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MBABARAM: A DYING AUSTRALIAN LANGUAGE

By ROBERT M. W. DIXON

Between October 1963 and August 1964 the writer was engaged in linguistic field-work in the Cairns Rain Forest of North Queensland, while employed as Research Officer by the Australian Institute of Aboriginal Studies. Intensive studies were made of the Dyirbal, Giramay, and Mamu languages, and linguistic descriptions of these languages are at present being prepared for publication.

In 1942 Tindale had mentioned a language that he called 'Barbaram', spoken on top of the Dividing Range about 70 miles inland from Cairns. Entirely on the basis of the 11 words Tindale quoted,[1] it seems, Mbabaram acquired a reputation of mystery, and has been singled out as one of the two Australian languages which seem least able to be fitted into the linguistic pattern of the continent.[2] Recent work by Hale on 30 Cape York languages seemed to emphasize the possible uniqueness of Mbabaram.[3]

In view of the interest surrounding Mbabaram, the writer made serious attempts to locate speakers of this language. It took four months to locate an informant, and after that a delayed wet season curtailed visits that could be made to him. The Mbabaram tribe was in August 1964 represented by three half-caste aborigines, aged about 75, 70, and 65 respectively; of these only the youngest was suitable as informant. The language had not been actively spoken for 10 or 15 years, and it took considerable persistence and depth probing to persuade the speaker to remember fragments. The first visit produced only 28 words; five months later about 250 words and 300 short sentences had been elicited. In view of the possible pivotal position of Mbabaram, normal field-work requirements—that an informant should speak the language concerned *most* of the time—were completely relaxed. Whatever validity the material has is due to the fact that the informant was probably more intelligent than any other the writer worked with in Australia; he was also extremely honest, not at all obsequious, and, at the end, friendly and interested.[4]

A statement of Mbabaram phonology will be published separately. The first

[1] *South Australian Museum Records*, VII, 1942, 7.

[2] S. A. Wurm, 'The present state of New Guinea (non-Melanesian or Papuan) and Australian historical and comparative linguistics', *Proceedings of the ninth International Congress of Linguists*, The Hague, 1964, 579.

[3] K. Hale, 'Vocabularies and cognation judgments for 30 Cape York Peninsula languages' (unpublished).

[4] The writer's major debt is to the Mbabaram informant, Albert Bennett. Mention must also be made of Jimmy Taylor and Mick Burns (Mbabaram), Mitchell Dodd and Jack Brumby (Wagaman), Willie Richards (Dyangun), Mrs. D. M. McGrath (of Petford), Jack Doolan (for assistance on Palm Island Aboriginal Settlement), Douglas Seaton (of Cairns), and others who assisted in various ways. Major acknowledgement must be made to F. D. McCarthy and the Australian Institute of Aboriginal Studies, for their great co-operation and encouragement throughout and beyond the writer's stay in Australia. And to A. Capell, S. A. Wurm, K. Hale, and La Mont West, Jr. Also, M. A. K. Halliday and R. D. Huddleston read a draft of this article and made some useful suggestions for improvement. Thanks are also due to M. Young of the Department of Geography, University College, London, for his expert drawing of the map.

section of the present paper discusses Mbabaram grammar. Then follow tentative remarks relating Mbabaram to some surrounding languages. Thirdly, Tindale's remarks about the languages and people of the Cairns region are commented upon. The paper ends with a lexicon.

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1.0. A language only has significance with relation to the cultural situations in which it is used. We can consider the meaning of a language pattern to be the sum of the correlations we can recognize between it and other language patterns (calling this the internal component of the meaning) and the correlations between it and general situational, behavioural, and mental patterns (the external component). Linguistics can conveniently set up different levels to describe different sorts of meaning—in one theory, a level of ' form ' to deal with internal meaning, and a level of ' context ' to deal with external meaning. Then, form and context are each considered with respect to the other : a contextual difference must correlate with each formal contrast, and vice versa.[5]

Where a description is wholly based on bilingual elicitation, only internal meanings can be described. And in this case the formal description is not with respect to a contextual description of the same language, but—rather unsatisfactorily—by translation equivalence, with respect to intuitive semantic notions in a second language. In the present case the writer kept in mind as much as possible the contextual categories he had set up for Dyirbal, Giramay, and Mamu, and tried to rely more on semantic intuitions based on a working knowledge of these languages, than on intuitions based on his use of English. The formal remarks that follow are, then, relative to English through translation, and to Dyirbal, Giramay, and Mamu through form-context analogy. They have not been related to spontaneous occurrence of Mbabaram patterns in everyday situations (and could not be, since such occurrence no longer takes place).

A formal description naturally resolves itself into two parts—a largely qualitative grammatical statement, and a mainly quantitative lexical statement. Since lexis—which deals with the potentialities of mutual co-occurrence of different lexical items, and so on—requires vast textual samples, only the grammatical component of a formal description can be put forward for Mbabaram. Again, only rather small utterances can be obtained through elicitation. So that just four grammatical units—called ' clause ', ' group ', ' word ', and ' morpheme '—will be set up here. But it is extremely likely that at least one higher unit could be postulated in addition if textual material were available.

The grammatical remarks that follow are within the framework of the ' scale-and-category ' general theory.[6]

[5] cf. the writer's *What IS language ? A new approach to linguistic description*, London, 1965.

[6] cf. M. A. K. Halliday, ' Categories of the theory of grammar ', *Word*, XVII, 3, 1961, 241–92 ; R. M. W. Dixon, ' A logical statement of grammatical theory ', *Language*, XXXIX, 4, 1963, 654–68.

1.1. Typical simple clauses in Mbabaram are :

(1) *yɨ́ and^{y}áb*	I'll come
(2) *lú and^{y}áb*	He/she'll come
(3) *múg and^{y}áb*	The man'll come
(4) *dayáɽi and^{y}áb*	The horse'll come

and, bearing in mind that at this degree of simplicity word sequence is quite free :

(5) *yɨ́ ŋɨ́n^{y} ndáb*	I'll kick him/her
(6) *lú ndáb ná*	He/she'll kick me

The reader with an Indo-European background would expect to infer from this that

(7) *múgul dayáɽi ndáb*

should be translated ' the horse'll kick the man '. In fact (7) should be translated as ' the man'll kick the horse '. ' The horse'll kick the man ' is a translation of

(8) *múg dayáɽil ndáb*

Other examples are :

(9) *yɨ́ ndáb ŋɨ́n^{y} múg*	I'll kick that man
(10) *yɨ́ yáɽil ŋɨ́n^{y} gúb*	I'll hit him/her with the spear
(11) *yɨ́ yáɽi níb*	I'll take the spear
(12) *lú múgul ná gúb*	That man'll hit me

Roughly (and in terms of Indo-European semantic categories) we can say that both actor of an intransitive clause and goal of a transitive clause can be exponenced by the uninflected form of a noun, but that actor of a transitive clause is exponenced by an inflected form of a noun. And that actor of both intransitive and transitive clauses is exponenced by what we can call the uninflected form of a pronoun, whilst goal of a transitive clause is exponenced by an inflected pronoun.[7]

The last paragraph spans the ranks of clause, group, and word. We can best describe the data by setting up nuclear [8] clause structures :

(i) A_1B_1 and (ii) $A_2A_3B_2$

(i) describing clauses (1)–(4) above, and (ii) (5)–(12). Here B_1 is exponenced by intransitive verbal group class, B_2 by transitive verbal group class, and A_1, A_2, and A_3 by different nominal group classes.

Full clause structures involve two optional elements, C and D. Typical clauses, with structural descriptions :

(13) A_1B_1D	*ndɨ́ an^{y}ág ŋgín^{y}*	You sit down there !
(14) A_1B_1C	*gúg ayánuŋ d^{y}ɨ́ndu*	It's raining on me (' the water's falling on me ')

[7] In traditional terms, pronoun constructions are of the nominative type, and noun constructions are of the ' ergative ' type (see, for example, W. K. Matthews, ' The ergative construction in modern Indo-Aryan ', *Lingua*, III, 4, 1953, 391–406).

[8] cf. R. E. Longacre, *Grammar discovery procedures*, The Hague, 1964.

(15)	A_1B_1DC	*yɨ́ and^{v}áb ŋgín^{v} d^{v}ugúndu*	I'll go across that creek
(16)	A_2B_2C	*múgul mbánu d^{v}ɨ́ndu*	He told me
(17)	$A_2A_3B_2D$	*ndɨ́ ayí d^{v}ɨ́g ŋgín^{v}*	You make a fire there !
(18)	$A_2B_2A_3D$	*ndɨ́ d^{v}ɨ́g amɨ́y argím*	Now you cook the kangaroo !
(19)	$A_2A_3B_2C$	*lú gúg yáɽu d^{v}ɨ́ndu*	He gave me water
(20)	A_2B_2D	*amíŋga níɽu ŋgál*	Granny took [it] up the hill
(21)	B_2C	*níg abɨ́ndu*	Give [it] to grandfather !

Element C in clause (14) is identified with C in (15) with reference to structural similarities at the next lower unit. Element D in (17) is identified with D in (18) on distributional grounds. There are strong intuitive semantic reasons for conflating the elements C and D at primary delicacy (and giving clause (15) a three-element description, for instance). However, this would considerably complicate the grammatical description, and make correlation between delicacies at different ranks difficult. At increased delicacy we can recognize two elements, D_{01} and D_{02}, corresponding to the primary element D—according, roughly, as the adjunct can be given ' time ' or ' place reference ' semantic qualification. Structures involving two D elements were not elicited but seem highly probable. At increased delicacy we can also recognize elements A_{11} and A_{12}; A_{21} and A_{22}; B_{11} and B_{12}; B_{21} and B_{22}.

We can now state clause structure more perspicuously, in terms of the scale of delicacy. In all clause structures the elements are unordered, and written in arbitrary sequence (corresponding, since all else is equal, roughly to majority textual sequence).[9] Parentheses indicate that an element is optional, and an integer superscript that it can occur up to that many times in a structure.

Primary structure: $A(A)B(C)(D^2)$

Secondary structures: $A_1B_1(C)(D^2)$; $A_2A_3B_2(C)(D^2)$

Tertiary structures: $A_{11}B_{11}(C)(D_{01})(D_{02})$ *and* $A_{12}B_{12}(C)(D_{01})(D_{02})$; $A_{21}A_3B_{21}(C)(D_{01})(D_{02})$ *and* $A_{22}A_3B_{22}(C)(D_{01})(D_{02})$

In fact, not every clause need necessarily include a full quota of A and B elements—but to clarify exactly what must be obligatory and under what conditions we would have to be able to refer to a higher unit.

1.2. We can recognize three primary group classes: I, nominal group; II, verbal group; and III, locational group.

Primary class I exponences elements A and C, and has associated with it *primary system* ' I '; this system has four terms: I.1, exponencing element A_1; I.2, exponencing A_2; I.3, exponencing A_3; and I.4, exponencing C. *Secondary system* ' I.1/2 ' is associated with the classes exponencing A_1 and A_2. In the case of I.1 the system has terms I.11, exponencing A_{11}; and I.12, ex-

[9] See Dixon, ' Mbabaram phonology ' (to appear in *Trans. Phil. Soc.*, 1965), section 5.5; and compare M. A. K. Halliday, ' Categories of the theory of grammar ', *Word*, XVII, 3, 1961, 254–5; J. R. Firth, ' A synopsis of linguistic theory, 1930–1955 ', *Studies in linguistic analysis*, Oxford, 1957, 5, 17; F. R. Palmer, ' " Sequence " and " order " ', *Report of the 15th Annual Round Table Meeting on Linguistic and Language Studies*, Georgetown, 1964.

ponencing A_{12}. For I.2 the terms are I.21, exponencing A_{21}, and I.22, exponencing A_{22}. (These and other classes, structures, and systems set up are shown diagrammatically, arranged as to delicacy, on pp. 118–21.)

Primary class II exponences B and has associated with it a two-term *primary system*, ' II ', whose terms are II.1 and II.2, exponencing B_1 and B_2 respectively. A two-term *secondary system* cuts across the primary system and is associated with both II.1 and II.2 ; the terms II.11, II.12 ; II.21, II.22 exponence B_{11}, B_{12} ; B_{21}, B_{22} respectively.

Primary class III exponences D and has associated with it a two-term *secondary system* ' III.0 ', whose terms III.01 and III.02 exponence D_{01} and D_{02} respectively.

1.3. At the rank of group, primary class I is exponenced by :

primary structure : $|((E)E)(F^n)|$

Secondary classes I.1 ; I.2 ; I.3 ; I.4 are exponenced by :

secondary structures : $|((E_1)E_1)(F_1{}^n)|$; $|((E_1)E_1)(F_2{}^n)|$;
$|((E_2)E_2)(F_1{}^n)|$; $|((E_3)E_3)(F_3{}^n)|$

respectively. More delicately, classes I.11 ; I.12 ; I.21 ; I.22 ; I.3 ; I.4 are exponenced by :

tertiary structures : $E_{11}E_{12}(F_1{}^n)$ *and* $|(E_{13})(F_1{}^n)|$; $|(E_{14})(F_1{}^n)|$;
$E_{11}E_{12}(F_2{}^n)$ *and* $|(E_{13})(F_2{}^n)|$; $|(E_{14})(F_2{}^n)|$;
$E_{21}E_{22}(F_1{}^n)$ *and* $|(E_{23})(F_1{}^n)|$; $E_{31}E_{32}(F_3{}^n)$ *and* $|(E_{33})(F_3{}^n)|$

Vertical lines, | |, in structures denote that *at least one* of the optional elements or sets of elements within the lines must be present ; so that |(x)(y)| is an abbreviation for x, y, xy, and |(x)(y(z))|t abbreviates xt, yt, yzt, xyt, xyzt.

Some examples, with clause structure and nominal group structures (given in sequence of clause structure nominal elements) :

(22) $D_{01}A_{22}B_{22}A_3$; E_{14}, F_1F_1
argím ndý dᵘýg almág amýy Now you cook the kangaroo meat !

(23) $A_3D_{02}B_{22}$; F_1F_1
almág ŋgínᵘ yág albán Give [me] that piece of meat !

(24) $A_{21}B_{21}C$; E_{13}, $E_{33}F_3$
yý yáɽu yýndu nᵘúlmbundu I gave [it] to the little child

(25) $A_{11}B_{11}D_{02}$; $E_{12}E_{11}$
ndý lí andᵘáb ŋgál Let's you and me both go up the hill

(26) $A_{12}B_{12}D_{02}$; F_1E_{14}
nᵘúlmbu ndý adínug ŋgínᵘ You, little one over there, join in the crying !

(27) $A_{11}B_{11}$; F_1F_1
múg albýn argínuŋ Lots of men are dancing

(28) $A_{22}CA_3B_{22}$; E_{14}, E_{33}, F_1
ndý dᵘýndu gurgáɽa níg You bring that billy-can to me !

1.4. Substantial exponents of E elements can be tabulated in part as follows (with semantic gloss in English) :

	E_1	E_2	E_3	(x)	
(i)	*yɨ́*	*ná*	*dᵘɨ́ndu*	*dᵘɨ́*	I
(ii)	*ndɨ́*		*nᵘɨ́ndu*		you
(iii)	*lú*	*ŋɨ́nᵘ*	*ŋɨ́ndu*		him/her/it
(iv)	*lí*	*línᵘ*	*líndu*	*líŋ*	I and someone else

The first three columns give exponents of E_1, E_2, and E_3. For each E_i, the fourth entry in the i^{th} column exponences E_{i_1}, the second entry exponences E_{i_4}, the second and third entries exponence E_{i_2}, and all the entries exponence E_{i_3}. It will be seen that the table is far from complete: it should almost certainly have more rows, and the gaps should be filled in. The last column indicates ' possessives '—these could only once be elicited within a verbal clause, and so cannot properly be placed within the grammatical description:

(29) *yáɽi dᵘɨ́* That's my spear
(30) *albá dᵘɨ́* That's my home
(31) *amí dᵘɨ́ lúnu* My granny died

1.5. We can recognize two primary word classes—IV, pronoun class, and V, nominal word class—that exponence elements in nominal group structure.

Primary class IV exponences element E, and has associated with it a three-term *primary system*; cutting across the primary system is a four-term *secondary system*, associated with the first term of the primary system, and a three-term *secondary system* (whose terms correspond to three of the terms in the four-term system), associated with each of the other two terms of the primary system. In this case delicacy in nominal group structure, and in word classes and systems, are at each point in one-one correspondence.

Primary class V exponences element F, and has associated with it a three-term primary system (analogous to the primary system for class IV), whose terms—V.1, V.2, and V.3—exponence F_1, F_2, and F_3 respectively.

1.6. At the rank of word, primary class V is exponenced by:
primary structure: K(L)
Secondary classes V.1, V.2, and V.3 are exponenced by:
secondary structures: K; KL_1 *and* KL_2
respectively.

L is exponenced by a two-member morpheme class which has associated with it a two-term system; the terms exponence L_1 and L_2 respectively and have each one formal item exponent. K is exponenced by an open morpheme class.

L_1 and L_2 have several alternate phonological exponents. Enough data are not available to attempt an exhaustive statement; the following are all the examples obtained:

K	KL_1	KL_2	
amí	*amíŋga*		granny
abɨ́		*abɨ́ndu*	grandfather
gúg	*gúgul*		water

K	KL_1	KL_2	
múg	*múgul*		man
yáɽi	*yáɽil*		spear
dayáɽi	*dayáɽil*		horse (coinage)
yaramán	*yaramánda*		horse (loan)
nʸúlmbu		*nʸúlmbundu*	small (thing, child, etc.)
bɨ́r	*bɨ́ril*		emu
dʸugún		*dʸugúndu*	creek
náb	*náŋga*	*nándu*	who

The small number of examples indicates the sparseness of the corpus from which this description is abstracted. But in nominal word structure, as in many other things, there are very strong similarities between Mbabaram and Dyirbal, Giramay, and Mamu.

It will be noted that *náb* ' who ' has to be considered with class V rather than with class IV. For example :

(32) *náb andʸáɽuŋ* Who's that coming ?
(33) *yargúl náŋga níɽu* Who brought the woman ?
(34) *náŋga gúɽu ŋgínʸ yargúl* Who killed that woman ?
(35) *ndɨ́ nándu yáb* Who will you give that to ?
(36) *náb múg ŋgínʸ* Who's that man ?

ndʸándu, with structure KL_2, has a common root with *ndʸáb*, *ndʸádam*, *ndʸág*, and *ndʸám* (see section 1.7 below) :

(37) *ndɨ́ ndʸándu yáɽu* Where did you leave it ?
(38) *ndɨ́ ndʸándu almbúnu* Where were you born ?

With more data it would probably be necessary to set up another structure, KL_3, where L_3 could be semantically qualified as ' possessive suffix ' (again there are formal-substantial analogies with Dyirbal) :

(39) *albá náŋ ŋgínʸ* Whose camp is that ?
(40) *abɨ́ŋ dayáɽi* Grandfather's horse

Pronominal words can be allocated word structures in a similar way. The available data were tabulated in section 1.4.

1.7. No primary structure at the rank of group typically exponences primary class III. Tertiary class III.02 is exponenced by :
primary structure : |(I)(J)|

Tertiary class III.01 cannot be allocated any (non-trivial) group structure and must be referred directly to its formal item exponents :

argím now
anmɨ́n to-morrow (?, or earlier on to-day ?)
anú to-night
ndʸáb when

(41) *ndʸáb andʸáb lú* When's he coming ?
(42) *yɨ́ argím gúɽu* I killed [it] just now
(43) *anmɨ́n andʸáb* [He's] coming to-morrow

This class will certainly have further members, in addition to the four that have been abstracted from the present limited corpus.

We can recognize primary word classes VIII and IX, exponencing elements I and J respectively. Class VIII has no word structure, and must be referred to its formal item exponents :

ŋgínᵛ	there
agáŋ	here
ŋgál	up
alŋgída	down

and probably others.

(44) *lú ŋgál anᵛánuŋ* She's standing on top of the hill
(45) *ndɨ́ argíg ŋgínᵛ* You dance there !
(46) *ndɨ́ aŋí níg agáŋ* You bring the wood here !

Class IX is exponenced by primary word structure :

Q(R)

where, roughly, Q denotes a locational root, with typical exponents *albúd* ' Dimbulah ' or *wú* ' west ', and R denotes a directional suffix, such as ' from ' (exponenced by *-um* or *-m*, as in *albúdum* ' from Dimbulah ', and *wúm* ' from the west '). Class IX is only poorly documented, and its structure is best indicated by examples :

(47) *ndᵛám andᵛáɽuŋ* Where's [he] from ?
(48) *ndᵛág andᵛáɽuŋ* Where's [he] going to ?
(49) *múg ŋgínᵛ ndᵛádam andᵛáɽuŋ* Where's that man there just come from ?
(50) *múg ŋgínᵛ albúdum andᵛáɽuŋ* He's from Dimbulah
(51) *abírum andᵛáɽuŋ* [I've] just come from the south
(52) *gám andᵛáɽuŋ* [I've] just come from the east
(53) *aŋí níg gá* Take the wood to the east !
(54) *ndɨ́ ndᵛádam andᵛáɽuŋ* Where have you come from ?
(55) *yɨ́ arí andᵛáɽu albúd* I've never been to Dimbulah

1.8. At the rank of group, primary class II is exponenced by :
primary structure : (G)H
Secondary classes II.1 and II.2 are exponenced by :
secondary structures : $(G)H_1$ *and* $(G)H_2$
respectively. Tertiary classes II.11 ; II.12 ; and II.21 ; II.22 are exponenced by :
tertiary structures : $(G_{01})H_{11}$; $(G_{02})H_{12}$; *and* $(G_{01})H_{21}$; $(G_{02})H_{22}$

Element G is exponenced by word class VI of verbal modifiers. The corpus yields two formal item exponents :

arí	not
wáy	don't

Class VI has associated with it a two-term secondary system ; term VI.01 has *arí* as sole formal item exponent and term VI.02 has *wáy* :

(56) *yɨ́ arí andᵘáb* I shan't go
(57) *wáy andᵘág* Don't go !
(58) *ŋɨ́ndu wáy andᵘág* Don't go near him !
(59) *ndɨ́ wáy aŋág ŋgínᵘ* Don't fall down there !
(60) *dᵘɨ́ndu arí yáb* [He] won't give [it] to me

1.9. Element H of verbal group structure is exponenced by word class VII. This class is in turn exponenced by *primary word structure* :

$$M|(N)(P)|$$

Increasing delicacy, secondary classes VII.1 and VII.2, exponencing H_1 and H_2 respectively, are exponenced by :
secondary structures : $M_1|(N)(P)|$ *and* $M_2|(N)(P)|$
respectively. And then classes VII.11 ; VII.12 ; and VII.21 ; VII.22, exponencing elements H_{11} ; H_{12} ; and H_{21} ; H_{22}, are exponenced by :
tertiary structures : $M_1|(N)(P_1)|$; $M_1(N)P_2$; *and* $M_2|(N)(P_1)|$; $M_2(N)P_2$

M is exponenced by a class, at morpheme rank, of verbal roots. Associated with this class is a two-term system ; one term exponences M_1 and yields a class of ' intransitive ' verbal roots, with typical formal item exponents :

andá- talk
andᵘá- come, go
aŋá- fall down
agá- laugh

whilst the other term exponences M_2 and yields a class of ' transitive ' verbal roots, with formal item exponents :

gú- hit, kill
yá- give
gá- pick up, get
ndá- spear, shoot, kick
dᵘɨ́- burn, cook, make a fire

amongst others.

Element N has a single formal item exponent, which can be semantically interpreted as indicating ' action initiated and, unless otherwise indicated, completed in the past '. It has alternate phonological exponents *-ɽu-* or *-nu-* :

(61) *yɨ́ aŋánu* I fell down
(62) *yɨ́ yɨ́nu* I've eaten
(63) *ndᵘág andᵘáɽu* Where's he gone to ?
(64) *lú gúɽu yargúl* He's killed [his] woman

Element P is exponenced by a morpheme class ; associated with the class is a two-term system—the first term exponences P_1 and the second P_2. Semantically, the first term can be interpreted as having an implication of ' future time ', the second term as having an implication of ' commanding ' ; the statement of clause structure indicated selection by a ' commanding ' verbal group of a nominal group involving pronominal element *ndɨ́* ' you '.

So that structure M_iP_1 (i = 1 or 2) can be interpreted in terms of ' intention '

or ' expectation ', M_1P_2 in terms of simple ' commanding ', M_1N in terms of completed action, M_1NP_1 in terms of action started some time ago but continuing at least up to the present, M_1NP_2 in terms of a command to continue some action, or else to join in an action others are engaged in. Phonologically, P_2 is exponenced by *-g* ; and P_1 by *-b* in structures M_1P_1 and by *-ŋ* in structures M_1NP_1. For example :

(65) *lí ndáb ŋɨ́nᵛ* Let's [you and me] spear him
(66) *ndɨ́ ndág yáɽil yargúl* You spear the woman with the spear !
(67) *yɨ́ ŋɨ́nᵛ ndáɽu múg* I speared that fellow
(68) *ndɨ́ ndáɽug* You carry on spearing !
(69) *múgul ná ndáɽuŋ* This fellow's spearing me

It should be noted that all the word structures given above are strictly ordered, the ordering being expounded by sequence. None of the structures of higher units are ordered ; in fact, strings are sequence free between word and clause ranks, in material of the simplicity represented here.

1.10. A handful of more complex examples were elicited :

(70) *ndɨ́ andᵛág ŋgínᵛ / aŋí gáɽug* You go there, and get wood !
A_{12} B_{12} D_{02}
A_{22} A_{23} B_{22}

In this two-clause sentence *ndɨ́* exponences both the A_1 element in the first clause and the A_2 element in the second. Similarly :

(71) *ndɨ́ andᵛág ŋgɨ́y / yargúl ndág yáɽil* You go there, spear the woman with a spear !
A_{12} B_{12} D_{02}
A_{22} A_3 B_{22} A_{22}

where *ndɨ́* is sole exponent of the A_1 element, and part (with *yáɽil*) of the exponent of the A_2 element.[10] A straightforward two-clause sentence :

(72) *lí arí gúb ŋɨ́nᵛ / lú gúb línᵛ* He'll kill us if we don't kill him

A more complex example :

(73) *yɨ́ andᵛáb ŋɨ́ndu / mbánu ŋɨ́ndu* I told him I'd come (to him)
A_{11} B_{11} C
A_{21} B_{21} C

The whole first clause might be looked upon as ' A_3 ' element in the *mbánu* clause ; but more corroborative data would be needed before such an analysis could be put forward with confidence.

1.11. For additional illustration, amongst other clauses elicited were :

(74) *yáɽi mbádᵛ* [There are] no spears
(75) *ndᵛíl mbádᵛ* [There's] no food
(76) *yɨ́ aŋgʷáyir* I'm hungry
(77) *nág ndɨ́* You stand up !

[10] The exact status of *ŋgɨ́y* is doubtful. This ' word ' occurred three times in the corpus ; in (112) and in (113) *aŋí níg ŋgɨ́y gá*, with gloss ' take it over there to the east '. It may differ from *ŋgínᵛ* in implying a different order of distance (' a long way over there ', rather than ' just over there ', say).

(78) *yɨ́ nánuŋ* I'm standing up already
(79) *gurgáɽa búg ŋgínᵘ* Empty out the billy-can !
(80) *múɽu lím* It smells good
(81) *ndɨ́ múg ŋgínᵘ almág* You smell that beef !
(82) *bɨ́ril ndáb ná* The emu'll kick me
(83) *yargúl mbúl andáɽuŋ* Those two women are talking
(84) *ndɨ́ yáɽi dᵘág* You put that spear down !
(85) *ndɨ́ gág ŋgínᵘ yáɽi* You pick that spear up !
(86) *yɨ́ gáɽu* I have picked it up
(87) *lú gúg yáɽu dᵘɨ́ndu* He gave me some water
(88) *yɨ́ gúb ŋɨ́nᵘ yargúl* I'm going to fight that woman
(89) *múgul ndáɽu ná* That man just shot me
(90) *dayáɽil ndáɽu ná* The horse kicked me
(91) *yaramánda ndáɽu abɨ́* The horse kicked grandfather
(92) *ndɨ́ ndúg amɨ́y* Cut up the kangaroo !
(93) *amɨ́y ndúɽu ŋgínᵘ* [I've] cut up that kangaroo
(94) *yɨ́ argím yɨ́nu gúg* I've just drunk some water
(95) *guŋgág bánuŋ* The jackass is laughing
(96) *argídᵘ argídᵘ bánuŋ* Willy wagtail's singing out
(97) *arbáy bánuŋ* The locust is making a noise
(98) *lúnú lú* He's dead
(99) *yɨ́ búnu* I had a bathe
(100) *ndɨ́ agáŋ / dᵘɨ́ndu* You come over here, to me !

1.12. On being asked ' What's he going for ? ' the informant mentioned the word *nᵘɨ́b*, but then and at other times used *nᵘɨ́bug* in clauses :

(101) *nᵘɨ́bug andᵘáɽuŋ* What's [he] going for ?
(102) *ŋgínᵘ nᵘɨ́bug* What's that for ?
(103) *yargúl nᵘɨ́bug adínuŋ* What's the woman crying for ?

Other clauses that cannot be placed in the grammatical description through lack of corroborative material are :

(104) *yɨ́ andᵘáb gúguŋ* I'm going down to the water
(105) *yɨ́ andᵘáb albáŋ* I'm going home
(106) *ndɨ́ andᵘág gúgul búg* You go and have a bathe in the water !
(107) *gúgul búg ndɨ́* You bathe in the water !
(108) *yɨ́ arí búnbu / gúg muɽál* I'm not going to bathe, the water's too cold
(109) *yɨ́ gúguŋ andᵘáb búnbu / gúgul búnbu* I'll go down to bathe in the water
(110) *yɨ́ lúnbu* I'm going to die
(111) *yɨ́ andᵘáb núnbu* I'll go [there] to sleep
(112) *lí andᵘáb ŋgɨ́y argínbu lí* Let's go there and dance

2

2.0. The Mbabaram language was spoken by a tribe bearing the same name, that lived at about latitude 17° 20′ S, longitude 145° E. The tribal area was

bordered on the north by the Walsh River and included the present settlements of Irvinebank, Petford, and Lappa. It did not extend as far as Almaden, Mount Garnet, or Mareeba. The tribes with whom the Mbabaram seem to have had most contact were the Dyangun to the north and the Wagaman people (speaking the Agwamin language) to the east. Albert Bennett, the writer's Mbabaram informant, stated that Agwamin was most similar to Mbabaram, although in fact no language was very close to it.

In this region of north Queensland, as in most or all of Australia, each tribe's language is generally to some degree mutually intelligible with those of surrounding tribes. Mbabaram appears to have been an exception. Because of the difficulty of the language for aborigines of other tribes, the writer was told that Mbabaram people would tend to learn the neighbours' languages, rather than the other way round. Speakers of Muluridyi, Agwamin, and Dyangun languages were encountered who said they could understand Mbabaram but not speak it. Undoubtedly, the relative difficulty of the language for speakers of other languages has aided its premature near-disappearance.

Geographically, Mbabaram is seen in the map (p. 109) to be enclosed within a broken circular continuum of mutual intelligibility. Taken in order round the circle, the tribal languages are Agwamin, Dyangun, Muluridyi, Dyabugay, Yidin, Dadyan, Mamu, Dyirbal, Giramay, and Waruŋu. Each language is mutually intelligible with (at least) the ones immediately next to it; Waruŋu does not appear to be very similar to Agwamin. Mbabaram is not mutually intelligible with any of the other languages.

Thus, Mbabaram appears on the surface to be linguistically distinct from surrounding languages. This is mainly because of large phonetic and some phonological differences; grammatically, the language has quite great similarities with, for instance, Dyirbal.[11] On closer inspection, Mbabaram can be related fairly satisfactorily to the general linguistic pattern of the Cape York Peninsula.

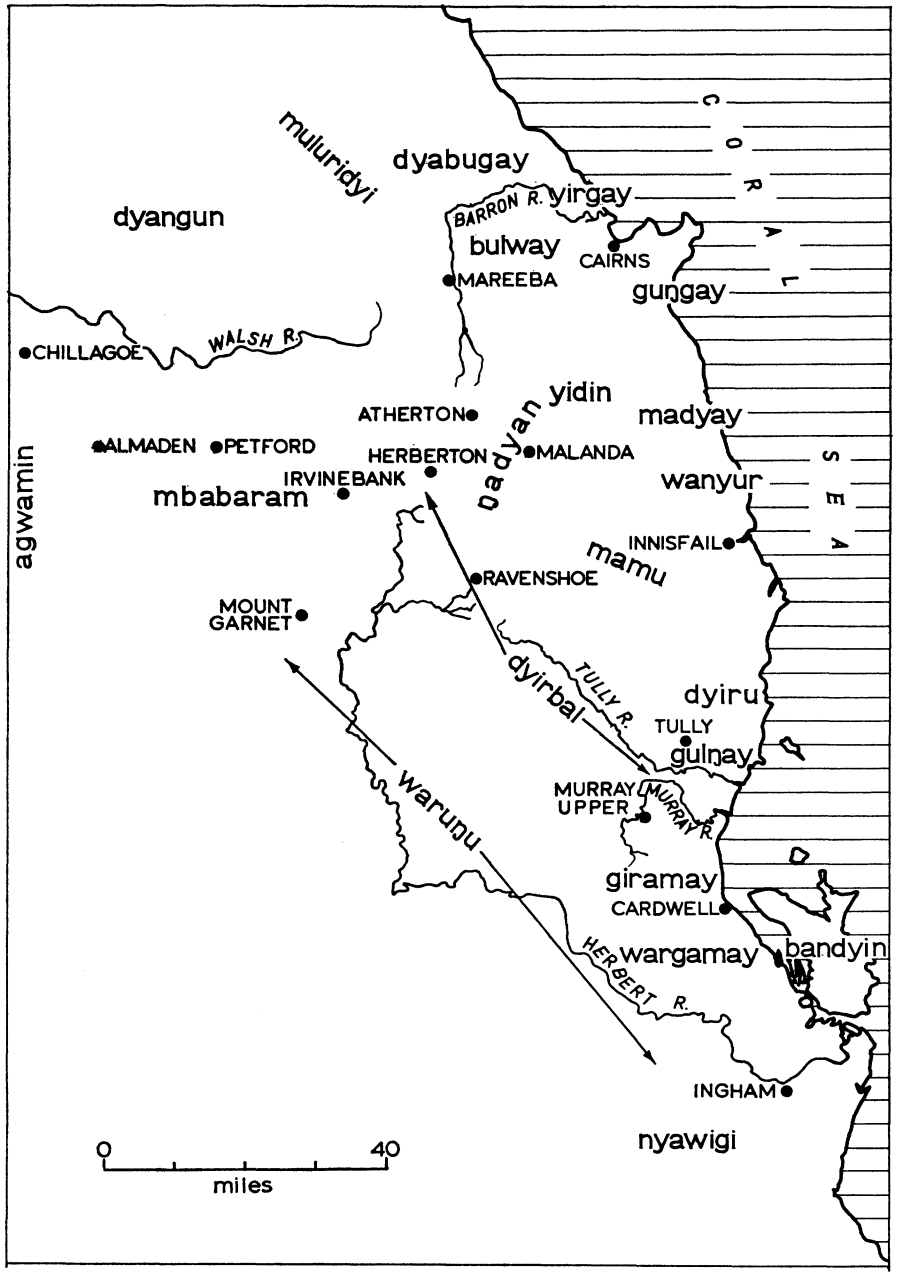
The writer is not a comparativist, and has insufficient data to attempt a systematic comparison of Mbabaram with other languages of its region. What follows should be taken in the spirit of rather random remarks indicating how Mbabaram quite certainly could be placed within the general scheme of Cape York languages.

2.1. A phonological description of Mbabaram will be published separately. This posits three structures at the rank of phonological word: [12]

(i) $TS(S^n)$ (ii) $RS(S^n)$ (iii) $S(S^n)$

[11] Although, whereas languages from Mamu down to Dyirbal and Giramay have four noun classes, Mbabaram makes no grammatical distinctions of this sort. A grammatical comparison of Mbabaram with Dyirbal will be included in a projected full description of the Giramay, Dyirbal, and Mamu languages.

[12] This is a quite different unit from grammatical word, lexical word, and graphological or graphetic word, and is set up with regard paid mainly to purely phonological distributional considerations.


muluridyi
dyabugay
CORAL SEA
dyangun
BARRON R.
yirgay
bulway
CAIRNS
MAREEBA
gungay
WALSH R.
CHILLAGOE
ATHERTON
yidin
madyay
ALMADEN
PETFORD
HERBERTON
MALANDA
badyan
agwamin
IRVINEBANK
mbabaram
wanyur
INNISFAIL
mamu
RAVENSHOE
MOUNT GARNET
dyirbal
TULLY R.
dyiru
TULLY
gulnay
warunu
MURRAY UPPER
MURRAY R.
giramay
CARDWELL
wargamay
bandyin
HERBERT R.
INGHAM
nyawigi
0
40
miles

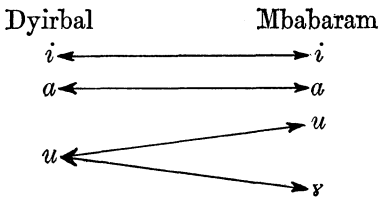
Examples of words with TS-type structures are *bigín*, *dargɤy*, *mayár*, *yawúl*, *láŋgal*; of RS-type are *argíd^y*, *ag^{w}ú*, *amɤy*, *almbɤr*, *arwɤy*, *ayí*; of S-type are *bí*, *ndúg*, *ŋg^{w}áɾ*, *mbɤl*, *gúg*, *wír*. Restricting ourselves to nuclear structures, conflating units of phonological word and syllable, and using C to denote consonantal phonematic unit and V for vowel phonematic unit, these three structures can be written roughly:

(i) $C_1V_1(C_2)C_3V_2(C_4)$ (ii) $A(C_5)C_3V_2(C_4)$ (iii) $C_3V_2(C_4)$

where each distinct structural symbol is exponenced by a different system of phonematic units. Now in Dyirbal, and in most or perhaps all of the other surrounding languages, we have just to set up one compatible structure (in general form similar to TS):

(i') $C_1^!V'(C_2^!)C_3^!V'(C_4^!)$

Systems exponencing correspondent elements in (i) and (i') are compatible. In Dyirbal, $C_1^!$ is exponenced by an 11-term system; in Mbabaram C_1 is exponenced by a 12-term system. Moreover these two systems can, when regarded phonetically, be said to have 10 common terms (roughly: *b*, *d*, *d^y*, *g*, *m*, *n*, *n^y*, *ŋ*, *y*, *w*; the first system also has term *ɾ*, and the second *g^w* and *l*). Similarly for the other consonantal elements. There is more difference in the vowel systems, Dyirbal (and most or all of the other languages surrounding Mbabaram) having just one three-term system, and Mbabaram a one-term system at A, a three-term system at V_1, and one with four terms at V_2. Orthographically, we can use *u*, *i*, *a* for the terms in the Dyirbal system, and *u*, *ɤ*, *i*, *a* for the terms in the main Mbabaram vowel system (also using orthographic *a* for the single exponent of Mbabaram element A and *u*, *i*, *a* for the exponents of V_1). Phonetically the two systems can be identified as follows:



where the correspondences are only majority ones, since the phonetic exponents do not (and would not be likely to) coincide absolutely.[13]

2.2. Some words are effectively identical in Mbabaram and neighbouring languages:

[13] We can usefully think of the phonetic exponent of a term in these phonological vowel systems as a 'volume' in three-dimensional phonetic space, where the dimensions are defined by 'close/open', 'front/back', 'rounded/unrounded'. Then we are saying that the *ɤ*-volume for Mbabaram does not fall completely within the *u*-volume for Dyirbal. In fact, most of both the *u*-volume and the *ɤ*-volume for Mbabaram fall within the *u*-volume for Dyirbal; but a small part of the *ɤ*-volume falls within Dyirbal's *i*-volume. In each instance, the 'point' within a particular volume that is 'chosen' (i.e. that describes the articulation in this instance) is determined partly by environmental and partly by structural considerations. (Cf. Daniel Jones, *The phoneme*, Cambridge, 1962, especially pp. 92–8.)

Mbabaram *bárŋan*	Dyangun *bárŋan* (or *bárŋun* ?) (Dyirbal *báɽŋan*)		kangaroo-rat
Mbabaram *búmba*	Agwamin, Dyirbal *búmba*		ashes
Mbabaram *gurgáɽa*	Dyirbal *gúrgaɽa* (Dyangun *gúrgaɽu* ?)		billy-can
Mbabaram *dayáɽi*	Agwamin *dáyaɽi*		horse

And Mbabaram has accepted some of the same loan-words via English as other languages of North Queensland :

Mbabaram *yaramán*	Neighbouring languages *yáraman*		horse
Mbabaram *migúlu*	Neighbouring languages *mígulu*		white man

Another close correspondence is :

Mbabaram *wáŋgu*	Agwamin *wángu*		small guana

2.3. In other cases we can identify a TS-type structure in another language with either an RS-type or an S-type structure in Mbabaram. Examples of the correspondence TS to RS :

	RS			TS	
Mbabaram	*arí*	Dyangun, Agwamin		*gári*	no
,,	*amí*	,,	,,	*gámi*	granny
,,	*andʸá*	,,	,,	*ŋándʸan* [14]	father
,,	*aŋál*	Dyirbal (Agwamin *wáŋara* ; Dyangun *wáŋi*)		*wáŋal*	boomerang
,,	*ardʸɾ*	Dyangun, Agwamin		*gúrdʸu*	three

In the third example Dyangun and Agwamin have a final consonant where Mbabaram has none. In the last line *u* in the first syllable of the Dyangun/Agwamin word corresponds to initial *a* in the Mbabaram word.

Examples of the correspondence TS to S are :

	S			TS	
Mbabaram	*gá*	Dyangun, Agwamin		*nága*	east
,,	*yú*	,,	,,	*gúyu*	fish
,,	*gɾ*	,,	,,	*dʸúgu* (Dyirbal *yúgu*)	tree
,,	*ŋgɾ*	Dyangun, Agwamin, Dyirbal		*búŋgu*	knee
,,	*mbúl*	Agwamin		*dʸámbul*	two
,,	*ndʸá-*	Dyirbal		*wúndʸa-*	where
,,	*mbá*	,,		*bámba*	belly
,,	*ŋgʷáɽ*	Dyangun, Agwamin		*gúŋgar* (Dyirbal *gúŋgari*)	north

The orthography should not be allowed to mislead. The correspondence between *yú* and *gúyu* is exactly the same as that between *gɾ* and *dʸúgu* (and that between *ardʸɾ* and *gúrdʸu* as far as the last syllables are concerned, and so on) : it was mentioned above that the two terms *u* and *ɾ* in the main

[14] One Agwamin informant said *ŋándʸan*, the other (now living several hundred miles away) *ŋándʸa* ; the sole Dyangun informant said *ŋándʸan*.

Mbabaram vowel system can be identified phonetically with the single term *u* in the Dyirbal system.[15] Similarly, the two terms *ŋg* and *ŋg*^{w}, in the Mbabaram system exponencing element C_3, correspond phonetically to two 'allophones' of the single term *ŋg* in the Dyirbal system exponencing element C_3^1. The correspondence TS to S is thus complete in each of the first seven examples quoted above; in the eighth line there is non-correspondence between *r* and *ɽ*.[16]

There is one example where a longer word of structure TSSS corresponds to a Mbabaram word of structure RS:

RS		TSSS	
Mbabaram *aɽú*	Agwamin	*wáɽumugu*	wallaroo

2.4. A number of weaker correspondences are also worth mentioning. A TS-RS correspondence where there is vowel non-correspondence between S syllables:

Mbabaram *alŋú*	Dyangun, Agwamin	*gálya*	uncle

In other putative correspondences, an initial, single *a* syllable in Mbabaram has no correspondent in the neighbouring language:

Mbabaram	*aramán*	Dyangun, Agwamin	*ráman*	woomera
,,	*abú*	,, ,,	*búɽa*	ground
,,	*abí*	,, ,,	*bína*	ear
,,	*abá*	Agwamin	*báma*	body

In the last three examples, Mbabaram has no third syllable corresponding to the second syllable of the word in the neighbouring language (we can represent the first correspondence RSS-SS, and the last three RS-SS). It may be coincidental that the final vowels in the right-hand list are identical with the initial vowels in the left-hand list.

In other cases we can establish correspondences where there is no final vowel in Mbabaram corresponding to one in a neighbouring language:

Mbabaram	*bíb*	Muluridyi	*bíbi*	breast
,,	*guŋgág*	Dyirbal	*gúŋgaga*	laughing jackass
,,	*gayámbal*	,,	*gáyambula*	white cockatoo
,,	*gúg*	Agwamin[17]	*gúgu*	water

the third example also involving vowel non-correspondence.

In three instances, vowels appear to have been reversed:

[15] At the level of phonology only systems can be compared, and those only through their phonetic exponents. In order to set up system-system correspondences examples should be given involving all or almost all the terms in each system, showing their correspondents in the other system (and dealing with all kinds of possible structural environment). It can be seen that here the examples given are quite inadequate for the comparisons to have full scientific validity. Similarly, grammatical comparison can only be of systems, and only through the systems' contextual and situational exponents.

[16] Roughly, *r* is further forward than *ɽ*. For more detailed phonetic remarks reference should be made to the writer's forthcoming account of Dyirbal.

[17] One informant gave two words for water: *gúgu* and *bána*; the other only gave *bána*. *bána* is very common, as the word for water, in languages of this area.

Mbabaram	*ayúɽ*	Agwamin	*wúyaɽ*	sun
		(Dyangun	*wúya*)	
,,	*abír*	Dyangun, Agwamin	*dᵛíbar*	south
,,	*wú*	,, ,,	*gúwa*	west

2.5. The examples above are all that the writer has collected. It must be realized that the data for Mbabaram are scanty, and for Dyangun, Agwamin, and Muluridyi even more so—a word list was gone through in a couple of hours solely to look for superficial word correspondences with Mbabaram. But the correspondences that have been postulated indicate that it would not be difficult fully to relate Mbabaram to the neighbouring languages in terms of phonological/lexical correspondences.

3

Tindale theorized in 1942 that in the eastern coastal and mountain region near Cairns existed ' several small tribes of a people characterized by a high incidence of relatively and absolutely small stature, crisp curly hair, and a tendency toward yellowish-brown skin colour. All of the tribes appear to be mixed in greater or lesser degree with the Australian aboriginal type, but preserve in their mixed condition characters recognizable as belonging to the Tasmanian aborigines '.[18] He mentioned that ' there is a central bloc of a dozen small tribes of the Tasmanoid people occupying an area one hundred miles wide (from Cape Grafton in the east to Lappa Junction in the west) and 180 miles long (from the headwaters of the Annan River in the north to near Cardwell and Ravenshoe in the south) '.[19] Tindale listed as ' Tasmanoid ' the Ngatjan, Mamu, Wanjuru, Tjapukai, Barbaram, Idindji, Kongkandji, Buluwai, Djiru, Djirubal, Gulngai, and Keramai tribes. He also mentioned that ' grouped in a half-circle, and enclosing the area, except along the sea front, are other more mixed peoples, who include some pygmoids. They form a transitional type between the nucleus of Tasmanoid tribes and the more normal Australian ones ',[20] and listed the ' transitional ' tribes as Bandjin, Newegi, Agwamin, Wakaman, Muluridji, Djankun, and Irukandji. Tindale's short section on ' language ' will be quoted in full.

> ' Comparative vocabularies indicate that, while the peripheral and intermediate zones of pygmoid peoples have languages allied to those of their taller neighbours, there is a central area where the languages appear to be nuclear and to have been strongly isolated. Barbaram seems best to represent this archaic type : Wakaman and Agwamin, which adjoin, show marked influences from the west. The northern and north-eastern Tasmanoid tribes reveal the influence of northern languages of the Koko Imudji type (Koko-yimidir of Roth). In Tjapukai, for example, the original Barbaram elements have been obscured and overlaid, surviving only in modified form.

[18] N. B. Tindale and J. B. Birdsell, ' Tasmanoid tribes in North Queensland ', *South Australian Museum Records*, VII, 1942, 1.

[19] ibid., 2.

[20] ibid., 3.

Barbaram, which is regarded in this preliminary statement as most typical of the area of isolation, is characterized among other things by many monosyllabic words with consonantal endings: [ˈ**kaŋ**] tree, [ˈ**mok**] man, [ˈ**kok**] water. In words of two or more syllables, principal stress is often placed on the second syllable: [**a**ˈ**ro**] a species of kangaroo, [**a**ˈ**runda**] head, [**a**:ˈ**tja**] three, [**n**ˈ**ka**:**la**] leg, [**al**ˈ**ma**:**k**] meat, [**a**ˈ**bo**] ground, [**a**ˈ**wa**] mother, [**m**ˈ**be**:**ra**] grass basket.

A glottal stop [ˈ] is evident in some words, and in others this is so marked that it seems to have almost the effect of a click, as in [**n**ˈ**gara**].

Terminal vowels are often indeterminate, and the voice may be raised a tone [**nd**ᵃ], [**atj**ᵃ], [**k**ᵒ], [**k**ᵃ]. The last-named word is an example in which the terminal vowel is very short.

Short texts and grammatical notes have been obtained from two of the tribes in this area, and parallel vocabularies from each of them. They will be the subject of a more detailed separate study.' [21]

In actual fact, all the languages but Mbabaram fit perfectly well into the pattern of Australian linguistics. Mbabaram has some superficial phonetic and phonological eccentricities (which made learning it difficult) but is grammatically not too unusual and, as was indicated above, can with a little dexterity easily be related to its neighbours. Mbabaram is not typical of the other 11 languages Tindale mentioned as centrally Tasmanoid, but is a little nearer Dyangun and Agwamin. Tindale's statement concerning the ' original Barbaram elements ' having been overlaid and obscured in Dyabugay cannot be commented on in the absence of explicit specification of the 'original Barbaram elements '. But such a genetic-type statement, based on parallel vocabularies and texts in only two (unspecified) languages, seems a little speculative. The evidence available does not really yield any genetic judgments. If one were forced into one, it would seem far more reasonable to say that Mbabaram had in some ways diverged a little more than is usual from the common linguistic pattern of that region, but that it is still very recognizably of that region.

In fact consonantal endings are not uncommon in this area (to the south and east, non-plosive consonants often end words—only in Agwamin is it unusual to end a word in a consonant). What is unusual to Mbabaram is the presence of final stops—often glottalized (but, as in near-by languages, glottalization is a phonetic feature that is not phonologically significant). Stress peculiarity, and the presence of monosyllabic words and words beginning with a vowel, give Mbabaram most of its phonetic peculiarity. On the last two points (no surrounding language allows either) reference can be made to the TS-RS and TS-S correspondences set up in the last section. Unstressed terminal vowels in Mbabaram are often short and difficult to determine at first; similarly, in Dadyan, terminal consonants are often long—neither of these observations has any great linguistic significance.

Capell commented [22] that to uphold Tindale's Tasmanoid thesis on linguistic

[21] ibid., 7; no further study has appeared in the intervening 24 years.

[22] A. Capell, *A new approach to Australian linguistics* (Oceania Linguistic Monographs, No. 1), Sydney, 1962, 111.

grounds ' one or both of the following facts would have to appear—(*a*) that the Rain Forest languages are not Australian; (*b*) that they are linked with Tasmanian '. With reference to the first fact, the Rain Forest languages (Tindale's central dozen) are almost all obviously Australian. Bulway appears to have died out, and the writer could gather no material on it; the indications are that it was fairly similar to Dyabugay. Mbabaram was a little eccentric phonetically and phonologically, and was certainly not typical of the nuclear Rain Forest region: but little ingenuity is required to show that it is Australian. And, linguistically, there is little apparent reason specifically to separate out the central ' Tasmanoid ' languages from the ' transitional ' ones. Thus the first fact cannot be upheld.

4

The most attested 90% of the writer's Mbabaram lexicon is written out below. First, exponents of element M_1 in verbal word structure (with, for each stem, a specification of whether it selects *-ɣu-* or *-nu-* as exponent of element N):

adí- (*-nu*)	cry	*andá-* (*-ɣu*)	talk
agá- (*-nu*)	laugh	*anʸá-* (*-nu-*)	stay, sit
argí- (*-nu-*)	dance	*andʸá-* (*-ɣu-*)	come, go
almbú- (*-nu*)	grow up	*aŋá-* (*-nu-*)	fall down

Exponents of element M_2:

bá- (*-nu-*)	(bird or insect) making [a noise]	*mbá-* (*-nu-*)	tell
		ní- (*-ɣu-*)	take, bring
bú- (*-nu-*)	bathe, immerse	*nú-* (*-nu-* ?)	sleep
dʸá- (*-ɣu-*)	put down	*ndá-* (*-ɣu-*)	shoot, spear, kick
dʸɤ́- (*-ɣu-*)	burn, cook, make a fire	*ndú-* (*-ɣu-*)	cut up
		yá- (*-ɣu-*)	give
gá- (*-ɣu-*)	pick up, get	*yɤ́-* (*-nu-*)	eat (drink ?)
gú- (*-ɣu-*)	hit, kill	*lú-* (*-nu*)	die
mú- (*-ɣu-*)	smell		

In addition *ná-* (*-nu-*) is probably another exponent of M_1 and, even less well attested, *muŋá-* (*-ɣu-*) an exponent of M_2; the former can be given gloss ' stand up ' and the latter ' plant (?) '.

Elements K and Q include, amongst one or both of their classes of exponents:

abá	body	*albín*	track
abál	tobacco	*albír*	beard
albá	camp, home	*abú*	ground
albán	lump	*albú*	egg
arbáy	brown locust	*albúd*	Dimbulah
abí	ear	*abɤ́*	grandfather
abír	south	*albɤ́*	grey

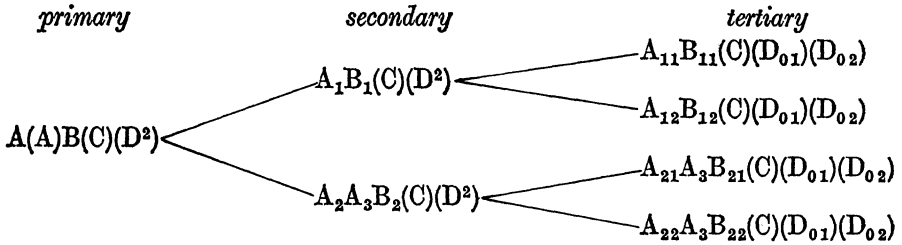
albʸn	a lot
adíl	ring-tail possum
adúɽ	sore (e.g. eye, nose, belly)
adúɽil	Petford
ardʸʸ	three
agír	(any) snake
argídʸ	willy wagtail
algú	grass
argúɽ	emu's neck
agʷámin	language spoken to the west
algʷár	sky, cloud
agʷíy	smoke
agʷú	black native bee
anmáɽ	sore (e.g. knee)
almág	meat
amí	granny
almín	forehead, face
amʸy	(any) kangaroo
armbár	bone
almbʸr	ricket-bush
anú	night
anúb	green
alndá	big possum
andʸá	father
aŋál	boomerang
aŋí	fire, wood (for fire)
arŋín	black
aŋúɽ	sun, daytime
alŋú	uncle
arŋgín	leaf
alŋgʸ	neck
aŋgʷáyir	hungry
alŋgʷín	foot
alŋgʷúɽi	white
aramán	woomera
arín	a thin tree
aríb	head
aɽíb	close
aɽú	wallaroo
aɽún	gum tree
awá	mother
arwʸy	lice
báybu	pipe
baybún	tail
barŋán	kangaroo-rat
balán	moon
bára	big
bí	liver
bíb	breast
bigín	shield
birgíl	frost
biníŋ	Boonmoo pinnacle
bírŋga	old man
búgir	armpit
búmba	ashes
búndi	a kind of grass
búy	ghost
búl	carpet-snake
bʸr	emu
dábu	baby
dargʸy	wild turkey
dambú	short (e.g. man)
dambún	borer
dayáɽi	horse
dúlbu	match
dúg	dog, dingo
dún	stone
dúl	son
dʸángun	language spoken to the north
dʸáŋga	black yam
dʸibú	no good (e.g. man)
dʸigʸy	white-tail rat
dʸugún	creek
gá	east
gawír	tomahawk (i.e. hatchet)
gayámbal	white cockatoo
gáɽa	bread
gaɽúg	bandicoot
gaɽúl	wild yam
gúg	water
gurgáɽa	billy-can
guŋgág	laughing jackass
gúr	nulla nulla
gʸ	tree
gʸr	elbow
gʷándʸil	frilly lizard

gʷudᵛín	no good
malgádᵛiɣ, *malgáɣ*	big
máni	stone
maŋár	grey kangaroo
migúlu	white man
mír	thirsty
míɣ	spirit
múg	man
múga	auntie
muɣál	cold, cold weather
mbá	belly
mbábaɣam	name of language
mbádʸ	none
mbú	bottom (anat.)
mbúl	two
mbɨ́dʸ	frilled lizard (another name)
mbɨ́l	back (anat.)
nambúr	big brown snake
numbɨ́	big red wallaroo
nɨ́wiy	larrikin
ndám	arm
ndír	chest
ndúy	rock-wallaby
nduyír	cheeky, dangerous
nʸumáyig	cheeky
nʸúlmbu	small
ndᵛíl	food (vegetables and fruit)
ndʸɨ́y	nose
ŋawɨ́y	hot weather
ŋárabulgán	Mount Mulligan
ŋgár	leg
ŋgɨ́	knee, kneecap
ŋgʷáɣ	north
wagáy	big sword
walgɨ́y	brown snake
warmág	Dyangun corroboree
walŋá	teenage girl
wáygu	tree-guana
wáy	river sand
wí	mouth
wír	head-hair
wú	west
wurgún	young boy
wumbún	Boonmoo pinnacle (another name)
wúnda	not sweet
wungál	tall
yargúl	woman
yawúl	blood
yaramán	horse
yáɣi	spear
yigír	itchy
yú	(any) fish
lábalába	Lappa Junction
láŋgal	a light
líbúɣ	eye
lím	good
lúgul	a long way
lúr	whip-tail kangaroo

DIAGRAMMATIC SKETCH OF THE MAIN FEATURES OF MBABARAM GRAMMAR
↖ is to be read 'exponences'

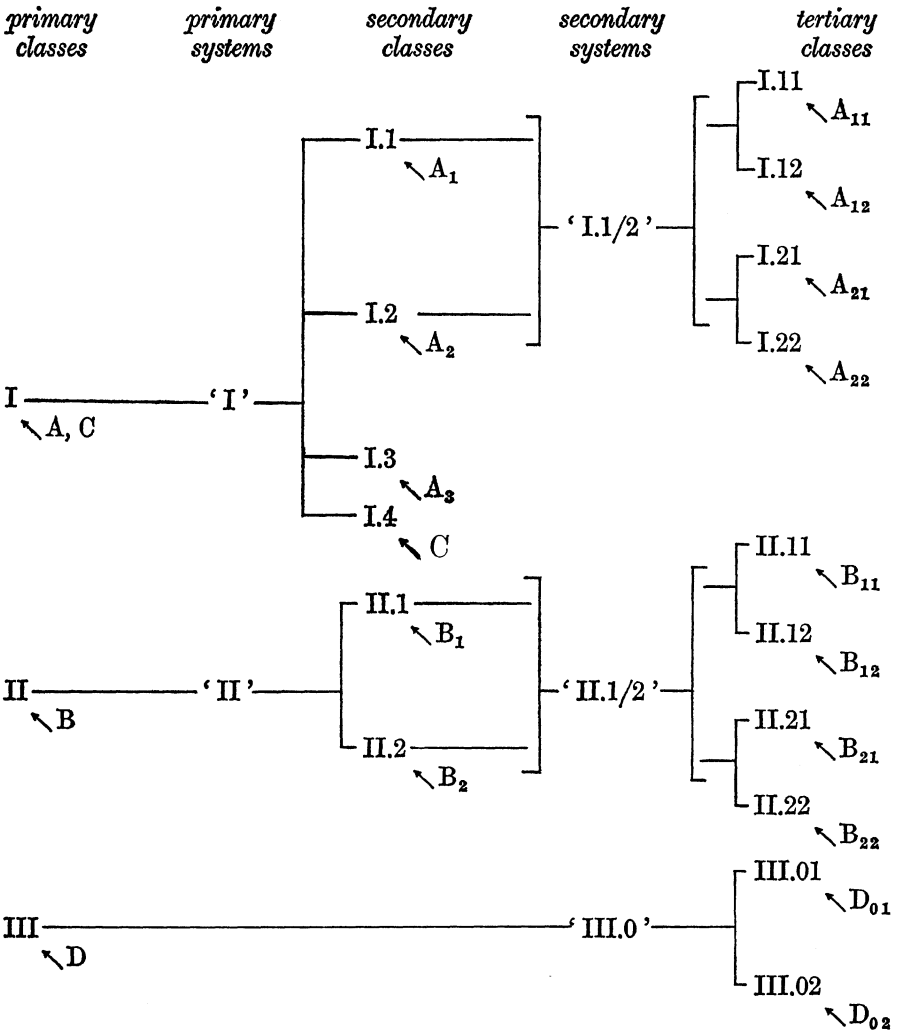
UNIT: CLAUSE

CLAUSE STRUCTURES

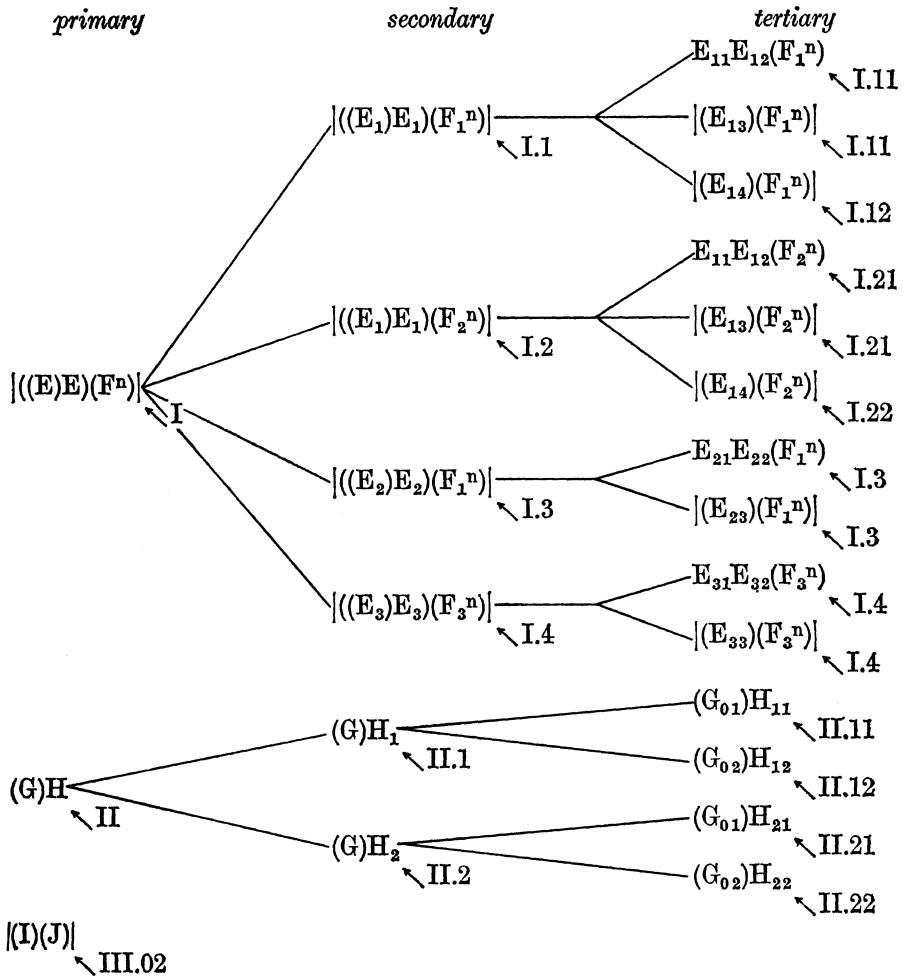


UNIT: GROUP

GROUP CLASSES AND SYSTEMS

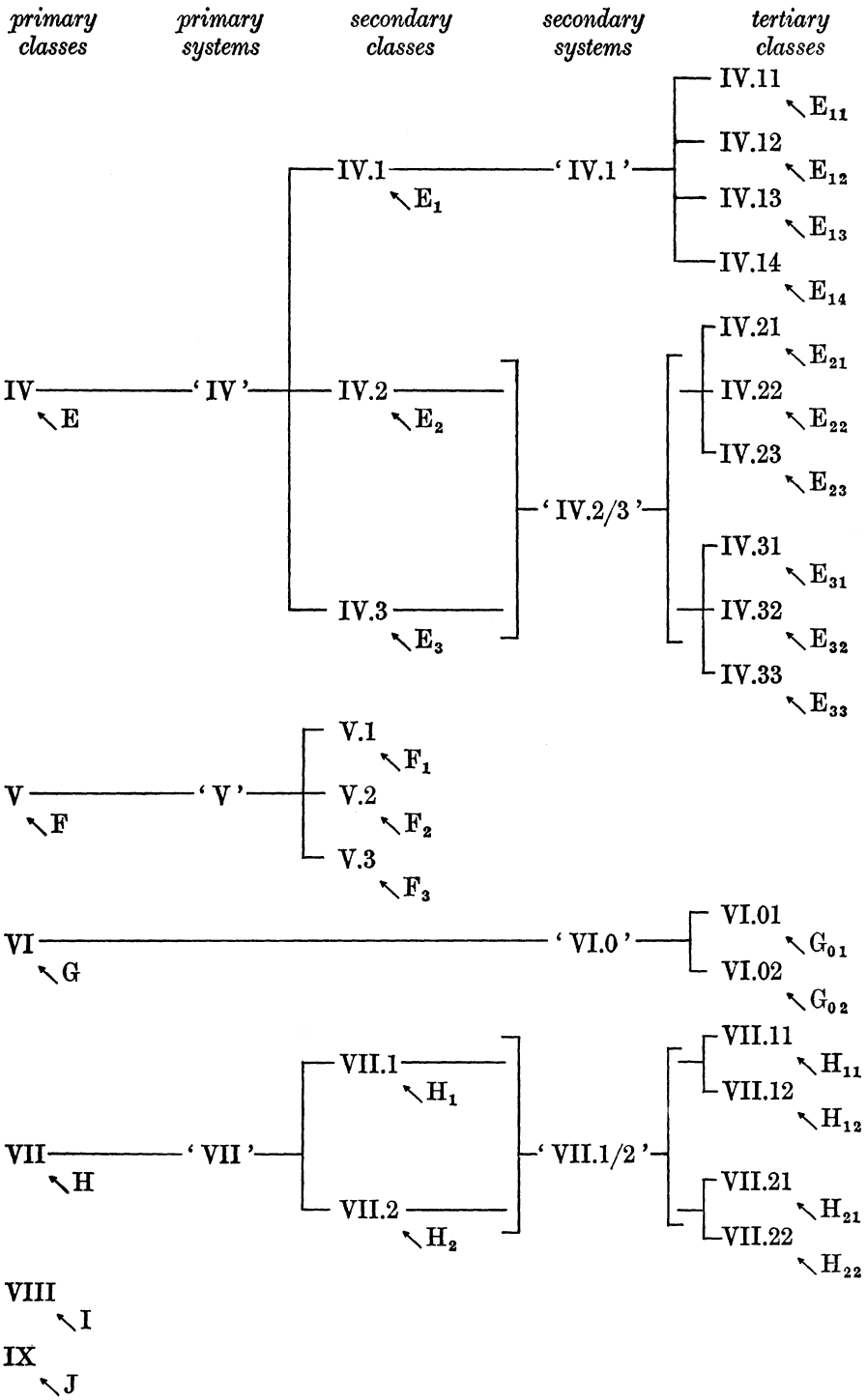


GROUP STRUCTURES

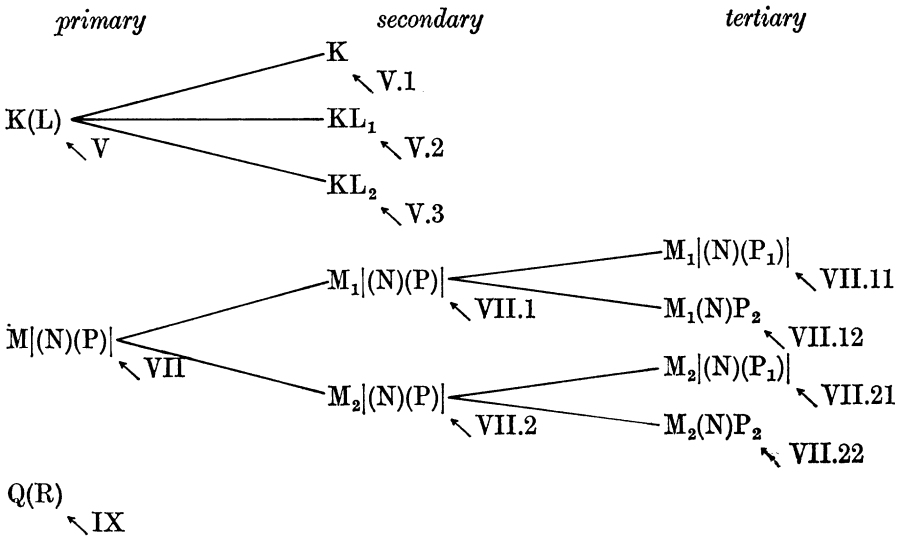


UNIT: WORD

WORD CLASSES AND SYSTEMS



WORD STRUCTURES



Graphic representation of other classes, systems, and structures (including morpheme classes and systems) can easily be provided by inspection of the data.