



An inclusive pronoun as intersubjective evidential

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Inclusive pronouns as intersubjective evidentials: Shared access vs. primary access to knowledge

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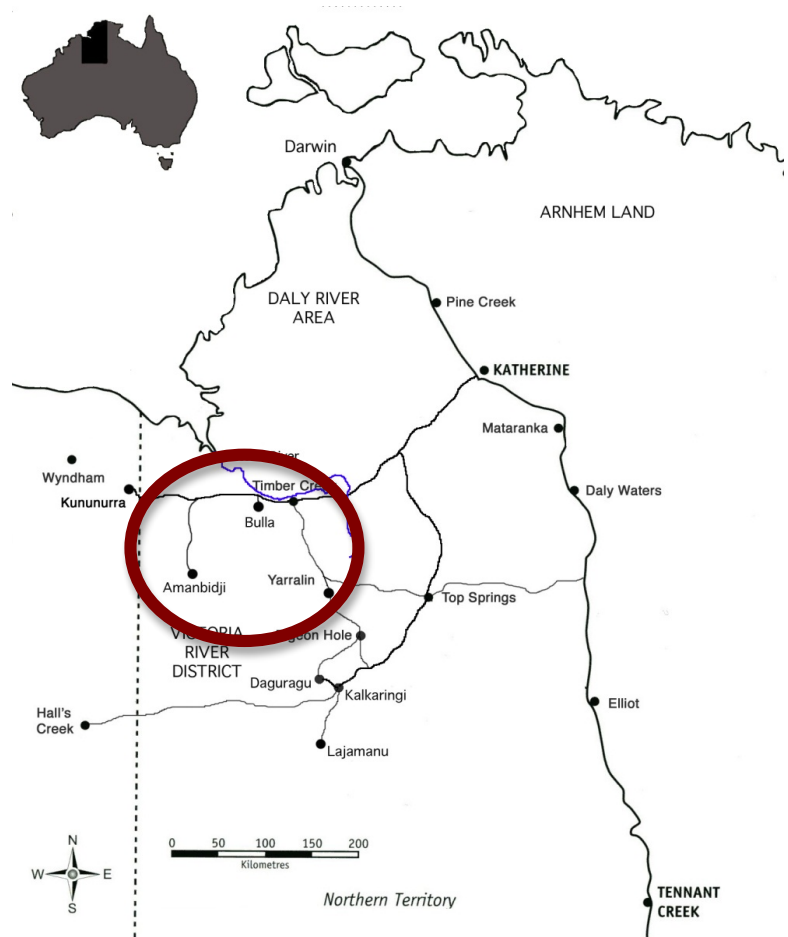
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Person and knowledge: from participant role to epistemic marking

Workshop at the SLE conference, Leiden, 2 September 2015

Jaminjung / Ngaliwurru

- Mindi Language Family,
Northern Australia
- Few elderly speakers
- Texts and elicitation data
1993–2015



The phenomenon

- In Jaminjung/Ngaliwurru, first person inclusive pronouns frequently occur in non-referential function, as **intersubjective evidentials** indicating shared access to information (1)

(1) *yinju* *jungulug, gurlurl* *ga-yu=mindi* \

here one be.on.top 3SG-be=1+2

‘Here there is one, it is on top=**mindi**’

- These contrast with an **egophoric evidential** indicating speaker’s primary access to information
- No obligatory evidential system; relatively low frequency



21. ball (table)

Outline

- Distribution of the egophoric evidential
 - Tense/aspect, Person, Epistemic modality, Speech Act
- Distribution of the intersubjective evidentials
 - *Uses of pronominal clitics in Jaminjung / Ngaliwurru*
 - Tense/aspect, Person, Epistemic modality, Speech Act
- Implications

Egophoric evidential =ngarndi ~ =(nga)rdi

- Speaker (in declaratives) has privileged access to source of information; fully integrated into speaker's knowledge; 'primary knower'
 - Shifts to addressee in interrogatives
- Mode of access (e.g. visual, auditory, report, proprioception) not encoded (except lexically)
- Still, evidential – rather than just a generally epistemic – meaning because the speaker has direct, participatory evidence of some nature for the event

Declarative usage

- Compatible with all tense/aspect/modal forms, all persons, and negation

Individual witnessed past event

- 1st person subject / argument (note: 1+3 = 1st exclusive; 1+2 = 1st inclusive)

(2) *dij* *yirra-gba*, *pek-im-ap* *yirri-yu=biya *
stay.overnight 1+3PL-be.PST pack-TR-up 1+3PL>3SG-say/do.PST=SEQ

bot *yirr-uga=ngardi* *thawu* *gurra?*
boat 1+3PL>3SG-take.PST=**EGO** immersed TAG

‘we stayed overnight, then packed up and took the boat to the water, right?’ (response of co-narrator: *Yawayi* ‘yes.’)

(IP/EH, ES08_A04_05.067-9)

- 3rd person subject / argument

Looking at photos of the the construction of a shed:

(3) *ngarrgina-ni=biya jayiny* *yirr gan-anthama*
 1SG:POSS-ERG=SEQ grandchild pull 3SG>3SG-bring.IPFV

trailer-mij *warnda=ngarndi*
 trailer-COM grass=**EGO**

‘my daughter’s daughter was pulling grass with a trailer’

(IP, ES97_A03_09.001)

- 2nd person argument (rare)

Context (fictitious dialogue): Speaker sees addressee approaching with two other people.

(4) *ah marndaj nganji-yu=ngarrgu gaburrgad,*
 ah all.right 2SG>3SG-say/do.PST=1SG.OBL yesterday

en jalang, na-jga-ny=bunyag=ngardi durd-bina,
 and today 2SG-go-PST=3DU.OBL=EGO hold.one-ALL

*nganji-nganjama-ny=biya *
 2SG>3SG-bring-PST=SEQ

‘ah, all right, you told me yesterday, and today you went for the two to pick them up, and you brought them here’ (JM, ES08_A08_01.073)

The speaker’s epistemic authority builds both on verbal report (having been informed about the addressee’s plans by herself) and on eyewitness (of the approach of the three people in question).

Habitual past event

- 1st person subject

(5) *nenigot=biyang* *yirrunra-wardagarra-nyi=ngardi* *garrb*
goat=SEQ 1+3PL>3PL-follow-IPFV=**EGO** gather

‘we used to follow goats around, and gather (them)’ (narrative about station life experienced by speaker) (IP, ES08_A04_03.003)

- 3rd person subject

(6) *olga-olgaman=ni* *laikim* *burra-mila=ngardi*
RDP-old.women=ERG like:TR 3PL>3SG-get/handle.IPFV=**EGO**

gardaj=biya *burr-arra-nyi=ngardi* *yathang* *bilij=mij*
grind=SEQ 3PL>3SG-IV.put-IPFV=**EGO** allright tree.sp=COM

(about a kind of strong tobacco) ‘the old women used to like it, they used to grind it, then (mix it) with *bilij* ashes’ (IP, ES08_A05_01.172-5)

Observed state or event at speech time

(7) *wind* *ga-ram=ngarndi,* *gabardag burduj* *ba-jga:!, gabardag,*
wind 3SG-come.PRS=**EGO** quick go.up IMP-go quick

burdaj ga-ram=ngardi gujugu! yani-ma!
Wind 3SG-come.PRS=**EGO** big IRR:3SG>3SG-hit

“(There’s) wind coming! quick go up! quick! A big wind is coming! It might hit it!” we told her then’ (from a personal narrative about a relative of the speaker building a shed) (IP, ES97_A03_10.125-27)

Intention / prediction of future event

- 1st person subject: intention

(8) *ngayug=malang nga-w-ijga=ngarndi yinawula!*

1SG=GIVEN

1SG-POT-go=EGO

DIST:DIR

‘me, I’m going to go over there (she said to her)’ (JM, ES96_A01_01.037)

- 3rd person subject: predictions / warnings based on expectations about regular behaviour grounded in previous experience

(9) *wirib-di yawurru-minda=ngardi*

dog-ERG IRR:3SG>3PL-eat=EGO

‘the dog might eat them!’ (DB, overheard utterance)

Interrogative usage

2nd or 3rd person subject / argument, in all tenses

Past tense

(10) *nami=malang, nyangulang na-ruma-ny=ngardi?*

2SG=GIVEN

when

2sg-come-PST=**EGO**

‘you, when did you come?’ (JM, ES97_A04.101)

(11) *yagbali=biji gan-angu=nggu=rdi?*

place=ONLY

3SG>3SG-get/handle.PST=2SG.OBL=**EGO**

‘did only your house catch (fire)’ (lit. ‘did it only catch the place on you’? (Response: ‘no, everything in it got burnt as well’)

(ERa, ES12_A03_02.046)

Present tense

(12) ERa: *buru ga-ngga ... nganji-ngayi-m=ngardi?*
return 3SG-go.PRS 2SG>3SG-see-PRS=**EGO**

JM: *mm! .. marndaj nga-ngayi-m yina walnginy*
INTERJ all.right 3SG>3SG-see-PRS DIST walking

(Context: commenting on a video of a relative digging for yam)

ERa: 'she's going back, can you see her?'

JM: 'mhm! I see her all right over there walking around'

(ERa/JM, ES12_A04_01.074-7)

(13) *guyawud na-yu=ngardi?*
hungry 2SG-be.PRS=**EGO**

'are you hungry?' (in conversation) (CP/VP, ES99_V01_06a.433)

Future tense / non-realised modality

- (14) *mirdanguddawung na-w-ijga=rdi Darwin-bina ngih?*
tomorrow 2SG-POT-go=**EGO** place.name-ALL TAG
'tomorrow you will go to Darwin, right?' (JM, ES99_V05_05.151)

Directive usage

(15) *ba-yu=nu=ngardi warladbari-wu, “ ...”*

IMP-be=3SG.OBL=**EGO** old.man-DAT

‘Tell the old man, “ ...”’ (JM, ES09_A01_01.236)

(16) *jalig=gayi bardawurru ganurra-ma-ya=mindi?*

child=ALSO

many

3SG>3PL-have-PRS=**1+2.EVID**

ngarla ba-ngawu=rdi Nalyirri

BUT

IMP:2SG>3SG-see=**EGO** subsection.name

‘Does she also have many children there? Have a look, Nalyarri!’

(JM, ES12_A04_01.139-40)

- Emphasises speaker’s motivation for request (?)
(Found with egophoric evidentials in other languages???)

Interaction with epistemic marking

- The ego evidential =*ngardi* is compatible with the (single) epistemic modal particle *majani* ‘maybe; it is possible that’
 - Egophoric evidence ≠ certainty (cf. Gipper 2011: 127ff. on =*laba* ‘subjective’ in Yurakaré)

Context: fictitious warning to a man that someone else might elope with his wife

(17) *jirri* *majani* *ganu-wu-ngarna=rndi*,
magic.p powder maybe 3SG>3SG-POT-give=EGO

‘maybe he will give her *jirri* (to make her fall in love with him) (I tell you!)’ (IP, ES97_A03_03.099)

Context: prompted by elicitation scenario of blaming a person for stealing food. He says, “No, not me, I used to steal from you before, but not today, someone else must have taken it”.

(18) *Majani janyung-ni=biyang mayi*
maybe other-ERG=SEQ person

*thanthiya bunug ga-gba=ngarndi *
DEM steal 3SG-be.PST=EGO

‘maybe another person stole that one (?I can vouch for me not stealing it)’ (DBit, ES97_A08_01.005)

Scoping of evidential / modal markers

EGOPH_{EVID} [POSSIBILITY_{EPIST} [Potential / future_{ROOT} [EVENT]]]

Speaker intuition

(19) *Yeah you say ngardi **for yourself**,*

*Gardbany=**ngardi** jarlig,*

3SG:fall:PST=EGO child

you say 'my kid bin fall down'.

(JosJ, 2015; ES15_A09_02)

Analysis of =ngardi 'EGOPHORIC Evidential'

- Meets definition of egophoricity as indicating a 'primary knower' with privileged access to the information encoded
 - Speaker in declaratives, hearer in interrogatives
- Unlike in some Himalayan systems, orthogonal and additional to argument indexing ("agreement"); not strictly associated with particular argument role (cf. the typological distinction discussed by Bickel (2008))
- Not obligatory; rather functions in discourse to underline request / warning / relevance to hearer of communicated information ('I tell you!')
- Parallels in Australian languages (not described in terms of egophoricity):
 - ma* ~ -*mvrra* in Enindhilyakwa (van Egmond 2012: 225-236)
 - karinganta* in Warlpiri (Laughren 1982)

Intersubjective evidential: 1+2 pronoun(s)

- The source of evidence is a situation observable at speech time by both S and H
 - Often employed during viewing of pictures or videos
- S explicitly acknowledges shared and symmetric access by S and H to the information conveyed
 - as opposed to claiming status of ‘primary knower’ as indicated by egophoric =*ngarndi*
- In corpus data, not used for established, shared facts (these remain unmarked), but only for observations not yet integrated into S or H’s common ground

Pronominal paradigm (free & clitic pronouns)

	MINIMAL			UNIT AUGMENTED (+1, “Dual”)			AUGMENTED (“Plural”)		
	Free	Clit.	Obl. Clit.	Free	Clit.	Obl. Cl.	Free	Clit	Obl. Cl.
1	<i>ngayug</i>	—	<i>ngarrgu</i>	<i>yirrinyi</i>	<i>yinyag</i>		<i>yirri</i>		<i>yirrag</i>
1+2	<i>mindī</i>	<i>mindī</i>	<i>mindag</i>	<i>yurrinyi</i> ¹	<i>yunyag</i>		<i>yurri</i>		<i>yurrag</i>
2	<i>nami</i>	—	<i>ngunggu</i>	<i>gurrinyi</i>	<i>gunyag</i>		<i>gurri</i>		<i>gurrag</i>
3	<i>ji</i>	—	<i>nu</i>	<i>burrinyi</i>	<i>bunyag</i>		<i>burri</i>		<i>burrag</i>

¹ according to speakers (2015) all 1+2 pronouns can be used in the same function as *mindī* – but not in corpus data

Uses of clitic pronouns (mostly postverbal)

- **Oblique (“dative”) clitic pronouns** index humans and higher animates in roles such as addressee, recipient or beneficiary

(20) *Eva* *ga-ram=mindag*
<proper.name> 3SG-come.PRS=1+2.OBL

‘Eva is coming for you & me!’ (i.e. to talk to us) (JM, ES08_A08_01)

- **Absolutive (non-oblique) clitic pronouns** index humans / higher animates **indirectly** affected by an event but not as recipient, goal or beneficiary (typically adversely affected; similar to “ethical datives”)

(21) *Gurrurrij* *ngad* *ga-w-irdba=yurri*
car bogged 3sg-POT-fall.IPFV=1+3PL

‘our car was about to get bogged / we nearly got bogged’ (DP, 1994 N)

- **The absolutive 1+2 clitic pronoun *mindī*** occurs both in contexts of indirect affectedness (22) and contexts where no such affectedness can be construed (evidential uses, (23))

(22) *warrij-di=warra bulgub yan-arrga=mindī*

freshie-ERG=DOUBT sneak.up IRR:3SG>3SG-approach=1+2

‘a freshwater crocodile might sneak up on her “**on you and me**”
(referent = hearer’s daughter) (VP, ES99_V01_06)

(23) *mali garrb burr-antha=nu=mindī*

clothes hold(many) 3PL>3SG-take.PRS=3SG.OBL=1+2

Context: spontaneous comment on observed actions of
age care people in the community

‘**looks like** they are taking clothes for her!’ (DB, ES97_A02_02.166)

Distribution with respect to TAM and negation

- In corpus data: restricted to **present tense clauses** (most examples), **verbless clauses with present time reference** (29), and **past perfective clauses with resultative perfect interpretation** (results observable at speech time; (24), (25))
- Not attested with imperatives

(24) *Jungulug burr-angu=mindi \ ngayin \ yangarra *
one 3PL>3SG-get/handle.PST=1+2 animal kangaroo

Context: spontaneous utterance upon seeing a dead kangaroo brought over by dogs

‘they got one, an animal, a kangaroo!’ (JM; ES09_A01_01.190-2)

Past perfective / resultative cont.

From fictive dialogue elicited
by means of cartoons

(25) *yina burduj ga-jga-ny=mindi*
there go.up 3SG-go-PST=1+2

janju wirib
DEM dog

‘ah, there it has gone up, that dog’

(JM, ES08_A20_03.073)



- Rarely attested: modal verb forms with **future time reference** – only if occurrence inferred from events observable at speech time

Context: speaker commenting on a video showing state of change scenes; actor preparing to strike another with a paper roll

(26) *gani-w-ijja=mindi=biyang, a::!, diny=nyung*
 3SG>3SG-POT-poke=**1+2**=SEQ ah lie.down=RESTR

‘looks like he will strike her now, ah, so she falls over’ (IP, 1994)

- Compatible (if rare) with **negation**

Context: speaker wondering about the identity of a driver who has just arrived in the community

(27) *gurrany .. mindi Nangari*
 NEG .. 1+2 <subsection>

‘looks like that’s not Nangari!’ (JM, ES08_A08_01.101)

Interaction with epistemic marking

- Compatible with **epistemic modal *majani* ‘maybe’**, indicating less than full commitment to the interpretation of an observed situation

(28) *majani* *guyawud* *ga-gba=mindi*
maybe hungry 3SG-be.PST=**1+2**

gani-mindi-ya=mindi *ngabulu gujarding*
3SG>3SG-eat-PRS=**1+2** milk mother

‘maybe it (puppy) was hungry; it sucks (its) mother's milk’

(29) *majani=mindi* *malyju * *yawayi yawayi *

maybe=1+2 male yes yes

yinyju=biya *het nga-ngayi-m * *malyju *

this=SEQ hat 1SG>3SG-see-PRS male

Context: describing arrangements of toy figures.

‘Maybe (it’s) a boy, yes yes, here I see his hat now – a boy’

(JM, ES09_A01_01.017)

Scoping of evidential / modal markers (?)

1+2_{EVID} [POSSIBILITY_{EPIST} [EVENT]]

Interrogative usage (infrequent)

- As one would expect, the evidential origo does not shift in interrogatives (since it already encompasses both 1st and 2nd person)

Context: dialogue prompted by instructions to speakers to ask each other questions about a video which showed a familiar person looking for and digging up yam.

(30) *gan-ijja-ny=mindi?*

3SG>3SG-poke-PST=1+2

‘does it look like she has she dug it up (yet)?’

(Response: ‘not yet, but she’s found it’) (ERa, ES12_A02_02.120)

Distribution in discourse

Elicitation:

Frequent first utterance in **elicitation with unfamiliar visual stimuli**

- see also examples (2) (ball on table); (25) (dog in cartoon); (29) (describing toy figures)

(31) “*gud ba-wiyaj!*” *gan-unggu-m=nu=mindi=biyang*
get.up IMP-be 3SG>3SG-say/do-PRS=3SG.OBL=1+2=SEQ

Context: speaker describing video clips showing two women – unfamiliar to speaker – acting in short scenes

“‘get up!’ she tells her now’ (IP, ES96_A08_03.286)

Table 1. Use of =*mind*i in one Frog Story narrative (told while looking at the picture book), 425 Intonation Units (IP; ES97_A03_01)

Context	Nr of occurrences	
Start of new scene (= new page in picture book)	8	
New aspect/participant of same scene, 1 st description	9	(1 in repeat)
New aspect of same scene, repeated description	3	
Other (new interpretation of scene, summary, reflection)	4	
Total	24	

Narratives

Only in **reported speech**; one participant comments on a newly arising state of affairs for which access to evidence is shared with the other.

Context: two hunters in a narrative had encountered “devil” kangaroos and were following them.

“Where are they?” one said to the other. The other said:

(32) *“ngiya=ga bula ga-yu=bunyag=mindi”*
here=EMPH track 3SG-be.PRS=3DU.OBL=1+2

‘Looks like there are tracks here of the two!’ (DB, ES96_A10_A01)

Context: co-constructed account by two speakers of how they noticed an unfamiliar car and at first did not recognise the driver, then realised ESB (= Nangari) had come back after several years of absence, with a different car and haircut.

(33) JM: *“janju=gun ga-ram=**mind**i Nangari”*
DEM=CONTR 3SG-come.PRS=1+2 <subsection.name>

nga-yu=nu=biya, (...)

1SG>3SG-say/do.PST=3SG.OBL=SEQ

“that Nangari is coming”, I said to her (= ERa)’

ERa: *“Nangari=gun=**mind**i” gani-yu *
<subsection.name>=CONTR=1+2 3SG>3SG-say/do.PST
‘“(It’s) Nangari indeed!” she (= JM) said’

Conversation

As far as =*mind*i has been recorded in **spontaneous conversation** it usually appears in comments on a newly arising situation (see also example (23))

Context: Out-of-the-blue utterance unrelated to previous context; S observing a stranger's car coming down the river bank where S and H were sitting.

(34) *janyungbari yina motika jid ga-ram=mindi*
another DIST car go.down 3SG-come.PRS=1+2

‘Another car is coming down there (as you and I can see)!’

(DB, ES97_A01_03)

Speaker intuition

(35) ... *that mean you tell your mate, (...) if I tellim,*

gurrurrij=gun ga-ram=mindi,

car=CONTR 3SG-come.PRS=1+2

(...) that mean nother motika coming,

that mindi mean like mibala two, (...)

I just tellim, letting him know, motika coming.

(JosJ, 2015; CS15_A15_06)

Analysis =mindi ‘intersubjective evidential’

Common denominator of all (non-referential) uses of =mindi:

- The event described (or an event that provides the source of an inference) are **observable** by the speaker at **speech time** (TAM restrictions)
 - Observability is **shared** by addressee, i.e. both speaker and addressee have **shared direct evidence** of the state of affairs (discourse restrictions)
 - Marks shared evidence, but **not** in case of established / known information
- contributes to mounting evidence for evidentials where evidential origo is not the speaker (e.g. Landaburu 2007; Bergqvist 2009; Gipper 2011; Hintz 2012; San Roque and Loughnane 2012; Zariquiey 2013)

- The **discourse function** of the marker =*mind* appears to be to establish joint attention (cf. Diessel 2006 on demonstratives), described as a type of intersubjectivity (Brinck 2008: 132; Verhagen 2008: 309)
 - Functional relationship to **mirative** if defined as indicating that information is not yet integrated into speaker's overall representation of the world (DeLancey 1997: 35f.; Dickinson 2000)
 - Cf the comparable phenomenon of “mirative inclusive” pronoun in Ingush – “The speaker states an important generalization or point that is known to both speaker and hearer but is not in the hearer's immediate consciousness.” (Nichols 2011: 282–283)
 - In the context of “Territory of Information”: new information is less close to speaker until considerable processing has taken place (Kamio 1995: 238)

Implications for the typology of person marking and evidentiality

- Nascent evidential system
 - EGOphoric (subjective)
 - EGO+TU-phoric (intersubjective)
 - (plus non-grammaticalised reportative strategy)
- Grammaticalised but not obligatory; rather used to emphasise the relevant speaker access / shared access, for pragmatic effect
 - EGO often associated with directive illocutionary force (providing reason for request; with direct request; with warning)
 - EGO+TU to establish joint attention / drawing attention to event of (potentially) mutual relevance / (pragmatically restricted) mirativity

- Findings support distinction between evidentials and epistemic modals (distinct position; scope evidential > epistemic)
- Evidential use of pronouns supports deictic nature of evidentials (Jakobson 1971 [1957]; Mushin 2000; de Haan 2005)
 - Evidential pronouns rarely reported – but see LaPolla (2003) on 1st person in Qiang, Molochieva (2007) on 2nd person in Chechen, Nichols (2011: 282–283) on 1st person inclusive in Ingush
- Intersubjectivity signalled transparently by a 1+2 pronoun – *primary* intersubjective function, not result of subjectification (cf. e.g. Traugott & Dasher 2002)
 - Rather, extended use of pronouns in “ethical dative” / indirect affectedness constructions (see also Molochieva and Nichols 2011)



THANK YOU

Abbreviations

1+2	1st & 2nd person dyad	MOD	modal
ABL	ablative	OBJ	object
ALL	allative	OBL	oblique
CONTR	contrastive focus	PL/pl	plural
DAT	dative	POSS	possessor
DEM	demonstrative	POT	potential modality
DIR	directional	PROPR	proprietary ('having')
DIST	distal demonstrative	PROX	proximal demonstrative
DU/du	dual	PRS	present tense
ERG	ergative	PST	past tense
EGO	egophoric evidential	RDP	reduplication
FS	False start	RESTR	restrictive marker ('just', 'only')

HS	hearsay evidential	SG/sg	singular
IMP	imperative	SUBORD	subordination marker
IMPF	(past) imperfective	TR	transitivity marker (Kriol)
INTERJ	interjection		
IRR	irrealis		
\	Final (falling) intonation		

Underline in Jaminjung examples marks Kriol words and passages

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