

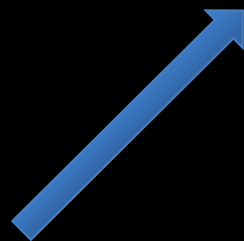
Postcolonial contact influences on a polysynthetic Australian language

John Mansfield
MPI Leipzig 2014

Changes via lang shift of Marri speakers



Murrinh Patha 1940s-2000s

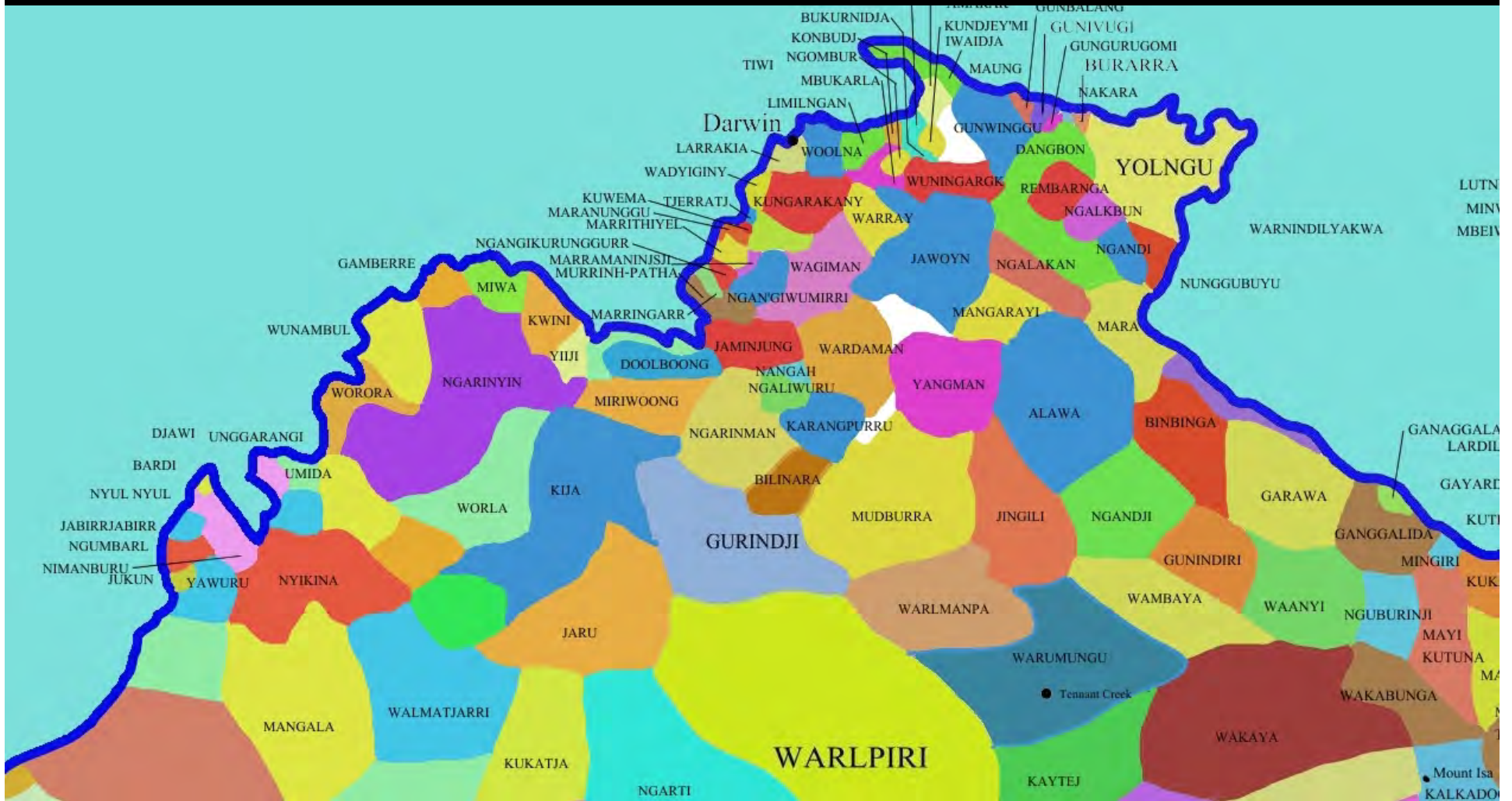


Changes via English pidgin

What's in this talk

- 1) Social situation in Wadeye, northern Australia
- 2) Murrinh Patha verb
- 3) Overview of changes
- 4) Conclusion: critical period acquisition and abstract structure

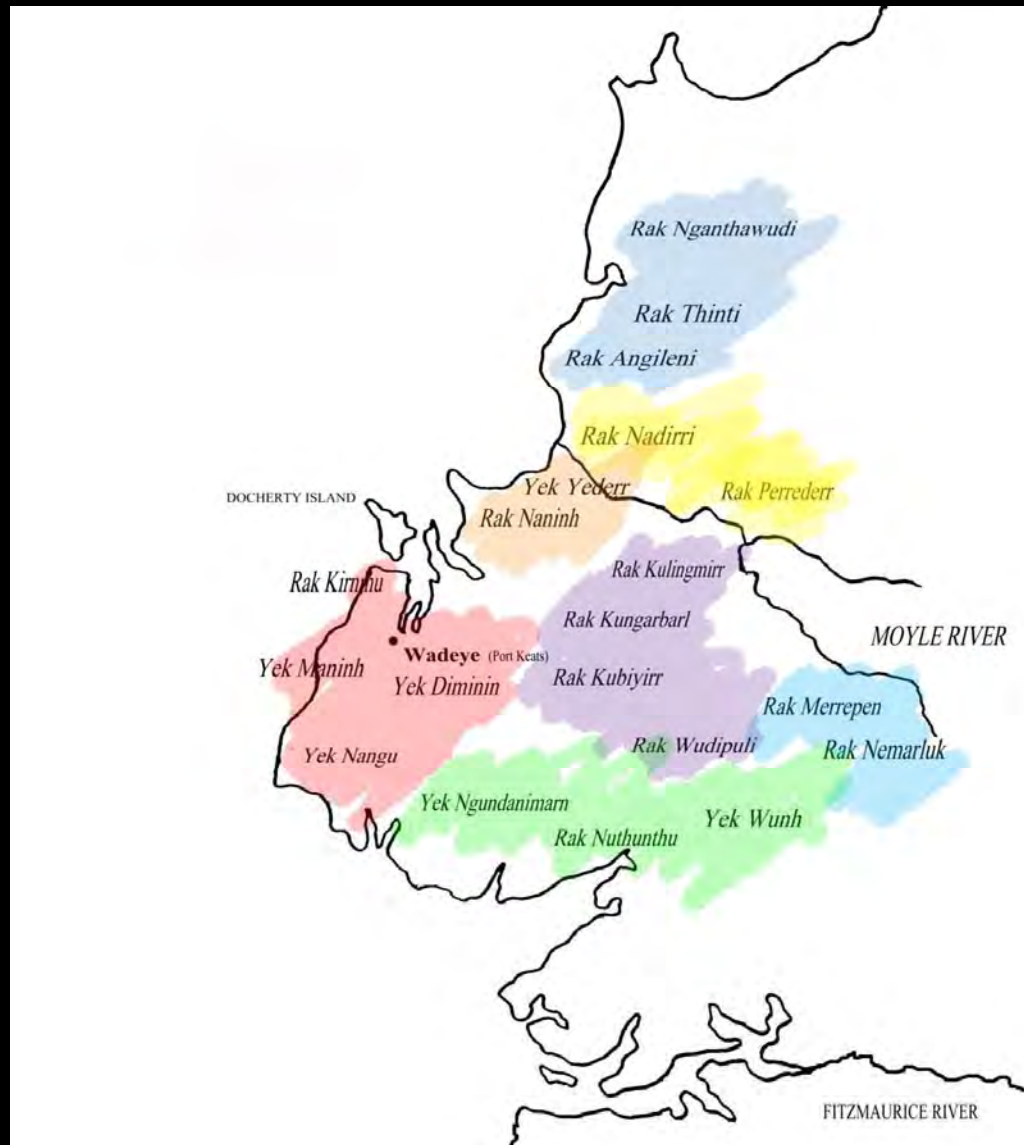
Wadeye, northern Australia



Wadeye, northern Australia



Mission settled 1940s



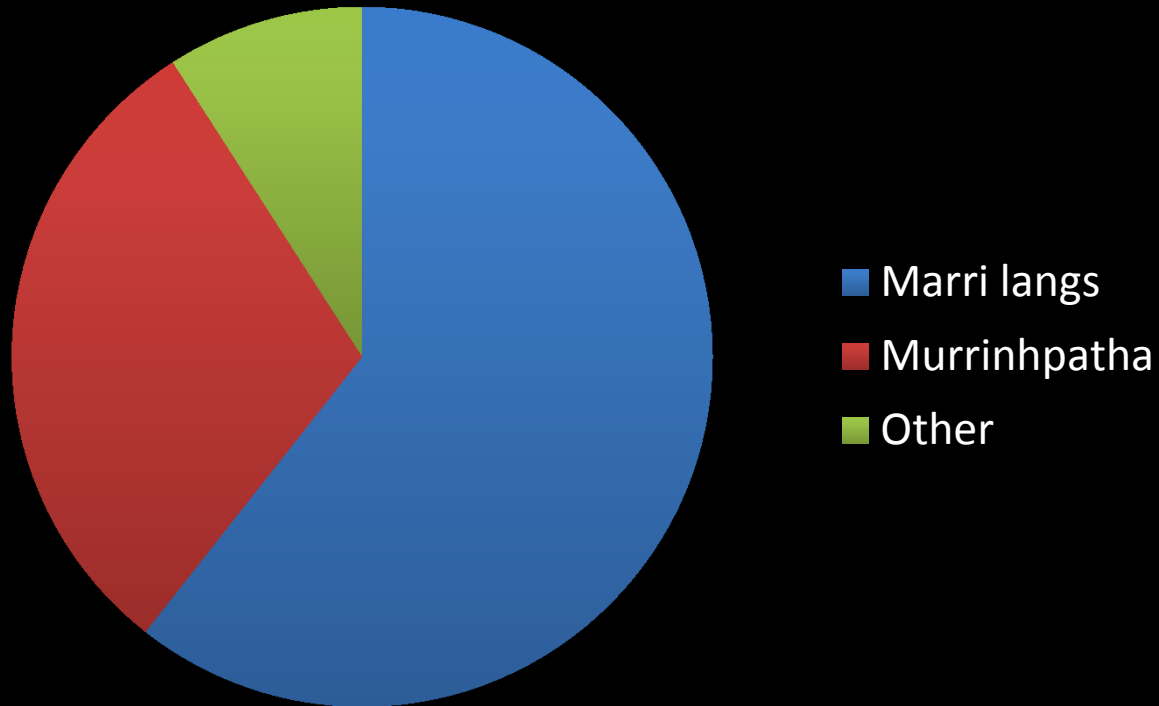
Wadeye, 1940s



Shed built by J. D. Dabney and P. J. of natives

Wadeye, 1940s

Languages



Wadeye, 2014



Wadeye, 2014



Murrinh Patha verb

LightVerb -infl-infl-infl + IncorporateVerb -infl-infl-infl

Murrinh Patha:

ku kardi-ku=dha kunginire
ANIM 3S.BE.PST-fish=PST yesterday
he went fishing yesterday

nantji trak ngume-batj=tha-ngardi
THING vehicle 3PC.HANDLE.PST-have=PST-IMPF
we had a vehicle

Marri Tjevin:

a kani-pirr-a tjuwugina
ANIM 3S.STAND-fish-PST yesterday
he went fishing yesterday

tha murruka kiringki-vutj-karrki=ya
THING vehicle 3PC.HANDLE-have-IMPF=PST
we had a vehicle

Changes induced by Marri lang shift

- Light verb TAM inflectional paradigm
- Structure of the verbal word
- (Phonological influence)

Light verb TAM paradigm

Trad MP

Contemp MP

Marri

Pres/past → Pres/past

Past → Past

Future
Irrealis → Irrealis
Past irrealis →

Realis

Irrealis

Light verb TAM paradigm

ngarra Darwin wurru-nu
3s.go.FUT

he'll go to Darwin

ngarra Darwin mere kurru
3s.go.IRR

he doesn't go to Darwin

ngarra Darwin mere wurri-dha
3s.go.PSTIRR

he didn't go to Darwin

kurru
3s.go.IRR

```
graph LR; S1[ngarra Darwin wurru-nu  
3s.go.FUT] --> S2[kurru  
3s.go.IRR]; S2 --> S3[kurru  
3s.go.IRR];
```


Word structure in the verb

[pardi-ngerren]=dha-ngime-pardi Trad MP
[3pl.go-talk]=PST-PAUC-IMPF

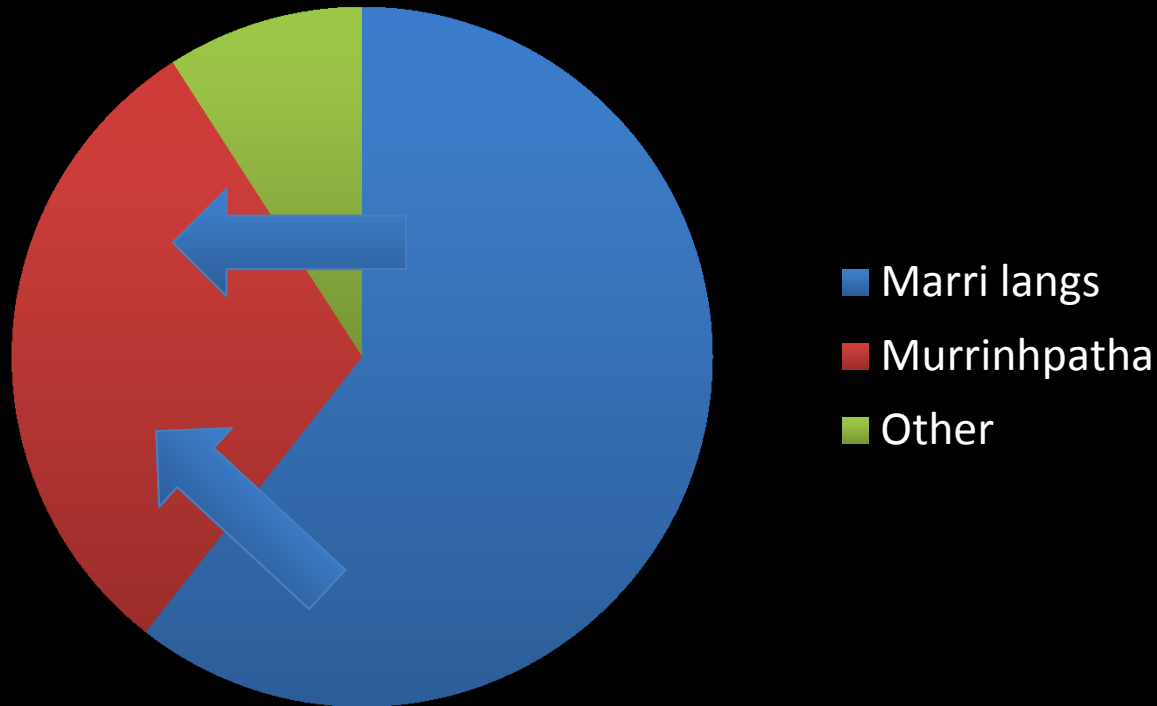
[kawuny-murrin-nimpini-kawuny]=a Marri
[3pl.go-talk-PAUC-IMPF]=PST

[pardi-ngerren-ngime-pardi]=dha Contemp MP
[3pl.go-talk-PAUC-IMPF]=PST

they were talking

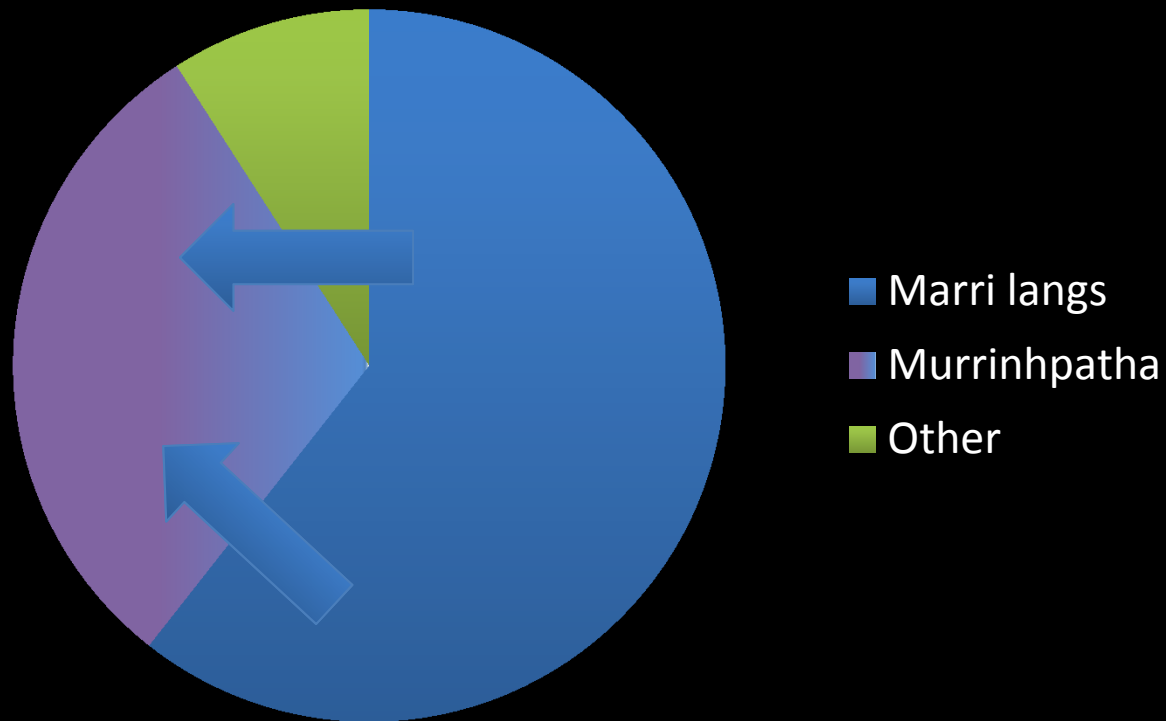
Mass absorption of L2 speakers

Wadeye languages



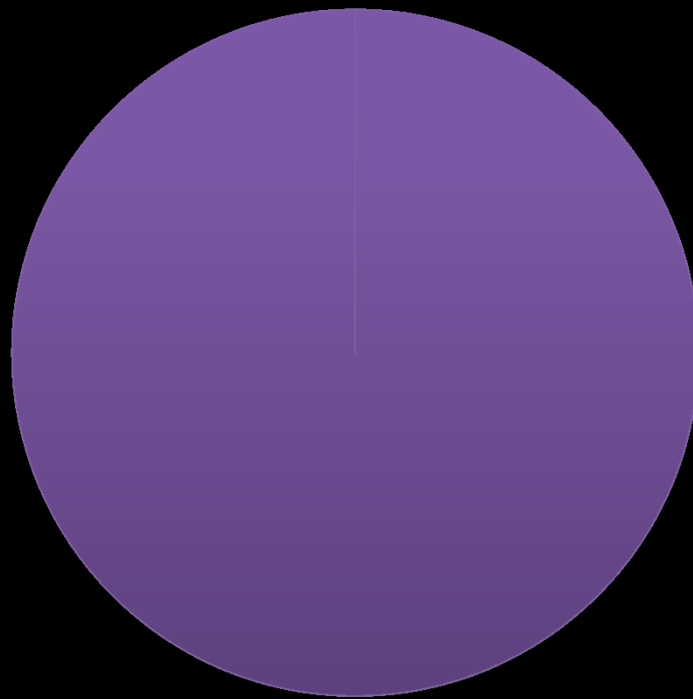
Mass absorption of L2 speakers

Wadeye languages



Mass absorption of L2 speakers

Wadeye languages



■ Contemporary MP

Changes induced by pidgin English

- mass lexical borrowing
- some functional material
- phrasal verbs

Lexical vs abstract transfer

	Lexical	Abstract
English	✓	-
Marri	-	✓

Borrowed functional items

mange ngarra **olimpik-mup-mini**

like LOC **Olympics-PPL-TRY**

like people an Olympic athlete

nantji isi thurru-kulk ngarra kura=yu

THING ABLE 2S.GO.IRR-submerge LOC water=TAG

you could launch (that boat) in the water

Indirect structural influence – Phrasal verbs

purrini-lili=dha-ngime

3pl.go-walk=PST-PAUC

they were walking

treining pardi=dha-ngime

exercise 3s.be=PST-PAUC *they were exercising*

wilili purrini=dha-ngime

walk 3pl.go=PST-PAUC

they were walking

Conclusions

Changes via Marri lang shift

Structures acquired in critical period

>> Abstract structures

Changes via English pidgin

Material acquired in adulthood

>> Meaningful units

(but also indirect structural effects)