

**Cundeelee Wangka/ Pitjantjatjarra/ Irrunytju Pitjantjatjarra Pronoun Comparison.**  
**December 2021**  
**Compiled by Jackie Coffin.**

Gloss	Cundeelee Wangka	Pitjantjatjarra	Irrunytju Dialect
<b>1SG</b> I, me	ngayu	ngayu	ngayu
<b>1SG bound</b>	-rna	-rni	-na
<b>2SG</b> you	nyuntu	nyuntu	nyuntu
<b>2SG bound</b>	-n	-n	no data
<b>3SG</b> he, she , it	palu-	paluru	palu-
<b>1DU</b> the two of us, you and I	ngali-	ngali-	ngali-
<b>2DU</b> The two of you/ you two	nyupali	nyupali	nyupali
<b>3DU</b> the two of them, they two	pula	pula	pula
<b>1PL</b> we, us	nganarna	nganarna	no data
<b>2PL</b> you all	nyurramuka (nyurra+muka)	nyurra	nurra
<b>3PL</b> they, them, they all	tjana	tjana	tjana
<b>3PL (bound)</b>	-ya	-ya	-ya
<b>ERG</b>	-lu	-lu	-lu
<b>ACC</b>	-nya	-nya	-nya
<b>GEN</b>	-mpa	-mpa	-ku -mpa
<b>LOC</b>	-la	-la	-la
<b>REFL</b>	-ngku?	-nku	no data

Phonemic comparison results: Exact match

	Cundeelee Wangka	Pitjantjatjarra	Irrunytju Pitjantjatjarra
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Cundeelee Wangka		14/17 83.35%	12/14 85.71
Pitjantjatjarra	14/17 83.35%		14/14 85.71
Irrunytju Pitjantjatjarra	12/14 85.71%	12/14 85.71	

- Pronoun data collected to compliment the information recovered from the Swadesh Test (see Cundeelee Wangka and Pitjantjatjarra Swadesh 2020) and primary data sourced by GALCAC linguist, Jackie Coffin.
- Irrunytju Pitjantjatjarra is the dialect of Pitjantjatjarra being used at the Wingellina (or Irrunytju) community on the West Australian/ South Australian and Northern Territory border (henceforth tri-state border).
- GALCAC linguists are in the early stages of a long-term research project, documenting and analysing the variety of Pitjantjatjarra used at Irrunytju.
- Long term aims include tracking differences in usage and code classification (i.e. dialect, communilect or language).
- Lexicostatistics require a return of at least 65% commonality to prove mutual intelligibility or relatedness between tested codes. Being that the first (exact match) test returned a minimum value of 83.35% and a maximum value of 85.71%, we can conclude an historical relationship between Cundeelee Wangka, Pitjantjatjarra and what we have labelled Irrunytju Pitjantjatjarra.
- This figure then aligns language familiarity, with a shared history between speakers from all three codes.
- The Cundeelee/Pitjantjatjarra result is much higher than that of the Swadesh Test, which returned comparison values of 48.3%.
- One significant difference is the suggestion of a PL suffix marker for Cundeelee Wangka pronouns, *-muka*. For example, 2PL *nyurramuka* 'you all'. A corresponding equivalent was not found in the Pitjantjatjarra or Irrunytju data. This plural suffix was later confirmed by Cundeelee speaker and language informant, Dawn Hadfield.

Phonemic comparison results: one phoneme removed

	Cundeelee Wangka	Pitjantjatjarra	Irrunytju Pitjantjatjarra
Cundeelee Wangka		15/17 88.24%	13/14 92.86%
Pitjantjatjarra	15/17 88.24%		13/14 92.86%
Irrunytju Pitjantjatjarra	13/14 92.86%	13/14 92.86%	

- When linguists allowed for similarities with one phoneme difference (or one phoneme removed) the result increased from 88.24% to 92.86%.

- A lexicostatic match of 100% proves mutual intelligibility and therefore a very close relationship between the three codes.
- The first difference appears on the final (vowel) phoneme of the 1SG bound -rna/-rni/-na
- The next marked difference in the place of articulation of the REFL suffix from velar nasal -ngku (Cundeelee Wangka) and alveolar -nku (Pitjantjatjarra). Readers will note there was no data available in Irrunytju for this pronoun.
- The change between alveolar nasal and velar nasal results in a small sound change for this suffix. This is dialectal rather than semantic. Further research to determine the regularity of a -ng/-n variation in these two codes needs to be conducted to establish (if any) an allophonic variation rule. In any case, this is the only (suffix) sound variation of its kind in the above table.
- It is important to note the similarity between 2PL, *nyurramuka/nyurra/nurra*. Disregarding the morphemic break at *nyurra+muka*; 2DU+PL and focussing instead on the root, *nyurra*, the two lexemes match in the Cundeelee Wangka and Pitjantjatjarra columns.
- Concerning the 2PL, we see a palatal/alveolar shift between the Cundeelee Wangka/Pitjantjatjarra/Irrunytju Pitjantjatjarra lexemes.

### In summary

- The movement of Pitjantjatjarra language users from traditional homelands to Cundeelee Mission (CM) meant the language was transported too.
- Interaction with other language users at the mission over time, saw the development of a code known as Cundeelee Wangka (CW).
- While the Swadesh List returned only small percentage values (see CW and Pitj Swadesh 2020), the rate of similarity found in this pronoun comparison is high enough to indicate the Cundeelee Wangka is a dialect of Pitjantjatjarra, rather than a distinct language.
- The same can be said for the relationship between Irrunytju Pitjantjatjarra and Cundeelee Wangka, and Pitjantjatjarra.
- The existence of common pronouns and case suffix markers demonstrate the lexicostatic relationship between the three codes. Pronouns and pronoun suffixes have stayed the same, while nouns, verbs and descriptors show change (see CW and Pitj Swadesh 2020). This indicates an influence from other language users and languages speakers of Pitjantjatjarra who came into contact at the mission. However we can see the pronouns have not been affected.
- We could assume speakers using the new code with other community members continued to use their heritage language within the family domain, thus ensuring the enduring use of pronouns and noun suffixes.
- The data also suggests, the length of exposure to the new code (Cundeelee Wangka) was not long enough to sustain significant change to pronoun use. Thirty-five years, or less than two generations (1950-1985) is not sufficient to have impact upon pronouns, unless speakers make a conscious effort to abandon the old morphemes, in favour of the new. Speakers only to do this when they want to make a strong comment on the feelings towards the old code and affiliation with the new. There is no evidence of communication accommodation at Cundeelee. Further, following the closure of the Cundeelee Mission and the subsequent return to traditional

homelands, there has been a shift in CW to something more closely resembling Pitjantjatjarra (see below).

- We may consider the pronouns were not consciously changed because; their operation suited speakers; they offered some kind of political, ideological, or identity-related reward that kept this word class relevant.
- Historical records show many residents from Cundeelee resettled in Tjuntjuntjarra after the mission closed in 1985, whereupon they continued to use their heritage languages without issue (D. Hadfield, personal communication, 28 July 2020). This means speakers of CW, on the mission, continued to use their heritage language within their own groups, or the new code was so similar to heritage languages, they could be picked up again without too much effort. Given the results from GALC's Swadesh List were so low (48%), we may disregard this second possibility.
- Further, speakers of Cundeelee Wangka, having returned to their traditional lands, are reported to using a code much closer to Pitjantjatjara. (D. Hadfield, personal communication, 28 July 2020) than that of CW itself (that is, the code they used on the mission).
- Given the opportunity to rename their code with a label more representative of its language roots, (for example "South West Pitjantjatjarra") users of Cundeelee Wangka declined, choosing instead to keep the name that associates their code with the mission community and their identity as ex Cundeelee folk. This supports the earlier suggestion that an affinity for the identity provided by being speakers of this language, prevented speakers from making political statements in significant language change.
- Despite the fact that the Irrunytju Pitjantjatjarra research is in its initial stages, the high percentages returned from the data suggest Cundeelee Wangka is further removed from the code used at Irrunytju, than that of Pitjantjatjarra.
- Percentage values between Irrunytju and Pitjantjatjarra returned the highest scores for both tests, even though these numbers are only small.
- Therefore, speakers at both Cundeelee Mission and the Irrunytju community are still using a code highly similar to Pitjantjatjarra, which can be labelled the original source or parent code.
- Through continued research, GALCAC linguists hope to uncover more information about the variety of Pitjantjatjarra used in the Irrunytju community, however; this initial pronoun comparison suggests the two codes remain quite similar, in this word class at least.

## References

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