

## Synopsis

### Deictics? Demonstratives in Gamilaraay Yuwaalaraay

John Giacon

ANU

jgiacon@ozemail.com.au

Gamilaraay Yuwaalaraay [GY] are languages from northern New South Wales, known almost exclusively from historical materials, most importantly tapes made in the 1970s.

'Demonstratives' have been briefly described in previous works, most extensively in Williams *Grammar of Yuwaalaraay* (1980). However the actual use found is much more complex than existing descriptions, and more complex than any description arrived at anytime soon. Factors which make it difficult to fully describe the form and use of 'demonstratives' include:

- uncertainty about the 'standard' form represented by writing or on tape [How would the informant say it carefully?]. This includes uncertainty about allomorphs.]
- Demonstratives are not case marked, and NP do not have fixed constituent order, so it is difficult to assign demonstratives to an NP or to a word class, particularly since the one demonstrative has many different translations - [English demonstrative, locative adverb, Ø]
- A related question is the many roles of demonstratives - ostensive, anaphoric, 'discourse'
- The meaning of 'Demonstratives' is often context dependent, and that context is almost all lost in word lists, and much of it is lost in tape recordings, so there is a considerable amount of 'guesswork' involved.
- to some extent deictics may be a matter of personal style, so not bound by clear rules which operate in other areas of the language

I will present a list of demonstratives, adding somewhat to previous lists, and with added descriptions of their use.

Many questions remain, including the relation of 'demonstratives' and other deictics [with time and manner reference] and the fact that demonstratives seem to be to some extent optional.

The context of GY study is language revival, where it is often better to have a rule with some basis in historical GY, rather than no rule. Having a rule with some basis means people making new GY sentences are closer to traditional GY than if they use what they otherwise know - English rules.

In the recording of the languages considerable attention was paid 'basic' issues such as verb and noun morphology, but little attention was given to this messy area.