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Flagging in diachrony workshop, 5 September 2024

# Flagging and Diachrony in Pama-Nyungan Languages, Australia

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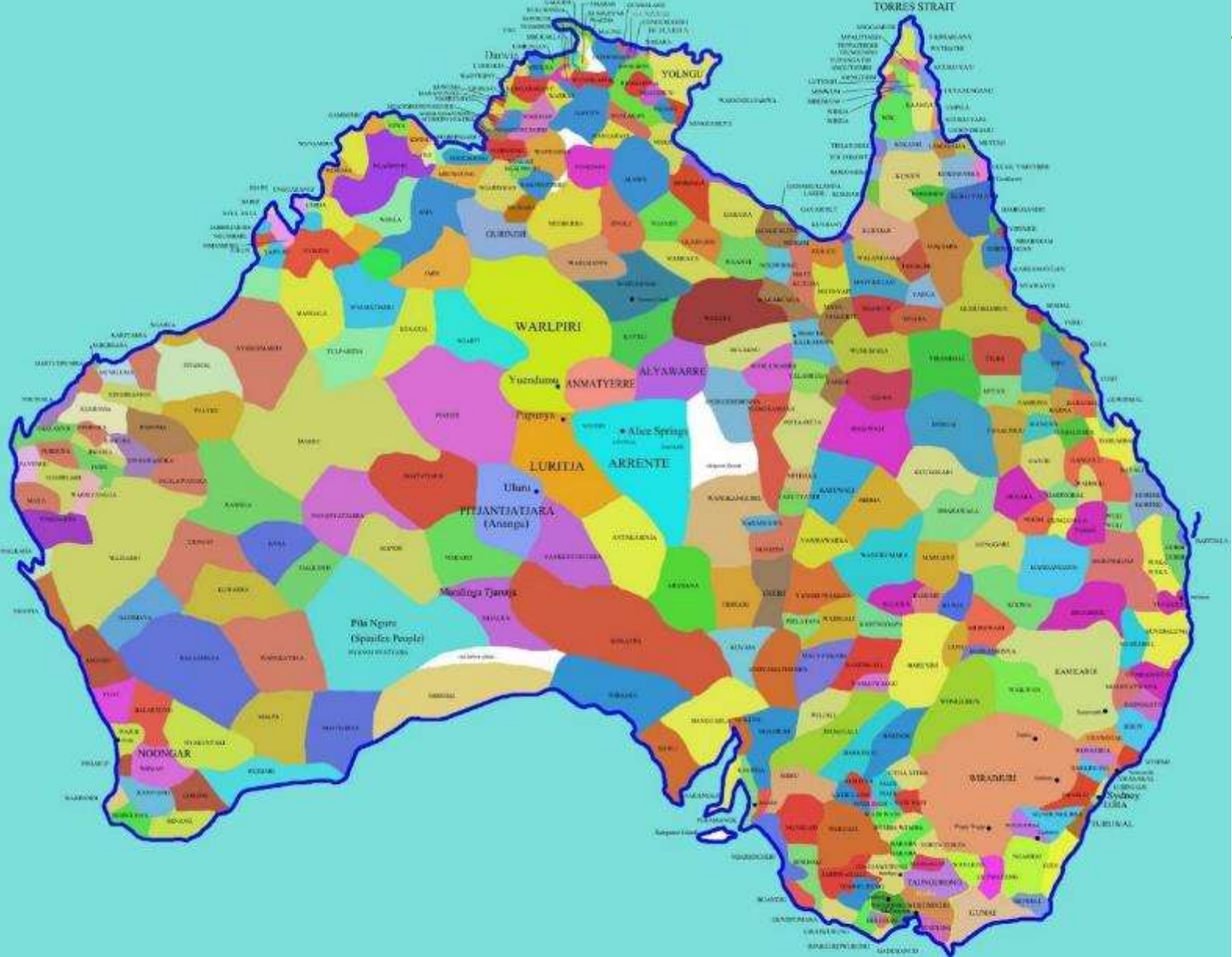
# Overview

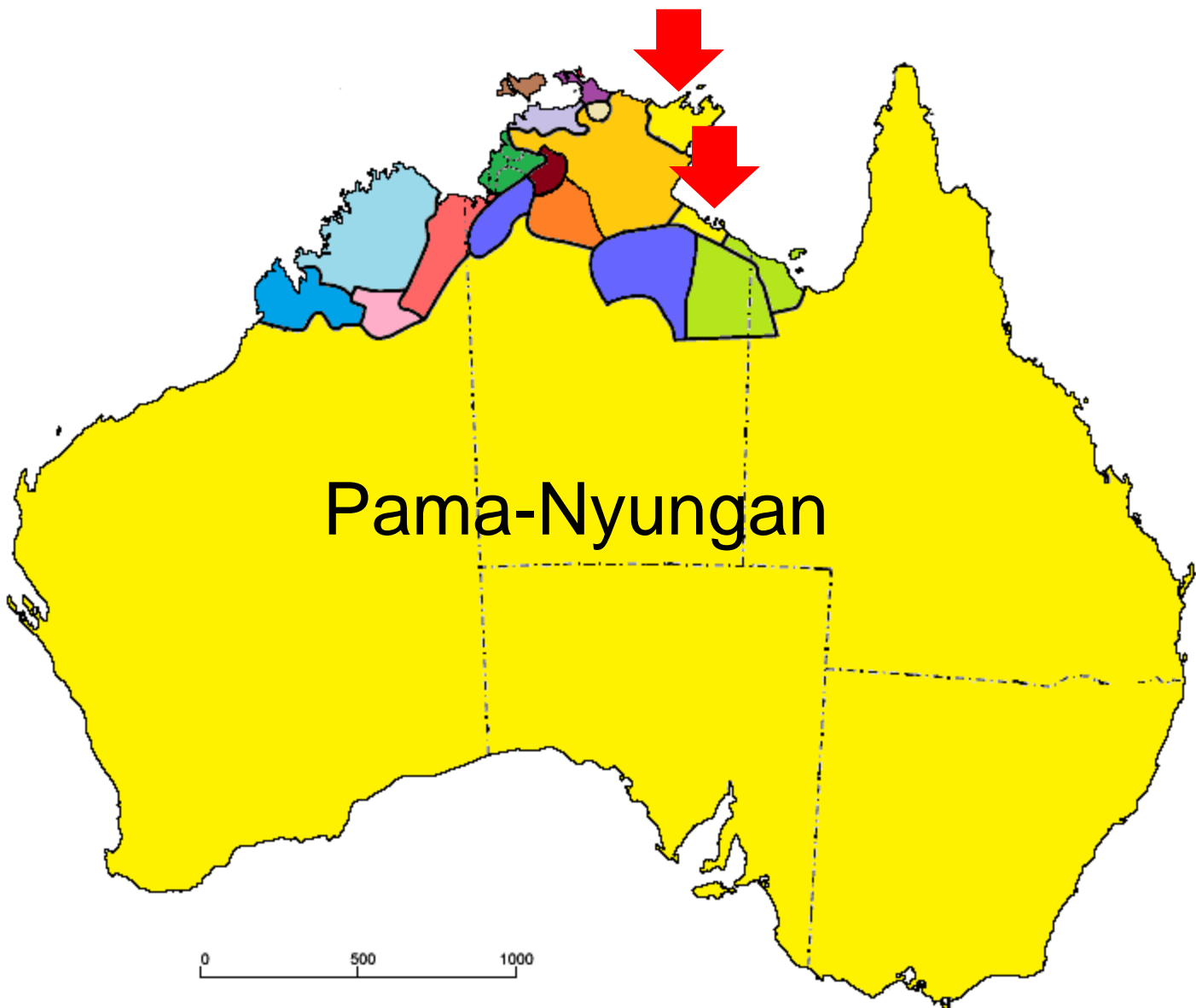
- Indigenous languages of Australia
  - Typology of flagging in Pama-Nyungan
  - Selected diachronic developments
    - nominative-accusative flagging
    - gender and flagging
    - head-marking
  - Conclusions
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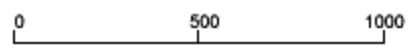
# Australian languages

- At invasion 1788 around 600 groups with own cultures, laws, languages and land
  - Around 350 different languages – in 2024 only 12 have child learners, around half have no-one who learned them as children
  - Genetic classification: (1) Pama-Nyungan (PN), around 270 languages; (2) 27 other families (non-PN). Unclear if all languages are related. Widespread areal features.
  - Internal classification of PN not yet fully established – some groupings reconstructed but subgrouping unclear
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Pama-Nyungan



# PN typological profile

- Morphology entirely suffixing, mostly agglutinating (some fusion in pronouns)
- Major morpho-syntactic categories: N, V (no Adj, Adv) (see Nordlinger 2014: 2-14). **No** adpositions
- Many (not all) languages have some “non-configurational” characteristics: ‘free’ word order, no evidence of phrases, zero arguments (Hale, 1983, Austin and Bresnan 1996)
- Main vs. dependent clauses usually clearly distinguished
- All PN are dependent-marking, around 30% are double-marking, with affixes/clitics on clause head, mostly S/A with a few also coding P (see also Ennevear and Brown 2023)
- Suffixaufnahme (‘double case’) widespread, e.g. N-case<sub>i</sub> N-poss-case<sub>j</sub>

# PN flagging

- Basic transitivity types:

Vi	S			
Ve	S	E		
Vtr	A	P		
Vdi	A	P		P/E

- Flagging reflects interactions between:
  - grammatical function
  - lexical features of N (“animacy hierarchy”) or pragmatic status (“optional ergative”)
  - clause status – main vs. dependent clause types
  - cross-clausal coreference (typically switch-reference)

**Note:** 3+4 may suspend 2



# PN flagging

- PN flagging can be: (1) right edge N; and/or (2) all N
- Within main clauses flagging is typically ‘split-ergative’:
  - Inanimate N            A ergative, P/S unmarked (=absolutive)
  - Pronouns                A/S unmarked (=nominative), P accusative
  - Others                    A ergative, S unmarked (=nominative), P accusative
- Within dependent clauses flagging can use various strategies (Austin 2024):
  1. Same as main clause
  2. Suspend flagging – no marking
  3. Copy dependent verb morphology
  4. Addition – add extra layer of flagging outside main clause type flags
  5. Replacement – use non-argument case-marking, e.g. allative, ablative
  6. Dative-possessive
  7. Zero – obligatory absence under coreference

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**Note:** languages may mix these according to clause types

# PN flagging

- Flagging example – Jiwari (Western Australia) coding of A and P:
    1.  $\emptyset$                     nominative                    all S in main clause, 1sg pro A in main clause
    2. *-nggu ~-lu*            ergative                        other A in main clause
    3. *-gurla*                    allative                        all P in purpose-same subject dep clause
    4. *-gu*                        dative                            all P in all (im)perfective dep clause
    5. *-nha*                      accusative                      animate P in main clause, in purpose-different subject dep clause and lest dep clause
    6. ZERO                        all S/A in dep-same subject clauses; all S/A in dep-different subject clauses with non-subject coreference
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# PN flagging

	GF	Animacy	Clause	Clausal cross-reference
-∅	YES-S/A	YES	Main	
-nggu	YES-A	YES	Main	
-gurla	YES-P	NO	Dep-purp	YES - SS
-gu	YES-P	NO	Dep-imperf Dep-perf	NO
-nha	YES-P	YES	Main	
			Dep-purp Dep-lest	YES - DS
ZERO	YES-S/A	NO	All Dep-SS	YES – SS
			All Dep-DS with coreference	YES – DS + coref

# PN flagging diachronic examples 1

- Some Ngayarda languages (Western Australia) are nominative-accusative in main clauses, with P flagged by *-gu* (< dative)
- Dench (1982, 1994) argues for diachronic reanalysis ('insubordination') of dependent clause flagging using DAT for P into main clauses:
- [A V<sub>main</sub> P] [(A-zero) P-dat V<sub>dep</sub>] → S-unmarked P-acc V<sub>main</sub>
- Pattern of two-argument verbs as NOM-ACC supported by existing Ve template [S-unmarked E-dat]
- Martuthunira "present tense suffix forms, *-nguru/-rnuru*, are cognate with subordinate clause relative/contemporaneous/imperfective inflections in Ngarluma, Nyamal, Ngarla, Yindjibarndi and Kurrama"

# Ngayarda languages



# PN flagging diachronic examples 3

- Wanggumarra (Western Queensland) has three-way flagging for all N, and developed gender-based dependent flagging of A and P
- This patently (Blake 1979) derives from grammaticalisation of 3<sup>rd</sup> person pronoun (= demonstrative) forms that originally followed the N, which was unmarked due to right edge marking: [N dem-case]

Function	Feminine	Non-feminine
S	-ani	-ya
A	-ndru	-lu
P	-nhanha	-nha





demonstratives/3<sup>rd</sup> person pronouns

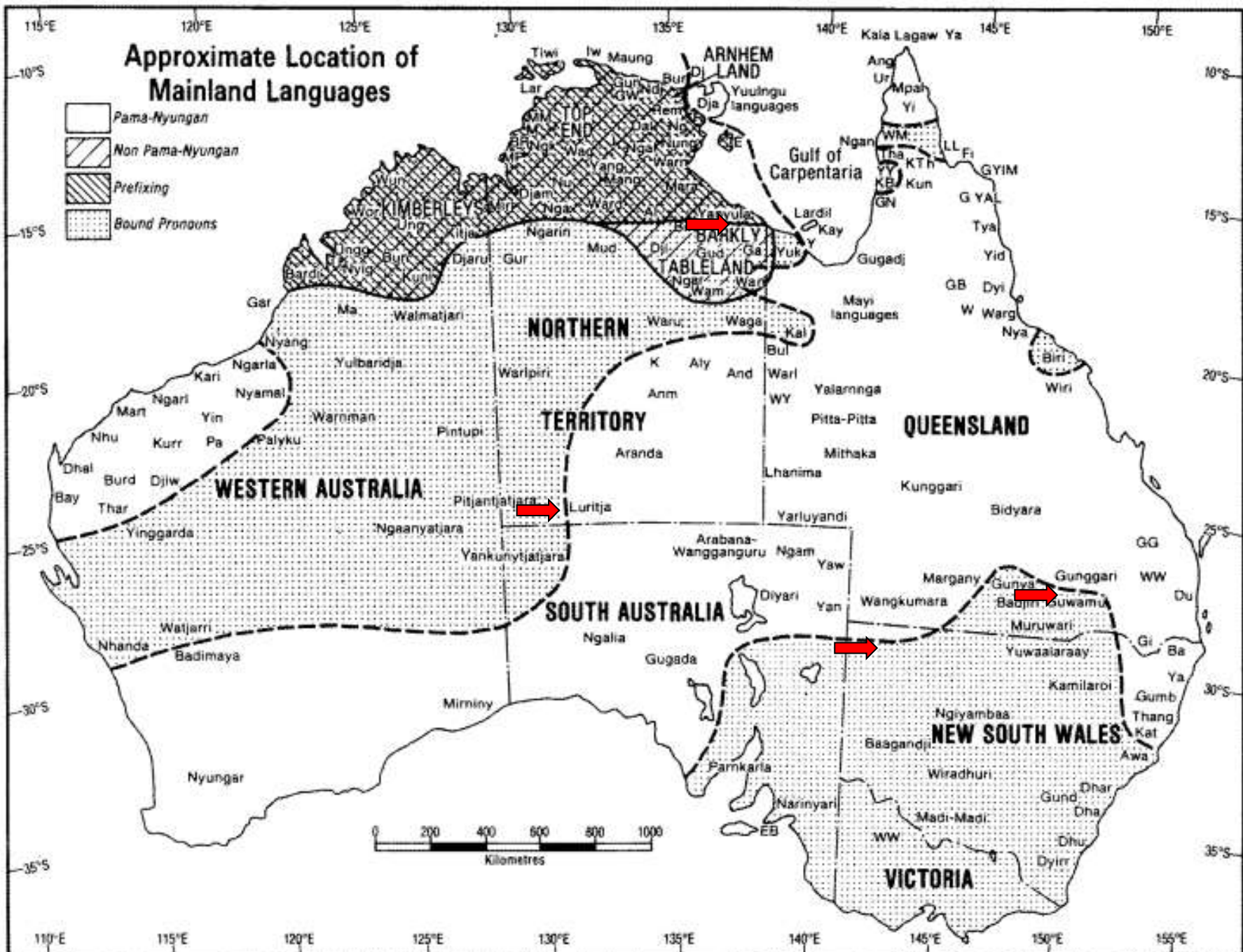
Function	Feminine	Non-feminine
S	nhani	nhiya
A	nhandru	nhulu
P	nhanha	nhinha

# PN flagging diachronic examples 4

- All PN languages are dependent-marking and about 30% have double-marking (DM)
- Map in Blake 1987 shows DM is areally distributed in two separate large geographical blocks (1) central and western Australia; and (2) south-eastern Australia
- The isoglosses cut through dialects of single languages (e.g. southern Guwamu vs. northern Guwamu in central Queensland) or between very closely related languages (e.g. Pitjantjatjara (DM) vs. Luritja (non-DM))
- All DM languages have clausal head affixes (added to Verb or AUX) that flag S and A, while about half flag S/A, and P, and some flag S/A, P, and E (but see Ennever & Browne 2023). Such marking is always nom-acc, with one exception (Malyangapa, western NSW)

# Approximate Location of Mainland Languages

-  Pama-Nyungan
-  Non Pama-Nyungan
-  Prefixing
-  Bound Pronouns





# DM diachrony

- Blake (1979, 1987) argues that the two blocks have separate histories:
- (1) **Western block** – generally form of HM flags differs from free pronouns, e.g. 1sgS/A *-rna* versus *ngayu*, 2sgS/A *-n* versus *nyuntu* [see Blake 1979 [table](#)]
- Blake suggest this pattern may have arisen in Proto-Warluwaric (including Yanyula, extreme north-east of the Western DM block) where 1sgS/A free pronoun is *ngarna*
- (2) **Eastern block** – generally forms of HM flags are transparently related to (unstressed) parts of free form pronouns, suggesting grammaticisation (Blake 1979: 368). Recent research shows that systems near the south-eastern isogloss are also only partial

		Free				Bound		
		S <sub>1</sub>	A	P	DAT	S <sub>1</sub> ,A	P	D
Ooldean (Ngalia)	1s	ɲayulu	ɲayulu	ɲayunʔa	ɲayuku	(-ɲa)		
	2s	nʔura	nʔura	nʔuranʔa	nʔurampa			
Pitjantjatjara	1s	ɲayulu	ɲayulu	ɲayunʔa	ɲayuku	-ɲa	-ɲi	-tʔu
	2s	nʔuntulu	nʔuntulu	nʔuntunʔa	nʔuntuku	-n	-nta	-nku
Pintupi	1s	ɲayunʔa	ɲayulu	ɲayunʔa	ɲayuku	-ɲa	-ɲi	-tʔu
	2s	nʔuranʔa	nʔuralu	nʔuranʔa	nʔuraku	-n	-nta	-ɲku
Yulbaridja	1s	ɲayu	ɲayulu	ɲayu	ɲayuku	-ɲa	-tʔa	-tʔu
	2s	nʔuntu	nʔuntulu	nʔuntu		-n	-nta	-ɲku
Nyangumarda	1s	ɲatʔu	ɲatʔulu		ɲatʔuku	-ɲV	-nʔi, -nʔa	-tʔi, -tʔu
	2s	nʔuntu				-n	-ntV	-ɲu
Garadjari	1s	ɲatʔu	ɲatʔulu		ɲatʔuku	-ɲa	-nʔa	-tʔa
	2s	nʔuntu	nʔuntulu			-n	-nta -ɲgu	-ɲgu
Mangarla	1s	ɲayu	ɲayunɲku	ɲayu	ɲayuku	-ɲa	-nʔa	-tʔa
	2s	nʔuntu	nʔuntunɲku	nʔuntu	nʔuntuku	-n	-na	-ɲka
Walbiri	1s	ɲatʔu(lu)	ɲatʔu(lu(!u))	ɲatʔu(lu)	ɲatʔuku	-ɲa	-tʔu	-tʔu
	2s	nʔuntu(lu)	nʔuntu(lu(!u))	nʔuntu(lu)	nʔuntuku	-n pa	-ɲku	-ɲku

# DM diachrony

- Malyangapa (Western NSW, Austin 2022) is only PN language with “split-ergative” head-marking and is on south-eastern DM isogloss – singular A vs S/P, in dual and plural S/A but no P:

Person-number	P (animate)	S	A
1 <sup>st</sup> singular	-nyi	-nyi	-dhu
2 <sup>nd</sup> singular	-ni	-ni	-ndu
3 <sup>rd</sup> singular	-nha	-nha	-mbu
1 <sup>st</sup> dual		-li	-li
2 <sup>nd</sup> dual		-la	-la
3 <sup>rd</sup> dual		-bula	-bula
1 <sup>st</sup> plural		-ngana	-ngana
2 <sup>nd</sup> plural		-rra	-rra
3 <sup>rd</sup> plural		-rna	-rna

- Compare: 1sg S *nganyi*, 1sg A *ngadhu* (**BUT** *nganha* P), 2sgS *yini*, 2sgA *yindu*. Non-singular pronouns are nom-acc, e.g. 1dl S/A *ngali*, 1dlP *ngalinha*

# DM diachrony

- Guwamu (Maric southern Qld, Austin 2023) southern dialect has obligatory verb suffixes for S/A, clearly derived from pronouns. Biri (Maric north-east Qld, Terril 1998) is isolated DM with P for 1sg only (cf. Malyangapa above)

	Guwamu			Biri		
	S/A	Pronoun		S/A	P	Pronoun
1sg	-ya	ngaya		-aya	-na	ngaya
1dl	-li	ngali		-ali	-nu	ngali
1pl	-na	ngana		-ana	-ngga	ngana
2sg	-nda	yinda		-nda		yinda
2dl	-yibalu	yibalu		-ndabula		yibalu
2pl	-yura	yura		-ra		yura
3sg	-la			-la		
3dl	-bula	bula		-bula		bula
3pl	-rna	dhana		-dhana		dhana

# DM diachrony

- Gamilaraay-Yuwaalaraay (northern NSW, Austin 1993, Giacom 2014) has HM affixes for 2<sup>nd</sup> person **only**, clearly derived from pronouns

	Affix	Pronoun
2sg	<i>-nda</i>	<i>nginda</i>
2dl	<i>-ndaali</i>	<i>ngindaali</i>
2pl	<i>-ndaay</i>	<i>ngindaay</i>

- These affixes can only be used in:
  1. polar or content questions
  2. negative statements, negative imperatives

NOTE: 19<sup>th</sup> century sources suggest some extinct dialects had paradigms for all persons, also used in simple statements

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# DM diachrony

*waal-ndaali gaba gigi-la-nha*

not-2dIS good be-cont-pres

‘You two are not good’ (Giaccon 2014: ex. 233)

*gariya-ndaali yana-ya*

neg.imper-2dIS go-imper

‘Don’t you two go!’ (Austin 1993: ex 5.10)

*yaama-nda nhamangay wuu-rri*

Q-2sgA that 1sgdat give-fut

‘Will you give that to me?’ (Austin 1993: ex 5.8)

*dhalaa-nda yana-waa-n*

where-2sgS go-cont-pres

‘Where are you going?’ (Austin 1993: ex 5.10)

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# DM diachrony

*minya-gu-nda yana-waa-n*

what-dat-2sg go-cont-pres

‘What did you come for?’ (Austin 1993: ex. 5.12)

These distributions suggest addition of new forms in Wackernagel position derived from pronouns, but only in highly restricted contexts and only for 2<sup>nd</sup> person.

Note that this could reflect frequency effects: 2<sup>nd</sup> person is the unmarked subject addressee in imperatives and questions.

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# Conclusions

Pama-Nyungan languages show diachronic developments in flagging of several types:

- Replacement of split-ergative DM with nominative-accusative DM arising from insubordination of dependent clause flagging
- Creation of gender+function DM flagging in Wanggumarra from post-posed third person pronoun/demonstratives
- Development of HM (plus DM) in two separate areal blocks, as a result of two separate processes:
  - In West-Central block, innovation of Warluwaric pronouns and diffusion to south-west (plus elaboration of E(dat) encoding);
  - In South-East block, grammaticisation of pronouns to head-markers; languages located along isogloss show irregularities in change processes



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**Thank you!**

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