7

A sketch of Kalaw Kawaw Ya

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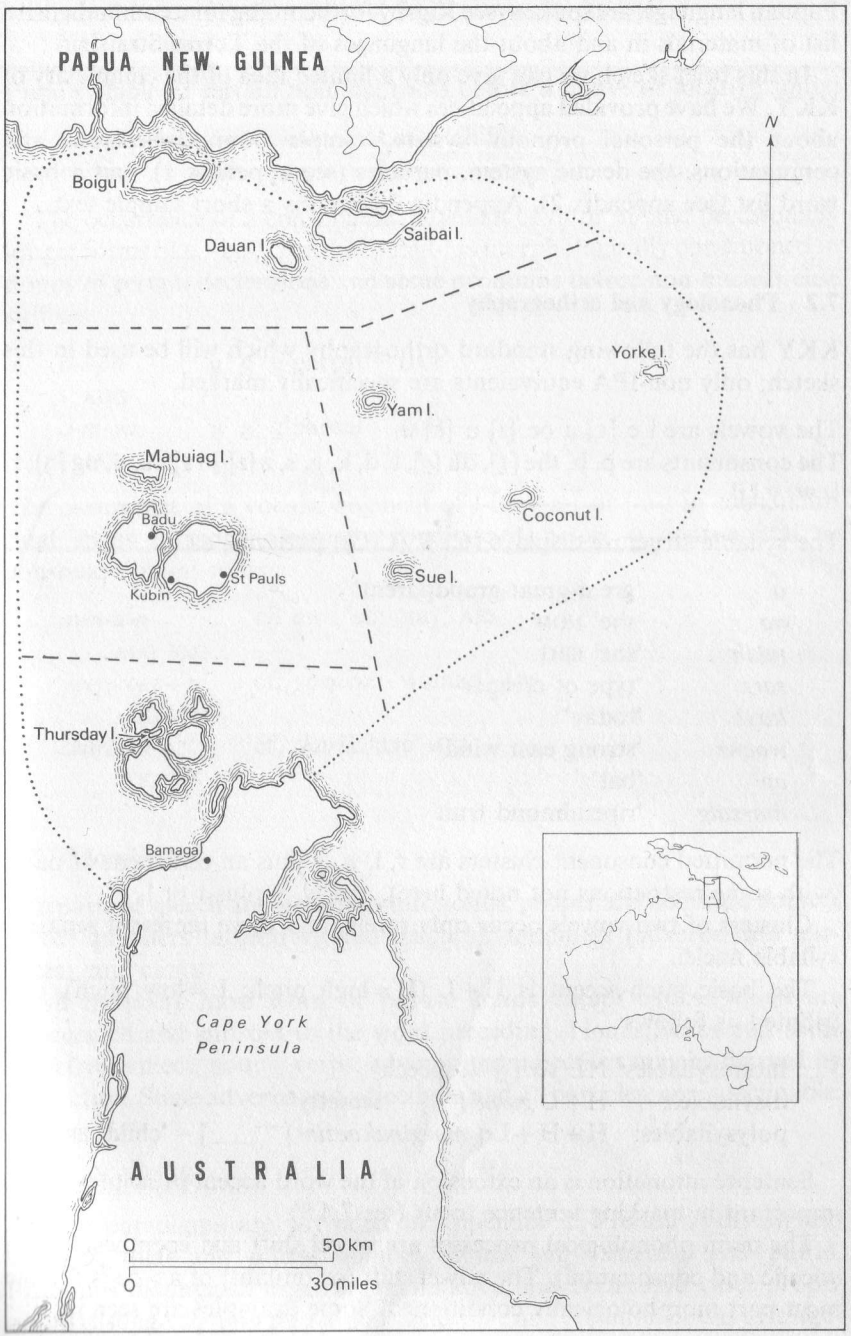
7.1 Language and setting

Kalaw Kawaw Ya (KKY) is a dialect of the Western Torres Strait language, which is considered to belong to the Pama-Nyungan family, the largest of the Australian subgroupings (Dixon 1980). Kala Lagaw Ya, Kala Lagaw Langgus, Yagar Yagar and Mabuiag are other names which have been applied to the Western Torres Strait language or another of its dialects. Speakers have agreed that the language as a whole should be called Kala Lagaw Ya, the 'Western Island Language'.

The Western Torres Strait region, whose islands and waters lie mainly within Australia's international boundaries, includes four dialect zones, marked by broken lines on map 7.1. The description presented here comes from Saibai Island speakers and is representative of the northern zone. Kalaw Kawaw Ya is their own name for the 'Western Island Language'. Bani and Klokeid (1975 and 1976) have described the dialect of Mabuiag Island in the western central zone. The dialect of the eastern central zone is used only by older speakers; younger people have adopted Torres Strait Creole (see Shnukal, this volume) as their mother tongue. The southern zone includes the town of Thursday Island, the administrative and service centre for the region, where groups of speakers from different dialect zones now live.

In recent times, a multi-village settlement has grown up at Bamaga on the mainland of Cape York Peninsula. Torres Strait Islanders are the majority group, including people who migrated from Saibai Island originally. Some few thousands of Islanders now also live in the nearest Queensland cities of Cairns and Townsville.

With an estimated total of 3,500–4,000 speakers, Kala Lagaw Ya is one of the three or four largest indigenous Australian languages. Perhaps 1,500 people speak Kalaw Kawaw Ya, including those resident at Bamaga. In addition, Torres Strait Creole (Broken), English and Meriam Mer, a



Map 7.1 The Western Torres Strait, showing major dialect boundaries

Papuan language, are spoken (see Rigsby forthcoming for a comprehensive list of materials in and about the languages of the Torres Strait).

In this brief sketch we can give only a limited idea of the complexity of KKY. We have provided appendices which give more detailed information about the personal pronoun system, sample noun declensions and conjugations, the deictic system, particles (see appendix 1), and a basic word list (see appendix 2). Appendix 3 contains a short sample text.

7.2 Phonology and orthography

KKY has the following standard orthography which will be used in this sketch; only non-IPA equivalents are specifically marked.

The vowels are i e [ɛ] a oe [ɨ] o [ɔ] u
The consonants are p, b, the [ţ], dh [ḍ], t, d, k, g, s, z [z]/[d z], m, n, ng [ŋ], r, l, w, y [j].

The syllable structure displays (C) V (C(C)) patterns, as in:

a	'great-great-grandparent'
na	'she' NOM
nadh	'she' ERG
sarz	'type of creeper'
kayb	'today'
woewr	'strong east wind'
ap	'bat'
moesalg	'ripe almond fruit'

The permitted consonent clusters are r, l, w, y plus an obstruent or nasal (with some restrictions not noted here), and w, y plus r or l.

Clusters of two vowels occur only rarely, and these represent separate syllable nuclei.

The basic pitch-accent is H+L (H=high pitch; L=low pitch), distributed as follows:

monosyllables: HL *ya* [\] – 'speech'
disyllables: H+L *gumi* [¯_] – 'secretly'
polysyllables: H+H+Lq *moeginakoezin* [¯¯___] – 'child' ERG

Sentence intonation is an extension of the word accent principles and is important in marking sentence focus (see 7.4.8).

The main phonological processes are vowel shift and epenthesis (both vocalic and consonantal). The vowel shift (or umlaut) of a > oe is for the most part morphologically conditioned. Some examples are seen in:

Initial syllable of a form governing a preceding qualifier:

gimal loeg-a-l < *lag* – 'house' 'high (elevated) houses'
high house PL

Final syllable of certain nominal roots before a dative or locative suffix:

moeginakoez-i-pa < *moeginakaz* – 'child'
child DAT

The occurrence of a consonantal augment of /l/ or /n/ and occasionally longer forms like /-be-/, /-ni-/ or /-mul-/ is morphologically conditioned in nouns of certain declensions and some pronouns before non-nuclear case suffixes:

a-l-pa	'g' g' g'parent'	DAT
AUG		
a-ni-ya	'g' g' g'parent	COM
AUG		

The occurrence of a vocalic augment of /-i-/, /-a-/ or /-u-/ in consonant-final stems is morphologically conditioned before a consonantal or consonant-initial suffix:

awn-a-n	cf. *awn* 'stingray' ABS
AUG ERG	
yoepkoez-i-n	cf. *yoepkaz* 'woman' ABS
AUG ERG	
thurik-u-n	cf. *thurik* 'axe' ABS
AUG INS	

7.3 Morphology

The parts of speech are: nominals (pronouns, proper and common nouns), verbs, qualifiers (adjectives and deictics), modifiers (adverbs and particles), and clitics.

All members have word or phrase status except clitics, which are unaccented and suffixed to the word preceding. Nouns, verbs and some adjectives inflect; nouns, verbs, adverbs and adjectives may be derived by suffixation. Some adverbs and adjectives, and all particles, are indeclinable.

7.3.1 Nominals

Sample paradigms are provided in appendix 1. Pronouns distinguish singular, dual and plural number, nouns only singular and plural. Pronouns distinguish ergative, nominative and accusative case; proper nouns distinguish nominative and accusative and common nouns distinguish ergative and absolutive. Third-person pronouns distinguish masculine

and feminine genders. Singular nouns determine the choice of pronoun according to sex in the case of humans and other appropriate animates, and non-predictably otherwise (see Bani 1987 on feminine and the unmarked gender in KLY).

Nuclear cases mark the syntactic functions of S (subject of an intransitive verb) and A and P (Agent and Patient, the two arguments of a transitive verb; see Comrie 1981). The oblique cases (possessive, instrumental, dative, ablative, locative, comitative) are each found in a range of constructions. Imitative, though not a case suffix, is shown here.

(a) Possessive. In KKY, the possessor NP normally precedes the possessed; the order may be reversed for special effect (focus):

ngi-nu lag – 'your house'
you POSS house ABS
nga-w ubi kedha +thana senabi za idim-a-n
I POSS wish ABS thus they PL that thing ABS break PR PF
'I want them to break that thing'.

The symbol + (intonational 'upstep') is explained in 7.4.8 below.

(b) Instrumental.

suguba-n woen-i-g – 'don't smoke!'
tobacco INS smoke NEG
IMPER SG

(c) Dative.

moeginakoez-i-pa nagi – 'look at the child'
child DAT look at
IMPER SG

(d) Ablative.

umay-ngu kulay – 'beware of the dog'
dog ABL beware

(e) Locative.

umay mabayg-i-ya thoeydh-i-z
dog ABS person LOC bite PR PF SG
'The dog bit somebody'.

(f) Comitative.

Ezoera midh mul-i-z kedha +nuy-dh nga – n
Ezra NOM Q say PR PF thus he ERG who ACC
SG

im-a-n Eleno-n-i-ya paru – nu siy – ayn
see PR PF Eleanor COM front LOC standing
'Who did Ezra say he saw standing in front of Eleanor?'

(g) Imitative. This suffix is used with all nominals:

nungudh – 'like him' *Boekaradh* – 'like Boekar'
nanudh – 'like her' *yoepkoezidh* – 'like a woman'
thanamudh – 'like them'

7.3.2 *Verbs*

Transitive and intransitive conjugations are distinguished by the form of the singular concord suffix, and otherwise syntactically in the choice of nuclear cases. The two criteria do not correlate perfectly, and there are exceptions. Some intransitive verbs govern oblique cases; and there are irregular and defective forms. Appendix 1 includes transitive and intransitive paradigms for present, past and future tenses, simple, habitual, imperfect and perfect aspects, and declarative and imperative moods. The future is a periphrastic formation of either of the clitics *kay* – 'immediate' and *bal* – 'non-immediate' and an inflected verb form. Positive number/tense/aspect differences are neutralised to a single negative in both the declarative and the imperative. These negatives are technically derived forms comprising the infinitive with alternatives of the predicative suffix. Other derivations are the infinitive or nominalisation (suffix *-y*), the aversive (suffix *-le* on the infinitive), and the participle or adjective (suffix *-zi* on the infinitive). Phonological variation within the conjugation classes is, like that in noun declensions, based on the quality of the vocalic augment (i, u, a), for example, *path-a* – 'chop', *palng-i* – 'whip', *uth-u* – 'plant'.

7.3.3 *Qualifiers*

7.3.3.1 *Adjectives*

Adjectives form a large class, and the majority are invariable when used attributively, but may take one of two series of suffixes in predicative use, as in these examples:

Attributive	*Predicative Positive*		*Predicative Negative*	
	SG.	PL.	SG.	PL.
i. *woeray* – 'wet'	*woeray-nga*	*-mayl*	*woer-gi-nga*	*-gi-mayl*
i. *gizul* – 'sharp'	*gizul-nga*	*-mayl*	*gizu-gi-nga*	*-gi-mayl*
ii. *kikiril* – 'sick'	*kikiril-ayg*	*-gal*	*kikiri-gi-g*	*-gi-gal*
ii. *aziral* – 'shy'	*aziral-ayg*	*-gal*	*azira-gi-g*	*-gi-gal*

Adjectives may be derived from verbs by the use of the participial suffix *-zi*. Examples of various attributive and predicative expressions are:

teypoel ayde-nga – 'there's food on the table'
table ABS food PRED
wapi-w gasam-oe-y-zi garkaz nuy nu-ngu loeg-oe-nu
fish POSS catch INF PC boy ABS he ABS he POSS home LOC
'the boy who caught the fish is in his house'.
poeth -a-y-zi puy – 'chopped, felled tree'
chop INF PC tree ABS
puy poeth-a-y-zi-nga – 'the tree has been felled'
PRED
puy moeginakoez-i-w poethayzinga
child POSS
'the tree has been felled by the child'

No systematic difference in meaning or use can be associated with the two predicative suffixes, except in the case of nonfinite relative clauses (see 7.5.3) where *-nga*/*-mayl* has an objective and *-g*/*-gal* a subjective force. Some adjectives may take either suffix without any change in meaning.

A few commonly used adjectives behave differently, either because they are restricted to attributive use, or have their own plural form.

7.3.3.2 Deictics

Appendix 1 displays the forms of the deictic system which distinguish proximate and remote location, masculine and feminine gender in the singular, and singular, dual and plural number. The order of elements within the noun phrase is flexible, being partially constrained by focus (see 7.4.8).

7.3.4 Modifiers

The modifier subtypes are distinguished only by the tendency of 'particles' to be the focus of the sentences in which they are found. Adverbial modifiers may limit the meaning of any other sentence elements, including other modifiers, or whole sentences. Particles are listed in appendix 1.

Adverbs are indeclinable, except for the locative nouns which we classify as nominals, but which may also function as modifiers without any change in form. Some adverbs are derived from nouns by means of a vocalic suffix, as in:

dapara – 'in the sky'	*dapar* – 'sky'
kubilu – 'at night'	*kubil* – 'night'
moelpala – 'during a month'	*moelpal* – 'month'

Nouns in the locative regularly function adverbially, as in:

goeyg-i-nu – 'during daylight'	*goeyga* – 'day'
kup-a-nu – 'at the base'	*kup* – 'base'
kuth-a-nu – 'at the end'	*kuth* – 'end'

puy lag-oe-nu pasi-nu – 'the tree is beside the house'
tree house LOC side LOC

7.3.5 Clitics

Clitics cannot stand alone and are never the focus of the sentence. They are normally linked intonationally to whichever word precedes them to form a compound, though they may occur sentence-initially for particular emphasis (see 7.4.7). There are only seven clitics:

a	interrogative
a	'and'
bal	non-immediate future
dhe	vocative/'take your turn'
kay	immediate future
nay	unfulfilled condition
nge	'then, next'

7.4 Syntax – simple sentences

The basic word order pattern is SOAV, with possessor preceding possessed and qualifiers preceding their head. Modifications are discussed in conjunction with intonation and focus in 7.4.8.

7.4.1 Anti-passive

The anti-passive has the following structure:

Subject + ABS/NOM Oblique Object + INS
Verb + INTR

Its meaning is collective or inclusive force in the object. Some examples are:

moeginakaz puy-n path-i-z
child ABS tree INS chop PR PF
'the child chopped all the trees down'

Compare the transitive equivalent:

moeginakoez-i-n puy-l path-a-moey-n
child ERG PL chop PL PR PF
'the child chopped the trees down'

The anti-passive construction may also be negative:

lawnga moeginakaz puyn poeth-a-y-gi-nga
'no, the child didn't chop all the trees down'

7.4.2 Apposition

Different types of nominal may be apposed.

i. Locative phrases comprise a content noun with a locational noun, as in:

kaba-nu para-nu – 'in front of the paddle'
paddle LOC face LOC

ii. Pronouns in apposition with nouns function as definite determiners and have a discourse linking role, as in:

na wara yoepkaz – 'the other woman'
she other woman (previously mentioned)
thana yoepkoez-i-l – 'the women'
they woman PL

Out of context these examples are, of course, ambiguous, and they could be interpreted as verbless predications.

iii. Quotation with the optional adverb *kedha*, as in:

thana na-n kedha thoeraypa +Boekar
they NOM her ACC thus call PR IMP
'they call her "Boekar"'

Sentence apposition is discussed in 7.5.2.

7.4.3 Equation

Past and future tenses employ the intransitive verb *aym-a* – 'happen' (the common transitive *aym-a* – 'make, do' also exists). All negatives are strictly non-finite predictions (see 7.4.6). Some examples are:

Pili nagu-uth-u-y-moebayg – 'Pili is a farmer'
ABS seed plant INF person ABS
thana kulba thathi-l law-nga
they NOM old man PL NEG
'they haven't grown old'
Pili – bal ngarā kulba thathi aym-e-dhe
FUT must old man happen FUT
'Pili will have to grow old'

7.4.4 Location

Non-present forms regularly employ the verb *waz-i* – 'be situated, appear'. A range of other stative verbs is possible, with a further range of locative/temporal modifiers, as in:

Pili puy-nu gimal lawnga – 'Pili is not up a tree'
tree LOC up NEG
Pili ngul puynu gimal woeziginga
yesterday
'Pili was not up a tree yesterday'
na yoepkaz adhal thanuriz / apiyayuypa / kulunsipa
sit lie kneel
'the woman was sitting/lying/kneeling outside'
koewbu paru-nu thana aym-oe-dhin
war ABS face LOC they make REM PA
'it was made before the war'
na rum-a-nu ten klok-oe-nu
she NOM room LOC LOC
'she will be in the room at ten o'clock'

7.4.5 Possession

Attributive possession has been exemplified in 7.3.1a; predicate-suffix forms are shown in 7.4.9; other expressions are as follows:

ngay-bi-ya ukasar geth – 'I have/own two arms'
I COM two hand/arm ABS
yana nga-bi-ya – 'who's got the bag?'
bag ABS who COM
cf. *yana ngu-nu* – 'whose is the bag?'
POSS
Nami-ni-ya yana – 'Nami's got the bag'
COM
cf. *Nami-n yana* – 'Nami owns the bag'
POSS

7.4.6 Negation

The negative particle *lawnga* may have originated as part of the productive predicate system (see 7.4.9). The single-form declarative negatives also display the predicate suffix *-nga* or *-ayg*, and both the declarative and imperative forms employ the negative suffix *-g(i)*; as in

Imperative:

(*ngi-dh*) *awta guyth-way-a-r*
you ERG outboard start IMPER
'(you) start the outboard motor!'
(*ngidh*) *awta guyth-woey-a-y-g*
'don't start the outboard!'
ma-r – 'give (it)!'
give IMPER
ma-y- gi – 'don't give (it)!'
INF NEG (also used to mean 'don't!')

Declarative:

ngidh nan matham-a-n – 'you hit/killed her'
you ERG her hit PR PF
nigdh nan matham-oe-y-gi-nga
INF NEG PRED
'you didn't hit/kill her'

The aversive suffix *-le* is added to the infinitive, to derive non-finite verb forms, as in:

gabudhan na-n yuth-a-r pudh-a-y-le
carefully her ACC pull IMPER fall AVS
'pull it carefully lest it fall'
ngay akanme-pa puy-ngu poeth-a-y-le
I NOM afraid PR IMP tree ABL chop AVS
'I'm afraid to cut the tree down'

7.4.7 *Questions*

Direct 'yes/no' questions are normally marked by the sentence-final clitic *-a* (which is regularly lengthened), and by the use of any of the optional particles *waza*, *midh* and *nag*. The interval between high and low pitches is increased, and the final clitic bears extra-low pitch, as in:

Ezoera puy midh pathan-a – did Ezra cut the tree down?'

Note the alternative emphatic form:

a-Ezoera midh puy pathan-a
Q Q
nag Ezoera puy pathan-a – 'did Ezra cut the tree down?'
Ezoera waza puy poethayginga
'Ezra didn't cut the tree down, did he?'

WH questions choose from a range of proforms or else prefix *mi-* to nouns; as in:

sepal garkaz nga-w-al – 'who are those two boys?'
those 2 boy ABS who DU
nga-dh iman nga-n – 'who saw whom?'
who ERG who ACC
ngadh manin mi-za nga-be-pa namuyth
who ERG WH thing DAT when
'who gave what to whom and when?'
Ezoera midh mul-i-z kedha+Gabu nga-n im-a-n
Q say PR PF thus who ACC see PR PF
'who did Ezra say that Gabu saw'

Embedded questions are structurally appositional complements (see 7.5.2).

7.4.8 *Focus, intonation and word-order*

These three elements of KKY interact, in the following way. Utterances may have unmarked or marked focus as in the examples below. Focus is carried by intonation, with a tendency for the focused element to be the penultimate constituent (or antepenultimate in longer utterances). SOAV word order is regularly modified to SOVA or similar to comply with the tendency for penultimate focus. Basic H+L (see 7.2 on word-accent) are attached to the focus and if necessary to each major constituent following the focus. The High accent of the focus spreads leftwards, and a simple phonological adjustment process whereby [L > !H/H____H] (combined with the principle of automatic downdrift) accounts for the intonation pattern. There is a further tendency for certain constituents to be the natural focus of their clause, and these form the following hierarchy: WH words and *nay*, particles, and negatives. Focus is otherwise determined by position as outlined above, though these tendencies may be overridden by speakers if they so choose. Some minor intonation rule adjustments are required for mono- and di-syllables, as the KKY canonic form for descriptive purposes is trisyllabic. Some sample derivations are as follows; focused elements are italicised.

Ezoera Gabulpa *moeginakaz* manin
H L accent assignment
H H L L accent spread 1
H H H H H H H H L L L L accent spread 2
'Ezra gave the child to Gabu'

This sentence may represent unmarked focus (as in answer to the question, 'What happened?') or marked focus (as in answer to, 'What did Ezra give to Gabu?). In the latter case, the response could be elliptically just *moeginakaz*.

The tendency for penultimate focus can be overridden by speakers, as in:

Ezoera Gabulpa moeginakaz manin
H L accent assignment
H L HL post-focus accent
H HL H H L H HL L L L accent spread
H H!H H H! H H HL L L L adjustment rule
'it was Ezra who gave the child to Gabu'

Within the noun phrase, word-order appears to be flexible. As noted, qualifiers normally precede their head, though they may follow, in which case focus or emphasis applies to the initial element. Between qualifiers the order is flexible, as in:

nuy senaw garkaz ngaybiya minakay kikirilayg
he that boy ABS I LOC more sick PRED
'that boy is more sick than me'
cf. *senaw nuy garkaz ngaybiya minakay kikirilayg*
'that boy is more sick than me'
ukasar kuykuthal moeginakaz – 'two tall children'
two tall child
cf. *kuykuthal moeginakaz ukasar* – 'two TALL children'

The difference in focus here is reinforced by intonation and the last two sentences could be spoken in such a way as to bring any of the three words into focus.

In particular complex structures (see 7.5) the symbol + is used to mark 'upstep', or a return to utterance-initial pitch level.

7.4.9 Non-finite clauses

7.4.9.1 Causative/purpose

Verb forms add the dative suffix to the infinitive. Certain nominal arguments also take the dative; and the semantic range is wide. Some examples are:

ngoey-mu-n ubi umay-pa lag-oe-pa moey-pa
we POSS want dog DAT house DAT take DAT
'we want to take the dog(s) home'
nga-th nuy-n thari-pa man-i-n
I ERG he ACC run DAT make PR PF
'I made him run'
ngath palay tharipa may-gi-nga
I ERG they 2 run DAT make NEG PRED

'I didn't make the two of them run'.
nga-w ubi garkoez-i-pa puy-pa poeth-a-y-pa
I POSS want man DAT tree DAT chop DAT
'I want the man/men to cut the tree/trees down'

While the non-finite is possible, the finite form in the next example is stylistically preferable when the subjects change:

ngaw ubi kedha +garkoez-i-n puy-l patha-moey-n
thus man ERG PL PL PR PF
moeginakoez-i-w ubi ngay-a-pa nga-w geth
child POSS want I DAT I POSS hand
matham-oe-y-pa
hit INF DAT– 'the child wants me to hit myself'

Similarly, the next example is normally preferred to the previous one.

moeginakoeziw ubi kedha +ngay ngaw geth matham-i-z
PR PF

7.4.9.2 Predication with agent

This structure involves an absolutive subject, possessive agent, and participial verb with suffix *-zi*, followed by the predicator *-nga*/*-mayl*, as in:

moeginakaz Ezoera-n gumi gasam-oe-y- zi-nga
child ABS POSS secretly take INF
'the child was taken secretly by Ezra'

7.4.9.3 Simple predication

The suffixes, which attach to the verbal infinitive, are those exemplified with adjective qualifiers in 7.3.3.1 (with positive and negative, and singular and plural forms). An alternative negative is possible with *lawnga*. Additional uses include:

ngay igil-i-l-nga – 'I am alive'
I NOM life PRED
ngay ukasar geth-a-l-ayg – 'I have two arms'
I two arm PRED
ngi bokadhzoe-gi-g – 'you don't have any money'
you money NEG PRED

7.5 Syntax – non-simple sentences.

Multi-verb sentences in KKY are essentially paratactic. There are no subordinate verb forms, and there are no formal grounds for establishing a separate class of conjunctions. Use is made of the linking clitic *-a* 'and', which also acts as the noun phrase linker, and a range of sentence

modifiers. There is a relative pronoun which declines for case and number (singular, dual and plural), thereby showing concord with its antecedent noun-phrase. There is an alternative finite relative construction which does not require the relative pronoun, as well as a non-finite relative construction. Sentence intonation reinforces the paratactic analysis of multi-verb constructions in that 'upstep' highlights the break between clauses. Five types of construction will be considered separately.

7.5.1 *Clitic-conjoining*

The linker is *-a* – 'and' which attaches to the final word of the preceding clause, as in:

lawnga Ezoera woerab-a-l poer-a-y-gi-nga –a
NEG PL pluck INF NEG PRED and
+nu-ngu ira – pa gumi ma-y-gi-nga
he POSS in-law DAT secretly give
'no, Ezra didn't pick the coconuts and give them secretly to his in-laws'

The linker is omissable only in noun phrase concatenations, as in:

palay alay ipa – 'husband and wife'
they 2 husband wife

7.5.2 *Appositional complements*

Finite sentences can be set in apposition to the modifier *kedha* – 'thus', typically after verbs of saying, perceiving and questioning. Such complements can be statements, questions or direct speech. *kedha* is syntactically part of the controlling clause and is omissable; the appositional clause is marked intonationally by upstep; as in:

nuy ngayapa kedha muliz + Ezoera Gabulpa
he I DAT thus say PR PF DAT
soekoeri maninu
arrow ABS give IMM PA
'he told me that Ezra gave the sharp-pointed arrow to Gabu'

(61) *ngay Ezoeralpa kedha yapupoeybiz + nuydh ngabepa*
DAT ask PR PF he ERG who DAT
dagul manin
spear
'I asked Ezra who he had given the fishing spear to'

7.5.3 *nanga* clauses

Temporal, potential conditional, and relative sentences are linked by the particle *nanga*, which may not be sentence-initial and which may be repeated in long sentences and/or for emphasis. Clause breaks are invariably marked by intonational upstep. *nanga* is intonationally the information focus of its clause.

7.5.3.1 *Temporal clauses*

Typical temporal modifiers are *mi-thunara* and *namuyth*, as in:

sena-w-kay nanga dhangal namuyth karay-pa
that M FUT dugong up DAT
uzar-ipa + buway-garkoez-i-n-kay senabi thunar-a
go PR IMP harpooner ERG FUT that time ADV
wap nithu-ypa
harpoon cast PR IMP
'as soon as the dugong surfaces, the harpooner will throw the harpoon'

7.5.3.2 *Potential conditions*

The particle *nanga* is used with either of the future time clitics *kay* and *bal*, as in:

ngalpa-kay nanga dhangal gasamay-g kayb
we PL dugong catch NEG today
+ngalpa-kay ay-gi-gal kun-i-ya
food NEG PL back COM
'if we don't catch a dugong today, we won't have any food to take back'

7.5.3.3 *Relative clauses*

Finite expressions employ either of the formulae: *mi-* NP *na(nga)* and REL *na(nga)*, as in:

mi-moeginakoezin nanga dhugu pathan + nuy uzariz
ERG log chop he go
'the child who cut the log went away'
Ezoera soekoeri senawbi moeginakoezipa manin
that (M) DAT give
+wapi ngadh nanga pagan
fish who ERG spear
'Ezra gave the sharp-pointed arrow to the child who speared the fish'

The non-finite relative has the following structure: NP + POSS (= object of relative verb), Verb + INF + *-zi* (= participial form), NP (with functions of S, A or P in its finite clause).

Compare the following finite and non-finite equivalents.

wapi mi-moeginakoezin nanga gasamoenu +nuy nungu
fish ABS child ERG catch IMM PA he he POSS
loegoenu 'the child who caught the fish is at home'
wapi-w gasam-oe-y-zi moeginakaz nungu loegoenu
POSS INF PC
'the child who caught the fish is at home'

The participial expression may also be used predicatively, in which case the choice of predicative suffix (singular/plural pairs *-g/ -gal* and *-nga/ -mayl*) presupposes a subjective and objective force, respectively (see 7.3.3.1), correlating with the system of number concord and ergativity (see Comrie 1981), as in:

senawbi moeginakaz wapiw gasamoeyzig
that M child ABS fish POSS catch PRED
'that is the child who caught the fish'
sethabi moeginakoezil wapiw gasamoeyzigal
those PL PRED PL
'those are the children who caught the fish'
senawbi moeginakaz baydamaw thoeydhayzinga
'that is the child the shark mauled'
sethabi moeginakoezil baydhamaw thoeydhayzimayl
'those are the children the shark mauled'

As expected, only the subjective forms (*-g*/*-gal*) are possible with intransitive verb forms, as in:

soekoeri mi-moeginakoezin nanga Gabulpa
arrow ERG
manin+nuy mayoedhayzig/**mayoedhayzinga*
give he cry PRED
'the child who gave the sharp-pointed arrow to Gabu is the one who cried'

7.5.4 *Irrealis conditions*

Counter-factual conditions are marked by the particle *nay* in the conditional clause and by the clitic *-nay* in both clauses. Intonational upstep marks the clause boundary. The particle *nay* occurs penultimately in its clause as the information focus, as in:

Ezoera-nay Gabulpa dagul-al nay ma-may-i-nu
DAT PL PL IMM PA
+nunga apuwan-nay nuyn koey-m-a mathamoenu
he POSS mother ERG he ACC big ADV beat IMM PA
'if Ezra had given the fishing spears to Gabu, his mother would have beaten him soundly'

7.5.5 *Other adverbally linked clauses*

Sentence modifiers which help to link finite clauses are *se kasa (midh)* – 'although', *kasa(kay) kedha* – 'but', *kedhazungu(kedha)* – 'because', *wagel* – 'or else', *lawnga* – 'or (not)' and *kurusipa* – 'until'. Examples are:

nungu apuwan nuyn mathaman +se kasa Ezoera Gabulpa dagulal mayginga
'Ezra was beaten by his mother even though he didn't give the fishing spears to Gabu'
ngaw ubi Dawinipa maypa +kasa-kay kedha ngay bokadhzagig
'I want to go to Darwin but I don't have any money'

Notes

1. We have used the following abbreviations.

ABL	ablative	LOC	locative
ABS	absolutive	M	masculine
ACC	accusative	NEG	negative
ADJ	adjective	NOM	nominative
ADV	adverb	P	patient
AUG	augment	PA	past
AVS	aversive	PART	particle
COM	comitative	PC	participle/participal
DAT	dative	PF	perfect
DU	dual	PL	plural
ERG	ergative	POSS	possessive
F	feminine	PRED	predicate
FUT	future	PR	present
HAB	habitual	REC	recent
IMIT	imitative	REL	relative
IMM	immediate	REM	remote
IMP	imperfect	S	subject
IMPER	imperative	SG	singular
INS	instrumental	TR	transitive
INTR	intransitive	!	downstep (the lowering of the following tone)

Appendix 1

KKY sample noun declensions

	'foodstuff'	'Boekar(f)'	'Diwe(f)'	'g'child'	'woman'
NOM } ABS	ayza	boekar	diwe	ngep	yoepkaz
ACC }		boekarina	diwena		
ERG/INS	ayzapun	boekar	diwe	ngepan	yoepkoezin
POSS	ayzaw	boekarina	diwena	ngepaw	yoepkowziw
DAT	ayzapa	boekaraw	diwew	ngepapa	yoepkoezipa
ABL	ayzangu	boekaroelngu	diwelngu	ngepangu	yoenkoezingu
LOC	ayzanu	boekaroenu	diwenu	ngepanu	yoekkoezinu
COM	ayzaya	boekaraniya	diweniya	ngepiya	yoepkoeziya
IMIT	ayzadh	boekaradh	diwedh	ngepadh	yoepkoezidh
PL	ayzapul	boekaral	diwel	ngepal	yoepkoezil

KKY sample verb conjunctions: verb *dudup* – 'drown' (tr/intr)

		Transitive	*Intransitive*	
Pres. Perf.	SG.	dudupan		dudupiz
	DU.		dudupoeman	
	PL.		dudupoemoeyn	
Pres. Imperf.	SG.	dudupoepa		dudupipa
	DU.		dudupoempa	
	PL.		dudupoemoeypa	
Pres. Hab.	SG.	duduparngu		dudupayrngu
Rec. Past Imp.	DU.		dudupoemoerngu	
	PL.		dudupoemoeyrngu	
Imm. Past Simple	SG.	dudupoenu		dudupima
	DU.		dudupoemoenu	
	PL.		dudupoemoeynu	
Rec. Past Simple	SG.	dudupoengu		dudupayngu
	DU.		dudupoemoengu	
	PL.		dudupoemoeyngu	
Rem. Past Simple	SG.	dudupoedhin		dudupaydhin
	DU.		dudupoemoedhin	
	PL.		dudupoemoeydhin	
Imm. Past Imp.	SG.	dudupoedha		dudupidha
	DU.		dudupoemoedha	
	PL.		dudupoemoeydha	
Rem. Past Imp.	SG.	dudupar		dudupay
	DU.		dudupoemar	
	PL.		dudupoemoeyr	
Fut. Simple	SG.	dudupoene		dudupidhe
(*kay, bal*)	DU.		dudupoemoene	
	PL.		dudupoemoeyne	

Past Hab.	SG.	dudupupu		dudupipu
	DU.		dudupoemoempu	
	PL.		dudupoemoeypu	
Negative	SG, DU, PL.		dudupoeyginga	
Imper. Pos.	SG.	dudupar		dudup
	DU.		dudupoemar	
	PL.		dudupoemoeyr	
Imper. Neg.	SG, DU, PL		dudupayg	

Deictic system

Proximate	M	F	DU	PL
In view	in	ina	ipal	itha
Not in view	inubi	inabi	ipalbi	ithabi
Locational	inuki	inaki	ipalki	ithaki
Remote				
In view	senaw	sena	sepal	setha
Not in view	senawbi	senabi	sepalbi	sethabi
Locational	senawki	senaki	sepalki	sethaki
'over there'				
Nominal	pinungap	pinangap	pipalngap	pithangap
Locational	pinungapki	pinangapki	pipalngapki	pithangapki
'up there'				
Nominal	pinuka	pinaka	pipalka	pithaka
Locational	pinukaki	pinakaki	pipalkaki	pithakaki
'down there'				
Nominal	pinuguy	pinaguy	pipalguy	pithaguy
Locational	pinuguyki	pinaguyki	pipalguyki	pithaguyki
'up at the front'				
Nominal	pinupay	pinapay	pipalpay	pithapay
Locational	pinupayki	pinapayki	pipalpayki	pithapayki
'down at the back'				
Nominal	pinupun	pinapun	pipalpun	pithapun
Locational	pinupunki	pinapunki	pipalpunki	pithapunki

The initial *pi-* of the forms in the last five series is omissable. Examples of concord with the locational forms.

a. *ngath burum senawki wakaydhin*
I ERG pig ABS chase REM PA
'I chased a pig there'

b. *thana burum senawki wakaydhin*
'they chased a pig there'

c. *thana burum sepalki wakaymoedhin*
'they chased two pigs there'

d. *thana burumal sethaki wakaymoeydhin* 'they chased pigs there'

ApA. *KKY personal pronoun system*

	Person	Nominative Ergative subject	Accusative object	Possessive belonging to	Locative-accompaniment with	Ablative from	Dative to	Imitative like
SINGULAR	1 I	ngay (intr.) ngath (tr.)	ngoena	ngaw (M) nguzu (F)	ngaybiya	ngawngu	ngayapa	ngawdh
	2 you	ngi (intr.) ngidh (tr.)	ngin	nginu	ngibiya	nginungu	ngibepa	ngimudh
	3 she	na (intr.) nadh (tr.)	nan	nanu	nabiya	nanungu	nabepa	nanudh
	he	nuy (intr.) nuydh (tr.)	nuyn	nungu	nubiya	nungungu	nubepa	nungudh
DUAL	1 we (exc.) he & I	ngalbe	ngalbe	ngalben	ngalbeniya	ngalbelngu	ngalbelpa	ngalbedh
	we (inc.) you & I	ngoeba	ngoeba	ngoeban	ngoebaniya	ngoebalngu	ngoebalpa	ngoebadh
	2 you (two)	ngipel	ngipel	ngipen	ngipeniya	ngipelngu	ngipelpa	ngipedh
	3 they (two)	palay	palay	palamun	palamuniya	palamulngu	palamulpa	palamudh
PLURAL	1 we (exc.) they & I	ngoey	ngoey	ngoeymun	ngoeymuniya	ngoeymulngu	ngoeymulpa	ngoemudh
	we (inc.) we & you	ngalpa	ngalpa	ngalpan	ngalpaniya	ngalpalngu	ngalpalpa	ngalpadh
	2 you	ngitha	ngitha	ngithamun	ngithamuniya	ngithamulngu	ngithamulpa	ngithamudh
	3 they	thana	thana	thanamun	thanamuniya	thanamulngu	thanmulpa	thanamudh

Appendix 2

Basic wordlist (Swadesh 100)

1	I	ngay	43	tooth	dhang
2	you sg	ngi	44	tongue	noey
3	we	ngoey	45	claw	awar
4	this	ina	46	foot	ngar
5	that	sena	47	knee	kulu
6	who?	nga	48	hand	geth
7	what?	miza	49	belly	maytha
8	not	lawnga	50	neck	mudul
9	all	mura	51	breast	susu
10	many	koeyma	52	heart	ngoenakap
11	one	urapun	53	liver	sib
12	two	ukasar	54	drink v	wan-i
13	big	koey	55	eat v	purth-a
14	long	kuykuthal	56	bite v	thoeydh-i
15	small	moegina	57	see v	im-a
16	woman	yoepkaz	58	hear v	karngem-i
17	man	garkaz	59	know v	ngulayg (Pred)
18	person	mabayg	60	sleep v	uthuy yun-a
19	fish	wapi	61	die v	um-e
20	bird	uruy	62	kill v	umamatham-a
21	dog	umay	63	swim v	way-i
22	louse	ari	64	fly v	palg-i
23	tree	puy	65	walk v	mab uzar-i
24	seed	kapu	66	come v	ay-a
25	leaf	nis	67	lie down	apiya yun-a
26	root	sipi	68	sit	than-u
27	bark	piya	69	stand	thar-i
28	skin	goengaw	70	give	ma-
29	flesh	madhu	71	say v	mul-i/thar-a
30	blood	kulka	72	sun	goeyga
31	bone	ridh	73	moon	moelpal
32	grease	idi	74	star	thithuy
33	egg	kakur	75	water	nguki
34	horn	—	76	rain	ari
35	tail	koewb	77	stone	kula
36	feather	baba	78	sand	buthu
37	hair	yalbup	79	earth	boeradhar
38	head	kuyk	80	cloud	ziya
39	ear	kawra	81	smoke	thu
40	eye	purka	82	fire	muy
41	nose	pati	83	ashes	kunar
42	mouth	gud	84	burn v	muy punath-a

85	path	yabugudh
86	mountain	pad
87	red	kulkagoemul
88	green	maludhgoemul
89	yellow	bamidhgoemul
90	white	goerabgoemul
91	black	kubikub
92	night	kubil
93	hot	komal
94	cold	gabu
95	full	gudapoelam
96	new	kayn
97	good	kapu
98	round	bokadh
99	dry	thepadh
100	name	nel

List of particles

na(nga)	[temporal marker]
nay	[irrealis condition]
midh	[interrogative]
nag	[interrogative]
waza	[interrogative – positive orientation]
se kasa midh	[concession]
ngaru	[obligation]
sike	[possibility]
matha	[durative]
kedha	'thus'
kedhazungu kedha	'because'
kasa-kay kedha	'but'
mathakedha	'like, for example'
minakoey	[comparative]
bu	[superlative]
dhapa	[superlative]
wagel	'or else'
kurusipa	'until'
lawnga	'or'

Appendix 3

Sample text

Bayra – n adhi (*Danalgub-a-n um-a – y – zi-nga*)
Baira POSS story ABS Danalgub POSS speak INF PC PRED
The story of Baira (as told by Danalgub)

War thunar-a thana kulba moebayg-a-l kedha
Other time ADV they NOM old person PL thither
Once upon a time people used to go across to

uzar-moey-n Sigabadhoer-pa burum-pa lum-a-y-pa.
go PL PR PF DAT pig DAT hunt INF DAT
Sigabadhoer to hunt pigs.

Umay man-i-n. Koey-goesar garkoez-i-l ladh-u-n
Dog ABS take PR PF Big many man PL go PL PR PF
They would take dogs, and quite a large group of men would go.

Thana kal-a-nu burum-i-ya lum-e-mi-n.
They NOM back LOC pig COM hunt PL PR PF
And they hunted for pigs.

War moebayg-a-n na burum nanga matham-a-n nanga
Other person ERG when pig ABS when kill PR PF when
When the others killed a pig,

+nuy-dh Bayra burum matham-oe – y – gi – nga.
he ERG Baira pig ABS kill INF NEG PRED
Baira failed to bag one.

Senaw Bayra nanga nuy nga – w dhugu.
That M Baira particular he NOM I POSS g'father
That particular Baira was my grandfather.

Thana ladh-u-n. Nu-ngu kasa gamu-kawba-as-i-n.
They NOM go PL PR PF He POSS only body tired get PR PF
They moved on, and he just grew weary.

Yan burum-i-ya lum-i-z +war moebayg-a-n nanga
In vain pig COM hunt PR PF other person ERG when
He hunted in vain for a pig while the others

burum koey-m-a matham-a-n
pig ABS big ADV kill PR PF
bagged many.

Nuy kedha uzar-i-z – a +war wang gasam-a-n.
He NOM thither go PR PF and other jungle reach PR PF
So he went to another part of the jungle.

Nuy siki woelmay. Kedha nanga nuy
He NOM there keep going PR PF Thither when he NOM
(irreg. vb)
He was walking around there and when he

nag-i-z +nuy-dh mabayg im-a-n,
look PR PF he ERG person ABS see PR PF
looked round, he saw someone.

Nuy goengaw adhal me-pa. Thabu koey za.
He NOM skin ABS outside be PR IMP Snake ABS big thing ABS
His skin was lying beside him. It was a big snake.

Wa dhawdhay moebayg. Mabayg adhal nipa.
Yes mainland person ABS Person ABS outside sit PR IMP
Yes, it was a mainlander, sitting outside his skin.

Nuy-dh woesar koba-nga purth-a-ypa.
He ERG wallaby ABS raw PRED eat PR IMP
He was eating a wallaby raw.

Nuy nu-be-pa kedha + 'koeymeg-a ngi kay-a'
He NOM he DAT thus friend Q you NOM here Q
He said to Baira, 'Friend, are you here, too?'

Wa aya +ngoe-ba ina woesar koba-nga purth-a-ypa.
Yes come you+I DU this wallaby raw PRED eat PR IMP
Yes, come! We two can share this raw wallaby meat.

8

Understanding language shift: a step towards language maintenance

PATRICK McCONVELL

8.1 Facing facts and facing theories

If nothing is done about it, almost all Aboriginal languages will be dead by the year 2000. Even the two most likely survivors, the Yolngu languages of north-east Arnhem Land and the Western Desert language may not last long beyond that date. Most of us who have worked for some time in the field of Aboriginal languages would agree with statements like this. However, if we were asked to show why we thought a particular language was going to die, we would often not be able to give a very coherent account of our reasoning. Nor would any two researchers necessarily come up with the same kinds of answers about how and why a language dies.

In recent study of a dying language in Australia, Schmidt (1985) was unable to give any general theory of language death that would fit the many different linguistic and sociocultural features of the different languages that have died or are dying. She points out that linguists can predict neither when nor what types of changes will occur in language contact situations generally, despite some decades of impressive work on the subject. She also notes that sociocultural factors are more important than linguistic factors in determining whether a language survives or not.

I believe that a beginning has been made in constructing a sociocultural theory of language death. In this discussion I shall be concentrating on recent accounts of why and how a language lives and dies. I shall not be describing, therefore, the history of massacre, forced movement, and institutionalisation of Aboriginal people, nor the periods of prohibition and denigration of their culture and languages by schools and other bodies which are necessary background for the understanding of the present situation of Aboriginal languages in Australia (see Hudson and McConvell, 1984; and Fesl 1988). I shall focus on the present situation and how theories of language shift can contribute to language maintenance.