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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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
Outline

• Distribution of the egophoric evidential
  o Tense/aspect, Person, Epistemic modality, Speech Act

• Distribution of the intersubjective evidentials
  o *Use of pronominal clitics in Jaminjung / Ngaliwurru*
    o Tense/aspect, Person, Epistemic modality, Speech Act

• Implications
Egophoric evidential  $=ngarndi$ $\sim =(nga)rdi$

- 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

• 1<sup>st</sup> person subject / argument (note: 1+3 = 1<sup>st</sup> exclusive; 1+2 = 1<sup>st</sup> 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 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)
• 2\textsuperscript{nd} person argument (rare)

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

(4) \textit{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**
  
  \[\text{(5) nenigot}=\text{biyang} \quad \text{yirrurra}=\text{wardagarr}-\text{nyi}=\text{ngardi} \quad \text{garrb} \]
  
  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**

  \[\text{(6) olga-olgaman}=\text{ni} \quad \text{laikim} \quad \text{burra-mila}=\text{ngardi} \]
  
  RDP-old.women=ERG like:TR 3PL>3SG-get/handle.IPFV=EGO

  \[\text{gardaj}=\text{biya} \quad \text{burr-arra-nyi}=\text{ngardi} \quad \text{yathang} \quad \text{bili}=\text{mij} \]
  
  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 *bili* 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

• 1\textsuperscript{st} person subject: intention

(8) $\text{ngayug}=\text{malangi} \quad \text{nga-w-ijga}=\text{ngarndi} \quad \text{yinawula}!$

$1\text{SG}=\text{GIVEN} \quad 1\text{SG}-\text{POT-go}=\text{EGO} \quad \text{DIST:DIR}$

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

• 3\textsuperscript{rd} person subject: predictions / warnings based on expectations about regular behaviour grounded in previous experience

(9) $\text{wirib-di} \quad \text{yawurru-minda}=\text{ngardi}$

\text{dog-ERG} \quad \text{IRR:3SG>3PL-eat}=\text{EGO}

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

2\textsuperscript{nd} or 3\textsuperscript{rd} person subject / argument, in all tenses

Past tense

(10) \textit{nami=}malang, \textit{nyangulang} \textit{na-ruma-ny}=\textit{ngardi}?  
2SG=GIVEN \hspace{1cm} when \hspace{1cm} 2sg-come-PST=\textit{EGO}  
‘you, when did you come?’ (JM, ES97_A04.101)

(11) \textit{yagbali=}biji \hspace{1cm} \textit{gan-angu}=\textit{nggu}=\textit{rdi}?  
place=ONLY \hspace{1cm} 3SG>3SG-get/handle.PST=2SG.OBL=\textit{EGO} \hspace{1cm}  
‘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’
  o 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.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**

$$EGOPH_{EVID} \ [POSSIBILITY_{EPIST} \ [Potential / future_{ROOT} \ [EVENT]]]$$
Yeah you say ngardi *for yourself*,

\[ Gardbany=ngardi\quad jarlig, \]

3SG:fall:PST=EGO\quad 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
  o 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)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>MINIMAL</th>
<th>UNIT AUGMENTED (+1, “Dual”)</th>
<th>AUGMENTED (“Plural”)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td><em>ngayug</em></td>
<td>—</td>
<td><em>ngarrgu</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1+2</td>
<td><em>mindi</em></td>
<td><em>mindi</em></td>
<td><em>mindag</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td><em>nami</em></td>
<td>—</td>
<td><em>ngunggu</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td><em>ji</em></td>
<td>—</td>
<td><em>nu</em></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

1. according to speakers (2015) all 1+2 pronouns can be used in the same function as *mindi* – 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 *mindi* occurs both in contexts of indirect affectedness (22) and contexts were no such affectedness can be construed (evidential uses, (23))

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

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=mindi*

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’
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 (?)**

\[ 1+2_{EVID} \text{ [POSSIBILITY}_{EPIST} \text{ [EVENT]]} \]
**Interrogative usage** *(infrequent)*

- As one would expect, the evidential origo does not shift in interrogatives (since it already encompasses both 1\textsuperscript{st} and 2\textsuperscript{nd} 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) \textit{gan-ijja-ny=mindi?}  
3SG>3SG-poke-PST=1+2  
‘does it look like she has she dug it up (yet)?’

(Responses: ‘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 *mindi* in one Frog Story narrative (told while looking at the picture book), 425 Intonation Units (IP; ES97_A03_01)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Context</th>
<th>Nr of occurrences</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Start of new scene (= new page in picture book)</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New aspect/participant of same scene, 1\textsuperscript{st} description</td>
<td>9 (1 in repeat)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New aspect of same scene, repeated description</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other (new interpretation of scene, summary, reflection)</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>24</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
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=mindi  Nangari”
DEM=CONTR  3SG-come.PRS=1+2  <subsection.name>

ngayu=nu=biya, (...)
1SG>3SG-say/do.PST=3SG.OBL=SEQ

‟that Nangari is coming‟, I said to her (= ERa)‟

ERa: “Nangari=gun=mindi”  gani-yu \ 
<subsection.name>=CONTR=1+2  3SG>3SG-say/do.PST
‟(It‟s) Nangari indeed!” she (= JM) said‟
Conversation

As far as =mindi 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)!’
(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)
  
  o 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 =*mindi* appears to be to establish joint attention (cf. Diessel 2006 on demonstratives), described as a type of intersubjectivity (Brinck 2008: 132; Verhagen 2008: 309)

  o 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)

  o 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
  o EGOphoric (subjective)
  o EGO+TU-phoric (intersubjective)
  o (plus non-grammaticalised reportative strategy)

• Grammaticalised but not obligatory; rather used to emphasise the relevant speaker access / shared access, for pragmatic effect
  o EGO often associated with directive illocutionary force (providing reason for request; with direct request; with warning)
  o EGO+TU to establish joint attention / drawing attention to event of (potentially) mutual relevance / (pragmatically restricted) miratiity
• 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)
  o 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)
  o Rather, extended use of pronouns in “ethical dative” / indirect affectedness constructions (see also Molochieva and Nichols 2011)
THANK YOU
# Abbreviations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Abbreviation</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1+2</td>
<td>1st &amp; 2nd person dyad</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ABL</td>
<td>ablative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ALL</td>
<td>allative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CONTR</td>
<td>contrastive focus</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DAT</td>
<td>dative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DEM</td>
<td>demonstrative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DIR</td>
<td>directional</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DIST</td>
<td>distal demonstrative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DU/du</td>
<td>dual</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ERG</td>
<td>ergative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>EGO</td>
<td>egophoric evidential</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FS</td>
<td>False start</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MOD</td>
<td>modal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OBJ</td>
<td>object</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OBL</td>
<td>oblique</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PL/pl</td>
<td>plural</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>POSS</td>
<td>possessor</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>POT</td>
<td>potential modality</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PROPR</td>
<td>proprietive (‘having’)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PROX</td>
<td>proximal demonstrative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PRS</td>
<td>present tense</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PST</td>
<td>past tense</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RDP</td>
<td>reduplication</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RESTR</td>
<td>restrictive marker (‘just’, ‘only’)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
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
References


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