



Goldfields

Aboriginal Language Centre

wangka kanyira ngalipirniku

Language Change at the Three-Way Border

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Introduction

- All languages undergo change
- Change at Irrunytju due to language contact
- Due to contact with Standard Australian English
- Younger generations of speakers are demonstrating innovation in language praxis
- No sign of convergence between Pitjantjatjarra and Ngaanyatjarra
- Today's presentation will show how Pitjantjatjarra is changing

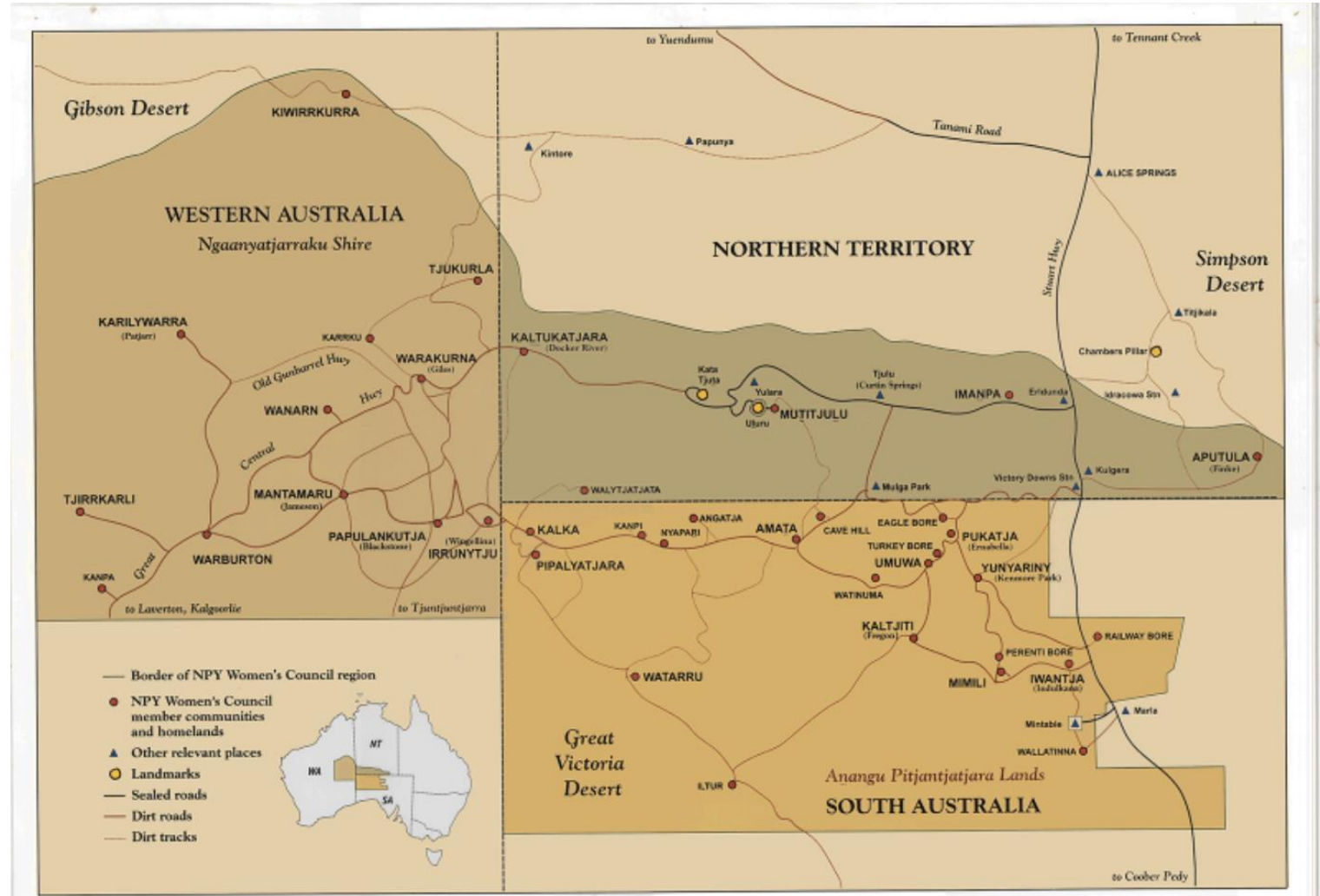


What is language change ?

- All languages undergo change
- Takes place over a period of time. Effects are gradual
- Often two variants exist alongside each other until the old one is cycled out completely
- Happens because of external or internal forces
- Linguistic/ non-linguistic



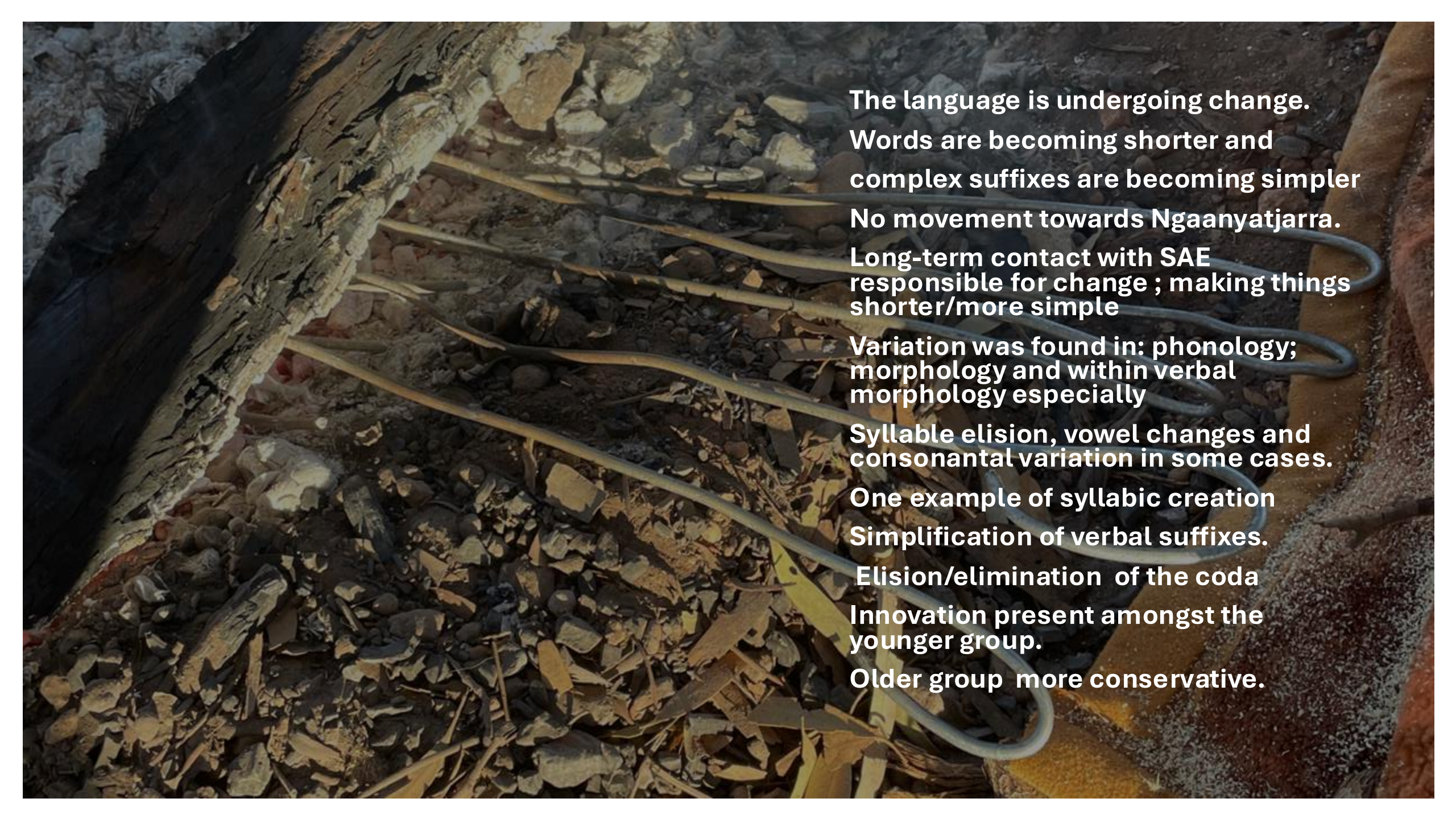
NPY Lands



Methodology

- **Synchronic study of the dialect of Pitjantjatjarra spoken at Irrunytju.**
- **Data provided by first language speakers of Irrunytju Pitjantjatjarra, or IP.**
- **Two groups of women; an older group the kami tjurta, and a younger group the minyma tjurta**
- **Elicitation**
- **Natural speech environments**
- **/rl/, /rn/, /rt/ and /r/, /rr/**
- **Voiceless varieties /p/, /t/ and /k/ used in place of voiced.**





The language is undergoing change.
Words are becoming shorter and
complex suffixes are becoming simpler
No movement towards Ngaanyatjarra.
Long-term contact with SAE
responsible for change ; making things
shorter/more simple
Variation was found in: phonology;
morphology and within verbal
morphology especially
Syllable elision, vowel changes and
consonantal variation in some cases.
One example of syllabic creation
Simplification of verbal suffixes.
Elision/elimination of the coda
Innovation present amongst the
younger group.
Older group more conservative.

Language Change: variations in four areas

1: word medial elision

2: word final elision

3: syllabic creation

4: simplification of
verbal suffixes

But first.....



Lexeme Composition in Pitjantjatjarra

- ngurra , ‘home’
- ngu/rra
- CV/CV (two mora)
- ka, ‘and’ (different subject)
- Pronounced kaa
- CV but two mora
- pijta, ‘come’
- pi/tja
- CV/CV (two mora)
- nyaa, ‘INT’
- nyaa
- CV (two mora)

The Syllable

- **ngurrpa**, ‘*don’t know*’
- **ngurr/pa**
- **ng: onset**
- **u: nucleus**
- **rr: coda**
- **p: onset**
- **a: nucleus**

- Ngurrpa is a two syllable-word in Pitjantjatjarra meaning, ‘*I don’t know.*’
- the **onset** and **coda** are always consonants
- The **nucleus** is always a vowel and is the only part of the syllable that is compulsory.
- Think about VC syllables and V syllables
- This example has two syllables, but only one **coda**.

The Syllable

- **akatjarri**, *visit*
- **a/ka/tja/rri**
- **a: nucleus**
- **k: onset**
- **a: nucleus**
- **tj: onset**
- **a: nucleus**
- **rr: onset**
- **i: nucleus**

- akatjarri, meaning 'visit'
- V/CV/CV/CV
- vowel-initial word
- V syllable initial
- all three syllables are lacking a **coda**
- Demonstrates the **nucleus** is obligatory but the **onset** and **coda** are not

Syllables, Mora and Assigned Weight

- **ngurr/pa**, ‘don’t know’
- short/short
- one /one
- **two** mora

- **pi/tja**, ‘come+IMP’
- short/short
- one/one
- **two** mora

- **taan/tja** ‘split’
- long/short
- two / one
- **three** mora

- **maa/pi/tja**, ‘go+IMP’
- long/short/short
- two/one/one
- **four** mora

Stress Patterns in Pitjantjatjarra

- Primary stress placed on the vowel/nucleus of the initial syllable
- Secondary stress sometimes falls on the penultimate syllable in lexemes of four or more syllables
- Stress falls on the initial syllable of a disyllabic suffix
- On the initial syllable of the REDUP segment





Phonotactic variation: word medial syllable elision

- **nyirtayirra, *boy***
- ***nyi/rta/yi/rra***
- ***CV/CV/CV/CV***

- **Traditional Pitjantjatjarra;
kami tjurta**
- Four syllables
- Common CV/CV pattern
- Conservative
- Unmarked

- **nyirta(yi)arra**
- **nyi/rta/rra**
- **CV/CV/CV**

- **Contemporary
Pitjantjatjarra ; minyma
tjurta**
- Glide-initial, short syllable
- Three syllables
- Unstressed syllable = most likely to be elided.
- Marked example
- Several examples, from multiple speakers

Phonotactic variation; word medial syllable elision

- taraw**at**ja, trousers

- ta/ra/wa/tja

- CV/CV/CV/CV

- kungka**w**ara, teenage girl

- kung/ka/wa/ra

- CVC/CV/CV/CV

- wala-**w**ala, quickly

- wa/la/wa/la

- CV/CV/CV/CV

- tara(wa)tja

- ta/ra/tja

- CV/CV/CV

- kungka(wa)ra

- kung/ka/ra

- CVC/CV/CV

- wala-(wa)la

- walala

- CV/CV/CV

Production of sounds

- Elision is sometimes about making less effort with the vocal apparatus
- Natural speech encourages elision/shortened words
- Think 'want to' vs 'wanna'
- Also called 'Economy of Movement'
- Positioning of the vocal apparatus and moving the mouth as little as possible

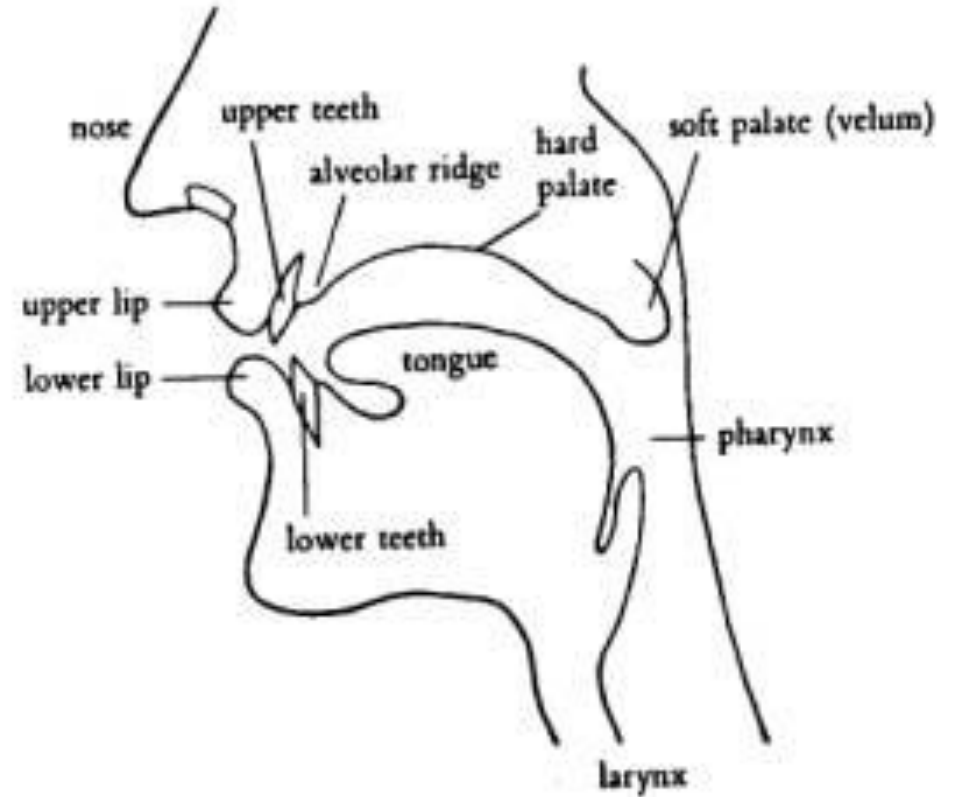


Figure 1: The vocal apparatus

Economy of Movement (EoM)

- **nyirta(yi)rra**
- retroflex stop and alveolar rhotic are both apical consonants
- **tara(wa)tja**
- retroflex rhotic and lamino-dental stop are both non-peripheral consonants
- **wala-(wa)la**
- two identical sounds; alveolar lateral
- **kungka(wa)ra**
- kungkara is the only example that does not conform to the posited EoM theory





Coda Elision: Simplification of Nominals

- **kurlu(ny)pa**, 'little or small'
- **ku/rlu(ny)/pa**
- **CV/CVC/CV**
- **3 syllables/ 3 mora**

- **nyuntu(m)pa**, 2SG
- **nyun/tu(m)/pa**
- **CVC/CVC/CV**
- **3 syllables/ 3 mora**

- **kurlupa**
- **ku/rlu/pa**
- **CV/CV/CV**
- **3 syllables/ 3 mora**

- **nyuntupa**
- **nyu/tu/pa**
- **CV/CV/CV**
- **3 syllables/ 3 mora**

Coda Elision: Simplification of Nominals

- **ngurri(l)payi, 'always searching'**
- **ngu/rril/pa/yi**
- **CV/CVC/CV/CV**
- **4 syllables, 4 mora**

- **tjarrtja(rr)pa, 'shallows'**
- **tjarr/tja(rr)/pa**
- **CVC/CVC/CV**
- **3 syllables, 3 mora**

- **ngurripayi**
- **ngu/rripa/yi**
- **CV/CV/CV/CV**
- **4 syllables, 4 mora**

- **tjarrtjaa**
- **tjarr/tjaa**
- **CVC/CV**
- **2 syllables, 3 mora**

Coda Elision: Case Marker Variation

- tjarrrtjarrrta, in the shallows
- tjarr/tjarr/ta
- CVC/CVC/CV

- Three syllables
- Two CVC
- Traditional affixing of the –ta LOC

- Tjarrrtjangka
- Tjarr/tjang/ka
- CVC/CVC/CV

- Three syllables
- Two CVC
- Innovative use of –ngka LOC



Word Final Elision

- nyinang(i) pala, 'was sitting there'
- nyina+ng(i) pala
- be+PAST_CONT DEM
- Was sitting there

- Traditional Pitjantjatjarra uses nyina+ngi for be+PAST CONT

- nyinang pala
- nyina+ng pala
- be+PAST_CONT DEM
- Was sitting there

- Contemporary example shows dropped final (i)
- No final vowel
- Consonant cluster at word boundary

Word Final Elision

- kurrunpa miirl-miirl(pa),
'spirit feels bad'
- kurrun+pa miirl+miirl+(pa)
- Spirit+EUPH
dangerous+REDUP+EUPH
- Spirit feels bad

- Kalgoorlie-lakutu ananay(i),
going to Kalgoorlie,
- Kalgoorlie+lakutu a+nany(i)
- Place+ALL go+PRES
- Going to Kalgoorlie

- Kurrunpa miirl-miirl
- Kurrun+pa miirl+miirl
- Spirit+EUPH
dangerous+REDUP
- Spirit feels bad

- Kalgoorlie-kutu anany
- Kalgoorlie+kutu a+nany
- Place+ALL go+PRES
- Going to Kalgoorlie

Word Final Elision: Syllabic Effects

- kurrunpa miirl-
miirl(pa)
- CV/CVC/CV CV/CV/CV
- 3/3
- nyinang(i) pala
- CV/**CV/CV** CV/CV
- 3/2
- Kalgoorlie-lakutu
anany(i)
- CVC/CV/CV-CV/CV/CV
V/**CV/CV**
- 3/3/3

- kurrunpa miirl-miirl
- CV/CVC/CV CV/CV
- 3/2
- nyinang pala
- CV/**CVC** CV/CV
- 2/2
- Kalgoorlie-kutu
anany
- CVC/CV/CV-CV/CV
V/**CVC**
- 3/2/2

And now for
something
completely
different ...



Word medial Syllable Creation

- purlkanya, so much
 - purl/ka/nya
 - CVC/CV/CV
-
- 3 syllables
 - Traditional less common CVC syllable

- purlakanya
 - pu/rla/ka/nya
 - CV/CV/CV/CV
-
- 4 syllables
 - Deletion of consonant cluster
 - Shifting the syllabic pattern of the lexeme towards CV syllables in favour of CVC syllables

Table 1: Pitjantjatjarra Syllable Types

Syllable Type	Number	Comments
V	12 (4.49%)	rare
VC	3(1.12%)	Extremely rare
CV	220 (82.4 %)	Most common
CVC	32 (11.99%)	Not as common as a CV
Totals	267	

Table 2: CVC Syllable placement

Example Type	Number	Comments
Lexeme without suffixation	3	Nominals: tjukurrpa; mungarrtji; marlanypa
Lexeme with suffixation	7	Nominal+ VERB+NOM Verb+tense Verb+tense+NOM Verb+NOM
Total	10	



Verbal morphology: simplification

- mantj**intj**ikitja, get, INTENT
 - mantji+ntji+kitja
 - man/tjin/tji/ki/tja
 - get+NOM+INTENT
 - CVC/CVC/CV/CV/CV
-
- Kami tjurta using full traditional format
 - Five syllables
 - 2 CVC. 3 CV

- mantjikitja
- mantji+kitja
- man/tji/ki/tja
- get+INTENT
- CVC/CV/CV/CV

Minyma tjurta using shorter contemporary format

Four syllables

1 CVC. 3 CV

Verbal morphology simplification

- nintirringunytjikitja, learn
INTENT
- nin/ti/rring/kuny/tji/ki/tja
- CVC/CV/CVC/CVC/CV/CV/
CV

- ankunytjikitja, go, INTENT
- an/kuny/tji/ki/tja
- CV/CVC/CV/CV/CV

- nintirrikitja
- nin/rri/ki/tja
- CVC/CV/CV/CV

- ankukijta
- an/ku/ki/tja
- CV/CV/CV/CV

Verbal morphology simplification

- kulintjikitja, listen, INTENT
- ku/lin/tji/ki/tja
- CV/CVC/CV/CV/CV

- ngarrinytjikitja, sleep, INTENT
- nga/rriny/tji/ki/tja
- CV/CVC/CV/CV/CV

- kulilkitja
- ku/lil/ki/tja
- CV/CVC/CV/CV

- ngarrikitja
- nga/rri/ki/tja
- CV/CV/CV/CV

Conclusion

- Irrunytju Pitjantjatjarra is changing
- Becoming shorter, less complex
- Various methods
- Loss of unstressed syllables
- Codas
- Simplification of complex suffixes
- Shift from CVC towards CV
- Influenced by SAE
- Ngaanyatjarra is specific examples

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