndt (1964:38), to whom I am indebted for much of the detail which follows, note that the relationship with the land was profound and supported by religious belief that the place in which they lived their lives was:

> *... that in which the great mythical beings travelled or performed exploits, instituted rituals, created the most important local features, before perhaps disappearing into the ground or the sky or assuming a different shape. Through his links with these beings, an Aboriginal is deeply attached spiritually to his own land.*

For many thousands of years, Aboriginal people, in language groupings, lived a semi-nomadic existence in Australia, relating their movement across the land to that of the creative beings whom they saw as having gone before them. Their attachment to what they call, in English, "country" (i.e., the territory to which they belonged) was imprinted in their thinking and in their spiritual understanding.

2.3.3 Orientation to observation

Aboriginal Australians, being traditionally hunters and food collectors, were highly dependent on observational skills and closely related to their environment. They were constantly drawing inferences on the basis of the seasons, the vegetation and the behaviour and movements of birds and animals. While their hunting and gathering activities took place in a limited area, each group had wider contacts through the movement of goods across the continent, usually along watercourse or waterhole routes.

2.3.4 Kinship

Children born to Aboriginal parents were early socialized into the community of their wider kin and taught how they fitted into complex kinship systems. Their lives were relatively unrestricted until, around puberty, they needed to go through initiation in preparation for adulthood. The cutting of the umbilical cord had represented the first step towards independence of the mother, and, for males, the circumcision was the second such step, though this independence needed to be exercised in conformity with the practices of former generations (Berndt and Berndt 1964).

2.3.5 Totemism

For many Aboriginal people the relationship with the environment was emphasized through the practice of totemism, which linked them to elements of the natural world, which, in turn, held links to the Eternal Dreamtime of the creative beings. The significance of totems and totemic sacred sites was expressed in the songs of sacred rituals which would use key words with particular associations . Berndt and Berndt (1964:311) note:

> *In sacred songs especially, the style, the way of saying things, is not a prosaic literal affair: there is a heavy use of symbolism; a single word may convey a whole range of images – most notably in short compressed songs where each word has a number of mythical and other implications apart from its literal meaning.*

2.3.6 The Dreaming

The immanence of the spiritual dimension of life was assumed in traditional Aboriginal life, in the referencing of present life to that of the Eternal Dreaming , and in the spiritual concern expressed in, for example, the requirement not to use the name of the recently deceased, the avoidance of sacred places, the precautions taken against sorcery, and the retelling of many stories relating to the work of malignant spirits.

2.3.7 The place of storytelling

The tradition of oral storytelling was, and is, an essential element of Aboriginal cultural life. Such storytelling, often taking place around the campfire, is heavily dramatic in tone, and may involve extensive use of facial expression, and gesture, as well as the expressive use of pause and variations in tone and volume. Stories are told for pleasure and relaxation but may also serve instructive or moral purposes. Aboriginal narrator Marjorie Bil Bil (1995:20-21), from the Northern Territory, reflects on their significance in cultural transmission to the younger generation:

> *The story is told to the children to remind them of their own people from long time ago. Sometimes people act the story to have fun with the children and make them happy. The story is told by the elders as they walk through the bush for hunting and see what animals they can find to eat and what food they can collect.*
>
> *The story teaches us about our culture and our life and way of living and keeping it still for the future...*

Tyson Yunkaporta, a member of the Apalech clan of Cape York, is reported by Purdie, Milgate and Bell (2011:205) as saying:

> [T]he narrative and yarning modalities of our oral culture have been the keys to our thinking, learning, doing, knowing and being for many thousands of years.

In similar vein, Harrison (2004:9, 10) has contrasted Aboriginal with western modes of education as being characterized by "self-narrativization" as opposed to "transmission."

In summary, then, the traditional life of Australia's Aboriginal people entailed profound interconnections between language, social life, the land and the spiritual dimension. The English brought by the colonisers would have been, in its existing form, totally inadequate in giving recognition to these interconnections.

2.4 Aboriginal linguistic context

2.4.1 Diversity and similarity

From the outside, it is easy to assume a greater linguistic uniformity among Aboriginal people than actually exists, and this is what non-Aboriginal observers have frequently done (Leitner 2004b:11). Pre-colonial language varieties spoken probably numbered 200–250 languages and 500–700 dialects, and were seen as inseparably tied to the areas of the country in which they were spoken. Although there is linguistic diversity across Australia, the languages spoken in the southerly seven-ninths of the land area show a degree of similarity which has led to their being described as one family, the Pama-Nyungan, while the 26 language families across the Kimberley region of Western Australia, the northern part of the Northern Territory and north-west Queensland appear to be less closely related (Kaldor 1982:32).

Despite the diversity among Aboriginal languages, they share many similarities if compared with European languages (Dixon 1980:22; Leitner 2004b:24). Since Aboriginal English developed initially among speakers of these languages it is important to survey some of their features. The outline which follows is particularly indebted to Kaldor (1982).

2.4.2 Phonology

In broad overview, in terms of phonology, Australian Aboriginal languages tend to focus principally on the vowels /i/, /e/, /a/ and /u/, which may have short

and long forms. By contrast with English, the phonemes do not generally include central vowels (such as the /ɜ/ in 'work', or the /ə/ in 'upon'), nor do they include phonemes corresponding to English diphthongs. The consonant repertoire of Australian languages may include bilabial, alveolar and glottal stops such as /p/, /b/, /t/, /d/, /k/ and /g/, though many languages do not recognize a phonemic difference between the voiced and voiceless alternants. The consonant system often includes a range of retroflex sounds, which we will represent as: 'r', 'rr' (the alveolar flap or trill), rt, rd, rn and rl and a range of palatal sounds: ty, dy, ny and ly. The alveolar stops may have dental alternatives /t̪/ and /d̪/. All languages include the semi-vowels /w/ and /j/ and the nasals /m/ and /n/. There are no fricative consonants. Stress in Aboriginal languages tends to fall on the first syllable of the word.

2.4.3 Morphology

Aboriginal languages, generally being of agglutinating or polysynthetic structure, have particularly complex morphology. Unlike English, which distinguishes nominative and accusative case, most Aboriginal languages distinguish, in terms of morphology, ergative (i.e. subject of a transitive but not an intransitive verb) and absolutive (i.e., subject of an intransitive verb). The morphological system may recognize a wide range of other cases, including dative, locative (normally recognized through prepositions in English), comitative ('in the company of'), instrumental, causative and semblative ('resembling something'). Noun gender (where observed in the noun class) may be recognized in dual classifying languages as masculine or feminine, or in multiple classifying languages in up to eleven noun classes. In the third person singular pronoun (*he/she/it*), where gender has to be recognized in English, the gender distinction is not made in Aboriginal languages. Apart from number, nouns or pronouns may be modified to express distinctions of distance from the speaker, inclusivity or exclusivity of the addressee and kinship category of the speaker, addressee or third person.

Verb tense may be differently recognized in different Australian languages. In some, only future and non-future may be recognized and in others only past and non-past. Others may recognize past, present and future, while others again may make finer distinctions, such as near, middle, distant and remote past. There may also be distinctions of aspect between single, continuous, habitual, incipient and ceasing occurrence, and distinctions of mood between potential, reported, desirable, doubtful, undesirable and dependent on another action.

2.4.4 Syntax

Word order in Aboriginal languages is, understandably, in most cases, more flexible than in English, though there may be a preference for a Subject-Object-Verb (SOV) order. In the noun phrase, possessives may precede the noun and adjectives may follow the noun. Equational sentences (like English *He is the teacher,* or *it is red*) do not require a copula or linking verb. There are no articles (such as English *the* and *a*) to precede nouns, though where definiteness needs to be emphasized a demonstrative (such as English *this, that, those*) may be used.

Questions may be formed in Aboriginal languages with the use of interrogative pronouns, though polar questions are often expressed as a statement with questioning intonation. There are also tags which can be appended to statements to make them into questions. Various complex sentence forms exist to express such meanings as purpose, prevention, condition, causality and to incorporate relative clauses. In narratives, there may be long strings of clauses and verbs coming together without conjunctions.

2.4.5 Lexis

In terms of lexis, Aboriginal languages are particularly rich. Dixon (1980:2) and Walsh (1991:42) have observed that such languages could have a vocabulary of at least 10,000 lexical items. The elaboration of the vocabulary is especially noteworthy in areas of cultural focus, including ethnobotany, ethnozoology, directional terminology, body parts and terms for kin (Walsh 1991:43). Kinship terms may be differentiated according to subsection as well as gender, and may include different terms for older and younger siblings. In some cases, where constraints exist in relation to communication with certain kin, there may be special respect vocabularies. Often the lexicon will reflect categorizations of phenomena which are not shared by European languages, as where, for example, the Ngaanyatjarra adjective *yurnmi* denotes not only 'ripe' but also 'cooked,' and where there is no general noun denoting 'food', but rather *kuka* 'meat food' and *mirrka* 'vegetable food.' Many items are highly specific to occupations such as hunting, for example, the Pintupi verb *kukunkypinkunytja* 'pulling a spear through a wound when the spear barb prevents it being pulled back' (Kaldor 1982:66).

It is clear that the linguistic context into which English would be introduced was one which would impose challenges at every level of analysis. We will return to how these challenges were met in the next two chapters.

2.5 Aboriginal sociolinguistic context

All speech communities, as initially demonstrated in the work of Dell Hymes (1968), develop characteristic patterns of speech use which involve recognized message forms and settings, behaviours of addressers and addressees, purposes and channels of communication as well as norms of interaction and interpretation. The Aboriginal speech communities in which English came to be implanted were no exception to this and the use of Aboriginal English needs to be understood against this background. The following discussion draws primarily on a comprehensive survey of research data on speech use in Aboriginal communities provided in Malcolm (1980–1982).

2.5.1 Greetings

Within an Aboriginal speech community the exchange of verbal greetings is not necessarily expected when people come into contact. A person might stand or sit in silence and wait to be identified before speaking. Silence is not seen as negative or anti-social behaviour. If a greeting does take place, it may often relate to where the person is coming from or where they are going. This, in turn, might lead into a further inquiry as to whether the person might have had contact with relatives or friends of the inquirer.

2.5.2 Address

It may not be polite, in more traditionally oriented communities, to ask a person their name. In some cases the name could be obtained from a third party; in some cases there might be reluctance to divulge a name, since a person's name received on initiation is seen as sacred. Within the community, as is the case in many cultures, people may address one another by means of kin terms.

2.5.3 Giving information

There are constraints in an Aboriginal community with respect to responding to requests of an inquirer for information. Not everybody in a community may have the authority to divulge certain information. The inquirer might receive a non-committal answer or be referred to another member of the community. On the basis of research among Aboriginal communities in South-east Queensland,

Eades (1982, 2013) has shown how community members seeking information learn to offer information first as a means of showing their interest, in case the person concerned may wish to pursue the matter further.

2.5.4 Reporting

One of the most distinctive speech acts in an Aboriginal speech community (to be pursued further in Chapter 6) is the reporting of what one has observed, an act termed "remarking" in the Darwin speech community studied by Sansom (1980:85). The speech act of remarking, followed up by some kind of inference, has been widely reported across Australia (Malcolm 2009, 2014a). Often there is an element of uncertainty about the inference, leading to the designation used by Eades (2013:70): "speculative reporting". The following two extracts, the first from a Warlpiri woman in the Great Sandy Desert in Central Australia and the second from a Nyungar woman in metropolitan Perth, illustrate this practice:

> Extract 1: ...*On the way to the soakage we saw tracks.*
> *'There were people living here the day before yesterday,' we said.*
> *There was a bough shade belonging to other people who had stayed here earlier.*
> *'They must be at another soakage,' we said...*
> (Nungarrayi et al 1995:9)

> Extract 2: ...*Look out you fullahs.....the demons* [police officers] *cruzin round this way.*
> *Aaay, they mighte lookin for Johnny an em unna.*
> *Yeah you watch, yep, they gunna pull up right next to us ere...*
> (Collard 2011:3).

The persistence of the orientation to observation, in speech events across remote and urban communities, is noteworthy and reflects the longstanding cultural pattern of mutual dependence on environmental signs and their accurate interpretation as a guide to ongoing action.

2.5.5 Group orientation

In an Aboriginal community communication may, of course, take place in any setting, but there are strong cultural predispositions to communication in the open. The members of a community are comfortable keeping watch over one another and to isolate oneself from the group is to risk being treated with suspicion. An interacting group may sit on the ground with their legs outstretched while they talk. Interaction is as a group rather than between individuals. As

shown in the extracts above, members show a group orientation in what they say. The life of the community is largely shared by all its members, children included.

2.5.6 Audience behaviour

There are different expectations as to audience behaviour in Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal Australian society. Where non-Aboriginal audiences are expected to remain silent while being addressed, there is no such expectation of Aboriginal audiences in Aboriginal contexts. Audience members have the right not to listen, and also the right to interjection and to a certain level of audience participation. Similarly, a person who is directly addressed has the right not to respond.

2.5.7 Tone

In an Aboriginal speech community, as in most communities, there is sensitivity to the tone of communication. The way in which tone is expressed may be distinctive. "Strong talk", characterized by direct address to an individual and heightened volume, may be interpreted as conveying animosity. A respectful style, by contrast, is associated with slow utterance, low volume, indirectness and brevity. Other designations of speech style are "light" (careless, casual speech), "rough" (strongly Aboriginal speech), and "high" or "flash" (closer to non-Aboriginal norms).

2.5.8 Eye contact

The maintenance of eye contact is not required as a sign that the hearer is still listening and fixed eye-contact may be seen as threatening. It is respectful to hang one's head when addressed by an elder. Rather than hands, the lip and chin may be used for pointing, and there are highly developed forms of kinesic expression, some transferred from hunting practices, which may be incorporated into story telling.

2.5.9 Courtesy

Courtesy behaviours within the Aboriginal speech community may differ from those expected in non-Aboriginal society. Writing from the point of view of the Koori people in Victoria , Enemburu (1989:4) notes: "The total lifestyle of the traditional Koori was based on the sharing of all things with all members of the

group; there tended to be little necessity to make requests and give gratitude as in many Western societies."

2.5.10 Shame

The group orientation of Aboriginal society means that the individual is not encouraged to stand out from the group. Children learn early that not to conform will cause them shame and the motive of avoiding shame may lead (in the eyes of non-Aboriginal observers) to apparent social reticence and shyness.

2.5.11 The stolen generations

It is important to recognize that many people of Aboriginal descent in Australia are also of non-Aboriginal descent. Policies in all Australian states and territories from around the beginning of the 20th century were enacted to remove Aboriginal children of mixed descent from their parents, and from their lands, so that they might be brought up in the context of non-Aboriginal society. A national inquiry in 1997 revealed that "in the period 1910 to 1970, between one in three and one in ten Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children were forcibly removed" (Williams-Mozley 2012:27). In view of what we know of the cultural significance of kin relationships and country it is hard to conceive of the disorientation and suffering caused to the families concerned by the implementation of these policies. Although the policies came to an end in the early 1970s, the enduring shadow of the "stolen generations" still has a profound effect on many Aboriginal people, who have experienced, or witnessed the experience of, a crisis of identity through long-term or permanent separation from their close relatives and from their cultural, and linguistic, heritage. As Williams-Mozley (2012:25), himself one such person, comments, "We have no past, and in many respects, we have no future." The experience of the "stolen generations" significantly affects the use of language and the interpretation of such terms as "taken away."

2.6 The context of language contact

Up to this point no reference has been made to the contact languages which developed out of the coming together of Aboriginal languages and English. The history of the early development of Aboriginal English will be dealt with in chapter 7. Here,

however, it is necessary to provide some information (further information being available from Meakins, 2014) on the nature and distribution of the contact languages, as their early and ongoing influence on Aboriginal English has been highly significant. It has indeed been suggested (Mühlhäusler 1991:162) that "[p]resent-day forms of Aboriginal English may well be heavily reconstructed earlier pidgins and creoles."

2.6.1 Contact languages

Pidgins, creoles and mixed languages have emerged worldwide largely as a result of European expansion. Typically, people were relocated from their traditional lands and expected to communicate with foreigners speaking a European language, as well as with other locals whose languages they did not know. Pidgins arose as reduced varieties to enable cross-group communication to proceed for limited purposes while both sides retained their own languages for most purposes. The European language would normally provide the main vocabulary source for such varieties and it would often be encountered in a modified form ("foreigner talk"), since, as Velupillai (2015:141) has noted, "[i]t seems to be a near-universal phenomenon that speakers intuitively alter their speech when confronted with a person who is not fluent in their language."

2.6.2 New South Wales Pidgin

In New South Wales a pidgin emerged in the early years after the arrival of the British. English (significantly affected by regional and social varieties, foreigner talk as well as nautical jargons) was the lexifier language, providing the main vocabulary source, and local Aboriginal languages comprised the substrate, influencing patterns of pronunciation, grammatical simplification and interpretation. English-based pidgins would also emerge, in time, in other parts of the country. Mühlhäusler (1998), for example, has discussed their emergence in Western Australia, Foster, Mühlhäusler and Clarke (1998) in South Australia, and Koch (1985), in Central Australia, but the development in New South Wales was probably the most significant in the formation of Aboriginal English, as will be discussed in chapter 7.

2.6.3 Processes in the formation of contact languages

It has been argued by Siegel (2000) that there are five processes involved in the formation of contact language varieties. The first is *reanalysis*, whereby the speakers

of the substrate language (in this case, Aboriginal) reinterpret what they hear in the superstrate language (in this case, English) according to the patterns they are used to. This will involve reproducing the superstrate language in a modified form, sometimes using its words to denote concepts from their existing language ("relexification") or modifying its structures in the direction of structures they are used to ("reanalysis"). In a similar way, they may modify the sound patterns of the language to make it more easily pronounceable.

The second process is *simplification*. Siegel (2000:2) suggests four ways in which this may be achieved:
–   reduction, i.e., using fewer words, grammatical categories and inflections;
–   increased regularity, i.e., having fewer exceptions to rules;
–   greater transparency, i.e., having closer correspondence between form and meaning, and
–   lack of markedness, i.e., having fewer marked forms or structures.

The third process is *levelling*, whereby, as the new variety stabilizes, some alternative forms will cease to be used and others will be retained. This is followed by the fourth process, *diffusion*, which is the phenomenon of language spread, which causes varieties, or features of varieties, to be spoken increasingly widely. As levelling and diffusion have occurred across Australia, the English varieties emanating from New South Wales Pidgin, and from associated creoles, have become increasingly similar across the country showing a large degree of consensus as to the forms retained by Aboriginal English speakers from different areas.

2.6.4 Language shift

Following these processes, *language shift* may occur, as the contact language becomes increasingly entrenched and begins to displace the languages which helped to form it. In settings like Australia, where the superstrate language, English, has remained strongly present, the pidgin and creole varieties which have formed will come increasingly under its influence, leading towards *depidginization* and *decreolization*, resulting in a non-standard variety of English and, in some cases, eventually, in the standard variety.

The declining use of Australian Aboriginal languages as a result of language shift is, as Walsh (2007) has documented, continuing even in remote areas of the country. The influence of English, in schools and media, has been a significant contributing factor, and other factors have included competition with creoles and other Aboriginal languages, the practice of code-switching and

the development of mixed languages. There are, however, initiatives at reviving the use of some traditional languages which have had encouraging success (Walsh 2007:94).

2.6.5 Developmental and restructuring continua

Clearly, if we consider the processes resulting in Aboriginal English as being, on the one hand, *away* from English-speaker models (through reanalysis, simplification, levelling and diffusion of alternative forms), and, on the other, *towards* English-speaker models (through depidginization and decreolization), we could describe the overall process in terms of two contradictory pressures. This is what Mühlhäusler (1979) did when he postulated a *developmental continuum* leading from an initial contact jargon through processes of pidginization and creolization towards a new system, followed by a *restructuring continuum* leading away from that new system back towards the superstrate, though stopping short of it to create an alternative linguistic variety. This process has been expressed diagrammatically (in Malcolm 2003a:13) as follows, where D stands for developmental processes and R for restructuring processes:
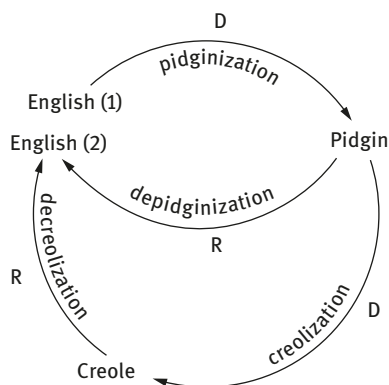
Figure 1: Developmental and restructuring processes underlying Aboriginal English

Aboriginal English is, then, part of a dynamic system in which contradictory pressures are at work. It follows that the performance of Aboriginal English speakers will vary between "English" and "Aboriginal" norms. This will show both in the performance of individual speakers and in the range of varieties of Aboriginal English exhibited in different speech communities, some of which will be basilectal, showing strong creole influence, and others of which will be acrolectal, approximating more to Australian English.

2.6.6 Creoles in Australia

Creoles did not develop in all areas of Australia. There are two major creole varieties, one, Torres Strait Creole, spoken in the Torres Strait Islands and nearby mainland in North Queensland and the other, Kriol (sometimes referred to as Roper River Creole) spoken in northern parts of the Northern Territory, north western Queensland and the Kimberley region of Western Australia. Most speakers of Aboriginal English would be in areas remote from where creoles are spoken, yet this does not mean they are necessarily immune from creole influence. Many markers of past, or diffused, creole influence may be found embedded in the English of Aboriginal speakers in southern parts of the continent.

2.7 The Australian English context

2.7.1 Australian English

Aboriginal English co-exists with the other major English variety deriving from the time of colonization: Australian English. Australian English is a "settler" variety (Collins and Peters 2008:341) resulting initially from the levelling of the dialectal inputs of convicts and settlers from England, Scotland, Wales and Ireland (Horvath 2008:89). It is said to have provided a linguistic identity to Australians in the early history of the colony (Collins and Blair 2000:1). In pronunciation it has some commonalities with Cockney and New Zealand English (Horvath 2008:108). On the basis of pronunciation, its speakers have been divided into about 10% who follow "Cultivated" norms, 30% who follow "Broad" norms and the remainder who speak General Australian English (Mitchell 1946, Horvath 2008:89). While it maintains a closer association with British than with American English norms, there is evidence that younger speakers are increasingly influenced by American norms (Collins and Peters 2008). The standardized form of the dialect has been reinforced by its use in education and the publication of both Macquarie and Oxford Australian dictionaries.

2.7.2 Vernacular Australian English

A sociolectal variety of Australian English has been identified in the informal speech of some working class Australians and men from the country and termed Australian Vernacular English (Pawley 2008). This variety, like Aboriginal English, incorporates stigmatized pronunciation forms (e.g. H-dropping, *could a*

'could have', *meself* 'myself', *-in* instead of *–ing*) as well as non-standard grammatical features (e.g. *he don't; e wasn't no teenager; them words*) and is possibly declining in its number of speakers. It is, however, a carrier of covert prestige, and is likely to be maintained as a medium of expression of Australian humour and deeply embedded Australian values.

2.7.3 Ethnic Australian English varieties

Immigration, especially since the end of the Second World War, has brought increasing numbers of non-native speakers of English to Australia. In some cases, ethnic varieties of English have been maintained in their speech communities. Clyne, Eisikovits and Tollfree (2001) have discussed data on Greek, German and Yiddish ethnolects, as well as a "pan-ethnic" variety which has been used by young speakers from a variety of Mediterranean backgrounds. Ethnic varieties have been found to modify pronunciation, morphology and syntax (particularly word order) and to include lexical transfers from the community languages. They may be used by second generation migrants in communication with the generations of their parents and grandparents, as a mark of solidarity. They may also be used to strengthen networks among ethnic peers. A study in a multiethnic region of Sydney by Kiesling (2001) showed that both networks and gender have a bearing on the retention of ethnic phonological features such as the modification of certain diphthongs.

2.7.4 Standard Australian English

While Australian English, then, embraces various sociolects and ethnic varieties which are a regular part of colloquial communication, these have little wider recognition, except, perhaps, in areas of creative arts and entertainment. Standard Australian English (SAE) is the default form for use in education, the law and the administration of public services and competence in SAE is generally agreed to be an expected outcome of education.

2.8 Aboriginal English: its distinctiveness and its functions

2.8.1 Distinctiveness

Aboriginal English is not a form of Australian English in the sense in which we have been using the term. It represents a different response to the English

varieties which were brought to Australia by the colonisers and it has emerged as a result of different processes in different speech communities. Its existence alongside Australian English reflects the fact that the Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal speech communities have not been integrated, but have maintained a largely parallel existence in Australian society.

2.8.2 Functions

The use of Aboriginal English is inherent in the life experience of most Aboriginal people and within Aboriginal speech communities there may be strong social pressure against using SAE, which may be referred to disparagingly as "flash talk." Many Aboriginal people acquire mastery of SAE for purposes of higher education or employment. They do not, however, switch to SAE for all purposes. In order to investigate this, Aboriginal students and staff working at Edith Cowan University in Perth, Western Australia, were surveyed by means of a questionnaire inviting them to indicate on a scale of 1-7 whether they would use Aboriginal English or SAE in 35 circumstances which were defined to cover the seven variables isolated by Hymes (1968): Channel, Purpose, Topic, Audience, Addressee, Setting and Tone (Malcolm 1997). The results showed that, while, in about half of the circumstances listed, neither dialect would necessarily be dominant, there was clear consensus that Aboriginal English would be the default form where:
- the hearer was known to the speaker
- all other people present were Aboriginal
- the talk was about things connected with their own people
- jokes and/or stories were being told.
- the subject matter was sacred
- the location was in the bush, or in camp

On the other hand, there was consensus that SAE would be the default form where:
- the hearer was non-Aboriginal and/or hostile towards the speaker
- the hearer was a stranger (non-Aboriginal)
- the other people present were all non-Aboriginal
- the business was seen to be important
- the talk was about the business of white society
- the talk was non-personal (e.g. about shopping)
- the medium was written

Participants in the survey were invited to comment, if they wished to, and some of the comments were:
- "Mostly Aboriginal English is used for talking to someone you know"

- "Aboriginal English will serve to lessen hostility between Aboriginal speakers but it will increase hostility when used with whites"
- "Aboriginal English is more persuasive and gets more respect than Standard English with Aboriginal people"
- "When talking outside an Aboriginal speaker may use Standard English in case a white person comes by"
- "Aboriginal speakers try to accommodate to the local forms of the area they are in"
- "Aboriginal English may be used to get rid of an unwelcome non-Aboriginal interlocutor".

It is clear that Aboriginal English was seen to be the normal and most effective means of communicating within Aboriginal contexts and where the content was informal or cultural, whereas SAE, which served more utilitarian functions, was the normal means of communication with, and in the presence of, non-Aboriginal people.

Aboriginal English, then, performs a significant function for its speakers as a marker of common identity and as an unaffected means of communication. In contrast with SAE, it has been described by its speakers as "'easy', 'simple', 'slack' or 'straight' English, 'blackfella English', or 'blackfella talk'" (Malcolm 1995:29). There is a sense that Aboriginal English is seen as more clear and direct communication than SAE. In the words of a Nyungar student at Edith Cowan University, "Not much Nyungars talk like lecturers an' that, they talk straight out to you…" (Malcolm and Rochecouste 1998:67). Ethnographic work among Aboriginal youth has shown that it is not only as a spoken but as a written medium (with orthographic innovations) that Aboriginal English is serving the purposes of expression within its speech community (Grote 2004; Malcolm et al 2002).

Increasingly over recent decades, Aboriginal English has been used as a medium not only for the expression of cultural identity, but for its transmission. Rather than suppressing the Aboriginal voice, as had so often been the case, even in the production of materials purporting to communicate Aboriginal culture (Malcolm et al 2003), publishers have increasingly let it be heard. Western Australian author Jack Davis in the '80s produced a trilogy of plays about Aboriginal people, using Aboriginal English, which have reached significant audiences and also gained inclusion in secondary school curricula (see further Malcolm and Grote 2007:167). The autobiography (e.g. Lennon 2000) and the autobiographical novel have become popular forms of expression especially by female Aboriginal authors (Brewster 1996) and have often incorporated the use of Aboriginal English. In some cases, Aboriginal English translation has

been used as a means of giving English speakers access to narratives told in Aboriginal languages (e.g. Crugnale 1995; Nungarrayi et al 1995). In other cases, SAE and Aboriginal English versions of narratives of Aboriginal speakers have been presented side by side (e.g. Koch and Koch 1993). An initiative in the Department of Training and Workforce Development in Western Australia has been the production of a series of texts which can only be accessed in Aboriginal English (e.g. Collard 2011).

Aboriginal English has also been used by songwriters, such as Ken Carmody, Ruby Hunter, Archie Roach and the *Yotha Yindi* music group, and Jimmy Chi's musical about Aboriginal experience in the Kimberley, under the title *Bran Nue Dae* has reached national audiences (Malcolm and Grote 2007:167).

To some extent, community service provision has been undertaken by Aboriginal organizations. In Victoria, for example, the Victorian Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisation (VACCHO) is an advocacy group devoted to achieving "health equality and optimum health" (Adams 2014:3) for Aboriginal people, and as a part of this brief, has, in collaboration with La Trobe University, produced a manual designed to educate non-Aboriginal Australians in how to operate with speakers of Aboriginal English. A similar initiative by the Victorian Aboriginal Education Association, the State Board of Education and Monash University enabled Aboriginal author Enemburu's booklet *Koori English* to be produced "to be a source of information and to foster discussion about this important area" (Enemburu 1989:iii). According to Enemburu (1989:1), the view prevails in Victoria among "most of the legal organisations run and controlled by Koori people ...that Koori English can be differentiated from what might be termed Standard Australian English (SAE). Indeed many Koori believe that the two are quite different codes of English."

2.9 Attitudes to Aboriginal English

2.9.1 Contradictory pressures

There is, however, a lack of uniformity across the Australian community in attitudes taken towards Aboriginal English. Until non-standard dialects of English began to be described by linguists, first in the U.S.A., then in Australia from the 1960s, it was commonly believed that the use of a non-standard dialect was a sign of a linguistic deficit. Aboriginal students were often assumed to be in need of speech pathology or compensatory education. Even after research had established the legitimacy of Aboriginal English as a dialect, there were still strong pressures to maintain an implicit assimilationist position with respect to English

teaching. McConnochie (1982:76), writing about practices in the Northern Territory in the 1980s, described how

> *...a wedge is progressively driven between the child as a member of a family and community, and the child as a member of a school. Either way the child is expected, and his parents as well, to drop their social identity, their way of life and its symbolic representations, at the school gate.*

Interestingly, Aboriginal education workers, asked to identify students' language problems in school (reported in Malcolm 1992) most commonly mentioned the teachers' use of "big words," implying that the problem lay with SAE rather than Aboriginal English. The negative evaluation of the dialect has, however been taken on by some of its speakers. McRae (1994:8), seeking to promote literacy in Aboriginal English among its speakers, encountered such feedback as: "I don't believe in Aboriginal English. It's just a bastardized form of the proper English that they have to learn" and "The kids here all speak English. Bad English of course, lazy English, but English."

Kamwangamalu reports on the use of the term "the commons" in Africa to refer to indigenous languages which their speakers are willing to sacrifice, as media of instruction, in favour of ex-colonial languages such as English, because of what they see as the economic payoffs. People are caught between their desire for decolonization and their desire for development. Though, in such cases (unlike in Australia) the indigenous languages are spoken by a majority, they have been "minoritized" (to use a term of Skutnabb-Kangas 2006), in the interests of development (Kamwangamalu 2012:170). The ambivalence shown by some Aboriginal people with respect to admitting that they speak a variety of English which is only recognized in their community can perhaps be understood in this light.

2.9.2 Assertion of ownership

This, however, is not the whole story. As we have already observed, there are contradictory pressures operating in Aboriginal English speech communities. While some within these communities have (at least in interaction with non-Aboriginal people) consented to the view that there is something wrong with their English, there are others who are stridently claiming ownership of English – the English they have indigenized in their own country, as in the claim: "This is who we are. This is our language" (Malcolm 2013a:42). The claim to ownership of the language echoes similar claims made by colonised peoples in other parts of the world (including the United States, India and the Caribbean), where they have

indigenized the colonizers' language and now, in post-colonial perspective, see it as their own (Malcolm 2013a; Ramanathan 2005).

Aboriginal writer Bridget Priman from Bundaberg, Queensland, has observed increasing accommodation to Aboriginal English among the SAE-speaking community, both with respect to its vocabulary and its speech use conventions. She writes:

> *...words such as 'deadly'* [i.e. 'fantastic'] *have been adopted by mainstream Australia. The terms 'Murri'* [Queensland Aboriginal] *and 'Koori'* [Victorian/New South Wales Aboriginal] *are more widely used in mainstream society. When a prominent Elder passed away two years ago, the news media apologised for using his first name and he was given a respectful traditional name for an Indigenous person who has passed on* (Priman 2004:16).

2.9.3 Qualified official recognition

Aboriginal English has slowly been gaining recognition in public policy, which usually pays at least lip service to language maintenance, community control and inclusivity, but the imposition of high stakes language testing in SAE across education systems works against the theoretical goal of providing due recognition to the community language of Aboriginal speakers (Truscott and Malcolm 2012).

2.9.4 Generational differences in attitude

Attitudes towards Kriol among Aboriginal language speakers from a Northern Territory community have been shown, in a study by Ponsonnet (2010), to vary between generations. She found that some regarded Kriol as a children's language (perhaps reflecting the fact that it was through the younger generation that Kriol was formed) whereas local Aboriginal languages were for adults. A young man, however, who could speak Kriol and English but not his traditional language, described Kriol deprecatingly as "brainwash from English." This judgment was not endorsed by older generation speakers, who saw Kriol as an object of pride and of benefit to the community.

2.10 Aboriginal English and creative expression

There has been some research recognition of vernacular literacies among Aboriginal young people (Malcolm et al 2002). It was found that Aboriginal students in

metropolitan high schools in Perth were, in vernacular literacy practices, showing evidence of literacy skills not generally accessed in school literacy instruction. Reading and writing of personal letters and SMS messages were, for some, an important part of building social and personal relationships. Spellings were often modified both to correspond to Aboriginal English pronunciation and to incorporate alternative orthographic conventions. In addition to writing on notebooks and scraps of paper, environmental writing, accompanied by art work, was a popular social activity, including body writing and graffiti.

Appropriately, some educators have taken up the interest of Aboriginal youth in their own kind of literacy by developing literacy training materials authored by Aboriginal writers in Aboriginal English and accompanied by Aboriginal art work (Königsberg, Collard and McHugh, 2012, Volume 11). A project currently underway (Department of Education Western Australia 2016) is developing e-books which will enable Aboriginal readers to access multi-media versions of Aboriginal narratives on tablet.[3]

Aboriginal English has found expression in a number of movies, including *Blackfellas* (1993) and *Rabbit Proof Fence* (2002). In writing an analysis of the language use in these films, Aboriginal writer Vinson (2008:1) has observed:

> *...for many Aboriginal Australians, Aboriginal English is a link to tradition and community and ...it is often used as a solidarity marker and an expression of Aboriginal identity. It shows that almost all lexical variations in Aboriginal English mark solidarity and that Aboriginal English is a symbol of cultural maintenance. It explains that for many Aboriginal people, gestures and vocal articulations are interchangeable within Aboriginal English...*

2.11 Implications

English, then, having once come into Australia in confrontation with prevailing linguistic, social and cultural norms, has progressively been adopted into Aboriginal society and indigenized. As Aboriginal English, it has survived rejection by the non-Aboriginal majority and even by some of its own speakers and it has come to perform a growing number of social, pragmatic and artistic functions. It now serves to maintain, for its speakers, the culture it once seemed to be displacing. It is a powerful symbol, at the same time, of Aboriginal cultural resilience and of the re-inventive power of language.

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3 Information about the project may be accessed at
https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLii_cr4ClSc2GKD39tt1UC4jflJeI4Xnc

3 Phonetics and Phonology

3.1 Introduction

The most observable identifier of Aboriginal English to most Australian English speakers is the way it sounds. In interviews with 129 teachers of Aboriginal students across Western Australia, the features most commonly referred to in order to characterize the classroom speech of their Aboriginal students were: rapid pace of utterance, H-dropping, slurring, and dropping of other consonants (Malcolm 1992:37). There is, then, no doubt that, in the eyes of SAE speakers, Aboriginal English is distinctive, and the first level at which this distinctiveness is encountered is the phonological. In fact, the variation from SAE is at least as significant at the grammatical and conceptual levels, but it is not so easy for SAE speakers to discern the differences at these levels.

Being a non-standardized variety, controlled by its speakers rather than by dictionaries and manuals of usage, Aboriginal English embraces wide variation both across its diverse, nation-wide macro-speech community and in the varying outputs of individuals. Speakers of Aboriginal English are aware of this variation and use the terms "heavy" and "light" (or "high") to distinguish speech which diverges further from SAE from speech which is closer to it. In discussing the phonetics and phonology of Aboriginal English I will be more focused on the broader end of the continuum, but it should be recognized that, at the other end, there will be speakers whose speech does not exhibit all the features I discuss.

Any dialect is instantiated in the idiolects of individual speakers and something is always lost by generalization. However, the advantage of generalization is that it enables us to gain better insight into the major influences which have borne on Aboriginal speech communities to bring about the degree of consensus we see in the development of the variety with which they identify.

3.2 Influences on the phonology of Aboriginal English

3.2.1 The English varieties brought by the colonists

Aboriginal people first encountered English in the form of multiple regional and social varieties transported to their country by convicts, sailors, government functionaries, and other settlers and their families, predominantly from England, Ireland, Scotland and Wales, occupying their country. These speakers provided the first models of spoken English from which the language began to be acquired.

There is some evidence that the English speakers were surprised at how adept the Aboriginal people were at imitating them. Troy (1990:16) quotes an observation of Worgan, surgeon of the first fleet, to this effect:

> *They are wonderfully expert at the art of mimicry, both in their Actions and in repeating many of our Phrases, they will say 'Good Bye' after us, very distinctly. The sailors teach them to swear. They laugh when they see us laugh.*

Aboriginal use of English began with imitation of the models Aboriginal speakers received from the range of people with whom they interacted. It is clear that the influence of the sailors would have extended beyond the standard use of the language. Not only did they teach their listeners to swear, but also to use pidgin forms current in the Pacific Islands. In addition, convict influence included exposing the Aboriginal interlocutors to the jargon current in British prisons (Troy 1990:125).

Of course the path towards Aboriginal English would entail many further inputs, but when we compare the speech of contemporary Aboriginal speakers with that of contemporary speakers of varieties spoken in the United Kingdom, we find similarities which reflect their past association.

3.2.2 The phonologies of Aboriginal languages

As in the case of all speakers of English as an additional language, early Aboriginal speakers drew heavily on the phonologies of their own languages in attempting to pronounce English. As their own languages – as noted in Chapter 2 – recognized fewer vowel phonemes and many more consonant phonemes than English (in addition to other phonological differences), the speakers had to make constant compromises in attempting to reproduce English phonemes, and some of these compromises remain embedded in the English which is spoken today.

3.2.3 The changes introduced with pidgins and creoles

The initial formation of a pidgin and a creole involves (as noted in the previous chapter) a developmental continuum in which the superstrate is reanalysed and simplified. In terms of phonology this means the reduction of the number of phonemes and introduction of alternative rules with respect to the ordering of phonemes and the suprasegmental expression of meaning. This is followed by a restructuring continuum in which the system becomes more elaborated, and, in

some ways, closer to that of the superstrate. The non-standard dialect resulting from depidginization and decreolization will still bear marks of these processes which continue to distinguish it from the superstrate.

3.2.4 The phonology of Australian, and other English, varieties

Speakers of Aboriginal English encounter varieties of Australian English in their contact with non-Aboriginal Australians in social, educational and bureaucratic contexts. Although there are strong pressures within their speech communities on maintaining their own speech norms, some language mixing has taken, and continues to take, place. It is clear that some changes which have been taking place in the phonology of Australian English have been paralleled (though not exactly replicated) in Aboriginal English. As we shall see, a prime example of this is in the monophthongization of diphthongs. Aboriginal English speakers are also exposed to speakers of other varieties through the media and, especially among younger speakers, there is a readiness to identify with, and emulate, in some respects, speakers of varieties such as African American Vernacular English (Malcolm, et. al., 2002:78; Siegel 2012:778).

3.3 Vowels

The phonemes, or sounds distinguishing meanings, of English are differentiated into two groups, the vowels (strictly speaking, monophthongs) and diphthongs, which consist of an air flow which is moulded but not restricted by the speech organs, and the consonants, and semi-vowels, in the formation of which the air flow is in some way restricted. We shall look at all the phonemes of Standard English in these two groups, noting where, and suggesting why, there are Aboriginal English variants.

3.3.1 Front vowels

The front vowels are those in the production of which the part of the tongue raised highest is the front, and, in descending order of closeness of the tongue to the roof of the mouth, they are /iː/ as in 'eat', /ɪ/ as in 'hit', /ɛ/ as in 'bet' and /æ/ as in 'hat'. The vowel /iː/ can be lengthened, whereas the other front vowels are short.

3.3.1.1 Lowered articulation

In Aboriginal English, the distinction between /iː/ and /ɪ/ is not always strongly maintained. The tongue may be lowered in the articulation of /iː/, and the length reduced, so that it sounds more like /ɪ/, as in [krɪk] 'creek', and [bɪn] 'been'.

The less clear recognition of the phonemic differentiation of /iː/ and /ɪ/ can be related to the fact that, for most Aboriginal languages, these would correspond to allophones (variant forms) of one phoneme. This simplification of the English system is, to a lesser extent, present in Australian English. It is also strongly present in Australian creoles.

Another widespread case of lowered articulation of a front vowel is shown in the form /ana/, sometimes spelled as *unna*, which is an invariant question tag derived from 'isn't it?' As we shall see, the low front-central vowel form /a/ is often substituted for other vowels, in that it is, as Readdy (1961:60) has cited from Capell, "the commonest vowel statistically in most aboriginal languages." It has also affected the vowel /ɛ/, resulting in the form /ˈfalaz/ 'fellows'.

The vowel /ɛ/ may also be given a lowered articulation causing it to sound like [æ], as reported from Cherbourg and Palm Island in Queensland (Department of Education, Queensland, 1972). This may be accounted for on the basis that /æ/ is not a phoneme in Aboriginal languages. There is also the likelihood of influence from Australian English, since, as Bradley (2008:115) and Loakes et al (2014) have pointed out, some regional varieties of Australian English have been replacing /ɛ/ with /æ/, in particular before postvocalic /l/.

3.3.1.2 Raised articulation

In several cases the position of the tongue has been raised to change the pronunciation of front vowels as in:

/ɛ/ → [iː]	[iːg]	'egg'	Sharpe 1976:15, Alice Springs
/ɛ/ → [ɪ]	[gɪt]	'get' (widely reported in Western Australia; also occurring in Australian Vernacular English – Pawley 2008:373)	
	[ˈpɪnsil]	'pencil' (reported from the Northern Territory)	
	[pɪgz]	'pegs' (reported from the Northern Territory)	
	[ˈbrikfis]	'breakfast' (reported from the Northern Territory)	
/æ/ → [ɪ]	[kɪn]	'can'	
/æ/ → [ɛ]	[jɛm]	'yam'	
	[kɛtj]	'catch' (reported from Queensland and the Northern Territory).	

In all of these cases the changes in articulation can be related to the sound systems of Aboriginal languages, most of which do not recognize /ɛ/ and /æ/ as

phonemes (Dixon 1980:129-131). It should be added, with respect to the pronunciations of 'yam' and 'catch', as noted by Butcher (2008:630) and Fletcher and Butcher (2014:99), that /æ/ is not always replaced with /ɛ/ but that the fronting and raising of the vowel in these cases has been occasioned by the proximity of palatal consonants /j/ and /tj/.

3.3.1.3 Palatalization

Palatalization, as noted in Chapter 2, is an important element in distinguishing phonemes in Australian languages. It is not surprising, then, that sometimes palatalized variant vowel forms occur in Aboriginal English, as in the case recorded in Alice Springs by Sharpe (1976:15; 1977:46):

    [flejg]   'flag'
    [ejg]   'egg'
    [gejk]   'cake'.

3.3.2 Central vowels

The central vowels in Australian English include /ɜ/, as in 'stir' and the neutral short vowel /ə/, as in the first syllable of 'upon', which is frequently used as a substitute for an unstressed vowel. Neither of these vowels is represented phonemically in Aboriginal languages. The close vowel /u/, as in 'shoe', is identified as central by Fromkin et. al. (2005:228), though as back by Mitchell (1946:30), and the open vowels /a/, as in 'star' and /ʌ/, as in 'but' are identified as central by Fromkin et al. (2005:228) though as front by Mitchell (1946:30). In Australian English pronunciation the long vowel /a/ and the short vowel /ʌ/ are close together in their place of articulation and are distinguished from each other mainly by length.

3.3.2.1 Lowered articulation

Aboriginal English speakers have been identified as using /ʌ/, rather than /ə/, in such contexts as:

    [jʌ'sɛlf]   'yourself'   (Douglas 1976:17, South-West)
    ['gʌna]   'gonna'   (Vinson 2008:2, South-West)
    ['bʌtʌ]   'butter'   (Pirola 1978:68)
    [wʌz]   'was'   (Sleep 1996:8, Ceduna, South Australia),
    [ai ʌs]   'I was'   (Readdy 1961:94, Cherbourg, Queensland)

and as using /a/, rather than /ə/, in such contexts as:

[wʊda]	'would've'	(Collard 2011:13, Perth, Western Australia)
['ɒladeɪ]	'holiday'	(Leonora, Western Australia)
[ɔːl a ju mɒb]	'all of you mob'	(Darwin, Northern Territory)
[ja friːks]	'You freaks!'	(Eagleson, Kaldor & Malcolm 1982:59, Sydney)
['sniːkan]	'sneakin''	(Flint, 1968, Queensland.)
[da]	'the'	(Flint, 1971, N.W. Queensland)
[ðɛm fɛla]	'those ones'	(Enemburu, 1989, Victoria).

3.3.2.2 Fronted articulation

The central short vowel /ə/ may also be avoided by way of a more fronted articulation as in [kɪn] 'can', a pronunciation also found in Torres Strait Creole.

Where the central vowel /ʌ/ occurs in stressed syllables in Australian English, it may be replaced in Aboriginal English by /ɪ/, at least in the word 'just', which may be pronounced as /djɪs[t]/ in, at least, Western Australia, South Australia and Queensland.

The long central vowel /ɜ/ may also be replaced by a more fronted alternative, as in the case of [teːn] 'turn' (Flint 1968, Queensland).

Sometimes, perhaps in a form of hypercorrection, this may be accompanied by diphthongization, as in ['tɛətɫz] 'turtles' (Alexander 1965, Yarrabah, Queensland).

3.3.2.3 Retracted articulation

In the Torres Strait Islands, a retracted articulation of /ɜ/ occurs, at least in one word: ['toːtl] 'turtle' (Dutton, 1970).

3.3.3 Back vowels

The back vowels of Australian English, from most close to most open, are /u/, as in 'blue' (seen rather as a central vowel by Fromkin et. al. 2005:228), /ʊ/, as in 'foot', /ɔ/, as in 'law' and /ɒ/ as in 'hot.'

3.3.3.1 Raised articulation

Butcher (2008:630) has observed that, in the presence of a palatal consonant, the articulation of /u/ may be raised, leading to the pronunciation: [ʃʉt] 'shoot'.

The articulation of /ɒ/ may be raised and lengthened, as shown in such examples as:

[dɔ:g]   'dog'   (Douglas, 1976, South-west)
[tʊk ɔ:f]   'took off'   (Mullewa, Western Australia)
[gɔ:n]   'gone'   (Darwin, also Girrawheen, Western Australia).

A similar process has been reported from Woorabinda, Queensland (Alexander 1968). The fact that the difference between /ɒ/ and /ɔ/ is not phonemic in Aboriginal languages helps to account for this feature. There could also be influence here from dialects from the South of England. As Mitchell (1946:24) has noted, this raised articulation may be found in Cockney.

3.3.3.2 Fronted articulation

The back vowel /ɒ/ may be fronted, leading to a pronunciation closer to /ʌ/. Examples of this have been recorded in towns of the Pilbara region of Western Australia, e.g. [hʌt sæn] 'hot sand.'

3.3.4 Diphthongs

Diphthongs entail a glide from one vowel position to another. The direction of the glide tends to be rising or centring. The diphthongs in Australian English are

/aɪ/ (acrolectal) or /ɒɪ/ as in 'sky',
/eɪ/ (acrolectal) or /ʌɪ/ as in 'say',
/ɔɪ/, as in 'boy',
/aʊ/ (acrolectal) or /æʊ/ as in 'now'
/oʊ/ (acrolectal) or /ʌʊ/ as in 'go'
and (in General or Broad Australian), /əɪ/ as in 'see' and /əʊ/ as in 'who'
all of which are rising, and
/ɪə/, as in 'here', /ɛə/, as in 'there', /ʊə/, as in 'cure' and /ɔə/, as in 'four',
all of which are centring.

Diphthongs are not phonemic in Aboriginal languages and, hence, in the simplification process involved in pidginization, they were not retained. The fact that the centring diphthongs entail the use of the short, central vowel /ə/, which Aboriginal English tends to avoid, also made it less likely for diphthongs to be produced in Aboriginal English.

It is interesting that there is a strong trend towards the monophthongisation of diphthongs in Australian English. Bradley (2008) has noted the high rate of

pronunciation of 'near' as [niː] and cure as [kjɔː] in Sydney and of 'square' as [skwɛː], Australia-wide. Horvath (2008) has noted frequent pronunciations such as /ʃɔː/ for 'sure', /hɛː/ for 'hair' and /biː/ for 'beer,' and noted that monophthongal variants tend to be favoured by speakers who are male, working class and older.

3.3.4.1 Rising diphthongs

The diphthong /ai/ (or /ɒɪ/, in Broad Australian), as evidenced in all parts of the continent, especially in more remote areas, is liable to lose its rising glide in Aboriginal English and become /a/, as in

| [ma] | 'my' | (Leonora, Western Australia) |
| ['raːdəræʊnd] | 'right around' | (Onslow, Western Australia). |

Aboriginal speakers in Melbourne (Fesl 1977), North Queensland (Alexander 1968) and more generally (Pirola 1978:69; Eagleson, Kaldor and Malcolm 1982) have been noted to reduce /eɪ/ to [e] or [ɛ], as in

| [tek] | 'take' | (Pirola 1978:69) |
| [mɛk] | 'make' | (Leonora, Western Australia). |

There is a corresponding trend in Torres Strait Creole, where 'rain' becomes *ren*. In Alice Springs the diphthong has been modified by the introduction of the semi-vowel /j/, as in ['frʌjzʌ] 'Frazer' (Sharpe 1976:16).

The diphthong /ɔɪ/, as in 'toy', is generally maintained in Aboriginal English, but may occasionally be monophthongized, or given a more fronted articulation, as in:

| [bɔː] | 'boy' | (Carnarvon, Western Australia) |
| [djaɪ] | 'joy' | (Leonora, Western Australia). |

Australia-wide (Alexander 1968, Fesl 1997, Eagleson, Kaldor & Malcolm 1982; Sharpe 1976), the diphthong /aʊ/ (or /æʊ/ in Broad Australian English) is liable to become /æː/ in Aboriginal English, as in:

| [fæːnd] | 'found' | (Tardun, Western Australia) |
| [æːt] | 'out' | (Leonora, Western Australia). |

The other rising diphthong, /oʊ/ exhibits a wide range of monophthongized forms in different parts of the country, and, in some cases more than one variant in the same location:

[goʉn den]	'go on then'	(Fesl 1977, Melbourne)
[bro:k]	'broke'	(Flint, 1968, Qld; c.f. Eagleson, Kaldor & Malcolm, 1982, Western Australia)
[hɔ:m]	'home'	(Eagleson, Kaldor & Malcolm 1982, Western Australia, c.f. Pirola 1978:69)
['mʊdʊ]	'motor'	(Leonora, W.A.; c.f. Butcher 2008:630)
['madə]	'motor'	(Leonora, Mullewa, Western Australia)
[na:]	'no'	(Onslow, Western Australia)
['pɪla]	'pillow'	(Leonora, Western Australia).

3.3.4.2 Centring diphthongs

Typically, in what would be centring diphthongs in Australian English, the central vowel /ə/ is either eliminated or replaced with /a/, or the vowel glide is interrupted by the introduction of the semi-vowel /j/.

In the case of /ɪə/, Aboriginal English speakers may change the diphthong to a long monophthong, [i:], as in ['eidri:n] 'Adrian' (Onslow, Western Australia).

Alternatively, /ɪə/ may become [ɪa] (Flint 1968) following the typical pattern (noted above in 3.2.1) of replacing the central vowel with the lower articulated form /a/, which is so prevalent in Aboriginal languages. A further alternative is the form [ɪjʌ] (Douglas 1976), or [ijə] (Pirola 1978) in pronouncing the word 'here'. It is possible that these forms (both from relatively close-contact areas, the south-west and Melbourne) could represent hypercorrections, reflecting the speakers' awareness of their liability to lose the end-point of the glide, and overcompensating by introducing the semi-vowel /j/.

The pattern for the diphthong /ɛə/ is virtually the same as that for /ɪə/. The diphthong may be reduced to a monophthong, as in:

['ɛpriwɛ:]	'everywhere'
[dɛ:]	'there'
[jɛ:]	'yeah'
[ʃɛ:]	'chair

(a trend reported from Cherbourg (Readdy 1961), Yarrabah (Alexander 1965), Woorabinda (Alexander 1968), Palm Island (Dutton 1969) as well as the Goldfields, Western Australia, from which the above examples are taken). Alternatively, Flint (1968) has noted the occurrence of the modified diphthong [ea] in Queensland. In addition, [ɛja] may be heard in the pronunciation [dɛja] 'there'. /ʊə/ may be monophthongized as [u:], as in the pronunciation ['kælgu:li] 'Kalgoorlie,' (from Leonora) and (as in Australian English) /ɔə/ may pronounced as [ɔ:], e.g. [fɔ:] 'four' (Pirola 1978:69).

3.4 Consonants

Most of the modifications of the consonant system may be related directly back to the consonantal systems of Aboriginal languages, which (as noted in Chapter 2), typically differentiate phonemes on the basis of plosion rather than friction and entail multiple rhotic and palatal variants, while they tend not to recognize voicing as phonemic.

Seven different responses to the phonological system of English will be seen in the analysis which follows:
– different application of voicing and devoicing
– introduction of plosive influence
– generalization of sibilants
– introduction of palatal influence
– variants of /r/
– elision of certain fricatives
– TH-fronting

3.4.1 Voicing and devoicing

Plosive consonants which are unvoiced in Australian English may be voiced in Aboriginal English, as in:

[ˈbugɪwain]	'porcupine'
[ˈðæd a ˈprɪdɪ sneik]	'that's a pretty snake' (Flint, Qld)
[ˈhʌndɪŋ]	'hunting' (Kaldor & Malcolm, W.A.)
[geɪk]	'cake' (Sharpe 1976, Alice Springs)

Plosive consonants which are voiced in Australian English may be devoiced in Aboriginal English, as in:

[ˈtæmpa]	'damper' (Strelley, Western Australia)
[dɒk]	'dog' (Kaldor & Malcolm 1979:418)
[bɛt]	'bed' (Sharpe 1976:13, Alice Springs)

A general tendency, noted by Butcher (2008:627), is "to follow the typical allophony rule of Australian Aboriginal languages, which is to voice intervocalic obstruents and to devoice word-final ones (unless followed by a vowel)."

A similar trend may be seen in fricatives (some of which are transformed into plosives) and affricates, as in the following cases of devoicing:

[ts ‘mɔːnɪŋ]   ‘this morning’ (New South Wales)
[‘ɛpriwɛə]   ‘everywhere’ (Western Australia)
[bɔɪs]   ‘boys’ (Western Australia)
[ʃɪ’raːf]   ‘giraffe’ (Northern Territory),

and in the following case of voicing:

[baɪt]   ‘fight’ (New South Wales).

3.4.2 Introduction of plosive influence

Especially in rural and remote areas, fricative consonants are frequently modified
to become plosive, as in:

[tɪŋ]   ‘thing’ (W.A., S.A. Qld)
[dɪs]   ‘this’ (W.A., N.T., S.A.)
[wɪd]   ‘with’ (W.A.)
[‘pɛla]   ‘fella’ (S.A.)
[naip]   ‘knife’ (W.A.)
[‘nɛba]   ‘never’ (W.A., S.A.)
[‘tɪsta]   ‘sister’ (N.T.)
[‘bɪnis]   ‘finish’ (N.T.)

3.4.3 Generalization of sibilants

The sibilant consonants /s/, as in ‘sip’, /ʃ/, as in ‘ship’, /z/, as in ‘zoo’ and the
affricates /tʃ/, as in ‘chip’ and /dʒ/, as in ‘gym’, which do not have counterparts
in Aboriginal languages, are liable to be interchanged, resulting in such pronun-
ciations as:

[ʃɔː]   ‘saw’ (W.A.)
[ʃɛd]   ‘said’ (W.A.)
[‘ʃiːkrəts]   ‘secrets’ (N.T.)
[ʃʌk]   ‘chuck’ (W.A., N.T.)
[ʃɒnɪ]   ‘Johnny’ (W.A.)
[pliːs]   ‘please’ (W.A.)
[fɪs]   ‘fish’ (W.A.)

Sibilant consonants may also be substituted for interdentals, as in:

['nasɪŋ]	'nothing' (N.T., W.A.)
[sroʊ]	'throw' (W.A.)
[ʃruː]	'threw' (W.A.).

3.4.4 Introduction of palatal influence

Palatalized variants of consonants have been reported from Queensland (Flint 1968), Western Australia (Kaldor & Malcolm 1979), the Northern Territory (Sharpe 1976) and generally (Butcher 2008). Some examples are:

[ɛdj]	'edge' (W.A.)
[djɒn]	'John' (W.A.)
['tjɪkən]	'chicken' (W.A.)
[kætj]	'catch' (W.A.)
[reitj]	'race' (W.A.)
['pleiən]	'playing' (Qld.).

The last example illustrates a feature common to most varieties of informal English, though, according to Horvath (2008:102) more common in British and American varieties than in Australian English. Unlike the other examples, it could reflect influence from English varieties rather than Aboriginal languages.

3.4.5 Variants of /r/

Like Australian English, Aboriginal English is non-rhotic, in that the consonant /r/ is normally only pronounced in pre-vocalic position. There is, however, wider allophonic variation in this phoneme than in Australian English. The strong presence of flapped and trilled variants in Aboriginal languages is reflected in Aboriginal English in many areas (Flint 1967, Dutton 1970, Kaldor & Malcolm 1991, Sharpe 1976). Sometimes an existing /r/ will be flapped or trilled, as in [brrɪks] 'bricks', and sometimes (often in association with emphasis) the rhotic will replace the plosive consonant /t/, as commonly occurs in many dialects of British English. All the following examples come from regional Western Australia:

['gɒrrɪt]	'got it'
['pʊrrɪt]	'put it'
['ʃʌrrʌp]	'shut up'.

3.4.6 Elision of certain fricatives

The glottal fricative /h/ and the interdental fricatives /Ө/ and /ð/, which are absent from Aboriginal languages, are often elided by speakers of Aboriginal English (as, indeed, by speakers of many English varieties), as in:

[i:]	'he' (all areas)
[ɪm]	'him' (all areas)
[æv]	'have' (all areas)
[bi'aind]	'behind'
[ɪn ə gʌts]	'in the guts' (Perth, W.A.)
[ɪn ə wɔ:ta]	'in the water' (Qld.)
['gɒtəm]	'got them' (WA, NT, Qld)

The glottal fricative may, also, by way of hypercorrection, be redundantly inserted:

['haiən]	'iron' (Strelley, W.A.).
[ˌhæbə'rɪdʒənlz]	'Aboriginals' (Perth, W.A.).

The deletion of initial /h/ is a longstanding feature of British English varieties and /h/ deletion and insertion are strongly present in Cockney (Kortmann & Langstrof 2012:125).

3.4.7 TH-fronting

Another feature shared by Aboriginal English with many other non-standard varieties and with Australian English (Horvath 2008:102), and emanating from working class London speech (Kortmann & Langstrof 2012:124), is the substitution of /f/ for /Ө/ and of /v/ for /ð/, commonly known as TH-fronting. It is reasonable to suppose that this represents the retention of a feature heard in the English varieties first encountered by Aboriginal speakers and reinforced in ongoing interactions with Australian English speakers:

[fɪŋk]	'think' (S.A.)
[froʊ]	'throw' (W.A., c.f. S.A., N.S.W.)
[mauf]	'mouth' (Sydney)
['brʌvə]	'brother' (Sydney).

3.4.8 Pronunciation of semi-vowels

The semivowels /j/, as in 'yet' and /w/, as in 'wet', though not exhibiting the audible friction normally associated with consonants, can function as consonants at the margins of syllables. They may function also to aid fluency when vowels in adjacent words come together, as in /si:[j] ɪt/ 'see it' and /sɔ:[w] ɪt/. Dixon (1980:146) has noted that "[i]n many (but not all) languages, word-initial /wu-/ or /yi-/ can be pronounced as [wu-], [yi-] or as [u-], [i-]." There is a strong trend, in all parts of Australia, for Aboriginal English speakers to elide /w-/, especially when it occurs as a part of the verb 'to be'. Often, when this has happened, /w-/ will have already been pronounced in the preceding pronoun:

[wiəz]	'we was' (W.A.)
[wi:z]	'we was' (N.T.)
[wiɛnt]	'we went' (W.A.)
[aiz]	'I was' (N.T.)
[aɪ ʌs]	'I was' (Qld.)
[ʃi:əz]	'she was' (S.A.)

/w/ may also be elided in the context of another bilabial consonant: ['sæmɪdʒəz] 'sandwiches' (W.A.), or inserted in place of another bilabial consonant: [bʊgɪwaɪn] 'porcupine'.

The semivowel /j/, as we have seen, may be introduced to bridge between the two vowels forming a diphthong, as in

[ijʌ]	'here' (W.A.)
[dɛja]	'there' (Qld.)

or to substitute for the raised vowel in a diphthong, as in [frʌjza] 'Frazer' (N.T.) or to make what would be a vowel in Australian English more like a diphthong, as in [flejg] 'flag' (N.T.).

3.5 Suprasegmentals

We change perspective now to consider the way in which Aboriginal English operates above the level of individual phonemes. This involves a consideration of the ways in which adjustments in volume, pitch, vowel length, pace and tone of speech are managed by Aboriginal English speakers to convey meaning.

3.5.1 Stress

Stress refers to the pronunciation of a word or syllable with more force than the surrounding words or syllables (Richards, Platt & Weber 1985:275). Australian English stress is basically comparable to that of British English, however it varies from it in that the syllables in a word are liable to be stressed more evenly, that is, fewer syllables are completely unstressed, as in

SAE		Standard British English	
[ˈmɛdəsən]	vs.	[ˈmɛdsən]	'medicine'
[ˈkɒmbæt]	vs.	[ˈkɒmbət]	'combat'
[ˌspɒnˈteɪniəs]	vs.	[ˌspɒnˈteɪnjəs]	'spontaneous'.

Australian English also more commonly employs "spelling pronunciations" (Mitchell 1946:45), as in

SAE		Standard British English	
[ˈmʌndeɪ]	vs.	[ˈmʌndɪ]	'Monday'
[ˈdɜːbi]	vs.	[ˈdɑːbɪ]	'Derby'.

The stress in both Australian English and British English is variable as to the syllable of the word on which it should fall. While Australian patterns usually follow the British ones, sometimes (according to Mitchell 1946) they diverge, as in:

SAE	Standard British English	
[ˈdiːfɛkt]	[dəˈfɛkt]	'defect'
[ˈɪnklaɪn]	[ɪnˈklaɪn]	'incline'
[ˈriːleɪ]	[rɪˈleɪ]	'relay'

The pronunciation of 'controversy' as [kənˈtrɒvəsɪ] rather than [ˈkɒntrəvəsɪ], considered "vulgar and... not acceptable" at the time of writing of Mitchell (1946:47), was by 1999 given precedence in the Australian Oxford Dictionary, showing the growing independence of British norms in Australian pronunciation.

In contrast to the situation with respect to English, the word stress in Aboriginal languages is predictable, with the primary stress being applied to the first syllable of a word (Dixon 1980:128). It is understandable, then, that this often carries over into Aboriginal English, as in such cases as the following:

[ˈkæŋgru]	'kangaroo' (W.A.)
[ˈliːnəra]	'Leonora' (W.A.)

['wɪluna]   'Wiluna' (W.A.)
['tɔːada]   'four-wheel drive vehicle ('Toyota')' (W.A.)

Fletcher and Butcher (2014:128) have observed that the tendency to stress the initial syllable often results in changes in the pronunciation of words which in SAE have stress on later syllables. They note, in particular, that two-syllable words with iambic stress, such as *along, suppose, police, explain, collect* are commonly pronounced without the first syllable, and that leftward stress occurs on polypedal words, such as *operation* and *referee* (Butcher 2008), favouring a trochaic or dactylic rhythm. This also affects the pronunciation of acronyms, so that *CD* may be pronounced /'sɪ dɪ/ and *DVD* /'dɪ bɪ dɪ/.

Sometimes the stress given to the first syllable of a word will be reinforced with the elision of later syllables, as in: ['kærən] 'throwing' (from 'carrying') (Qld).

In compound nouns, which are commonly formed in Aboriginal English, rather than evenly stressing the first and second element, the tendency is to stress the first element, as in:

['sændbiːtʃ]   'sandbeach'
['aiglaːsəz]   'eye glasses'
['fut træk]   'foot track'.
['lɒŋtaɪm]   '[a] long time'.

3.5.2 Intonation

By intonation is meant the patterning of pitch and changes of pitch in the speaker's utterances. In Australian English it is normal for the pitch to be raised towards the end of a sentence to indicate incompleteness, a polar question or an invitation. There is also a "high rising tone" (Horvath 2008:103), which is used in Australian English, especially in the course of descriptions and narratives, when the speaker is seeking to have confirmation of the listener's comprehension, and perhaps to invite the listener's involvement in what is being said. On the other hand, a falling intonation indicates completion, deliberateness and sometimes anticipation of the listener's agreement.

Sometimes, a slow fall, or a fall followed by a slight rise, may express disappointment and a slow rise may indicate disagreement or warning. According to Mitchell (1946), the range of pitch variation is not as great in Australian English as in British English. It has been suggested (Sharpe 1976:6) that "in major outline" the intonation patterns of Aboriginal languages compare with those of English.

Distinctive intonation patterns were observed among Aboriginal English speakers in Queensland communities by Flint (1968:5), though details were not

given. Extensive recording among young Aboriginal English speakers in Western Australia showed that, although the variation in the rise and fall of the voice often reflected the patterns of Australian English, it was more subject to change.

3.5.2.1 Emphatic high pitch and stress

Sometimes the changes reflected the tendency to stress the first syllable. For example, children offering to answer questions might say *I know* with strong emphasis on "I" and an almost inaudible "know," whereas the normal Australian English pattern would be to stress both words equally, with a slight rising inflection on "know."

Similarly, in a bipartite expression involving a non-count noun and a limiting word, where only the non-count noun would be stressed in Australian English, both might be stressed in Aboriginal English, as in: *That a 'piece of 'meat.* (Aboriginal boy, Pilbara region, Western Australia).

3.5.2.2 Pitch rise for narrative effect

Commonly-occurring patterns observed among Aboriginal schoolchildren in Western Australia are:

3.5.2.2.1 Pitch rise and vowel lengthening to express ongoing movement More detail will be given in Chapters 5 and 6 on the ways in which narratives are constructed in Aboriginal English. It will be shown that one of the commonest narrative schemas represents events in terms of successive segments of moving and stopping. The moving segments are identified with ongoing vowel lengthening and rise in pitch, otherwise referred to as "stylised lengthening," a feature common to many Australian languages (Fletcher & Butcher 2014:124), as in:

> (rise) and so we 'as goin' alo-o-ong…
and so we was travelling,
(10 year old girl, Goldfields region, Western Australia)
… (rise) and then we went alo-o-ong…
> Then we come 'ome.
(10 year old boy, Goldfields region, Western Australia)
> walking alo-o-o-ng
C… see us, (rise)
(9 year old boy, Goldfields region, Western Australia).

In a study of the way in which adults told stories to children in Tennant Creek, using Wumpurrarni English, Disbray (2008:66) observed that they would draw

out syllables to emphasize actions taking a long time and raise the pitch to reflect tension, excitement and the unexpected.

It has also been observed by Sharpe (1976:6) that many Aboriginal languages employ "the lengthening or repeating of a word on a high pitch level to indicate prolonged or repeated action" and that the introduction of this innovation into English can be related to this. On occasions, where the emphasis on the duration of the movement is not intended, the pitch rise may take place without vowel lengthening:

we 'as goin' (rise) along, and so the bucket falled off...
(10 year old girl, Goldfields region, Western Australia).

3.5.2.2.2 Pitch rise and vowel lengthening for onomatopoeic effect

In the midnight we was wake an dis dingo was (rise) 'ow----ling
(9 year old boy, Pilbara region, Western Australia).

3.5.2.2.3 Pitch rise and pause for anticipatory effect

A narrator, especially in dealing with apparently supernatural events, may set the listener up for what is to follow by raising the pitch before revealing what happens, as in:

...dis owl (rising),
            (pause) 'e made a big rain.
(11 year old girl, Kimberley region, Western Australia).

The anticipatory pitch rise may also be accompanied by vowel lengthening:

            properly-ee-ee
And you look (rise then level)
(lower primary school girl, Kimberley region, Western Australia).

3.5.2.2.4 Successive stressed fall for information followed by elaboration

'Goanna. That's big 'yellow one.
(10 year old boy, Pilbara region, Western Australia)

We get five 'sheeps, 'fat one.
(6 year old boy, Pilbara region, Western Australia)

E got new 'muticar, 'red one (Butcher 2008:635)
We seen a 'clapper's egg, 'green one.
(Leonora, Goldfields region, Western Australia).

3.5.2.2.5 Successive stressed fall and pause for anticipation of danger

And they saw a 'big (pause) 'devil (pause) 'light (pause) 'coming. It shined and they packed everything up...
(Year 6 boy, Kimberley region, Western Australia)

3.5.2.2.6 Rising intonation on tag eliciting confirmation of attention or comprehension

...we wen' camping out, y'know...
an' W... did cry for one li'l um bird, y' know...
an' 'e did bring it an... an' dey did get two big turtle, y'know...
(8 year old girl in Kimberley region, Western Australia).

3.5.2.2.7 Falling intonation on termination marker at end of narrative

...and so we went to the lake and we came back. That's all.
(10 year old girl, Goldfields region, Western Australia)

...next minute we heard a 'oo-oo-oo' like that there then. That's it.
That's the end.
(13 year old boy, Perth, Western Australia)

...and lady disappeared. An das the end.
(girl of primary school age, Perth, Western Australia).

...Then next day we 'ad a feed den. Da finish.
(11 year old boy, Gascoyne region, Western Australia.

3.5.2.2.8 Falling intonation on point of resolution of narrative

...And e' took some blanket... Found 'im.
(14 year old boy, Mullewa, Western Australia)

3.5.3 Rate of utterance

In the perception of many Australian English speakers, Aboriginal English has a greater rate of utterance than Australian English. Some 10% of teachers across Western Australia noted this as the most notable characteristic of their Aboriginal pupils' speech (Malcolm 1992:37). Flint (1970) observed that General Australian English "has a comparatively slow and Ab[original] A[ustralian] E[nglish] a comparatively fast rate of articulation." He qualified this by saying that:

> "[r]ate of articulation varies continually according to the characteristics of the segmental phones, syllable patterning, discourse style (e.g. narrative or discussion), the emotional attitude of the speakers, and their idiolectal characteristics" (Flint 1970:721).

Studies in Northern Queensland (Alexander 1965, 1968) also found a slightly faster rate of utterance among Aboriginal English speakers, especially among children.

Sharpe (1976) has observed that Aboriginal languages vary in their rate of utterance, in that some may be syllable timed (i.e., giving almost equal time duration to each syllable), whereas others (like English) are stress timed (i.e., allowing about the same time between the main stresses in an utterance). Thus, for example, some languages, like Bandjalung in Northern New South Wales, will appear to have a similar rate of utterance to English, whereas others, like Pitjantjatjarra, spoken in the Western Desert, will appear to have a faster rate. Commenting on the Aboriginal English spoken in Traeger Park School, Alice Springs, where she was gathering data, she noted that its rate of utterance was no faster than that of Standard Australian English, and she related this to the influence of the Wailpri language which had a rhythm similar to that of English.

It may be that one of the factors affecting teachers' judgments of the high rate of utterance in English of their Aboriginal students in Western Australia was the fact that the students' speech was affected by the tendency to syllable timing in their home languages.

3.5.4 Voice quality

A number of studies of Aboriginal English have emphasized the distinctiveness of the voice quality of Aboriginal speakers (Fletcher & Butcher 2014:128). Aboriginal researcher Fesl (1977:71), focusing on Aboriginal English in Melbourne, considered that voice quality, as shown in a "breathy" phonation type and softness of volume, was possibly the most important difference distinguishing Aboriginal English from Australian English speakers. Commenting on the situation in Alice Springs, Sharpe (1976:3) noted: "From quality of voice alone an Aboriginal English speaker can usually be distinguished from other Australians." Her overall depiction of this quality of voice was: "softer or gentler, possibly slightly husky when speaking at low volume, becoming perhaps harsh and certainly penetrating when speaking loudly or shouting" (Sharpe 1976:4). Harkins (1994:29) has endorsed Sharpe's and Fesl's findings and added (1994:22) that Aboriginal speakers characteristically use a "soft" style when talking to children up to the age of nine, and a more "heavy" style thereafter.

Both Harkins and Sharpe have attempted to account for the voice quality of Aboriginal speakers. Harkins (2000:67) observed that it "probably corresponds to particular locations and degrees of tenseness and laxness in the vocal cords themselves and in the supralaryngeal and pharyngeal parts of the vocal tract." Sharpe (1976:4) has suggested that there is an element of laryngeal friction or hoarseness involved when Aboriginal speakers shout to or correct one another, and this is not involved when non-Aboriginal speakers raise their voices. It involves the tightening of the faucal pillars at the back of the mouth and occasions a huskiness comparable to that of a person with a sore throat. She raises the question as to whether or not this might have arisen because of the frequency of respiratory infections in Aboriginal communities and the tendency of people to speak this way even when they have no such disorder.

3.6 Phonotactic rules

Phonotactics is concerned with the ways in which the phonological units of a language may be arranged in sequence. In analysing Atlantic creoles, Holm (1988-1989) referred to a number of phonotactic rules which accounted for the ways in which the ordering of phonological units in the creoles differed from that in the superstrate languages. We shall use his terminology in describing the phonotactic rules of Aboriginal English.

3.6.1 Aphesis

"omission of one or more sounds at the beginning of a word" (Holm 1988–89:109)

This was noted above (4.6) and has been reported from Aboriginal speakers in all states of Australia:

...cross [across] *the road from the park* (Perth, W.A.; Collard 2011:68)
...walkin long [along] (Carnarvon, W.A.)
leven [eleven] (Alice Springs, N.T.; Sharpe 1977)
I'nt [I want] (Alice Springs, Northern Territory; Sharpe 1977:47)
you member [remember] (Darwin, N.T.; Ford, n.d.)
bacca [tobacco] (Adelaide, South Australia; Foster, Monaghan & Mühlhäusler 2003:xxv)
splain [explain] (La Perouse, New South Wales; Malcolm & Koscielecki 1997:58)
cos [because] (Baryulgil, N.S.W.; Fraser-Knowles 1985:199)
roun [around] *da rocks* (Yarrabah, Queensland; Alexander 1965:57)

they n see it [bin see] (Qld., Dwyer n.d.)
pacifically [specifically] (Victoria; Adams 2014:11).

The most regular form of aphesis in Aboriginal English, as in most non-standard dialects (Horvath 2008:101), is H-dropping (see above, 4.6), and it affects some of the most frequently occurring words in all areas, such as *e* [he/she/it], *im* [him/her/it], *ave* [have], *ere* [here], and *be'ind* [behind].

Stigmatization of aphesis may lead to the hypercorrect addition of a sound at the beginning of a word (prothesis), as shown below (6.6).

3.6.2 Syncope

"omission of one or more sounds from the middle of a word" (Holm 1988–89:109) is also widespread:

acn [acting] (South-west of Western Australia; Douglas 1976)
drecly [directly] (Perth, W.A.; Collard 2011:29)
sposed [supposed] (Darwin, Northern Territory, Ford n.d.)
wondrin [wondering] (Ceduna, South Australia; Sleep 1996:8)
blong/bloŋta [belong] (Baryulgil, New South Wales; Fraser-Knowles 1985:194)
orait [all right] (Torres Straits, Queensland; Dutton 1970).

3.6.3 Apocope

"omission of one or more sounds from the end of a word" (Holm 1988–89:110) is universally present in Aboriginal English, usually reducing consonant clusters, especially following the nasal consonant /n/:

conven [convent] (Balgo Hills, Western Australia; Barbara Jones pers. comm.)
wan [want], *wen* [went], *ol* [old], *jus* [just] (Darwin, Northern Territory, Ford n.d.)
can [can't], don [don't], *han* (hand) (Alice Springs, N.T.; Sharpe 1977:46)
fren [friend] (Alberton, South Australia; Wilson 1996:41)
biyon [beyond] (Baryulgil, New South Wales; Fraser-Knowles 1985:188)
unc [uncle] (Victoria, Adams 2014:17)

3.6.4 Epenthesis

"insertion of a sound in the middle of a word" (Holm 1988–99:110) is also common:

/sə'neik/ 'snake' (Pirola 1978:64)
/'pɪkənɪk/ 'picnic' (Carnarvon, Western Australia)

/ˈiːmiju/ 'emu' (Leonora, W.A., also Alice Springs, N.T., (Sharpe 1976))
/bʊˈloʊk/ 'bloke' (Onslow, W.A.; Geytenbeek 1977:38)
/saˈliːp/ 'sleep' (Maningrida, Northern Territory, Elwell 1977)
/sɪlɪp/ 'sleep' (Torres Strait, Queensland; Dutton 1970:185)
/ˈʌgəliː/ 'ugly' (Alberton, South Australia, Wilson 1996:42).

3.6.5 Paragogue

"addition of a sound to the end of a word" (Holm 1988–89:11), which is not uncommon in non-standard Australian English, is also present in Aboriginal English, especially in areas of intensive contact with Australian English speakers:

somethink (Mullewa, W.A.); also recorded as /sʌmtɪŋk/ by Pirola 1978:66
nothink (La Perouse, N.S.W. (Malcolm & Koscielecki 1997:59), also Geraldton, W.A.)
anythink (Sydney, N.S.W.; Eagleson 1977)
anyways (Perth, W.A., Collard 2011:25)

3.6.6 Prothesis

"addition of a sound at the beginning of a word" (Holm 1988–89:110) occurs, especially as a hypercorrect response to H-dropping, but also as a reanalysis of word boundaries (Kaldor & Malcolm 1991:76):

hol [old] (North-West Queensland, Flint 1971
huncle [uncle] (Sydney and Western Australia, Eagleson, Kaldor & Malcolm 1982:83, 135)
heldest daughter (Sydney, New South Wales, Eagleson, Kaldor & Malcolm 1982:135)
haunt [aunt] (Woorabinda, Qld, Alexander 1968)
my nother brother (boy 9, Port Hedland, W.A.)
this nother English (Alice Springs, Northern Territory,Harkins 1994:16)
that nother Sunday (Torres Strait, Qld.,Dutton 1970)
nused to [used to] (Alice Springs, N.T., Sharpe 1977); New South Wales (Drobot 2011:358).

3.6.7 Metathesis

"a change in the order in which two sounds occur in a word" (Holm 1988–89:111) is particularly evident in one common word: *aks* [ask].

This form, which, in fact, predates the form used in contemporary Standard English, /ask/, is like a shibboleth, readily identifying Aboriginal speakers even when they are using SAE.

3.6.8 Elision of vowels

"a sandhi rule involving the omission of sounds between syllables or words in connected speech" (Holm 1988-89:112). Vowel elision rules apply strongly in Standard English, as evidenced in such expressions as *don't, I'm, he's* and *you're.* In Aboriginal English they are often less relevant, since the verb 'to be' tends to be less used as an auxiliary or copula and modal auxiliaries are less used. It is interesting, for example, that the vowel-eliding auxiliary for the future tense marker, *'ll*, is not so widely used in Aboriginal English as the future marking form *gonna* (which elides the consonant /t/) is used instead. Perhaps the pronunciation of 'his' as /hiːz/ represents a hypercorrect reanalysis of what looks like a possessive form without the possessive infection. The same could apply to the reproduction of 'themself' and 'themselves' as *theirself* and *theirselves.*

Aboriginal English also elides vowels where their elision would not normally be allowed in Standard English, as in: */plovni/* 'polony' (Perth, Western Australia, Collard 2011:19).

3.7 Morphophonemics

Here we shall consider some phonological and grammatical factors relevant to the form of phonemes.

3.7.1 Liaison

When, in connected speech, two vowels come together at the junction of two words, it is normal in Standard English for a link to be made by the insertion of a consonant or a semi-vowel, so, for example, whenever the definite article comes before a noun or adjective beginning with a vowel, it needs to take the form /ðiːj/ rather than /ðə/, as in / ðiːj ænsə/ 'the answer', and whenever the indefinite article comes before a noun or adjective beginning with a vowel, it needs to take the form /æn/ or /ən/, as in /ən 'ɪnkə,rɛkt ænsə/ 'an incorrect answer'. These rules are not generally applied in Aboriginal English, and hence such expressions as the following are not uncommon:

...th'other fella	'...the other one' (La Perouse, New South Wales, Malcolm & Koscielecki 1997:59)
...a urgent phone call	'...an urgent phone call' (La Perouse, N.S.W., Malcolm & Koscielecki 1997:59)
My pop's a elder	'My pop's an elder' (Perth, Western Australia)

We saw a emu egg   'We saw an emu egg' (Alice Springs, Northern Territory, Harkins 1994:57, 205).

3.7.2 Assimilation

It is common in Standard English, when two consonants come together, for one to be assimilated into the other, so that, for example, the /n/ in the first syllable of 'inquisitive' becomes /ŋ/ under the influence of the following velar consonant /k/. In Aboriginal English there are many assimilations which go beyond what is considered acceptable in Standard English, as in:

Das a crow   'That's a crow' (Mullewa, Western Australia)
nex minute   'next minute' (Perth, W.A., Collard 2011:9)
onna table   'on the table' (Alice Springs, N.T., Sharpe 1977:47)
alla bird   '[all] the birds' (Onslow, W.A., Eagleson, Kaldor & Malcolm 1982:85)
alla people   '[all] the people' (Alice Springs, N.T.,Sharpe 1977:47)
alla dog[s]   '[all] the dogs' (Alice Springs, N.T., Harkins 2000:70)
inna book   'in the book' (Alice Springs, N.T., Sharpe 1977:47).

Clearly, in the last five examples above, with the assimilation of /ð/ under the influence of the preceding nasal consonant, the language does not make it explicit whether the article was definite ('the') or indefinite ('a'). This would be one reason why such an assimilation would be avoided in Standard English. The differentiation between definite and indefinite articles is less fixed in Aboriginal English.

One case has been noted by Fletcher and Butcher (2014:94) where, following patterns in Australian languages, assimilation does not occur in Aboriginal English where it does in SAE. This is where vowels tend to be nasalised in the vicinity of nasal consonants.

3.7.3 Elision of syllables

Where Standard English readily allows the elision of vowels, Aboriginal English goes beyond this to elide multiple phonemes, as in:

al'as   'always' (Darwin, Northern Territory, Ford n.d.)
prob'ly   'probably' (Ceduna, South Australia, Sleep 1996:8)
yest'i   'yesterday' (Yarrabah, Qld., Alexander 1965:59).
unna   'isn't it' (Perth, Western Australia, Collard 2011:7)
C'on   'Come on' (Perth, W.A., Collard 2011:35)
I'na wear it on   'I want to wear it' (Queensland., Dwyer 1974:19)
baimbai   'by and by' (Torres Strait Islands, Qld. Dutton 1970)

3.7.4 Clipping

One of the favoured practices of Australian English speakers is the clipping or shortening of nouns to produce 'hypocoristic' forms (Simpson 2004:643) such as 'arvo' for *afternoon,* 'mozzie' for *mosquito* and 'strawbs' for *strawberries.* Aboriginal English speakers share some of these forms, such as *cuz* 'cousin' and *bro* 'brother' and also create other forms by clipping, usually without adding any diminutive suffix, as in the following examples, all current in Victoria and taken from Adams 2014:13–17:

stolen gens	'stolen generations' (children removed from their parents under government policy)
didg player	'didgeridoo player'
the mish'	'the mission'.

In the context of the Aboriginal speech community, the shortened forms are seen to convey a sense of identification with the Aboriginal interlocutor.

3.8 Concluding reflection

In this chapter an attempt has been made to abstract from data on Aboriginal English the elements that are relevant to its operation as a phonetic and phonological system. In some ways, this is a futile endeavour, since it is more than this, and what is happening on the sound level is integrated with what is happening at the level of morphology and syntax. This, in turn, is only to be fully appreciated if seen in the context of the social life of a community exchanging speech acts within speech events, and this is only to be properly comprehended if understood in the light of the commonly held conceptual system which informs it all. We have had to make a start somewhere, and it is to be hoped that the full picture will become increasingly clear with successive chapters.

What has been, I hope, established is that, while no two communities of speakers of Aboriginal English are the same, and the consistencies across speakers of the dialect, and even within the performance of individual speakers, are limited, the data from across the continent give evidence of a coherent system which is being managed by a pan-Australian speech community to enable it to be authentic while communicating in an adopted language. This has been achieved by a range of processes of selection and modification of the linguistic inputs, and it has entailed dealing with a range of ongoing contradictory pressures.

In the next chapter we will explore the outworking of these same processes and tensions at the level of word forms and their structuring for the expression of meaning.

4 Morphosyntax

4.1 Introduction

In this chapter we are concerned with the word, phrase and sentence forms of Aboriginal English, focussing successively on the verb phrase, the noun phrase and sentence structure. The intention is not simply to describe these forms but to account for them as features of an adopted language. English (in its varied forms), as transmitted to Aboriginal speakers, derived from communicative assumptions which were not fully shared by Aboriginal speakers. The reception of the language would be selective. Some elements would be retained, some reanalysed, some resisted and some replaced, resulting in a unique linguistic convergence of diverse traditions.

4.2 The Verb Phrase

Verbs carry information about something which is done, enabling contrasts to be made in terms of tense, aspect, voice, mood, person and number (Crystal 1992:409). In looking at the verb phrase in Aboriginal English we will first see how these functions are carried out and then look at some related structures and forms: transitivity, co-ordination, negation, auxiliary verbs, the copula and the adverb.

4.2.1 Tense

4.2.1.1 Present

The verb is uninflected for the expression of the simple (non-continuous) present tense and it functions the same way, with respect to tense, in both SAE and Aboriginal English. In the present continuous tense, in SAE, the present participle of the verb is preceded by the 'be' auxiliary. Among some Aboriginal English speakers it has been shown (Malcolm 1996) that the present continuous tense is formed without the auxiliary. This has been evidenced in most states:

You always chasin me (Perth, W.A[1].; Collard 2011)
I sitting down (Maningrida, N.T.: Elwell 1977)

---

1 Generally, hereafter, identification of the Australian state will be made in abbreviated form.

E going now (Cherbourg/Palm Island, Qld.: Dwyer, n.d.)
Where you goin? (Vic.: Adams 2014:14).

The simplification entailed in pidginization, and in second language acquisition, has been maintained in the dialect, and the present participle alone carries the continuous or progressive aspect of the verb, though the tense is not made explicit as in SAE.

4.2.1.2 Past

The simple past tense (or preterite), may be marked in SAE in the regular way by inflection, or by a vowel change. Aboriginal English speakers, in all states of Australia, may leave the past tense unmarked on both strong and weak verbs:

My cousin, e jump for it [to catch a kangaroo] (Mullewa, W.A.)
Then we come to North Well (Coober Pedy, S.A., Lennon 2011:8)
Our father go to Coonbarrabran last month (Sydney, N.S.W., Eagleson 1978:58)
He hook him (Cherbourg/Palm Island, Qld.: Dwyer, n.d.).

It is not uncommon, where there is more than one verb, for one to carry the regular past tense marking and the others not to

We went to um Ellery Gorge. We get um fish and we swim (Alice Springs N.T., Harkins 1994:204)
There was a man who live in a small suburb near Melbourne (Goulburn Valley, Vic., McKenry 1995:64).

On the other hand, and probably as a reaction to the possibility of failing to mark the tense, there is a tendency across the country for Aboriginal English speakers to double the marking of the past tense, as in :

one of my cousins tooked off (Geraldton, W.A.)
he didn't stayed late at night (Perth, W.A. Malcolm & Koscielecki 1997:67)
we bin went to Hermannsburg (Alice Springs, N.T., Harkins 1994:205)
should've went (Sydney, N.S.W., Eagleson 1977)
Donald Woods had escaped and went to England (Goulburn Valley, Vic., McKenry 1995:44).

There is also a range of irregular past tense verb forms of SAE irregular verbs, including *brang,* 'brought', (reported from Western Australia, the Northern Territory, New South Wales and Queensland), *sawn* 'saw' (reported from Western Australia, and the Northern Territory), *writ* 'wrote', (from Victoria and Western Australia) and *rid* 'rode' and *brung* 'brought' (from Western Australia). It is

probable that some of these forms were learned from the colonists. The form *brung* is still heard in Scotland today (Miller 2008:300).

Aboriginal English speakers also reanalyse the irregular past tense of regular verbs to make it regular, as in such cases as *shined, falled, digged* and *waked up* (recorded in Western Australia), *heared, catched and failed* (from South Australia), *shaked* (from New South Wales) and *busted* (from Victoria). Again, this is a tendency also found in non-standard dialects in Britain (Wagner 2008:434). Although the use of auxiliary verbs is not as common in Aboriginal English as in Australian English, there are parts of the Kimberley in the north of Western Australia where the "do" auxiliary will be used, marking past tense, as in: *W.... did cry for one little bird* (One Arm Point, Western Australia).

There is a strong trend (with precedents in Scottish English: Miller 2008:300, as well as in colloquial Australian English) for the past participle to be used to perform the function of a full past-tense verb. For example:

> *he actually seen this woman* (Perth, W.A.)
> *They gone Port Adelaide* (Alberton, S.A., Wilson 1996:63)
> *They rung up* (Sydney, N.S.W., Eagleson 1977)
> *They seen one green snake* (Yarrabah, Qld., Alexander 1965)
> *They gone back by their little caves* (Woorabinda, Qld., Alexander 1968)
> *Cecily come in to growl him* (Victoria, Enemburu 1989:12).

A development possibly from this process was the adoption into Kriol of the past participle of the verb 'to be', reconceived as *bin,* as a past tense marker. In Aboriginal English, *bin,* sometimes pronounced as *been,* may be used with the sense of 'was/were', as in:

> *They bin telling funny stories* (Kimberley region, W.A., Crugnale 1995:11)
> *Moon been here all the time* (Central Australia, Koch 1991:99)
> *I bin young fella den* (North-west Qld., Flint 1971)

It may also be used, as in Kriol, as a past tense marker, especially in rural and remote areas:

> *We bin get lots of fish* (Roebourne, Pilbara region, W.A.)
> *I bin light a fire* (Carnarvon, Gascoyne region, W.A.)
> *I bin hit him* (McLaren Creek, N.T.)
> *We bin swim inna water* (Alice Springs, N.T.)
> *He been say...* (Coober Pedy, S.A., Lennon 2011:56)
> *We bin give you a lot of shell, eh?* (Lockhart River, Qld., Thompson 1972)
> *Them two bin into it* 'They were fighting' (Vic., Enemburu 1989:9).

As is the case with the present tense, English has a past continuous (or progressive) form using the auxiliary of the verb 'to be' followed by the present participle.

We noted that, in the case of the present continuous, there is a pervasive trend to use the present participle with no auxiliary. Research reported in Malcolm 1996 showed that, in the community studied, in north-west Australia, while the zero auxiliary form was clearly preferred among the several variants used (with over 50% of possible occurrences) in the present continuous, this did not carry over into the past continuous, where it occurred more erratically, and in only 21% of possible occurrences. The reason for this appears to be that, since present tense is unmarked, there was less need for the auxiliary, which carries tense marking. In the past continuous, where the tense was not otherwise marked, the auxiliary performed an important function and needed to be retained.

The progressive aspect may be (perhaps hypercorrectly) doubly encoded when the form 'used to' is followed with the present participle, as in: *We used to goin out and watch it* (Perth, W.A., Malcolm & Koscielecki 1997:69).

4.2.1.3 Future

SAE normally marks the future by means of the modal auxiliary 'will.' While this may be used in more acrolectal varieties of Aboriginal English, it is not strongly present in other varieties and, as will be shown shortly (2.4.3), it can perform quite a different function in the dialect.

It is not unusual for the future to be unmarked in the verb but clearly inferred (as is also the case in Australian English):

> *Nan, she's turning a hundred* (Geraldton, W.A.)
> *I eat it* (Cherbourg/Palm Island, Qld. Dwyer n.d.)
> *They be down the park with the oldies, you reckon?* (Perth, W.A., Collard 2011)

The most pervasive influence on the expression of the future in Aboriginal English is from the creoles in which it may be expressed by *go*[*na*], *garra* or *na*. In areas where creole influence is strongest, forms such as the following may be found:

> *an mela new teacher gotta come* 'and our new teacher will come' (Fitzroy Crossing, W.A., Eagleson, Kaldor & Malcolm 1982:91)
> *You gotta come to that ceremony?* 'Are you going to come to the ceremony?' (Butcher 2008:633)
> *We got to be living here all the time* 'We will be living here all the time' (Central Australia, Koch 1991:98)
> *E go come back tomorrow* 'He will come back tomorrow' (North Queensland, Butcher 2008:633)

Generally the 'go'- based future (which is also an option available to Australian English speakers) prevails:

Where you reckon they gonna be? (Perth, W.A., Collard 2011)
...the ones who's gonna lose out in the long run (Sydney, N.S.W., Malcolm & Koscielecki 1997:60)
John's going to catch you (Cherbourg/Palm Island, Qld., Dwyer n.d.)
...said that they were going to leave home and was going to get a flat somewhere (Goulburn Valley, Vic., McKenry 1995:7)

4.2.2 Aspect

Aspect refers to the duration of the activity indicated by the verb (Finch 2000:85). The continuous, or progressive, aspect, conveyed in the use of the present participle (...ing), indicates continuous activity and the perfect aspect, conveyed through the use of the auxiliary of the verb 'to be' or 'to have', followed by the past participle, indicates the present relevance of something in the past. The use of the modal auxiliary 'will' can add a future dimension.

4.2.2.1 Progressive (Continuous)

As referred to in 2.1.1 above, the progressive, or continuous, aspect may be conveyed in Aboriginal English through the use of the present participle, not necessarily preceded by the auxiliary, e.g.

Twobala sitting longa that tree 'Two people are sitting under the tree' (Butcher 2008:633)
We goin along a road (Pilbara region, W.A., Von Brandenstein 1970:147).
I sitting down (Maningrida, N.T., Elwell, 1977)
Who coming in? (Yarrabah, Qld., Alexander 1965:59)

This corresponds, in form but not necessarily meaning, with the Kriol pattern, as in *Olabat gaman* 'They come' (Sandefur 1979:132).

As noted above (2.1.2), when there is no auxiliary, the form of the verb does not indicate whether the continuous action is present or past, and Aboriginal English speakers may include the inflected auxiliary if they wish to show that it is in the past, as in

E bin creepin on yuntupala 'he was creeping up on you two' (Fitzroy Crossing, W.A., Eagleson, Kaldor & Malcolm 1982:87)
We was playing game (Leonora, W.A.)

The creole influence is more apparent when, as in Fitzroy Crossing, the suffix –*bat* is added to the verb to indicate progressive aspect, as in *All the kid gotta go bogie-bat gotta bus* 'All the kids will go swimming by bus' (Eagleson, Kaldor & Malcolm 1982:91).

4.2.2.2 Perfect

The pattern of non-use of auxiliaries also affects the representation of the perfect aspect in Aboriginal English. There is some ambiguity in utterances such as the following, which could be seen as having the past participle form represent the past tense of the verb (see 2.1.2), or in having its use imply the perfect aspect:

> *I'm sure those students seen us* (Perth, W.A.)
> *Father in law been in the war before* (*Coober* Pedy, S.A., Lennon 2011:46)
> *They appreciate what you done* (Goulburn Valley, Vic., McKenry 1995:87)

In some cases, the perfect continuous aspect is made clear by the use of a prepositional phrase rather than the form of the verb, as in: *We all know for long time* (Kununurra, W.A., Eagleson, Kaldor & Malcolm 1982:230).

4.2.3 Voice

SAE allows for the action represented by the verb to be attributed to a subject (as in *John hit the ball*) or to be received by a subject (as in *John was hit by the ball*). The differentiation between these two perspectives is one of "voice," with the former sentence being seen as active voice and the latter as passive. According to Readdy (1961:152, citing Capell), "voice in Australian Aboriginal languages is limited to the active." Clearly, to put a sentence into the passive voice, Standard English speakers normally use the verb 'to be.' There is, however, an alternative pattern, that is, to use the verb 'to get.' Thus, it is possible, in informal Australian English, to say *John got hit by the ball.* It is not surprising, then, in the light of the reluctance of Aboriginal speakers to use the verb 'to be' (which I will attempt to account for in chapter 6), that this is the preferred alternative in Aboriginal English, as in:

> *her son got runned over* (Perth, W.A.; Malcolm 2002a:74)
> *he's heater...made him got blisters on 'is feet* (rural W.A, Malcolm et al 1999a:57)
> *Uncle Steve...he got hit* (Koongamia, W.A.; Malcolm et al 1999a:50)
> *We got bogged* (Kimberley region, W.A.; Malcolm et al 1999a:48).

It has been observed by Collins & Peters (2008:347) that this way of expressing the passive has been showing "increasing popularity" among Australian English speakers. This, together with the fact that it is used in Kriol (e.g. *We bin get bog la riba* 'We got bogged in the river' (Hudson 1981:108)), would help to entrench it in Aboriginal English. It is, however, not the only option taken by Aboriginal English speakers. Sometimes they may express the passive with the unmarked verb and no auxiliary, as in:

After road fix 'after the road is fixed' (Central Australia, Koch 1991:97)
It's gonna call the Standard Gauge 'it will be called the Standard Gauge' (Leonora W.A.),

and sometimes a speaker may avoid the transformation from active to passive, as in: *A bee stung him* (Qld, Dwyer, n.d.).

It should be noted, with respect to the verb 'get', that it may also be used with an adjective, where the sense is essentially inchoative, depicting a state as progressive:

> *Mummy got wild and she burn it up* (Gnowangerup, W.A.; Eagleson, Kaldor & Malcolm 1982:91)
> *When he died I got sick* (W.A., Malcolm et al 1999b:40)
> *He get wild* (Yarrabah, Qld, Alexander 1965:72)
> *She's getting game* 'She's becoming more confident' (Victoria, Enemburu 1989:9).

4.2.4 Mood

The mood or modality of a verb is the attitude of the speaker to what he or she is saying. A speaker of English may use the indicative mood, in the declarative, to convey information, or in the interrogative to seek information. The imperative mood is used to make demands, the conditional to express something as a possibility subject to some condition/s, and the subjunctive to express something that is hypothetical, though perhaps wished for.

4.2.4.1 Indicative

Normally, the declarative form is indicated in English by a Subject-Verb-Object/Complement ordering accompanied by falling intonation and the interrogative form by reversing the order of the Subject and Auxiliary verb and raising the intonation, or, in the case of a WH- question, preceding the Auxiliary verb and subject with a WH- word (*who, why, how,* etc) and using a falling intonation.

Aboriginal languages generally are less dependent than is English on word order for the conveying of grammatical meaning. It is understandable, then, that, although the basic word order for declarative sentences is maintained in Aboriginal English, it may also be departed from in a number of ways for different kinds of expressive effect. These will be illustrated below in section 4, where we discuss Structure of Sentences.

Aboriginal English, except in its most acrolectal varieties, avoids using changes in word order in order to indicate the interrogative, relying instead on rising intonation and the employment of question tags at the end of statements – an option which also exists in SAE, but is not exploited nearly to the same extent.

Exemplification will be provided in section 4.2. When a WH- question is formed, 'who' may be used where SAE would use 'what', as in:

Who's your name? (Alice Springs, N.T., Sharpe 1976)
Who 'is name? (Pilbara region, W.A., Geytenbeek 1977:40)

4.2.4.2 Imperative

In SAE, the imperative is basically expressed by means of the *uninflected* verb, e.g., *Come here*, though it may be preceded by a vocative, i.e., *Harry, come here,* or it may be modified by the use of a politeness formula such as *Would you/Could you come here,* or *Would you mind coming here?* Or *Let's go, shall we?*

Whereas in SAE it is unusual, and could be taken as hostile, to precede the imperative verb with a pronoun, as in *You, come here,* the use of a pronoun before, or after, the imperative is common and non-offensive, in Aboriginal English, as in:

Look out you fullahs (Perth, W.A., Collard 2011:3)
You girls, c'on (Perth, W.A., Collard 2011:35)
You gotta throw sand in dere (Geraldton, W.A., Rochecouste & Malcolm 2003:23)
You mob anchor dat boat dere (Kununurra, W.A., Königsberg & Collard 2002:95).

4.2.4.3 Conditional

A conditional verb is one where there is an explicit or implied condition for the action referred to. In SAE one might say *If you worked harder you would do better.* The conditional is also used to refer to past habitual action, as in *She would take the dog for a walk every day.*

In Aboriginal English the conditional may be expressed without the conjunction 'if' and without any verb inflection, as in:

No school we play gings (Strelley, Pilbara region, W.A.)
Round the rocks be better (Yarrabah, Qld., Alexander 1965:57)
You get too tired, you wanna camp on the road 'If you get tired, you should camp on the road' (Eades 2013:71)

The modal auxiliary *will* may also be used to express the conditional, with particular relation to habitual action, as in:

You drink lotta milk you'll get strong (Hall's Creek, Kimberley region, W.A.)
Goanna they'll dig from the ground (Wiluna, Goldfields region, W.A.)
they'll walk like this [of turkeys] (Wiluna, Goldfields region, W.A.).

Eades (2013:53) notes, with respect to South-East Queensland, that "*will* is used as a prediction of the future, which is always conditional."

A hypercorrect double expression of the conditional has been recorded in La Perouse, N.S.W.: *If he would've pulled up he would've been all right* (Malcolm & Koscielecki 1997:61).

4.2.4.4 Subjunctive

The verb in the subjunctive refers to a possibility, as in *He might be late,* or *I wish you were more careful.* As we noted in chapter 2, section 5.4, Aboriginal people often use language for "speculative reporting" (Eades 2013:70), where possible inferences are drawn from something which has been observed. The sense of possibility is often expressed with a modal auxiliary (though sometimes different from those used in SAE), or an adverb. Hence,

> *He mus be chasin yorga down there* 'He must be chasing girls down there' (South-west, Malcolm & Koscielecki 1997:68)
> *Aaay, they mighte lookin for Johnny an em, unna* 'They might be looking for Johnny and the others, mightn't they' (Collard 2011:3)
> *That old man bin tell him to sleep in a corner, he might get into trouble.* (Kimberley region, W.A., Crugnale 1995:97)
> *"Let's go and look for the others. Maybe someone is sick," we said* (Central Australia, Nungarrayi et al 1995:11)
> *"I saw lots of yams to the north. We might go there..."* (Central Australia, Nungarrayi et al 1995:11)
> *"There aren't any children making noises. Maybe they are all sleeping"* (Gula Lalara, Groote Eyland, N.T. 1993)
> *"Might be something happen in bush"* (Pilbara region, W.A.Peter & Lofts 1997:57)

4.2.5 Person

Person, i.e., differentiation between the speaker, the one/s spoken to and the one/s spoken about, is recognized up to a point in the verb in SAE, in that, in the simple present tense, the third person singular of the verb carries an inflection, and in the verb 'to be' the forms for first, second and third person singular are different. In Aboriginal English there is less recognition of person than in SAE, in that, for one thing, the verb 'to be' is less likely to be used as an auxiliary or copula:

> *They playing* (Leonora, W.A.)
> *This a big one* (Alice Springs, N.T., Sharpe 1977b:48)
> *He blind* (Woorabinda, Qld., Alexander 1968).
> *They losin' their talk altogether* (Carnarvon, W.A.)

Secondly, the 3rd person singular is less likely to be inflected:

a bloke who scratch himself (La Perouse, N.S.W., Malcolm & Koscielecki 1997:60)
He don't (Sydney, N.S.W., Eagleson 1977).

And thirdly, if there is a 'be' auxiliary or copula, it is likely to be invariant:

He been say (Coober Pedy, S.A., Lennon 2011:56)
We bin get lots of fish (Roebourne, Pilbara region, W.A., 1976)
She be shy (Onslow, *Pilbara* region, W.A., 1976)
I be for'ard 'I was in the bows' (Torres Strait, Qld., Dutton 1990).

4.2.6 Number

Number is recognized in the verb in SAE, in that (as observed above) the verb has a different form for a singular subject, at least in the third person, than for a plural one, and, in the verb 'to be', the verb is different for the first person singular (*am*) and the first person plural (*are*). As we have seen, these differences are less likely to be apparent in Aboriginal English:

all the kids was playin (Geraldton, W.A.)
It change its colour (Alice Springs, N.T., Harkins 1994:200)
Mum take us (Coober Pedy, S.A., Lennon 2006:8)
We was in a little mini (La Perouse, N.S.W., Malcolm & Koscielecki 1997:60)
Me and Tommy was awake (Woorabinda, Qld., Alexander 1968)
Our cousins was coming (Goulburn Valley, Vic., McKenry 1995:114)

However, the reduced recognition of number in the morphology of the verb does not mean Aboriginal speakers are ignoring number. When we look at the pronoun system (in section 3.6) we will see that Aboriginal English, at least in some areas, is more meticulous about recognizing number than is SAE.

4.2.7 Related structures and processes

We proceed now to a consideration of seven further structures and processes associated with the verb phrase in which Aboriginal English distinguishes itself from SAE.

4.2.7.1 Transitivity

Transitive verbs differ from intransitive verbs in that the former can take a direct object (e.g. *He lost **his way***) and the latter cannot (e.g. *She slept*). It is also possible for sentences to be ditransitive, when they include both a direct and an indirect object (e.g. *The teacher read them a story*). There is no morphological recognition of transitivity on the verb in the standard dialect. However, there are a number of ways

in which, under the influence of Australian languages and pidgin/creole, Aboriginal English, in its heavier varieties, may introduce such recognition. The markers may be pronouns, particularly "him" and suffixes, including {-im}, {-em} and {-it}.

By a process common to colloquial English, the pronoun object 'him' or 'them' may be reduced to an enclitic and attached to the verb, as in:

> *we cookedim up* (Wiluna, WA, 1976)
> *you shootem with a gun* (Onslow, WA, 1976)
> *If you got any question just askem* (Alice Springs, NT, Harkins 1994)
> *tookem* right to that water (NSW, Sharpe 1989)
> *we bin eatem* (Sleep, SA, 1996)
> *he bin killem, indit* 'he killed him, didn't he' (Victoria, Enemburu 1989)
> *puttem on truck* 'load trucks' (Barrow Creek, NT, Koch, 1993).

Where there are two verbs, the transitive verb will carry the enclitic, as in:

> *I go and gettem water* 'I went and got water' (Barrow Creek, NT, Koch 1993)
> *He went round and collectem some people* 'He would go around and collect people' (Barrow Creek, Koch 1993:122).

It is particularly common, especially in more remote areas, for the enclitic and the direct object noun to co-occur, as in:

> *I bin eatim up goanna* (Kununurra, WA, Eagleson, Kaldor & Malcolm 1982)
> *...come up there – getem kangaroo and rabbit* (Western Desert, Crugnale 1995)
> *...you can seeim alla fish* (Fitzroy Crossing, WA, Eagleson, Kaldor & Malcolm 1982)
> *bin catchim job* 'got a job' (NW Queensland, Flint, 1971)
> *chuckem out paper* 'throw out paper (Barrow Creek, NT, Koch 1993)
> *puttem on his shoes* 'put on his shoes' (Barrow Creek, NT, Koch 1993)
> *they givit money* 'they give money' (Barrow Creek, NT, Koch 1993)

It is also possible, but much less common, for the direct object noun and pronoun to co-occur, as in:

> *Nothing, these men never kill him sheep* (Western Desert, Crugnale 1995)
> *We saddle him up camel* (Western Desert, Crugnale 1995)

Similarly, it is possible, though not common, for the direct object pronoun and the enclitic to co-occur, as in:

> *We takem him longa pub* 'We took him to the pub' (Barrow Creek, Koch 1993)
> *We had to findem him* 'We found him' (Barrow Creek, Koch 1993).

In a particular case, *gottem*, the verb+enclitic may be reanalysed as a preposition, as in: *We had to send them all time gottem girl* 'We sent them with their women' (Barrow Creek, Koch 1993).

In a study of the English speech of an elderly, multilingual speaker from Arnhem Land, Mailhammer and Birch (2014) have traced the patterns of use and non-use of the suffix {-im}, noting that, at least in this case, the influence of the contact languages is apparent and that {-im} is not directly associated with transitivity. The data from this study and from the sources cited above show that there is considerable variability in the extent and way in which transitivity may be marked in Aboriginal English. In lighter varieties of Aboriginal English no transitive marking occurs.

4.2.7.2 Coordination

Conjunctions are normally used to provide coordination between clauses, and between verbs in SAE. In Aboriginal English, verbs, or phrases, may follow one another serially, as in:

> *He run that way find a man* (Pilbara region, W.A., Von Brandenstein 1970:149)
> *E go paints on is face* (Alice Springs, N.T., Sharpe 1977b:49)
> *You get too tired, you wanna camp on the road* 'If you should get tired, you should camp on the road' (Eades 2013:71).
> *I got that big tree, knock it down with my hand, lift it up* (Leonora, W.A., Eagleson, Kaldor & Malcolm 1982:95)

Koch (2000) has identified, with respect to many central Australian languages, a feature he calls Associated Motion, whereby the main activity of the verb may be associated with some kind of prior or concurrent motion. Thus, there are verbs which are preceded by (what is translated as) "go and" or "come and" or "come back and." The effect of this on the use of English may be expressions like *im go get some cattle* and *go givit tucker longa him,* 'go and give him food'. There is evidence that constructions like these bringing "go" together with another verb (which may also occur in Australian English) are not uncommon in varieties of Aboriginal English, as indeed, according to Velupillai (2015:473), in pidgins and creoles generally:

> *They went walkin along* (Leonora, Goldfields region, W.A.)
> *We went walk* (Carnarvon, Gascoyne region, W.A.)
> *We went got it* (Leonora, W.A.)
> *I go see a policeman* (Mullewa, South-west region, W.A.).

4.2.7.3 Negation

The negation of the verb is a feature which distinguishes many non-standard dialects of English – as well as pidgins and creoles - from the standard, and a range of non-standard forms of negation brought to Australia by the colonists found their way, sometimes with modification, into Aboriginal English.

The form *no* functions as a negator in Torres Strait Creole, as in: *Em no bin sing* 'She didn't sing' (Shnukal 1988:20). This is echoed in the English of Torres Strait Island children: *No swim* 'Don't swim' (Dutton 1970).

A possible variant of this is found in Western Australia: *Johnny reckon, Nah, not even* (Collard 2011:25).

Butcher observes the occurrence of *nomo* (from 'no more', via creole), in basilectal varieties of northern Aboriginal English, e.g. *E nomo my fadda* 'He's not my father' (Butcher 2008:634).

This is comparable to the form observed by Koch (1991:99) in Central Australia: *No more been gaol there that time.* According to Dutton (1969:25), *nomo,* pronounced /namoː/, is used on Palm Island, Queensland, with the meaning "Definitely not."

The word *nothing,* with a meaning usually approximating to "no," is another form found in broader varieties of Aboriginal English, as a negative interjection, as in:

> *Nothin, they be right* (Perth, W.A., Collard 2011:9)
> *Nothing, I bin come first* (Kununurra, Kimberley region, W.A.)
> *I can't see it the* same *way – nothing* (Coober Pedy, S.A., Lennon 2011:xv)

The term here appears to compare with the early form *nating* spoken in Bislama prior to the First World War in Vanuatu with the meaning "nothing, not at all" (Crowley 1998:89). *Nothing* can also function, like "no", as a negative adjunct: *That fella got nothing clothes on* (Butcher 2008:634).

In some places, the term can be used with a meaning closer to that of "nothing" in Australian English: *I bin wait, wait, wait, wait: nothing* (Alice Springs, Harkins 1994:151). In Victoria, it can carry the meaning "No way, it's not happening, it didn't happen" (Adams 2014:11).

The negative adjunct *not* can be used without an auxiliary before the verb, as in *Nail not float* (Cherbourg/Palm Island, Qld., Dwyer, n.d.).

Probably the most widespread and common non-standard form of negation in Aboriginal English is the non-emphatic *never,* as in:

> *E never fell down* (Carnarvon, Gascoyne region, W.A.)
> *We never lost our culture* (Alice Springs, N.T., Harkins 1994:201)
> *E neber done 'm proply* (Ceduna, S.A., Sleep, 1996:8)
> *I never bin eat dat cake* (Butcher 2008:634)
> *You never done any further study* (South-west, W.A., Malcolm & Koscielecki 1997:68).

This is, by no means, an Aboriginal introduction into English. It has been identified by Kortmann (2017:7) as a *vernacular angloversal*, common to 69 of the 76 non-standard varieties studied in the survey for the World Atlas of Varieties

of English (WAVE), including dialects from Southeast England (Anderwald 2008:454), the north of England (Beal 2008:386) and Scotland (Miller 2008:303) as well as Australian English, all of which varieties helped to form Aboriginal English.

Multiple negation is another vernacular angloversal, widespread in English dialects (Beal 2008:235) and is pervasive in Aboriginal English varieties across the country:

> *We never got no grapes* (Alberton, S.A., Wilson 1996:69)
> *No one put no lights on or nothing* (Perth, W.A., Malcolm 2002:82)
> *I didn't go back with nobody then* (Coober Pedy, S.A., Lennon 2011:114)
> *He just don't see no danger in nothing* (Sydney, N.S.W., Eagleson, Kaldor & Malcolm 1982:132)
> *They haven't done nothing about it* (Goulburn Valley, Vic., McKenry 1995:47).

4.2.7.4 Auxiliary verbs

Auxiliary verbs play a major role in SAE, in the formation of tenses, questions, the passive voice, negation and emphases. They are, however, usually not stressed, and they do not contribute greatly to the content of communication. It is understandable, then, that in the simplification and reduction processes associated with language contact they should not have been retained, and that in the subsequent restructuring continuum leading to Aboriginal English they have not been fully recovered.

Reviewing what has already been said here in relation to tense, aspect, mood and voice, we can see that Aboriginal English is not completely dispensing with auxiliary verbs, but is using a restructured system in which certain functions are performed differently and certain auxiliaries are introduced with new functions. The Aboriginal English system is less constraining than that of SAE, in that, where meanings can be conveyed without dependence on auxiliaries, they do not need to be used. Thus, as we have seen, it is possible to convey the sense of the continuous verb by using the present participle without the auxiliary, but where the tense needs to be marked, the auxiliary can be introduced. Similarly, it is not essential to use the auxiliary to show the perfect continuous time reference, in that one can use a preposition to make this clear. It is possible also to simplify the formation of questions by avoiding the auxiliary and using an invariant question tag.

Aboriginal English has developed its own set of auxiliaries, "bin", "gotta" and "gonna", for its own purposes. The auxiliary "bin" has the convenience of being invariant, and can be used generally to mark the past, whether continuous or perfect (Dutton 1965). *Gotta* and *gonna* enable the future to be marked when it is relevant, though it is recognized that the hearer may infer the future rather than always having it made explicit.

4.2.7.5 The copula

The copula links a subject to its description or complement. It is, however, possible to make such a link (as many languages do) without such explicit linguistic support. I have elsewhere referred to what I called the *parsimony* of Aboriginal communication, by which I mean "one should use as few words as possible to get one's message across" (Malcolm 1994b:298). In the light of this, the copula can be seen as an obstruction, rather than an aid to communication, and it has therefore not been recovered, except in acrolectal varieties of Aboriginal English. If an inchoative sense is relevant, Aboriginal English can use "get" for this purpose.

4.2.7.6 The adverb

In the verb phrase in SAE, adverbs generally have the suffix {-ly}, though in informal speech this may not be added. The deletion of the {-ly} suffix constitutes a vernacular angloversal common to 69 of the 76 WAVE non-standard varieties (Kortmann 2017:7). In Aboriginal English the suffix is often not applied:

> *It was scary true* (Perth, W.A.)
> *And we sit down quiet* (Pilbara region, W.A., Von Brandenstein 1970:148)
> *move as slow as I can* (La Perouse, N.S.W., Malcolm & Koscielecki 1997:62)
> *You can easy do it* (Cherbourg/Palm Island, Qld., Dwyer n.d.)
> *When I was young it was proper hard* (Victoria, Enemburu 1989:11)

Aboriginal English speakers may also differentiate between adverbs of manner and of time, by using the suffixes {-way} and {-time} respectively:

> *getting out of motorcar real slow-way like* (Perth, W.A., Collard 2011:23)
> *e just got up quick-way* (Geraldton, W.A.)
> *I bin tell him a bit cheeky way: 'Dig that nother one over there'* (Coober Pedy, S.A., Lennon 2011:56)
> *We came back at dark-time* (Perth, W.A.)
> *Cold weather-time* (Central Australia, Koch 1991:101)
> *Long-time* (Alice Springs, Sharpe 1997).
> *Afternoon-time, my auntie said...* (Barrow Creek, N.T., G.Koch 1993:99)
> *Every raintime he go to house* (Western Desert, Crugnale 1995:26)

Some adverbs of Aboriginal English are not current in SAE:

> *That old lady gonna die by and by* 'the old lady will die soon'
> *That big-one tree, e gonna fall down by and by* 'That big tree will fall down soon' (Butcher 2008:633, 635).

The term *by and by* is common to Melanesian Pidgin English and New South Wales Pidgin English (Simpson 1996).

They was fairly missing it 'they were just missing it' (Mullewa, W.A.)
e fairly floated 'he was frightened, he took off' (South-west, W.A., Douglas 1976)
When she's cookin she's eatin same time 'she cooks and eats at the same time' (Darwin, N.T., Ford n.d.)
Maka big fire, burnim too same time (Lockhart River, Qld., Thompson 1972).

4.2.7.7 Metaphorical extension

English allows for the "metaphorical extension" (Pullum and Huddleston 2002:651) of verbs by the use of particles which extend the domains of their application. A notable case of this in Aboriginal English is the use of the particle {-up}, which tends to be extended in use to enable an increased level of intensity and completeness to be conveyed, as in:

rear up	raise (W.A., Toussaint 1992; Vic., Adams 2014:16)
grow up (tr.)	*mother...grew me up* (Coober Pedy, S.A., Lennon 2000:1)
marry up	*Barry and Ellen got married up* (Goulburn Valley, Vic., McKenry 1995:40)
bury up	*We bury im up* (Leonora, W.A .)
talk up	use Aboriginal English (Moree, N.S.W., Hitchen 1992)
listen up	pay attention (Victoria, Adams 2014:11)
jump up	be resurrected (Jerramungup, W.A., Hassell 1975)
party up	go out for the night, have a good time (Victoria, Adams 2014:11)
yarn up	*yarning up big time* 'talking a lot, telling a lot of stories' (Victoria, Adams 2014:12)
keep up	*you keep up* 'you're very good' (Broome, W.A.)

The readiness of this suffix to be used in this way can be understood in the light of the fact that {-ɑp} is one of nine adverbial suffixes in Kriol (Sandefur 1979:117-118). It has also been suggested by Arthur (1996:221) that the extended use of "up" could have come about "from the influence of an Aboriginal language, or languages, which commonly marked actions which were completed." Further examples may be seen in Malcolm & Sharifian 2007:388-9.

4.3 The Noun Phrase

The noun, which is the word class traditionally conceived as comprising words which name a person, place or thing, is the head of the noun phrase. Elements of its meaning and use in SAE are conveyed by determiners and adjectives and its form changes to express number and possession. It may also be replaced by a pronoun. In most aspects of the noun phrase and its use, Aboriginal English is distinctive.

4.3.1 Number

In SAE, plural number is normally marked in regular nouns by the suffix {-*s/-es*}. In Aboriginal English in all states of Australia, this suffix may be absent, although the plural number may be retrievable from the context:

> *dey got some turtle* (Kimberley region, W.A., Eagleson, Kaldor & Malcolm 1982:231)
> *Three goanna* (McLaren Creek, N.T., Gillespie 1991:30)
> *Dehz two way* (Baryulgil, N.S.W., Fraser-Knowles 1988:195)
> *Dey big dinosaur* (Ceduna, S.A., Sleep 1996:19)
> *those papers are nothing but piece of paper* (La Perouse, N.S.W., Malcolm & Koscielecki 1997:62)
> *Them fella got nothing either* (Victoria, Enemburu 1989:11)

In nouns with irregular plurals, the plural may also be unmarked: *Two man in a jeep* (Dept. of Education, Qld. 1970). On the other hand, regular plurals may be applied to nouns with irregular plurals in SAE:

> *two womans* (Leonora, W.A., Eagleson, Kaldor & Malcolm 1982:236, c.f. Coober Pedy, S.A., Lennon 2011:96)
> *lots of mans; foots* (Leonora, W.A., Eagleson, Kaldor & Malcolm 1982:236)
> *we get five sheeps, fat one* (Onslow, W.A., Eagleson, Kaldor & Malcolm 1982).

Sometimes the plural shows that Aboriginal English speakers are not making the same distinction between mass and count nouns which is made in SAE:

> *some barks* 'some bits of bark' (Kimberley, W.A., Eagleson, Kaldor & Malcolm 1982:227)
> *these big grasses* 'this deep grass' (Tardun, W.A.)
> *little woods* 'little bits of wood' (Alice Springs, N.T., Sharpe 1977).
> *the staffs* 'the staff' (Alice Springs, N.T., Harkins 1994:18)
> *having all good funs* (Alice Springs, N.T., Harkins 1994:205)
> *irons* 'pieces of iron' (Alice Springs, N.T., Sharpe 1977)
> *lots of dusts* (Alice Springs, N.T., Sharpe 1977)
> *silvers* 'silver [coins]' (Coober Pedy, S.A., Lennon 2011:20)

In some cases, perhaps by way of hypercorrection, the regular plural will be added to a word which already has an irregular plural:

> *These two old peoples was murdered* (Broome, W.A.)
> *mens* (McLaren Creek, N.T., Gillespie 1991:30; Ceduna, S.A., Sleep 1996:17; Baryulgil, N.S.W., Fraser-Knowles 1985:193).

Aboriginal English also introduces alternative (or accompanying) means of showing the plural. One way is by putting a plural marker, derived from "all of" or "a lot of" (See 7.2, above), before the noun, as in:

shooting alla bird 'shooting birds' (Onslow, Pilbara region, W.A.)
all the mosquito was biting them (Broome, Kimberley region, W.A.)
lotta/alla dog[s] (Alice Springs, N.T., Harkins 1994:70)
there's been lotta chippings going on (Alice Springs, N.T., Harkins 1994:200).

The term *mob*[s], from Kriol, may be used (before or after the noun) to denote plurality or quantity, as in:

mob of spinneyfex (Pirola 1978:13)
mobs of times (Pirola 1978:13)
clean water-mob 'lots of clean water' (Alice Springs, N.T., Sharpe 1977)
all the water come down from the rock, big mob (Fitzroy Crossing, W.A., Eagleson, Kaldor & Malcolm 1982:88).

4.3.2 Gender

While the requirement in SAE is to differentiate masculine, feminine and neuter with the 3rd person singular pronouns "he", "she", "it" this is not strongly maintained in Aboriginal English:

when e little girl (McLaren Creek, N.T., Gillespie 1991:30)
He's my daughter (Barrow Creek, N.T., G. Koch 1993:x)
E nice country (One Arm Point, W.A., Eagleson, Kaldor & Malcolm 1982:86)
But he still there, that bone (Barrow Creek, N.T., G. Koch 1993:xii).

This would be consistent with many Aboriginal languages, in which there is only one word to cover all genders (e.g. Geytenbeek 1977:41). The masculine gender pronoun may also be used to refer to fauna, as in:

this crow, he came right up (South-west, W.A.)
this kangaroo big bloke...we shoot 'im (Wiluna, W.A.)

The non-recognition of gender may carry over into the use of possessive pronouns, as in *That he dress* 'that's her dress' (Cherbourg/Palm Island, Qld., Dwyer n.d.).

4.3.3 Possession

Aboriginal English does not necessarily mark the possessive on the noun by inflection and the possessive can be inferred from the juxtaposition, as in:

my cousin bike 'my cousin's bike' (Leonora, W.A.)
Shane birthday 'Shane's birthday' (Alice Springs, N.T., Harkins 1994:69)
Where Tom house? 'Where's Tom's house?' (N.S.W., Eades 2003:83)
Grannie Elsie place 'Grannie Elsie's place' (Qld., Flint 1968)

The pronoun, similarly (as indicated in 3.2), may be unmarked for possessive, as in:

> *I done me best* 'I did my best' (South-west W.A., Malcolm & Koscielecki 1997:70)
> *meself* 'myself' (Alice Springs, N.T., Harkins 1994:16)
> *dey bin race to dey teacher* 'They raced to their teacher' (Roebourne, W.A.).
> *tell dey father* 'tell their father' (Carnarvon, W.A.)

By contrast, as shown above (Chapter 3, section 6.8), perhaps by way of hypercorrection, Aboriginal English speakers may reanalyse 'his' to make it sound more clearly possessive, i.e. /hi:z/:

> *He was going along on e's horse* (Mullewa, W.A.)
> *Hees four went back* (La Perouse, N.S.W., Malcolm & Koscielecki 1997:62)
> *He's mate Donald Woods* [in writing] (Goulburn Valley, Vic., McKenry 1995:44).

In areas of stronger creole influence, a periphrastic means of marking the possessive may be employed with, *for* before or after the noun:

> *the bed for that girl* 'that girl's bed' (Halls Creek, W.A., Eagleson, Kaldor & Malcolm 1982:85)
> *One fish broke my mum for line* 'a fish broke my mum's line' (Roebourne, W.A.)
> *Michael for father* 'Michael's father' (Fitzroy Crossing, W.A., Eagleson, Kaldor & Malcolm 1982:85)
> *Those kids for their sisters* 'the kids, their sister's kids' (Central Australia, Koch 1991:97)

Alternatively, *belong* [*to*], or a form derived from it or the Kriol forms *blanga*, *blangnda* may be used:

> *name belong canoe* (Torres Strait, Qld., Dutton 1970)
> *woman belong friend* (Derby, Kimberley region, W.A.)
> *a dingo trap belong to Dad* (Onslow, W.A., Eagleson, Kaldor & Malcolm 1982:85)
> *gun belong to Hedley* (Cherbourg, Qld., Readdy 1961)
> *Yvonne bong apple* (Derby, Kimberley region, W.A.)
> *the property belong to the Uturrpa people* (Central Australia, Koch 1985:184)
> *that property belonging to some old fellow there* (Central Australia, Koch 1991:97)
> *Wasn't fault belongin to Aboriginal people* (Barrow Creek, N.T., G. Koch 1993:11).

This has been listed by Kortmann (2017:15) as one of the top distinctive features for non-standard English varieties of the Australia Pacific region.

In areas where Aboriginal English speakers also have access to indigenous languages a possessive suffix may be transferred from the other language and used to make an English noun or pronoun possessive, or to add to its existing English possessive inflection, as in:

> *I only got one sisterku* (Wiluna, W.A.)
> *Auntie Wilmas-ku place* (Wiluna, W.A.)
> *minesgu* 'mine' (Ceduna, S.A., Sleep 1996:4).

4.3.4 Determiners

Basic to the noun phrase are the words which accompany a noun and specify its number and definiteness (Finch 2000:31). These, which we call determiners, include definite and indefinite articles and demonstratives. Also relevant to Aboriginal English are numerals, which are called post-determiners.

4.3.4.1 Definite article

It is a feature of Aboriginal English across the country that the definite article may not be used in contexts where it would be used in SAE:

> *I was in bush* (Kimberley region, W.A., Eagleson, Kaldor & Malcolm 1982:227)
> *We went to Alcoota for weekend* (Alice Springs, N.T., Harkins 1994:204)
> *I wanna go shop* (Alberton, S.A., Wilson 1996:18)
> *Where's Eora language?* (La Perouse, N.S.W., Malcolm & Koscielecki 1997:63)
> *Hey, tide'll be in about four o'clock, eh?* (Yarrabah, Qld., Alexander 1965:64)
> *...chap by name of...* (Victoria, Enemburu 1989:11).

It is also common (as sometimes in colloquial Australian English) for the demonstrative to replace the definite article:

> *We bn still keep de flaps on that ...stingray* (Broome, W.A., Malcolm et al 1999a:55)
> *I kill im, that old kangaroo* (Butcher 2008:632)
> *Dem girls got the music goin* (La Perouse, N.S.W., Malcolm & Koscielecki 1997:63)
> *They go longa that spring there...* (Barrow Creek, N.T., G.Koch 1993:18).

On occasions the definite article may be inserted where it would be redundant in SAE:

> *bloke with the long hair* (Leonora, W.A., Eagleson, Kaldor & Malcolm 1982:86)
> *the last Sunday* (Torres Strait, Dutton 1970).

In a similar way, the demonstrative may be inserted where it would not normally occur in SAE:

> *Dese three Yamatjis I think...dey speared dese...dese two wiypellas* 'two Yamatji people, I think, speared two white people' (Mullewa, W.A. 1976).

4.3.4.2 Indefinite article

The indefinite article is frequently not used in contexts where it would occur in SAE:

> *They was asking us kids for smoke* (Kalgoorlie, W.A.)
> *Jenny was driving car* (McLaren Creek, N.T., Gillespie 1991:30)

Shame job there (Ceduna, S.A., Sleep 1996:17)
And Aboriginal man walked past (La Perouse, N.S.W., Malcolm & Koscielecki 1997:63)
I got house there (Yarrabah, Qld., Alexander 1965:65)
Real big mob over there (Goulburn Valley, Vic., McKenry 1995:6).

The demonstrative may also commonly replace the indefinite article:

My dad caught ...this fish (Broome, Kimberley region, W.A.)
this really old guy came out (Sydney, N.S.W., Eagleson, Kaldor & Malcolm 1982:153).

The numeral *one* also regularly replaces the indefinite article:

Then she got one house (Gnowangerup, W.A., Kaldor & Malcolm 1991:75)
We killed one big goanna (McLaren Creek, N.T., Gillespie 1991)
one place called Wantjapala (Coober Pedy, S.A., Lennon 2011:46)
They seen one green snake (Yarrabah, Qld., Alexander 1965:66).

This is a feature not uncommon in high contact non-standard English varieties across the world (Kortmann 2017:10).

Sometimes the indefinite article may come redundantly or together with a post-determiner:

no one got a spare time (La Perouse, N.S.W., Malcolm & Koscielecki 1997:63)
They saw a one man (Leonora, Goldfields region, W.A.)
came in a two dinghy (Torres Strait, Qld, Dutton 1970).

4.3.5 Adjectives

The adjective in English represents a quality which is attributed to the noun. As such, considered apart from the noun, the adjective can be seen to stand for an abstraction. While speakers who have been enculturated in dominant Western cultures have a long tradition, in their use of language, of treating abstractions in much the same way as they treat physical objects, Aboriginal speakers do not, and they have found it necessary to modify the language, so that, as far as possible, when an adjective is used, it is closely attached to the noun to which it relates. There are two main ways of doing this: avoiding the listing of multiple adjectives before the noun and making adjectives more like nouns by giving them nominalizing suffixes.

4.3.5.1 Adjectives and word order
English allows for adjectives to be used either attributively (e.g. "a big kangaroo") or predicatively (e.g. "the kangaroo is big"). Aboriginal English follows the pattern of using a single adjective attributively, as in:

> *we bin getting some bush plums* (Barrow Creek, N.T., G. Koch 1993:100)
> *we went for sleepy lizards* (Ceduna, S.A., Sleep 1996:8)
> *Stevie know me from little kid* (Victoria, Enemburu 1989:12)
> *...that wirlo bird...it's a death bird* (South-west, W.A., Königsberg & Collard 2002:87).

However, the practice of using multiple adjectives before the noun, as in "a long, green snake", is not generally followed in Aboriginal English. Rather, in some areas, by means of a right dislocation, a structure closer to the predicative pattern of SAE (though without the copula) will be followed:

> *E got new muticar, red-one* (Butcher 2008:635)
> *e bin find that girl, naked one* (Halls Creek, W.A.)
> *man make that fire, smoky one* (Kununurra, W.A.)
> *we get five sheeps, fat one* (Onslow, W.A.)
> *we bin see one bird, flying one* (Camballin, W.A.)
> *we seen a clapper's egg, green one* (Leonora, W.A.)
> (all Western Australian examples from Eagleson, Kaldor & Malcolm 1982:87-88).

4.3.5.2 Adjectives and nominalization

In order to anchor the adjectives more clearly in the physical world, they may be nominalized in several ways. First, when an adjective needs to be mentioned on its own, it will typically be followed by *one*, as in the following exchanges:

> Speaker A: *What do they look like?*
> Speaker B: *Sweet one.* (Fitzroy Crossing, Kimberley region, W.A.)
> Speaker C: *Do you like the taste of that?*
> Speaker D: *Yeah, really juicy one.* (Leonora, Goldfields region, W.A.)

and in the following independent utterances:

> *This a big one* (Alice Springs, N.T., Sharpe 1977b:48)
> *E didda deadly one* 'What he did was excellent' (Ceduna, S.A., Sleep 1996:17)
> *Little bit bendy one* 'It's a little bendy' (Coober Pedy, S.A., Lennon 2011:32).

Another means of grounding adjectives is to bring the adjectival and the nominal element together in a compound noun, as in, for example:

> *cold sick* 'a cold'
> *ink pen* 'pen, for writing'
> *law man* 'a man knowledgeable in the law' (See further Malcolm & Sharifian 2007:380-382).

Nominalization may also be achieved, under the influence of Kriol, by following the adjective with a term derived from "fellow." In Kriol, 'cool' is *gulbala*, and 'strong' *drongbala* (Sharpe & Sandefur 1977:59). Suffixes, or adjuncts, deriving

from the same origin, are widespread in the noun phrase in Aboriginal English, involving adjectives, nouns, numerals and pronouns:

> *aks the big fellas*
> *put it with blackfellas' stories* (La Perouse, N.S.W., Malcolm & Koscielecki 1997:64)
> *That two whitefella* (Barrow Creek, N.T. G. Koch 1993:xi)
> *twopela chasing, chasing around* (Fitzroy Crossing, W.A., Eagleson, Kaldor & Malcolm 1982:88)
> *youfella see 'em* 'you watch it' (Central Australia, Koch 2000a:40)
> *We fella kids (Coober Pedy, S.A., Lennon 2011:20)*
> *They're really weak them fellas* (La Perouse, N.S.W., Eagleson, Kaldor & Malcolm 1982:130).

According to Koch (2000:35), the noun phrase *ADJpela N* dates from the 1830s in New South Wales and came about as a reanalysis of *ADJ fellow*.

Another means of nominalization is the use of the term "kine", from {-kain}, which is identified by Shnukal (1991:187) as an adjective and adverb suffix in Torres Strait Creole, presumably derived from "kind." This may be used together with *one* in Torres Strait Children's English in the expression:

> *this kine one here* 'this sort' (Dutton 1970).
> *onem kine* (/wʌnəm kaın/) 'what kind of' (Dutton 1970)

It may be heard in the Kimberley and the Goldfields regions of Western Australia in such expressions as:

> *Wha' kine dat man?* 'What's that man?' (Broome)
> *Mummy liar say this kine: 'Take your dress off...'* 'Mummy said, not seriously, like, 'Take your dress off...'' (Broome, W.A., Eagleson, Kaldor & Malcolm 1982:101)
> *That one half-kine-little* (Leonora, W.A.).

The strong tendency towards the nominalization of adjectives in Aboriginal English is consistent with patterns in Aboriginal languages. Koch (2000:32), has observed, citing Yallop, that "Few Aboriginal languages make a sharp distinction between nouns and adjectives. Many adjectives can serve as nouns."

4.3.5.3 Adjectives and emphasis

Speakers of Aboriginal English may emphasize adjectives effectively by redoubling the emphasis which would normally be possible in SAE. Comparative forms such as *more longer* were found to occur in all areas of Western Australia (Eagleson, Kaldor & Malcolm 1982:88). Such forms are, of course found in other non-standard dialects, including that of the South-west of England (Wagner 2008:419), from which they could have been transported to Australia.

Similarly, the superlative may be used in such expressions as:

I had the most rottenest hangover... (Sydney, N.S.W., Eagleson 1978:56)
most weirdest *dream* (Perth, W.A.)
a brainiest kid (W,A., Eagleson, Kaldor & Malcolm 1982:88)

A similar use of the superlative has been found in the English of the North of England (Beal 2008:381).

4.3.6 Pronouns

4.3.6.1 Personal and possessive pronouns

Aboriginal English modifies the personal pronoun system of English in a number of ways. As noted under 3.2 (Gender), the third person singular pronoun *e* or *im* may be used for referents which are masculine, feminine, neuter or non-human.

With respect to number, the personal pronoun system is more diversified than that in SAE in that, in line with Aboriginal languages and creole, it may represent dual as well as singular and plural subjects.

The singular first person is represented, as in Standard English, with *I*, in all areas: *I bin swim* (Lockhart River, Qld., Thompson, 1972). However, in some areas it may alternate with *me* as a subject pronoun: *Me go* 'I went' (Torres Strait, Dutton 1970).

The form *me* may also function as a possessive pronoun (c.f. 1.3.3):

I done me best (South-west, W.A., Malcolm & Koscielecki 1997:70)
because me phone's been off (La Perouse, N.S.W., Malcolm & Koscielecki 1997:62).

The dual first person, in more basilectal varieties, is usually is based on a combination of "me" and "two[fella]" and there is no difference between the forms used in subject and predicate:

mitu go go go... 'we [two] went until...' (Torres Strait, Dutton 1970)
mintupela bin fall down dere la back 'we [two] fell down the back' (Halls Ck.,WA.)
mintwofella bin go hunting 'we [two] went hunting' (Barrow Creek, N.T., Koch & Koch 1993:x).

In North-West Queensland, Flint (1971) found the term *midubela* or *minabela* in use. In the Torres Strait, an inclusive form, *yumi*, is available if the addressee is one of the two persons in the dual reference.

Although the use of the dual pronouns is generally restricted to more remote areas, there is some evidence of dual reference in less remote areas in expressions like:

me and him went swimming (Perth, W.A.)
me and Tommy was awake (Woorabinda, Qld., Alexander 1968).

The plural first person pronoun is *we* in all areas, though this may alternate in the Kimberley region of Western Australia with the addressee-exclusive forms *mela,* as in *Mela lookim spy picture* 'we watched a spy film' (Gogo, W.A.), and *mifella*, as in *mifella ...might go...next year* (Halls Creek, W.A.) (Eagleson, Kaldor and Malcolm 1982:87).

In Queensland it may alternate with a form derived from "a feller" (Flint 1968): *afla, afala, ufela.* This may also serve as a possessive pronoun: *You know ufela dog name?* (Palm Island, Qld., Dutton 1970).

In the subject position, as is also commonly the case in informal Australian English, the object form *us* may be used: *Cos only all us boys could do it* (Mullewa, W.A.).

The second person singular subject and object pronoun, as in Australian English, is *you*. A dual form *yutu* exists in the Torres Strait, and there are two dual forms *yudubela* and *yunabela*, which may be used in subject or predicate position in North-West Queensland (Flint 1971).

The second person plural form most commonly used across the nation is *yous*, a form which is pervasive in other non-standard dialects, in particular Irish English (Filppula 2008:349) and Scottish English (Miller 2008:301), from the combined influence of which it probably initially derived, though it would also have been encountered in Australian Vernacular English (Pawley 2008:372).

> *So yous don't play any sport?* (Geraldton, W.A.)
> *Yous drive the car* (Darwin, N.T., Ford n.d.)
> *I wuz jis wondrin when yous goin back* (Ceduna, S.A., Sleep 1996:8)
> *E wants yous in by the first* (La Perouse, N.S.W., Malcolm & Koscielecki 1997:62)
> *Where yous headin?* (S.E. Qld., Eades 2013:36)
> *Where was yous?* (Goulburn Valley, Vic., McKenry 1995:6)

In Alice Springs, according to Harkins 2000:68, *yous* may alternate with *you-mob*. There are more creole-related forms (*youfla, youfella, yupela, youfella*) current in more remote areas:

> *Youfella bring them cake* (Halls Creek, Kimberley region, W.A.)
> *Yupela shut up first* (Halls Creek, W.A.)
> *Youfella be all right* (Barrow Creek, N.T.)

The pronoun *youfla* and the possessive form *yourfla* have also been recorded in Queensland (Dept of Education, Queensland 1972; Dwyer n.d.).

As has already been noted (3.2, 3.6), the observance of a gender distinction in the third person singular is not as strong in Aboriginal English as in the standard dialect. Hence, the following would not be unusual: *When e little girl* (McLaren Creek, N.T., 1991:30).

Flint (1971) noted that, in Queensland, *e*, or *he* may serve as subject and *im* as object in the case of a male and *e* or *she* may serve as subject and /ia/ or /ɜː/ ('er) as object in the case of a female.

As already noted (3.2) the third person singular pronoun [*h*]*e* may sometimes serve as a possessive pronoun: *That he dress* 'That's her dress' (Cherbourg/Palm Island, Dwyer n.d.).

Forms used for the dual third person include *themtu* in the Torres Strait (Dutton 1970) and *dattufela* or distufela, as either subject or object, in North-West Queensland (Flint 1971). Harkins (1994:52) noted that *them-two, im-two* or *those-two* may be used in Alice Springs.

The 3rd person plural forms include *they, them* (generally), *that-mob* (alternating with 'them' in Alice Springs, Harkins 1994:52) and *them fella* or *thempla* (in north Queensland, Flint 1971, Dutton 1970). *They/dey* may be used as a possessive pronoun: *dey bin race to dey teacher* (Roebourne, W.A., Eagleson, Kaldor & Malcolm 1982:87).

4.3.6.2 Reflexive pronouns

The reflexive pronouns of Standard English sometimes are marked for possessive (as with *myself*) and sometimes are not (as with *himself, themselves*). Aboriginal English also shows this inconsistency, but often in different ways, as in:

meself (Alice Springs, N.T., Harkins 1994:16)
hisself (Perth, W.A.)
isself (Fitzroy Crossing, W.A.)
theirself Tardun, W.A.)
theirselves (Leonora, W.A., Alberton, S.A., Sydney, N.S.W.)
theyself (Fitzroy Crossing, Carnarvon, Onslow, W.A.).

There is also, especially in more remote regions, a generalized form:

He'd go self on the road (Coober Pedy, S.A., Lennon 2011:70).
We go hunting by self...No mother, *go self* (Western Desert, Crugnale 1995:26)
That husband go hunting self *and the wife go get bushtucker* (Western Desert, Crugnale 1995:7)

4.3.6.3 Interrogative pronouns

The interrogative pronouns may be less frequently used in Aboriginal English since alternative question forms are used. As observed in 2.4.1, the pronoun *who* may be used with other than direct human reference, as in: *Who's your name?* (Alice Springs, Sharpe 1977).

In more remote areas, alternative WH- forms may be used:

What for she gotta go hospital? 'Why will she go to hospital?' (Butcher 2008:632)
What time you gotta tape mela? 'When will you tape us?' (Fitzroy Crossing, W.A., Eagleson, Kaldor & Malcolm 1982:94).
Wha' kine dat man? 'What's that man?' (Broome, W.A.).

The term *wufor* for 'why' has been recorded in Ceduna, South Australia (Sleep 1996:45) and *who that* 'who', *onem* 'what' and *onem kain* 'what kind' have been recorded in the speech of children from the Torres Straits (Dutton 1970).

4.3.6.4 Relative pronouns

In Aboriginal English clauses may sometimes be embedded without the use of what would normally be seen as a relative pronoun, as in:

That man 'im have no shirt on, me an J. bin tryna takeim away (Halls Creek, W.A, Eagleson, Kaldor & Malcolm 1982:96)
That fella 'im got one eye, that's my brudda (Butcher 2008:632).

Where no relative pronoun might be used in SAE, one might be inserted in Aboriginal English:

my little story what I said (Alberton, S.A., Wilson 1996:76).
things what the teacher puts up (Sydney, N.S.W., Eagleson 1977).

Where a relative pronoun is used, it may be *what* instead of 'which,' 'that' or 'who':

this man what walk round... (Onslow, W.A.)
I forgot dat word what you said (Gnowangerup, W.A.)
that tree what he knows (Coober Pedy, S.A., Lennon 2011:58)
I got one mate what goes to a Catholic school (Sydney, N.S.W., Eagleson, Kaldor & Malcolm 1982:133)
...that boat what come over here every day (Yarrabah, Qld., Alexander 1965:65).

The use of *what* as a relative pronoun is common to many dialects, and, in particular, is a feature of the English of Southeast and Southwest England (Anderwald 2008:456; Wagner 2008:429). It seems that it has been retained from the dialects encountered in the early years of contact by Aboriginal speakers, and perhaps reinforced through interaction with speakers of nonstandard Australian English. Less commonly, *where* may be used where SAE would use 'who' or 'that':

That fella weya 'im got one eye... 'That fella that's got one eye' (Butcher 2008:633)
That old fella where him bin stealem that tommyhawk 'The old fella who stole the axe' (Barrow Creek, N.T., G. Koch 1993:xii).

This form is no doubt derived from the form *wee* used with this function in Kriol (Crowley & Rigsby 1979; Eagleson, Kaldor & Malcolm 1982:109).

4.3.6.5 Other 'pro' forms

Aboriginal English has developed additional pro-forms which are widely used to substitute for words which may be seen as difficult to recover or unnecessary to repeat. The commonest pro-form is *thing*, often pronounced /tɪŋ/ or /sɪŋ/:

> *I seen a blowie jump on the thing 'I saw a blowfish jump on the thing'* (Perth, W.A.)
> *So we jump off the ting* (Leonora, W.A., Eagleson, Kaldor & Malcolm 1982:233)
> *little um bark um ting where you carry food* (Kimberley region, W.A., Eagleson, Kaldor & Malcolm 1982:227)
> *den we went to the sing* (Carnarvon, Gascoyne region, W.A.).
> *...they took her into the operation thing* [theatre] (Eagleson 1978:58).

Harkins (2000:69) has referred to the occurrence of this form in Alice Springs as an "anaphoric device", where, for example, *we went up to the thing* implies 'we went up to the shop, mentioned earlier'. The term *something* may sometimes function in the same way as the pro-form *ting,* as in *gotta get new boots, something* and *he bin huntin something kangaroo* (Butcher 2008:639).

It should be noted that, unlike the word 'thing' in SAE, the pro-form *thing* in Aboriginal English may substitute for a verb, as in:

> *...in Carnarvon, if any o' them fellas, like if they 'urt me, like I get a blood nose or something, dey'll thing* i.e., 'pay back' (Mullewa, South-west, W.A.)
> *Me and Basil...was thinging* (Leonora, Goldfields region, W.A.)
> *Um thingin' 'is tail up* i.e., 'lifting' (Alice Springs, N.T., Sharpe 1977).

Another form, which has been observed in Central Australia, is the kin relation marker *gether,* derived from "together," which enables Aboriginal speakers to use English to express dyadic relationships between kin members, as is possible in the Kaytetye language (see above, section 2.7.2). Thus, for example, two sisters may be called *sister-gether,* or a father and his child *father-gether* or an uncle and a nephew *uncle-gether* (Koch 2000a:44-45).

It is important in Aboriginal discourse, in recounting events, to be inclusive of all the people who were involved. This may sometimes involve a long listing of participants, as in: *Me and Basil and Michael and Kookie and Robert and Kelman and Cleeby...* (Leonora, Goldfields region, W.A.).

Sometimes Aboriginal English speakers may short-cut this process by using an indefinite extension term, such as *and that,* or *and them:*

there was me and that 'there was me and the others' (Southwest, W.A.)
an Ian an dem, dey's waitin... (Onslow, Pilbara region, W.A.).
den we give some to our cousins an that (Carnarvon, Gascoyne region, W.A.).

4.3.6.6 Pronoun cross-referencing

It is possible for pronouns and their referents to be used together. This has been called pronoun cross-referencing and has been observed in more remote areas:

If I find it kangaroo ... (Maningrida, N.T., Elwell 1977).
We, all de kid, we going to somewhere we gonna play (Elwell 1977)
you mix it up tea (Strelley, Pilbara region, W.A.)
get 'im out damper an' you eat it (Strelley, W.A.).

Butcher (2008:632) has reported a similar pattern, which he interprets as the use of an appositional noun phrase to provide an expansion of what the pronoun refers to, in such cases as:

I kill im, that old kangaroo 'I killed the old kangaroo'
You tell 'em, that schoolteacher mob... 'You tell the teachers...'

4.3.7 Prepositions

Prepositions function in language to show a relationship between two parts of a sentence. There are many such relationships, but one way of summing them up is to group them under time, place and logic (Firth 2000:114). The differences between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal ways of conceptualizing time, place and logic are profound, and these show in the ways in which Aboriginal speakers differ from SAE speakers in their use of prepositions. In some cases, where prepositions are expected in SAE, no preposition is used; alternatively, more than one preposition may be given; in other cases the relationship/s signalled by the same preposition may be different; in other cases again, Aboriginal English has introduced new prepositions into the language.

4.3.7.1 Zero preposition

Time relationships:

School start eight o'clock 'School starts at eight o'clock' (Fitzroy Crossing, W.A.)
We bin wait loooong time 'We waited for a very long time (Eades 1996)

Place relationships:

We went rubbish dump 'We went to the rubbish dump' (Onslow, W.A.)
We was goin bush 'We were going into the bush' (Perth, W.A.)
down the Tweed somewhere 'down on the Tweed [River] somewhere' (Millie Boyd, N.S.W., Sharpe 1989)
We going Coober Pedy 'We are going to Coober Pedy' (S.A., Lennon 2011:72)
We been even go Gordonvale 'We even went to Gordonvale' (Yarrabah, Qld., Alexander 1965:67)
...go up Ellis Beach '...go up to Ellis Beach' (Yarrabah, Qld., Alexander 1965)

Logical relationships:

We want build cubby house 'We want to build a cubby house' (Leonora, W.A.)
We ad go back 'We had to go back' (Leonora, W.A.)
We went ...get alla wild bananas 'We went to get wild bananas' (Alice Springs, N.T., Harkins 1994:205)
...walking round there no hat on '...walking round there with no hat on' (Woorabinda, Qld, Alexander 1968)
this side Borroloola 'this side of Borroloola' (North-West Qld., Flint 1971)
Mum was swearin em 'Mum was swearing at them' (Darwin, Ford c.1980)

It is worthy of note that where the preposition is not used, it is most commonly the preposition *to*, especially in its allative sense. This is not peculiar to Aboriginal English. Miller (2008:311) notes, with respect to Scottish English, "*down* and *up* do not require *to*".

4.3.7.2 Added prepositions
Place relationships:

we *went right up to the hill* 'we went right up the hill' (Perth, W.A.)
we go on top sand dune to look around 'we went up a sand dune to look around' (Western Desert, Crugnale 76)
e was um climbin up on a tree 'he was climbing a tree' (Carnarvon, W.A.)

It can be argued that the combinations of prepositions here represent different orientational image schemas (Palmer 1996:292) for the actions concerned. This will be taken up in Chapter 6 (section 2.2).

4.3.7.3 Distinctive prepositional uses
Time relationships:

The prepositions *in, at* and *on*, which can all be used to refer to a period of time, are liable to be interchanged in the speech of some Aboriginal English speakers:

at morning 'in the morning' (Leonora, Goldfields region, W.A.)
in night time 'at night' (Woorabinda, Qld., Alexander 1968)
in Thursday 'on Thursday' (Strelley, Pilbara region, W.A.)

The choice of the form *from* rather than *since* represents a simplification: *Stevie know me from little kid, baby* 'Stevie has known me since I was a little kid, a baby'.

Place relationships:

Again, *in, at* and *on* are liable to be interchanged, showing less clear differentiation between the surrounded (*in*), the situated (*at*) and the surface contact (*on*):

> *we kill one in de beach* 'we killed one on the beach' (Onslow, Pilbara region, W.A.)
> *I put Matthew in my back* 'I put Matthew on my back' (North-west W.A., Kaldor & Malcolm 1991:78)
> *scratched their names in the walls* 'scratched their names on the walls' (Perth, W.A.)
> *they get stuck at the mud* 'they get stuck in the mud' (Fitzroy Crossing, Kimberley region, W.A., Eagleson, Kaldor & Malcolm 1982:88)

The preposition *in* may also be used where it would seem inappropriate in SAE:

> *fell down in a tree* 'fell down from a tree' (Leonora, Goldfields region, W.A.)
> *bring us all in here, Coober Pedy* 'brought us all here, Coober Pedy' (S.A., Lennon 2000:30)

A usage reported from Croker Island, N.T., is: *I go where beach* 'I go to the beach' (R. Mailhammer, pers. comm.).

The prepositions *up, out* and *down* may function in Aboriginal English with an implied locative sense, as in:

> *Up the bush we talk Wangai* 'In the bush we speak Wangai' (Leonora, W.A.)
> *up Toombul* 'in Toombul' (Yarrabah, Qld., Alexander 1965)
> *Dey was out bush* 'They were out in the bush' (Leonora, W.A., Eagleson, Kaldor & Malcolm 1982:233)
> *out back beach* 'out at the back beach' (Yarrabah, Qld., Alexander 1965)
> *e lives out um Ottoway* 'he lives out in Ottoway' (Alberton, S.A., Wilson 1996:51)
> *I was down Hedland* 'I was in [Port] Hedland' (*North-west, W.A., Kaldor &* Malcolm 1991:74)
> *We was down Geraldton* 'We were in Geraldton' (Perth, W.A.)
> *My pop got emu eggs down his place* 'My pop has emu eggs at his place' (Perth, W.A.).

The preposition *by* may be used with the sense of 'into': *They gone back by their little caves* (Woorabinda, Alexander 1968), or with an instrumental sense, as in: *got a ride...by Joseph* 'got a lift from Joseph' (Yarrabah, Qld., Alexander 1965).

The prepositions *up* and *down* may also be used in an allative sense:

> *Dad went up Perth* 'Dad went to Perth' (Geraldton, W.A.)
> *I ad to go down the shop* 'I had to go to the shop' (Perth, W.A.).

The preposition *for* may represent several distinctive relationships. It may have an ablative sense, as in:

> *I'm frightened for snakes* 'I'm frightened of snakes" (Geraldton, W.A.)
> *kids frightened for the guard* 'kids frightened of the guard' (Coober Pedy, S.A., Lennon 2011:10),

or a purposive sense, as in:

> *We used to go for cockies* 'We used to go hunting cockatoos' (Geraldton, W.A.)
> *they were going for that water* 'they were looking for water' (Coober Pedy, S.A., Lennon 2011:12)

or an attributive sense, as in: *I'm pregnant for you* (Mullewa, South-west, W.A.).
The preposition *from* may express an attributive meaning, as in:

> *dry off from the sun* 'dry off in the sun' (Perth, W.A.)
> *frightened from ghosts* 'frightened by ghosts' (Perth, W.A.)
> *she frightened from the boys* 'she was frightened by the boys' (Alice Springs, N.T., Harkins 1994:67),

or a purposive meaning, as in:

> *They no fight from country* 'they were not fighting for country' (Barrow Creek, S.A., G. Koch 1993:13),

or a source orientation meaning, as in:

> *goanna, they'll dig from* [i.e., 'out of'] *the ground* (Wiluna, W.A.).
> *We always...from school...there we play marbles most times* (Malcolm 2001:229)

The preposition *with* may carry an instrumental sense, as in: *Mr H bin knock Cathy with a ball* 'Mr H knocked Cathy with a ball' (Fitzroy Crossing), or a comitative sense, as in:

> *get married with him* 'get married to him' (One Arm Point, Kimberley, W.A.)
> *...went with the bus* 'went on the bus' (Alice Springs, N.T., Harkins 1994:205)
> *sell it with X* 'sell it to X' (Yarrabah, Qld., Alexander 1965).

The prepositions *on* and *to* may suggest the direction of the action, as in:

> *I can't go mad on you* 'I can't be mad at you' (La Perouse, N.S.W. Malcolm & Koscielecki 1997)
> *share it to me* 'share it with me' (One Arm Point, Kimberley, W.A.).

The preposition *along* may be used with the sense of 'through', as in *all along the book* 'all through the book' (Central Australia, Koch 1991:95).

4.3.7.4 New prepositions

Prepositions have been derived from 'along' to express a range of locative, alla-tive directive and temporal meanings in more basilectal varieties of Aboriginal English:

> *play long sandbeach* 'play on the beach' (Torres Straits, Dutton 1970)
> *walkin long footpath* 'walking on the footpath' (Derby, Kimberley region, W.A., Eagleson, Kaldor & Malcolm 1982:236)
> *Long Easter* 'At Easter' (Torres Straits, Dutton 1970)
> *young guy longa book* 'young guy in the book' (Kununurra, Kimberley region, W.A, Kaldor & Malcolm 1979)
> *E used to stay longa pub 'he used to stay at the pub*' (Kununurra, W.A., Eagleson, Kaldor & Malcolm 1982:230)
> *him longa camp* 'he's in the camp' (S.E. Qld., Eades 2013:40)
> *E was camp longa that olman 'he was living with the old man'* (Butcher 2008:633)
> *They bin live longa Thankenharenge 'They lived at Thankenharenge'* (Barrow Creek, N.T., G. Koch 1993:xi)
> *...big crocodile longa barge landing* '...big crocodile on the barge landing' (Butcher 2008:632)
> *we bin go longa dat way* 'We went that way' (Broome, Kimberley, W.A.)
> *This one go longa that camel* 'This fella went to the camel' (Barrow Creek, N.T., G. *Koch* 1993:xi)
> *chuck dat banana stick longa...catfish 'throw the banana stick at the catfish'* (Kununurra, W.A., Eagleson, Kaldor & Malcolm 1982:86)
> *I bin get bump la tree* 'I got bumped on the tree' (Kununurra, W.A., Eagleson, Kaldor & Malcolm 1982:89)
> *knockim right la guts* 'hit right in the guts' (Fitzroy Crossing, W.A.)
> *I gotta go la Ruby Plains* I have to go to Ruby Plains' (Halls Creek, W.A., Eagleson, Kaldor & Malcolm 1982:88)
> *And we go la outstation* 'and we went to the outstation' (Alice Springs, N.T., Harkins 1994:67).

4.4 Structure of sentences

In discussing the Verb Phrase and the Noun Phrase we have already considered a number of matters relating directly to the structure of sentences, including the operation of auxiliaries and copulas, negation, subordination and various forms of agreement. In this section we will cover a number of matters which are still outstanding.

4.4.1 Statements

The basic statement form of Standard English, subject-verb-object, sub-ject-verb-extension, or subject-verb-complement is fundamentally followed in

Aboriginal English, though, as we have seen, there may be differences in the structuring of the verb phrase and the observance of subject-verb agreement. As we have observed, particularly with regard to the linking of complements (2.7.5) and the formation of the passive voice (2.3), there is a tendency in Aboriginal English to avoid the use of the verb 'to be.' This carries over to the making of existential statements of the type which begin with the dummy subject "there". Aboriginal speakers will often avoid the dummy subject and its associated verb, as in:

> *No medicine in the bush.* 'There's no medicine in the bush.' (Western Desert, Crugnale 1995:52)
> *Rope laying across again* 'There's a rope lying across there again' (Coober Pedy, S.A., Lennon 2011:62)
> *Real big mob over there* 'There's a lot over there' (Goulburn Valley, Vic., McKenry 1995:6).

Alternatively, as in the case of the passive, the verb 'get' may solve the problem: *They got a new railway station in Laverton.* 'There's a new railway station in Laverton.' (Leonora, W.A.)

The Kriol form *E got* is widely used in northern and desert areas:

> *Behind meatworks e got deep hole there and e got some sand* 'There's a deep hole and some sand behind the meatworks' (Broome, W.A., Eagleson, Kaldor & Malcolm 1982:86)
> *When that tide go out, 'e got plenty mussels* 'when the tide goes out there are lots of mussels' (Butcher 2008:632)
> *He got white cliff there and jungle behind, heavy jungle* 'There's a white cliff and heavy jungle behind' (Central Australia, Koch 1991:98).

A variation from the regular sentence pattern is the use of parataxis, where repeated verbs follow one another without conjunctions between them, as in:

> *I got that big tree, knock it down with my hand, lift it up* (Leonora, W.A., Eagleson, Kaldor & Malcolm 1982:95)
> *He run that way find a man* (Pilbara region, W.A., Von Brandenstein 1970:149)
> *I was down the swamp seen bobtails an' all that* (Perth, W.A.).

This feature was referred to in 2.7.2 under "Co-ordination". (See further Malcolm 2004:677). Often where this process takes place the first verb is "go" or "come", as in:

> *We'll go buy something* (Perth, W.A.)
> *I 'ad to go get 'im* (Carnarvon, Gascoyne region, W.A.)
> *I wanna go see 'em* (Barrow Creek, N.T., Koch 2000a:50).
> *The kangaroo came bowled Darryl over* (Leonora, W.A.).

These carry the sense of associated motion, referred to above (2.7.2).

4.4.2 Questions

The formation of questions in Standard English normally requires the inversion of the subject and the verb/auxiliary. Aboriginal English, in line with its general reduced dependence on auxiliary verbs, maintains a number of simplifications with respect to question formation. Polar (Yes/No) questions may be expressed as statements with questioning intonation, as in:

> *E come from Tokyo? E can speak English?* (Derby, Kimberley region, W.A., Eagleson, Kaldor & Malcolm 1982:94)
> *That carpet snake go down to um Bowra too?* (N.S.W., Sharpe 1989)
> *An you goin tomorrow to the doctor's?* (La Perouse, N.S.W., Malcolm & Koscielecki 1997:60)
> *You like banana?* (Cherbourg/Palm Island, Qld., Dwyer n.d.).

Such a question form may have the illocutionary force of an offer, as in: *You want kuka?* 'Would you like some meat?' (Alice Springs, N.T. Harkins 1994:21).

In the absence of an auxiliary, WH- questions may be formed with the WH word before the statement form, and falling intonation, as in:

> *Where you work now?* (South-west, W.A., Malcolm & Koscielecki 1997:69)
> *Who the people been here the longest?* (Coober Pedy, S.A., Lennon 2011:xv)
> *Why you went too far?* (Western Desert, W.A., Crugnale 1995:41).

Aboriginal English speakers show a particular preference for the formation of questions by the use of tags after the statement form. Such questions usually have falling intonation, and can constitute requests for confirmation rather than information. There are many tags in use, some of which almost certainly were brought by the colonists. The tag "eh?" exists in Scottish English (Miller 2008:311) and Channel Island English (Ramisch 2008:233) and the tag "innit" is current in the English of Southern England (especially London) (Anderwald 2008:457, 459) and of Wales (Panhallurick 2008:361). The tags "eh?" and "you know?" which are not uncommon in Australian English, are found in Aboriginal English across the country:

> *We went to Starfish Island. It was wicked, eh?* (Geraldton, W.A.)
> *You didn't see me there, eh?* (Alice Springs, N.T., Harkins 2000:69)
> *I'm the first one, eh?* (Coober Pedy, S.A., Lennon 2011:xv)
> *And he was talking, eh, but couldn't talk proper, eh?* (Sydney, N.S.W., Eagleson, Kaldor & Malcolm 1982:133)
> *Them electric one all right, eh?* (Yarrabah, Qld., Alexander 1965:57)
> *...no but it was so scary, you know?* (Perth, W.A.)
> *they was all soaked with water, you know?* (N.S.W., Sharpe 1989)
> *they was going to cut my grant off, you know?* (Sydney, N.S.W., Eagleson, Kaldor & Malcolm 1982:133).

Tags retaining some phonetic resemblance to "isn't it" are common, with some variation, across the states:

> *He bin killim, indit?* (Enemburu, Vic., 1989:12)
> *One got sick, innit?* (Onslow, Pilbara region, W.A.)
> *That's Bernie Moore, ini?* (Mullewa, South-west/Wheatbelt W.A.)
> *But I'm all right though, ini?* (Coober Pedy, S.A., Lennon 2011:138)
> *They don't lay eggs here, inti?* (Northern & desert areas, W.A., Kaldor & Malcolm 1991:74)
> *Yoobin pick mar nanna ub indy?* (Ceduna, S.A., Sleep 1996:17)

The term *unna,* identified by Vinson (2008:3) as a "marker of solidarity," is particularly strong in Western Australia, but also appears in the Northern Territory (Harkins 2000:69), South Australia (Wilson 1996:73) and New South Wales (Malcolm and Koscielecki 1997:63):

> *Tha's sad, unna?* (Perth, W.A.)
> *Didn' we see a shark, unna?* (South-west, W.A.)
> *Yeah, unna?* (Ceduna, S.A., Sleep 1996:17)
> *Our stories are otherways, you know, unna?* (La Perouse, N.S.W., Malcolm & Koscielecki 1997:63)

There are also a number of associated variants:

> *That's the place you got a photo of, inna?* (Carnarvon, Gascoyne region, W.A.)
> *She had de tent at the bushes, inna, Janey?* (Perth, W.A.)
> *Have you been to Meekatharra na?* (Tardun, South-west, W.A.)
> *Now today you no good, na?* (North-West Qld., Flint 1971)

Sometimes the form used as a tag may appear at the beginning or in the middle of an utterance:

> *Ini Miss Brown, have to do all them?* (Tardun, South West, W.A.)
> *Look at that table, all smooth ini an' brownish.* (Onslow, Pilbara region, W.A.)

4.4.3 Responses and vocative tags

Aboriginal English has a number of response forms which form a part of vernacular discourse, including the form *unna* and some lexical transfers:

> Speaker 1: *...and all the blood just went all over the window*
> Speaker 2: *Unna?* [i.e., "Really?"]
> Speaker 1: *I hate that.*
> Speaker 2: *Unna!* [i.e., "So do I!"] (Mullewa, South West, W.A.)

> *Awwww poor nyoin* [expression of sympathy] (Vic., Adams 2014:10)
> *...nyorn,* she never even knew they took it (Perth, W.A., Collard 2011:11)
>
> *Choo but that was real close, unna.* [expression of sympathy] (Perth, W.A., Collard 2011:7)
> *Choo that's kump* [sympathetic protest] (Perth, Malcolm et al 2002:30)
> *Oh, you're winyarn, kunyi* [sympathetic concern] (Perth, Malcolm et al 2002:30)

There are forms of repartee which give enthusiastic endorsement of what was said:

> Speaker 1: *You're 'orse.*
> Speaker 2: *'Orse and cart!* (Perth, Malcolm et al 2002:61)
> Speaker 1: *Ay brother, 'orse and cart!*
> Speaker 2: *Sausages and baked beans, and eggs on top!* (Perth, Malcolm et al 2002:32).

Most of the above examples come from Western Australia. A group of Aboriginal representatives from across Victoria (Adams 2014:10-12) listed these among responses used by Aboriginal people:

> *Ay cuz, budj, sis* 'isn't that right'
> *Deadly* 'good, excellent'
> *Shame job!* 'embarrassing behaviour'
> *Solid* 'strong, good'
> *Straight up?* 'Is that true?'
> *True that!* 'That's right'.

Aboriginal speakers also use vocative tags to reinforce their relationships:

> *That's easy man* (Gnowangerup, South West, W.A.)
> *I bin dere boy* (Mullewa, South West/Wheatbelt, W.A.)
> *Look out you fullahs* (Perth, W.A., Collard 2011:3)
> *We goin right down ere, sister girl* (Perth, W.A, Collard 2011:33)
> *Don't go drinkin too much, you yorks* 'Don't drink too much, you girls'
> (Perth, W.A., Collard 2011:37)
> *We'll have a wicked time, unna, budda* 'We'll have a great time, won't we, brother' (Perth, W.A., Collard 2011:39).

4.4.4 Resumptive pronoun (left dislocation)

It is very common in Aboriginal English for the subject of a sentence to be accompanied by the pronoun standing for it (a feature which may also be referred to as "predicate marking," or "double subject"). This is a feature which also occurs in Australian Vernacular English (Pawley 2008:382) as well as in Kriol (Sharpe & Sandefur 1977:58) and in Torres Strait Creole (Shnukal 1991:189). It also is

compatible with patterns in some Aboriginal languages (Harkins 1994:53). It has been reported from most states of the country:

> *these kids, they live out of town* (Roebourne, Pilbara region, W.A.)
> *my mother, she come from down there* (Alice Springs, N.T., Harkins 2000:69)
> *Jessie, she cooked the damper* (Coober Pedy, S.A., Lennon 2011:54)
> *Coober Pedy, it's all built up now* (Coober Pedy, S.A., Lennon 2011:xv)
> *My little fire year old sister, she stood on the bridge* (Sydney, N.S.W., Eagleson, Kaldor & Malcolm 1982:133)
> [student writing] *2 little kids a boy and a girl them 2 seen the white's first* (Goulburn Valley, Vic., McKenry 1995:40).

4.4.5 Post-sentence modification (right dislocation)

The sentence structure in Aboriginal English may involve what sounds like an afterthought, where, after a full sentence, further elaboration is given. This often involves the addition of adjectival information not put (or in addition to what is put) before the noun, as in:

> *an dis kid walked along an went to de toilet, little blond head one* (Geraldton, W.A.)
> *All the water come down from the rock, big mob* (Fitzroy Crossing, W.A., Eagleson, Kaldor & Malcolm 1982:88)
> *She 'ad little bike – this when they little kids – little bike. Little yellow one* (Mullewa, W.A.)
> *Man make that fire, smoky one* (Kimberley, W.A.).

(Further examples of this are given in 3.5.1). Alternatively, it could involve giving the referent of a pronoun subject, as in:

> *But he still there, that bone* (Barrow Creek, N.T., G. Koch 1993:xii)
> *What is dat for, dat game dere?* (Alberton, S.A., Wilson 1996:37),

or it could consist of further elaboration of information about the subject, as in:

> *This feller went to get away, this dead man* (Pilbara region, W.A., Von Brandenstein 1970: 148–149)
> *Den we went dere went on the boat for dugong* (Broome, Kimberley region, W.A.).

This feature is most apparent in Aboriginal English spoken in more remote areas and can be attributed to creole influence. Steffensen (1977) has noted, with respect to Bamyili Creole (Kriol), that it exhibits right dislocation, with the subject NP being moved to a clause-final position, as in *Im dibwan dat ol* 'That hole is deep'. It has also been observed (Koch2000:54) that the expression *watchem-long*

all the way, them cattle can be seen as a direct translation from the Central Aboriginal language Kaytetye.

There are a number of other forms of post-sentence modification. The deictic demonstrative there may occur clause-finally, as in:

> *I...found couple near de big tower dere in Mullewa dere* (Geraldton, W.A.)
> *Deep rockhole there* (Western Desert, W.A., Crugnale 1995:184)
> *Some plum over there* (Department of Education, Qld.)
> *Real big mob over there* (Goulburn Valley, Vic., McKenry 1995:6).
> *Went over to Boonah there* (N.S.W., Sharpe 1989).

It may be, as Butcher (2008:632), citing Eades, has suggested, that the clause-final 'there' may sometimes replace the clause-initial "there" (what we have called the dummy subject, in 4.1) which does not occur in Aboriginal English: *...this little island there* 'there's a little island' (Butcher 2008:632).

There may also occur as a deictic extension, in sentences such as:

> *E'd jump up and turn like that there* 'he'd jump up and turn, as you can see/imagine' (Malcolm & Sharifian 2007:391)
> *We pulled up there, you remember, on the corner there* (Yarrabah, Qld., Alexander 1965).

It is also possible for *here* and *then* to occur clause-finally:

> *I was trying to stay awake like this 'ere* 'I was trying to stay awake as you can see/imagine' (Malcolm & Sharifian 2007:392)
> *and that's when we all went inside then* (Perth, W.A.)
> *Then next day we ad a feed den* (Carnarvon, W.A.)
> *We didn't have bag then* (Western Desert, W.A., Crugnale 1995:175).

Gourlay and Mushin (2015:76) have reported the occurrence in Queensland of a final particle *la* which frequently occurs at the end of a sentence, as in *Up dere la, ay?* They note that *la* frequently collocates with the deictic demonstratives *ere* 'here' and *dere* 'there', and they see it as probably representing influence from Aboriginal languages or from other contact varieties.

4.4.6 Topicalization (fronting)

There is also an adjustment of the sentence structure in the opposite direction, where an element from the predicate is shifted to the front of the sentence, as in:

> *Mission we stayed* (Leonora, W.A.)
> *Only one they caught* (Onslow, W.A.)

Giligam up there he sent a letter to (La Perouse, N.S.W., Malcolm & Koscielecki 1997:64)
That grog they bringin' (Butcher 2008:632).

Butcher (2008:632) accounts for this as an "appositional noun phrase expansion." Penhallurick (2008:367) has observed it in Welsh English and referred to it as "predicate fronting." Beal (2008:397), who has also observed it in dialects in the North of England, comments: "Left-dislocation, in Northern dialects as in colloquial English generally, is used for topicalisation." In the following example, the predicate is fronted but the initial subject and verb are elided: *No respect that one* '*That* person doesn't know how to behave properly' (Vic., Adams 2014:11).

4.4.7 Embedded observation

A distinctive feature of Aboriginal communication is the importance given to the reporting and interpreting of observations (Malcolm 2009, 2014). In some areas, the imperative of embedding statements in the activity of the speaker as observer has been built into English as Aboriginal speakers have re-formed it. I have elsewhere (e.g. Malcolm2004:677) referred to this as *embedded observation*. It may be seen in, for example:

We saw elephant was kicking the ball (Jigalong, W.A.)
We saw one motor was coming up (Leonora, W.A.)
I saw one bird was going across (One Arm Point, W.A., Eagleson, Kaldor & Malcolm 1982:96)
I saw him was running behind me [student writing] (McLaren Creek, N.T., Gillespie 1991)
I saw Jeffrey came with one ganna [student writing] McLaren Creek, N.T., Gillespie 1991).

This pattern appears to have been maintained from Kriol, in which it is possible to say *Mela bin see-im imyu bin breikat* 'We saw an emu started to run' (Hudson 1981:181).

4.4.8 Verb repetition

There is considerable freedom within the syntax of Aboriginal English to enable verbs to be repeated with the purpose of reflecting the extended or repeated nature of what they represent:

de girl was pullin and pullin 'n pullin (Broome, Kimberley region, W.A.)
I bin running, running, running, running, running, running, running, running (Kununurra, Kimberley region, W.A., Eagleson, Kaldor & Malcolm 1982:94)

And run, run, run, run, run...and we ran (North-west, W.A., Kaldor & Malcolm 1991:78)
then we waiting, waiting, we wait-for, wait-for... (Alice Springs, N.T., Harkins 1994:205)
Mitu go go go 'We two went until...' (Torres Straits, Dutton 1970).

4.5 Conclusion

It should be noted that the aforegoing survey of the morphology and syntax of Aboriginal English has sought to make clear its distinctiveness. This should not obscure the fact that, as mentioned in chapter 2, the dialect exists on a continuum between its English and non-English antecedents and contemporary influences. There is no standardized norm for Aboriginal English and its speakers monitor their performance according to what they see as the constraints, and openings, associated with the interlocutors and groups involved. Some more discourse-oriented features of the use of the dialect have not been discussed at this point, because they are seen as best treated within the context of the social use of the dialect, which will be in focus in the next chapter.

5 Lexis and Discourse

5.1 Introduction

In this chapter we consider the vocabulary of Aboriginal English, where it came from and how it serves its speakers, and then we look beyond the level of words and sentences to the ways in which the dialect is used to exchange speech acts and create genres.

5.2 Lexis

Most of the words used by speakers of Aboriginal English are recognizably English, but, in many cases, they perform a distinctive conceptual and pragmatic function. The distinctiveness of use has been formed over the period of two and a quarter centuries as these lexical items have been selectively adopted (from regional and social dialects, as well as from the jargons of maritime, occupational and incarcerated groups), reanalysed (in many cases) in the course of pidginization and progressively nativized into their adopting culture.

At the same time, speakers of Aboriginal English have often maintained some level of familiarity – even if only at the lexical level – with their traditional languages and have been involved in ongoing interactions with speakers of other Aboriginal languages, as well as of Australian English, in both standard and non-standard varieties. The vocabulary of Aboriginal English, then, has a component (by far the largest) which has come from adoption of forms from other English varieties, either as a part of, or following, the processes of pidginization and creolization, and another component which has come from non-English languages, either through the speakers' knowledge of those languages, or through their contact with speakers of those languages.

5.2.1 Derivation

We shall now consider the diverse paths of the derivation of the lexicon of Aboriginal English as it now exists, considering first the sources drawn upon and then some of the lexico-semantic processes operating.

5.2.1.1 English lexical sources
The occupation of Australia by English speakers began in 1788 when the first fleet of eleven ships brought some 750 convicts and a similar number of free settlers

to what is now Sydney. From the beginning, the English which reached Australia was diverse, in that it represented speakers from England, Scotland, Wales and Ireland and that it covered the social spectrum from freemen and their families to convicts (Horvath 2008:89). There was also input from sailors and soldiers, some of whom had some prior experience of using pidgin to communicate with speakers of other languages. Within the first sixty years of settlement, the number of convicts arriving continued to grow until there were, by 1840, 38,305 (Malcolm & Koscielecki 1997:8). It seems clear that the dialects of the South-East of England and of Ireland were particularly influential in helping Australians to develop a linguistic identity, and it has been argued (Watts 1991) that the Indigenous population may have identified particularly with the Irish, who, like them, were among the less advantaged members of the society. There is certainly evidence (as will be shown in chapter 7, section 5.1), that Aboriginal English shares more non-standard features with Irish English than with any other imported variety (Malcolm 2013b).

In the early years after contact, Aboriginal people were not, for the most part, intensively involved with English speakers, yet a number of records show that they were seen to have an aptitude for learning the language which exceeded that of the English speakers to learn the local languages (Malcolm & Koscielecki 1997:11). In time, they were to acquire an English language vocabulary, though it would represent, to some extent, a relexification of concepts underlying their existing or former vocabularies and a reanalysis of the forms they received.

It is important to note, before focusing on particular lexical items, that, although there are many lexical innovations in Aboriginal English, it is not usually the lexis as such which constitutes the greatest barrier to the comprehension of the dialect among speakers of other dialects of English. Aboriginal English uses a basically English vocabulary with meanings that are generally recoverable by other English speakers, though the phonology, morphology, syntax and conceptualizations of the dialect may provide significant comprehension barriers.

To illustrate this, let us consider the following transcript:

...so we bin go, we bin go hunting – makin' up - so we sawn a kangaroo sitting down in the tree...We went and we went k- and Derek got a gun and shoot it so we just 'as chasin 'im so I got it in in da leg so we bin cook we dug da hole and take all 'is tjuni out so we bin put 'im in da hole put all da waru so we sawn – so we bin cook 'im so we got a warda – bushes – and we put it on da parna so we bin get 'im cook really cook so we just put da kangaroo and we 'ad a good feed.

This records the speech of a student of a remote Aboriginal school in an area of the Western Australian Goldfields/Mid-West. Clearly, the student has four times transferred words from the local Aboriginal language into her utterance (*tjuni* 'belly', *waru* 'fire', *warda* 'bushes' and *parna,* 'ground'), though she has provided a translation of one of these, she has used the creole-derived past tense marker *bin* several times and has used a number of English words with meanings specific

to Aboriginal English (in particular, *makin up* 'pretending' and *feed* 'meal'), but close to 90 per cent of the words used have meanings readily accessible to English speakers, although the conceptual underpinnings might not always be apparent.

In discussing the derivation of the lexicon of Aboriginal English, then, the first point to be made is that much of it has been adopted, albeit within the framework of a modified morpho-syntactic system, and is used in ways familiar to English speakers. We will assume this and give attention to the smaller, but significant, proportion of the lexicon which has been modified through the application of lexico-semantic processes. Nine such processes will be considered.

5.2.1.1.1 Retention

Aboriginal English retains some forms which were current in 18th and 19th century English but have not been retained in contemporary Australian English, for example:

> *gammon* 'nonsense' (attributed by Arthur 1996 to 19th century criminal slang)
> *She properly gammon* 'She's not telling the truth' (Enemburu 1989:9)
> *humbug* 'causing trouble or difficulty'
> *He sits in there, doesn't make humbug* (Crugnale 1995:86)
> *necktie* 'tie'
> *supper* 'evening meal'
> *jar* 'scold'
> *'E bin jar 'im off* (Kaldor & Malcolm 1985:234; Arthur 1996:100).

Some forms still current in Aboriginal English probably reflect the derogatory terms used in the colonial past to refer to Aboriginal people, for example:

> *flog* 'belt, beat': *When 'e comes back I'll flog 'im* (McKenry 1995)
> *cheeky* 'mischievous, dangerous': *We bin find cheeky animal* (Crugnale 1995:14)
> *make 'im jump* 'frighten someone into doing something' (Malcolm, et. al,. 2002:62)
> *drop* 'hit, fell' (originally with references to pugilism or forestry)
> *Go away, two pigs, before I drop you* (Eagleson, Kaldor & Malcolm 1982:235).

5.2.1.1.2 Compounding of nouns

There is a strong tendency in Aboriginal English (alluded to in Chapter 4, section 3.5.2, and discussed further in Malcolm & Sharifian 2007) to bring nouns together as compounds. Such compounds may be hyponymic, as in:

finger ring	'ring worn on the finger'
ink pen	'pen, for writing'
cold sick	'a cold': *No coldsick in bush* (Crugnale 1995:8)
cattle snake	'a snake with markings like those on cattle'
law man	'a person very knowledgeable in the law' (Arthur 1996:42)

scar tree	'a tree that has had bark removed for ceremony or implement making' (Adams 2014:14)
bushtucker	'food from the bush': *We lived on bushtucker* (Crugnale 1995:3).

In some cases the compounding may be following a feature of Aboriginal languages whereby generic classifiers are used to accompany nouns (Dixon 1980:272):

sand beach	'shore' (Shnukal 1988:83)
waterflood	'flood'
paper wrapping	'wrapping'
cattle cow	'cow' (Woorabinda, Alexander 1968).

Some compounds have been retained from pidgin or creole, for example:

motor car	'car'
blackfella	'Aboriginal'.

Some, which are co-ordinative rather than hyponymic, express kin, or extended kin, relationships:

cousin brother	'classificatory, rather than co-sanguine, brother'
Marky boy	'son or nephew of Mark'
auntie girl	'someone the same age or younger' (Adams 2014:15)
auntie mum	'closely related older female' (Adams 2014:15).

5.2.1.1.3 Compounding of verbs and particles

There is also a strong tendency (as noted in Chapter 4, 2.7.7) for verbs to be accompanied by particles. This may strengthen the sense of completeness or effectiveness, as in:

learn it up	'study it'
ripped 'em right up	'remonstrated with them'
get jarred up	'be reprimanded'
roast it up	'roast it'
we bury im up	'we buried it'
they got married up	'they were married'.

It may also emphasize the scope of what is being said, as in:

share things up	'share things around'
sing out	'shout' (a form also found in Pitkern (Källgård 1998))
laugh out	'laugh at and mock'.

Sometimes it distinguishes what is done in the open from what is done inside, as in:

camp out	'camp in the open (by contrast with camp which means 'stay overnight')'
dinner out	'a meal in the bush'.

5.2.1.1.4 Conversion

Often forms are taken over in Aboriginal English and given a different grammatical function. Very commonly the conversion is from a more nominal to a more verbal function, as in:

shellin'	'gathering shells'
we go rabbitin'	'we go hunting rabbits'
I schooled in Derby	'I went to school in Derby'
she blued	'she got drunk' (Malcolm et al 2002:62)
I versed against B.D.	'I played against B.D.'
they cheek 'em	'they give them cheek'
he blackeyed 'im	'he gave him a black eye'
Don't liar, Dad	'Don't lie, Dad'
to clothes up	'to dress or provide with clothes' (Pirola 1978:129)
to fish them	'to catch fish' (Pirola 1978:129)
to loan	'to lend' (Sydney, Eagleson 1977)

Other examples referred to by Butcher 2008:639 include *ruding* 'being rude to', *cruellin* 'being cruel to' and *jealousin* 'envying'.

Another case is the conversion of what in Standard English are intransitive verbs to transitive verbs, as in:

It's a good place if people don't growl ya [i.e., 'scold you'] (Wilson 1996)
My own mother grew me up 'My own mother raised me'.

It is also not uncommon (as stated in Chapter 4, section 3.1) for what are mass nouns in SAE to be converted to count nouns in Aboriginal English, as in:

some barks 'some bits of bark' (Kimberley, W.A., Eagleson, Kaldor & Malcolm 1982:227)
two woods 'two pieces of wood' (Alice Springs, Sharpe 1977b:48)
the staffs 'the staff members' (Alice Springs, Harkins 1994:18)
seen big mullets 'saw some big mullet [fish]' (*Carnarvon, W.A.*).

A possible counter-example, referred to by Harkins (1994:59) is the treatment of *kangaroo* (as a source of meat) as a mass noun, as in *We bin go shooting kangaroo*.

5.2.1.1.5 Metaphor

English words may be used in an original way in Aboriginal English as metaphors, as in:

He's a horse	'He's a terrific guy' (Douglas 1976:18)
That's boss	'That's very good'
demons	'detectives'
proper feed	'desirable girl'
scorch 'im up	'be strict on him'
made that bus piss	'really drove the bus hard'

hurt that motorcar	'drove the car really fast' (Collard 2011:31)
'e's charging up	'he's drinking alcohol'
jaffa	'Aboriginal person in a red motor car'
street light black	'urban Aboriginal' (Adams 2014:12).

The conceptual implications of this will be pursued in Chapter 6.

5.2.1.1.6 Semantic shift

Many English words used in Aboriginal English have undergone semantic shift. This would be consistent with the view which sees the English vocabulary as often relexifying concepts previously expressed in another language. The semantic shifts are of four kinds: extension, specification, inversion and blending.

Semantic extension is seen where the word includes, but goes beyond, the meaning it carries in the source language. This may be seen, for example in

- *granny/grannies,* which may be used as a reciprocal term between grandparents and grandchildren;
- *mum,* or *mummy,* which may refer to a person's mother or to the mother's sister, and which may also be used, preceded by *little,* by the mother to the daughter; the terms daddy and little daddy may operate similarly;
- *see,* which may be used with the Standard English sense of 'look' as well as 'see', i.e., "the intention of an action and the action itself...represented by one word" (Arthur 1996:7);
- *learn,* which may be used with the Standard English sense of 'teach' as well as 'learn': *Learn 'im to talk Nyungar words* (Königsberg & Collard 2002:83);
- *kill,* which may be used with the Standard English sense of 'hit' as well as 'kill';
- *fall down,* which can be used with the sense of 'fell,' as in *to fall down a tree* (Pirola 1978:132)
- *bump,* which can extend to running over, as in *we bumped a brulliga* 'we bumped/ran over a bullock/cow' (Yandeyarra, W.A.)
- *fire,* the meaning of which, at least in Alice Springs, may be generalized to include the match which lights a fire (Harkins 1994:146);
- *calico,* which may cover the meaning not only of the material a tent is made of, but of the tent as well (Arthur 1996:7);
- *bamboo,* which may be used with its Standard English meaning but may also be used to refer to a didjeridoo
- *broke[n],* which may be applied more widely than in Standard English, as, for example, in *That big eagle, he went and broke my hand* (Mullewa M9) or *broken smoke* (Malcolm et al 2002:63) .
- *belong to/blongtu,* which can be used to refer to one's country, as in *she's blongtu there* (Sharpe 1989), where in Australian English one would put it "she's from there" since the sense of mutual ownership between person and land is not so strong.

What I am calling semantic specification refers to cases where an expression with a generalized application comes to be used in Aboriginal English with a culturally specific reference, as in the case of:

– *sit down,* derived from the Kriol form *jidan* (Sandefur 1979:184), which refers to staying, for a while, or camping (Butcher 2008:638), in a place;
– *stop,* which also carries the sense of staying for a while, perhaps overnight (Eagleson, Kaldor & Malcolm 1982:233);
– *camp,* which, by contrast with *camp out,* can refer to an indoor stay: *Can I camp at your house tonight?* (Adams 2014:13);
– *country,* which refers to traditional land (Koch & Koch 1993:46);
– *man,* which can be understood to imply an initiated man (Arthur 1996:46), whereby *to make someone a young man* is understood in Central Australia as to initiate someone (Koch 1985);
– *poison,* which may precede a term such as *brother, cousin* or *auntie,* to indicate an avoidance relationship with the speaker (Butcher 2008:637);
– *language,* which implies an Aboriginal language;
– *dreaming,* which relates to the time in which the landscape and living things were formed;
– to *go for,* which relates to hunting, as in *They went for kangaroo* (Harkins 1994:68), and sometimes, by extension, to shopping, as in *On the weekend we went to Tennant Creek fro* [for] *shopping* (Gillespie 1991, student writing, McLaren Creek, N.T.);
– *smoke,* which refers to a means of ritual cleansing: *They smoke us so we don't swear* (Crugnale 1995:68);
– *business,* sometimes preceded by *men's* or *women's,* which refers to ceremonial obligations;
– *clever,* which implies the exercise of spiritual powers;
– *shame*, which is specific to "transgression of cultural norms" (Harkins 2000:73);
– *sorry*, which refers to bereavement (Harkins 2000:73; Sharifian 2011b);
– *take* [*away*], which implies the experience of the stolen generations (referred to in chapter 2, 5.11), where the government required the removal of "part-Aboriginal" children from their parents (Königsberg & Collard 2002:23);
– *take over,* which implies the Aboriginal response to this, by taking of threatened children by family members into less accessible Aboriginal communities: *when they took me over, out in the bush...* (Königsberg & Collard 2002:83).

Semantic inversion refers to the practice (exhibited also in African American Vernacular English, and in youth culture), of using negative, or potentially negative, expressions with a positive meaning, as in:

- *deadly*   'very good': *E didda deadly one* (Sleep 1996:17)
- *cruel*   'extreme[ly]': *a cruel kick; we was laughin cruel* (Collard 2011:31)
- *hungry*   'good-looking, sexy'
- *wicked*   'terrific[ally]': *there's the best world cars, they wicked* (Malcolm et al 2002:31)
- *savage*   'good'
- *That's sic* 'That's good' (Victoria, Adams 2014:12).

Very often the semantic processes leading to the distinctive English vocabulary of Aboriginal English entail conceptual blending, that is, they "bring together shades of meaning which do not converge in Standard English" (Malcolm & Sharifian 2007:394). This will be picked up again in the next chapter, but can be briefly illustrated here:

- *Lorna was talk us a story* (McLaren Creek, N.T., Gillespie 1991). The use of *talk* rather than 'tell' emphasizes the interactional nature of the event of storytelling in the Aboriginal community.
- *The boys went cross the swamp* (McLaren Creek, N.T., Gillespie 1991). The use of *cross* instead of the preposition 'across' might be seen as strengthening the sense of directional movement in depicting the action of the boys.
- The metaphorical expression *in the foot Falcon* (Adams 2014:19) blends the idea of going on foot (which is its literal meaning) with the more prestigious idea of driving in a Falcon, thus ironically lending dignity to having to walk.

5.2.1.1.7 Modified analysis

Aboriginal English speakers may reproduce what they will have heard from other English speakers in a way which shows a modification, so that, although the meaning is maintained, the form is distinctive. If this were done by speakers within the same culture, it might be called a malapropism, however used as it is across cultures, it could be seen as deliberate resistance to the forms of the prestige dialect. Some examples are:

- *a remote controlled community* 'a remote community': *Umbilgari, it's a remote controlled community* (Perth. W.A.)
- *talking broken down English* 'talking broken English' (Roebourne, W.A.)
- *earsdropping* 'eavesdropping'
- *revision mirror* 'rear vision mirror'
- *You not worse!* [from 'You're not worth'] expression of rebuke (Goldfields, W.A., Ross Bilson, pers. comm.)
- *Da's why we never had meat* 'That's because we didn't have any meat' (Goldfields, W.A., Ross Bilson, pers. comm.)
- *I pacifically said...* 'I specifically said...' (Victoria, Adams 2014:11).

5.2.1.1.8 Clipping

Clipping (mentioned already under Phonology in Chapter 3, 7.4) is, of course, characteristic of colloquial Australian English (Simpson 2004, 2008). It also characterizes Aboriginal English, but is used distinctively, and as such provides a means of reinforcing relationships, as in:

- *cuz* 'cousin'
- *bro* 'brother'
- *sis* 'sister or female peer'
- *unc* 'uncle or older male'
- *peeps* 'people, i.e., relatives'
- *rellies* 'relations'
- *glueies* 'glue sniffers'
- *olds* 'old people'.

5.2.1.1.9 Neologisms

There have been many innovations in varieties of Aboriginal English whereby Aboriginal speakers have enabled English better to express their meanings. Often these have involved terms of reference to family members, as in:

- *budda, budder, buddah* 'brother'
- *budj, bruz* 'male peer' (Adams 2014:15)
- *tidda* 'sister or female peer'
- *niddy* 'the last one in the family': *Give some to my niddy sister* (Yandeyarra, W.A.)
- *ownlation* 'own relation'
- *fulation* 'immediate family, from full relation' (Pirola 1978:130)
- *auntie girl* 'female the same age or younger' (Adams 2014:15)
- *jetta* 'auntie or older female' (Adams 2004:16)
- *sistagirl* 'female (peer)' (Adams 2004:17)

Other innovations, with other frames of reference, include:

- *tell-lie* 'pretending', e.g. *tell-lie stick* 'pretending to be a stick' (Onslow, W.A.)
- *liar* (adv.) 'insincerely', e.g. *liar cry* 'cry crocodile tears' (Butcher 2008:639)
- *bulliga* 'bullock' (Yandeyarra, Pilbara region, W.A.)
- *steps* term of measurement used by children in the Goldfields, W.A., e.g. a goanna may be described as *three steps* (Ross Bilson, pers. comm.)

- *man-head*   *'E's a* proper *little man-head, that one* (Perth W.A.) 'He's a clever boy'
- *woman-head*   *She's a proper little woman-head, that one* (Perth, W.A.) 'She's a clever girl'
- *blue*   *He's up there blue* 'He's drunk' (Perth, W.A.)
- *hammered*   'really drunk' (Victoria, Adams 2014:11)
- *lingo*   can refer to Aboriginal languages or languages other than English (Harkins 2000:73)

5.2.1.2 Non-English lexical sources

The influence of Australian indigenous languages in Aboriginal English can be traced in three main ways. The first way is in the formative and enduring influence of the languages spoken by those Aboriginal people who first encountered English and began to pidginize and modify it; the second way is in the successive waves of influence as speakers of other Aboriginal languages in different parts of the country encountered and came to use pidgin, creole or English, introducing further local modifications, and third way is in the attribution to this new English of cultural conceptualizations which were common to Aboriginal people across the country. As Foster, Mühlhäusler & Clarke (1998:35) have noted, "Since settlement by Europeans, a pan-Aboriginality has developed that could never have existed before." The first two of these influences are relevant to this chapter and the third to the one which follows.

5.2.1.2.1 Lexical influence from early language contact

At the time of the arrival of the First Fleet, the settlers were in possession of an Aboriginal wordlist which had been compiled by Captain Cook and Joseph Banks on a voyage some eighteen years previously to the Endeavour River in North Queensland (Malcolm 2000a:131; Leitner 2007:197). It was thought that these words from Guugu Yimidhirr, which included *ganguru* 'kangaroo,' would be understood by the Aborigines in the Sydney region. When they were used there, the Aborigines assumed they were from the colonists' language and that 'kangaroo' must have been an animal they had brought with them. However, the word came to be used in Aboriginal and Australian English with the intended reference. In time, of course, words from the Sydney language, Dharuk, and other local languages found their way into communication with the colonists. Some sixty of these (Leitner 2007:204) have found a place not only in Aboriginal English Australia-wide, but in Australian English as well, including *coo-ee, dingo, boomerang* and *corroboree*. Some early transfers from Dharuk and nearby languages have been retained in Aboriginal English but not in Australian English, e.g.:

myall '*stranger*' (Dharuk), 'wild, or bush-dwelling Aboriginal'
Koori 'Aboriginal man' (Awakabal, eastern N.S.W.) 'a N.S.W. or Vic. Aboriginal'
bogey 'swim' (Dharuk: Alexander 1965).

Some of the forms used in early communication were phrases from the Aboriginal language attempting to provide an equivalent Aboriginal term for the colonists and what they had brought:

bèreewolgal 'men come from afar' i.e., colonists (Troy 1990:48)
gooreebeera 'stick of fire' i.e., gun (Troy 1990:49).

Others would appear to be original ways of saying things with limited English:

tumble down	'kill' (Troy 1990:82. 93)
jump up	'rise, be resurrected' (Hassell 1975:55)
big wheelbarrow	'carriage' (von Hügel 1994:273)
paper talk	'written notes' (Hassell 1975:57).

None of these usages appears to have remained in contemporary Aboriginal English, though the term jump may be used with the sense of 'spill', as in: *Something could jump on your shirt* (Perth, W.A., Malcolm 2002:87).

5.2.1.2.2 Lexical influence from later language contact

As Harkins (2000:72) has noted, "[w]ords from traditional Aboriginal languages are often incorporated into Aboriginal English to mark local and regional affiliation." As English came into contact with increasing numbers of Aboriginal languages, the number of alternative Aboriginal terms borrowed into English with the same referents increased, and this was further exaggerated when there were multiple English ways of referring to the same items. Leitner (2007:205) has called this overlexicalization, a condition which he says is generally resented and leads to some variants falling into disuse. This has indeed been the case and a process of levelling has occurred whereby certain preferred variants have come to be used widely across the country, though not to the complete exclusion of terms which have important local associations. Thus, in the South-west of the country, which is geographically far removed from the place of initial contact, terms deriving from the first contact in Sydney are in use, alongside Nyungar terms such as:

choo [expression of sympathy] *He said choo you better dress 'em up* (Perth, W.A.)
djinagarbi 'featherfoot, avenger' *Can those djinagarbis like change their voices inta other people's voice?* (Geraldton)
marlu 'kangaroo': *Um, catched um marlu* (Perth)
nyorn [expression of sympathy] *Mum was crying, she was oh nyorn* (Perth)
Wargyl 'Swan River spirit' *That's the Wargyl, you know, come from the Swan River right through* (Perth)

wudachi 'evil, mischievous little man' *She could see like little black shadows um she could see little ... um wudachis* (Perth)
monartj 'black cockatoo' (metaphorically used to refer to a uniformed police officer).

The transfers from Aboriginal languages are in numerous domains but particularly in reference to Aboriginal self-identification (*Koori* [Vic., N.S.W.], *Murri* [Qld., northern N.S.W.], *Wongi* [W.A. Goldfields] , *Nunga* [S.A.], *Nyungar* [South-west W.A.], etc.) (Butcher 2008:636; Harkins 2000:72), the ceremonial and spiritual life, personal interaction and traditional activities such as hunting and gathering.

Words transferred from Aboriginal languages readily acquire English morphology, as in:

'E's kepered up 'He's drunk' [*ke:p* is Nyungar for 'water'] (Perth)
Let's cruze, you yorgas 'Let's move on, you girls' (Perth, Collard 2011:33).

Likewise, English words may take on suffixes from the local languages, as in:

Arthur-ku brother '*Arthur's* brother' (Wiluna, W.A.) (*Eagleson*, Kaldor & Malcolm 1982:85)
We go to Ayer's Rock-werne 'We go to Ayer's Rock' [-*werne* is the allative suffix from Arrernte] (Harkins 1994:67).

In a number of cases, words have been transferred from English into Aboriginal languages and later returned to use in in-group English communication, where they will be no longer likely to be recognized by other English speakers. One example of this is the word *gubba*, derived from 'government,' which has come to be a general reference to white Australians. Eades (1993:4, 2013:84) has pointed out a number of examples relating to officers of the law, including *booliman* 'policeman' (N.S.W. and Qld.), *gandjibal* or *gunjibul,* 'constable' (N.S.W.). These will be further discussed under the Restructuring Continuum in Chapter 7, section 6).

5.2.2 Use

The maintenance, use and further modification of Aboriginal English lexical items show a number of conceptual and pragmatic driving forces prevailing in the speech communities responsible. We shall briefly look at a few examples.

5.2.2.1 Conceptual factors
5.2.2.1.1 Alternative categorizations

kangaroo: The term 'kangaroo', as we have seen (2.1.2.1), was not directly transferred from an Aboriginal language into English, and, for some speakers, does not represent a sufficiently clear categorization. An Aboriginal Education

Worker in a school in the Pilbara recognized an ambiguity in a story told by an Aboriginal child to a non-Aboriginal listener, and felt compelled to explain: "… we've got two different kinds of kangaroos – hills and plain. The plainy one is a sort of a sacred sort of thing…" (Malcolm et. al. 1999b:40). Another student in another part of Western Australia (the South-west), describing his kangaroo shoot, explained "caught uum…ten boomers.. an' ten roos," then saw the need to go on and explain: "Yeah… they boomers – still kangaroos.. " (Malcolm et. al. 1999a:76). To do justice to the report on the hunt, he needed to distinguish two types of kangaroos: the *boomers*, which are the large male kangaroos, and the *roos*, which are younger, smaller and have more tender meat.

5.2.2.1.2 Alternative orientation

Many of the changes which Aboriginal English has made to English have been to orient it more to action rather than either existence or abstraction. We have observed this in chapter 4 (esp. 2.7.4-5) where we saw the demotion of the verb 'to be' from its central place in the verb phrase and (in 3.5.2) the tendency towards the nominalization of adjectives. We see it also in the conversions which have taken place enabling nouns to behave like verbs (see 2.1.1), where, for example, 'putting a person down' becomes downing (see Schnukal 2000:192), 'going to school' becomes schooling and 'giving cheek' becomes *cheeking*. The same trend is in evidence in the way in which thinking and saying are blended into one word in the way 'reckon' is used, in, for example, *She reckon, "Why you, why you pick me up?"* (Geraldton, W.A.). It may also be seen in numerous cases where the intention and the end-point are treated as one (2.1.1.6), as in the use of *learn* to mean 'teach and/or learn', *kill* to mean 'hit and/or kill', *see* to mean 'look and/or see' and *grow up* to mean 'raise.'

5.2.2.1.3 Alternative identification

An important function of Aboriginal English is to serve as a medium of communication in which the speakers can mutually identify as Aboriginal and use their own designations for non-Aboriginal people. It has been noted (2.1.2 above, also in Butcher 2008:636 and Harkins 2000:72) that one of the areas in which transfers from Aboriginal languages have been frequent is that of the designation of Aboriginal people. Thus, Aboriginal people are not, within their speech community, comfortable with such designations as "Aboriginal" or "Indigenous". Rather, they identify with more localized labels such as Koori, Yolngu or Nunga, or as blackfellas. The local names of groups have tended to be used with increasingly wide reference. Fink (1960:78-79) noted with respect to the Jamadji (Yamajee) people of the Mid-West region in Western Australia:

> Originally 'Jamadji' was the word for 'a man' in the Wadjari language. It came to mean any 'blackfellow' or tribal native in the Murchison. Gradually its meaning was extended to include not merely full-blooded Aborigines, but anyone of Aboriginal descent. Finally it came to be used for anyone of Aboriginal descent who mixes with other natives and lives in their camps. It no longer refers to a tribal identity but to an identity by association.

It is also to support their local identification that Aboriginal English speakers maintain other transfers. As Eades (1988:101) has observed, the use of group-distinctive words, often coming from Aboriginal languages, is "an important 'badge' of Aboriginal identity." At the same time, their own dialect provides means not available in SAE for Aboriginal people to refer to people not within their speech community, such as *whitefella, wadjela, walypala* or, in the north, *balanda*, a term originally meaning "Dutch" and deriving from early trading contacts in the north with the Macassarese (Arthur 1996:134). Another process which has served the purpose of distinctive identification is the recovery from Aboriginal languages of English transfers (now no longer English-sounding) which have been used to refer to non-Aboriginal authority figures, as mentioned above (2.1.2).

5.2.2.1.4 Alternative schematization

The use of English words does not imply the use of the schemas associated with them in the minds of speakers of another English. This shows, for example, in the fact that Aboriginal people do not share the assumption that to "camp" implies living in a tent in the open air. Hence, they have developed the form *camp out* to distinguish such usage from references to staying overnight indoors. It also shows in the ways in which Aboriginal people may re-interpret what they hear from non-Aboriginal speakers, as when "cubby house" is reproduced as *copy house* and "buy" as *pay* (Harkins 1984b) and *half way* is perceived as part of the way, but not necessarily half.

5.2.2.1.5 Alternative historical association

The experience of Aboriginal people since colonization is embedded in the English they use. It follows that words such as *blackfella* and the demeaning tag *boy* are offensive to them when uttered by a non-Aboriginal speaker, though they have become a part of in-group usage. It also follows that such terms as *behind bars* have a wider association to them than simply imprisonment (i.e., institutionalization), and that *flog* is used where other Australians might use *belt*. The terms *take away* and *take over*, as mentioned above (under *Semantic Shift*, section 2.1.1) also allude to significant historical experience within the speech community.

5.2.2.1.6 Alternative existential association

There are also distinctive assumptions among Aboriginal English speakers about the world around and how one relates to it. As Harkins (1994:148 pp.) has pointed out with respect to Aboriginal English in Alice Springs, the taxonomic supercategories for such items as rock, fire, tree, grass and bird are not the same as in Australian English. The human body may also be differently perceived in that the same word *hand* may designate 'hand' and 'arm', and the same word *head,* 'head' and 'neck' (Malcolm et al 2002:63). The distinction between human and non-human also is not as fixed as in non-Aboriginal society and it is possible to refer to a fast motor bike in the expression *Jo was jus hurtin it* (Mullewa, W.A.), and to a fight between one's friends as a *smash* (Geraldton, W.A.). One can refer to sleeping on the ground as to *bend the grass* (Pirola 1978:132) and to one's financial deficiency as *my hole* (Königsberg & Collard 2002:31). A person can be referred to as a *horse* or an *emu* depending on their skills and the appearance of their legs. A tree can be *bony* and a person *narrow,* or long, as in *He's a big man – very long, eh?* (Harris 1978). Some of these associations will be explored further in the next chapter.

5.2.2.2 Pragmatic Factors
5.2.2.2.1 Respectful address

We observed in chapter 2, section 5.1, how silence is evaluated as respectful behaviour in Aboriginal society and how, in approaching a group, one might be expected to wait to be identified before speaking. Such respectful behaviours carry over into English-based interaction, as does the expectation that one will not ask a person directly for their name, and that, within the community, kin terms will be used as terms of address. Aboriginal English incorporates kin terms the use of which conveys respect, for example the use by adults of the terms *auntie, uncle.* Today on social media, respected Aboriginal people may be referred to by people who do not know them personally, as *Auntie Rose,* or *Uncle Bob.* The term *old,* when applied to a person, is not neutral or derogatory but respectful (Harkins 1994).

It is also respectful not to use the name of a member of the community who has died (see Chapter 2, section 9.2) and substitute names may be able to be used for this purpose. Nor should one engage in direct conversation with one's mother-in-law. Respect also constrains the husband of an expectant mother not to ask about the expected child: *That father or husband can't ask if it boy or girl. It sacred, he don't have to know...not allowed to ask* (Crugnale 1995:85). Respect is shown in indirectness (Eades 1988:105), and in not claiming to speak for people other than oneself.

5.2.2.2.2 Reciprocal address

One of the pragmatic changes brought about in English interactions by Aboriginal speakers is to enable a greater degree of reciprocity in the ways in which members of families may address one another. As we have seen, a mother or father may address a child as *little mummy* or *little daddy* respectively and the term *granny* may be used reciprocally between grandparents and grandchildren. The term *cousin,* or *cuz,* or, in some areas, *koorda,* enables reciprocal family address to extend well beyond the family (Amery & Buckskin 2012:54).

5.2.2.2.3 Affiliation

The use of Aboriginal English implies a sense of affiliation among the speakers. Amery and Buckskin (2012) with special reference to South Australia, have noted how the ways in which Nunga English is used reflect the "flexibility" with which kinship is assumed across speakers of the Kaurna language. The idea of classificatory relationship entailed the use of a term in that language with the meaning "brother in a more general sense; friend" (p. 54), which could be applied across tribal boundaries. Equivalents to this in Nunga English included 'brother, boy, bro, bruth, bruss and brudda'. In the South-west of Western Australia, utterances such as *I bin dere boy* (Mullewa) and *That's easy man* (Gnowangerup), perhaps showing influence both of traditional Aboriginal expressions of affiliation, and of patterns observed among African Americans. The terms *sis, sista* and *sistagirl* are current in a similar way in Western Australia (Collard 2011:33), South Australia (Amery & Buckskin 2012:54) and Victoria (Adams 2014:17) and probably beyond. Among Nyungar females, the term *yorks,* from from *yorga,* 'female', may be used similarly, as in *Don't go drinkin too much you yorks* (Collard 2011:37). The term *mate*, from Australian English may also be used in some places between like sexes (Dutton 1969:25).

5.2.2.2.4 Inclusive interaction

There is a strong sense of inclusivity in the way in which Aboriginal English is used within the speech community. This shows in the way (referred to in chapter 4) in which the personal pronoun system is made more sensitive to registering the presence or otherwise of the person/s alluded to. It also shows in the way in which the listener's acquaintance with the person spoken about will often precede what is recounted, by the use of a pre-informing act, as in *Well, you know my auntie?* (Perth), *You know my grannie?* (Kimberley), and in the way in which, as noted in Chapter 4, section 3.6.5, narrators are careful to list all participants in the event they are recounting, and, if the matter recounted has come from another source, to attribute the account to the one from whom it was obtained, as in *My nana, she told me...* (Perth).

5.2.2.2.5 Humour

Aboriginal English is the preferred medium when humour is involved. Asked "Does Aboriginal English still serve you for any purposes?" a bidialectal speaker responded: "Er mainly...for telling jokes, as it is far more expressive and goes hand in hand with gestures and facial expressions..." (Eagleson, Kaldor & Malcolm 1982:237). Flint (1968:7), in describing the behaviour of Aboriginal people in Queensland, commented: "Especially when telling stories, the same informants showed a high degree of intelligence, a vivid and picturesque power of narration and a keen sense of humour." Humour functions to improve the sense of inclusion and to enable stressful matters to dealt with in a light-hearted way. Aboriginal English speakers enjoy using rhyming words to humorous effect, as in the following expressions, perhaps borrowed from British English sources:

> *my sister from another mister* (Adams 2012:7)
> *brotha from another motha* (Adams 2012:15).

There are also forms which are humorous by association, such as

> *flash black* 'Aboriginal person showy about money' (Adams 2012:10)
> *black out* 'a lot of Aboriginal people in one place' (Adams 2012:15).

Humour is also gained by metaphor, as in:

> *charging up* [alluding to a battery] 'getting drunk'
> *monartj* [Nyungar for 'cockatoo'] 'uniformed police officer'.

5.2.2.2.6 Overstatement

Another pragmatic effect in Aboriginal English is the tendency to overstate what is being said, as if the hearer might not get the point, or to give emphasis. This may be related to the way in which Aboriginal people first encountered English, as foreigner talk, where an unnatural level of emphasis was used. It also may be seen as a form of hypercorrection, intended to increase the possibility of the communication getting through. This was referred to in Chapter 4, section 3.5.3. Some examples are:

> *mens*   'men'
> *hisself*   'himself'
> *more longer*   'longer
> *most biggest*   'biggest'
> *a brainiest kid* 'a very brainy kid'
> *a one man*   'a man'
> *two one dollar*   'two dollars'
> *too much*   'very much'
> *camed in*   'came in'.

5.3 Discourse

So far we have been considering Aboriginal English in terms of its phonological and morphological forms, its syntactic structures and its vocabulary. As such, we have been viewing it as a linguistic system. It is, however, more than that: it is a way of behaving. In considering discourse, we are looking at what people do with Aboriginal English: how they create speech acts which go together to form speech events, and how they use the language creatively to bring into being the linguistic art forms we call genres. Our treatment will, of necessity, be selective. We will look first at interaction in general and then focus in on the oral narrative.

5.3.1 Interactive conventions

5.3.1.1 Principles

Before considering some of the ways in which speakers of Aboriginal English use their dialect to perform speech acts and carry out speech events it is important to recognize that there are certain underlying principles of communication the observance of which is normally taken for granted.

5.3.1.1.1 The relevance of kinship

As Eades (2013:28) has pointed out, "Each person has a particular kin relationship with every other person with whom they come into contact – if not a blood relationship, then by extension, one of classificatory kinship. These kin relationships play a crucial part in all interaction." As we have observed above (section 2.2.2) there are reciprocal relationships between certain kin. At the same time, there are other kin with whom communication may be considered inappropriate, or constrained by the use of a particular style. Kinship is in the foreground at the initial meeting of two people, and, rather than inquiring about individual matters such as occupation or interests, the interactants will be likely to explore their respective places of origin and their relationships.

5.3.1.1.2 Orientation to the group

Aboriginal people interact in groups and as members of groups, rather than as individuals. This affects conversation and the sharing of experiences. Elwell (1979:223) noted of the interactions she observed in a school in the Northern Territory, "Informal 'narratives' in Milingimbi English are characterised by audience participation (questions, elaboration, digression and so on), so that the story becomes disconnected, and takes on the features of an informal turn-taking

conversation." This fits in with the expression used in McLaren Creek: not "tell a story" but *talk a story* (Gillespie, 1991).

In non-Aboriginal society interactions often take place between two individuals. This, according to Walsh (1996) contrasts with Aboriginal society in which it is normal for interactions to be communal rather than dyadic.

Aboriginal people tend to experience discomfort when isolated from the group. This is one of the meanings associated with the Nyungar word *winyarn*, as a group of students attempted to explain to the non-Aboriginal research assistant in the following interaction:

Student 1:	*Winyarn!* (group laughs)
Researcher:	Is that the word you said?
Student 1:	*Winyarn*
Researcher:	*Winyarn*
	...
Student 1:	You're all poor an' ... an' got no...nowhere to play with.. no-one to play with. All poor.
Researcher:	Someone sitting over there all by themselves...that'd be *winyarn*
	...
Student 2:	Poor, *winyarn.*
Student 3:	And you got no food.. and you.. got no new clothes-
Student 1:	Then you're *winyarn.*
Student 4:	Nothin' to do. When you're by yourself.(Mullewa, W.A.)

An interesting observation on the relevance of the group life to Aboriginal people is made by Eades (2013:59), where she notes how, even in homes suffering severe poverty, there is usually a television set. She argues that "this is an indication of the Aboriginal concern with entertainment not just as a private experience, but as a group activity..."

5.3.1.1.3 Shame avoidance

I have referred previously (Malcolm 1994b:298) to two other pervasive principles of Aboriginal discourse: shame avoidance and conflict avoidance. The word *shame* has come to be used in Aboriginal English for the failure to conform to societal norms, in particular by being seen to be in isolation from the group. This may occur either as a result of the individual's non-conformist behaviour, or (as often happens when non-Aboriginal people are present) because the individual rather than the group has been addressed and thereby made to stand out from the group. There is strong pressure on Aboriginal people to avoid shame, and this may lead to such communication strategies as:

> *parsimony,* i.e., showing restraint and saying as little as possible to people beyond the group when the group is in the audience role;

indirection, i.e., avoiding direct communication, particularly question-and-answer interactions, with people outside the group;

code-switching, i.e., shifting to a lighter form of Aboriginal English in wider society but always shifting back to a heavier form within the group.

5.3.1.1.4 Conflict avoidance

This may lead to avoiding expressing direct disagreement with the person one is talking to. Sometimes it may involve what Liberman (1977) has called "gratuitous concurrence," where apparent approval is expressed to minimize conflict, though there may be no intention of acting on the approval that is given. Liberman (1982:47) has shown, on the basis of research among the Pitjantjatjara, how these people in interaction show a primary concern for "establishing an effective collective spirit," whereas Anglo-Australians "are tied more absolutely to the topics which motivated their participation in the talk, and ...are reluctant to abandon their own interests for the sake of the group." Without suggesting that one can generalize unreservedly from one group to all Aboriginal people, Liberman's findings have been found, especially in legal contexts, to account for the behaviour of Aboriginal people more widely. Another way of minimising conflict, when talking about a shared experience, is the common practice of co-narration or collaborative narration (Malcolm & Rochecouste 2000:271-2), whereby others involved in the event have an equal chance of sharing in the retelling.

5.3.1.2 Speech events

Speech events are occasions where people exchange speech in a way governed by the rules and norms of the speech community. The constituent factors of a speech event (as already referred to in Chapter 2) include the sender, receiver, message form, channel, code, topic and setting (Hymes 1968:110), all of which will vary from one speech community to another. While we are focused here on the dialect, we need to make some reference to speech events, as the dialect is a constituent factor of a speech event. We shall make brief mention of two such events.

5.3.1.2.1 Observing and responding

One of the most distinctive speech events in Aboriginal society, as noted in Chapter 2, sections 3.3, 5.4, is that of observing what is going on and commenting on it. Since the orientation of Aboriginal people is to the group, this means using speech to inform the group of what is observed and of the possible consequences. Sansom (1980), who described this behaviour in a Darwin community, referred

to it with the word "witnessing." Walsh (1991), writing of another northern community, used the term "broadcast speech", a term endorsed by Reeders (2008:107) who noted that, among the Yolngu, participants "address everybody present" and thereby achieve a "collaborative construction of knowledge". Collard (2011) in her reconstruction of the life of an Aboriginal group regularly gathering together in a park in Perth, showed their conversations in Aboriginal English following the same pattern (Malcolm 2014a). In Malcolm 2009, I report on an analysis of 80 narratives from Aboriginal speakers in four states, 31 told in Aboriginal English and 49 translated from 23 different languages into English, where I found a similar pattern recurring, where the speaker would comment to the group on an observation, following it up with a possible interpretation of what had been observed and an anticipation of what action might need to be taken. Sometimes a speaker would invite observation on the part of others in the group, or invite inferences on observations which had been made.

5.3.1.2.2 Yarning

Yarning is a term used in Aboriginal English to cover talking and telling stories (Adams 2014:12). In non-Aboriginal English it carries the suggestion of a tall tale or a rambling fabrication. In Aboriginal English, on the contrary, it is the term used for talk which is based on real experience. In fact, Aboriginal speakers may prefer to use the term "yarn" rather than "story," in that, from the standpoint of Aboriginal English, the latter carries the culturally-inappropriate implication of fiction. Yarning includes talking seriously about a matter of concern. An Aboriginal teaching assistant might say "I'll have a yarn with him about that," when a disciplinary problem has arisen with a student. It also includes relaxed interaction, ideally over a fire, outdoors. This is what Anthony, an 11 year old from the Western Australian wheat belt was referring to when talking to a research assistant:

> *"Mrs Smith... but I just call er aun- aunty.... she always has big fires at the back of her yard and umm big warm ones at night time when you sit around telling yarns*
>
> (Kellerberrin, W.A. tape kell1).

Typically, yarns will be oral narratives, some examples of which will be given below in 5.3.2.

5.3.1.3 Speech acts

Speech events are composed of speech acts, each of which performs a communicative function for the speaker. There are innumerable speech acts, but we shall mention some which are particularly relevant to communication in Aboriginal English.

Some acts relevant to the speech event of Observing and Responding, drawn from Collard 2011 and illustrated briefly in chapter 2 (section 2.5), are:

– Announcing observation
  Look out you fullahs...the demons [police] *cruising round this way*
– Announcing inference
  Aaay, they mighte lookin for Johnny an em unna
  The term *mighte,* pronounced /maɪtɪ/ seems to have been derived, in the South-west, from "might be," which opens up possibilities in a way Butcher (2008:639) has described as "oiling the wheels" of communication.
– Announcing impending action
  I'm off, you girls
– Eliciting observation
  Aaay, wonder where Inny an em went
– Eliciting inference
  Well...where else you reckon they gunna be? (Malcolm 2014:576)

At the beginning of an interaction, after two people meet, rather than a greeting, there is likely to be some kind of orientation act. Eades (1982:74) has pointed out, with respect to South-East Queensland, that phrases such as: *Where are you going? Where did you come from?* are "interactionally equivalent to *Hullo...*". Among the Nyungar people of South-western Australia, it has been found necessary to borrow terms from the local language, such as *Choo!* and *Nyorn!* to fulfil the speech act function of empathazing, when receiving information about a speaker's "shame" or misfortune.

In the course of storytelling, Dutton (1970) noted, with respect to children in the Torres Straits, that *Okay* and *Orait* would be used to mark a change in action or state. Similar markers were found by Muecke (1981) among adults in the Kimberley. It is very common for speakers to mark the end of their turn with a termination marker, such as *Finish, Da's all* or *That's it, that's the end.* In Cherbourg, Readdy (1961) noted that a speaker would signal that it was time for another speaker by saying /jɛ/, 'yeah', after a pause. In the Goldfields, the term *Finish* commonly marks the end of a turn, though the Wangai word *bardu* may also be used (Ross Bilson pers. comm.).

5.3.1.4 Strategies

Interaction works in a speech community if the appropriate strategies are employed to enable information to flow. Some of the strategies have the effect of ensuring that the hearer is fully engaged with the speaker. One of these, which we noted in Chapter 4 (section 4.2), is the use of question tags like *eh? you know?* and *unna?* with a falling or level intonation, which are not so much asking questions as confirming comprehension and, where relevant, seeking corroboration,

of what has been said. Other devices aimed at supporting comprehension include the use of repetition, as in *Dey was sentenced. Sentenced them* (Mullewa, W.A., tape Y31), or multiple repetition, as in *Next day we keep walking, walking, walking* (Western Desert, Crugnale 1995:35), *And run, run, run, run, run...and we ran* (Kimberley, W.A., Kaldor & Malcolm 1991:78), or the lengthening of vowels on key words, as in *lo-o-o-ong time* (Flint 1971; see further Chapter 3, section 5.2.2.1).

Strategies are also relevant, as Eades has demonstrated in research in South-East Queensland, to the obtaining of information from Aboriginal people. Eades (2013:38 ff.) has shown how direct questioning is an inappropriate way to seek access to substantial information and that more indirect strategies need to be used. She has shown, as noted in Chapter 2, section 5.3, that an acceptable strategy would be to share with the person what one already knows about the topic, then to pause, enabling the person, if they wish, to expand further.

Speech elicited from children in the South-west exhibited a practice labelled "surveying" or "zooming out" (Malcolm et. al. 1999a:50) whereby, in depicting an event, the speaker would include detail in the context which did not directly bear on the action. The following is an example from a six-year-old, recounting how, during a football match, her uncle was struck on the head by a ball when he went onto the field to recover his baby who had strayed there:

> *Dey got little cousin...*
> *And dey little cousin crawled in the way*
> *and Uncle Steve.. he - oh he got hit and there* [gesture to head]..
> *and we watched Freda Bickley play- tha's her name*
> *an' 'er baby was like... she's a nice girl wid about ten names..*
> *an' I was only watchin' Uncle Steve watchin' football.* (Perth, text P20)

The strategy of incorporating wider observation in the account is consistent with the emphasis in Aboriginal society on reporting observations (3.1.2 above), which, according to Kearins (1985:67), distinguishes contemporary Aboriginal people as inheritors of a hunter-gatherer lifestyle, even though they may not be continuing in physical contact with such a lifestyle.

5.3.2 Oral narrative

Aboriginal Australians have a long history of oral literature, much of it related to the Dreaming and to initiation rituals (Berndt & Berndt 1964:326 ff.). The development of a Western Australian corpus of oral narratives in Aboriginal English began with the Western Australian Aboriginal Children's English (WAACE) project which gathered state-wide data from school-age children between 1973 and 1977. Some of the data on Oral Narratives were reproduced in Kaldor & Malcolm 1979:414-5,

Kaldor & Malcolm 1985:234-5, Eagleson, Kaldor & Malcolm 1982, Malcolm 1994a and Malcolm 1994b). Later studies focused on data from the Yamatji lands (Malcolm & Rochecouste 2000, Rochecouste & Malcolm 2003) and from the Perth metropolitan area (Malcolm 2002a). A study of men's oral literature in Aboriginal English from the Kimberley region was carried out by Muecke (1981).

Muecke found among the men who were his informants in the Kimberley that they observed rules in relation to the order of telling of narratives and the rights to telling them. He identified six kinds of story: law, payback, hunting, *bugaregara* [Dreaming], travel and devil stories. He found that the narrators alternated between performative, narrative and dramatic frames, and that, in the dramatic frame, the speech of the characters in the story was directly quoted.

Much of what Muecke found in his study of Kimberley men is reflected in the studies of younger speakers in different parts of Western Australia. In particular, travel, hunting and devil stories are strongly represented in the children's narratives, and there is clear alternation between narrative and dramatic modes. What follows will draw mainly on the corpora of the of the WAACE, Yamatji and Perth projects.

5.3.2.1 Oral narrative genres

While it would be a gross oversimplification to suggest that we can predict all the discourse forms that will be used by speakers of Aboriginal English in their oral narratives, it is possible, when we review a large number of such narratives, to find some forms which frequently occur. Some of the distinctive genres found in the Western Australian corpora were travel, hunting, observing, "scary things" and family. We shall briefly illustrate and comment on each of these.

5.3.2.1.1 Travel narrative

Travel narratives typically involve successive depictions of moving and stopping activities either in bushland or locations around towns, ending with a return home. Text 1 (below) was recorded in a school in Roebourne (Pilbara, W.A.);

> Text 1: On the Weekend
> 1.   On the weekend...
> 2.   We went to a um river with my family
> 3.   and we had a swim...
> 4.   and... and dere we went-
> 5.   we caught some fish...
> 6.   and... and we were swimming, us kids, in another part of the pool
> 7.   and... we saw a snake
> 8.   so we got out
> 9.   an we went to a ... nother spot
> 10.   when our um...

11. we made a raft
12. and we left it there..
13. an we was playin on dat...
14. and.. we nearly fell off
15. so we um.. cam back
16. an then we- ... went back home...
17. and we saw some kangaroos on the way back.

While a non-Aboriginal depiction of this weekend's activity might ignore the movement between locations, this is a key part of the narration here, mentioned in lines 2, 4, 9, 15 and 16.

5.3.2.1.2 Hunting narrative

The depiction of hunting often incorporates the travel element and includes constant movement between locations. It also, typically emphasizes the observation skills and persistence required of the hunter/s and often includes the reward of the hunt in the eating which follows. Text 2, which originally appeared in Malcolm 1994a:171-2) is the recount by an eleven year old boy from the Goldfields of a bird hunt involving four boys.

> Text 2: Boys' Bird Hunt
> 1. My name is MB
> 2. and Kev and Gary and-we went to um bush
> 3. and and after we sawn an emu,
> 4. we sawn a nest
> 5. and after we climb up
> 6. and we sawn a egg
> 7. and we put it back
> 8. and and after we went we went past
> 9. and we sawn a bird
> 10. and Gary kill 'im
> 11. and after 'e 'ad a blood er bloody er mouth
> 12. and after, and, and I said: "Could I have this bird?"
> 13. And Gary said: "Yes."
> 14. And after we went along
> 15. and Gary kill a nother bird
> 16. and and and after I said: "Kev, you wan' have this?"
> 17. and Kev said: "Yeah."
> 18. And after we w- we went went back
> 19. and after we we we sawn a big bird
> 20. and after I just sneakin' up
> 21. and I and I 'ad a shot
> 22. and and Kev just ran round the big bird
> 23. and Kev dropped 'im right in the head
> 24. and that bird neber die.

25. And after, Gary run along
26. and he grab 'im in a- um, he dropped 'im right in the head
27. and after I dropped 'im right in the tail
28. and and after we chase 'im up
29. and I and I and I dropped 'im everywhere
30. and I killed 'im.
31. And after, we take it
32. and Ivor look up at that tree
33. and Ivor knock down this
34. and I climb up
35. and I look down.
36. I sawn a big egg wi- one egg.
37. And after I went down and we went
38. we went all the way chasing the bird
39. we chase 'im up.
40. And then I went to a- home
41. And and I climb up to the pepper tree
42. I climb up to the pepper tree
43. and and I looked around
44. and I cl- and I jumped down
45. and I climb up to the house
46. and after I jumped down
47. and and after we 'ad a dinner time.

In this case the narration is in hasty, short clauses, linked with conjunctions. The underlying travel frame is clear, as is the emphasis on repeated efforts by multiple hunters involved in making the kill. The use of parallelism in lines 38-39 and 41-42 is often a feature of narrations in this area, as is the inclusion of direct speech in lines 12, 13, 16 and 17. It should be noted that *climb up to* in lines 41, 42 and 45 is the equivalent of "climbed up" or "climbed up on" in SAE. It is not unusual to have an unexplained deictic reference, as in line 33: *And Ivor knock down this*. Context is always important in the interpretation of narratives.

5.3.2.1.3 Observing narrative

An observing narrative simply focuses on the reporting of observations, especially of birds and animals. The number, location and movements of the potential prey are carefully noted.

Text 3: Birds on the Station
1. Tom   Out Worra station there was big mobs of crows on the tree-
2. May   Yeah, and um-
3. Tom   ...and there was big mob of crows on the tree with the cockies.
          And a big and a big um eagle came along-
4. May   Yungagee [goanna].
5. Tom   And there was a yungagee.

> They's after the yungagee, the big eagle.
> And that's what um I 'ad for dinner.
> That's the end.

This is clearly a case of collaborative narration. Although Tom is giving the report, May was there as well and is able to contribute to the retelling. (As in all the texts, these names are pseudonyms). Three kinds of bird and one reptile are identified. This account by young children in a mission in Carnarvon (Gascoyne region, W.A.) includes the termination marker *That's the end*, as is commonly the case (see 3.1.3).

5.3.2.1.4 "Scary things" narrative

Among more than 200 narratives gathered, predominantly from school children, in Perth and the Gascoyne areas, the commonest genre was that which involved devils or other supernatural beings and events. The descriptor "Scary Things" was suggested by Aboriginal collaborators in the research as the most appropriate way to refer to these. Two examples will be given, the first by an adult from the South-west.

> Text 4: Little Fellas in the Bush
> 1. I was out bush.
> 2. I went to this hill.
> 3. And this ole fella said:
> 4. "Oh, don't go near that 'ill."
> 5. But me, nah, I went up the 'ill,
> 6. when I was mustering sheep,
> 7. and I went in lookin' in aroun'.
> 8. An' these little fellas lived,
> 9. an' that night they come out
> 10. an' tormented me:
> 11. got me and chucked me outa my bed,
> 12. chucked the bed on me an' all.
> 13. I had to go back to that hill
> 14. Because I took something from the hill
> 15. what I shouldn't 'a' taken,
> 16. an I put it back.

One possible function for "scary things" narratives is as a means of social control. It could be that the adult telling this story to a group of schoolboys was intending it for this purpose. It is clear that what happens in lines 3 and 4 precedes, and to some extent, justifies, the story. In a non-Aboriginal account it would be likely to come first. It is not unusual for Aboriginal narrators to begin the narrative without providing the necessary background beforehand. When it is relevant it is given, often (though not in this case) preceded by the misplacement marker *coz* (from 'because'). A similar use of *coz,* which, in Australian English, may be

"linked to the preceding talk and provide additional explanatory material" is provided in Burridge 2014:534.

The next text consists of a narration by a boy in upper primary school in Carnarvon (Gascoyne, W.A.), in the presence of another boy and the interviewer. It has been previously published in Malcolm & Rochecouste 2000:283-4.

> Text 5: Devil's Visit
> Gavin: One devil came to me.
> Interviewer: A devil came to you?
> Gavin: Yeah, at Onslow.
> Interviewer: Well, tell me all about it, Gavin.
> Gavin: Out the window.
> Interviewer: Out the window. What do you mean?
> Gavin: Yeah... I was 'wake for a *looong* time...
> Interviewer: Yes.. you were in the house, were you?
> Raymond: xxxx dere?
> Gavin: Yeah.. an' I looked..
>   An' I was..
>   wiped the window..
>   Then I seen sumpin' come aroun' the corner dere...
>   An' I jumped,
>   an' I put the pillow over my head.
> Interviewer: And what did it look like?
> Gavin: Huh?
> Interviewer: What did it look like, what you saw?
> Gavin: I don't know...
>   Den in the morning I went around dere
>   to have a look where his foot-mark.
>   But it wasn't dere.
> Raymond: Footmark wasn't dere.
> Gavin: Nuh.
> Raymond: I' was sandy?
> Gavin: Yeah... big sandy pile.
>   Den I got some sand an' put it dere.
>   An' I... den we ... den
>   it come night again.
>   Den I waited for a long time
>   to see if he'd come again..
>   But he never come.

In this case, the apparition was *out the window*, meaning outside the window. Both Gavin and Raymond know that the best way to track an intruder is to look for footprints in the sand, and this is what Gavin prepares for the next night but, as is typical in these stories, he finds nothing there when he looks for it in the morning. Both darkness and being alone contribute to the sense of vulnerability expressed in the account.

5.3.2.1.5 Family Narrative

Oral narratives often involve the family, in that they feature family members, or that they "belong" to the family, having been passed down from generation to generation. In the example that follows, a boy from Mullewa (South-west, W.A.), aged about 12 years, retells such a story, being careful to attribute it to its sources within the family.

> Text 6: Station Yarn
> 1. Well...
> 2. this... there was a uh man
> 3. and xxx
> 4. and um.. he was.. he was going along on e's horse.. way out the back
> 5. an' e's dog..
> 6. and um.. then..
> 7. well,
> 8. 'e's horse.. bucked
> 9. an' 'e hit 'is tree
> 10. an' he hit this tree..
> 11. threw 'im..
> 12. an' he broke he's leg and e's arm..
> 13. an' 'e, he.. and e's.. and my dad's .. my mum's grandfather
> 14. told my mum's mum.. that then my mum's mum told.. told me..
> 15. and.. and.. and that old.. my mum's grandfather..
> 16. when 'e'd xx
> 17. an' 'e's horse came back..
> 18. an'.. so.. see 'e hopped on this.. other horse..
> 19. No, no, 'e got on this um.. xx jeep
> 20. an' to.. went out
> 21. and 'e took some blanket....
> 22. Found 'im.

This narrator marks the commencement and climax of his story with the anticipatory term *Well* (corresponding to *Okay* or *Orait* in some areas) (3.1.3). Though there is one example of repetition (lines 9, 10), words are generally not wasted. The narrator follows the pattern of some other Aboriginal storytellers of dropping the subject from the final clause to make the ending more dramatic. This is a good example of where the Aboriginal parsimony with words can increase the effectiveness of an account. Two key elements in the story (one the inflicter of the pain, the other the means of rescue) are introduced as if they are already visible to the narrator, through the use of the demonstrative adjective *this*, i.e., *this tree* (lines 9, 10) and *this jeep* (line 19).

5.4 Conclusion

The Aboriginal nativization of English is strongly apparent when we consider the distinctive ways in which Aboriginal English speakers have selected from, modified and extended the vocabulary of the language as it was transported to their land. It is also strongly in evidence in the ways in which Aboriginal speakers of the language have developed group-distinctive means of using the language for interaction and for the sharing of experience through oral narrative. To the extent that Aboriginal English has become a comfortable means of expression for its users, it has become a difficult medium for cross-cultural communication. Priman (2004:14) describes her communication with Australian English speakers as "putting on a cloak," and an adult Aboriginal teaching assistant put it to an English professor (Eagleson) in the terms "we put on another mask" (Eagleson, Kaldor & Malcolm 1982:241). We will consider some of the implications of this in chapter 8. In the meantime, in the next chapter we will look more closely at the patterns of thinking that underlie the Aboriginal transformation of English.

6 Schematic Structures

6.1 Introduction

It is not possible to give an adequate account of Aboriginal English by describing it as a phenomenon which is merely linguistic. It is the product of a speech community and that speech community exists as part of a culture. The language serves its speakers as a means of representing and handling reality, and the view of reality that informs the culture informs, and continually re-forms, its linguistic representation. Towards the end of the 20th century there was a convergence of linguistic interest in language as both a cognitive and a cultural phenomenon. In particular, the emergence of the field of Cultural Linguistics (Palmer 1996, Sharifian and Palmer 2007, Sharifian 2011a, 2017) provided a theoretical framework which made it possible to analyse language and culture as jointly providing evidence of common cultural conceptualizations.

The application of Cultural and Cognitive Linguistics to the study of Aboriginal English since the late 1990s (e.g. Malcolm et al 1999a; Malcolm 2002b,c, 2007; Sharifian 2002b, 2007, 2011a,b; Malcolm & Sharifian 2002) has been particularly fruitful, enabling the dialect to be seen in a wider cultural perspective and making clearer the cognitive dimensions of the nativization that has taken place as its speech community has made the English language its own.

In this chapter some of the conceptual categories of Cultural Linguistics will be introduced and illustrated with respect to Aboriginal English and a number of key cultural conceptualizations which have significantly affected the development of Aboriginal English will be put forward.

6.2 Approaching cultural conceptualizations

It is an assumption of Cultural Linguistics that the same mental imagery which informs a culture informs language as a part of that culture. Cultural Linguistics, according to Palmer (1996:36) "is primarily concerned not with how people talk about some objective reality, but with how they talk about the world that they themselves imagine." Further, he claims that "the evidence suggests that language and world view are mutually constitutive" (Palmer 1996:113). In order to investigate a language according to these assumptions it is necessary to start with units of conceptualization rather than linguistic units. Building on the foundation laid by Palmer, Sharifian (2011a, 2017) has developed and applied a theoretical framework for the study of such units. He stresses that the focus needs to be not on

culture as such but on conceptualization, which can be approached by looking at the ways in which speakers categorize the entities they talk about, and the ways in which they use schemas, or "mental pictures or templates … to organise or package [their] view of the world" (Sharifian, in Königsberg and Collard 2002:35). A third element of analysis is metaphor or metonymy whereby speakers draw on elements of one domain to help in the conceptualization of another.

6.2.1 Categories

In order to talk about the reality they experience, speakers are dependent on ways of reducing it to identifiable and recoverable units. That is, we learn, through language, to categorize everything so that it may be communicable. The categories we use, as Palmer (1996:78) put it, often divide things into groups which have "family resemblances among members rather than discrete boundaries with precisely defined membership," so that, for example, we might sometimes not be sure as to whether to call what we are looking at a 'tree' or a 'bush.' Hatch and Brown (1995:52) report on experiments in which Americans were given a limited time to give the best example of a given category. In the case of 'bird' there was strong agreement that it was a 'robin', whereas 'penguin' had borderline status. In this case, it could be said that, for the people tested, the robin was the prototypic bird. Prototypes may vary from place to place and from culture to culture.

Investigation of prototypes among Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal informants in the south-west of Australia (reported in Malcolm et al 1999a) showed, in some items, cross-group contrasts. A notable case was the prototypic bird, which, for Aboriginal (but not non-Aboriginal) informants was almost unanimously the crow. Following up this finding it was found that, for a number of Aboriginal informants the crow had totemic associations.

Other contrasting prototypes across the two groups included the following (Malcolm et al 1999:45):

Item	Aboriginal prototype	Non-Aboriginal prototype
a roast	outdoor event involving the cooking of meat (preferably kangaroo) in a fire	indoor sit-down meal with potatoes, gravy and peas
a story	a tale based on experience, passed on as an interactional event	a tale based on imagination and found in a book
supper	the evening meal at home, also known as a *feed*	a snack before bed time
picnic	a large gathering involving the outdoor cooking of food	family/ friends in the open eating food prepared beforehand (cooking not necessarily involved)

Categories may also be explored by means of associative networks, where speakers from different groups are invited, in a limited time, to list the words which come to mind in response to a verbal stimulus. It was found in the southwest of Australia (Malcolm et al 1999a:45) that the word *kangaroo* was strongly associated by the Aboriginal informants with cooking, eating and hunting, whereas for non-Aboriginal informants none of these associations applied, but it was thought of in terms of its emblematic significance and its physical characteristics.

Sharifian (2002b) employed an association-interpretation technique to investigate the associations carried by 32 lexical items among groups of Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal students in Perth schools. His findings (reported in brief in Sharifian 2011a, chapter 5) showed significantly different associations across the two groups with respect to such items as *shame,* which, to Aboriginal informants, evoked the sense of being singled out from the group, while to non-Aboriginal informants, it evoked guilt or disappointment, *home*, which to Aboriginal informants evoked family members and family obligations, whereas to non-Aboriginal informants it evoked a place of residence, and *family*, which to Aboriginal informants evoked the extended family, whereas to non-Aboriginal informants it evoked the nuclear family. It seems clear that Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people even living in a common location and participating in the same macro-culture, may maintain distinctive ways of looking at the world which are embedded in the ways in which they categorize the elements of everyday life.

Underlying language and language use are folk ontologies that "define the essential nature of things for each culture" (Palmer 1996:8). Thus, for example, where Standard English speakers are generally comfortable in using such nouns as *smoke, track, glasses, cow and cold*, Aboriginal English speakers tend to relate them to associated categories, as in *firesmoke, foot track, eye glass, cattle cow* (Malcolm 2011:268) and *coldsick* (Crugnale 1995:8). In some cases different categorizations are obvious, as when Aboriginal speakers in Groote Eylandt are able to say *Good fish, that wallaby,* where *fish* conveys what *meat* would in Australian English, or *Is the watermelon cooked?* where *cooked* and *ripe* are seen as equivalent terms (Harris 1978). Further, it is possible in Groote Eylandt to say of a man *He's a big man – very long, eh?* showing that length, which in Standard English relates to the horizontal dimension, can be used to depict the vertical, and it is possible to use *hope* with the same sense as SAE *expect* in such a statement as *When the storm came I hoped to die* (Harris 1978).

6.2.2 Schemas

Schemas are "mental pictures or templates that we use in order to organise or package our view of the world" (Sharifian, in Königsberg and Collard 2002:35). Chafe (1994:9) has argued: "...there is at bottom only one way to understand something, whether it is some everyday experience or the nature of the universe. Understanding is the ability to relate a particular spatiotemporally limited observation to a more encompassing and more stable imagined schema, within which the observation has a natural place." More specifically, schemas are entailed in the conceptualization of events, roles, behaviour and objects, and in formulating expectations and telling and interpreting stories.

As Palmer (1996:66) has pointed out, "[a] word must be defined relative to its schema. For example, while *ground* and *land* may be used to describe a piece of dry earth, *ground* belongs to a vertical schema that divides sky from ground, whereas *land* belongs to a horizontal schema that divides *land* from *sea*." There are differences in "orientational image-schemas" (Palmer 1996:292) which show in the differences between Standard English *on the ground* and Aboriginal English *on top of the ground*, with the latter, but not the former, entailing the implied inclusion of a subterranean dimension, and in the way in which Aboriginal English speakers will *climb up to a hill* where Standard English speakers will *climb [up] a hill*. Another Aboriginal English schema implies a sense of territoriality around a location, so that the land immediately around a site is seen as relevant to that site. This leads to such an expression as the following: *we always...from school...there we play marbles most times,* where *from* implies not at the school but in its vicinity. This is referred to in Malcolm et al (1999a:47) as a proximity schema.

The schema for the human body underlying some varieties of Aboriginal English (as noted in Chapter 5, section 2.2.1) does not entail a difference between *head* and *neck* or between *hand* and *arm*, leading to the possibility in Aboriginal English, but not Standard English, of referring to a *broken hand*.

The schema associated with human activity often has an added dimension entailing the use of serial verbs, the first being *go*, as in such expressions as:

> *They was goin singing* (Malcolm 2013c:274)
> *Me and Jody been go and getting grapes*
> *I wanna go see em* (Koch 2000a:50).

This, as a feature of morphosyntax, was observed in Chapter 4 (2.7.2) where it was referred to with Koch's term *associated motion*. Koch sees in this a continuity with Central Australian languages, in which the associated motion may be prior to, concurrent with or immediately subsequent to the main activity

expressed by the verb. Koch (2000:52) has shown that the accompanying verb in Central Australian Aboriginal English (usually *go*, but sometimes *come* or *go back*) may perform a function carried by the verb morphology in Kaytetye. From a Cultural Linguistic perspective we could see this as an example of the restructuring of English to enable it to carry a cultural conceptualization which had been given different expression by means of the morphosyntactic system of another language.

Cultural conceptualizations, as Sharifian (2007:182) has noted, are largely derived from the cultural experience of the users of the language. It follows that the past and present communal experience of members of a cultural group will be reflected in the schemas they use.

In the case of past experience, the semantic extension referred to in Chapter 2, section 5.11 and Chapter 5 , section 2.1.1, whereby the terms *take away,* as in *We all got taken away* [i.e., removed from parents by government] *in 1961, nine of us* (Königsberg and Collard 2002:53) and *take over*, as in *when they took me over* [i.e., when relatives moved me to a less accessible location] *out in the bush* (Königsberg and Collard 2002:83) derive their meaning from a schema in the collective memory of the group with recollection of the "stolen generation" experience. The retention of such terms as *boss,* for positive endorsement, *flog*, for 'beat,' *make im jump*, for 'frighten him into doing something' and *gammon*, for falsehood or nonsense, may also relate to schemas from the colonial experience.

In the cases of semantic shift such as the use of *business* to refer to ceremonial obligations, *language* to mean Aboriginal language, *man* to mean an initiated male, *fire* to mean 'match' *clever* to mean 'spiritually powerful' and *sing* in the sense of ritual incantation, the conceptualizations relate to schemas relevant to the contemporary life of the Aboriginal speech community.

Schemas, or "discourse scenarios" (Palmer 1996:170) are also relevant to the ways in which speech events are conducted and interpreted. An Aboriginal member of the academic staff of an Australian university, discussing conversation within her home community, commented:

> ...interacting in my family often involves a lot of talking at once. In Standard English that's actually seen as being really really quite rude and we tend not to talk over people. And you certainly don't get five people...all talking at once, often having two or three different conversations going, and as a participant you're involved in all of those conversations happening at one time. I mean everyone's talking at once. (Collard, Fatnowna, Oxanham, Roberts and Rodriquez 2000:92).

The speech event is schematized differently in the two contexts being referred to here. In one, it is, as it were, multi-track and in the other, single-track. The assumption that it is legitimate to "talk over" people can, of course, lead to miscommunication in cross-cultural contexts.

The schema associated with co-participation in an event is different across cultures. It is normal, in non-Aboriginal society, for a person to wait to be invited to co-participate when informed by someone of what they are doing. By contrast, in Aboriginal society, the fact of being informed implies the invitation to co-participate. Thus, an Aboriginal person could feel rebuffed by a non-Aboriginal friend who consistently fails to turn up when the Aboriginal person informs them of where they are going. Such a situation is acted out by Aboriginal actors in the DVD which accompanies Königsberg and Collard (2002:32).

It is clear that Aboriginal people often tend to "read" the event schema as a whole rather than depending on explicit linguistic cues. This is made apparent in the following extract from a conversation between two Aboriginal Education Workers:

> Tanya: When a person, like Aboriginal person, says something, they just say it, like 'I'm going to the shop.' And a white person says, 'Well, why're you goin' to the shop?, Oh, well, what are you gonna buy?' Like, if I said, 'yeah, I'm goina go shop,' then *you* don't have to ask me what I'm goina do – you – 'oh I just goin to shop,' but if someone else, like they wanna.. get into more detail, that sort of example... or, 'we goin' t' Perth,' like **How** you gointa Perth' or, you know – wanna know **everything!** (from Hill, 2002:100).

Below is a reproduction of the words of a member of an Aboriginal speech community in the Kimberley region of Western Australia, Victor Hunter, recreating what he saw as a typical speech event in his community, where an Aboriginal man, returning from a hunt, with a large goanna (*barney*) tied up on the back of his truck, pulls up outside the house of some friends:

> "Hello what you bloke comin for?
> When you see bloke pull up with motorcar
> you bloke rush out now."
> "But well you pull up in front of our house, eh,"
> they tell-im.
> "What you got now?
> Where you been?
> You been out bush again?"
> E tell-im:
> "Ah yeah, I just bin get-im one barney from out dere.
> I bin catch-im and in that part near Millers' Pool there."
> E said "I chase it up the tree and
> I bin- we bin throw-im rocks and everything
> till I wop-im on the head
> and he fall down
> and I bin just pick-im up
> and tie-im up with rope
> and bring-im back here for you people.
> I can feel-im 'is tail part

'e little-bit fat one.
But if you bloke reckon it's all right,
well you can have it,
but if you don't want it
I'll take it to them nother fellas at the nother camp."
"Course we want-im barney,"
they telling-im.
"Because we never had barney for long time now.
Only people only been eating only kangaroo, skinny one."

Embedded in the schema here are a number of assumptions:
– the interaction begins when the visitor's presence is acknowledged by those at whose territory he has stopped
– the initial greeting relates to where the visitor has come from
– an information-seeking question is accompanied by a suggested answer (*You been out bush again?*)
– the visitor interacts with the group, rather than individuals
– the report on the hunt includes detail on the place and manner of capture
– the hunt is related as a corporate event
– the results of the hunt are offered to the group, or to the next group.

In this case, the event schema has to some extent incorporated a story schema, or scenario, in that the event entails a report on the hunt, bringing out the key elements of observation, pursuit and repeated attempts at making a kill.

In Chapter 5, section 3.2.1, a number of oral narrative genres were described and exemplified. From the perspective of Cultural Linguistics, each of these is associated with a story schema or scenario. In investigations carried out in the south-west of Western Australia (Malcolm 2002a, Rochecouste & Malcolm 2003), 208 Aboriginal school students, invited to relate oral narratives, framed what they had to say in accordance with 24 different schemas, showing that they could draw on a wide range of narrative schema options in expressing themselves. However, it was clear that, overall, they showed a clear preference for five schemas, one or other of which was adopted 68% of the time. These were the ones alluded to in Chapter 5: Travel, Hunting, Observing, "Scary Things" and Family. We shall restrict our focus to these after commenting briefly on some of the discourse features which are common to many schemas.

Indigenous Australians are heirs to significant traditions in oral narrative. Extending our analysis to that of narratives from across Australia, both in Aboriginal English and in translation (Malcolm 2009; Malcolm 2014c), it is possible to characterize some of the main distinctive features of their manner of narration by means of four terms:

1. Situated

    Oral narratives tend to be situated in that they are often introduced with a time and/or place orientation, as in:

    > *Early this year um we keep finding our door open at night time...*
    > *When we was down Geraldton, we went to the beach and fishing...*
    > *Last week our family...we go rabbiting...*
    > *This story's about when I was up at Roper River in the Northern Territory...*

    The situated nature of oral narratives reinforces the perception that they are not invented but relating to real life.

2. Dramatic

    Aboriginal oral narratives tend to downgrade the role of the narrator and let the characters speak for themselves. In the course of narration, without introduction, in a practice I have called "direct speech switching" (Malcolm et al. 1999a:54), a character will speak, often followed, again without introduction, by the utterance of another character. Such a practice has been observed by Palmer (1996:184) in other cultures. He sees the use of direct quotation as "a narrative device for activating subjective schemas in listeners' imaginations." Aboriginal oral narrative may be essentially "dialogue-driven" (Malcolm 2014a:575) rather than narrated. Sometimes what is quoted is not so much what is said as what is thought by the character. Some of these points are exemplified in the opening lines of the narrative *A Day in the Park* (Collard 2011:3):

    > *Look out you fullahs...the demons* [police] *cruisin round this way.*
    > *Aaay, they mighte lookin for Johnny an em, unna.*
    > *Yeah you watch, yep, they gunna pull up right next to us ere.*
    > *I'm off you girls.....meet yous at the big crates.*

3. Inclusive

    The perspective in Aboriginal oral narrative is less focused than in typical Standard English narration. It is, as noted in Chapter 5, section 3.1.4, as if the schema within which the narrator envisages the action occurring includes other detail which will not be taken up in the narrative, but which needs to be recorded as well. The following is an account by a boy of a fishing trip, but there is considerable attention to what might be seen as "irrelevant" detail about contextual issues:

    > *I went fishing with my dad at .. One Arm Point an we went with some of our cousins... and*
    > *Joe and Shane and my Uncle Jack and my Aunty Laura.. wid my sisters.. my sisters came*
    > *too an my two brothers.. an my stepmum.. me and my big boy cousins, me an Brian, we*

were doing backflip off of the .. sand-dunes but I just did one an den I aksed im to flip me back – when e flipped me.. I landed in the water cause we were playing next to the water.. and.. when.. when I was.. when we ad to go fishing.. my dad pulled out the drag net wid my Uncle Jack... and we caught about seven sharks... (Malcolm et al 1999a:47).

It is important, in the Aboriginal perspective, to include detail on the co-participants in the event and on the nature of the context. This is not just a story; it is an account of life experience.

4. Interactive
    Oral narrative, in keeping with the group-orientation of Aboriginal society, is a group event. More than one person may participate in the narration, if it relates to a shared experience. Even if there is only one narrator, there can be frequent invitation to the audience to confirm what is being said, by the use of tags such as *eh, ini* or *you know*:

    > *I nearly fell over, eh!*
    > *...we 'as cookin' dis um lizard, you know?*
    > *...da's a orrible picture, ini?*

    Group interaction may also be shown in the occurrence of affiliative tagging, as in:

    > *I dived on one, boy.*

    Interactive discourse markers may be used to direct the hearer's attention to points of progression or reflection in the narrative, as in:

    > *Now, at the station...*
    > *Dad, well, e seen this dingo...*

    Since the progression of the narrative may not be linear, the narrator may often need to inform the listener of background information which is relevant to the understanding of what happens. For this, *cos,* sometimes spelt *coz,* is used as an explanatory or misplacement marker (as noted in Chapter 5, section 3.2.1):

    > *E tried ta jump this fence,*
    > *cos he was runnin from the police.*

    The schema of narrative in Aboriginal English includes providing indication to the hearer when the narration has concluded and the turn may be passed on to another speaker. Thus, narratives often conclude with such discourse markers as:

    > *That's all*
    > *Finish.*

More particularly, specific narrative schemas will incorporate image schemas and schematic associations the recognition of which is essential to the full understanding of what is being communicated. We shall illustrate this briefly in regard to the five narrative schemas we have referred to.

6.2.2.1 Travel

The travel schema (as evidenced in the travel narrative, quoted in Chapter 5, 3.2.1) represents experience in terms of ongoing movement between successive stopping places. As such, it sees contemporary experience as replicating that of the creative beings of the Dreaming, who moved from location to location, leaving behind natural features as evidence of their activity. It also, of course, reflects the nomadic life of traditional Aboriginal people, of which Edwards (1988:93) has noted:

> Life in traditional Aboriginal societies was lived in constant touch with the ground. It revolved around two axes expressed by the Pitjantjatjara words, *nyinantja* = sitting and *ankuntja* = going. One sphere involved sitting or lying on the ground in a camp and engaging in the activities of camp life such as resting, talking, cooking and eating. The other sphere involved movement over the ground for purposes such as hunting and gathering, ritual and transit from one camp to another.

The travel schema, then, provides a default pattern (which I have referred to elsewhere as "tracking") for the representation not only of life as a whole, but also of everyday experience. Thus, it may be used in the depiction of travel, but also to put other experience into a moving and stopping framework. The following account of a swimming outing, by a twelve year old girl from the Goldfields region of Western Australia (also reported in Malcolm 1994b:303), reports the experience in terms of three moving and three stopping episodes:

> At Tarmoola
> when we went swimming
> well, Leanne was the leader and all us kids was biggest to the littlest.
> We was making little tracks,
> and we was running round in the bushes
> and we was going along
> and we made a camp at this windmill place
> and then I said to Leanne, 'You be one leader and I'll be another.'
> We picked teams.
> And Leanne went around another way
> and I went round… and went around…
> Others went around another place.
> And we met at the place where we 'as swimming
> and we stayed there.

> And we went up to another place.
> And we come back again.
> And we –some of the kids- jumped in the water and swimming around.

The image schemas of moving and stopping are represented both in the word choice and in the intonation. Key moving expressions (e.g. *going along, went round, went up to another* place) are spoken with vowel lengthening and elevated pitch, in contrast to the short vowels and falling intonation of key stopping expressions (e.g. *camp, met, come back*). Just to hear the appropriate term with the appropriate intonation would be sufficient to evoke the whole schema in the mind of a listener from the speech community involved.

In using the movement of the human body to represent life more generally, Aboriginal English speakers are conforming to a practice which is exhibited in many languages (Maalej and Yu 2011; Foolen, Lüdke, Racine and Zlatev 2012). As Zlatev (2012:7) has said, "…we are animate forms who are alive to and in the world, and who, in being alive to and in the world make sense of it. We do so most fundamentally through movement." We will return to this matter when we discuss metaphor and metonymy.

6.2.2.2 Hunting

The hunting schema evokes the hunting experience, which often will involve travel, so oral narratives about hunting may often begin with the use of the travel schema (as illustrated in Malcolm & Rochecouste 2000). In dealing with the hunt, there are five elements which may be included: observation, the chase, repeated attempts, the kill and the feed. In the hunting narrative in Chapter 5, section 3.2.1, observation is predominant in lines 3-9, the (first and second) kill in lines 10-17, the chase in lines 19-22, repeated attempts in lines 23-29, the (third) kill in lines 30-31, further observation in lines 32-46 and the feed in line 47. This illustrates the fact that the schema is not the same as a genre, in that it does not entail principles of linguistic ordering. Elements of the schema may enter and re-enter the representation in any order.

We noted with the travel schema that it could inform activities other than travel. The same principle applies to the hunting schema. An Aboriginal footballer can draw on similar skills of observation, persistence and capture that are required in hunting when playing football, and sometimes in describing sporting exploits speakers may have the hunting schema in mind:

> *I started off in the back line...standin up you know...*
> *then...footy come towards me, boy.*
> *I just made 'em jump...*
> *Next minute.. they brang it back down dere again ...*

So dey got.. knocked the ball down..
tossed it up again you know..
then.. dey.. got down to our .. end..
got the first goal
and then, brother,..snap. Me.
Went straight down the forward line
snapped the first goal
I snapped two dere... (from Rochecouste & Malcolm 2003:35).

6.2.2.3 Observing

Making careful observations and reporting them accurately to the group is a highly valued skill in Aboriginal society. This was immediately apparent to Europeans when they made initial contact with the people they encountered at Port Jackson. Watkin Tench, a member of the First Fleet, observed: "Their eyes are full, black and piercing, but the almost perpetual strain in which the optic nerve is kept, by looking out for prey, renders their sight weaker at an early age" (Tench 2012 [1793]:245). An example of an Observing oral narrative was given in Chapter 5, section 3.2.1. It could be seen that the place of observation, the species observed, the quantity, and whether the birds or animals were alive or dead were key components of an observation report.

As has been noted in Chapter 5, section 3.1.2, it has been reported from widely separated parts of Australia that members of Aboriginal communities characteristically employ what has variously been called "broadcast address" (Walsh 1991) or "witnessing" (Sansom 1980) or "announcing" (Malcolm 2009, 2014), whereby they tell the community what they have observed. This does not necessarily constitute an oral narrative, but it carries over a practice of watchfulness which is relevant in the hunting and gathering context and which may be applied in other contexts.

A common pattern, illustrated above (6.2.2), from Collard 2011:3, is that an observation will be announced, followed by an inference on that observation and an announcement of intended action, as in:

Look out you fullahs... the demons cruisin round this way	[Announcing observation]
Aaay, they mighte lookin for Johnny an em, unna	[Announcing inference]
I'm off you girls	[Announcing intended action]
(Malcolm 2014a:576).	

6.2.2.4 Scary things

The Scary Things schema enables Aboriginal English speakers to allude to the activity of powers beyond their control which may affect their lives. Scary things typically occur to a person at night when they are alone. They involve visitants,

perhaps labelled *little fellas* or *devils* (as in texts 4 and 5 in Chapter 5, section 3.2.1) or referred to by Aboriginal language terms such as *balyits* or *wudachis*. The Scary Things schema often involves the leaving of a door or window open, thus allowing access to the spirit being. A visitation may be announced by a dog barking, or by the appearance of a light, or dark shadows, or some kind of knocking or creaking sound. When an investigation is made, sometimes when morning comes, to track down the intruder, the result is usually that no sign has been left of the visitation.

There are many forms in which scary things may take place. The idea of "watching" tends to be associated with potential spirit involvement. A cat may be seen to be conveying a spirit message, and *red eyes* suggest a threatening presence:

> *Dey looked dere, an an dey seen e's eyes glowin* (Mullewa, W.A.)
> *E looked like a devil den e had like these reddish eyes* (Kalgoorlie, W.A.).

When driving at night, drivers need to beware of looking in the rear vision (*r'vision*) mirror because they may see a *minmin* (or *mimi*) light which will distract them. In the following recount a boy from Geraldton, Western Australia, tells of how the light prefigured a visitant coming into the car:

> *... A.. reckon*
> *he help K..*
> *was drivin back from Wiluna or whatever some place*
> *an light behind,*
> *look in r'vision mirror*
> *no he's gone,*
> *drivin along*
> *saw i',*
> *look in the 'vision mirror again,*
> *look in the back seat,*
> *an ole ole blackfella sittin in the back seat, lookin at im.*

Sometimes the visitants are the spirits of departed persons, as, perhaps in this case, and, more clearly, in the case of the following report from a teenage girl living in Perth:

> *Oh an my uncle he just use to live in Girrawheen there*
> *before he moved into his house*
> *um Mervyn Bond was asleep*
> *an' he could smell some cooking*
> *an' e' um woke up to see if was my uncle*
> *an' um he actually seen this woman um cooking in the kitchen*
> *'e goes 'Oh get out woman' you know*
> *'This my house not yours.'*

She goes "No you get out
I was here for years before you came along'
and um so that like
couple days later my Nanna an' my other um elders like Grandpops an' all that they came around
and they were praying
an' one of my Nannas she um feel these little fing- like fingers an' that
and she 'as to like,
they left the windows open
so the spirit goes out.
She feel this choking
and when she like finished an' that
she 'ad to finish the praying an' that
'cause it's choking 'er 'an that
an' they noticed it
'cause it in 'er voice
an' they had kept on praying
an' got over it
an' the spirit's not there anymore.

Sharifian (2011a:85) cites the case of a recount about a woman who has been sick and wakes up with the taste of medicine in her mouth, and says *they come and give me some medicine last night*, suggesting that the spirits of her ancestors had attended her in the night. Sharifian (2011a:90, 91) has also dealt with the fact that the anger or sadness of departed spirits may be seen in the falling of rain. Similarly, in research by Sharifian and associates (Sharifian et al 2012:49) a windstorm in a story was interpreted by Aboriginal readers as the work of spirits, whereas a bushfire was seen as positive, since fire provides protection against spirits. It is consistent with this that smoke may be used as a means of driving spirits away. The research on the interpretation of non-Aboriginal texts by Aboriginal readers has shown the power of the schematic associations of such elements in the text as *someone, looking, cat, death, wind, fire, singing, nothing was there,* and many other everyday items, of signalling spiritual meanings.

6.2.2.5 Family

The family schema is ever-present in the consciousness of Aboriginal speakers. The way of initiating talk between two Aboriginal people who meet is often, as we have noted, to explore their respective families, looking for possible connections. An interaction with a non-Aboriginal person may often start with a question like *You know my father?* or *You know Bill Brumby?* followed up with *He's my cousin.* It is more common in speech among Aboriginal than

non-Aboriginal people to use kin terms frequently in the course of conversation and (as we have noted) to list the kin members with whom one has participated in an event being related. The relevance of family has led to the development of expressions not present in Australian English, such as *We're all married in to one another.*

One other kind of schema which needs to be mentioned is the proposition schema (Palmer 1996:105), which is something which is assumed as a given in the speech community. We have noted that Aboriginal people are embarrassed when singled out from the group. There is, then, a proposition schema which might be stated YOU DON'T PUT YOURSELF ABOVE THE GROUP. Others which might be apparent from some of the patterns of interaction we have observed include: RESPECT IS DUE TO THE PEOPLE WHOSE LAND YOU OCCUPY (This has both a contemporary and an ancestral dimension), IT IS NOT APPROPRIATE TO SPEAK FOR OTHERS WITHOUT AUTHORIZATION (hence the reluctance of Aboriginal people to respond directly to inquiries about Aboriginal people in general), IT IS GOOD TO KNOW ONLY WHAT ONE IS SUPPOSED TO KNOW (hence the respect given to secret and restricted knowledge) and PEOPLE WHO ARE RELATED LOOK AFTER ONE ANOTHER.

6.2.3 Metaphor and metonymy

There is a considerable body of literature supporting the idea that metaphor is an essential way of structuring thought and language (Pires de Oliveira 2001; Foolen et al 2012; Maalej & Yu 2011). In metaphor, such as "You'll have to sink or swim," we use experience in one domain to inform another, and in metonymy, as in "I'd like a bite to eat" we represent something by isolating a part of it.

We have observed that, in a sense, the story schema of Travel, or 'tracking', represents a metaphorical extension from the life of the figures of the Dreaming to contemporary life. Consistently with this, the terms *camp, sit down* and *stop* may be used metaphorically to refer to dwelling, for a time, in a place, as in:

> *Matthew was campin at my house* (boy from Kalgoorlie)
> *So we stayed there and had our married life there, sitting down* (Lennon 2011:64)
> *...she was camping there all the time: she was stopped there* (Lennon 2011:10)
> *We bin sit down Barrow Creek long time* (Daisy Akemarra, in Koch 1993:76).

Metaphor may be used, as Sharifian (2011:57) has pointed out, to "map from the conceptualisations of kinship onto the domain of land", as in reference to the land as *my mother* (c.f. Leitner 2007:213). A further extension of this is to say *This land is me* (Sharifian 2014:121). Similarly, the earth may be spoken of as human,

as the term *in the ashes* may carry the meaning 'in the context of Aboriginal life' (Malcolm & Grote 2007:159) and after a fire has been used for cooking, *we close the fire in with all the sand* (Königsberg, Collard & McHugh 2012:2012, Focus Area 11:27) as it is necessary to *heal the wound of the earth* (Malcolm 2007:57). Metaphor may also apply to reference to the moon, which is seen to *jump up* (Königsberg & Collard 2002:37) and to things growing on the land. Referring to two grass trees, Nyungar woman Glenys Collard commented: *Well, they're trees but they're people. This eh big tall one is a Nyungar man and the smaller the Nyungar woman* (Königsberg & Collard 2002:37).

Metaphorical extension may apply within the same domain, where, for example *little nanna* may be used to refer to "little grandchild" (Malcolm et al 2002:40) and "baby boy" may be used to refer to a younger male (Adams 2014:15). Very often it crosses the human and non-human domains, as where *hungry* may denote desire for anything, not only food, and *a proper feed* means a "desirable girl". It is also possible to refer to a human with a container metaphor, as in *block im up* "fill him with food," or with a metaphor drawn from fire: *scorch im up* "be strict on him." The metaphor *hole* (mentioned in 2.2.1.6), perhaps drawn from the idea of a hole in the ground which may belong to a goanna or a rabbit, can be used by a person to refer to him-/ herself and the expression *I've got my hole* suggests a person has no money, i.e., all the person possesses is him-/herself, as exemplified in Chapter 5, section 2.2.1. (These examples come from Malcolm et al 2002 and Königsberg and Collard 2002). Sometimes semantic boundaries may be crossed deliberately in the interests of informality, as when, for example, the expression *Yous can't rip yourselves* can be used to mean "You can't nag me" (Malcolm et al 2002:41) and where the word *chuck* (often pronounced "shuck") is used in unexpected contexts: *Nanna bin cut da kangaroo into pieces an shucked it in da pot* (Department of Education, Western Australia 2016:21). A further level of informality is *talking rough*, with heavy use of taboo expletives. This may, in the view of Aboriginal informants, "be tolerated as part of a whole lifestyle of inadequacy and hopelessness" (Malcolm et al. 2002:35).

Cultural linguist Ning Yu (2011:141) has observed with respect to Chinese, the use of what he calls metonymic chains, whereby, for example, the speech organ may be used to denote language. In Standard English this would apply to the use of *tongue* to mean "language." He has further noted that it is possible to use a word relating to speaking to denote "speech." This is a case of what he calls ACTION FOR RESULT. In Aboriginal English there would appear to be a reverse movement along the metonymic chain, i.e., RESULT FOR ACTION, where (as referred to in Chapter 5, 2.2.1) the word denoting the intended end point is used to denote the way of reaching it, as in:

> *Learn im to talk Nyungar words* 'Teach him to speak Nyungar' (South-west)
> *Kill him in the neck* 'Hit it in the neck' (Central Australia)
> *I'll drop you* 'I'll punch you' (Palm Island, Qld)
> *My own mother grew me up* 'My own mother brought me up) (Kimberley, W.A.)
> *Don't you know how to bring a lawnmower back when I borrow it to you?* 'Don't you know how to bring a lawnmower back when I lend it to you?' (Victoria, Enemburu).

There is a good deal of emergent metaphorical imagery in Aboriginal English, as its users develop fresh ways of expressing their experiences and observations. Some examples are:

> *They're putting us to the back of the bus* 'They're neglecting us' (Perth)
> *Number one gubba* 'a good non-Aboriginal person' (Victoria)
> *Poor man's meat* 'devon sausage' (Victoria)
> *In the foot falcon* 'walking' (general)

The following example of repartee has already been cited in Chapter 4, section 1.4.3:

> Speaker A: *Ay brother, orse and cart!*   'Hey, boy, that's okay'
> Speaker B: *Sausages and baked beans, and*   'It's super okay'
> *eggs on top!* (Perth)

6.3 The embedding of conceptualization in an adopted language

Aboriginal English embodies categories, schemas and metaphors which distinguish it, conceptually, from other varieties of English. The English inputs received by Aboriginal speakers (as detailed in Malcolm 2017) have been reworked in four main ways in generating the new dialect:

6.3.1 Retention

Many of the features present in the varieties brought to Australia have been retained in Aboriginal English, in that they are compatible with Aboriginal patterns of conceptualization (as outlined in section 4, below). Some non-standard features strongly present in Aboriginal English which have their precedents in dialects brought to Australia include:

– use of personal pronoun *yous* to distinguish 2nd person plural from singular (from Irish and Scottish dialects, but attested in 91% of the 76 non-standard varieties investigated by Kortmann (2017:7))

- use of invariant auxiliary form *was* with singular and plural subjects (present in Scottish, Irish and North-eastern English dialects, but identified by Cheshire et. al. (1993) as a pan-British feature)
- less consistent use of the definite article, as in *Hey, tide'll be in about four o'clock, eh?* (from Northern English dialect)
- less consistent use of the indefinite article, as in *We went for walk* (from Northern English dialect)
- negation with non-emphatic *never*, as in *She never died* (from Scottish, North-Eastern and South-Eastern English dialects and recognized by Kortmann (2017) as a vernacular angloversal)
- tag question form *eh*, as in *You'll get shame, eh?* (from Scottish and Channel Island English dialects)
- tag question form *init*, as in *One got sick, init?* (from Welsh, South-East and South-West English dialects)
- lexical items *gammon* 'nonsense, falsehood'; *jar* 'reprove'; *humbug* 'nuisance' (current in 18th century English)
- discourse displacement marker *cos,* as in *Cos she lives with her nan and pop* (from Scottish English)

In most of these cases the forms retained may be considered consistent with processes of grammatical simplification; in the case of *yous* the process is in the reverse, showing greater concern for reducing ambiguity in reference to the addressee; the lexical items are all negative and possibly relate to a register which came to be considered impolite in wider society; the term *cos* was particularly useful to Aboriginal speakers for recovering information they could see, or anticipate, had not been inferred by the listener.

6.3.2 Elimination

In other cases, Aboriginal English speakers have not adopted features that are current in other dialects, including:
- obligatory marking of count noun plural, hence, *dey got some turtle* 'they['ve] got some turtles'
- obligatory marking of noun possessive, hence *that man car* 'that man's car'
- use of *be* copula in stative clauses, hence *that a pretty snake* 'that's a pretty snake'
- use of *be* copula to link a subject with an adjectival complement, hence *they green,* 'they are green'

- use of auxiliary to form polar questions, hence *You whitefella?* 'Are you non-Aboriginal?'
- use of auxiliary to form WH- questions, hence *Where they movin?* 'Where are they moving to?'
- generalized terms like *Aboriginal* or *Indigenous* are avoided in favour of more localized terms such as *Nyungar* or *Koorie*
- some forms of greeting and phatic conversation (e.g. *Hello, how are you?*) are avoided in favour of such forms as *Where you been?*

Aboriginal English, then, is often less explicit than the varieties from which it is derived, more localized, and less prone to reference life to being (using the verb *to be*) rather than action.

6.3.3 Modification

Aboriginal English represents, in some cases, a modification of English patterns to make the language more expressive of its speakers' cultural conceptualizations. Some examples are:

- using *get* rather than *be* to form the passive, as in *E got is and burnt* 'His hand was burnt' and to form existential clauses, as in *He got white cliff there* 'There is a white cliff'
- using the verb *go* rather than the modal auxiliary *will/shall* to form the future
- reanalysing the modal auxiliary *will* for use as a marker of habitual action: *Dey'll make damper an den dey'll have a big feed* 'They make the damper and then have a big feed'
- using the reanalysed past participle *been/bin* as an invariant marker of the past tense: *We bin go langa dat way* 'We went that way'
- sometimes using the reanalysed personal pronoun *him* as a suffix to mark a transitive verb: *I bin eatim up goanna* 'I ate a goanna'
- using, in the Kimberley, the reanalysed adverb *about* as a suffix to mark progressive aspect on a verb: *All the kid gotta go bogie-bat* 'The kids will be swimming'
- distinguishing adverbs of manner and time, respectively, by suffixing them with *–way* or *–time*: *I hid my head, shy-way* 'I shyly hid my head'; *cold weather-time* 'in the cold weather'
- enabling personal pronouns to indicate duality and inclusivity or exclusivity: *you two* 'you [dual]', *yumob* 'you [plural]' (Kimberley, W.A.).

Many more examples of modification could be cited. In most cases cited here, speakers of Aboriginal English have changed the language in the direction of action, rather than existence, and embodiment, rather than abstract marking, of meaning.

6.3.4 Extension

A fourth form of modification of English has been in the direction of introducing change from non-English sources. Sharifian (2007:182) has observed that: "[p]erhaps the entrenchment of cultural conceptualisations in language is most evident in the area of lexical semantics, where lexical items provide an index to conceptualizations that are largely derived from the cultural experience of the users of the language." The extension of English to enable it to express Aboriginal conceptualizations has often entailed the transfer into it of lexical items from Indigenous language sources.

The Dharuk language, which was spoken in the area of earliest concentrated settlement by English speakers, was clearly a source of many early lexical transfers, as noted in Chapter 5, 2.1.2. Many of these are no longer current, but some became incorporated into Australian English, for example, *woomera* 'throwing stick', *dingo* 'wild dog', *corroboree* 'Aboriginal dance ceremony', *cooee* 'a call', while others have been maintained only in varieties of Aboriginal English. The term *bogey* 'swim' is widely used by Aboriginal speakers across the north and the term *myall*, originally meaning 'stranger,' and used in reference to an Aboriginal from another tribe, now may be used to refer to a more traditional Aboriginal.

Since Aboriginal speakers have a strong sense of local identity, Aboriginal English in different areas, as mentioned in Chapter 5, section 2.1.2.2, is usually referred to by the local term for the community, i.e., Nunga English (in the vicinity of Adelaide), Nyungar English (in the South-west), Koorie English (in the South-east), Martu English (in Wiluna and further East), Yamatji English (in the Gascoyne), etc., and the local varieties of English will incorporate transfers from the languages of the area. In the South-West, a dog may be referred to by the term *dwert,* whereas in Bundjalung country in New South Wales the term transferred with this meaning is *dabay.* In the Northern Territory the Djingulu word for 'old man' *malaga* will be used in English to mean 'boss.' In the South-west, the Nyungar term for water, *kepa*, will be used to refer to alcoholic drink (as in Chapter 5, section 2.1.2).

Aboriginal conceptualization is, then, embedded in Aboriginal English by the choices made by its speakers, whether to retain forms received from other

Englishes, to exclude them or to modify them, or to draw on resources from other languages, sometimes with a view to localizing the reference, sometimes with a view to drawing on particular semantic resources.

6.4 Cultural conceptual imperatives in the formation of Aboriginal English

The course of the development of Aboriginal English may be seen, from a Cultural Linguistic perspective, as driven by the need to give better expression to certain cultural conceptualizations. The nativization of English by Aboriginal speakers entailed the foregrounding of certain cultural conceptualizations which were ever-present in their consciousness and which were comparatively less salient in the other Englishes to which they were exposed. We will be returning here to some of the features raised in relation to the context of Aboriginal English, in Chapter 2. It is suggested, in using the term "imperatives" (c.f. Malcolm 2002b, 2011, 2016), that many distinctive features of Aboriginal English were, in large part, driven by the need of the speakers to give appropriate expression to certain core conceptualizations. Without claiming to be exhaustive, it is possible to isolate five of the most apparent cultural conceptual imperatives: group orientation, interconnectedness, orientation to motion, orientation to observation and awareness of the transcendent.

6.4.1 Group orientation

As a high-context society (Hall 1976), Aboriginal people are strongly group-aware. They have made English more expressive of reciprocal and extended kin relations and have reduced the over-explicitness of expression which fails to recognize common group knowledge. They have developed a form of English for Aboriginal contexts which is reflective of features of the group lifestyle and which implicitly acknowledges group values.

6.4.1.1 Pervasiveness of kinship
Many lexico-semantic changes to the language and associated discursive patterns relate to the extended use of the family *schema* in interaction:

As mentioned in Chapter 5 under Semantic Extension and Reciprocal Address, a young son may be addressed as *little daddy*, and a young daughter as *little mum*[*my*] (Malcolm et al. 2002b:65). E.g. *Oh my liddle mummy!* [spoken by mother to baby] (Malcolm 2001:229).

The terms *auntie* and *uncle* may be extended to cover niece and nephew, or "someone the same age or younger" (Adams 2014:15). *Ay auntie girl* may be used widely as a term of respect.

The term *granny* may be used reciprocally between grandparents and grandchildren (Chapter 5, sections 2.1.1 and 2.2.2, and Malcolm et al 2002:56).

The term *family* may be used with reference to the extended family, as in *I got a lot a family* doin *modelling* (girl from Mullewa, W.A.).

The terms *brother/brother boy/budda/bro* may be used to address or refer to a male peer: *We cruel hungry... price for a feed budda, unna?* 'We're really hungry. Can we have some money to buy a feed, brother?' (Collard 2011:17).

The terms *sister/sister girl/sis* may be used to address or refer to a female peer: *Aaay sister girl ow long we gotta* stop *ere for?* 'Hey, sister, how long do we have to stay here?' (Collard 2011:27).

The term *cousin/cuz* may be used to refer to a distant relative or peer (Adams 2014:16).

The compound noun *cousinbrother* may be used to address or refer to a parallel-cousin (Chapter 5, section 2.1.1, and Arthur 1996:74).

6.4.1.2 Group reference perspective

The perspective adopted in interaction in Aboriginal English tends to assume the common schematic and experiential knowledge of the group and continually references what is said to the group for endorsement. There are also means of expression of empathy with group members.

Aboriginal English speakers have modified the personal pronouns of English to make them more sensitive to certain features of the group spoken to. The introduction of the second person plural form *yous* reflects a need to make it clear as to whether the reference is to an individual or to a group. The differentiation in some areas, of dual from plural shows a similar motivation. The further distinction made between showing exclusion (as in, e.g., *me'n'im/her*) and inclusion of the addressee (as in, e.g., *mi'n'you*) again shows a raised concern for clarity for the addressee/s.

The use of the demonstrative, where otherwise a definite article might be used, is a sign of schema-based referencing (Sharifian 2001:129), i.e., the assumption on the part of the speaker that the hearer shares the same schema, as in *Dat tide bin start comin in* (Malcolm & Sharifian 2007:379).

Utterances are often elliptical, or "minimal" (Sharifian 2001). The term *ting* or *sing* (from "thing") may be frequently employed "to de-emphasize contextual features deemed...common knowledge" (Malcolm et al 1999a:56), as in: *So we*

jump off the ting (9 year old boy from Leonora, in Eagleson, Kaldor & Malcolm 1982:233), as illustrated in Chapter 4, section 3.6.5. In a similar manner, indefinite extension markers, such as *an that* may be used to allude to detail not mentioned because of it being common knowledge, as in *my uncle an dat* (Perth boy, aged 10), *she was shakin an all that* (Mullewa girl, aged 14).

A range of tags (see Chapter 4, sections 4.2, 4.3) are used to reference what is being spoken to the group. These include confirmation tags, such as *eh, unna, innit,* etc., as in *You'll get shame, eh* (Kimberley speaker)*; Da's a orrible picture ini* (Pilbara speaker), authentication tags, which may be used by the speaker or hearer, as in *His son bin come too...true!* (Western Desert, adult speaker) and Speaker: *They drag their feet all the time.* Hearer: *True* (Perth, adult speaker). Narrators will often switch from narrative to interactive idea units, using *you know* to invite a response, as in *No, but it was so scary, you know* (Perth speaker). As noted earlier in this chapter (3.1), *cos* may be used to reference the listener to information which may not have been made explicit earlier in a narration, as in *We was walking along in the shallow...cos the tide was out* (Mullewa boy 11).

Empathetic discourse markers have also been brought into the language by Aboriginal speakers. *Choo*, from Nyungar, is used in the South-west both as an expression of sympathy and of shared embarrassment, e.g. *Choo, you better dress em up!* The transferred term *Nyorn* is also used in the South-west as an empathetic expression. An Aboriginal Islander Education Worker, talking to Aboriginal researcher Glenys Collard about her feeling of isolation from her community when working in Perth, commented: *...I guess at times I feel lonely nyorn but when we get together I feel really good* (Malcolm et al. 1999a:129). As Sharifian (2011b:70) has noted, *Sorry* may be used in Aboriginal English more as an expression of empathy than to acknowledge guilt. The term *Shame* may be used across the country to express, or identify with, embarrassment.

In keeping with conventions within the Aboriginal community, the term *old* carries no stigma and, indeed carries the denotation "having recognised wisdom and authority" (Arthur 1996:50). Likewise, an *old fella* is a person to be heeded and respected, as is an *ole girl*.

Group-consciousness is strongly expressed in Aboriginal discourse in that the speaker is obliged, when giving second-hand information, to be explicit about from whom it was obtained, and when recounting action it is expected that the other participants in the action (as well as the location) be detailed: *My great grandfather he told my mum...and my mum mum told me* (Mullewa male narrator).

6.4.1.3 Lifestyle-specific categorizations

The group orientation of Aboriginal English is also seen in the way in which the default meaning of English expressions is seen. Words are referenced to the Aboriginal context and to the lifestyle associated with that context.

The abbreviation for "people", *pepes,* or *peops,* denotes Aboriginal people, *language* is understood to mean Aboriginal language and the term *camp* to refer to the speaker's home or an equivalent place. Hence, when one is referring to "camping" in the non-Aboriginal sense, the term to be used is *camping out.*

Reference to *supper* implies not the pre-bedtime snack as in Australian English, but the evening meal. Likewise, *feed,* within the Aboriginal context, refers to a meal for the family, not just for babies or animals. The first association, when *kangaroo* is mentioned, will be to a food source, and, when *roast* is mentioned, will be to cooking outside with a fire.

6.4.1.4 Connotations deriving from shared history

Aboriginal English has developed among people with a shared history of being colonised and made subject to laws imposed by the colonising group.

The term *gubba/gubbah/gub*, derived from "government" and widely used in South-eastern Australia to refer to white people, shows the identification of white people in general with government. Terms *gunjabal,* from 'constable' and *bulliman,* from 'policeman' are used mainly in New South Wales and Queensland, respectively, to refer to police officers (as noted in Chapter 5, section 2.1.2). All these terms have retained the pronunciation features which help to make them less comprehensible to those to whom they refer. In Western Australia the term *monaych/monarch*, derived from the Nyungar word for 'black cockatoo' (Arthur 1996:160) is widely used as an in-group way of referring to a uniformed police officer, while *devil* is used to refer to a plain clothes officer.

The shared colonial history has also entailed being talked down to as *boy* and threatened with *flogging*. (See Chapter 5, section 2.2.1 and Chapter 6 section 2.2). These terms have been retained, but with different reference. *Boy* is an affiliative tag and *flog* is used where non Aboriginal Australians would say "beat" or "belt." Adams (2014:11) suggests that (at least in Victoria), to say *I'm gonna flog you if you don't…* is a use of "hyperbolic humour." The term *boss*, has been carried over into the Aboriginal English vernacular as an adjective implying strong approval.

The shared history has also entailed (as mentioned previously) the experience of the stolen generations, where children of mixed Aboriginal/non-Aboriginal parentage could be removed from their parents, a process built into Aboriginal English with the expression *taken away.* The Aboriginal preventative response to

this, taking children into the care of relatives in remote places, is remembered as being *taken over.*

6.4.2 Interconnectedness

The second major cultural-conceptual imperative which has strongly influenced the development of Aboriginal English is interconnectedness. Where the dominant cultures in which the English language has been maintained have accommodated an approach to reality which is analytical and which understands abstracted elements apart from the whole, Aboriginal culture is strongly oriented the other way. Linguist Bob Dixon (2000:23), citing the words of anthropologist Mervyn Meggitt, has described the Aboriginal view of the universe as one:

> ...that regarded man, society and nature as interlocking and interacting elements in a larger, functionally integrated totality. According to Aboriginal belief, each variable in the system had an eternal, moral commitment to maintain itself unchanged for the benefit of others and to contribute to the proper functioning of the system as a whole.

Bob Randall, a senior member of the Yankunytjatjara people of the Northern Territory, produced a film about Aboriginal culture which premiered at the Sydney Film Festival in 2006. He named the film *Kanyini*, which translates as "interconnectedness" and in the course of the film he commented: "The purpose of life is to be part of all that there is...We are connected to everything else." Looking around at the natural environment, he commented: "Everything you can see is my family." When we observe the ways in which English has been nativized by its Aboriginal speakers, we find the conceptual imperative of reinforcing the interconnectedness of all things ever-present, as we see a constant reduction in the differentiation between, for example, past and present, time and space, human and animal, human and non-human and between language and the reality for which it stands.

6.4.2.1 Less segmented time differentiation
The marking of time difference through verb tense is not obligatory in Aboriginal English:

> *These kangaroos with big spears come along* (Perth, W.A.)
> *We went to um Ellery Gorge. We get, um fish and we swim* (Alice Springs, N.T., Harkins 1994:204)
> *He come in the day after* (La Perouse, N.S.W.)
> *Then they get two turtles in the bay* (Yarrabah, Qld, Alexander 1965:57)
> *There was a man who live in a small suburb near Melbourne* (Goulburn Valley, Vic., McKenry 1995:64)

The term *the old people* can refer to ancestors, not just the present generation. The expression [*a*] *long time ago* is modified by the deletion of the past marker *ago*: *Long time we caught two down the river* (Carnarvon, W.A.). Similarly, *not long ago* will be reduced to *not long* (Königsberg & Collard 2002:113).

Experience may be recalled by event rather than time reference: *When we was down Geraldton...* (Perth, W.A.).

6.4.2.2 Reduced differentiation between time and space

The expression [*a*] long way away is modified by the deletion of the distance marker *away*: *long way country* (Flint 1971).

It is common in Aboriginal English to refer to a distance in terms of the time taken to reach it rather than in terms of the space dimension.

6.4.2.3 Reduced differentiation between genders

The third person singular personal pronoun *he* may be unmarked for gender, as noted in Chapter 4, section 3.2:

e [he] *sleep ere* (Kununurra, W.A.)
when e little girl (McLaren Creek, N.T.)
e nice country(One Arm Point, W.A.)

6.4.2.4 Reduced number differentiation

The marking of plural number on the noun, adverb or verb is reduced:

two window, two big turtle (Pilbara region, W.A.)
dey was out bush (Goldfields region, W.A.)
when he finish he go home (Western Desert, W.A.)
Sometime we go early (Western Desert, W.A.)

6.4.2.5 Reduced differentiation between human and animal

Metaphorical reference to humans as animals is common, in that, as Sharifian (2011a:14) has put it, "[t]here are no such categories as animals, human beings and plants in the Dreamtime":

He's a horse 'He's expert in his job' (South-west) (Chapters 5, section 2.1.1, 6 section 2.3)
Emu [reference to a person with thin legs and distinct Aboriginal ankles] (general)

At least in the South-west, the "chitty chitty", a bird Australians call "Willy Wagtail" evokes the schema of children, and its presence can be considered to carry a message about children.

It is also common to talk of animals in human terms, as in:

This kangaroo big bloke, big, big boomer (Wiluna, W.A.)
They tell liar, they are still, that they are stick 'They pretend to be a stick' (reference to goannas, Pilbara region, W.A.)
We bin find cheeky animal 'We found a dangerous animal'
Nyorn, poor thing, poor dog 'How I sympathise with the poor dog'

6.4.2.6 Reduced differentiation between human and non-human

Terms normally reserved for non-human referents may be used with humans, as in:

He's a big man – very long eh? (Groote Eylandt, N.T.)
They all cruel narrow 'They [her sisters] are all really thin' (Perth, W.A.)
Me and Tony had a smash 'Me and Tony had a fight' (Geraldton, W.A.)
We're gonna have a bit of a charge 'We are going to drink alcohol' (general)

The reverse also occurs, in that a tree may be described as *bony* (Malcolm et al. 2002b:65) and it can be said of the moon, or the sun, that it *jumps up* (Königsberg & Collard 2002:37).

6.4.2.7 Embodiment of meaning

Especially in the morphology of Aboriginal English there are strong tendencies towards the embodiment of meaning, in that the linguistic form is made more reflective of the meaning conveyed, as in:

– repetition of the verb to convey extent:
 Next day we bin walking, walking, walking (Western Desert)
 The two men dug, dug, dug got two goannas (Goldfields, W.A.)
 I bin wait, wait, wait: nothing (Alice Springs, Harkins 1994:151)
 He...banged it an banged it an banged it (South-west)
– elongation of the vowel to convey extent:
 goanna oh bi-i-ig one (Perth, W.A.)
– nominalizing suffix to provide embodiment to adjectives:
 That kid clever one 'That kid is clever' (Western Desert, W.A.)
 [*What do they look like?*] *Sweet one.* (Fitzroy Crossing, W.A.)
– nominalizing suffix to provide embodiment to pronouns:
 wefella 'we' (pl.)

youfella 'you' (pl.)
mintwofella 'we' (dual) (Halls Creek, W.A., and elsewhere)
– nominalizing suffix to provide embodiment to numbers:
Twofella bin go 'n wait for... them bullock (Central Australia, Koch 2000a:50)
– providing greater embodiment to mass nouns by pluralizing them like count nouns:
these big grasses 'the tall grass' (Tardun, W.A.)
they break the woods and put it together to make a fire 'they split wood up and put it together to light a fire' (Western Desert, W.A.)
– employing associative plural markers in place of inflections:
shooting alla bird (Strelley, W.A.)
get lotta sheep (Onslow, W.A.)
– employing periphrastic possessive marker in place of inflection:
name belong canoe 'canoe's name' (Palm Island, Qld.)
– employing explicit possessive adjective:
an one gotta long hair 'and one with long hair' (Pilbara region, W.A.)
– marking time time adverbials explicitly as such:
Come back afternoontime (Western Desert, W.A.)
– marking manner adverbials explicitly as such:
E just got up quick way (Geraldton, W.A.)
We went Ceduna way (Coober Pedy, S.A.)

6.4.3 Orientation to motion

A third cultural conceptual imperative is an orientation to motion, whereby, in keeping with the ongoing motion of the Dreaming figures (and the Travel Schema), static representations are made more dynamic.

Nouns, adjectives and prepositions are frequently converted to verbs, as discussed in Chapter 5, section 2.1.1:

Instead of downing them they'd more or less praise them (Perth, W.A., Collard 1997:130)
I schooled in Derby (Malcolm et al 2000:51)
...growl im (Derby, W.A.)
Las week our family...we go rabbitin (10 year old boy, Perth, W.A.)
You'll have to hot it up (Malcolm et al 1999b:46)
shelling means *collecting shells* (Malcolm et al 1999b:45)
They cheek em (Malcolm et al 2000:51)
She blackeye[d] Amy (Perth)

Where Standard English foregrounds existence, through the use of the verb *to be* to link a subject with a complement or to form a compound verb, Aboriginal

English gives priority to what is depicted, by avoiding the verb *to be,* as in the following examples from Malcolm 2002b:31:

> *E big-one* 'It's big'
> *You the teacher?* 'Are you the teacher?'
> *Easy-one, unna?* 'It's easy, isn't it?'
> *We workin* 'We're working'
> *We gonna work* 'We are going to/will work'
> *E got smash* 'It was smashed'
> *E got lotta bird over dere* 'There are birds over there'

Standard English has two alternatives in representing the passive voice, i.e. using the verb *be*, as in *The job was done*, or using the verb *get,* as in *The job got done.* Aboriginal English, as we might predict, avoids the first and uses the second, more active, alternative. It also chooses to use the verb *get* in an inchoative sense when depicting human subjects, as in *He get wild* (Yarrabah, Qld.), and *they get shy* (Carnarvon, W.A.) (discussed in Chapter 4, section 2.3).

Aboriginal speakers encountering English verbs would have been faced with two ways of expressing the future: either by using the modal auxiliary *will/shall* before the verb, or by using the verb *go*. The choice, as noted in chapter 4 (4.2.1.3), fell on *go*, which expresses a stronger sense of motion, and which, unlike the modal auxiliaries, has a greater sense of embodying the movement to the future: *Where you reckon they gonna be?* (Perth, W.A.).

Aboriginal English, as has previously been noted (Chapter 4, section 2.7.2; this chapter, section 2.2), sometimes expresses *associated motion* through putting a form of the verb *go* before the main verb, thus highlighting the conceptualization of motion involved in what is represented:

> *Twofella bin go 'n wait for...them bullock* 'Two waited for the bullocks' (Central Australia)
> *...then we went go lookin for um turkeys* '...then we went looking for turkeys' (Perth, W.A.).

A common discourse feature of Aboriginal English is topic chaining through the use of serial verbs. This strengthens the sense of motion in what is being depicted:

> *He ad a shot, missed im* (Carnarvon, W.A.)
> *I got that big tree, knock it down with my hand, lift it up* (Leonora, W.A.)
> *He run that way find a man* (Pilbara region, W.A.).

The orientation to motion is also apparent in the discourse strategy, already discussed (this chapter, section 2.2), of *direct speech switching*, whereby the action

of a narrative is forwarded by bypassing the narrator and moving directly to what the participants are saying.

6.4.4 Orientation to observation

A fourth cultural-conceptual imperative apparent in Aboriginal English is an orientation to observation, which is not hard to account for in view of the longstanding Aboriginal requirement of a highly observant response to the environment for the maintenance of a hunting and gathering lifestyle. Aboriginal communication, as we have noted (2.5.5, 4.1, above), is strongly group-oriented and the group life entails reporting to the group of observations and of their possible implications (as alluded to in 2.2).

Eades (2013:70) has drawn attention to the speech act of *speculative reporting*, whereby inferences are drawn from observations made (noted in Chapter 2, section 5.4). This often involves the use of the term *might be* (sometimes reduced to *mighte,* as noted in chapter 5, section 3.1.3) as in *Might be they fell by accident* (Western Desert, W.A.). An alternative form is *must be*: *Must be you gonna do that again* (Halls Creek, W.A.).

The observational orientation involves a heightened use of deixis, or "features of language which orientate our utterances in time, space, and speaker's standpoint" (Finch 2000:214).

We have already observed (Chapter 4, section 3.4.1) a strong trend in Aboriginal English to heighten the deictic effect by replacing the definite article with the demonstrative, as in:

> *She nearly killed dat snake* (Perth, W.A.)
> *They had big mob tucker at that barbecue* (Brown 1989, Vic.)
> *Is that them caves?* (Millie Boyd, N.S.W.)
> *Them electric one all right eh?* (Yarrabah, Qld.)

The indefinite article may also be replaced by a demonstrative, as in:

> *We pulled up at this crossroads* (Darwin, N.T.)
> *We went to dis windmill* (Wiluna, W.A.).

There, at the end of a phrase or clause, will often perform the function of distal *deictic extension* (Malcolm & Sharifian 2007:391), and may be accompanied by a gesture:

> *I ... found couple near de big tower dere in Mullewa dere* (Geraldton, W.A.)
> *Up in the hills there's a cave there* (Yamatji country, adult).
> *Real big mob over there* (Goulburn Valley, Vic.)

The preposition *here* functions in a similar way with a proximal sense: *So we always talk our own language in class here* (Perth, W.A.). Time can be referenced in a similar way, with *now* and *then*:

> *Well dat fella bin take me now, walkin long footpath now* (Derby, W.A.)
> *He left school now* (Perth, W.A.)
> *They little bit big now* (Western Desert, W.A.)
> *an that's when we all went inside then* (Perth, W.A.)
> *We didn't have bag then* (Western Desert, W.A.)
> *Then next day we ad a feed den* (Carnarvon, W.A.).

The desire to be specific in the reporting of observations leads often to the syntactic feature of right dislocation (see Chapter 4, section 4.5), where the basic information is given first and then further descriptive information is appended, as in:

> *Little birds. Grey one.* (Western Desert, W.A.)
> *We seen a clapper's egg. Green one.* (Leonora, W.A.)
> *E got new muticar, red one* (N.T.)

Another strategy which appears to be motivated by the desire to be attentive to observation is the discourse feature I have called "surveying" (Chapter 5, section 3.1.4; Malcolm 1999a:50) whereby the person reporting on a scene observed will, as it were, zoom out to include everything, not only the items which are relevant to the main event being reported on. This is discussed as an example of the inclusiveness of Aboriginal discourse, in section 2.2 of this chapter.

6.4.5 Awareness of the transcendent

A fifth cultural-conceptional imperative which has affected the nativization of English is the need to include reference to transcendent powers which are impinging on the human experience. We have already looked (in 2.2 of this chapter) at the pervasiveness of the "Scary Things" schema which often informs oral narratives by Aboriginal English speakers in Western Australia. Research in bicultural Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal teams reported in Malcolm et al (1999a and 1999b) helped to show the salience of the transcendent dimension to Aboriginal students and the apparent inaccessibility of the relevant schemas to their non-Aboriginal teachers. The following extract from an interaction between an Aboriginal student and an Aboriginal Islander Education Worker (AIEW) in Roebourne, W.A., cited from Malcolm et al 1999b:40, shows the student's awareness of the teacher's misunderstanding when a classmate was talking about the

wirlo bird, and need for the AIEW to help the teacher understand what the student had been talking about:

Student:	*Samantha was tellin us for news, teacher didn't even know what she was talkin 'bout an if they go whistling too an in Nyungar thas means like someone dyin or something like*
AIEW:	*Death bird thas*
Student:	*Yeap*
AIEW:	*She was tellin us the same thing, an I had to help her because I knew a lot about. The wirlo bird, it's a death bird or wha- someone very sick or they're lost.*

In subsequent research, Sharifian and associates (Sharifian et al. 2004, 2012) systematically attempted to explore the ways in which Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal listeners comprehended one another. It was shown that teachers were often unsure about how to interpret extended utterances in Aboriginal English and that, lacking access to the schemas underlying the Aboriginal students' utterances, they depended on non-Aboriginal schemas to help them make sense of them. Aboriginal students, asked to repeat what they had had read to them from school literacy materials, often looked for linguistic cues which might be relevant to their existing schemas to help them towards understanding. The process of applying a schema from one culture to the interpretation of texts from another was called *reschematization,* and it was found that it often led to misinterpretation. In particular, it was found that, where there was no transcendent meaning intended in the non-Aboriginal text, Aboriginal students would find one triggered by particular cues.

One of the stories to which the Aboriginal students were asked to respond could be briefly summarised as follows:

> Rose's husband has **died** and she sits by the **fire** with her **dog**, John Brown. One day a **cat** appears in the garden and John Brown – but not Rose – wants to send it away. Then Rose **falls ill** and John Brown, in distress, has to allow the cat into the house to help Rose recover.

The words which appear in bold all acted for the Aboriginal students as triggers of a transcendent meaning. The operation of evil spirits, perhaps *balyits*, was seen in the fact that Rose's husband had died and that Rose fell ill. The fire, and the dog, were seen as positive forces for Rose's protection, but the cat's appearance could have been an omen. Both Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal students were invited to retell the story, but only the Aboriginal students saw in it a transcendent meaning. Some, indeed, reschematized the story further, by suggesting, for example, that Rose sat near the fire because she was sick, that the cat warned

them that a ghost was coming and that they might die and that the cat died at the end.

This research highlighted the fact that Aboriginal English carries for its speakers transcendent meanings which are not readily accessed by non-Aboriginal speakers. Some of these meanings relate to the Scary Things schema, which is concerned with the involvement of spiritual powers in ordinary people's lives. Others relate to the also transcendent area of traditional sacred knowledge. Hence, Aboriginal speakers will see transcendent meanings such as the following:

> *clever* 'spiritually powerful'
> *dangerous* 'hazardous because of the possible effect of spiritual powers'
> (Arthur 1996:24)
> *law* 'cultural and spiritual knowledge'
> *ceremony* 'a cultural ritual'
> *man* 'initiated man'
> *cut* 'circumcise'
> *smoking the house* 'using smoke to expel unwelcome spirits'.

6.5 Conclusion

This chapter has attempted to support the view that Aboriginal English cannot be accounted for unless the cultural-conceptual dimension is taken into account. The variation which separates Aboriginal English from Australian English is not arbitrary, but is the result of the adoption of English by Aboriginal speakers to serve their distinctive communicative needs, including the need to express cultural conceptualizations which the language, as they found it, was not able adequately to carry. English, therefore, had to be made capable of supporting new categorizations, schematizations and forms of metaphor. The driving force behind the changes in English came from cultural-conceptual imperatives, of which it is suggested the most powerful were those towards group orientation, interconnectedness, orientation to motion, orientation to observation and awareness of the transcendent. In the next chapter the historical background against which these changes took place will be considered.

7 History

7.1 Introduction

We have claimed that English has come to be for Aboriginal people the repository of their longstanding and ever-evolving conceptualizations of the world that surrounds them, the means they use to embody and express their distinctive perceptions. More than that, as Sommer (1974:39) has put it, it "serves as a unifying and identifying characteristic of the Aborigines almost everywhere." If this is the case, it is a remarkable demonstration of the human capacity, over seven generations or less, to nativize a foreign language to the point where what was completely foreign is completely enculturated. It is the object of this chapter to trace, as best we can, the course of this transformation.

7.2 An outline of early contact history

It has been noted (Leitner 2004b:3) that Australia has always been "a host to many languages." It is likely that there were, prior to colonization, some 250 distinct indigenous languages and numerous dialects. Aboriginal multilingualism enabled trade routes to develop across the continent (Hill 2002:73). Pre-colonial contact with South-East Asian fishermen traders, usually called Macassans, to the north of Australia, had continued for at least 300 years and it has been estimated (Evans 1992:46) that northern Australian languages contain 200-300 Macassan loanwords. The Macassan contact entailed the use of a Macassan Pidgin, and this may have been later modified for communication across Aboriginal groups (Harris 1985:148). The 17th century saw Australia visited by European explorers, including William Jansz, who came from Holland to Weipa, Cape York (Leitner 2004b:39), Abel Tasman, another Dutchman, who landed in Tasmania in the mid-century, Luis Váez de Torres, the Spaniard, who navigated between Australia and New Guinea, and, later, the Englishman William Dampier who visited the north-west of Western Australia. The most significant contact, from the point of view of colonisation, came in the 18th century, when Lieutenant (later Captain) James Cook, in 1770, made landfall at Botany Bay and had his first meeting with Aboriginal people. Later, he came ashore again near what is now Cooktown, in North Queensland, needing time to make repairs to his ship the *Endeavour*. While the ship was undergoing repairs, Cook, Joseph Banks, and other members of his crew were able to interact with the speakers of the Guugu Yimidhirr language, making a word list which, as noted in chapter 5, famously included the word later transferred into English as *kangaroo*.

Cook's positive report to the British government contributed to the decision made to establish a settlement at Botany Bay (later, Port Jackson). Primarily, this was to be a penal settlement which would ease the pressure on British prisons. According to a report made by an officer from the First Fleet, (An Officer 1789:21) the intention of transportation of convicts to Australia was put forward to them as both punitive and potentially leading to rehabilitation. The governor, in addressing the prisoners, is reported to have commented on:

> *their former conduct which occasioned them to be sent to this place, observing that the humanity of the English laws yet gave them an opportunity to expiate their offences and so much to their advantage that while their situation had placed them beyond the reach of temptation, it also afforded them room to become good, even opulent men, as many of the first settlers in the western world had been convicts like themselves.*

The settlement was, of course, also seen as serving British political and economic interests in what could easily have been seen as a potentially contested part of the world (Malcolm & Koscielecki 1997:45).

The First Fleet of eleven ships set out from Portsmouth with two years' stores and about 1,000 passengers, 700 of whom were convicts, on the 13th May 1787. After a 36 week voyage they arrived at Botany Bay on the 20th January 1788 (Tench 2012 [1789]). Captain Lieutenant Watkin Tench was among these first arrivals and he stayed at Port Jackson for four years. His second report on this experience, published in 1793, contained this reference to the Aboriginal people and their response to the intruders:

> *Our intercourse with them was neither frequent or cordial. They seemed studiously to avoid us, either from fear, jealousy or hatred. When they met with unarmed stragglers they sometimes killed and sometimes wounded them. I confess that, in common with many others, I was inclined to attribute this conduct to a spirit of malignant levity. But a farther acquaintance with them, founded on several instances of their humanity and generosity (which shall be noted in their proper places), has entirely reversed my opinion and led me to conclude that the unprovoked outrages committed upon them by unprincipled individuals among us caused the evils we had experienced. To prevent them from being plundered of their fishing-tackle and weapons of war, a proclamation was issued forbidding their sale among us, but it was not attended with the good effect which was hoped for from it.* (Tench 2012 [1793]:91).

It was, indeed, not only language which separated the indigenous people from the colonists, but multiple aspects of their respective ways of life. The Aborigines were naked and the colonists clothed, which meant that at first Aborigines had difficulty differentiating male colonists, with their shaven faces, from female colonists. Tench commented: "Of the use and benefits of clothing these people appear to have no comprehension" (Tench 2012 [1789]:52).

The Aboriginal lifestyle seemed to the colonists pre-eminently concerned with survival needs. As Tench put it, "perhaps, no words could unfold to an Indian [i.e., Aborigine] the motives of curiosity which induce men to encounter labour, fatigue and pain, when they might remain in repose at home, with a sufficiency of food" (Tench 2012 [1793]:188). The colonists tried to demonstrate to the Aborigines their moral code by bringing them to observe the flogging of a man who had stolen fishing tackle from an Aboriginal woman, but the message did not get across: "There was not one of them that did not testify strong abhorrence of the punishment and equal sympathy with the sufferer" (Tench 2012 [1793]:184).

Governor Phillip's commission, with respect to the Aborigines, was "to open an intercourse with them and to conciliate their affections; every one in the colony was to be enjoined to live in amity and kindness with them; they were not to be wantonly destroyed or unnecessarily interrupted in their occupations" (Barton 1889:129). In keeping with this, it was reported:

> *He seems not to have lost any opportunity of going among the natives whenever and wherever they were to be met with, making particular inquiries into their habits and customs, and endeavouring by every means in his power to conciliate them* (Barton 1889:281).

However, the reticence of the Aboriginal people in coming into contact with the colonists caused Phillip to resort to the strategy of kidnapping individuals to enable both sides to have more intensive contact with their respective languages. Thus, a young man, Arabanoo, came to live in the governor's quarters. He was fed and clothed and bathed, fettered and kept under guard. Eventually a level of trust developed between him and his captors. He shared some of the words of his language with them and he began to learn English. In time, Phillip began to depend on him as an interpreter. In this role, he came in contact with some of his people who had caught small-pox, and he himself died from this disease just eighteen weeks after having been kidnapped.

Bennelong was another young man who was kidnapped. He showed exceptional skills in learning English. Tench 2012 [1793]:118 notes of him:

> *He acquired knowledge, both of our manners and language, faster than his predecessor had done. He willingly communicated information, sang, danced and capered, told us all the customs of his country and all the details of his family economy.*

Though Bennelong was to escape confinement, he would continue to serve as a go-between for the governor and the local people and eventually be one of the first Aboriginal people to be taken on a trip to England "to acquire the 'taste' of civilisation" (Malcolm & Koscielecki 1997:13). A letter dictated by Bennelong

in 1796 has been claimed to be the first written use of English by an Aboriginal person (Maher 2013).

The early records suggest that, although most Aborigines were not initially interested in adopting the culture or language of the colonists (Troy 1990:9), those who set themselves to learn English surprised the colonists with their skill at doing so (Reynolds 1987:103; Troy 1990:23, 62). Within the first 30 years after the British came, the first school would be set up in Parramatta to teach Aboriginal children English (Leitner 2004b:45). However, schooling would not be the main means by which English would come to be used by most Aboriginal people.

The earliest contacts between Aboriginal people and the settlers involved the use of gesture and the offering of gifts on the part of the colonists. Tench (2012 [1788]:42) reports, however, that "our toys seemed not to be regarded as very valuable." The colonists drew on Cook's Guugu Yimidhirr wordlist using the word *kangaroo* (see Chapter 5, 2.1.2), but found that the locals assumed this could be applied to any animal except a dog (Tench 2012 [1788]:54). The colonists found that, to the Aborigines, the emu was not a bird, as it could not fly (Tench 2012 [1793]:241). Tench was impressed with the prominence of vowels in the Sydney language and the sonorous sound it gave the speakers. He also observed how they tended always to stress the first syllables in their words. In order to talk about the new things the colonists had brought into their lives, they showed a fondness for creating compound nouns, like *goòroobeera,* 'stick of fire', for *gun* and *bèreewolgal*, 'men come from afar' (Tench 2012 [1793]:265, 266). Later, compounds would develop combining English and the local languages, in particular, *kibra men,* 'sailors' and *kibra walk* 'the sailing of the ship' (Malcolm & Koscielecki 1997:12).

It is perhaps worth pausing at this point to consider, from the point of view of the Sydney Aboriginal people, what an adjustment their first exposure to English involved. Heirs to a culture which, over thousands of years, had developed an integrated and unified view of the world they knew, they now had to come to terms with intruders who had no place in it, and who brought with them not only a foreign language but foreign cultural artefacts like clothing, guns, carriages and sailing ships. They needed a means of communication which would enable them to interact about and with this world, yet not one which would entail commitment to it in place of their own culture. Their situation could be compared to that described by Douglas (1976:15) with respect to the Nyungar people of the South-West, coming to terms with English, but not the English of the intruders, rather a form which Douglas calls "Neo-Nyungar":

> *Neo-Nyungar may be seen as the expression of a person torn between two cultures, voluntarily segregated by their unwillingness to commit themselves to one culture or to the other. The*

variant forms of the speech, its vocabulary slant, and its mixed English-Njuŋar̤ structure, may suggest reasons for this unwillingness by pointing to basic psychological uncertainty, to the breakdown of old restraints, and to the conflict with forces tending to obliterate their identity as a distinct people.

Sydney, indeed, would experience more dramatic change as the second and subsequent fleets arrived, bringing more male and female convicts, an increasing number of free settlers and detachments of the New South Wales Corps. In addition, Sydney became a base for sealing and whaling fleets, making it a hub of South Pacific maritime activity, and, linguistically "a veritable melting pot" (Tryon 2001:200). Of necessity, Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal came into increasing contact, since both, for different reasons, claimed an attachment to the same land. As Troy puts it:

> *Given the strong ties between land and occupants in traditional Aboriginal society, the Aborigines were unlikely simply to walk off their land because colonists also occupied it, and in fact did not unless forced to do so. In addition, it was often dangerous for an Aboriginal group to move into the territory of another Aboriginal group because violent hostility was the likely result. Therefore, Aborigines and colonists tended to co-occupy the land while ever the colonists tolerated those circumstances* (Troy 1990:8).

Within the first ten years of settlement, colonists began to travel north, towards Newcastle and Port Macquarie, taking Aboriginal people with them as guides or messengers. Some also moved west, towards the Blue Mountains. As colonists became engaged in agriculture, many Aboriginal people found casual employment on farms. Others joined the crews of whaling or sealing vessels, or continued their fishing activities, selling fish to the colonists.

Inevitably, a mixed and highly variable form of communication developed, enabling a limited level of communication between the Aboriginal people and the colonists. Such a communicative medium, termed a jargon, developed in New South Wales between 1788 and 1845 (Troy 1990:4).

7.3 New South Wales Pidgin

By 1813, with the opening up of the interior of NSW for settlement, displacement of Aboriginal people from their lands increased and contact between Aboriginal people and colonists extended with the pastoral and squatting developments from the 1830s (Troy 1990:1). With people of diverse Aboriginal language backgrounds displaced from their lands, not only in Sydney but elsewhere, a need arose for a *lingua franca* for communication among Aboriginal people as well as for communication with the colonists. In the light of this need, the development

of the unsystematic and diversified jargon into a systematic simplified language, i.e., a pidgin, can be understood.

The research of Troy (1994) has traced the way in which NSW Jargon began to stabilize into NSW Pidgin beginning in Sydney around the turn of the century, becoming firmly established by the 1820s. As Aboriginal people became increasingly involved in the pastoral industry, the use of the pidgin spread ever more widely (Troy 1994:276), and, as the pidgin came to be used in two different social contexts, both inclusive and exclusive of colonists, it diverged into two sociolects, one showing rather more Aboriginal language influence than the other.

It is of the nature of pidgin that it serves as a supplementary means of communication by people who retain their own languages for most purposes. For the colonists, the pidgin was a means of communication with Aboriginal people; for the Aboriginal people, it was a means of communication with the colonists, but increasingly also for communication across language barriers in Aboriginal contexts, through which they could "rationalise the radical social changes they experienced as a result of contact with the colonists" (Troy 1990:7). This latter function helps to account for its rapid expansion and influence in Aboriginal communities.

The fact that the most influential pidgin developed in New South Wales does not mean that it was the only such development. Harris (1985) has referred to the use of an English-based pidgin in Port Essington, Northern Territory, which could have been a relexification of an earlier Macassan Pidgin. Most other pidgins however have shown some influence from NSW Pidgin. Mühlhäusler (1998) has brought together information on the development of pidgin in Western Australia, noting influences of pearlers, gold diggers, the Afghans and the Chinese, but he suggests the local pidgin is not "a totally separate development"; Koch (2000:13) has described some features of "Australian Aboriginal Pidgin English or Australian Pidgin", noting that it "originated in southeastern Australia and spread, with many local variations across most of Australia in the nineteenth century"; he has also described "Central Australian Aboriginal Pidgin", which, again "developed out of New South Wales Pidgin" (Koch 2011:437); Foster, Monaghan and Mühlhäusler (2003:ix) have provided documentation of South Australian Pidgin English, which they see as probably "influenced by the Nautical Jargon and New South Wales Pidgin English"; Dutton (1983) and Meakins (2014) have observed that 19th Century Queensland Pidgin English was a continuation of NSW Pidgin. Sandefur (1991:118) notes: "…there were a number of pidgins that arose quite independently of one another. But there was also a lot of confluence of many of these pidgins, primarily through the movement of the

pastoral industry." It seems clear that, although there have been independent pidgin developments across the nation, the diffused influence of NSW Pidgin has been pervasive.

It is difficult to know the details of the development of NSW Pidgin, since we are largely dependent on incidental written records. On the basis of such records from 18th and 19th century sources, we are able to make the following observations (derived from Malcolm & Koscielecki 1997):

7.3.1 Phonology

– word-initially, unstressed syllables might be deleted or devocalised, as in: *pose* 'suppose', *bout* 'about', *gain* 'again', *blieve* 'believe', *bacco* 'tobacco', *member* 'remember'
– word-initially, where /s/ was followed by a plosive or a nasal, the /s/ might be deleted, as in: *top* 'stop', *peak* 'speak', *nuffer* 'snuffers', *moak* 'smoke'
– word-medially, consonant clusters would be simplified, as in *gemmen* 'gentlemen', *mitter* 'mister', *massa* 'master', *waijela* 'white fellow'
– word-finally, consonant clusters would be simplified by the deletion of a plosive, as in: *ol* 'old', *tausan* 'thousand', *frighten* 'frightened', *dum* 'dump'
– front vowels /ɪ/, /ɛ/ and /æ/ might not be clearly discriminated, so that, for example 'devil' might be represented as *dibil, debble,* or *dable,* 'sit down' as *set down*
– back vowels /ɔ/ and /ɒ/ might be interchanged, so that the Koori borrowing *corban* 'big' might be represented as *corbon, corban,* or *cobawn*
– a plosive might be substituted for an interdental fricative consonant, as in *tousand* 'thousand'
– a plosive might be substituted for a sibilant fricative consonant, as in *tit down* 'sit down'
– a plosive might be substituted for a fricative consonant, as in *gib* 'give'
– initial */h/* might be elided as in *im* 'him'
– voiced and voiceless consonants might not always be discriminated, as in *towsand/dousand* 'thousand'

7.3.2 Morpho-syntax

– the 3rd person singular might be unmarked in present tense, as in *pose e rain* 'if it rains' (1818–1827)

- *been* might be used as a past tense maker, as in *all black pellow been say so* 'all the Aborigines said that' (1830)
- alternatively, the past tense might be unmarked, as in *Who tell him?* 'Who told him?' (1852)
- no auxiliary might be used to form the continuous aspect, as in *the bone coming out* 'the bone is/was coming out' (1818–1827)
- the past participle might be used to form the perfect, as in *Massa gone out* 'The master has gone out' (1834)
- future tense might be unmarked, as in *Massa when you come?* 'Master, when will you come?' (1818–1827)
- there might be no copula with a subject complement, as in *That my picka-ninny* 'That's my child' (1816)
- there might be no auxiliary with a yes/no question, as in *You hear, massa?* 'Do you hear, master?' (1830)
- there might be no auxiliary, and alternative WH- form, with a WH question, as in *What for you jerran?* 'Why are you afraid?' (1827–1835)
- there might be no auxiliary with the passive voice, as in *Black fellow killed here murry long while ago* 'An Aborigine [or Aborigines] was/were killed here a very long time ago' (1827–1835)
- *-it* or *−im* might mark transitivity on the verb, as in *killim* 'hit' (1788–1800), *eatit* 'eat' (1818–1827)
- the infinitive might not be preceded by *to*, as in *He no learnt him read book* (1818)
- *no* might be used to negate the verb (as in the above example)
- adverbs might lack the *−ly* inflection, as in *quick* 'quickly' (1813)
- nouns might be unmarked for plural, as in *White fellow kill and eat black fellow* 'Whites kill and eat blacks' (1818–1827)
- noun/pronoun possession might be unmarked or marked with a form of *belong*, as in *brodder belonging to me* 'my brother' (1830)
- pronouns might be unmarked for case, as in *Me like the bush best* 'I like the bush best' (1818–1827)
- the 3rd person singular pronoun might be unmarked for gender, *he* 'he/she/it' (1818–1827)
- the definite article might not be used, as in *to keep poor dead black man warm* 'to keep the poor dead black man warm' (1818–1827)
- the demonstrative might replace the definite article, as in *dat dam blackpel-low killit whitepellow* 'the damn Aborigine killed the white man' (1827)
- prepositions might not be used, as in *Mary come me* 'Mary came to me' (1830); *Dat get it plenty bark* 'They got plenty of bark' (1830); *We look out for you long time* 'We were looking out for you for a long time' (1830)

–   *too much* might be used to mean 'many', as in *Too much dibil dibil sit down there* 'There are many devils there' (1856–7).

Pidgins are driven by the need to communicate where intense contact exists with speakers of mutually unintelligible languages (Velupillai 2015:15). It follows that they are economical and pragmatic means of communication sufficient to cover the needs of the moment but not necessarily seen as enduring. To meet these needs, pidgins involve simplification of the most influential input language on which they are based (the superstrate) at the levels of phonology, morphosyntax and lexicon. Thus, typically, the number of phonemes will be reduced and the syllable structure reduced to CV (consonant-vowel) rather than having multiple consonants coming together. In morphology, inflectional endings will be avoided and sometimes replaced with the use of free forms. The noun phrase of a pidgin typically lacks definite and indefinite articles and does not mark case, gender or number. The verb phrase depends more on adverbials than on verb inflection to mark tense. Pidgins normally do not use a copula verb. Their lexicon is smaller than that of the superstrate and includes fewer function words. The data we have gathered on NSW Pidgin show that it conforms to most of these expectations, though it does vary from them in the tendencies (common to Aboriginal languages) to form compound nouns and to inflect the transitive verb. In the view of Meakins (2014:378), "Pidgin English seems to have acrolectalised into Aboriginal English by 1890 in most of southern Australia including Victoria…, NSW, southern Queensland, the southern part of South Australia… and Tasmania."

7.4 Creoles

The fundamental difference between a creole and a pidgin is that the creole has mother tongue speakers. As Mühlhäusler (1991:160) has put it, "[c]reolisation illustrates the human capacity to 'create' language." A [creole] language is created out of a pidgin when children grow up hearing the pidgin, rather than the mother tongue of their community members, spoken in their homes and communities. This can happen, for example, where people who speak different mother tongues are living in close contact and need to use pidgin for much of their everyday communication.

This condition was met at the Roper River Mission, Ngukurr, Northern Territory, shortly after the beginning of the 20th century. As J. W. Harris (1991:200– 201) has explained, European drovers, miners and settlers began to converge on the area with their pastoral and mining interests and the development of the

Overland Telegraph, and large numbers of Aboriginal people, threatened with extermination by gangs seeking to defend their projects, sought refuge in the mission set up by the Anglican church at Roper River. Among these people at least eight different languages were represented. Cattle station pidgin, showing continuity with NSW Pidgin, was their common medium. Some 70 Aboriginal children in the mission school were exposed to limited English in the school and pidgin for the rest of the time and, as Harris puts it, "it was this younger generation who, in the course of their lifetime, created the creole, manipulating the lexical resources available to them and drawing on linguistic universals to create a language which catered for all their communicative needs" (Harris 1991:201–2). This interpretation has been questioned by Munro (Munro and Mushin 2016; Meakins 2014) in that she sees the development of the creole as having taken place over two to three generations, and having taken place among adults as well as children.

A separate but parallel development occurred around the same time in Cape York Peninsula and ten of the neighbouring islands of the Torres Strait, where, through the convergence of speakers of local languages, English, Kanaka Pidgin English and various forms of Pacific Pidgin English (bearing influence of NSW Pidgin), a generation of children came to be dependent on pidgin as their first language (Shnukal 1991). The use by parents of English (effectively, Pidgin English), in speaking to the children, was encouraged by European teachers as an aid to their schooling and, at least in Cape York Peninsula, the housing of schoolchildren in mission dormitories favoured innovation in the use of the pidgin (Mühlhäusler 1991:169). Starting from the generation of school children, a significant body of first language speakers of Torres Strait Creole emerged.

Kriol (the name now usually used for Roper River Creole) and Torres Strait Creole remain dominant linguistic influences among Aboriginal people in the northern and remote areas of Australia and creole influence has been seen in developments in Aboriginal English and in mixed languages such as Gurindji Kriol (Meakins 2008).

For a pidgin to become a creole, some of what has been lost through pidginization needs to be regained, though often through other influences, including that of substrate language/s rather than the superstrate. In particular, the pidgin requires structural expansion (Mühlhäusler 1991:160) to enable it to carry a greater communicative load. Study of continuities between Aboriginal English and its input varieties (Malcolm 2013a, 2014 b,c), has suggested that the distinctiveness of the dialect (even in urban areas) may owe more to creole than to any other linguistic influence. Some evidence of creole influence on the grammatical structures of Aboriginal English (including simplifications retained from pidgin and creole-specific developments) is summarized below:

7.4.1 Evidence for continuity in grammar

a) Morphological continuity of Aboriginal English with Creole and with traditional languages

Morphological feature	Aboriginal English	Continuities (Kriol/TS Creole)
Noun plural marking	*Those.. are nothing but **piece of paper*** [La Perouse] Malcolm & Koscielecki 97:62	K: Sharpe & Sandefur 77:55 *med gija* 'They (two) are mates'
Noun/pronoun possessive marking	*my **cousin** bike* [Leonora] Kaldor & Malcolm 1979:421	K: Sharpe & Sandefur 77:55 *yumob mani* 'your money'
Possessive pronoun (no gender)	*One song e name is 'O Carol'* (Eagleson, Kaldor & Malcolm 1982:87 [Broome])	K: Sharpe & Sandefur 77:55 *im asbin* 'her husband';
Personal pronoun (dual/plural)	***youfella*** = you pl [Onslow] Kaldor & Malcolm 1982:102; ***me'n'you*** = 1p dual incl; ***youtwofella*** = 2p dual [Barrow Ck] (Koch 2000a:41)	K: Hudson 1981:45 *yubala, yundubala;* Sharpe & Sandefur 77:59 *Dubala bin lodimab* 'They loaded it up'
Personal pronoun (no gender)	*my mother, ...**e** talk* [Wyndham] Kaldor & Malcolm 1979:422	K: Sharpe & Sandefur 77:58 *ledi im bin dalim me* 'the lady told me'
Demonstrative for definite article	***dat** dog for Alan mob* 'Alan's family's dog' (Butcher 2008:634)	K: Hudson 1981:56 *Det stik bin pein-im mi* 'The splinter is causing me pain.' Sandefur 1991:207 *Det modikga bin breikdan* 'The vehicle stopped working'
Compounding of nouns	*eye glass, finger ring, cold sick, foot track* (Kaldor & Malcolm 1982:98)	K: Sharpe & Sandefur 1977:60 sengran 'sand'; 77:53 dilib 'tea' 77:54 bujiged 'cat' Hudson 1981:153 aiglaj 'spectacles' TSC: Shnukal 1991:192 big win 'cyclone', smol kaikai 'snack'

b) Syntactic continuity of Aboriginal English with Creole and with traditional languages

Syntactic feature	Aboriginal English	Continuities (K /TSC)
Non-use of copula to relate a subject to a complement	*Where John?* [Port Hedland] (Geytenbeek 1977:40) *This a big one* [Alice Springs] (Sharpe 1977b:48)	K: Sandefur 1991a:209 *Dis ti prapa swit* 'This tea is really sweet'

(continued)

Syntactic feature	Aboriginal English	Continuities (K /TSC)
Postclausal modification ('afterthought')	*We get five sheeps, **fat one*** [Onslow]Kaldor & Malcolm 1979:423	K: Hudson 1981:194 *tray-im langa natha-wan wota o:: lilbit hela-wan* 'tried a different route where the water was shallower'
Tag question forms	*...school is real big, **eh?*** [Sydney] Eagleson 1982:133	K: Sharpe & Sandefur 77:57 *ngi* or *intit,* with rising pitch
Resumptive pronoun ('double subject')	*Me and these other guys, **we** roll up* [Sydney] Eagleson 1982:129	K: Sharpe & Sandefur 77:58 TSC: Shnukal 1991:189 *Mary i bin graule em* 'Mary quarrelled with her'
No determiner before noun	*She big dobba* [Perth] Collard 2011:27	K: Sharpe & Sandefur 77:56 *im bin megim ginu* 'he has made a canoe'
Ellipsis of preposition *from*	*we see the lights coming – long way* (Lennon 2011:60) [Coober Pedy, S.A.]	Kimberley Language Research Centre 1996:50: *Det gardiya bin siyim langwei* 'the white man saw him from a long way off'
Ellipsis of adverb *ago*	*...an longtime, when R go in hospital...* (Kaldor & Malcolm 1979:415) [Fitzroy Crossing, W.A.]	K: Hudson 1981:29 *Longtaim wen ai bin lidl...* 'A long time ago when I was little...'

c)   Morphological continuity of Aboriginal English with creole

Morphological feature	Aboriginal English	Continuity (K/TSC)
Invariant reflexive pronoun	*wash **ourself*** [Perth] Collard 2011:33	K: Hudson 1981:121 (suffix *–jelp*) TSC: Shnukal 1988:33
Personal pronoun (non-distinction of nom/acc case())	*Me and him went swimming* (Kaldor & Malcolm 1991:73)	K: Sharpe & Sandefur 77:55 *im bin basaway* 'he died'
Adjectival suffix *–one*	*muticar, **red-one*** [pan-regional] Butcher 2008:635	K: Hudson 1981:181 *tray-im langa natha-wan wota o:: lilbit shela-wan* 'tried a different route where the water was shallower' Sandefur 1979:170 *jet waitwan rok* 'that white rock'
Adjectival suffix *–bala* [-fella]	*Put it with blackfellas' stories* (Malcolm & Koscielecki 1997:64 [La Perouse, N.S.W.)	K: Sharpe & Sandefur 1977:58 *dagbala na* 'It was dark then'; '77:59 *jad drongbaloa strong drink* 'that strong drink'; '77:59,56 *gulbala* 'cool' Sandefur 1979:174 *im hotbala* 'it is hot'; 123 *gudbala* 'good'

(continued)

(continued)

Morphological feature	Aboriginal English	Continuity (K/TSC)
-*bala* [-fella] suffix on numeral	*Twofella* [snakes] *still in that claypan* (Crugnale 1995:55) [Western Desert]	K: Sandefur 1979:105 *fobala lilwan dog* 'four little dogs'
Numeral for definite article	*They saw* **one** *man* [Leonora] Kaldor & Malcolm 1979:122	K: Sandefur 1979:79 *wanbala boni* 'a pony'
Superlative suffix for extent	*catch one bigg***est** *turtle* Butcher 2008:635	K: Sandefur 1979:102 *bigiswan bijibiji* 'very big fish'
Lexical compounds with –*way* = manner	*walkin* **slow way** [Perth] Collard 2011:21	K: Sandefur 1991a:208 *brabli-wei* 'correctly' TSC: Shnukal 1991:187
Formation of future with *gotta*	*An mela new teacher gotta come* 'And our new teacher will come' (Eagleson, Kaldor & Malcolm 1982:91, Fitzroy Crossing)	K: Sandefur 1979:129 *Olabat gada gaman* 'They want/intend to come'
Use of particle *up* with verbs	*roast it up, bury im up, block him up, get jarred up* etc (Malcolm & Sharifian 2007:388)	K: Kimberley Language Research Centre 1996:72: *widimap lon* 'weed the lawn' Sandefur 1991:208 *Ola daga, deibin binijimap* 'They ate all the food'

d) Syntactic continuity of Aboriginal English with Kriol or Torres Strait Creole

Syntactic feature	Aboriginal English	Continuities (K /TSC)
Continuous aspect without *be* auxiliary	**they comin** *this way* [Perth] Collard 2011:7	K: Sandefur 1979:132 *Olabat gaman* 'they come'
Existential clauses with *get* ('there is/ are')	**E got** *some sand* [Broome] Kaldor & Malcolm 1982:86	K: Hudson 1981:95 *I garram wan big eligeita la riba* 'There is a big alligator in the river' TSC: Shnukal 1991 *I gad kap ya* 'there is a cup here'
Passive voice with *get*	*them girls* **mighta got** *picked up* [Perth] Collard 2011:7	K: Hudson 1981:108 *We bin git bog la riba* 'We were bogged in the river'
Serial verbs	*wind* **blow me knock me** *over* [Gnowangerup] Kaldor & Malcolm 79:414	TSC: Shnukal 1988:81 *Dat bot I kam anka ya* 'The boat came and anchored here'
Preverbal past tense marker *bin*	*I* **bin** *run* [Leonora] Kaldor & Malcolm 1979:415	K: Sandefur 1979:128 TSC: Shnukal 1991:190 *Mitu Kathy bin dans…* 'Kathy and I both danced..'
Left dislocation	*Emu egg I bin eat one* (Leonora, W.A.)	K: Sandfur 1991a:208 *Ola daga, deibin binijimap* 'They ate all the food'

(continued)

(continued)

Syntactic feature	Aboriginal English	Continuities (K /TSC)
Embedded observation	*I saw him was running behind me* (Gillespie 1991) [McLaren Creek, NT)	K: Hudson 1981:181 *Mela bin see-im imyu bin breikat* 'We saw an emu started to run'
Verb negation with *no more*	*no more been gaol there that time* (Koch 1991:99) [Central Australia]	K: Sharpe & Sandefur 1977:56 *yu nomo bin albim mi* 'you didn't help me'
Verb negation with non-emphatic *never*	*We never lost our culture* (Harkins 1994:201) [Alice Springs]	TSC: Shnukal 1991:190 *Dalassa neba luk nating deya* 'Dalassa didn't see anything there'
Where as relative pronoun	*That fella weya 'im got one eye…* 'That fella that's got one eye' (Butcher 2008:633)	TSC: Shnukal 1991:191 *Dat stori we yu bin spik I prapa paniwan* 'That story you told was very funny'
Periphrastic marking of possessive	*gun belong to Hedley* (Readdy 1961 [Cherbourg, Qld])	K: Mühlhäusler 1998:21 *Where that money belonga me?* TSC: Shnukal 1991:189 *Mislam i boi blo Kemuel* 'Mislam is Kemuel's son'
Generalized locative preposition *langa*	*E used to stay longa pub* (Eagleson, Kaldor & Malcolm 1982 [Kununurra])	K: Sharpe & Sandefur 77:58 burrum langa debul 'put it on the table'
Generalized locative preposition *la*	*I bin get bump la tree* (Eagleson, Kaldor & Malcolm 1982 [Kununurra])	K: Sandefur 1991a:207 Imbin go-bek la kemp 'He went back home'

While not claiming that Aboriginal English is fully explicable as derived from preceding pidgins and creoles, it is clear that it shows a high level of continuity with these contact varieties. It is possible to discern, in the limited examples given above, three processes which have underlain the morphological and syntactic changes which have been made in order to expand the pidgin input into creole and then to further transform the pidgin/creole input into Aboriginal English.

7.4.2 Processes underlying continuities

7.4.2.1 Retention of simplifications from pidgin
Many of the simplifications of the superstrate which were achieved in pidginization were retained in creole and further maintained in Aboriginal English. These include
– reduced dependence on inflection to show noun plural
– reduced dependence on inflection to show noun genitive

- reduced marking of nominative/accusative case difference
- invariant reflexive pronoun forms
- invariant pronoun forms with respect to gender
- reduced use of SAE definite and indefinite articles
- reduced use of the *be* copula
- reduced use of the auxiliary to form continuous aspect or passive
- reduced use of prepositions
- reduced separation of successive verbs with conjunctions (i.e., parataxis)
- ellipsis of the past-marker *ago*

Incidentally, it may be noted that the phonology of the creoles and of the Aboriginal English have also been influenced by the simplifications we have listed as characterizing NSW Pidgin.

7.4.2.2 Exploitation of alternative options not so prevalent in SAE

Often what is common in creoles and Aboriginal English represents the mainlining of options available but less commonly taken in SAE, for example:
- extended use of the demonstrative in place of the definite article (or, as in non-standard English, in the form of *them* with the plural)
- frequent compounding of nouns
- use of non-emphatic *never* for regular verb negation
- post-clausal modification
- extended use of invariant tag questions
- extended use of phrasal verbs formed with – *up*
- use of the verb *get* to form the passive

7.4.2.3 Introduction of forms not compatible with SAE

- use of the word *one* in place of the definite article
- use of *one* as a suffix to a post-posed adjective
- use of a form of *fella* as suffix to an adjective or numeral
- use of the superlative suffix – *est* to express extent, not excess
- use of – *way* as a post-posed marker of adverbs of manner
- use of – *time* as a post-posed marker of adverbs of time
- formation of the future tense with the auxiliary *gotta*
- use of *bin* as invariant past tense marker
- use of forms of *no more* to negate the verb
- use of a form of *where* as a relative pronoun

- using forms of *belong* for periphrastic marking of noun possession
- using generalized locative prepositions *longa* and *la*
- using modified personal pronouns to enable dual and inclusive/exclusive to be distinguished.

As would be expected, the more strongly creole-related variants will be more prevalent in varieties of Aboriginal English in areas of more current creole influence.

7.4.3 Evidence for continuity in lexis

Lexical feature	Aboriginal English	Continuities (Kriol/TS Creole)
Excess for extent	*Murray black too much saucy* [1844] (Foster et al 2003:v) *Tonight will be too deadly* (Collard 2011:39)	K: Sharpe & Sandefur 77:53 *dumaj* 'very'. Kimberley Language Resource Centre 1996:137 *Bob Morrow…det dugud to me* 'Bob Morrow was really good to me'
Group-specific lexis	*hard to get tucker* (Koch & Koch 1993:65) [NT]	K: Sharpe & Sandefur 77:53 *daga* 'vegetable food'
Semantic shift (metaphor)	*They bin sittin down there, big mob* '(Koch & Koch 1993:22) [NT]	K: Sandefur 1979:184 *jidan* 'dwell, be'
Semantic shift	*They smoke us so we don't swear* (Crugnale 1995:68) [W. Desert]	K: Hudson 1981:152 *jmokam* 'put into smoke for a cure or for protection'
Semantic shift	*Some bird, I think owl, e looking for something to eat in the night, daytime you can't mostly look im* (Arthur 1996:103) [NT]	K: Sandefur 1979:79 *Ai bin luk wanbala boniboni* 'I saw a colt' TSC: Shnukal 1991:190 *Dalassa neba luk nating deya* 'Dalassa didn't see anything there'
Semantic shift	*Old Jack sing out…' There's your boyfriend coming'* (Lennon 2011:50) [Coober Pedy, S.A.]	K: Sandefur 1991:206 *jing-in-at* 'singing out, calling' TSC: Shnukal 1991:192 *paul I singaut* 'cockcrow'
Semantic shift	*finish* 'die' *that one been finish, passed away* (Koch 1991:99) [Central Aust.]	K: Sandefur 1991:209 *Det dog blanga mi bin binij* 'That dog of mine died'

There are many continuities with creoles in the lexis of Aboriginal English. The above examples are not claimed to be at all exhaustive. The relevance to the discussion of the conceptualizations underlying Aboriginal English (in Chapter 6) will be apparent.

7.5 **Other input varieties**

It is important to recognize that the English to which Aboriginal people were exposed in the early stages of contact was by no means homogeneous. Among the colonists were some who spoke an acrolectal variety which would continue to be associated with education and leadership and form the basis of what would be called "cultivated Australian English" (Mitchell & Delbridge 1965). However, the majority of the early arrivals were convicts and they represented a range of social and regional varieties of English. It has been emphasized by Troy (1992:463) that Aborigines interacted regularly with "convict labourers and domestics and the working class of the emancipated and free minority" and that, by 1800, 16% of the Australian population were of Irish origin. It has been argued, on the basis of Aboriginal literature of the late 20th century (Watts 1991), that there was a particular affinity between the Aborigines and the Irish (both, to some extent, marginalized groups) which the Aboriginal writers have attempted to recover. Dialects from Scotland and the north and south of England would also have been consistently in the hearing of Aboriginal people, as would sociolects associated with prison and naval and military service life. The influence of these variant superstrate inputs may be seen both in the developmental processes leading to pidgin and creole and in the restructuring processes of depidginization and decreolization leading towards Aboriginal English.

In order to investigate the possible respective influences of different varieties of English on the development of Aboriginal English, we need a tool which will enable variable features to be traced across relevant dialects and Aboriginal English. Such a tool came available with the development, between 2008 and 2011, at the University of Freiburg, of the electronic World Atlas of Varieties of English (eWAVE). This is a database on morphosyntactic variation which enables 235 variable features to be mapped across varieties of English. This has now been done with the assistance of scholars working on some 76 varieties from across the Anglophone world, enabling the attestation rates of each feature to be recorded, compared and related to the relevant variety types (L1, L2 and pidgins/creoles).

The use of the eWAVE resource has enabled the identification of *angloversals*, or the most widespread features across all 76 varieties. It has also enabled a focus on features common to particular variety types (*varioversals*) and on features limited to particular areas (*areoversals*). To some extent, the findings on areoversals for the British Isles show that some features originating from certain areas are now pan-British, and could have been so when English was transported to Australia. The comments made below on selective retention need to be interpreted with due regard to this.

Aboriginal English is included in the database as a high-contact L1 variety. Also included in the database are the contemporary versions of varieties of British English which would have been brought to Australia, as well as Australian English, Australian Vernacular English, Kriol and Torres Strait Creole. Implications on the respective attestation rates of 86 relevant features, with respect to British English varieties, (from Malcolm 2013a) are summed up below.

7.5.1 Selective retention of British English features showing influence of Irish English

Among the features strongly present in Aboriginal English and shown in the eWAVE database as present in Irish English are:

– *me* in place of *I* in coordinate subjects
  Me and Tommy was awake (Perth, W.A.)
– regularized reflexives paradigm
  ...they don't wash theirselves (Leonora, W.A.)
– object pronoun serving as base for 1st and 2nd person reflexives
  miself 'myself' (Sydney, Eagleson, Kaldor & Malcolm 1982:129)
– object pronoun forms as (modifying) possessive pronouns: third person singular
  I stayed with em... prac'ally all me life (South-west, Königsberg & Collard 2002:83)
– use of *us* + NP in subject function
  Us mob when we go flying fox Samson... 'When we go on the flying fox at Samson' (Kimberley, W.A.)
– use of *us* in object function (with singular referent)
  What's the biggest fish you caught, S.? Show us. (Geraldton, W.A.)
– alternative form for 2nd person plural pronoun
  Do yous want to come to the pools? 'Do you [people] want to come to the pools?' (Malcolm, et.al. 1999a:49)
– Specialized plural markers for pronouns (Filppula 2008:349)
  Youfella bring dem cake 'You brought the cakes' (Kaldor & Malcolm 1979:423)
– subject pronoun drop: referential pronouns
  [*Why else is water so important? Yes, Ken*] *Don't want to die* (Eagleson, Kaldor & Malcolm 1982:187)
– *them* instead of demonstrative pronoun *those* (Filppula 2008:349)
  gotta take them horses back (Harkins 2000:69)

- deletion of auxiliary *be* before progressive
  I goin shame for her 'I'm getting embarrassed for her' (Malcolm et al 2002:64)
- deletion of auxiliary *be* before *gonna*
  nobody gonna take this (Ford 1980)
- deletion of *to* before infinitive (Filppula 2008:333)
  We want build cubby house (Leonora, W.A.)
- proximal and distal demonstratives with *here* and *there*
  more demons pullin up other side there (Perth, W.A., Collard 2011:25)
- unmarked past tense
  ...when he come back on the airplane e was in the ospital (Malcolm et. al. 1999:58)
- *was* for conditional *were*
  If I was in the bush an had no food... (Kimberley, W.A., Eagleson, Kaldor & Malcolm 1982:227)
- multiple negation (Filppula 2008:338)
  We never got no grapes (Alberton, S.A., Wilson 1996:69)
- invariant *don't* for all persons
  Don't matter how far it is (Roebourne, W.A.)
- *never* as preverbal past tense negator
  The dog never died (Kaldor & Malcolm 1985:228)
- Existential *there's* with plural subjects
  There's hospital dere and hostel and a few of the house (Leonora, W.A.)
- Relativizer *what* in non-restrictive clauses
  Face- like the face says lot what you say ya know (Kellerberrin, W.A.)
- Zero relativisation in subject position (Filppula 2008:340)
  That fella 'im got one eye, that my brudda (Butcher 2008:632).

7.5.2 Selective retention of British English features showing influence of Southern English Varieties

Among the features strongly present in Aboriginal English and shown in the eWAVE database as present in South-east or South-west English as well as Irish English (refer Malcolm 2013a) are:
- Unmarked past tense verb
- Demonstrative *them* for *those*
- Regularized reflexive pronoun *hisself, theirself/-selves*
- Use of object pronoun in subject position
- Negation with *never*
- Multiple negation.

The following features are common in Aboriginal English and in Southern English varieties:
– Regularized past tense marking
  The bucket falled off (Leonora, W.A., Eagleson, Kaldor & Malcolm 1982:233)
– Zero suffix on adverb
  move as slow as I can (La Perouse, NSW, Malcolm & Koscielecki 1997:62)
– Tag question with *init*
  More sharks there, init? (Broome, W.A.)

7.5.3 Selective retention of British English features showing influence from Northern English

The following features, common in Aboriginal English, and also in varieties as shown above, are also common in Northern English:
– Zero suffix on adverb
– Negation with *never*
– Multiple negation

Other features present in Aboriginal English and shown in the eWAVE database as present in Northern English are:
– Superlative preceded by *most*
  I had the most weirdest dream (Perth, W.A.)
– Subject-verb non-agreement
  We was looking for some green birds (McLaren Creek, N.T.)
– Zero definite article
  We all went to Alcoota for weekend (Alice Springs, Harkins 1994:204)
– Zero indefinite article
  Somebody bin light fire (Western Desert, Crugnale 1995:16)
– Left dislocation
  Only one they caught (Onslow W.A.)
– Uninverted question
  They can get it? (Yarrabah, Qld., Alexander 1965)

7.5.4 Selective retention of British English features showing influence from Scottish English

A number of features of Scottish English which have been retained in Aboriginal English are also present in other varieties we have considered. These include:

– Second person plural pronoun *yous* (Miller 2008:301)
– Regularized reflexive pronouns *hisself, theirself/-selves* (Miller 2008:301)
– Subject-verb non agreement (Miller 2008:302)
– Negation with *never* (Miller 2008:303)
– Multiple negation

Some features, perhaps more distinctive of, though not exclusive to, Scottish English which are shared with Aboriginal English include:
– Past participle for past tense (Miller 2008:300)
  They seen one green snake (Yarrabah, Qld, Alexander 1965)
– Irregular past tense forms (Miller 2008:300)
  Who brang you? (Goldfields, W.A., Eagleson, Kaldor & Malcolm 1982:233)
– Zero *to/at* after *down* and *up* (Miller 2008:314)
  My pop got emu eggs down his place (Perth, W.A.)
– Tag question with *eh?* (Miller 2008:311)
  I'm the first one, eh? (Coober Pedy, S.A., Lennon 2011:xv)

7.5.5 The place of selective retention

While the continuity of Aboriginal languages is understandably recognized in many aspects of Aboriginal English, it is possible to overlook the continuity that exists also with the other dialects of English to which Aboriginal speakers were exposed as the dialect was being formed. It is clear that some of the differences which distinguish Aboriginal English from Australian English represent different patterns of selective retention of features in the input varieties which were brought to Australia. The different patterns of selection may be related to dominant groups with which Aboriginal people interacted, and to the cultural conceptual principles which caused them to favour certain variants above others. The levelling of the varieties of Aboriginal English across the country would have continued to follow such principles.

7.6 The restructuring continuum

As referred to in chapter 2, it has been argued by Mühlhäusler (1979) that, under the ongoing influence of the superstrate, pidgins and creoles may go through a process of restructuring which will lead them back towards the dominant language from which they were derived. The idea of a continuum helps to account for the fact that there is a good deal of variation in Aboriginal English, between

varieties which are not far removed from Australian English and varieties which are much closer to creole. Illustration of the social and linguistic dimensions of such variation, in Western Australia, has been given, for example, in Kaldor & Malcolm 1979:412-415 and 1985:233-235. Contextual influences will affect not only the degree of retention of pidgin/creole features but also the degree of transfer into the dialect of vocabulary and structures from either traditional language or Australian English and other varieties. Inherent in the idea of a continuum is also the sense of continuity which enables the dialect to be identified with by all who share its underlying cultural conceptualizations.

In Chapter 6, section 3, some of the processes whereby Aboriginal conceptualizations were embedded in English, namely, retention, elimination, modification and extension, were illustrated. These are all entailed in the restructuring continuum. There is a wide range of ways in which these processes may be effected. These have often involved, for example, transfer and re-transfer of terms between English and Aboriginal languages. Eades (2009:3) has observed that, among the words used by Aboriginal English speakers to refer to non-Aboriginal people are:

> *balanda* in Arnhem Land (Northern Territory)
> *gubba* or *gub* in south eastern Australia
> *wajala* in Western Australia
> *walypala* in parts of northern Australia.

In the case of *balanda,* this is, as noted in chapter 5, section 2.2.1.3, a transfer into English of a Malay borrowing from Macassarese, of the word *Hollander*, meaning 'Dutch' (Arthur 1996:134). In each of the other cases the word represents a re-transfer (in the case of *gub*, in a clipped form) into English of a term ("government" or "white-fellow") which has been Aboriginalized by its use in an Aboriginal language context. As previously noted, Eades (2009:4) also refers to the terms *booliman* in Queensland, *gunji* or *gunjibal* in New South Wales which are Aboriginalized re-transfers of the words for "policeman" and "constable." Amery and Buckskin (2012:56) have used the term *re-introduction* to refer to kinship terms from the Kaurna language in South Australia, once supplanted by English terms but now, following the introduction of Kaurna language classes into schools, being replaced in Nunga English by Kaurna terms such as Ngarrpadla 'aunt' and *Kauwanu* 'uncle.' When the Minister for Education (then Rob Lucas) visited the Kaurna Plains School the children addressed him as *Kauwanu Rob* 'Uncle Rob.' It has also been noted (p. 54) that Nunga English has developed innovatory respectful terms of address *Brother Boy* and *Sister Girl* to distinguish those considered relatives from others who might be addressed as *Bro, Bruth, Bruss, Brudda, Sis* or *Sista*. A similar pattern has been observed among Nyungar English speakers in Western Australia (Collard 2011).

In some cases, part of the restructuring process has involved using particles or prepositions to enable discriminations relevant to Aboriginal speakers to be made. For example, in Victoria, *yarning* 'talking, telling stories' is distinguished from *yarning up big time* 'talking a lot, telling a lot of stories,' *hold up now* (referred to a person) means 'stop, slow down', *married up, Koori married* means 'living with a partner without a marriage licence' (Adams 2014); in the Southwest, and more widely, to *camp* means to stay the night and to *camp out* means to go camping; in Western Australia generally, *to go for* means to go hunting, *to take off* means to leave, to *crash in* means to have a collision; in New South Wales, a person's *blongtu* is their home location.

7.7 Aboriginal English in the context of non-Aboriginal society

Aboriginal English has developed as a means of communication within the Aboriginal speech community, yet its speakers are often communicating in non-Aboriginal contexts where Australian English prevails. What I have called the "marginal orientation" (Malcolm 2017) significantly impacts on Aboriginal English, especially in more urban areas, in that its speakers may show a tendency towards hypercorrection, in the sense that they overcompensate for the possibility that they have not made themselves clear, as shown below:

Feature	"low" form (where relevant)	More hypercorrect/emphatic form
Definite article before noun SAE: "If I was in the bush"	*If I was in bush* (Kimberley, Eagleson, Kaldor & Malcolm 1982:227)	*Bloke with the long hair* (Leonora, Eagleson, Kaldor & Malcolm 1982:86) *the last Sunday* (Torres Strait, Dutton 1970)
Indefinite article before noun SAE: "I saw a man"	*He bin make hole* (Crugnale 1995:48, Western Desert)	*I saw a one man* (Leonora) *Hab you god two one dollar?* (Ceduna, Sleep 1996,)
Demonstrative in place of definite article SAE: "...then the station owner gave us a ride on the bus" "The girls got the music going"		*..and then that station owner he give us a ride on the bus* (Coober Pedy, Lennon 2011:58) *Dem girls got the music goin* (Sydney, Malcolm & Koscielecki 1997:60)
Superlative adjective SAE: "the most rotten/ rottenest"		*most rottenest* (Sydney, Eagleson 1977)

(continued)

Feature	"low" form (where relevant)	More hypercorrect/emphatic form
Superlative to express extent SAE: "very brainy, very big"		*a brainiest kid* (Eagleson, Kaldor & Malcolm 1982:88) *It was biggest mob of tucker* (Enemburu 1989:11)
Comparative adverb SAE: "play it better"		*play it more better* (Perth)
Negative SAE: "We didn't get anything"		*We never got no grapes* (Wilson 1996:69, Alberton) *He just doesn't see no danger in nothing* (Sydney, Eagleson, Kaldor & Malcolm 1982:88)
Noun plural marking SAE: "two men"; "five sheep"; "people"		*two mens* (Ceduna, Sleep 1996:17) *We get five sheeps, fat one* (Onslow, Eagleson, Kaldor & Malcolm 1982:88) *These two old peoples was murdered* (Broome)
Noun possessive marking SAE: "…on his horse"		*He was going along on e's horse* (Mullewa)
Reflexive pronoun SAE: "himself, themselves"		*My dad goes out by hisself* (Perth) *…have a good look at theirselves* (Sydney, Malcolm & Koscieloecki 1987:65)
Past tense marking SAE: "I saw a big python" "One of my friends took off" "We went to Hermannsburg"	*I seen a big python* (Gascoyne, Eagleson, Kaldor & Malcolm 1982:220)	*I sawn two turkey* (Wiluna, Eagleson, Kaldor & Malcolm 1982:85) *One of my friends tooked off* (Geraldton) *We bin went to Hermannsburg* (Alice Springs, Harkins 1994:205)
Double subject (predicate marking) SAE: "All the kids like to swim"		*All the kids they like to swim* (McLaren Ck, NT, Gillespie 1991) *That man e say 'Kiss my lady'* (Alberton, Wilson 1996)
Double subject (right dislocation) SAE: "But that bone is still there"		*But he still there, that bone* (Barron Ck, Koch 1993:xi) *E made a belt of it, the white fella* (Perth)
Double object (left dislocation) SAE: "We had lots of sheep and goats at the Old Mission"		*Lots of sheep and nanny goats we bin have at Old Mission* (Western Desert, Crugnale 1995:43)

(continued)

(continued)

Feature	"low" form (where relevant)	More hypercorrect/emphatic form
Double object (predicate marking) SAE: "If I find it/If I find a kangaroo"		*If I find it kangaroo…* (Maningrida, Elwell 1977)
Redundant preposition SAE: "Take me home"	e.g. *we went rubbish dump* (Onslow, Eagleson, Kaldor & Malcolm 1982:88)	*Take me to home* (Maningrida, Elwell 1977)
Deictic extension SAE: "Then we went inside" "There's a cave in the hills"		*an that's when we all went inside then* (Perth P79) *Up there in the hills there's a cave there* (South-west)
Redundant initial /h/ SAE: "old, eldest, uncle, and"	*ave* 'have', *ot* 'hot', *ouse* 'house', etc. (Kaldor & Malcolm 1979)	*hol* 'old' (NW Qld, Flint 1971) *heldest daughter, huncle* (Sydney, Eagleson, Kaldor & Malcolm 1982:135) *Johnny han em* (Perth, Collard 2011:9)
Redundant initial /n/ SAE: "an emu egg, another one, used to"	e.g. *a emu egg* (Alice Springs, Harkins 1994:57)	*this nother one* (Kaldor & Malcolm 1991:76) *nused to* (Alice Springs, Sharpe 1977)
Additional unstressed syllable (epenthesis) SAE: "kangaroo, directly, snake, picnic, sleep, ugly"	e.g. *kang'roo* (Leonora) *d'rekly* (Perth, Collard 2011)	/sənɛɪk/ 'snake' (Pirola 1978:166); /pɪkənɪk/ 'picnic' (Carnarvon); /salip/ 'sleep' (Maningrida, Elwell 1977); /ʌgəli/ 'ugly' (Alberton, Wilson 1996:42)

As shown on the chart, some of the Aboriginal forms I am calling hypercorrect may be seen as overreactions to the oft-criticized non-standard (or "low") forms which are current in the dialect. In other cases, it seems they are attempts to be very clear or emphatic to ensure the meaning is conveyed. This tendency could well be a continuing reflection in the dialect of the foreigner talk which has often accompanied the use of by Europeans addressing Aboriginal people.

It might be thought that the end-point of the restructuring continuum we have been looking at might be for Aboriginal speakers to eventually assimilate linguistically to the mainstream Australian population. It is interesting that there is indeed a precedent for a minority group speaking a non-standard variety of the mainstream language to move in this direction. This situation has arisen among the northern Sámi in Norway and has been documented by Bull (2002). Like the Aborigines in Australia, the Sámi in Norway were expected to shift from their

home language to the national language for purposes of public administration and education, and they did so, yet not without embedding their culture in a non-standard variety of Norwegian, their ethnolect. Bull has observed that, with the abandonment of a national policy of assimilation and successful introduction of policies which have enabled the Sámi language to be revived, a process of "deethnolectification" has begun, whereby there has been declining use of the non-standard variety of Norwegian, since cultural maintenance has been ensured through the Sámi language.

The possibility of such deethnolectification taking place in the Australian context is remote, because, despite efforts at the revival of some of the few remaining Indigenous languages, the languages of most Indigenous Australians would be beyond recovery. At the same time, the existence of Aboriginal English is an ongoing reminder for its speakers of the fact that to be Australian, in fact, means having shared access to diverse cultures.

7.8 The Aboriginal ownership of English

We return to the matter alluded to in Chapter 2, section 9, that is, that Aboriginal people are increasingly laying claim to Aboriginal English, the English that they have restructured over generations, as their own. The issue of the ownership of English has become a matter of international debate in recent years with post-colonial cultures no longer accepting the assumption that, if English has to be taught, it has to be that of the former colonizers. It has been said, for example, that "for English to function 'normally' in a country like India, it has to become Indian" (Mesthrie 2008:27) and, with respect to the U.S.A., that, though English was intended to supplant the indigenous languages, it was re-formed by the native Americans to become "a Native language of America" (Spack 2002:176). Henry Widdowson, who initiated the debate about the ownership of English has seen what he calls "dynamic adaptation" as a key feature of English ownership. "Proficiency," he says (1994:384), "only comes with nonconformity, when you can take the initiative and strike out on your own."

Aboriginal English is the fruit of dynamic adaptation, and increasingly its speakers have been standing up for their linguistic nonconformity and owning it. Jeannie Roberts, an Aboriginal worker at the Centre for Aboriginal Studies at Curtin University, reflecting on the distinctiveness of the English in Aboriginal literature, commented: "I think they use it as 'yeah we are different, this is how we talk and this is how we fit within our life environment,'" to which her colleague Darlene Oxenham responded: "This is who we are. This is our language" (Collard,

Fatnowna, Oxenham, Roberts and Rodriquez 2000:96). A group of Aboriginal Education Workers, in response to a request for a collaborative definition of Aboriginal English provided the following:

> *Aboriginal English consists of English words that are used by Aboriginal people and which have specific Aboriginal* meanings. *Aboriginal English is used in an Aboriginal context. It belongs to Aboriginal people* (Malcolm, Haig, Königsberg, Rochecouste, Collard, Hill and Cahill 1999a:124).

7.9 Conclusion

English, once a language of foreign imposition, has been adopted by Aboriginal speakers and made their own. It is primarily seen by its speakers (as shown above) as "used in an Aboriginal context." However, since many of its speakers are not bidialectal, it needs to be used in public service, legal and educational settings. If Aboriginal English is to be accepted as a legitimate vehicle of communication in the Australian context, there are important implications for the ways in which services need to be provided. These will be pursued in the next chapter.

8 Cross-cultural communication

8.1 Introduction

Having provided a description of Aboriginal English and an account of its development, it remains to consider the implications of the use of this dialect in the context of a society which has different norms with respect to the use of English. The fact is that, although a majority of Aboriginal Australians have allowed English to supplant traditional languages as their main means of communication, "communication between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people often fails, partially or completely, even when everyone speaks English" (Harkins 1994:1). Aboriginal people, though they have adopted the prevailing language of Australian society, may still not be, on the basis of their dialect, treated as linguistic equals of speakers of Standard Australian English. "English" may be, by default, understood to refer to the standard dialect, and the use of Aboriginal English may be assumed to represent inadequacy in English.

8.2 Language rights, policies and practices

It has been noted by Nero (2001:128) that "[c]olonization instilled the belief that standard (British) English is the native language of anyone born and raised in a former British colony." This belief has contributed to the stigmatization of non-standard and creole-related dialects not only in Australia but in many other parts of the world. Such a belief came to be seriously questioned as a result of early sociolinguistic research in the United States from the mid-20th century which brought out the systematic, rule-governed nature of African American Vernacular English. A language rights movement arose in the U.S.A. at a time when other civil rights were being asserted. In 1972 the Conference on College Composition and Communication passed a resolution on Students' Right to Their Own Language. The resolution reads, in part, as follows:

> *We affirm the students' right to their own patterns and varieties of language – the dialects of their nurture or whatever dialects in which they find their own identity and style. Language scholars long ago denied that the myth of a standard American English has any validity. The claim that any one dialect is unacceptable amounts to an attempt of one social group to exert its dominance over another...* (Smitherman 2000:376).

Although this resolution was not to go unchallenged – indeed it was succeeded by the English Only Movement within a decade (Nero & Ahmad 2014:35) – it has

not been without influence among non-standard dialect speakers in other parts of the world. In particular, Aboriginal linguist Jaky Troy incorporated reference to such a right in writing an Aboriginal Languages Syllabus for New South Wales. Referring to this in 2012 as "giving ...students access to their most basic rights", she cited Article 14 of the United Nations' *Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous peoples,* which includes the paragraph:

> *3. States shall, in conjunction with indigenous peoples, take effective measures, in order for indigenous individuals, particularly children, including those living outside their communities, to have access, when possible, to an education in their own culture and provided in their own language.* (Troy 2012:135).

A significant recognition of language rights (albeit leaving open the question of whether "English" could be defined as including a non-standard dialect) was made in the Australian *National Policy on Languages* (Lo Bianco 1987), which stated:

> *No Australian resident ought to be denied ...equal, appropriate and fair treatment by the law including representation and other rights commonly associated with equality or deriving from citizenship, because of language disabilities, or lack of adequate, or any, competence in English* (Lo Bianco 1987:8).

A task force was set up to promote equity between Aboriginal and other Australians in education built on this conception of language rights by stressing the need to recognize the cultural dimension. The report advocated bilingual/bicultural programmes and the recognition of the legitimacy of Aboriginal English and included the comment (quoted by Malcolm & Königsberg 2007:272):

> *Perhaps the most challenging issue of all is to ensure education is available to all Aboriginal people in a manner that reinforces rather than suppresses their unique cultural identity. The imposition on Aboriginal people of an education system developed to meet the needs of the majority cultural group does not achieve this* (DEET 1988:2).

Continuing endorsement of such policies of cultural inclusion, including the recognition of Aboriginal English, was shown in successive policy documents, as surveyed in Malcolm & Königsberg 2007, which were endorsed by both federal and state governments. In particular, a national strategy for the education of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples was devised for 1996-2002, incorporating the statement, with respect to early childhood education:

> *The foundation for further literacy development will be the home language of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander children including Aboriginal English, Kriol and traditional Aboriginal languages* (MCEETYA 1995:53).

It would, however, be unrealistic to consider the existence of policy statements such as this as fully representative of practice, in that practice is also affected by

other imperatives imposed by government and society. Such imperatives constitute what has been called an "invisible, or de-facto language policy" (Truscott & Malcolm 2010:7). One such imperative was the foregrounding of literacy, so that the National Language Policy became a national Language and Literacy Policy. This effectively redirected language policy interests towards the mainstream (since "literacy" is invariably interpreted as literacy in the standard language) and prioritized concern with meeting monodialectal benchmarks over concern with linguistic inclusivity (Malcolm 2000b). The national language and literacy policy was renamed *Australia's Language: the Australian Language and Literacy Policy* (DEET 1991), and stressed: "Australian English is integral to Australian identity" (p. 32), thus endorsing the monodialectal emphasis which excluded Aboriginal English.

Aboriginal English speakers are aware of the oppositional relationship that has been created between their dialect and Standard Australian English, and within their own community there are pressures against the use of SAE. In a conversation among Aboriginal teaching assistants in Sydney, one commented:

> *If you talk, you know, flash, as they call it at home,...they think you're trying to be...stuck up or something, you know, and you've gotta talk on their level...*

> *So it's no good going home and talking the same way as we do at school. You've got to have two lots of English, in other words...one for home, one for school.*

Another commented on the pressure not to use Aboriginal English in the professional context:

> *...we used to... talk like the Aborigines, you know, all around our area, and she told us we better stop it... O' course we put on another mask and... but every time we're together, you know, we just talk how we want to talk, you know* (Eagleson, Kaldor & Malcolm 1982:241).

The perception that the standard variety of the language is pretentious is one that is shared by speakers of regional varieties in many parts of the world (Higgins 2003:619). Clearly, the Aboriginal speakers recorded in Sydney were under no illusions as to the adequacy of their dialect:

> *...we know how to speak English...Lot of people probably think ...ah, you know, they're ignorant and they don't know how to do this, they don't know...but we know how to do it...Well, I, far as I'm concerned, I reckon I'm a good communicator* (Eagleson, Kaldor & Malcolm 1982:242).

On the other side of the continent, very similar comments were expressed by a group of Aboriginal workers at Curtin University. One said, in reference to using SAE in Aboriginal company:

> *It's just that you don't want to come across as a big head or up yourself and you want to relate immediately to people* (Collard, et al 2000:84).

Another commented:

> *The main problem with the Aboriginal English is that it has always been viewed as lacking something, and it's not that it's lacking anything. What the shame of it is* [is] *that standard English has too many words in it. I've always been of the opinion that Aboriginal English actually takes the useless words out of it and actually transforms it into an English that is useable...* (Collard, et al 2000:90).

Clearly there are different ideologies abroad with respect to varieties of language. One has been identified by Lippi Green (1997) as the "standard language ideology" and described by Nero and Ahmad (2014:20) as based on the false assumption that "linguistic homogeneity is both normal and desirable for social cohesiveness." In fact, rather than deriving from objective observation of how human groups function, this derives from the desire to impose the linguistic patterns of one group on others. It is automatically accompanied by what Wolfram (2001:345) has called the "language subordination ideology," since, to sustain it, one has to consider (in contradiction to linguistic evidence) that one dialect is inherently better than another, thereby implying the subordination of one group to another.

Research among Aboriginal students enrolled in higher education (Malcolm & Rochecouste 1998) has revealed (in interviews with Aboriginal research assistants) the mixed feelings that some have in being obliged to use the English variety with which they do not identify in order to meet academic requirements:

– *I've come across some of the words, some words and I think they are just ridiculous words. You know, just too long winded to, to describe something that you know. I suppose just Aboriginal people can't perceive it or just can't grasp it, because we are just simple, we'll say something straight out...*
– *I don't like writing the Wadjela* [white people's] *writing. It's too long and it gets too boring. And there's too many whys, and whom and where and whens all in there...*
– *Nyungars have their own way of putting something in their own Nyungar prose and it was explained that once we were in tertiary that they wouldn't accept that sort of Nyungar prose in the assignments or even in the tut's...* (Malcolm & Rochecouste 1998:67–68).

Comments such as these represent responses to "majoritarianism", which is the assumption on the part of the majority that everybody is, or should be, like them.

With respect to language, it means conformity to the linguistic practices of the majority. Alternatively, Higgins (2003:619) has advocated a "pluricentric understanding of English norms," something which, to some extent, is anticipated in some of the comments of the Aboriginal teaching assistants from Sydney, listed above. Such recognition would amount to an acknowledgement of language rights on the part of both the majority and the Indigenous population, a recognition advocated by Luke et al (2002:11) under the name of a "balance of rights hypothesis."

8.3 Aboriginal English and human services

As Australian citizens, Aboriginal people need to access services which usually are provided in SAE. For the most part, government service providers are expected to meet equity requirements and some professional development is provided to help staff with cross-cultural interactions. One study will be cited here to illustrate the kinds of problems which may be encountered.

In interactions with Aboriginal clients in the Alice Springs Regional Office of the Australian Tax Office (Malcolm & McGregor 1993) it was found that difficulties were encountered both by the Aboriginal clients and by the non-Aboriginal service providers. From the point of view of the service providers, there was a problem with the perceived inexplicitness of the Aboriginal clients. A tax officer commented: "They don't make themselves clear. They use one or two words instead of saying exactly what they want" (Malcolm & McGregor 1993:50). The lack of clarity was partly phonological, in that, with the forwarding of stress, combined with reduced volume, only the first syllable of a word might be clearly heard. The name "Clements" might be heard as "Clems" and the name "Joseph" confused with "George." The lack of clarity also related to the clients' unfamiliarity with the specific vocabulary relating to the transactions concerned. The term *the taxation* might be used to refer to the tax refund cheque and *doin my tax* might mean "getting my return." Service providers found Aboriginal clients slow to answer their questions and sometimes reluctant to repeat what they had said.

From the point of view of the Aboriginal clients, there was a lack of awareness of how to manage the speech event. Clients were reluctant to look the service providers in the eye, and might not realize the service provider expected them to speak first and state what they needed. They might expect to be dealt with by the person they spoke to last time, but, not knowing their name, might resort to a request like: "Where the one with glasses on? Short one?" One of the essential requests from the

service providers was for the name of the client, yet the clients might be hesitant to give their names, or might utter them very softly and quickly. In some cases the client might no longer be using a name formerly used. Whereas the service providers were constantly prompting the Aboriginal clients to say more, the Aboriginal clients found the service providers' tendency to over-verbalise off-putting. In the words of the Assistant Manager of the regional office, "the majority [of Aboriginal clients] clearly don't like being here" (Malcolm & McGregor 1993:55).

Overall, the relationships between the clients and the service providers were positive. Service providers particularly noted, with respect to their Aboriginal clients, their "lack of arrogance and tolerance of waiting" (p. 57). Coming with different communicative expectations, both sides developed an ability to infer from one another (given the limited range of reasons why people visit the tax office) how to complete the interactions successfully.

8.4 Aboriginal English and education

8.4.1 School education

Much of the research on Aboriginal English has been enabled because of its perceived relevance to school education. The disappointing level of success of Australian education systems in the education of Indigenous students is inescapable. In the words of Purdie, Oliver, Collard and Rochecouste (2002:419),

> *it is commonly reported that many Aboriginal students from all areas of Australia have negative experiences at school, and thus develop a general feeling of alienation within the school environment. They have markedly lower school participation, retention, and success rates when compared with their nonindigenous counterparts.*

Compulsory education brings young Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal Australians together in a context dominated by standard Australian English and inevitably shows the limits of the communicative and sociolinguistic compatibility of Australian and Aboriginal English. Teachers are usually non-Aboriginal and the classroom is usually conceived as a domain where SAE prevails. In such domains Aboriginal speakers typically respond with silence. Reflecting on her school experience, Aboriginal educator Lynette Rodriquez remarked:

> *If you're uncomfortable you retreat. You try not to talk to non-Aboriginal people...and if you do talk you talk with your head down and you mumble a lot, because you're not confident in using Standard Australian English* (Collard, et al 2000:94).

The problem is partly one of lack of confidence and partly one of perceived inauthenticity. It may be possible to use SAE vocabulary, but the mental imagery remains with the term used in the home community. A student in a Pilbara town protested:

> *I do find that sometimes like – some English words – I feel I can't say them...*
> *'At home' feels really funny...when I do, do say it I feel – it feels funny and I laugh* (Malcolm et al 1999b:55).

8.4.1.1 The emergence of Aboriginal English in the classroom

As noted above, Aboriginal English speakers are often inhibited when it comes to classroom communication and may choose the option of silence when invited to communicate. A study of 8 year-old Aboriginal children in Mareeba, North Queensland (Watts 2009), has observed the distinctive ways in which silence may be perceived and used by such children. It was suggested that individual, situational and sociocultural factors were involved in the ways in which the children handled silence in teacher interviews. It has also been shown (Malcolm 1994a) that fluency in Aboriginal English speech, and indeed, artful handling of oral narrative, may be shown in non-school contexts by speakers who have little to say in class.

Despite the constraints against communicating in SAE contexts, the students' dependence on their home language, or an interlanguage, does emerge in the classroom in the following ways:

a) in communication with other Aboriginal students (intended to exclude the teacher):

Student:	*So we always talk in our own language in class here*
Aboriginal Education Worker:	*Yeah, yeah*
Student:	*She can't understand us.* (Malcolm et al 1999b:56)

b) in brief comments in small group work or informal interactions:
   Im blackfella name ['That's his Aboriginal name'] (Kimberley region)
   They shut they eyes   (Gascoyne/Murchison remedial group)
   [What's he got on his eyes?] *Eye glasses* (Goldfields region)

c) in the use of substitute words for inaccessible vocabulary:
   [Anything else in that picture?] *Nah...yeah ting...dat ting* (Kimberley region)
   Coralie wouldn't give us the thing...that's why I couldn't wash (Pilbara region)

d) in responses which show gaps in comprehension of the question or its intent:
   [Which of the jobs would you like to do if you were flying a big helicopter?]
   The passengers?   (Pilbara region)
   [You tell me something you like about the picture, M...]

I can see da ball   (Pilbara region)
[Now Thomas, are you going to sit over in the opposite desk all day by your-self or are you going to work nicely there?]
Sit, Miss S...   (Pilbara region)

e)   in responses which do not use the anticipated auxiliary:
[Who's got a cat at home?]
I gota, I gota   (Gascoyne/Murchison region)
[Who's ever been in a Flying Doctor plane?]
I bin   (Goldfields region)
[Do you want a game?]
Yeah I wanta.   (Pilbara region)

f)   in minimal responses:
[What have you got there, Colleen?]
Pot.   (Goldfields region)
[They're putting the...tins in the bin because if they don't..]
Flies, flies!   (Gascoyne/Murchison region)
[Where do you go to see a nurse?...]
Hospital.   (Pilbara region)

g)   in requests using statement form:
I can take it now?   (Kimberley region)
You ought to give me two one of those over there, Miss S... (Pilbara region)

h)   in attempts to help other students' meaning to get across:
Teacher: Chris, what would you like to be when you grow up?
Chris: Working.
Teacher: Oh you'll have to say it louder than that. I can't hear.
Student: *E might be work.* (Goldfields region)

i)   in oral reading where grammar and pronunciation of Aboriginal English are imposed on the SAE text:
Hundred [Hundreds] *of years ago a very brave and adventurous race of people arrived in* [the] *Pacific...They live in New Zealand, in Tahiti and in awaii* [Hawaii] *and* [as] *well as on much smaller islands. We are not quite sure what country they came from but we know now how they come* [came]. *They row* [rowed] *in mighty double canoes paddled by as many as sixty men and drive* [driven] *by winds...* (Gascoyne/Murchison region).

The influence of the students' home language will show not only in the grammar and phonology of their utterances but also in pragmatic aspects of their communication, such as:

a)   lack of eye contact with the teacher, making it hard for the teacher to know when s/he is being addressed (Malcolm 1995:177)

b) Inaudible responses
   Teacher: ...what's your fence made of?
   Student: (inaudible)
   Teacher: Mm, pardon?
   Student: Wood. (Goldfields region)
c) Silence when asked for a response
   Teacher: Anything else, Judith?
   Judith: (silence)
   Teacher: You're not thinking. (Gascoyne/Murchison region)
d) Very long wait time for response
   In the following example, from a Northern Territory school, recorded by Moses and Wigglesworth (2008:135), the teacher has to wait 20 seconds for a response to an elicitation, and still does not receive an audible reply:
   Teacher: ...Jelly keeps eggs safe. What do you think it keeps eggs safe from?
      (6 seconds)
   What do you think the jelly keeps the eggs safe from?
      (4 seconds)
   What would happen to these eggs if they live in the water; they sit in the water?
      (7 seconds)
   Student: (inaudible reply)
   Teacher: What do you think it keeps them safe from?
      (3 seconds).

The way in which many Aboriginal students communicate in a monodialectal SAE class provides a poor reflection of their communicative abilities. Some pedagogical approaches advocate a greater focus on the standard dialect, some a greater focus on the home language or dialect, and some a balanced attention to both.

8.4.1.2 SAE-oriented pedagogical approaches

The traditional approach to the education of Aboriginal Australians has been SAE-oriented. The need of all Australians to be proficient in English as a language of wider communication is virtually unquestioned. Where there is less consensus is on how important the existing language or dialect of Aboriginal learners should be in an education of which this will be an outcome. Torres Strait Islander academic Martin Nakata (2012:85) has observed that, being, as a child, a speaker of Torres Strait Creole, he was assumed to be using "rather broken, bad English" and he was put straight into instruction intended for SAE speakers. According to Jordan (1988:198), "The early policies towards Aboriginal people in Australia

were a denial of the existence of the people." The denigration of minority dialects and creoles has been observed to be a worldwide phenomenon. Siegel (2006:40) notes: "At worst, students' vernaculars are denigrated, and at best, teaching is done in standard English as if their vernaculars did not exist."

The teaching of Standard English without reference to the home language or dialect of the learner has been supported at various times by certain hypotheses about language learning. Five such hypotheses have been referred to as the deficit, interference, maximum exposure, home-school congruence and empowerment hypotheses (Malcolm 2003b).

The deficit hypothesis derives from the argument attributed to educational psychologists in the U.S.A. (Dillard 1978:298) that learners who speak a non-standard dialect suffer from environmental deprivation and require compensatory education (McConnochie 1982). It could be used to justify attempts at eradication of the non-standard dialect. Under the influence of linguistic research such as that of Labov (1972), a "difference" model was put forward in place of the "deficit" model, but deficit assumptions have been claimed to persist in Australia (Beresford 2003:26).

The interference hypothesis sees the home language or dialect of the learner as an obstacle to the learning of the standard dialect in that negative transfer will occur between features of the learner's existing language and the target language. Research reviewed by Siegel (1999) on the influence of pidgins, creoles and non-standard dialects on the acquisition of the standard language has revealed that where the original language or dialect is maintained the learning of the standard language is, in fact, enhanced.

The maximum exposure hypothesis (also known as total immersion theory) claims that the more students are exposed to the standard language the more they will learn it. While it is true that time on task is an important contributor to language learning, it is not exposure as such, but rather "comprehensible input" (Krashen 1985) which leads to language learning. It has also been shown (Cummins & Swain 1986) that existing language proficiency, as part of a "common underlying proficiency" is relevant to the acquisition of proficiency in an additional language.

The home-school congruence hypothesis would underplay the different demands between using a language for communication and for learning, leading to the assumption that additional support is not required by learners coming to school with a non-standard dialect for them to be successful in learning by medium of the standard language. Cummins (2000) argues that this is not the case because the demands of Basic Interpersonal Communication Skills (BICS) and Cognitive Academic Language Proficiency (CALP) are significantly different.

The empowerment hypothesis puts its focus on the standard language and the empowerment that it lends to people who can use it effectively. It is possible,

however, to underrate the empowerment that can be gained by communities through the exploitation of community-based resources. In particular, Cummins (1986) has claimed that essential elements of schooling which either empower or disempower minority students include the extent to which their language and culture are incorporated into the education process, the extent to which communities are enabled to interact with the school, the extent of cultural reciprocity in the curriculum and the enabling or disabling ways in which assessment is used.

Practice in Aboriginal education in Australia is diverse and the influence of some of the above assumptions may be seen in, for example, regulations to decrease time given to home language and increase time given to English in schools of the Northern Territory, the widespread implementation of "direct" literacy approaches which bypass Indigenous ways of expression and target the kinds of Standard English texts it is predicted students will need to use and produce and the introduction of "accelerated literacy" which avoids cultural reference and seeks to accelerate progress towards academic skills. Apart from these deliberate initiatives in foregrounding SAE and backgrounding the home language, there is the widespread practice of trying to treat Indigenous and non-Indigenous students "equally", exposing them to the same SAE-based instruction and expecting them to meet common SAE literacy benchmarks in national testing.

The attitudes and understandings of teachers entering the education system in Western Australia have been the focus of recent research by Aboriginal researcher Sharon Davis. In summing up her investigation, Davis (2014:75) commented: "This study shows that attitudes and understandings of pre-service teachers are somewhat mixed towards Ab[original] E[nglish], ranging from indifference to deficient to strong knowledge and concern."

8.4.1.3 Home-language oriented pedagogical approaches

The beginnings of an approach to language pedagogy which accounted for the home-language of non-standard dialect speaking students in an inclusive way may be dated back to the 1960s when research into non-standard dialect, in particular of African Americans, came to be more widely known. There was consensus among linguists that what had been previously dismissed as a "defective and distorted replica of the standard dialect" (Kaldor 1977:100) was a systematic, rule-governed dialect in its own right (Baratz 1971:375). In 1976 Gail Chermak proposed a cross-cultural approach where African American and Anglo-American children were together in classes in the United States. She argued:

> ...as the black child will eventually feel comfortable with the 'standard' dialect in the educational system, the white child should be given the opportunity to acquaint himself with the dialect of the black child. Each child would approach early education through his 'native

tongue' and only after some success would he begin to explore another dialect. This 'two-way'
bilingual approach would go further in accomplishing the goals outlined by Baratz (1973) edu-
cationally, psychologically and socially (Chermak, 1976:105).

Such an approach would be widely advocated as bidialectal education, or the teaching of Standard English as a Second Dialect (TSESD) (Gardiner 1977). It is remarkable how close the vision of Chermak and others in U.S.A. was to that which would emanate from Aboriginal Australians, who, according to McConvell (1982) were, around the same time, advocating two-way, or *both ways* education. By 1999, in an interesting extension of the idea of empowerment, Aboriginal educator Mandawuy Yunupingu would be advocating "double power" through an education which would offer Aboriginal learners "exciting possibilities for new ways of expressing and new ways of knowing, and for reconciliation" (Yunupingu 1999:4).

The Education Department of Western Australia, in association with Edith Cowan University, has been a major sponsor of research and development in the area of what has been called "two-way bidialectal education" since the early 1990s and continues to provide ongoing professional development and materials to teachers across the state and beyond. The fourfold aims of two-way bidialectal education have been summarised (Malcolm & Truscott 2012:234-5) as:
–   to motivate communication
–   to facilitate communication
–   to expand communication, and
–   to enhance learning.

In order to achieve these aims, a framework has been developed which spells out the roles of the School/Principal, the classroom teacher, the Aboriginal staff members and the students, both Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal. It is assumed that the motivation of communication must be achieved through relationship-building, the facilitation of communication through mutual comprehension-building, the expansion of communication through repertoire building strategies and the enhancement of learning through skill-building strategies. Case studies of the operation of this programme in contrasting schools (a fringe metropolitan primary school, a fringe rural primary school and rural-remote district high school) may be accessed in Malcolm & Truscott (2012).

Home-language-sensitive education, as exemplified in two-way bidialectal education, is characterised by:
–   *Proceeding from the known to the unknown*
    This entails providing for the use of the home language through having bidialectal teaching assistants and bicultural/bidialectal learning resources. It

may also involve facilitating access of community members to school meetings and events and the representation of the students' culture in art work on and around the school buildings.

– *Elimination of cultural bias in teaching and testing*

The focus is on knowledge exchange across cultures rather than on one-way cultural transmission. There is due recognition of the potential for cultural bias on the part of both Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal readers and listeners in the inferencing (Mohan 1986:128-9) which takes place in interpreting one another's communications. Stereotyping will be avoided and culturally affirmative practice followed (Herbert 2012:44). There is attentiveness to the ways in which Aboriginality is represented in learning materials (Malcolm, Grote, Eggington & Sharifian 2002). Care is taken that the means of testing students' communicative competence does not misrepresent their linguistic state (Malcolm 2011).

– *Additive rather than subtractive language instruction*

No attempt is made to replace the student's home language variety; rather, its place in the life of the learner is given due recognition and the imparting of a new dialect is seen as an extension of the student's linguistic repertoire, i.e., the education is leading only to empowerment and in no way to disablement. The school is seen to have a collaborative role with the community; the pedagogy is interaction-oriented and the assessment is advocacy-oriented.

– *Interdependence of language competencies*

The first language or dialect is seen as the foundation for the learning of additional varieties (Delpit 2006:88). This is a longstanding principle of the Teaching of Standard English as a Second Dialect (Dillard 1978:301-2) and is theoretically supported by the Interdependence hypothesis (Cummins 2001) which posits a "Common Underlying Proficiency (CUP)" initially laid down when the first language is learnt, and drawn on to support subsequent language learning.

– *Identity support rather than opposition*

It is recognized in home language-sensitive education that language and identity are intimately related. This may involve "maintenance of the identity they associate with the D1 or avoidance of the identity they associate with the D2" (Siegel 2010:108). It is noted that language "crossing", where a speaker uses a non-home variety, may be taken as group disloyalty (Rampton 1995), and the education process can play a role in developing reciprocity (Herbert 2012:42) and legitimizing different ways of speaking (Redfern and Edwards 1991; Delpit 2006:163). It cannot be assumed that, without significant professional development, teachers will see the importance of their acceptance of the vernacular in supporting student identity.

–   *Exploitation of linguistic/cultural diversity as a classroom/life/learning resource*
    Home language-sensitive education respects the home language (Kaldor,
    Eagleson and Malcolm 1982:193) and recognizes its relevance to classroom
    learning, employing such procedures as contrastive analysis and needs anal-
    ysis in developing the curriculum. It takes an "accommodation" or "inte-
    grative" approach to second dialect instruction (Siegel 2010:206), and uses
    the student's home language as a "jumping off point" for teaching the new
    variety (Berry and Hudson 1997). Home language-sensitive education favours
    the language experience approach to learning to read and write (Kaldor,
    Eagleson and Malcolm 1982:212). Many who favour home language-sensitive
    education would support the use of dialect readers as a transition to learn-
    ing to read SAE (Baratz 1969; Königsberg, Collard and McHugh 2012), though
    others would oppose them (Baugh 1983:109, 117). Home language-sensitive
    education also recognizes that the educational domain is not the only context
    in which Aboriginal students need to be effective communicators. Aboriginal
    people know (and teachers *should* know) the significance of their English
    dialect as a *lingua franca* in Aboriginal communities across Australia.
–   *Community engagement and relationship-building*
    Home language-sensitive education entails, in the first place, the estab-
    lishment or further development of a relationship between speakers of the
    home language/dialect and speakers of the language/dialect being imparted.
    Unless a relationship of trust and respect exists, attempts to impose a new
    variety will fail. As Lowe (2011) has pointed out, many problems may cause
    school-community relationships to founder. One problem is the ambiguity
    with which the term 'community' can be used within education systems.
    Despite such difficulties, Königsberg, Collard and McHugh (2012) rightly rec-
    ognize community engagement as one of the four essential pillars of a bidia-
    lectal programme, along with staff, learners and policy & practice.
–   *Two Way Principle*
    "In recent years, research findings have increasingly revealed that relation-
    ships built on respect and reciprocity engender feelings of equality" (Herbert
    2012:42). Both bilingual and bidialectal education can be conducted two-
    way. Baker (1993:164) describes how two-way bilingual education may occur
    when approximately equal numbers of majority-language and minority-lan-
    guage students are in the classroom. Such education uses both languages
    and "[s]ince both languages are used for instruction and learning, the aim
    is to produce relatively balanced bilinguals." Two-way bidialectal educa-
    tion, as we have noted, has been advocated in the United States since at
    least 1976 (Chermak 1976); it has been seriously pursued in Australia since
    1990s (Malcolm 1995; Malcolm et al 1999a,b; Königsberg and Collard 2002;

Königsberg, Collard and McHugh 2012) where, arguably, it has reached its most sophisticated level of implementation. The two-way principle requires having teaching teams including speakers of the minority dialect and entails dialect-sensitive communication between student and teacher and also between Aboriginal and Aboriginal or non-Aboriginal student.

8.4.2 Aboriginal students in tertiary education

While the Aboriginal participation rate in higher education in Australia has been rising over recent decades, figures on student progress have been lower than for other groups, including those of non-English-speaking background (Malcolm 2002d:268). A majority of Indigenous students have been shown to be female, city-dwelling, enrolled in external or mixed mode. They tend to enrol in bridging courses and in degrees predominantly in education and arts. Usually they are older than non-indigenous fellow students and take longer to complete their courses (Malcolm & Rochecouste 2003:17). Cultural problems reported by Indigenous students include the perceived disempowerment though the lack of recognition given to Indigenous perspectives, as well as issues of family, health and finance which may lead to premature withdrawal (Malcolm & Rochecouste 2003:18). As Aboriginal English speakers, students may find it confronting having to exclude their dialect from the academic discourse and some have difficulty in managing technical registers (as illustrated in 4.1).

A study at Edith Cowan University, Perth, drawing on frame theory, and gathering data from staff and students on two campuses (Malcolm & Rochecouste 1998; Malcolm 2002d), sought to determine the ways in which Aboriginal students participated in university literacy events. A literacy event is one in which the understanding and use of the grapholect, or standardized written form, takes a place. The study revealed five significant areas of contrast between the discourse patterns of academic and Indigenous contexts:

– Contextualisation: academic discourse tends to be decontextualized, whereas, to Aboriginal people, context and communication are inseparable;
– Participation: academic literacy events are often individual or dyadic, whereas Indigenous ones are participatory and group-oriented;
– Personalisation: academic discourse favours objectivity, whereas in Indigenous society there is a strong sense of personal ownership of the originators of contributions;
– Shame Avoidance: in academic contexts the speaker is often thrust into prominence, whereas in Indigenous contexts to be focused on apart from the group causes shame;

- Conflict avoidance: academic discourse frequently encourages the expression of disagreement, whereas in Indigenous society there is a striving for harmony.

It is understandable that Indigenous participants in higher education may be resistant to some of the communicative expectations. The study showed that lecturers differed in the extent to which they were prepared to allow flexibility in the way literacy events were framed. Fixed framing might be shown by the lecturer if they gave no alternative but to conform to academic expectations, or by the student, if they consistently failed to take the turns offered. A lecturer allowing flexible framing might be prepared to modify expectations, by some compromise, as in:

Lecturer: [referring to upcoming assignment] *So you know all about this.*
Student: *It's just putting it in those English words.*
Lecturer: *Just write as though you were talking to me, or writing a letter: 'Dear XX, I want to tell you about...*

Or, the lecturer might identify with the student's register, as in:

Student: *It's about how to collect stuff.*
Lecturer: *What sort of stuff do you collect?* (Malcolm & Rochecouste 1998:25).

Sometimes the students would contest the expectations of the lecturer, as in:

Lecturer: *It says pedagogical. Do you know that word?*
Student: *I don't like that word. I don't use it.*(Malcolm & Rochecouste 1998:27).

Cultural constraints might lie behind students' non-compliance with expectations, as in:

Lecturer: [explains how to obtain information in the library]
Student: *I didn't do that. I couldn't find it.*
Lecturer: *You couldn't find it? Why didn't you ask?*
Student: *Nup. It's too shame.* (Malcolm & Rochecouste 1998:27).

A switch to an Aboriginal English word might mark a student's intended frame shift, as in:

Lecturer: *I thought you were going to stay over there?*
Student: *I thought I'll join this mob.*   (Malcolm & Rochecouste 1998:29).

Frame shift might also take place in written expression. In the following example, a student required to write about "culture" deliberately avoids the abstract term in favour of "my life thus far":

> *After all the studying of the word culture, I still can't define the word culture. The dictionary says 'developed understanding of literature, art, music, etc; type of civilization'. I'm still not sure of my own culture so I will just have to talk about my life so far. Let's see. I was born on the 12th of March 1977, in the small wheatbelt town of K...* (Malcolm & Rochecouste 1998:31).

This is an example of counter-framing, an attempt to assert an alternative, more culturally-accommodating form of expression. It seems clear that to expect Aboriginal students to make a 100% switch from their culturally appropriate discourse to academic discourse as soon as they enter higher education may be unrealistic. The student may negotiate for a more graduated shift. Ideally, some degree of two-way education should apply at the higher education level to make this possible. An important factor to bear in mind is the social context provided by the student's peers. One student, reflecting on her high school experience, confessed in interview: "I kept on getting good marks until later on when the other kids would say I was pretending to be white" (Malcolm & Rochecouste 1998:41).

Another project based at Edith Cowan University (Malcolm, Rochecouste & Hayes 2002) attempted to see to what extent Indigenous skills were being, or could be, applied to university teaching and learning. On the basis of interviews by an Aboriginal research assistant with twenty-five students, in addition to open-ended questions, it emerged that students:
– found it took some time to learn who were the authority figures in the university;
– found it embarrassing to be singled out for their achievements
– did not appreciate it when lecturers, in an attempt to be inclusive, asked them to speak on behalf of other Aboriginal people
– had mixed opinions on whether or not Aboriginal learning styles needed to be taken into account
– preferred a lecturer who would sit down and talk with them rather than standing in front of the class teaching them
– felt shamed when words were used which they did not know
– were defensive about their own dialect, e.g. "Who's to say our way is wrong and their way is right?"
– found it confronting (but accepted) being required to make presentations to the class
– felt, in some cases, mainstream education tended to adopt negative stereotypes about Aboriginal people

– resented, in some cases, having their ideas discredited on the basis of written sources of knowledge the lecturer had accessed
– felt Aboriginal perspectives were rarely incorporated into course content
– found it invaluable being able to mix with other Aboriginal students in an Aboriginal Students' Centre.

The students' lecturers, in their interviews,
– expressed support for working in Indigenous and non-Indigenous staff teams to help provide "a kind of meshing of Indigenous and non-Indigenous views"
– emphasized that the students accepted into the university were a particularly talented group
– stressed that studying at university forces all students to work hard to adapt
– insisted that, where the lecturer was non-Aboriginal, as many resource materials as possible by Aboriginal authors were provided
– acknowledged they had a role in helping students manage enrolment and the selection of minor studies and electives
– saw the relationship between the student and the tutor as fundamental to success in studying units externally.

While this research did not reveal any clear consensus among Aboriginal students as to the application of Indigenous skills to university teaching and learning, it did show the importance of acknowledging Indigenous knowledge and working together with Indigenous people to enable it to be expressed and respected. It showed the importance of knowing appropriate ways of engaging Indigenous students in the learning process, avoiding making individuals spokespersons for their community as a whole, increasing informal and group-oriented learning experiences rather than heavily authority-oriented lectures, and giving due regard to the need for Indigenous people to spend time together. It is clear that, although Indigenous students know Aboriginal English is not an appropriate medium for university learning, they do see it as worthy of respect and use as they see fit in their own interactions. There is also evidence of the need for hands-on assistance with managing the linguistic register required in completing the tasks they have to do – something which was seen to be an important need also in workplace training contexts as reported by Wignell (1999) and Beattie (1999).

8.5 Aboriginal English in the criminal justice process

The likelihood Aboriginal people have of coming into contact with the criminal justice system is twenty times that of non-Aboriginal Australians (Eades 2013:162-3),

and the ways in which they use language have a significant bearing on the outcomes of their involvement with the law. The work of Diana Eades, using sociolinguistic analysis, has contributed significantly to the understanding of how Aboriginal people use language in legal contexts.

Aboriginal ways of communicating are, as we have noted (Chapter 2, section 5.5), group-oriented rather than one-on-one, and to isolate an individual from the group for purposes of interrogation is particularly confronting. Eades has carried out many analyses of questioning by lawyers and police and has shown the severe limitations of this means of obtaining information. Aboriginal people are used to indirect ways of seeking information and find direct questioning rude (Eades 2011:160). Eades has shown how a culturally appropriate way to seek information is to raise a subject and say what one knows about it, then keep silence to see if what one has said will trigger further information (Eades 2013:39; see 2.5). Questions are often followed by silence which, from the non-Aboriginal point of view, looks like non-compliance, when, in fact, it may be using the degree of wait time which is normal in Aboriginal society. The "either/or question" is not used in Aboriginal contexts, and asking one is not likely to produce a helpful answer. Indeed, the default form of answering repeated unwanted questions is to say "yes," in the hope that the questioner will be satisfied and stop asking – a feature identified by Liberman (1985) and given the name "gratuitous concurrence" (Eades 2013:101; Chapter 5, section 3.1.1 above). The response *I don't know* or *I don't remember* may also be open to misinterpretation, in that it may be a way of responding to a request for information the Aboriginal person feels it is not appropriate for them to give (2013:113–4).

Eades has drawn attention to various ways in which speech use conventions differ across Aboriginal English speaking communities, many of which can cause misinterpretation. For example, eye contact may be seen to be "threatening or rude" (2013:102; see 2.5), swearing may be considered normal and "a necessary part of settling disputes" (2013:103), storytelling may be collaborative (2013:168), time reference tends to be event-based and not chronological (2013:50) and trust is formed over time, and not in response to over-verbalization (2013:160).

In her analyses of transcripts, Eades has often highlighted how Aboriginal ways of communicating may be misread, or even manipulated, by lawyers in attempts to support prosecution cases. A case against a defendant may be made in the form of a story which competes with the one they have given, but the competing story may be created by "filtering" what has been said through questions based on particular assumptions (2013:166). Where Aboriginal speakers are having difficulty with English, an interviewer may "scaffold" their input (Cooke 1996:281) leading towards a particular outcome. The lawyer may re-tell a witness's story in court, decontextualizing it and omitting key

elements (Eades 2013:173), and some lawyers, having informed themselves of Aboriginal communicative patterns, such as gratuitous concurrence and silence, may manipulate defendants or witnesses to make it look as if they are admitting guilt.

Eades makes the case that the way Aboriginal people are treated in court may amount to asserting neo-colonial control over their lives (2013:182), and, on the basis of cases she has analysed, she exposes what she calls four ideologies which underlie the kinds of arguments they use:

- The ideology of inconsistency: the assumption that inconsistency between different tellings of a story indicates lack of truthfulness (2013:184)
- The ideology of decontextualized fragments: the assumption that individual words or fragments taken from a story can be understood without their context (2013:196)
- The ideology of narrator authorship: the assumption that a witness's or interviewee's story is solely their own account (2013:196)
- The ideology of repeated questioning: the assumption that repeated questioning provides the opportunity to properly test a witness's truthfulness (2013:198).

The focus here has been on the work of Diana Eades, since her work has been the most extensive and influential in this area. Partly through her influence, there have been numerous attempts over the past two decades to involve linguists in the analysis of recordings and transcripts of Aboriginal people involved in legal proceedings in various states. A project *Aboriginal English in the Courts* set up by the Queensland government in 2001 led to the provision of a handbook under this name, based on Eades' earlier publication for the Queensland Law Society, *Aboriginal English and the Law* (1992). An *Aboriginal Benchbook for Western Australian Courts,* edited by Stephanie Fryer-Smith, was published in 2002. Michael Cooke completed a doctorate on *Anglo/Yolngu communication in the criminal justice system* under Eades' supervision in 1998 and has continued to be active in speaking and writing about court room communication and interpreting, especially in northern areas. His handbook *Indigenous Interpreting Issues for Courts* was published by the Australian Institute of Judicial Administration in 2002.

8.6 Some competing pressures

Aboriginal English, while still struggling for recognition in the Australian community at large, has shown remarkable resilience and continues to thrive in Aboriginal contexts, and to emerge in wider contexts such as those of human services,

education and the law. Increasingly we hear calls from different parts of Australia for "Koorification" (Adams 2014:16) and "Aboriginalization" (Yunupingu 1999:3) which, for their fulfilment, will entail the maintenance of Aboriginal English. Aboriginal identity, and its symbol, will not be relinquished.

However, it has been noted (Simpson & Clancy 2002:984) that the maintenance of identity has a cost, in that equitable access to services and to education may be at risk. Against this it needs to be noted that there is also a cost entailed in taking on SAE literacy if it entails an exclusion of Indigenous identity (Malcolm & Rochecouste 2003:25). The recognition of these competing pressures has been apparent in much of the research which has been reported on here. One response to this is the expression, coming from Aboriginal communities, of the desire to go "both ways." To some extent we can see in developments in human services, the law and education a willingness on the part of the mainstream to make this possible.

A further competing pressure, highlighted by Eades (2013:182, 191), is that of a resurgent colonial mentality which is threatened by Aboriginal emancipation. The neo-colonial emphasis is apparent in politics as well as in service provision, and exists in all formerly colonised parts of the world. It is important that the advantages of SAE literacy be not oversold, and that those formerly colonised should have freedom to determine the future they choose.

8.7 The future of Aboriginal English

The distinctive use of English by Indigenous Australians, as this book has attempted to describe it, is likely to continue because it is a unique cultural inheritance which enables the expression of enduring cultural conceptualisations, and, as we have shown, it has been increasingly claimed by its speakers as an authentic expression of their identity. However, the appropriateness of the designation "Aboriginal English" has been called into question for a number of reasons.

First, this is not a name that has been generated by the speakers. As we have noted (Chapter 6, section 3.4), Aboriginal speakers retain a strong sense of "country," and tend to view the way they speak from a localised perspective. To a Koorie, it is "Koorie English," to a Nyungar, "Nyungar English" to a Mardu, "Mardu English", and so on. Associated with the local name will also be local linguistic features, in particular transfers from the local languages, which are an important part of the dialect in the eyes of its speakers.

Secondly, there is a lack of consensus among linguists as to where the dividing line comes between varieties which should be called "English" and those

which should be called "creole." As we have observed, Aboriginal English exists on a continuum, with a greater commonness with Australian English at one end and with creole at the other. In the words of Siegel (2012:774), "there is no clear dividing line between some varieties of Aboriginal English and and modern Aboriginal creoles, such as Roper River Creole (Kriol)." I have taken an inclusive approach in this volume, recognizing that Aboriginal English is not homogeneous, but embraces lighter (closer to English) and heavier (closer to creole) varieties. This has been deliberate, in that the intention was to provide evidence for a dialect which can gain equal recognition to that of Australia's dominant dialect, Australian English (which is also, though to a lesser extent, not homogeneous).

There are scholars who have taken a different perspective, seeking to emphasize the independence of localized varieties, like Wumpurrarni English/Barkly Creole (Disbray 2008; Meakins 2014:386), Yarrie Lingo (McIntosh, O'Hanlon & Angelo 2012:451), Woorie Talk (Munro & Mushin 2016), and others, regarding them as "autochthonous or place-based English-lexified" contact varieties (Angelo 2013:68) and giving attention to the distinctive influences in the contact process, which they see as "hidden" (Munro & Mushin 2016:82) under the title "Aboriginal English". It has been argued, for example, of Woorabinda Aboriginal English, that its label is misleading because it derives from earlier studies which did not take adequate account of sociohistorical data relating to its development (Munro & Mushin 2016:82). In my view, the concern to do justice to the distinctiveness of local varieties and the local identity that they represent, has its place. It is important to recognize that neither the localised title nor the wider term "Aboriginal English" is equally appropriate for use in all contexts, and it would seem reasonable for both terms to remain in use in the contexts in which they are relevant.

A third issue which has been raised with respect to the use of the term "Aboriginal English" is that it can be used in the sense of an ethnolect, presuming to predict how a person will speak, if they are really Aboriginal, whereas Aboriginal speakers may well command a wide verbal repertoire and, indeed, may not choose to express their aboriginality through the way they use English. This matter has been pursued by Eades (2013, 2014), who has suggested that the concept of "linguistic or verbal repertoire" (Eades 2014:437) might often be more useful than the term "dialect" in describing the English of Aboriginal people. Thus her 2013 volume on Aboriginal English carried this emphasis with the title *Aboriginal Ways of Using English,* though Eades would not completely exclude the use of the term "Aboriginal English." Mailhammer (pers. comm.) has found the repertoire approach useful in accounting for the English used on Croker Island which he sees as extremely fragmented as a result of "heterogeneous acquisition and input of various forms of English..."

What matters is not simply the term "Aboriginal English" but the ways in which it is used. As I have attempted to show in this volume, the English used by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people exhibits change and continuity, including influences from superstrate and substrate languages, as well as from the distinctive ongoing experiences of those who speak it. It is important that the speakers of distinctive varieties we have included under the umbrella term "Aboriginal English" should be seen as included rather than excluded by use of this term in the singular, and that, where appropriate, emphasis should be placed on the choices made by Aboriginal speakers from their diverse repertoire. At the same time, the use of the term in this volume seeks to gain recognition of the dialect alongside other varieties of English and to see due regard given to the distinctive needs of its speakers in social and educational planning.

In writing in SAE about Aboriginal English there is inevitably an irony. From the point of view of the Aboriginal speaker, SAE provides the "outsider's perspective" while Aboriginal English provides the "insider's perspective." A frequent observation from an Aboriginal collaborator on projects described here has been: "You don't know what you don't know," implying that, from the outsider's perspective, it is possible to miss what is obvious to members of the speech community using the dialect they have maintained. Although the Aboriginal English speech community is diverse (ranging from close-to-creole to close-to-Australian English), the speakers identify one another as "insiders," and this unites them more than their local differences divide them. This is, perhaps, the strongest reason for the maintenance of the term "Aboriginal English."

Appendix 1

Annotated bibliography

The literature on Aboriginal English includes a range of published and unpublished works, including theses, research reports, journal articles, book chapters, conference papers, teaching and training resources, books written in Aboriginal English, and books about Aboriginal English and its applications. From these a selection is made here of items considered worthy of special attention. These are organized according to their major areas of focus.

Aboriginal English Linguistic Descriptions

Queensland

The *Queensland Speech Survey*, directed by Elwyn Flint of the University of Queensland from 1960–1968, aimed at "investigating the variety of English used by members of English-speaking [A]boriginal communities" (Readdy 1961: iii), generated a number of theses based on linguistic descriptions of the English of small groups of Aboriginal speakers. Three of these will be commented on here, followed by Flint's overview.

Readdy, Coral A. 1961. *South Queensland Aboriginal English*. University of Queensland, Brisbane B.A. (Hons) thesis.

This thesis focuses on the English spoken by groups of up to four children, at Cherbourg, located 250 kilometres north-west of Brisbane. Readdy observed that, when these informants spoke with one another, "they used a familiar communalect, which was cognate with English and doubtless was the successor of the original aboriginal tongues, now largely lost. It was markedly different from the English which they use in school, and was partially unintelligible to the research worker when the tape was played back" (Readdy 1961: iii-iv). In using the term "communalect," Readdy was expressing the view that the speech recorded was "neither language nor dialect, but a form of oral communication which is intermediate between the two languages" (163). Though her informants are clearly using two dialects of English, Readdy describes them as "bilingual." In describing her informants as "as yet not completely assimilated into the Australian community" (25), Readdy reflects a widespread assumption of her time. She provides significant detail on aspects of the phonology, lexicology, syntax and morphology of

the speech observed, most of which would be found in subsequent studies to be common to other varieties. While she recognizes some pidgin-related forms, she does not pursue the significance of pidgin in the development of the dialect. Though limited because it predated much significant study of bidialectalism and post-pidgin/-creole varieties, this thesis provided a stimulating foundation for further investigation of Aboriginal English.

Alexander, Diane H. 1965. *Yarrabah Aboriginal English***. University of Queensland, Brisbane B.A. (Hons.) thesis.**

The material on which this thesis was based was gathered in Yarrabah, North Queensland, by E. H. Flint in October 1964 and consisted of tape recorded conversations among twelve groups of four informants, aged 6–16, and of four boys aged 14–16, in the absence of the field worker. The analysis was informed by one of the original informants. Like Readdy in her Cherbourg study, Alexander found that the informants spoke a variety of Australian English when conversing with the field worker, or in school, but switched to "the sub-language of Aboriginal English when conversing among themselves" (p. vii). The thesis provides analysis of the phonology, morphology and syntax of the informants' speech, much of which would later be shown to be in common with other varieties of Aboriginal English. The focus of the study is somewhat limited by that assumption that features of the dialect would be related to "a retention of the vernacular" (i.e, Yiddinji), though limited data on that vernacular were available. While some phonological and grammatical influence was found, it was observed that the variety spoken had "only a few aboriginal lexical items" and exhibited "considerable oscillation between two sets of speech habits (Australian English and Aboriginal)" (p. vi). The thesis provides justification for the study being undertaken on the basis that: "[t]he Government aims at assimilation of the [A]borigines, and it is agreed that education has an important part to play in implementing this policy" (i). The intention was that knowledge of the differences between the informants' English and Standard Australian English would provide an input into educational planning.

Dutton, Thomas E. 1965. *The informal English speech of Palm Island Aboriginal children, North Queensland***. University of Queensland, Brisbane, M.A. thesis.**

This is a study focused on the grammatical and lexical characteristics of the informal conversation of a group of four boys aged 12–14 years, on Palm Island Aboriginal settlement, North Queensland. It followed an earlier thesis which had looked at the phonological aspects of the same material. A summary of both theses is provided in Dutton (1969). As in the case of studies by Readdy and Alexander, Dutton found that the informants spoke two English varieties, one among themselves and another which was more readily intelligible when

speaking with the field worker. The thesis documents differences found between the less-intelligible variety spoken by the informants and Australian English. The occurrences (or non-occurrences) in the corpus of features which would not correspond to the expectations of the non-Aboriginal listener are enumerated. Dutton summarizes the distinctive grammatical characteristics of the informants' speech as:

(a) *the paratactic arrangement of clauses;*
(b) *simple clause structure;*
(c) *verbal phrases involving the past tense marker 'bin';*
(d) *high frequency of demonstratives 'this, that, these, those' where in Australian English one would normally expect to hear definite and indefinite articles;*
(e) *the distinctive first person plural subjective pronoun {èflè};*
(f) *singular and plural number undifferentiated morphemically in suffixes* (207).

As in the other studies from the Queensland Speech Survey, this thesis gives evidence of a dialect which, with the exception of (e), has much which would be shown to be in common with other Aboriginal English varieties in other parts of the country. Dutton (1969: 20) comments that "the observed linguistic homogeneity of Aboriginal English across the similar communities of Yarrabah, Cherbourg, Dunwich, and Palm Island is surprising in view of the different historical, social and linguistic backgrounds of these."

Some other findings from the Queensland Speech Survey and, in particular, the North-West Queensland "low" form (NWL) used among adults aged 40–60 documented by Flint (1971) and other theses by Dutton (1964) and Alexander (1968) are summarized in Malcolm (2000).

Flint, Elwyn H. 1968. Linguistic description as an aid to teaching. *English in Australia* 6. 3–22.

This paper reports on the Queensland Speech Survey, summarising the findings across a range of communities with respect to lexical, grammatical and phonological features.

It is reported that a small number of lexical items, including warning calls, commands and exclamations, came from Aboriginal vernaculars. In communities where Aboriginal vernaculars were in general use, there were occasional whole-utterance switches from the vernacular into English. Some English lexical items were of English dialectal origin.

The grammatical analysis noted ten salient features: inconsistent noun plural marking; signalling of possessive by word order, as in *Granny Elsie place* or by a form of "belong," as in *Gun belong to Hedley* 'Hedley's gun'; occasional representation of 3rd person plural feminine as /i:/; alternation of /afala/ with

'we' and 'us' as first person plural pronoun; absence of relative pronouns; alternation of unmarked and marked verb past tense in the 3rd person singular; use of /gona/ to mark the future tense; use of the present participle without auxiliary to express continuous aspect; frequent omission of the indefinite article; clause structures marked by inconsistent use of the copula in stative clauses, predominant use of simple and co-ordinate clauses, frequent separation of clauses by pauses without conjunction and frequent use of direct speech and "eh" tag in narration.

The phonological analysis included a reduced number of vowel and diphthong phonemes, tendency not to use the vowel /ɜ/, dental articulation of /t/, non-recognition of phonemic opposition between /s/ and /z/, or (except in initial position) between /p/ and /b/ or /k/ and /g/. Flint attributes intelligibility problems for non-Aboriginal listeners to phonological features.

Shnukal, Anna. 2000. Torres Strait English. In David Blair and Peter Collins (eds.), *English in Australia*, 181–200. Amsterdam: John Benjamins.

Torres Strait Islanders now live mainly in Thursday Island and in north coastal cities and towns in mainland Queensland. They are a distinctive indigenous population with origins among Melanesian people from the south coast of Papua New Guinea who have intermarried with Aboriginal Australians as well as Pacific Islanders, Malays, Filipinos and Europeans. Linguistically, they have links with the Aboriginal language Kala Lagaw Ya and the Papuan language Meriam Mir as well as with Pacific Pidgin English and Torres Strait Creole.

Shnukal notes that not all Torres Strait Islanders speak Torres Strait English and that for some it would be a second language. She notes the variability of its phonological, grammatical and lexical features and the fact that many (though not all) of these "also occur in other non-standard AusE varieties, including Aboriginal Englishes". In fact, the great majority of the phonological features of the dialect listed by Shnukal are found in varieties of Aboriginal English, as are most of the morphological and syntactic simplifications. She suggests that the influence of Torres Strait Creole is shown in predicate marking, as in *God He still exist,* and in the use of a *belong* form to express obligation, as in *We no belong to sit down, we belong to fight back,* 'We mustn't take this lying down, we have to fight back' (190). She also sees creole influence in the multifunctionality whereby forms like *argue* and *serve* may be used as verbs and nouns. It is in its lexicon that Torres Strait English shows the strongest variation from Aboriginal English, with a significant number of transfers from traditional languages as well as stylistic innovations.

New South Wales

Eagleson, Robert D. 1982. Aboriginal English in an urban setting. In Robert D. Eagleson, Susan Kaldor and Ian G. Malcolm, *English and the Aboriginal child,* **113–162. Canberra: Curriculum Development Centre.**

  This is the third and most detailed article by Eagleson (see 1977, 1978) on research undertaken from 1976 in two areas of Aboriginal concentration in Sydney: Redfern (close to the city centre) and La Perouse (near Botany Bay). Eagleson draws attention to the fact that some 10% of the Australian Aboriginal population of Australia lives in New South Wales and half of these live in Sydney. The research data came from school students aged 10–17, who were engaged in small group conversations, and some of whom were invited to participate in a debate and in a writing competition. Parents and other Aboriginal adults were also interviewed. Eagleson provides detail on verbs and verb forms, including number and person agreement, pronouns, adjectives and adverbs. He notes question tags, noun group duplication, vocabulary and syntax. He lists pronunciation features, noting that there does not appear to be an Aboriginal accent distinct from the Broad Australian accent. He recognizes the informants as using a non-standard dialect but does not see it as distinctively Aboriginal. This differs from the findings in a later study of Aboriginal adult speech in La Perouse by Malcolm and Koscielecki (1997). Eagleson rightly points out the capacity of his informants to handle "intricate syntactic structures" (146), but perhaps gives inadequate attention to the distinctive Aboriginal features in the data which emerge despite the relative formality of his elicitation methods. He tends to overstate the commonalities between the language used by his Aboriginal informants and that used by members of the white community with whom they have contact. This may relate to the period of writing, when there was less consensus than there is now on the legitimacy of Aboriginal English as a dialect.

Fraser-Knowles, Jill. 1985. A new Bundjalung language: Baryulgil Square Talk. In Margaret C. Sharpe (ed.), *An Introduction to the Bundjalung language and its dialects,* **2nd revised edition, 174–201. Armidale: ACAE Publications.**

  The Bundjalung people inhabit north coastal areas of New South Wales. This paper describes a variety of Aboriginal English used by Bundjalung people in Baryulgil, in the Southern Bundjalung area, and called by its speakers "Baryulgil Square Talk." It is used among Aboriginal speakers and out of the company of "white people or 'flash' Aborigines" (175). It is "a special private language ...to be able to talk to your friends and relatives with a talk that outsiders don't understand" (175).

Baryulgil Square Talk incorporates lexical transfers from Bandjalung, often with pronunciation influenced by English. Such transfers are especially in the domains of local animal life, human feelings, human interaction, parts of the body, kin relationships and activities such as eating, smoking, drinking and shopping, and the spirit world. Bundjalung suffixes may also be transferred onto English words to express, for example, noun possession, verb tense and adjective marking. English auxiliary verbs and sometimes subjects may be omitted.

In pronunciation, in common with Aboriginal English more widely, initial /h/ tends not to be pronounced, though it can be pronounced redundantly, as in *hafta* 'after.' Prothesis occurs with *nyusda* 'used to.' Word final /ŋ/ may be replaced with /n/ as in *gawin* 'going.' Fricative consonants tend to be replaced by plosives. Consonant clusters are reduced. Epenthesis may occur, as in *giraŋgi* 'mad' [from 'cranky] and *agali* 'ugly.' Plosive word-final consonants are avoided, though the English past-tense '-ed' is used.

Many English vocabulary items are used with changed meanings, especially those used to express kin relationships. The suffix *–es* may be used with the sense of emphasis, as in *biges* 'very big.' Nominal suffixes may be used, as in *longway* 'a long way', *mornin-time* 'morning', *big one* 'big person/thing', *big-fela* 'big person/thing/animal', *cheeky-mob* 'a cheeky group of people/animals'. Noun plural is marked if not apparent by other means, and irregular noun plurals may be regularized, as in *womans, peoples, foots*. Non-count nouns may be pluralized, as in *toasts* 'pieces of toast', *barks* 'pieces of bark.' Alternative distinctive noun plural suffixes are *–enat* as in *Where da cow-enat?* and *–enem, -enem* as in *ih-enem* 'he and others'.

Pronouns may be exclusive masculine, as in *me-n-im,* or feminine, as in *me-n-eh,* or common, as in *us-two.* Plural pronouns may be inclusive, as in *we* or exclusive, as in *us-fela(z).*

The paper includes a story on Gathering Witchetty Grubs, and a translation into Baryulgil Square Talk of the story of the Prodigal Son from the Gospel of Luke, 15:1–2 and 11–32.

Northern Territory

Sharpe, Margaret C. 1977. Alice Springs Aboriginal English. In Ed Brumby & Eric Vaszolyi (eds.), *Language problems and Aboriginal education*, 45–50. Mount Lawley: Aboriginal Teacher Education Program, Mount Lawley College of Advanced Education.

This is a brief overview of findings of research carried out in 1976 at the request of the Traeger Park Primary school to describe the English used by Aboriginal students attending the school. Sharpe recognizes their English as a

dialect, though there is some fluctuation between features of the dialect and of Standard English. Phonological features noted include H-dropping, replacement of fricative and affricate consonants with plosives, interchange of sibilants /s/ and /ʃ/ and of /tʃ/ and /ʃ/ and interchange of voiced and voiceless consonants. Consonant clusters may be reduced. Epenthesis may occur, as in /imiju/ 'emu', as may prothesis, as in /njust tu/ 'used to'. Vowel differentiations may be reduced, so that /ɛ/may not be pronounced differently from /ɪ/ and /æ/. Liaison between contiguous vowels may not be observed (as in *a apple*).

Grammatically distinct forms include the non-use of the auxiliary in forming progressive, as in *I going*, non-recognition of subject-verb agreement, as in *we was going,* the non-use of the *be* copula, as in *this a big one*, the use of the unmarked past tense verb *come* 'came', the use of *e* for 'he', 'she' or 'it' and the non-recognition of the count/non-count noun distinction, as in *two woods* 'two pieces of wood.' Pidgin influence is observed in the use of the *bin* past tense marker and *−um* or *−im* transitive verb suffixes and Aranda influence in such expressions as *He went for get some water.*

Sharpe gives examples of contraction rules which vary from those of Standard English, as in, for example, *onna table* 'on the table', *I- z goin* 'I was going', *we'z walking* 'we were walking', *I'nt a ice cream* 'I want an ice cream.'

Other, less readily accessible, reports on this research are found in Sharpe (1976) and Sharpe (1977a). Further detail on Alice Springs Aboriginal English is given in Harkins (1994), which is dealt with under the heading "Aboriginal English: School Contexts."

Koch, Harold. 2000. Central Australian Aboriginal English: in comparison with the morphosyntactic categories of Kaytetye. *Asian Englishes* 3 (2). 32–58.

This paper reports on a study of the English (CAAE) of Aboriginal native speakers of the Kaytetye language, living in Barrow Creek, some 300 kilometres north of Alice Springs. Koch recognizes that the English shows the influence of pidgin, as well as colloquial English, and he seeks to explore the grammatical influence on it of the Kaytetye language, on the assumption that "although the forms of CAAE are all derived from English, their functions reflect to some extent the organisation and meanings inherent in the grammar of the Australian Aboriginal languages" (36).

It is observed that, in the personal pronoun system of CAAE, the semantic categories of dual and inclusive vs. exclusive are introduced, but signalled with markers drawn from English, e.g., 1st person dual inclusive *menyou,* exclusive *mentwofella,* plural *mefella/*melabout; 2nd person, *yountwofella* vs. *youfella* and 3rd person *twofella* vs. *allabout*. The kin relation marker *−gether*, derived from "together", enables a kin set such as "father and child" or "mother and child"

to be indicated. There are also systematic changes in the uses of English prepositions, and a distinctive use of verbs to indicate associated motion, as in *go get*, etc. Koch claims that the influence of vernacular languages on both Aboriginal English, and Pidgin varieties needs to be recognized.

Victoria

Adams, Karen (ed.). 2014. *Koorified: Aboriginal communication and wellbeing.* Fitzroy, Victoria: Victorian Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisation (VACCHO) and School of Nursing and Midwifery, La Trobe University.

This document is the result of a project of the Victorian Aboriginal Community Controlled Health Organisation (VACCHO) to invite Aboriginal English speakers across Victoria to contribute words and sentences commonly used in Aboriginal English as an input to the training of people needing to communicate with Aboriginal people. More than 20 people contributed and their contributions were validated by a larger group.

A number of broad guidelines to communication with Aboriginal people are given, including: means of showing respect, body language, indirectness in communication, humour and variation in language.

Words and phrases are listed and explained in three main thematic areas: *Deadly ay?* (desirable and undesirable behaviour), *Country* (relationships with the land), and *Mob* (identity and relationships within Aboriginal and wider communities). Various examples are also given of greetings, insults and common expressions.

Enemburu, Irruluma Guruluwini [A.I.Brown]. 1989. *Koori English*. Melbourne: State Board of Education.

This booklet was prepared by Aboriginal author Enemburu at the request of the Aboriginal Languages Project Steering Committee of the State Board of Education and the Victorian Aboriginal Education Association in Melbourne in order to provide information on "the nature and use of Aboriginal English spoken in Victoria and its relation to Aboriginal languages" (p. iii). The term *Koori English* is used, according to the author, because he is writing in Koori country, though it is intended to refer "to all descendants of the original owners of this land" (p. 14). The booklet cannot, then, despite its title, be taken as representing only the varieties of Aboriginal English spoken in Victoria.

Enemburu stresses the distinctiveness of Koori English from SAE and its function in affirming Koori identity. The use of Koori English is related to cultural

features including family orientation, a view of knowledge as "exclusive and privileged" (p. 3), learning styles of observation and repetition, unresponsiveness to questions, deliberate use of silence, less explicit courtesy behaviours, early childhood independence, sensitivity to adverse comments and two-way approaches to giving and receiving information (as described by Eades 1983). Distinctive paralinguistic features such as reduced eye contact, lip pursing to indicate direction or intent, and the use of gesture in place of speech are referred to.

Some examples of semantic shift are cited and illustrations are given of such grammatical features as subject-verb agreement, noun plurals, absence or substitution of indefinite articles, quantifiers such as *proper* and *big mob*, indication of possession and the marking of tense and aspect. Unfortunately, many of the illustrations come from the author's prior case study of a speaker from Darwin, and the features relevant to Victoria are not clearly distinguished.

South Australia

It has been pointed out (Eades 2013:152) that, although he did not use the term "Aboriginal English," the linguist and anthropologist T.G.H. Strehlow was possibly the first academic to recognize it and to see its significance in bringing recognition to the way in which an Aboriginal defendant had been deprived of justice in a South Australian court case. Foster, Monaghan and and Mühlhäusler (2003) have researched early forms of Aboriginal English in South Australia from the 1840s to the 1920s and Sleep (1996) has recorded some data from Ceduna. There has, however, been only one significant description of a contemporary South Australian variety.

Wilson, Greg J. 1996. "Only Nungas talk Nunga English" A preliminary description of Aboriginal children's English at Alberton, South Australia. University of New England, Armidale, M. Lett (Linguistics) thesis.

Alberton is one of the western suburbs of Adelaide. This study was based on data gathered from Aboriginal students in the Alberton Primary School's homework centre. Overall, Wilson concluded that the informants were speakers of Aboriginal English of an acrolectal variety which was in many ways comparable with varieties which had been reported from other parts of the country. The main area of distinctiveness was lexical, where some items had been transferred from Indigenous languages local to the Adelaide region. An example of this was the transfer of the Ngarrindjeri verb *ngopun* 'walk' in the utterance *I wanna ngopun to the shop* 'I want to go to the shop' (18).

Phonological features observed included H-deletion, devoicing of final /-z/, as in /aɪbɹæːs/ 'eyebrows', substitution of the alveolar stop /d/ for the interdental

fricative /ð/ as in /dæt/ 'that', TH-fronting, as in /fɪŋk/ 'think', metathesis, as in /aksd/ 'asked', apocope, as in /bɛs frɛn/ 'best friend,' epenthesis, as in /ʌgəli/ 'ugly', substitution of /-m/ for /ɪŋ/ as in /nʌɵm/ 'nothing' and expressive vowel lengthening. Liaison might not be made between contiguous vowels.

Grammatical features observed included use of modified personal pronouns, including *me'nyou* (dual inclusive), *yous* (second person plural), hypercorrect possessives and reflexives *mys, mines* and *theirselves*, use of the resumptive pronoun, non-use of the indefinite article, variable use of the copula and auxiliary *be*, frequent absence of the *have* and *do* auxiliaries, lack of third person singular agreement, lack of concord in terms of number between subject and verb, regularization of irregular verb past tense, use of *never* as non-emphatic negator, use of invariant question tags *unna, ini, ina,* and *eh* and use of relative pronoun *what*.

Western Australia

The initial focus in Aboriginal English study in Western Australia was on the use of English by Aboriginal students in primary schools through the WAACE (Western Australian Aboriginal Children's English) project, which entailed field trips to over 40 centres across the state between 1973 and 1977. An early description of WAACE is given in Malcolm (1979: 84–141). Other descriptions are listed below under "Aboriginal English: School Contexts" (Kaldor & Malcolm 1979; Eagleson, Kaldor & Malcolm 1982).

Kaldor, Susan and Ian G. Malcolm. 1985. Aboriginal children's English – educational implications. In Michael Clyne (ed.), *Australia: meeting place of languages,* 223–240. Canberra: Department of Linguistics, Research School of Pacific Studies, Australian National University.

This draws on data from the WAACE project and other subsequent studies to document grammatical, lexical and discourse features in Western Australian Aboriginal children's English. It distinguishes between 16 widespread grammatical features, many of which are simplifications, and 19 features which characterize speech in northern and desert locations, many of which show creole influence. It is suggested that "complex syntactic and/or logical relationships often underlie what may appear to the casual observer to be 'disjointed' short sentences because of the non-standard ways in which these relationships are expressed" (233).

Among the unusual lexical items, apart from language transfers, there are many collocations often entailing semantic shift from SAE usage.

The chapter includes six extended transcripts of utterances of speakers in northern and desert locations.

Finally there is a discussion of discourse features and implications for education in Standard English as a second dialect.

Malcolm, Ian G. 1996. Observations on variability in the verb phrase in Aboriginal English. *Australian Journal of Linguistics* **16. 145–165.**

This paper reports the findings of a 1981–83 study of the use of the verb phrase by seven Aboriginal children aged 5–10 years in a remote school over a 12 month period. With the help of Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal members of the school staff, each child was given up to 4 structured and 15 free speech interviews over this period. The main intention of the study was to document the variability of form associated with 11 morphological and syntactic functions (present non-continuous, present continuous, present continuous (progressive), past continuous (progressive), perfect non-continuous, perfect continuous (progressive), future, modal (apart from future), copula statement, non-copula yes/no question and copula yes/no question).

The study was concerned to discover the manner of development in the use of the English verb phrase in bidialectal Aboriginal children. Findings suggested that the children operated within a system of multiple morphological and syntactic variants in reasonably systematic ways. Although they were being educated in standard Australian English, some of the development in their use of the verb phrase was in that direction and some away from it. The children were seen to be simultaneously acquiring two English systems.

General

Butcher, Andrew. 2008. Linguistic aspects of Australian Aboriginal English. *Clinical Linguistics & Phonetics* **22 (8). 625–642.**

This paper argues for the recognition of Australian Aboriginal English (AAE) as "a dialect of English with its own phonology, grammatical rules and lexicon, which is just as efficient a medium of communication as any other (indeed better, when it comes to expressing many of the core concepts of Aboriginal culture)" (640). The perspective is Australia-wide, and the variability of the dialect is essentially viewed as on a continuum between lighter varieties closer to Standard Australian English and heavier varieties closer to creole.

The distinctiveness of the phonology of AAE is seen as essentially reflecting indigenous language influence. This is shown to account, for example, for the lack of a consonantal voicing distinction and the reduction of the distinction between stops and fricatives. It is noted that the main consonantal differences relate to the obstruent class, and that nasals, liquids and glides tend to be unaffected. Butcher notes the frequent interchangeability of sibilant consonants

and affricates and the frequent omission, or hypercorrect addition, of initial /h/. He notes the occurrence of a clear, non-velarized /l/ in post-vocalic positions. With respect to vowels, it is noted that basilectal AAE may reduce the number of discriminations to 5, or 3, and may monophthongise some diphthongs. The tendency of indigenous languages to stress the first syllable is seen to carry over into AAE. This is sometimes achieved by deletion of the first unstressed syllable.

Butcher lists and illustrates 9 distinctive features of clause structure, 8 of verb phrase structure and 10 of noun phrase structure, making distinctions between acrolectal and basilectal usage.

With respect to the lexicon, Butcher notes the widespread retention of indigenous language words in referring to Aboriginal groups, and indigenized words (like *gubba* and *balanda*) in referring to non-Aboriginal groups. He notes the maintenance of earlier forms of English like *gammon* 'nonsense', *humbug* 'hypocrisy' and *jar* 'scold'). He also notes the semantic shift involved in the use of terms to refer to kin and other social relationships, and the conversion involved in such expressions as *ruding me* and *liar cry*.

Eades, Diana. 2014. Aboriginal English. In Harold Koch and Rachel Nordlinger (eds.), *The languages and linguistics of Australia: a comprehensive guide,* 417–447. Berlin: De Gruyter.

This chapter provides a comprehensive survey of the literature on Aboriginal English from its first recognition as a distinct Aboriginal variety of English by linguist and anthropologist T.G.H. Strehlow in South Australia in 1959 and including informed comment on all major studies from 1960 to the time of writing. Eades notes the way linguistic description of the dialect has progressively included ethnographic and sociolinguistic data, as well as, more recently, consideration of the cultural/conceptual dimension. She gives consideration to research methodology and the role of Aboriginal people on research teams. Attention is also given to the implications of the research for education and for legal processes. Concern is shown for ethical issues, in particular, the danger of "defining language use in terms of the ethnicity of speakers" (p. 436). The possibility of a repertoire-based approach to the study of the way Aboriginal people use English is put forward as an alternative to the use of the potentially problematic term "ethnolect."

Malcolm, Ian G. 2004. Australian creoles and Aboriginal English: phonetics and phonology. In Edgar W. Schneider, Kate Burridge, Bernd Kortmann, Rajend Mesthrie and Clive Upton (eds.), *A handbook of varieties of English,* vol. 1, 656–670. Berlin: Mouton de Gruyter. Reprinted in Kate Burridge & Bernd Kortmann (eds.), 2008. *Varieties of English 3: The Pacific and Australasia,* 124–141. Berlin: Mouton de Gruyter.

This chapter contributes to a project aimed at "documenting and mapping the structural variation among (spontaneously spoken) non-standard varieties of English" (Kortmann & Schneider 2008: 2). Following an introduction to the circumstances of the development of pidgins, creoles and Aboriginal English, it provides separate information on the phonology, first of Australian creoles, then of Aboriginal English.

The treatment of the phonology of Aboriginal English draws principally on data from Queensland, the Northern Territory and Western Australia. The variability in the vowel system is discussed and it is noted that phonemic opposition may be reduced between /iː/ and /ɪ/ and between /ɛ/ and /æ/, the mid central vowel /ɜ/ may not be consistently present, and the neutral short vowel /ə/ may be replaced by /ʌ/ or /a/. It is noted that the low central vowel /a/ is more widely distributed than in Australian English and that the back vowels /ɒ/ and /ɔ/ may be interchanged. The tendency for diphthongs to be monophthongised is noted.

Variability of consonant phonemes is shown on a chart, the main trends being the replacement of labio-dental fricatives with bilabial stops, the replacement of interdental fricatives with alveolar stops, the tendency to interchange affricates and sibilants, and to reduce the recognition of voicing.

Suprasegmental features noted are the forwarding of stress, the use of pitch rise with vowel lengthening for emphasis and some reports of pace of utterance and distinctive vocal quality.

Phonotactic changes include examples of aphesis (e.g. *bout* 'about'), apocope (e.g. *hɛn* 'hand'), prothesis (e.g. *njust tu* 'used to'), epenthesis (e.g. /imiju/ 'emu') and paragogue (e.g. *anythink*).

Morphophonemic features include the non-observance of liaison between contiguous vowels, the less common use of contractions such as *I'll* and *we're,* and the introduction of other contractions, such as *They'n see it* for 'they bin see it', *I 's* 'I was' and *I na* 'I want to'.

Malcolm, Ian G. 2004. Australian creoles and Aboriginal English: morphology and syntax. In Bernd Kortmann, Kate Burridge, Rajend Mesthrie, Edgar W. Schneider and Clive Upton (eds.), *A handbook of varieties of English,* **vol. 2, 657–681. Berlin: Mouton de Gruyter. Reprinted in Kate Burridge & Bernd Kortmann (eds.). 2008.** *Varieties of English 3: The Pacific and Australasia,* **415–443.**

The morphology and syntax of Aboriginal English, as a "restructured English" are described. The discussion is in three sections: the verb phrase, the noun phrase and sentence structure. Ten features are discussed under the verb phrase: subject-verb agreement, the unmarked verb, tense, aspect, negation, forms of *be*, parataxis, passive, transitive and the adverb. With respect to the noun phrase,

six features are discussed: determiners, number, gender, possession, kin relation marking, pronouns, adjectives, prepositions. With respect to sentence structure nine features are discussed: statements, questions, embedding, phrase and sentence repetition, predicate marking, post-sentence modification, successive pronoun subject deletion, associated motion and embedded observation.

Aboriginal English: Sociolinguistic Descriptions

Douglas, Wilfrid H. 1976. *The Aboriginal languages of the South-west of Australia*. 2nd edition. Canberra: Australian Institute of Aboriginal Studies.

This is a report on what remained of the Nyungar language in the South-west at the time of writing. It is based on data gathered on extensive travel through the South-west, the wheatbelt, the Goldfields and the Great Southern regions. The Aboriginal population, at the time, numbered about 8,000, including a small number of 'full-blood' Aborigines. This represents the earliest description of Aboriginal speech varieties in the South-west, being based on data actually collected between 1938 and 1944.

The word *nyungar,* from one of the dialects, previously meant 'man' or 'person' but is now generally used by the people of this area to describe themselves and their language.

The author identifies four major speech forms in current use: (a) *Nyuŋaṛ,* covering all dialects of the south-west language then spoken mainly by elderly folk and called *the lingo* by the younger generation; (b) *Wetjala,* or the normal Australian English of the south-west, sometimes caricatured by Aboriginal speakers as *simulated wetjala*; (c) *Yeraka,* a form of English-based Pig Latin used by some women of the south-west, who call it "Italian"; (d) *Neo-Nyungar,* "a development from Njuŋar under the influence of English." "From another angle, Neo-Nyungar may be viewed as a continuum carrying all degrees of variation from Nyuŋaṛ (the Lingo) to English (Wetjala)" (14). "Neo-Nyungar may be seen as the expression of a people torn between two cultures, voluntarily segregated by their unwillingness to commit themselves to one culture or to the other" (15). The form of speech used reflects the speaker's level of adjustment to the non-Aboriginal culture, and individuals may make continual speech adjustments, depending upon the person being addressed.

Details are given of words transferred from Nyuŋar into "Neo-Nyungar, some with semantic change. Detail is given on transfers relating to taboo subjects and to kinship as well as to traditional places, birds, animals and beings.

Part Two of the book deals with the shape of Njuŋaṛ, giving detail on phonology, morphology and syntax and the final portion of the book (53–101) consists of a Njuŋaṛ- English and English – Njuŋaṛ dictionary.

Eades, Diana M. 1983. *English as an Aboriginal Language in Southeast Queensland*. **University of Queensland, Brisbane, PhD thesis.**

This is a significant investigation of Aboriginal English as spoken in Southeast Queensland (between Brisbane and Rockhampton), using a Hymesian functional perspective. The data consist of 55 tape recordings of Eades and/or Goorang Goorang associate Michael Williams in conversation with Aboriginal people of Southeast Queensland, together with notebooks relating to fieldtrips covering 18 weeks.

Eades observes that all Southeast Queensland Aboriginal (SEQAB) people speak English as a first language. Her intention, with respect to the varieties of Aboriginal English spoken, is to investigate "the use of language in social action... starting with function, and then looking for the structures which serve it" (29). Particular attention is given to strategies of seeking information, giving and seeking reasons for actions and talking about future action.

Among the key findings are that the communication of SEQAB people is characterised by indirection, avoidance of confrontation, use of hints and orientation questions to elicit information, recognition of one another's individual freedom and responsibility, avoidance of "why" questions, disclaiming responsibility for the truth of reported statements, using experiential rather than chronological reference to past time, observing reciprocity when seeking information, making minimal demands on children before puberty and respecting spirit beings and people who are holders of religious knowledge.

Eades' findings on Aboriginal ways of using English are further discussed in Part 1 of Eades (2013).

Elwell, Vanessa M. 1979. *English-as-a-second-language in Aboriginal Australia: a case study of Milingimbi*. **Canberra: Australian National University M.A. thesis.**

Milingimbi is an island off the far northern coast of Arnhem Land in the Northern Territory. To the people there Yolngu is the first and English the second language. Elwell's study (not reported on in full here) focused on the children in the school and noted that, while students were capable of performing defined speech acts in English in the classroom, their socialization in the community surrounded them with cultural objects and expectations which were Aboriginal. She noted that, even by the age of three or four, they were fully functioning members of the Aboriginal society: "They understand the kinship system and are familiar with the objects of their environment, their language, expected and socially-acceptable behaviour and traditional stories and wisdoms" (344). By contrast, they had very little familiarity with "beds, chairs, tables, stoves, ovens, refrigerators, washing machines, flush toilets, kitchen utensils, cleaning equipment, toiletries,

books, pot plants and other paraphernalia of Western living" (345). Understandably, among some of the younger men in the community, English was regarded as something of a "secret" language (347).

The students' informal use of English in oral narrative was affected by heavy audience participation and took on the character of a conversation, often with switches to the Aboriginal language (223). Though the students could speak in English they lacked knowledge of the patterns of behaviour expected in an English speaking society, including greetings and politeness strategies.

Flint, Elwyn H. 1972. The sociology of language in Queensland Aboriginal communities. *Kivung* **5 (3). 150–163.**

On the basis of data gathered in 30 Queensland Aboriginal communities in the Queensland Speech Survey between 1960 and 1968, Flint identifies a continuum of linguistic variation between an L ('low') and an H form, with the latter approximating to the General Australian English used by teachers and administrators. He sees this variation as determined by the social role and domain. The L form is used principally in the home domain and the H form in interaction with administrators and teachers.

Aboriginal English: Lexis and Semantics

Arthur, Jay M. 1996. *Aboriginal English: a cultural study.* **South Melbourne: Oxford University Press.**

The author describes this as "a collection of words from Aboriginal English" (p. 4). It is a dictionary, but it is also a "cultural study," which "looks at contemporary Aboriginal Australia through the medium of one of its languages" (4). The words which are included are not claimed to be exhaustive, though they are deemed to be many of the significant words which can provide cultural insight. The words have been taken from written sources, though the sources selected have been seen to reproduce Aboriginal speech with "a consciousness of the integrity of the dialect" (5).

The organization of the dictionary is intended to reflect the Aboriginal experience which gave rise to the dialect, and the 8 chapters bear titles which an Aboriginal English speaker might have used, e.g. *Always was, always will be* (traditional and continuing culture); *Us mob* (feelings and social interactions); *Country* (place of belonging); *Living with whitefellas* (the experience of occupation); *The quiet run and the wild bush* (the pastoral industry). Each chapter is preceded by a commentary which provides an orientation to the cultural content which will follow.

Multiple sources are cited, where possible, for the lexical items, and quotations given with dates, locations and language influences.

Malcolm, Ian G. and Sharifian, Farzad. 2007. Multiword units in Aboriginal English: Australian cultural expression in an adopted language. In Paul Skandera (ed.), *Phraseology and culture in English***, 375–398. Berlin: Mouton de Gruyter.**

This chapter attempts, on the basis of Western Australian data, to illustrate the inventiveness with which Aboriginal speakers have vernacularized English, often creating distinctive multi-word units in the noun phrase or verb phrase. The innovations which have been made are viewed from the perspective of Cultural Linguistics, that is, the lexical changes are seen as "instantiations of conceptualisations [e.g. metaphors, schemas, categories, blends, etc.] that are culturally constructed by the new speech community" (377).

Multiword units in the noun phrase may entail processes of compounding, suffixing, collocation and syntactic adjustment, each with various sub-categories. Multiword units in the verb phrase may entail suffixing, prefixing, creation of phrasal verbs, collocation and syntactic adjustment, again with various sub-categories. It is suggested that the multiword innovations are conceptually driven and reflect accommodation to different schemas, metaphor and metonymy, perspectivisation and response to integrative versus abstractive conceptual principles.

Aboriginal English: Discourse and Genres

Eades, Diana. 1991. Communicative strategies in Aboriginal English. In Suzanne Romaine (ed.), *Language in Australia,* **84–93. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.**

This chapter is concerned with the bearing of sociocultural context on meaning and the ways in which cultural continuities within Aboriginal communities will affect the ways in which interactions in English will be conducted and interpreted. It is stressed that extensive kin-based networks, family obligations and a common history have a strong bearing on the ways in which interactions take place. The outdoor lifestyle is accompanied by a greater sense of openness to observation by others and, for personal privacy to be maintained, indirect styles of interaction have been developed.

The seeking of information is often carried out by initially presenting information for confirmation or denial. It is appropriate, after presenting information, to maintain silence, as a hint that further information on the topic would be

welcome. Requests are not made directly, but are implied by the use of orientation questions. Refusals are not direct but may be open, as in *Might be later* (p. 88). Seeking of reasons by asking "why?" is not typical of Aboriginal interaction. Rather, one seeks facts and draws conclusions from them. Opinions are expressed with caution and indirection, rather than dogmatically.

Some of the cross-cultural implications of these communicative strategies, and of the response of "gratuitous concurrence", are considered in the contexts of meetings, law courts, classrooms and at university.

Malcolm, Ian G. 2002. *Aboriginal English genres in Perth*. Mount Lawley: Centre for Applied Language & Literacy Research and Institute for the Service Professions, Edith Cowan University.

This is the report on a project aiming to record and analyse the naturally-occurring oral narratives of Aboriginal people in metropolitan Perth. Data came from both archival (dating back to 1977) and original sources, and the narrators were mostly school students aged between 7 and 18, though a small number of recordings from adult family members of Aboriginal members of the research team were also included. A total of 100 oral narratives were included in the study. All participants were volunteers and were recorded by Aboriginal or non-Aboriginal investigators, often in the presence of friends.

Although the informants in this study were unconstrained by the investigators as to what they should talk about, it was found that they tended to use a regularly recurring set of discourse forms (genres) and experiential frames (schemas). The most frequently occurring genre (about 75% of the time) was the recount, though narratives, reports, procedures and other forms were also present in the data. The most frequently occurring schemas were scary things (54%), hunting (31%), observing (25%), travel (16%), and family (16%), though there were some 20 schemas in all.

The report includes full transcripts of all oral narratives recorded, as well as some detailed analyses and comparisons with data gathered in another project from the Yamatji lands (Rochcouste & Malcolm 2003).

Rochecouste, Judith and Malcolm, Ian. 2003. *Aboriginal English genres in the Yamatji Lands of Western Australia*. Mount Lawley: Centre for Applied Language & Literacy Research, Edith Cowan University.

This report provides a theoretical background for the analysis of oral narratives in terms of their schema and genre and provides a summary account of the analysis of 108 such narratives, elicited mainly from school students (though occasionally from adults) in the Yamatji Lands of Western Australia (principally, Geraldton, Mullewa and Carnarvon). 65% of the narratives are recounts and most of the remainder are reports. The predominant schemas followed are Scary

Things (32%), Observing (18%) and Hunting (14%). In some cases more than one schema underlies the same narrative.

Texts of the narratives are analysed with respect to the schemas which underlie them and the discourse strategies that the narrators use. Other textual features which are observed in the corpus and discussed are: co-narration, cohesion by means of referential chains, direct speech and direct speech switching, male and female narrator differences, intertextuality and recapping.

Aboriginal English: History, Development and Ownership

Malcolm, Ian G. and Marek M Koscielecki. 1997. *Aboriginality and English: Report to the Australian Research Council.* **Mount Lawley: Centre for Applied Language Research, Edith Cowan University.**

The project on which this is a report set out to extend literature on the origins and development of Aboriginal English in particular with respect to the relationship between the development of the dialect on the eastern (Port Jackson) and western (Swan River) sides of the continent. The investigation had a diachronic and a synchronic component. The diachronic component involved a search of literature on the circumstances of initial contact in both locations and the development of a chronological database tracing phonology, grammar, lexico-semantics, discourse and pragmatics. The synchronic component entailed personal visits to La Perouse community in Sydney and the Nyungar community in Perth and recording of contemporary speech which was later transcribed and analysed in the same categories as those used for the diachronic analysis.

The investigation supported the view that the development of Aboriginal English in the Port Jackson and Swan River settlements was closely related

The report includes an initial socio-historical survey, details of the linguistic and pragmatic findings of the diachronic component, followed by related details of the findings of the synchronic component in both locations, leading to inferences about Aboriginality and English and to implications for the implementation of two-way bidialectal education.

An overview of this research and its implications is found in Malcolm (2000).

Malcolm, Ian G. 2013. The ownership of Aboriginal English in Australia. *World Englishes* **32 (1). 42–53.**

This paper shows how, in common with other post-colonial groups which have involuntarily adopted the colonisers' language, Aboriginal people, having indigenized English, have increasingly used it for their own purposes and claimed it as their own. The paper argues, on the basis of Australian and international

evidence, that claims of ownership of a dialect of English entail questions of identity, authenticity, group membership and language rights. There is some discussion of the tension involved in the conflicting demands of cultural maintenance (through Aboriginal English) and those of economic development (through SAE). In education, the need for pluricentrism, rather than the assumption that the only English is SAE, is recommended.

Malcolm, Ian G. 2013a. Aboriginal English and associated varieties. In *World atlas of variation in English*, 596–619. Berlin: Mouton de Gruyter.

The English-related influences on Aboriginal English come from diverse "settler varieties" brought to Australia by colonists, from contact varieties, of which the main contemporary ones are Kriol and Torres Strait Creole, as well as from various sociolects of Australian English. This paper takes advantage of data from the World Atlas of Variation in English (WAVE) to observe what Aboriginal English has in common with contemporary varieties from the Southeast of England, Irish English, Australian English, Australian Vernacular English, Roper River Creole (Kriol) and Torres Strait Creole.

On the basis of 86 non-standard grammatical features shared with one or more of these varieties, it is observed that some of the simplification features which have previously been attributed to pidgin/creole influence could have come from varieties brought to Australia. It is also noted that to call Aboriginal English a dialect of Australian English (e.g., by Arthur 1996) is misleading, in that neither Australian English nor Vernacular Australian English is more influential than other varieties brought to Australia. Judging by commonness of grammatical deviation from Standard English, the strongest influences on Aboriginal English are those of Australian creoles. The findings strengthen the case for viewing Aboriginal English as an independent Australian dialect.

Further analysis of the cultural continuities shown in the above findings is given in Malcolm (2013b) and Malcolm (2014b).

Troy, Jakelin F. 1994. *Melaleuka: A history and description of New South Wales Pidgin*. The Australian National University, Canberra, PhD thesis.

This substantial and painstakingly documented work provides a detailed account of the developments in the areas of Sydney, the Cumberland Plain, Port Stephens, the Monaro District and the Port Phillip District from 1788 to 1850 that accompanied the formation and spread of New South Wales Pidgin, which, it is argued, "is most probably an ancestor of all modern Australian creoles" (p. 436). The name "Melaleuka" derives from the assumption that NSW Pidgin comprised two sociolects, the "melanolect" and the "leukolect", spoken respectively by Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal speakers. With the displacement of Aboriginal

people from their lands, they progressively adopted NSW Pidgin for intra-group communication, leading to its wide dissemination across the country.

The overall argument of the thesis is that NSW Pidgin originated in Sydney in the late eighteenth century, that it expanded and consolidated between 1804 and 1820 as northern districts began to be settled, that it had acquired a stable core grammar and lexicon by the mid-nineteenth century and that it came to be widely spoken in the colony, especially in rural areas, acquiring some regional lexical variation as it spread.

The thesis provides data showing the early adoption of such features as the articles *de* and *wan,* the nominalising suffix *–fela,* the past tense marker *bin,* the future marker *go*, the intensifiers *tumatj* and *plenty* and the pronunciation of "ask" as *aks*. It is shown how the operation of Aboriginal people as "guides and informants, procurers and preparers of food and general hands on in expeditions", as well as providing an "informal messenger service" (275) helped in the spread of NSW Pidgin so that by the 1830s it was "very important as the colonial lingua franca" (351).

Aboriginal English: Conceptualisation

Malcolm, Ian G. and Judith Rochecouste. 2000. Event and story schemas in Australian Aboriginal English discourse. *English World-Wide* 21 (2). 261–289.

This paper reports on a study of 40 English oral narratives from school-age speakers from the Yamatji lands in the South-west of Australia. It is argued that schemas are mental patterns which are derived from experience and which lie behind the ways in which experience is represented. Genres are discourse forms and schemas are the patterns of regularity in the representation of experience which underlie them. 40 oral narratives by Aboriginal speakers were recorded in three towns in the Yamatji lands, and of these, 33 represented experience in one of four ways: as travel, as hunting, as observing, or as encountering strange powers (or, "scary things", in the words of an Aboriginal member of the research team).

The paper lists 16 discourse strategies and 12 discourse markers which were exhibited in the corpus, as well as a number of recurrent images which served to signify the relevant schema. Analysed samples of each of the four prototypic schemas are included.

Sharifian, Farzad. 2002b. *Conceptual-associative system in Aboriginal English*. Mount Lawley, Western Australia: Edith Cowan University PhD thesis.

This investigation studied Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal students from primary schools in the Perth Metropolitan Area using a word association

technique. The thesis adopts the theoretical base of Cultural Linguistics and the assumption that language is underlain by conceptualisation, with the main components of conceptual systems being categories and schemas, distributed across the minds of members of a speech community.

A word association technique was used in this investigation to enable stimulus words to be used to evoke associated schemas and categories in the conceptualisation of the 29 Aboriginal and 30 non-Aboriginal informants. A list of 30 words was derived from the literature relating to Aboriginal English speakers: Aboriginal, home, food, people, fight, family, country, fun, Australia, camping, story, bird, animal, mum, dream, watching, take away, walk, deadly, park, white, shame, life, lovely, important, kangaroo, smash, speaking, hunting and going out. When, in the presence of the investigator and an Aboriginal assistant, items were orally presented, the informants were invited to respond with their associations, and from the associations and feedback from the Aboriginal assistants, inferences were made as to the relevant categories and schemas used by both groups.

In the analysis, reasons are given for the selection of each of the words, and the responses of Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal respondents are put side by side. The analysis reveals two distinct but overlapping conceptual systems among the members of the two groups and shows clear links to their respective dialects. It is noteworthy that, although these informants were in an urban context and dialect was not being focused on, the same words tended, in many cases, to carry group-specific associations.

Further information on this study is found in chapter 5 of Sharifian (2011).

Sharifian, Farzad, Adriano Truscott, Patricia Königsberg, Ian G. Malcolm and Glenys Collard. 2012. *"Understanding stories my way": Aboriginal-English (mis)understanding of school literacy materials in Australian English*. Leederville, Western Australia: Institute for Professional Learning, Department of Education.

This is the report of a research project designed to provide information on how students who were speakers of Aboriginal English interpreted a range of Standard English texts which were in regular use in schools. The research was a follow-up to a previous project (Sharifian et al 2004) which had shown that teachers, confronted with tape recorded student narratives in Aboriginal English, often misinterpreted them.

Both projects used idea-unit analysis to enable the essential elements in the source texts to be tracked in the recalls given by the teachers or students who were asked to repeat what had been said or read to them. The theoretical foundation for the research was schema theory and it was assumed that the receiver

of a communication relies on a schema derived from their culture, in order to interpret it.

In the above research project, students individually listened to their teacher reading the sample text to them, then, after a break of ten minutes, were asked to say what they recalled. The texts included material of diverse cultural origins. The recalls showed that the students, rather than adopting the schemas of the storytellers, tended to reschematize what they heard to make it compatible with their existing schemas (which is comparable to what the teachers had done to the Aboriginal oral narratives in the previous study).

The report includes suggested bidialectal education strategies to overcome the kinds of problems revealed.

Malcolm, Ian G. 2011. Learning through standard English: Cognitive implications for post-pidgin/-creole speakers. *Linguistics and Education* **22. 261–272.**

This paper highlights conceptual continuities across Australian pidgins, creoles and Aboriginal English and suggests implications for school learning by medium of standard Australian English. It argues that the distinctiveness of Aboriginal English is due in part to the conceptual factors involved in the Indigenous nativization of English by successive generations of Indigenous speakers. 34 of the features expressing continuity with pidgin or creole and highlighting of integration over abstraction are illustrated and shown to respond to one of five cognitive principles: focus on experience rather than existence, focus on experience rather than time, focus on substance rather than function, focus on the entity rather than the attribute and focus on the entity rather than its components and focus on the spiritual, not just the temporal.

Malcolm, Ian G. and Farzad Sharifian. 2002. Aspects of Aboriginal oral discourse: an application of cultural schema theory. *Discourse Studies* **4 (2). 169–181.**

This article expounds and follows an approach to discourse analysis which accounts for it in terms of mental representation. Aboriginal English is put forward as a range of varieties used primarily by Aboriginal speakers within their own speech communities and informed by a semantic system deeply rooted in Aboriginal cultures.

A succession of interactions involving Aboriginal English speakers, including a girl's informal interaction about her holiday plans with her teacher, a boy's account of a hunting expedition, a group's interaction about a game of football and a girl's recount of her sister's encounter with a snake, are examined and seen to show reference to cultural schemas on the part of the Aboriginal speakers. The

paper provides further exemplification of schemas in Aboriginal discourse and shows their place in discourse processing.

Aboriginal English: School Contexts

Eagleson, Robert D., Susan Kaldor and Ian G. Malcolm. 1982. *English and the Aboriginal child*. **Canberra: Curriculum Development Centre.**

Part I of this book provides detail on Variation in English Language (by Eagleson) and the Aboriginal Languages of Australia (by Kaldor). Part II contains linguistic studies, the first of which (by Kaldor & Malcolm) focuses on Aboriginal English in remote and regional areas of Western Australia. It reviews the Western Australian Aboriginal Children's English (WAACE) project which involved extensive research in 38 schools across the state. Detailed analysis is provided of the phonology, grammar and vocabulary, referenced to the centres in which it was recorded. The second descriptive study relates to Sydney Aboriginal English (by Eagleson) and is described under "Aboriginal English: Linguistic Description, New South Wales" (above). Part III, Educational Issues, includes a chapter on Verbal Interaction in the Classroom (by Malcolm) and a chapter on The Teacher's Task (by Kaldor, Eagleson and Malcolm) giving information on the teaching of Standard English as a second dialect (TSESD). There follows an appendix (by Malcolm) with commentary and transcripts of an accompanying cassette tape of child and adult speech.

Harkins, Jean. 1994. *Bridging two worlds: Aboriginal English and crosscultural understanding*. **St. Lucia: University of Queensland Press.**

This is a scholarly work based on data gathered from Yipirinya School, Alice Springs, and under the direction of the all-Aboriginal School Council. The author is able to bring her knowledge of the Arrernte and Luritja languages to the interpretation of the Aboriginal English she describes. The study goes beyond phonology and grammar to analyse textual cohesion and semantics, and it includes a consideration of issues of cross-cultural communication.

As in Eades' doctoral work (1983), the involvement of local Aboriginal people in the development of this study was crucial. The study is also particularly important in the way it presents Aboriginal English within a multilingual context instead of the usual dichotomous context presented, of Aboriginal English vs Standard Australian English. Harkins demolishes "deficit" ideology by her demonstrations of ways in which Aboriginal English is used to express complex concepts. Her multi-level analysis of the expression of meaning is particularly valuable. The volume concludes with four representative texts of adult and child speech.

Kaldor, Susan and Ian G.Malcolm. 1979. The language of the school and the language of the Western Australian Aboriginal schoolchild – Implications for education. In R.M. Berndt and C.H. Berndt (eds.), *Aborigines of the West: their past and their present,* **406–437. Nedlands: University of Western Australia Press.**

This paper addresses the problem of the widespread assumption that Aboriginal children in school can be educated as if they are speakers of Standard Australian English (SAE). It surveys the history of Aboriginal contact with English in Western Australia and argues that their English exists on a continuum between contact language and SAE. Profiles are given of six students from different parts of Western Australia representing six points along this continuum and corresponding speech samples are provided. Some linguistic processes and influences leading to the development of varieties of Aboriginal English are listed, including: mother tongue transfer, simplification, informal settings and intra-group communication. Western Australian Aboriginal Children's English (WAACE) is described in terms of its speech sounds, grammatical forms and vocabulary. There is also discussion of the sociolinguistic feature of "shame." Implications for education are discussed, including bilingual education and the teaching of Standard English as a second dialect (TSESD). Recommendations are made for these matters to be taken into account in teacher education.

Further development of some of the matters raised in this paper may be found in Kaldor & Malcolm 1985, 1991 and in chapter 3 of Eagleson, Kaldor & Malcolm 1982.

Malcolm, Ian G. 1979. *Classroom communication and the Aboriginal child: a sociolinguistic investigation in western Australian primary schools.* **University of Western Australia, Nedlands, PhD thesis.**

This thesis provides an analysis and interpretation of the interactions between Aboriginal children and their teachers in Western Australian primary schools. Based on observation and recording of 114 interactions in 24 schools in all divisions of the state, it provides a comprehensive view of the ways in which classroom discourse proceeds. On the basis of Hymesian categories of speech events, routines and speech acts, classroom discourse is analysed as configurations of options, and it is shown how, and why, Aboriginal students do not always opt in to the options anticipated by the teachers and how teachers respond.

The classroom analyses are interpreted in the light of detail on Aboriginal English and the speech use conventions of Aboriginal societies, and the teacher responses are discussed in the light of teacher interview data.

Aspects of the findings of this research are presented in Malcolm (1979a, 1982 and 1986). Details of the analysis of speech use in Aboriginal communities are provided in Malcolm (1980–1982).

Malcolm, Ian G. 1994. Aboriginal English inside and outside the classroom. *Australian Review of Applied Linguistics* **17 (2). 147–180.**

It is argued in this paper that in the classroom it is the teachers who define the speech event, whereas, outside, there are contexts where the Aboriginal participants define the event. Nine transcribed and analysed texts are used to support this argument. The non-classroom texts, recorded in home contexts, are first person oral narratives which follow an alternation between moving and stopping segments, a pattern shown to be consistent with Aboriginal cultural precedents. The classroom texts include, in some cases, the same Aboriginal speakers but show them either not participating or not conforming to the teachers' communicative expectations. The relation between discourse and world view is apparent, and ways are suggested for teachers to take this into account.

Malcolm, Ian G. 1995. *Language and communication enhancement for two-way education***. Mount Lawley: Edith Cowan University, in collaboration with the Education Department of Western Australia.**

This document is the outcome of, and report on, a collaborative professional development project in which 18 teachers of Aboriginal students from 9 schools in different parts of the state were mentored to enable them to gather linguistic data from their students and analyse it according to a given framework, with a view to using the knowledge gained to improve their teaching.

The report includes a structured interview schedule (45) and the comparative responses to this across the participating schools (141). It provides an introduction to Aboriginal English and Aboriginal English research, an outline of the inservice courses and site visits, details of work packages and required reading, with suggested answers to questions. It also includes unit outlines for a proposed Graduate Certificate in Language Studies (Aboriginal English) and the formal evaluation of the project.

Simpson, Jane and Gillian Wigglesworth (eds.). 2008. *Children's language and multilingualism: Indigenous language use at home and school***. London: Continuum.**

This book is an outcome of the Aboriginal Child Language Acquisition Project, a four-year study of child language development in Kalkaringi, Tennant Creek, Yakanarra and Lajumanu. While much of the concern of the book goes beyond Aboriginal English, it does provide relevant insights into the performance of Aboriginal students in English-only classrooms. Two examples will be noted.

Chapter 6, by Moses and Wigglesworth, analyses the discourse and behaviour patterns of students in a one-teacher school south of Tennant Creek. In whole-of-class discussion it is shown the communication breaks down when the students do not respond to the teacher's elicitations, or respond too slowly or too softly. It

is shown that the grammatical demands of the teacher's questioning do not take adequate account of the students' actual variety of English.

In Chapter 9, Gould, a speech pathologist, discusses issues associated with the assessment of Indigenous students' English language ability. In particular she shows the inappropriateness of the use of assessment instruments designed to measure ability in standard Australian English with such students. Such testing often leads to misdiagnosis of language disorder. Gould advocates language sampling as an alternative assessment tool.

Aboriginal English: Legal Contexts

Eades, Diana. 2013. *Aboriginal ways of Using English*. Canberra: Aboriginal Studies Press.

Part II of this book contains six papers previously published by Eades between 1993 and 2012 which relate to speakers of Aboriginal English involved in the criminal justice process. On the basis of data coming from courtroom cases, Eades highlights a number of features of Aboriginal communication in English, including: gratuitous concurrence (answering "yes" to satisfy the questioner), confusion by either-or questions, avoidance of direct eye contact, swearing as a part of settling disputes, expressing quantity in relational rather than quantified terms, using "I don't know" in response to an inappropriate question, expecting reasonable wait time before responding, and taking a collaborative approach to telling a story. Eades illustrates how each of these strategies may be misunderstood, or even deliberately manipulated, by lawyers and police.

In the more recent papers, Eades refers to what she calls the "struggle over neo-colonial control over the lives of Aboriginal people" (182), as illustrated in the prejudgement that they are a public menace on the streets. She stresses the need not to rush Aboriginal witnesses with questions, but to take time to get to know them. She identifies four areas of "language ideology" which show up in the way in which language tends to be used or interpreted by representatives of the criminal justice system and the media:

a) Inconsistency: "the assumption that inconsistency between different tellings of a story indicates lack of truthfulness" (184)
b) Decontextualised fragments: "The assumption that individual words or fragments taken from a story can be understood without their context" (196)
c) Narrator authorship: "the assumption that a witness's or interviewee's story is solely their own account" (196), and
d) Repeated questioning: "the assumption that repeated questioning provides the opportunity to properly test a witness's truthfulness" (198).

Aboriginal English: Educational Resources

Cahill, Rosemary (ed.). 1999. *Solid English*. **East Perth: Education Department of Western Australia.**

This is a resource guide for teachers of Aboriginal students, providing an accessible introduction to Aboriginal English, its linguistic features, associated world view and speech use conventions. It includes advice on how Aboriginal students may be expected to learn and gives advice on how teachers may capitalise on their strengths. Details are provided on recommended general classroom strategies, and two-way language teaching strategies.

The appendices include notes on Aboriginal culture, preferred terminology in referring to Aboriginal culture, the meaning of "standard" English and the relation between Aboriginal English, pidgins and creoles.

Cahill, Rosemary. 2000. *Deadly ways to learn*. **East Perth: Deadly Ways to Learn Consortium.**

This is a resource kit for use by teachers engaging in two-way bidialectal education with Aboriginal students. It comprises two books and two videotapes.

The first book, *Deadly Yarns,* is concerned with raising awareness of the fact that worldviews differ, and giving expression to an Aboriginal worldview. Since yarning is a fundamental form of interaction in Aboriginal culture, the presentation is in the form of yarns, by named individuals, talking about issues in education and life. The yarns are grouped under headings of language, culture, identity, power and schooling.

The second book, *Deadly Ideas,* is a collection of two-way bidialectal teaching strategies, grouped in sections headed: Two-way teaching, Teaching About Language, Teaching Through Language and Teaching Language.

The videotape *Talking Deadly* is designed to be used to stimulate discussion on language, culture and identity in the context of Aboriginal English. The videotape *Deadly Ways to Teach* is designed to support teacher discussion on two-way bidialectal teaching strategies.

Königsberg, Patricia, Glenys Collard and Margaret McHugh (eds.). 2012. *Tracks to two-way learning*. **Perth: Department of Education and Department of Training and Workforce Development.**

This is a train-the-trainer resource for people involved in Aboriginal education at school and adult level, assuming a two-way bidialectal approach. The resource exists in hardcopy as 14 A4 books, and is also available, together with workshop slides, on DVD. It has three parts: a Facilitator's Guide for the delivery of two-way

training, 12 Focus Area guidebooks, dealing with topics in the areas of Professional Practice, Community Engagement, Inclusive Policy and Practice and Motivated and Engaged Learners, and a Sample Workshops Guide, providing detailed guidance in the conduct of three workshops. Included in one of the focus area handbooks are ten illustrated storybooks written in Aboriginal English by Aboriginal authors.

In line with two-way principles, this resource was developed and trialled over a number of years by teams of Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal educators across Western Australia and was also monitored by a team of Aboriginal English research linguists. It is the most comprehensive research-based two-way resource available to educators of Aboriginal English speakers.

Königsberg, Patricia and Glenys Collard (eds.). 2002. *Ways of being, ways of talk*. East Perth: Department of Education.

This training package consists of a 144 page booklet accompanied by 4 videotapes or, (in the version published from 2007) a DVD, which are intended to give people working with Indigenous Australians an introduction to Aboriginal English and two-way learning. The booklet contains the four research papers on which the training material is based. The first of these, "Shared World of Communication," by Judith Rochecouste, deals with the status of Aboriginal English as a dialect and its operation in the lives of its speakers and in society. The second paper, "Moving into Other Worlds," by Alison M. Hill, traces the history of the development of Aboriginal English and the interaction of the colonial and Aboriginal cultures. The third paper, "Now you see it Now you don't" by Ian G. Malcolm discusses the conceptual dimension of language and illustrates the conceptual distinctiveness of Aboriginal English. The fourth paper, "Two-Way Learning and Two Kinds of Power" by Ellen Grote discusses the power dimension of the Standard English/Aboriginal English divide and provides a case for two-way bidialectal education.

The four video or DVD programmes are each 15–20 minutes long and were produced by professionals from the Australian Broadcasting Corporation. The scripts and some accompanying pictures from each of these productions are provided in the booklet, as are details of other relevant readings and website resources, a glossary of terms and an index.

Malcolm, Ian G., Yvonne Haig, Patricia Königsberg, Judith Rochecouste, Glenys Collard, Alison Hill, and Rosemary Cahill. 1999a. *Towards more user-friendly education for speakers of Aboriginal English*. Mount Lawley: Centre for Applied Language & Literacy Research, Edith Cowan University and Education Department of Western Australia.

Malcolm, Ian G., Yvonne Haig, Patricia Königsberg, Judith Rochecouste, Glenys Collard, Alison Hill and Rosemary Cahill. 1999b. *Two-way English*. East Perth: Education Department of Western Australia.

The above two documents are reports on a collaborative research project conducted by Edith Cowan University in association with the Education Department of Western Australia over 1996–7 and involving a statewide field team of 7 non-Aboriginal teachers partnered with 7 Aboriginal/Islander Education Workers working together to implement two-way bidialectal education. The first report (above) was directed primarily to the academic and research community and the second (which includes more on curriculum implications and further resources) to teachers.

The field data gathered included 67 audio tapes, 3 video tapes, 12 sets of writing samples and 13 sets of semantic exercises. The reports draw on the data gathered, and also on the associated workshopping (4 workshops each of one week's duration) to extend knowledge of Aboriginal English and how it can be incorporated into educational practice at the primary school level.

Malcolm, Ian G., Ellen Grote, Louella Eggington and Farzad Sharifian. 2002. *The representation of Aboriginal English in school literacy materials*. Mount Lawley: Centre for Applied Language and Literacy Research.

This is the report on a study of literacy materials used with Aboriginal students to see to what extent they were congruent, linguistically and culturally, with students who were speakers of Aboriginal English, and consider how these materials might be used within a two-way bidialectal programme. Over 100 materials in current use were included in the study and 40 were given detailed analysis on four dimensions (linguistic, sociolinguistic, conceptual, pedagogical) by the research team which included Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal members.

It was found that morphology and syntax of the texts frequently imposed obstacles for Aboriginal English readers. This applied particularly to texts using the Western form of traditional storytelling and also to texts relating to Aboriginal culture, which frequently used the passive voice and multiple attributive adjectives which are not found in Aboriginal English. The sociolinguistic analysis showed that a little over half the texts viewed the Indigenous reader inclusively. The conceptual analysis showed some potential problems with the use of decontextualized categories, though many of the discourse and propositional schemas would have been familiar to Indigenous students. The pedagogical analysis showed that about three quarters of the texts surveyed would have been pedagogically useful though some were deficient on other criteria.

Price, Kaye (ed.). 2012. *Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander education: an introduction for the teaching profession.* **Port Melbourne: Cambridge University Press.**

This collection of articles directed to people in training to be teachers marks a significant development, in that it represents uniquely the views of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander spokespersons. Each of the ten authors precedes their article with a reflection on their own experience as a member of an Aboriginal or Torres Strait Islander community. Issues that are highly relevant to members of these communities are brought forward, such as their involvement in programmes designed for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander learners, their experience as members of the Stolen Generation, their experiences as minority members of SAE-oriented classes, their need to balance cultural obligations with the demands of schooling, their experience of stereotyping, "silent apartheid" (64) and "exoticism" (71). While most of the authors do not write as linguists, they apply cultural predispositions which have been observed by linguists to their approaches to education, for example, mathematics as storytelling, and as dance (107); "find common ground and work from there" (117); "move from 'telling/lecturing to…a pedagogy of students teaching themselves with teacher's guidance through the use of ICTs" (118); use of "instant messaging and other social networking services to gather information and build their knowledge, as well as to maintain social contacts and relationships" (118); "learning through experimentation" (123). One of the chapters is by Aboriginal linguist Jaky Troy, who suggests what is "standard" in the English of Aboriginal speakers is not the same as what is regarded more widely as Standard English (133).

Aboriginal English: Educational Policy and Practice

Malcolm, Ian G. 1999. English and inclusivity in education for indigenous students. *Australian Review of Applied Linguistics* **22 (2). 51–66.**

The concept of inclusivity, or inclusion, assumes the entitlement of all students, whatever their background in terms of abilities or culture, to receive the support they need for optimal educational achievement. It may be compared with the concept of empowerment which has been advocated with respect to minority students in the Canadian context and elsewhere. In the case of students coming from different Australian language backgrounds, bilingual education has been advocated as a means of supporting students' pride in both Indigenous and non-indigenous Australian cultures. This paper argues, on the basis of inclusivity, for the provision of two-way bidialectal education for students

in Australian schools who speak Aboriginal English. It shows how this form of inclusive education would affect three main sources of knowledge relevant to education: (a) schematic knowledge; (b) contextual knowledge, and (c) systemic knowledge.

Malcolm, Ian G. 2011. Issues in English language assessment of Indigenous Australians. *Language Assessment Quarterly* 8. 190–199.

This paper addresses what has been called a "reductionist" view of language education, where what is taught tends to be governed by what can be easily tested, and where the dialect of Aboriginal English speakers is not recognized in the national testing process, leading to what is deemed a gap in their achievement. It is argued that it is unfair and unrealistic to assess the language and literacy of Aboriginal people as if Standard English is their only, or primary, medium of communication. It needs to be recognized that Indigenous people have a "multiply-positioned identity", being, as they are, custodians of their own culture as well as participants in the majority culture. There are, in fact, alternatives to current homogenizing practices with respect to language testing and the article suggests more be done to explore them.

Malcolm, Ian G., Patricia Königsberg, Glenys Collard, Alison Hill, Ellen Grote, Farzad Sharifian, Angela Kickett and Eva Sahanna. 2002. *Umob deadly: recognized and unrecognized literacy skills of Aboriginal youth*. Mount Lawley: Edith Cowan University and the Department of Education, Western Australia.

This is the report on a collaborative project which sought to address the need of teachers and education systems for knowledge about the literacy practices which Indigenous learners maintain in contexts not controlled by the school. It was intended that this should develop the background of linguistic research required for the extension of two-way bidialectal education to students at the secondary level.

The data on which the investigation was based included field diaries and reports by Indigenous research assistants, case study reports by Indigenous research assistants on two students, tape recordings made (with permission) in a student's home, reports of two-way interactive research meetings, held weekly through 2001, and environmental and community artefacts (literacy samples, photographs, videotapes, notebooks).

The report includes an ethnography of communication (on Hymesian principles) of an Aboriginal Youth Culture in Perth, a linguistic analysis of language

use in non-school contexts, a conceptual analysis including image schemas, metaphor, conceptual blending and pragmatic markers with conceptual functions, and an analysis of the vernacular literacy practices of Indigenous youth, including reading, writing, environmental writing and prior literacy-relevant knowledge. The sub-final chapter includes the reports on teacher interviews in the light of the project findings, and the final chapter suggests how the school's profile of literacy practices and events might be expanded.

Aboriginal English: Texts by Aboriginal Speakers and Writers

The following books provide access to extended writing in Aboriginal English:

Collard, Glenys. 2011. *A day in the park*. **East Perth: Western Australian Department of Training and Workplace Development.**

    This is a brief recollection of life as a member of a teenage group of girls, living with a small Aboriginal community in a city park and being regularly watched by police. The text is accompanied by photographs modified by an Aboriginal artist. An analysis of the book is given in Malcolm (2014).

Crugnale, Jordan (compiler). 1995. *Footprints across our land: short stories by senior Western Desert women*. **Broome: Magabala Books.**

    This is a collection of 72 short stories about women's law and culture told by a group of thirteen senior Kukatja, Wangkajunga and Ngarti women based at Wirrimanu [Balgo Hills] and Yaka Yaka communities, south-east of Fitzroy Crossing and east of the Canning Stock Route. The stories are accompanied by paintings done on a trip away from the community to sites nominated by the women. All the stories were recorded on tape and then (where necessary) translated into Aboriginal English over an eight-month period.

Koch, Grace [and Harold Koch] (ed.). 1993. *Kaytetye country: An Aboriginal history of the Barrow Creek area*. **Alice Springs: Institute for Aboriginal Development.**

    This book provides history of the Barrow Creek area by a group of Kaytetye language speakers. The stories include Dreamtime stories, stories told by the ancestors and stories from their own experience. Where the stories have been told in language or in Aboriginal English, they have been translated by Harold Koch and the translations appear alongside the originals.

Lennon, Jessie. 2011. *I'm the one that know this country!* **Canberra: Aboriginal Studies Press.**

Jessie Lennon was a Matutjara woman from the Western Desert, born on a sheep station in the 1920s. Much of her life has been spent travelling, but she has often returned to Coober Pedy, where, in the 1950s she and her family experienced the effects of British nuclear testing. The book, accompanied by photographs, gives Jessie's life recollections in Aboriginal English.

Appendix 2

Sample texts

20 transcripts have been selected to give an overview of the ways in which Aboriginal English was observed to be used in all major regions of Western Australia, and some other locations. The texts include child and adult free speech, oral narration and classroom interactions.

Text 1: *GREAT SOUTHERN REGION, WESTERN AUSTRALIA: Classroom speech*

This is an extract from a reading lesson recorded in October 1974 with a primary Year 4 class in the Great Southern region of Western Australia. The non-Aboriginal teacher is reviewing students' reading.

The interaction illustrates the readiness of Aboriginal respondents to answer ahead of the person to whom the question is addressed, and for them to give a group response. In this case, when *jarred,* an Aboriginal English synonym for *scolded,* is suggested, the teacher gives the response qualified acceptance. Another offering, *growl,* which, in Aboriginal English can function, like *scold,* as a transitive verb (and therefore would be a valid answer to her elicitation), is ignored by the teacher.

Teacher (to Shane):	Right, how many questions did they ask her?
Another child:	Dozen.
Shane:	Twelve.
Teacher:	Twelve, good. What is a synonym for scolding?
Another child:	Told off.
Teacher:	Or another one?
Several children:	Jarred
Another child:	Jarred
Teacher:	Right, well, okay, jarred.
Another child:	Growl
Teacher:	But "scolded" means two things…
(KM 1)	

Text 2: *SOUTH-WEST REGION, WESTERN AUSTRALIA, Child oral narrative*

This recording was made in a district high school, some 450 kilometres north of Perth, in May 1994. The ten-year-old girl is relating an experience of a visitation from a small spirit being, using the "Scary Things" schema. The frequent repetitions suggest strong emotional engagement with the event.

See um… one … one day… I was laying on the bed dere… an an' and… I was layin' back dere lookin' dere and thinkin' what'll 'appen an' den um… den… den

I jus' looked aroun' ... den when I leant over a bit something 'ard den midget went an' come from the manhole an' went an' poked me right in the guts and and den... den... den I when I got up... den I laid in the bed for a while... den I got up... slipped the light on... looked under the bed... nothin' was dere... when... when I ... when I looked at the... when I opened the curtains up... dere window was open 'cause Mum she shut the window up but it was open up now. I finish. (MG 2)

Text 3: *SOUTH-WEST REGION, WESTERN AUSTRALIA, Child oral narrative*

This is a narrative by a male student at the same District High School in Yamatji Lands, as that from which the above extract was recorded.

The speaker is accompanied by three male friends and is perhaps particularly dramatizing the details of the killing and skinning of the prey for their sakes. It is worthy of note that the same persistence which is required in hunting down an animal is carried over into the description of dealing with the car which wouldn't start.

An one time...an we went to um... out to the bush. An we .... seen all dese pigarda dere... and ... shot 'im. And after dat dere... goin along and... dere was a boomer an 'e 'opped out... we shot 'im... And after that dere... um we was goin' 'ome... and we was goin' to skin de kangaroo... We skinned it in the bush... Then cook it up a bit... Jus cook de legs up... Den we 'ave a little feed... We were push the car trying to kick-start it... Tryin' to kick-start it an' all dat. But it wouldn't kick over so de car wouldn't kick over, so we... pushed it pushed it. Den... den I jumped out... We pushed it, an' then it started. I jumped back in the car... pushed it again and it started... Out dat dere... we seen a ting... One kangaroo at de thing good one 'aving a drink. An we shot 'im... put a 'ole in 'is guts an all that... and then I skinneded 'im... I's took a kangaroo tail 'ome... an' we was just getting in the farm... and we seen... a couple more... an' when I got into the farm, all them mob was drinking, and I got up an' I went to sleep. Da's de end of the story. (A14 Out in the Bush, Mullewa, 1994)

Text 4: *GASCOYNE REGION, WESTERN AUSTRALIA, Child oral narrative*

The narrator here is a boy from an upper primary class in a school in the Yamatji lands, in company with three of his friends. He refers to "blackfellas" although he identifies as Aboriginal, in that the people he is talking about do not come from his area, and have covered their feet with feathers to hide their identity. The recording dates from June 1976.

...if you go for a swim in the night time...um, well, he be in the water and... he'll pull you under the water, and 'old you for a long time till ya um drown... till ya drown [Linguist: Yeah, so you don't go for swims at night then?] .... Sometime... sometime we go down dere and have a look...see if he's down dere... if he is we

go home... Like dese blackfellas we saw, dey was featherfoot... they was singing a s-song in the bush dere... Yamatji song...[Linguist: Where was that?] Down the river dere... they was talk, all we was goin down there to play football with our footy... and then... we heard em all singing dere... an den we just took off home... (ECM 6)

Text 5:   *GOLDFIELDS REGION, WESTERN AUSTRALIA, Child oral narrative*

This is the first of three selected examples of oral narratives made in 1973 with Aboriginal children at the hostel where they lived during school terms in a town in the Goldfields region of Western Australia.

The first speaker is a ten-year-old boy, bilingual in Ngaanyatjarra and English. He has a number of strategies to compensate for his lack of assurance with respect to English vocabulary, including word and phrase repetition, use of *thing* as a hesitation form and use of forms of *whatsaname* and *thing* as substitute words.

Um, on the holiday we went to thing Kalgoorlie and and we and we we was watching the T.V. all night. Then, then, then we then we went and in the mornin' we went and and we and and we went buy some chick chicken and we went thing dinner out so we had we went we went we went we went out bush at Kalgoorlie and 'ave a – and have and – and we had a 'at'saname um, a what'saname chicken and w' cook 'im up and 'e eat 'im. Then then then we went home – no not not not home. We went round the rubbish bin and we lookin' round for thing Molly, Molly and Clive and oh and we was lookin' around there fella with a thing. Then we went right around the big rubbish bin with a big bin with a rubbish bin. We went right around and we saw a thing and all the all the things old things in the thing rubbish. Then we came 'ome. Then we – then we got a thing, like a crowbar but we went along and we saw, um, thing. There w' one boy with a – with a – one boy with a – with a good bike and one boy got a funny bike and he got no handle – no thing thing steering one steering thing wheel. So he he go crazy and he chased and he jumped on he anyway. He tryin t' drive but he but he fell down. Then – then we was talking to one Wangai. Talk – and he gave us a two dollar. Then we went home and we and we had a and and we went 'ome and we had a T.V. Then that's finish. (Leonora, tape L4B)

Text 6:   *GOLDFIELDS REGION, WESTERN AUSTRALIA, Child oral narrative*

Here the same speaker as in Text 5 is taking another turn, to retell another experience.

On the Easter holiday we went thing Laverton. Me, Phyllis, um Terry and Hester and and we was playin' with the little boy, that little Arnold, we was playin' with him and we was playin' wrestling in the car and and he punchin' us

too. Then we went along to thing um past La – not Laverton – what's the Mission called? Mount Margaret road, and we went to thing, we went along and we nearly got bog but he spinned it round that Mr Bligh. And we went along to thing Laverton, then then he came and stopped where Mr Baker car. Then we we were then we was we was waiting' then he gave us thing cordial and biscuits and we went to Laverton Down then we then we went along. Then we come home. Then we had a thing meat – sheep. Then then we – then in the night we went along fast too – we took the – it it was – he he had no brakes on that Toyota. He come a a – nearly had a accident but then he saw um thing. Um my little brother Wally he sittin' and he...and – That finish. (Leonora, tape L4B)

Text 7: *GOLDFIELDS REGION, WESTERN AUSTRALIA, Child oral narrative*

This consists of free speech by a 12 year-old-girl in a non-school context. The speaker tends to construct her narrative by the use of various kinds of parallelism.

On the holidays I went with Maxine's for holidays and on, on the last weekend we we went to the races and there was um er races there all the horses um raced. And we was walking round and after we ca- we had to walk home. We was walkin home and ... And on Sunday we played cubby house. We made a cubby house at Gwalia. There was a tent and we were sitting inside the tent and, and all the girls are sitting in the tent and all the boys are getting wild and they was throwing stones on the tent and Kerry was getting wild. She went and told her mother and her mother came and growled them boys and we was singing inside the tent and we was making them wild and after...and I came back then. (Leonora, tape L3) (An analysis of this narrative is given in Malcolm 1994b:302).

Text 8: *GOLDFIELDS REGION, WESTERN AUSTRALIA, Child oral narrative*

This is a narrative by a 9-year-old boy at a time of pre-bedtime relaxation at the hostel where he was living in 1973 (c.f. Texts 1 and 2).

It exemplifies the need Aboriginal narrators often have to be explicit about the participants in the events they are narrating.

This is my name is Ivor Brown. Er before, me, Paul and my mother was goin' for walk then we went along then we went along all the way we see some pretty birds something like that then me and Paul was playing round for – bird, then we was sittin' down, and after and me, Martin and Clive we 'ent up Tank Hill an' Clive see us walking along last, no, first Martin, me, no Clive then me, 'ent along, then Clive fell down, so 'e hurt 'is knee, then we 'ent Tank Hill and Martin 'as saying, "Don't cry," so we 'as saying "Don' cry" all the way up to Tank 'ill. So we jump off the ting and after, we, then we looked aroun' Reserve lake, everywhere, so finish. (Leonora, tape L4B)

Text 9:   *MID-WEST REGION, WESTERN AUSTRALIA, Classroom speech*

The teacher of a Year 4/5/6/7 class in a school in the Mid-West of Western Australia is seeking to get the students to talk about going to the football.

It is noteworthy that the students nominated by the teacher (i.e., given "shame" by being brought into prominence) either do not respond, or respond inaudibly. On the other hand, the students not nominated often give responses, sometimes echoing one another. The teacher tries to encourage the students not to talk to one another but to respond to his elicitations, but he ends up having to give his own response to the question he asks.

Teacher:	Do some people take money to buy lunch? Reggie?
Reggie:	[inaudible answer]
Teacher:	Ssh...Now listen. ...
	It's good to hear you talk but don't forget that everybody wants to hear.
	Richard- And don't talk amongst yourselves, but talk to everybody.
	Nice and loud so everybody hears.
	Right, they're going to play football, they're nearly ready...
	What happens before they start the game? What happens?
Unidentified child:	They practise.
Unidentified child:	They practise.
Teacher:	They practise. How do they practise?
Unidentified child:	Kick it all around.
Unidentified child:	Kick the ball up 'n' down
Teacher:	Run around, kick it to each other...
	Then what happens, Alice?
Alice:	(looks aside with hand over her mouth)
Teacher:	How does the game start? You tell us how the game starts.
	Ssh... No, Alice.
	Do you want to tell me how the game starts?
	Do they run on?
	Who runs on? Everybody? Just some of them?
Alice	(no response)
Teacher:	Right, everybody runs on, both teams...

(Wiluna, tape WAM 20/1, 1976)

Text 10:   *MID-WEST REGION OF WESTERN AUSTRALIA, Oral narrative*

This is an extract from an extended oral narrative by a girl from a Year 3/4/5 class in a school in a remote town in the Mid-West of Western Australia. The

teacher has invited the students to talk to him outside, following their regular practice of drawing in the sand as they narrate.

The narrative shows the effect of its dependence on the drawing which accompanies it, with the frequent use of the deictic expressions "there/dere" or "like dat" at the end of phrases. This speaker breaks with convention by introducing a fanciful element, in the form of elephants, (hence the giggling response from her audience), but basically she is following a hunting schema. The terms *sing* and *singing* are hesitation/substitution forms where the narrator does not see the need to be over-explicit.

…we was goin' along dere… an' I sawned a dead emu up dere, an' we went along, an' I saw de pram track where de, where us goin' up a 'ill with the pram, an' we went along, an' dust dat big 'ill, an' so, we was, we was goin' along dat road, an' alla hol' 'ouse dere, alla old 'ouse, alla ol' 'ouse an' de rubbish dere, an' so, an' so we was goin' along dis road, was goin' along dis road, an' na an' alla bush dere, an' one kangaroo I seen dat too dere, an' an' Gillie saw the kangaroo was walkin' out there, an' alla three dogs was there, an' the dogs, and… Gillie saw de kangaroo an' a dog wen' dis way an' they chased the kangaroo up the 'ill, but… but… but… but it was, but it was too stony, and they came back, an' we went along, …

…we went along, an' an' dis ol' road we an' where the water was runnin' really out of alla cracks along, an' the bush an' elephan' was walkin' in the ru… bush [giggling from listeners] … an' it went, an' it went an' it, 'n it um camel's leg poison um 'e was dere, an' 'e an' 'e 'ad, an' 'e was, an' 'e jumped over, an' 'e went round. 'N 'w went along, went along, and so it got… that, that hill, that 'nother little hill was like that, 'n the kangaroo was dere dere dere, there's three kangaroo… an' I was walkin' up dere with my daddy an' Gillie was dere, 'im an' Maureen's daddy, an' de bush dere, …

…an' Red saw the kangaroo… an' 'e chased 'im that way, an' 'e just 'eard fall ina … fall ina well an' so, we runned over 'n saw 'im an…de dog went thataway an' this other kangaroo running along de flat, an' so 'e chased 'im, chased 'im and so, and so, da's all it till 'e, till 'e… and so, dat, dat's 'im in a little hill like dat, an' 'e was, an' 'e caught 'im right dere well we was cookin a fire… yeah, makin' a fire, …'n so we bin sitting take the guts out, put it in a tree, it was in a tree, jus' sitting in a tree… an' we was makin' a fire, makin' it, and a an' a, an' a, somebody put all the wood, more wood… … chucked de kangaroo in de fire an' 'ey jus' let 'im cook… an' so we bin get 'im out, peel alla skin off, chuck 'im in our in our stick…

 …dey was having a um cook-up, an' so, an' so sing dey got a , an' I went up to de hill, an' I chuck a stone down de well an', in de water it went an' splashed it, an' so we sing, we sing, 'ad a cook-up, an' went along, an' … …. an' I seen… de kooka [kookaburra] up in a tree, 'e in a tree, he in a tree was singing… (Wiluna tape WAM 8/1)

Text 11:   *PILBARA REGION, WESTERN AUSTRALIA, Free speech*

This is a selection from a transcript of an extended "yarn" by a ten-year-old girl about her family experiences, recorded in a coastal town in the Pilbara in 1976.

The narrative provides a good example of direct speech switching (referred to in Chapter 6, section 2.2), where the narrator's voice often gives way to the voices of the people being depicted. The speaker clearly has a command of the local language (Yindjibarndi) and switches into it readily, especially to refer to creatures in the environment.

...I went some miles y' know, an' I 'it this um d- um *goorumandu* right in the 'ead an' 'e I killed 'im. "Mum! Mum! Mummy! I got a – guess what I got over there! Ah know what? A *goorumandu*!" [goanna] An 'e bin – an' 'e got it right an', "Could I 'ave some? Could I've some?" An' I said, "No-o, youfella – youfella like ea- eatin' that *djanguna*!" [emu] An' I said, "Oh no nobody eat it!" An' Mum said "I never eat it." An' 'n' I give 'em some, an' Mum learn me to put it in the ashes an' we an' an' we 'as waitin' a an' Dad an' Mum was goin' to sleep, you know, an' we 'as playin' around, an Robert an' us we 'as makin' a little fire, an' we 'as cookin' dis um um lizard, y' know, and um and dis liddle *goorumandu* bin come 'low slowly, havin' a res' under the car an' if we look, I said [whispering] "*Goorumandu, goorumandu*!" I 'as talkin' slowly you know, 'n' "Mummy, could I take that gun somewhere?" An 'e said "Yeah," an' nex' minute we seen we seen dis um *goorumandu* fa't. I said, "Chooo!" An' an' John an' John an' dem, dey's waitin' till dis um thing come y' know an' an' Dad an' I take da dust...to make a fire an' fix this win'mill up, an' an' a'ter when I said "No, youfella not gonna 'ave any," an Da- an' John said "*Goorioo-riu!*" [in special voice] and dis *goorumandu* looked around, an' John 'e bin shot 'im right in the neck an' 'e bin talk like a *worrana* [echidna], "Eeaw, eeaw, eeaw!" An 'e looked aroun' like dat, an' 'e didn' see John an' Robert up top o' the tree with a gun. 'E s' "Shooooor" an' an' I heard the um gun went off BANNNNGGG! 'E bin got 'im, an' John an' dem was coming wid us an' 'e back in da um thing, an' a'ter, um Robert an' um Ryan, they's playin', Indian an' cowboy, an' tryna 'it dis *bilyargu*, they's missing every *yargu*, an' Brian 'ad a lookin' aroun' an' they bin see Robert an' Ryan 'as creepin' up to the, an' a'ter I said "Shoo! Shoo, don't you wanna talk, you know, dis da easy place to get *djanguna*" they be quiet, and they really quiet, they stayed quiet, an' Robert an' Sheila was gigglin'...

Text 12:   *PILBARA REGION, WESTERN AUSTRALIA, Free speech*

This is an extract from the same girl's yarn, where she begins to talk about watching a movie ("pitcher"):

...we was havin' this pitcher, and dis man, e's dat small, when 'e's big y' know an' 'e went dat small, an' after this um dese fellas y' know they wen' out an' didn' wanned to help 'im, an' dis li'le- an' dis Bobna, 'e's about dat small, an' after

[Linguist: This Bob, was it, did you say?] yeah, Bob; an' 'e 'ad a black 'an' pitcher an um um after when I said, "Youfella 'na watch out, y' know, dis a creepy place," an' we smell something from over there, someone with a stink, y' know an' when I sit down like dis, I 'as smelling if it something stink an' it was a boogada [ghost]… I was watching pitcher and dis Bob, 'e bin 'e bin hit dis man y' know, 'e bin hit dis um dis fella said an – dis – 'oo that girl 'e said, "You gonna marry me?" An 'e said, "No! I got one already." An' then 'e bin jar 'im off an' 'e said an' 'e bin say, "'Oo's you? Oo's you? Get out!" And dese liddle um…man an' sing tryna kiss, these um these liddle fellas gotta peep at the window an' dis an' dis girl bin see dem peepin' an' one gotta long hair an' 'e said, "Where's da sheep?" And dey's takin' all da sheep somewhere in the bush an' drown dem, 'n' 'en a'ter when I said, "Da's a 'orrible pitcher, ini"… (Onslow, tape OM 14-15)

Text 13: *PILBARA REGION, WESTERN AUSTRALIA, Oral Narrative*

This is an oral recount delivered by a Year 3 male student to his non-Aboriginal teacher at the Yandeyarra Remote Community School in 2014. The form of English is relatively "high", reflecting the fact that the receiver of the communication is a respected non-Aboriginal person.

The transcripts from Yandeyarra (Texts 13 and 14) have been kindly provided by courtesy of teacher Nicole Reade and Principal, Graham Boyd.

We, we was riding on the four-wheeler, me and my older brother. We went up in the hill and we were at, down the river, we were down the river. We spin the four-wheeler and… went up some hills. Kyle… Kyle… Kyle went up more hills and made me frightened. I was scared, but I couldn't tell my mum and dad that, or we would get growled. Then we went round the block for another ride. We nearly tipped it but lucky we hold on very tight. We was all scared but we had fun with our brothers. When, when we got back home… we was laughing. Then we played football… versing each other. My brothers kicked high and when it's nearly landed on us little ones we was scared so we run away from the boys. They chased us and they try to hit us with the ball. We had great fun.

Text 14: *PILBARA REGION, WESTERN AUSTRALIA, Oral Narrative*

Here a Year 5 boy from the same school is, speaking to his non-Aboriginal teacher. He is using a broader form of Aboriginal English than the previous speaker.

I went to mustering in Woodstock. We bin chase lotta bulls. And there were lots of little one ah, calves there. The big one had big horns.

And umm, one man umm, he was in a bullbugy. He bin chase one big bull with big horns. And 'e bin roll that bull, and that, and he 'ad a flat tyre and he was asking for pump. Then 'e bin pump his tyre up. Then on other man, and 'e was

chasing a bull and 'e beat everyone else chasing a bull, 'cos he was like the only one that was chasing a bull.

Then we, after, we went to the yard to help, umm, one man build it.

Umm, my brother bin help, umm, set it up and that, an' after that we bin go, we bin keep chasing them

First it had little bit from the start, and then when the helicopters umm, gathered 'em up it was really a big mob and we couldn't handle them, 'cos it only had like a little bit of people there.

[Teacher: Really!]

Uh huh!

We put them in the yard and they was going wild, trying to bump the yard, trying to break free, and then one big bull try to, ah, get a, got away, and my ubby [grandfather] try to get 'im but 'e couldn't, cos 'e was like too jammed up too next to the cars and... yeah that's all.

Text 15:   *KIMBERLEY REGION, WESTERN AUSTRALIA, Oral narrative*

Here a six-year old girl from the West Kimberley recounts a story which has a clear moral.

Well one time dis one night well these two little children were, were sitting with their mother and father and they finished their supper an' they went back, they, they went back to their , to their little, um, bed and they was, they was sleeping and their mother said... their mother said, "Don't look at the moon." But the two little kids didn' listen and they was still looking at the moon an', all of a sudden they got, they, just like the, um, moon came down and , they got stuck together an... they were trying to get out but they couldn't. (Eagleson, Kaldor & Malcolm 1982:232)

Text 16:   *KIMBERLEY REGION, WESTERN AUSTRALIA, Oral narrative*

In this text a nine-year-old from the East Kimberley region, where the Kriol influence is relatively strong, is recounting an experience entailing the "Scary Things" schema.

Dis uncle Dan when 'e came back from dis pub he was just getting at dis mob place just next to the hotel there... what now? ...dis one girl chased 'im back an...'e was running an' when 'e bin just get down dere la reserve... that girl bin singing out "Dan! Dan!" an' Dan bin look back an' fin' that girl got no face an' 'e jus' run an' all the dog bin barking at that spirit then! (from Kaldor & Malcolm 1985:235)

Text 17:   *ABORIGINAL ADULT INTERACTION, South-West*

In this interaction, which took place in 1999, two Aboriginal Education Workers are in conversation. The speaker, Fred is chatting with colleague Eva about changing burial practices.

It is typical, in such interactions, for the speaker to make plain his family relationship with the persons being talked about. While both speakers have access to a broader form of Aboriginal English, a higher form is used in view of their roles in this context.

Um about a week ago or two weeks ago, I went out bush with these old people...an one of 'em- an' one of 'em's ol' grandmother is so she's my ol' great gran...mother an when she died, like, now people go to bury you in the cemetery, they get buried out in the bush wherever it was at that time an um before they useta buried 'em sittin up... so they could... see ... over their country where they come from... an when they buried 'er so she'd be sittin' up in the grave like how we are gotta be pretty deep an' um around the... grave some they put some... post an that... it's flat now an they put two two b- um billycans are still sittin' there... that's about she got buried about oh fifty something years ago... took us a while to find it but yeah... that's – an the ol billy cans are still sittin up – layin on the post... an when she died they got all her belongings and 'er tent an everything... wacked it all up and burnt it then or someone'd find something... (Geraldton SHS 3)

Text 18: *ABORIGINAL ADULT INTERACTION, South West*

This is a role play created by Nyungar English speaker Glenys Collard (1996) for use in professional development.

The role play assumes that, somewhere in Perth, "Glenys" has bumped into "Ken", a nephew whom she hasn't seen for some time, and this exchange ensues:

Glenys: Aaaay, where you goin', unc?
Ken: Goin' down this way 'ere, aunt... You gotta ngamari [cigarette]? I'll get some drekly.
Glenys: Nyorn, nothin' uncle. All them other fullahs down there, they might 'ave some, ana?
Ken: Dunno. Never been down there....just got 'ere.
Glenys: What, you not goin' down there? All your mob there, you know.
Ken: Mightee [Maybe] later on. Not yet but... Shame too many [a lot] down there anyway.
Glenys: On'y all one mob anyway.
Ken: No.... I gotta see a wadjela york [white woman] at the bank to get a new number. Lost the other one when I was on the keppa [alcohol].
Glenys: I might walk that way with you and see if I can see whossat [a certain person] down there.
Ken: Yeah, well I gotta get along now. Come on then.

[Note: Ken is not necessarily moving when Glenys meets him: "Where you going" is simply a greeting; a nephew can be addressed as "unc"; the request for a

cigarette confirms the relationship; "Shame" implies that Ken would be embarrassed at drawing attention to himself on approaching the group; "all one mob" implies that the people are all Ken's own people/relations].

Text 19:   *ADULT ABORIGINAL INTERACTION, Yamatji/Koori*
     In this extract, recorded in Perth in 1999, LA, a Yamatji woman from Western Australia, with two friends, is talking with LE, a Koori woman from New South Wales, about the Yamatji customs with regard to showing respect to the spirits.

LA: There's a place jus' outside o' Carnarvon... about what half an hour forty-five minutes' drive um goin' towards Gascoyne Junction an' like there's a big- it's call Rocky Pool- and like, if you... wh-when you go go there you have ta chuck sand in before you have a swim-

DK: Sing ya name out...

LA: Yeah sing ya name out before ya thing, cos something will happen like you'll go under.

LE: Mmm.

LA: Yeah so like our our our belief is that you have ta chuck sand in there an' say yer name then go for a swim an' you'll be right.

LE: So what y' sayin' is that the- the the Yamatji people up there believe that there is a creature livin' in there.

LA: Yeap.

LE: Like – like, see the Nyungars got their Wargyl [Rainbow Serpent] stories down 'ere, eh.

LA: Yeah

LE: So up there that's one of your- what that's [one of your Dreaming stories there?

LA: [Tha's one of the spots, yeah...
     that's one of our stor-

BB: What about that that's a snake, a big snake, at at it it It stays there?

LE: You know the Yamatji name for it? Is is there a name that ya can-

BB: Bimbardah – Bimbardah is a snake up there.

LE: Aw well tha's tha's good yeah.

(CALLR Yamatji Genres, 169)

Text 20:   *ADULT ABORIGINAL INTERACTION: Koori*
     The following transcript consists of extracts of an interview with Millie Boyd, a senior Gidhabal woman, from the far north coast of New South Wales, 26th May 1989, provided by courtesy of Margaret Sharpe.
     Millie is accompanied by her "grandson", Bob, as well as an Aboriginal relative, Sam, a solicitor, Andrew, and some unidentified persons who have little to

say in the transcript. The interaction shows some switching between English and the local language Gidhabal, not all of which is reproduced here. The extracts illustrate the close engagement seen between people and the land to which they are seen to belong, and the ready identification of natural features with Dreamtime figures. Millie's English, while relatively light (apart from the interlingual switches) shows a number of features found across the continent.

Unidentified female:	They talkin bout moving
	Yeah they got a movin down there to well out that way.
Bob (Millie's 'grandson'):	Where they movin?
Unidentified female:	Down the Tweed somewhere
	………..
Millie:	When we leave mulwullumbah [Murwillumbah]
Sam (relative):	There's ah Tindra
Andrew (solicitor):	And then there's Milaclose ah [Mella Close]
Bob:	You … press both them. You (h)old that you know.
Millie:	Quandong, yeah. That's the place you see that big watchacall *malawaru*
	carpet snake. Must be big as one of these tree over there, coiled up in the corner? Yeah. She's blongtu there. *Gandahnyi*
Bob:	Ah, yeah.
Millie:	Quandong. You look across from the road, see 'er coiled up – big one. Bigges' carpet snake I ever seen. An' I said to uncle, "You talking about werkin over there. Wots that over there? I'm not goin' over there. I said to i-
	No we not goina stay there. We just come down to have a look." Because I said *gagalahgu… mula boat jangah*. Right up to *waluhmmban*.
Bob:	That carpet snake go down to um Bowra too? Bowraville. Old Ivan Balengerry mob.
Millie:	Balengerry. I know that fella.
Bob:	Mm. Noeline granfa.
Millie:	Tha's a dangerous place to go that. I told 'er yesterday. I 'ad ta tell my niece to let 'er know wot i(t)s like and don' let these boys walkabout. Don' be like *dagay* [dog] yunmi singin' out for somebody to rubbem or do something fa them.
Bob:	Mm.

Millie:	Not like 'ere.
	....
Millie:	Yeah, they chasin' wallaby from *dergahgan, dergahgan* dere along the ridge *mamulaŋuy/*ŋay *balugahn* from *wuluhmbin* follow dem. *Yeh—yeh—gaŋaliwahn nyula buruhr(g)u* for 'is two dogs. *Yeh* – they never will – they never listen to 'im, they following the wallaby, kangaroo, big kangaroo tookem right to that water e/ they was in the middle
	of the water and the – the dogs was layin' on the bank. And the two young girls come from the tribal camp. Come for water. Get water. "Oh" they said, "Go an' get some *nyabi*" tha's means water. They went and got some - two
	can of water one – One of the girls look down in the water, they seen the shadder of the two dogs.
Andrew:	Right.
Millie:	In the water... she looked about and saw them. She left the can there an' went back to the camp. We found two dogs. Two *dabay* in the cook (?)/ they (?) all we'll come over then with spear an' they speared the(m), they killed
	the two dogs/ and they had them on the pole. They killed the wallaby. They had them on a pole over the fire. An' that young fellow from Waluhmbin come along singin out yeh—an' e knew that they got killed, so 'e flew down to the flat, you see the- wen 'e turned round, brought the storm on, rain. It rain lightning, everything. An' they left the dog an' the kangaroo on the thing and 'e picked the two dogs, carried 'em back to Waluhmbin way. An' they droppin' their toe nail like off you know.
Andrew :	Mm.
Millie:	Their pieces.
Bob:	An' what happened to the rest of the bones, did they go back to the Tweed, them *dabaynya* [those dogs now]
Millie:	Yeah, one salt water...even went down there to see what she fell to pieces. You see on the stone there when you go back back a a Wyangerie.
Bob:	Mm.

Andrew:	One was a male dog an' the other one was a female dog.
Millie:	Mm. Bundahygan.
Bob:	Did they go back to Fingal Head?
Millie:	Yeah. 'E went back but she didn't. Bundahygan. You see 'er on the rock there, way up Lynches Creek, right at end of Lynches Creek. You see 'er on the rock.
Bob:	Mm.
Millie:	'Ead shape of the dog.
Bob:	Mm.
Andrew:	And where did the dogs originally live?
Millie:	They belongtu round about Waluhmbin back on the Tweed.

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