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Australian language contact in historical and synchronic perspective

1 Introduction

This volume is the first collection of research dedicated to the effects of recent language contact processes on Australian languages. Multilingualism and language contact have always been pervasive in Australia (Bowern & Koch 2004; Koch 1997; McConvell & Bowern 2011), but have often been discussed in the context of identifying genetic relationships between languages. At the time of British colonisation, there were approximately 250 languages spoken in Australia, many with several dialects. Colonisation brought the extensive diffusion of English and with it a dramatically different configuration of languages in contact, including the emergence of pidgins, creoles and mixed languages and a range of English-lexified varieties and dialects, such as Aboriginal English. Now relatively few traditional languages are spoken day-to-day or are being transmitted to children. Yet notions of simplification and loss do not adequately capture the complexity and dynamics of the contemporary contexts. Indigenous people have developed complex linguistic repertoires, often including other traditional languages and varieties of English and/or Kriol (an English-lexified creole), or a mixed language. Many of the contact languages co-existed for periods of time with traditional languages, and in some cases, still do, raising questions of continuing and bidirectional contact influences. Indigenous speakers have shifted, or are shifting away from traditional languages in many locations, but in some places traditional languages remain the primary languages spoken, with English or Kriol included in speakers’ repertoires. These constantly evolving scenarios raise questions of what kinds of language contact mechanisms and outcomes are at play in contemporary language-in-use, and this volume collates research at the vanguard of that exploration.

The research presented in this volume marks a new era of linguistic work on Australian languages. The last 40 years have seen a concerted effort to describe traditional Australian languages rather than contact varieties. The focus is largely the result of the urgency of documenting these endangered languages. However, in the 1970s through to the mid-1980s, attention was given to the English-based pidgin and Kriol. The pidgin developed in the Sydney colony and diffused into the Pacific and northern Australia, and transformed into north Australian Kriol, that developed as a result of interactions between speakers of the pidgin, traditional languages and English. The interest in Australian pidgin
and creole languages abated until recently, when there has been a resurgence of interest in Australian contact languages, including Kriol varieties, newly-identified mixed languages and restructured traditional Australian languages. It is likely that, as more traditional Australian languages lose their first language learners, more attention will be drawn to these contact languages.

The volume contributes new data and theoretical analyses to discussions of contact languages and language contact processes. Theories of language contact need descriptions of mechanisms and outcomes from all parts of the world and from many language types, yet until recently they have been informed by relatively little data from Australia, which is rich in typological diversity and known for extensive contact historically. For example, the theoretical literature on pidgin and creole languages is largely Atlantic-focussed, with Australian varieties not included in the debates which have preoccupied creolists over the last two decades, such as whether creolisation is the result of an innate bioprogram (Bickerton 1984), relexification of substrate languages by colonial languages (Lefebvre 1998) or the result of more general second language learning processes (Siegel 2008). A related issue that Australian pidgins and creoles can contribute to greatly is the relative roles of the substrates and superstrates in creole formation and the role of pidgins as predecessors of creoles (Chaudenson 1992; Mufwene 2000). The development of Kriol is relatively recent, and detailed analyses of many of the substrate languages are available or within reach. Chapters 5, 6, 8, 9 and 10 take perspectives on factors in the formation of Kriol and continuing influences on it where it remains in contact with traditional languages.

Recent research on the Australian mixed languages, Gurindji Kriol (McConvell (2008), Meakins (2011)) and Light Warlpiri (O’Shannessy (2012)), has contributed new data and analyses to debates such as whether common contact processes such as code-switching can lead to the development of mixed languages and whether inflectional morphology can be borrowed. Further developments of these mixed languages will be discussed in Chapters 7 and 11. Additionally, Chapter 1 will examine the borrowing of a verb paradigm in Marrku, a process similar to those seen in the formation of mixed languages.

Work on Australian restructured varieties has informed the larger field of language contact. In particular, Schmidt’s (1985) work on the restructured variety of Dyirbal spoken by younger generations has become a classic case study often cited in the literature on language shift. Nonetheless much of Schmidt’s work and others in the field of language obsolescence frame the language of younger generations as language loss. This characterisation will be challenged in Chapters 12 and 13 which focus on new varieties of Murrinh-Patha and Jingulu, describing recent grammatical changes as newly emergent systems rather than language loss.
The volume stems from papers given at the Australian Languages Workshop (ALW) Language Contact Symposium (6–7 March 2014) run by Felicity Meakins and Carmel O’Shannessy at the Australian National University.

2 Contact between Australian languages before 1788

Extensive language contact has been a feature of the Australian languages context for thousands of years, making the role of language contact an important issue historically (e.g. Dixon 1980, 2002; Koch 1997; McConvell & Bowern 2011). One claim is that language contact effects in Australia are so extensive, and involve such great time-depth, that they obscure genetic relationships (Dixon 2001: 88; 2002: 38), and that all Australian languages form one large linguistic area, created approximately 40,000–50,000 years ago (Dixon 2001: 25, 39; 2002). But processes of language contact versus genetic inheritance have been distinguished using historical-comparative methods, providing substantial evidence for genetic subgrouping within Australia (e.g. Alpher 2004; Bowern & Atkinson 2012; Bowern et al. 2011; Dench 2001; Evans 1988; Evans & McConvell 1998; Heath 1978; L. A. Hercus 1979; McConvell & Bowern 2011; McConvell & Laughren 2004; O’Grady Voegelin & Voegelin 1966). The major genetic distinction is between the Pama-Nyungan family, with sub-groups covering approximately 90% of the continent, and the group labelled Non-Pama-Nyungan, which is not a genetic family, but a group of approximately 27 families in the north (Evans 1988; Evans & McConvell 1998; McConvell 1996).

There were approximately 250 languages spoken before colonisation, and the sizes of language groups ranged from 100–200 people, to about 3,000 people (including dialects) (McConvell 2010b: 1). The small numbers of speakers promoted multilingualism as groups communicate with each other. Hunter-gatherer economies were maintained until soon after colonisation, and multilingualism was common (e.g. Evans 2010; McConvell & Bowern 2011). It had been thought that hunter gatherer populations borrow proportionally more words than agriculturalist populations (Bowern et al. 2011 and references therein), and this claim has been made often for Australian languages (Koch 2004), but recent work by Bowern, et al (2011) shows that this is not the case. In a survey of 122 languages from hunter-gatherer and agriculturalist societies in three continents, Australia (31 languages), and North and South America, Bowern, et al (2011) found that the mean proportion of borrowed words in basic vocabulary is 9.4% – far less than often supposed. However, the Australian languages sampled have
more loans and show more variation than those on the other two continents. The reason is that some languages have loan rates of up to 48% (e.g. Gurindji, Pama-Nyungan), but these languages are outliers in terms of the amount of borrowing, and the high rates are the results of particular population movements (e.g. McConvell 1996, 2009). When the outlier languages are removed, the mean proportion of loans is 6.6%. Languages with the highest rates of loans have one or more of the following properties – speakers are relatively few in number, have a lower density of population in any one location, are relatively mobile, and practise linguistic exogamy. In a study of highly borrowed items in 53 Australian languages in the north west, it was found that basic vocabulary is borrowed least often, and terms for flora and fauna and items of material culture, including technologies, are borrowed more often (Bowern et al. 2014). Words for some highly traded items, for instance ‘spearthrower’ and ‘pearl shell’, diffused across great distances, such as the word for ‘pearl shell’ travelling from the Kimberley coast to central Australia and the South Australian Bight (Haynie, Bowern, Epps, Hill, & McConvell 2014: 13–14).

Some very early language contact events can be inferred from combining anthropological and archaeological information with current and reconstructed linguistic patterns. For instance, it is likely that as speakers of Pama-Nyungan languages migrated across the continent, perhaps around 5,000–2,000 BP, in some places their languages replaced those of the peoples already living in those areas, after a phase of mutual bilingualism (Evans & McConvell 1998: 125–7; McConvell 1996). The language shift may be linked to a change in social organisation from isolated, endogamous groups to that of increased “alliance, exchange and exogamy” (Evans & McConvell 1998: 184) including, for example, ceremonial events with speakers of other languages, increased trade exchanges, and a view of the incoming language(s) as high status. Changes in climate, availability of natural resources and changes in technology would have played a role in people’s movements. In McConvell’s (2010a) “upstream-downstream” model, people may have recolonised areas when their technology allowed for greater use of the resources in the area, or moved to more richly resourced areas when needed. In some instances these movements would have brought about language shift, in others, transfer of words and structure. For example, when speakers of Eastern Ngumpin (Pama-Nyungan) languages moved from the semi-desert area into the riverine region, perhaps 2000 years ago, they borrowed many words and likely some verbal structure from non-Pama-Nyungan languages into their own languages (McConvell 1996: 133, 2009: 811, 2010b: 776). Lexical semantic patterns also diffused among these languages (McConvell 2010b: 776).

Extensive diffusion of features is found in areas where speakers of different languages interacted frequently, for example, in the linguistic area in south east
Arnhem Land, where large amounts of vocabulary and morphological structure were transferred between Pama-Nyungan and non-Pama-Nyungan languages, especially Ritharrngu (Pama-Nyungan) and Ngandi (non-Pama-Nyungan) (Heath 1978, 1981). The intensive diffusion is attributed to small group size, linguistic exogamy and type of internal social organisation.

A dramatic example of language contact in Australia is the spread of section and subsection terms (known colloquially as ‘skin names’). Subsection terms are used along with kinship terms and personal names, and identify the relationship of the speaker to others in the community. McConvell’s (1985) reconstruction of the origin of Australian subsection systems shows that earlier four-section systems, originating in the south-west, were expanded into eight subsection systems through marriages between different language groups in the lower Victoria River Basin. Four terms belonging to each of two language groups were merged, resulting in a system of eight terms. The subsection system then spread south and west through further language contact. McConvell suggests that the diffusion took place over hundreds of years, perhaps beginning around 1,000 BP, with more recent changes being completed in the mid-nineteenth century (McConvell 1985: fn6 23, 1996: 130–6).

Several cultural-linguistic conventions that favour multilingualism and therefore, language contact, have been practised for long time periods. In East Arnhem Land linguistic exogamy is the norm. Men and women continue to maintain their own languages, and children grow up learning both, ensuring constant multilingualism (Evans 2010). In many areas, when people travel through lands belonging to speakers of other languages, they speak the language belonging to the land they are on (e.g. Evans 2010). Another wide-spread practice is placing a taboo on the names of recently deceased persons, along with other words that begin with similar sounding syllables. Borrowings from other languages can be a source of replacement words. This can lead to high levels of change in vocabulary (Dixon 1980: 28, 2002: 27), including in basic vocabulary (McConvell 2009: 30), which is usually less amenable to replacement than nonbasic vocabulary, but not so much that genetic lines have been obscured (Koch 1997: 41 and references therein).

3 Contact between Australian languages post 1788

Over the last two hundred years, English has left an indelible footprint on the linguistic landscape of Indigenous Australia. Of the approximately 250 languages which were spoken at first contact, only around 18 remain strong. The
shift to English has seen a decline in the use of Indigenous languages and the emergence of a number of contact varieties of English and Indigenous languages. The main language now spoken in many Indigenous communities across northern Australia is Kriol, a creole language which uses English vocabulary while preserving some of the sound system, semantics and grammatical features common to many Indigenous languages (Sandefur 1979; Schultze-Berndt, Meakins, & Angelo 2013) (§3.1). In other areas of Australia, Aboriginal English varieties have come to dominate (Eades 2014) (§3.2). Other Indigenous languages have formed mixed languages by combining with Kriol or English to create a new language, the best known examples being Gurindji Kriol (Meakins 2013a) and Light Warlpiri (O’Shannessy 2005, 2013) (§3.3). Where traditional Indigenous languages are still spoken, many have undergone grammatical restructuring under the influence of English, such as Lardil (Richards 2001), Areyonga Teenage Pitjantjatjara (Langlois 2004) and Young People’s Dyirbal (Schmidt 1985) (§3.4).

The volume provides much-needed descriptions and explanations of contemporary language contact processes in Australia, including work on each of the main types of contact outcomes since colonisation – NSW Pidgin (Ch. 3 McConvell, Ch. 4 Nash), north Australian Kriol (Ch. 5 Dickson, Ch. 6 Bundgaard-Nielsen and Baker; Ch. 8 Angelo & Schultze-Berndt; Ch. 9 Ponsonnet; Ch. 10 Nicholls), Aboriginal English (Ch. 2 Mushin & Watts), mixed languages (Ch. 7 O’Shannessy; Ch. 11 Meakins), and restructured traditional languages (Ch. 1 Evans; Ch. 12 Mansfield; Ch. 13 Meakins and Pensalfini).

This section gives an introduction to the linguistic shift that Australia, as a continent, has undergone since 1788 when British colonists first arrived. More substantial reviews of Australian contact varieties can be found in McConvell (2010c) and Meakins (2014) and specific reviews of the pidgin and creole literature are provided by Mühlhäusler (2008) and can be found in the Atlas of Languages of Intercultural Communication in the Pacific, Asia and the Americas (Wurm, Mühlhäusler, & Tryon 1996).

### 3.1 NSW Pidgin and north Australian Kriol

Most of the work which has been carried out on Australian contact languages has focused on pidgin and creole languages. A number of non-English-based pidgens were used in the past between Indigenous and non-Indigenous people including some based on Australian languages such as Jargon Kaurna spoken in Adelaide (Simpson 1996), Pidgin Ngarluma spoken in the Pilbara region (Dench 1998), and those based on non-Australian languages other than English
such as Pidgin Macassan (Evans 1992; Urry & Walsh 1981), and Broome Pearling Lugger Pidgin which was based on Kupang Malay (Hosokawa 1987). However the majority of pidgins spoken in Australia were English-based. Of particular interest are New South Wales (NSW) Pidgin and Queensland Pidgin English due to their influence on the development of north Australian Kriol, estimated to be spoken by up to 30,000 Aboriginal people across the Top End of Australia from western Cape York (Queensland) to Broome (Western Australia) and south to Tennant Creek (Northern Territory) (see map).

NSW Pidgin originated in the Sydney area when Australia was colonised in 1788 by the British. It probably has its roots in South Seas Jargon which was brought to Australia by early sailing crews. A small number of lexical items from this contact language are still found in north Australian Kriol including too much ‘plenty’, piccaninny ‘child, small’, sabi ‘know, understand’ and catch ‘get’ (Baker 1993; R. Clark 1979). Based on historical sources, Troy (1990) provides a detailed account of the linguistic context in which NSW Pidgin arose which involved South Seas Jargon, English and local Indigenous languages. Communication between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people largely involved the settlers obtaining information which would help the colony, but communication also occurred on a social level with mixed drinking parties. NSW Pidgin further developed with more formal attempts at teaching the local Aboriginal people English. These attempts involved kidnapping Aboriginal men or orphaned children. They were kept captive as English language students, with the expectation that they would become interpreters. The captive students also attempted to teach the colonists some of the Sydney Language which is how a number of Dharuk words entered the developing pidgin.

Troy (1990: 47) suggests that the developing pidgin may have also been a lingua franca among Aboriginal people early on. A likely scenario is that large numbers of Aboriginal people within individual language groups had been decimated by introduced diseases such as small pox and at the hand of the Europeans in killing sprees, and the survivors had then formed new allegiances, using the developing pidgin as a lingua franca. People were also displaced as their land was gradually taken over by the colonists. As a result different groups of Aboriginal people were forced into a closer proximity than had been the case traditionally, with the pidgin becoming their main means of communication. Amery and Mühlhäusler (1996: 38) observe that by 1804 NSW Pidgin was well-established as the language of communication between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people, and between Aboriginal people themselves.

1 Current, accurate published data on numbers of speakers is not available. See, e.g. Angelo and McIntosh (2014) on issues with census data and English-lexified varieties.
The diffusion of NSW Pidgin took a number of routes, including into the Pacific through sea trade (Troy 1990). Varieties of Melanesian Pidgin originate in NSW Pidgin (Baker 1993). NSW Pidgin also spread north to Queensland through both inland and coastal routes (Dutton 1983). Creole varieties subsequently developed in some areas. In the Northern Territory, the pidgin developed into varieties of Kriol, and in the far north Queensland region it developed into Torres Strait Creole (aka Broken, Yumplatok) (Shnukal 1988; Sellwood & Angelo 2013) and its dialect Cape York Creole (Crowley and Rigsby 1979). In addition, a mosaic of English-lexified varieties emerged in Queensland (e.g. Angelo & Carter 2015; Mushin, Angelo & Munro forthcoming).

By the early 1900s, reports from a mission at Roper River (now Ngukurr) in the north suggested that pidgin was no longer just a lingua franca used between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people, but was being learnt as the first language of many Aboriginal children. This is the earliest indication of the emergence of a creole language in northern Australia. Its link to NSW Pidgin is indisputable due to the few words which remain in Kriol from the Sydney Language including bogi ‘swim, bathe’, gabarra ‘head’ and binji ‘stomach’ (Harris 1986: 286 onwards; Troy 2003: 47).

The most detailed account of the emergence of a north Australian Kriol variety comes from Ngukurr (Harris 1986). Ngukurr was originally established as a mission on the banks of the Roper River in 1908. There may have been competing motivations for its establishment, including Christianisation and the creation of a refuge for Aboriginal people escaping massacres at the hands of the Eastern and African Cold Storage Company, which was seizing land in the area for pastoral leases. The mission provided sanctuary for Aboriginal people from nine different language groups. Most Aboriginal people were fluent in two or more of these languages and would have spoken the pidgin English that had spread across northern Australia. For many Aboriginal people, the pidgin became their lingua franca at the mission, with traditional languages reserved for in-group communication. English also had a strong influence on children through schooling.

Two theories exist for the diffusion of Kriol, (i) the monogenesis hypothesis and (ii) the multi-regional hypothesis. The monogenesis hypothesis suggests that Kriol originated at Ngukurr and then spread across northern Australia as a fully-fledged creole in a process of language shift and expansion (Munro 2000). The multi-regional theory proposes that pidgin English spread throughout the north of Australia through the pastoral industry (via imported Aboriginal labour) and creolised in different places (Sandefur & Harris 1986). The monogenesis hypothesis is popularly espoused, however this is probably the result of the disproportionately large amount of work which has focussed on Ngukurr Kriol. It is likely...
that dialects of north Australian Kriol developed independently and their similarity is the result of their shared origins in the pidgin spoken on cattle stations, and similarities in substrate languages (see Meakins 2013b: 381 onwards for arguments).

This volume provides domain specific studies of NSW Pidgin, specifically in the area of kinship (Ch. 3) and placenames (Ch. 4). It also examines a number of structures in north Australian Kriol more closely and in comparison with its Indigenous substrates, including lexical influence in the domain of verbs and kinship (Ch. 5), phonology and the question of a Creole Continuum (Ch. 6), the development of apprehensives (Ch. 8), distinctions between reciprocal and reflexive marking (Ch. 9) and the semantics of determiners (Ch. 10).

3.2 Aboriginal English

The name Aboriginal English is often used as an umbrella term to describe English-based contact varieties spoken by Aboriginal people which are neither Standard Australian English nor described (yet) as a creole. These range across a spectrum of varieties from those which are at a surface level very similar to English to those which are quite dissimilar (e.g. Angelo 2013; Mushin, Angelo & Munro in press; Eades 2013, 2014; Malcolm & Kaldor 1991; Sellwood & Angelo 2013). These varieties are spoken across much of the densely populated areas of Australia, particularly in southern Queensland and Western Australia, and in the southern states, New South Wales, Victoria, Tasmania and South Australia. Varieties of Aboriginal English show features of traditional Australian languages such as zero copula, no gender distinction in pronouns, and possession expressed by apposition. Some varieties are the result of an acrolectalisation of NSW Pidgin or Queensland Pidgin English (I. Clark, Mühlhäusler, & Amery 1996; Foster, Monaghan, & Mühlhäusler 2003) and others have developed as second language learner varieties (Malcolm 2008).

Most of the research which has been undertaken on Aboriginal English has occurred within the context of legal and educational systems. Eades’ (2008) pioneering work within an ethnography of communication framework has demonstrated the different ways in which Aboriginal people speak English and how miscommunication between speakers of SAE and Aboriginal English disadvantage Aboriginal people within the Australian legal system. Work on Aboriginal English within the education system has similarly examined differences between SAE and Aboriginal English. In early work, these differences were framed as deficits, for example the Queensland Speech Survey undertaken by Elwyn Flint and his students in 29 Aboriginal communities in the 1960s (Flint 1968). The
deficit approach made way for a bidialectal approach under the direction of Margaret Sharpe whereby children were encouraged to learn “school talk” but not at the expense of “home talk” (Teasdale & Whitelaw 1981). The bidialectal approach has been expanded, for example, as the program Fostering English Language in Kimberley Schools (FELIKS) (Catholic Education Office, W.A). More recent approaches recognise that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students become multilingual within complex language ecologies consisting of traditional languages, contact varieties and the national standard English (Angelo & Carter 2015). Educational responses include an augmented approach to Siegel’s 2010 Critical Language Awareness, a celebration of students’ ‘translanguaging’ practices (e.g. Garcia 2009) and targeted teaching of English as an Additional Language/Dialect.

Much descriptive work on Aboriginal English has studied the varieties within educational contexts (as shown above), notably also Harkins’ (1994) work in Alice Springs and Malcolm’s (2000) work in Perth, with some exceptions being Koch’s (2000, 2011) work with adult speakers of Central Australian Aboriginal English. This volume extends this descriptive work with a contribution from Mushin & Watts (Ch. 2) which re-examines one of the communities which participated the Queensland Speech Survey (Alexander, 1968).

3.3 Mixed languages

Mixed languages are the result of the fusion of two identifiable source languages, normally in situations of community bilingualism (Matras & Bakker 2003; Meakins 2013b, to appear; Thomason & Kaufman 1988). This dual linguistic parentage means that mixed languages cannot be classified according to standard historical comparative methods (Thomason & Kaufman 1988: 108). They emerge in situations of severe social upheaval, serving as an expression of a new identity or the maintenance of an older identity. Thus they differ from pidgin and creole languages in that their genesis is a product of expressive rather than communicative needs (Golovko 2003: 191; Muysken 1997b: 375). Pidgin and creole languages such as Kriol are born out of the need for communication between people of a number of language groups, whereas mixed languages are created in situations where a common language already exists and communication is not at issue.

Three mixed languages have been documented in Australia: Gurindji Kriol spoken by Gurindji people at Kalkaringi (Victoria River District, Northern Territory) (Meakins, 2013a), Light Warlpiri spoken by Warlpiri people at Lajamanu (North Tanami, Northern Territory) (O’Shannessy 2013), and New Tiwi spoken by Tiwi
people on Melville and Bathurst Islands (off Darwin, Northern Territory) (Lee 1987; McConvell 2002). These mixed languages fuse elements of a traditional Australian language with a contact variety of English. Unlike other mixed languages documented in other parts of the world, they are a recent development, probably only 30–40 years old. They can also be the main language spoken in their respective communities, although they continue to co-exist with their source languages. As a result there is good socio-historical and linguistic information available about the structure and use of these languages and the factors which contributed to their formation.

The work stemming from the documentation of these Australian mixed languages has made an important contribution to a number of debates in the language contact literature surrounding the genesis of mixed languages, including specific questions of whether mixed languages result from the fossilisation of code-switching (McConvell & Meakins 2005; Meakins 2011b; O'Shannessy 2012), and the structural possibilities of language contact, for example the borrowability of inflectional morphology (Meakins 2011a) and the role of typology in shaping the mixed languages (McConvell 2002; Meakins & O'Shannessy 2012).

Mixed languages which demonstrate a high degree of grammatical mixing are quite rare, with only five identified. Three of these are the Australian mixed languages. New Tiwi sources its NP structure from English and its VP structure from Tiwi. Gurindji Kriol and Light Warlpiri mirror this pattern, with Aboriginal English/Kriol providing TAM auxiliaries, and transitive and aspectual suffixes; and Gurindji or Warlpiri providing the nominal frame including derivational morphology and ergative, dative, comitative, locative, allative and ablative case marking. The following example schematically demonstrates a simple transitive clause in Gurindji Kriol in comparison with its source languages. Gurindji elements are italicised, Kriol elements are in plain font and bolded elements indicate the source of forms. Brackets indicate optional elements. The structure of Light Warlpiri is similar but has clear differences, especially in verbal structure (O'Shannessy, 2013).

What is remarkable about the clause structure of Gurindji Kriol and Light Warlpiri is the combination of inflectional categories from both source languages given that the transfer of inflectional morphology from one language to another is exceptional in its rarity. It always occupies the lowest rung on borrowability hierarchies (Gardani, 2008; Matras, 2007) and is most generally derived from the more dominant language in code-switching (Muysken 2000, Myers-Scotton 2002). Yet it is this very structure which characterises the composite morphosyntactic structure of and Gurindji Kriol and Light Warlpiri. Indeed Matras (2003: 158) suggests that a particular feature of mixed languages is the seemingly unconstrained borrowing of grammatical elements, which in the past have been labelled as ‘loan proof’.
The man speared the goanna with a stick.

This volume provides further studies of the case systems in Gurindji Kriol and Light Warlpiri including the grammaticalisation of the locative marker into a present tense suffix through a process of insubordination in Gurindji Kriol (Ch 11) and the entrenchment of case allomorphy in Light Warlpiri (Ch 7).

3.4 Restructured languages

English has had a less obvious impact on a number of other Australian languages. These languages continue to be spoken but have undergone restructuring under the influence of English grammar. A number of studies have examined restructured varieties of Warlpiri (Bavin & Shopen 2004), Dyirbal (Schmidt 1985a, 1985b), Jingulu (Pensalfini 1999b), New Lardil (Richards 2001), Pitjantjatjara (Langlois 2004), and Arabana and Paakantyi (Hercus 2005). Most of these studies have focussed on changes in the case system resulting from contact with English, in particular (i) the solidification of word order coupled with the loss of structural case marking, and (ii) the loss of the in/alienable distinction in possessive constructions.

One of the most commonly observed changes to Australian languages is the optional use of the ergative case marker. Optional ergativity has most commonly been observed as an internal feature of some Australian languages (see the special 2010 issue of Lingua 120.7), but can also be attributed to language contact, specifically, the adoption of the English/Kriol SVO word order system of indicating arguments, and the decreasing use of ergative case-marking (see Meakins & O’Shannessy 2010 for an overview). For example, Schmidt (1985), in her examination of structural change in Dyirbal, describes optional ergativity in terms of the incremental replacement of the case marking system. In Dyirbal the loss of the case marking system corresponds to a gradual increase in the use of
English word order and prepositions. In this in-between stage of language loss, ergative marking has become optional. Her predicted end point is the complete replacement of the Dyirbal system of argument marking with the English word order system. Optional ergativity is also a feature of the mixed languages Gurindji Kriol and Light Warlpiri.

Changes in possessive constructions is another commonly observed change in languages undergoing restructuring. A number of languages including Arabana, Paakantyi and Areyonga Teenage Pitjantjatjara have undergone the erosion of the alienable-inalienable distinction. Hercus (2005) attributes this structural change in Arabana (northern South Australia) and Paakantyi (Darling River, New South Wales) to contact with English. In Arabana, inalienable and alienable nominals continue to be differentiated in possessive constructions which contain two nominals, however this distinction is not being maintained in constructions which relate possessive pronouns to nominals. Hercus also gives a similar account of in/alienability in Paakantyi, and claims that the change in both languages is an outcome of contact with English, which does not distinguish inalienable nominals in attributive possessive constructions. In the case of Areyonga Teenage Pitjantjatjara, both alienable and inalienable nominals are being marked genitive, where inalienables were previously unmarked (Langlois 2004: 84).

This volume provides of further cases of restructuring beyond case systems such as the expansion of a marginal complex predicate structure in Murrinhpatha (Ch 12) and changes in the gender system of Jingulu (Ch 13).

4 Structure of the volume

The structure of the book is given below. After the introduction, the book is broadly divided into three sections:

II Transfer of form: Structure
(1) As intimate as it gets? Paradigm borrowing in Marrku and its implications for the emergence of mixed languages (Evans)
(2) Identifying the grammars of Queensland ex-Government reserve varieties: The case of Woorie Talk (Mushin & Watts)

III Transfer of form: Lexical
(3) Kinship loanwords in Indigenous Australia, before and after colonisation (McConvell)
IV Transfer of form: Phonological

(6) The continuum in Kriol: fact or furphy? (Bundgaard-Nielsen & Baker)

(7) Entrenchment of Light Warlpiri morphology (O’Shannessy)

V Transfer of function, structure, distribution and semantics

(8) Beware of ‘bambai’ – soon it may turn apprehensive (Angelo & Schultze-Berndt)

(9) Reflexive, reciprocal and emphatic functions in Barunga Kriol (Ponsonnet)

(10) Grammaticalization and interactional pragmatics: A description of the recognitional determiner det in Roper River Kriol (Nicholls)

VI (Further) Development of new structures

(11) No fixed address: The grammaticalisation of the Gurindji locative as a progressive suffix (Meakins)

(12) Light verb structure in Murrinh-Patha (Mansfield)

(13) Gender bender: Superclassing in Jingulu gender marking (Meakins & Pensalfini)

The first two sections follow Matras and Sakel’s (2007) distinction of MAT(ter) versus PAT(tern) borrowing. This distinction captures the difference between the transfer of surface level linguistic material such as lexemes, morphemes and phonological material versus the transfer of categories such as functional distributions, paradigmatic structures and lexical semantics. Section 2 focuses on MAT(ter) borrowing, examining the transfer of structural material such as verb paradigms (Ch. 1) and structures for temporal reference (Ch. 2); the transfer of lexical items such as kinship terms (Ch. 3), placenames (Ch. 4); and verbs (Ch. 5); and finally the transfer of phonological forms and processes such as phonemes (Ch. 6) and case markers and their allomorphs (Ch. 7). Section 3 then turns the reader’s attention to the PAT(tern) borrowings, specifically the transfer of Australian language semantics in the domains of a modal category, the apprehensive (Ch. 8), expressions of reciprocity and reflexivity (Ch. 9), and Australian language pragmatics in the domain of determiners (Ch. 10). Finally Section 4 considers the development of new structures in Australian contact languages, specifically in the functions of locative case (Ch. 11), complex verb structures (Ch. 12) and gender realignment (Ch. 13).

The volume begins with Paradigm borrowing in Marrku by Nick Evans. This paper is a case study of language contact which occurred before the colonisation of Australia, nonetheless it gives an insight into the kinds of contact processes which were underway in Australia before English was added to the linguistic
landscape. Evans argues that Marrku (non-Pama-Nyungan), spoken in the highly multilingual context of the Croker Peninsular Region, can be regarded as a precursor to a mixed language (§3.3). Marrku has borrowed complete paradigms for subject/object/TAM prefixing and TAM suffixing for some borrowed verbs, as well as the pronominal paradigm for reflexives. In particular, the borrowing of entire paradigms of verb inflections has implications for the emergence of mixed languages such as Gurindji Kriol and Light Warlpiri which exhibit verb structures from a language different from that which provides the nominal structure.

The complex layering of influences on a contact variety of English spoken in Woorabinda, a small community in Queensland, is investigated by Ilana Mushin and Janet Watts in Identifying the Grammars of Queensland ex-Government Reserve Varieties: The Case of Woorie Talk. Focusing on expressions of future time in a contemporary variety called “Woorie Talk”, the chapter traces influences on its formation from regional varieties of English, varieties of Pidgin and traditional languages. A strength of the indepth study is that it collates historical and socio-linguistic information about the forced relocation of speakers of many Australian languages, moved to government-controlled Reserves in the early twentieth century, and aligns this with structural analysis.

In Kinship loanwords in Indigenous Australia, McConvell demonstrates a continuity of borrowing practices with respect to kinterms in Australia before and after colonisation. He observes that Matras’ (2009) borrowability hierarchy of kinship terms – collateral terms (e.g. uncle, aunt, cousin) > affinal terms (e.g. spouse, in-laws) > lineal terms (e.g. parents, siblings) – applies well to the Australian context in both borrowings between traditional Australian languages and also borrowings from Aboriginal English or Kriol in traditional languages. McConvell notes that, in the latter cases, English/Kriol words are mapped onto Indigenous kinship structures in a process of relexification. For example, granny has been borrowed into many Indigenous languages to refer to maternal grandchildren of either gender as well as a maternal grandmother which reflects the use of the comparable Indigenous terms. Most curious is the case of cousin which has come to mean mother-in-law. Throughout the paper McConvell details the considerable complexity of identifying contact influence versus inheritance in the domain of kinship terms, and shows that the kinds of processes that take place elsewhere in the world with kinterms have taken place in Australian languages also.

Placenames supplement the rare insights into the use of nineteenth century Pidgin in Placenames from NSW Pidgin: Bulga, Nyrang by David Nash. The Pidgin placenames were probably co-constructed by locally resident speakers of traditional languages and of English, in contrast to those introduced by either of those groups of speakers independently. Nash details how the Pidgin names
show a mix of the formal and semantic patterns of Indigenous and introduced placenames. For instance, Indigenous placenames are rarely modified by a descriptive adjective, but some Pidgin names incorporate the words for ‘big’ *gabun* and ‘small’ *ngarang* from the Sydney Language into the name. The chapter also shows how placenames can assist in tracing the spread of Pidgin beyond its origins in Sydney and New South Wales.

The lexicon provides new data about the formation of Kriol, as Greg Dickson offers a nuanced view of how substrate languages may have contributed differentially to Kriol as it formed, in his chapter, *Rethinking the Substrate Languages of Roper Kriol: The Case of Marra*. Dickson analyses historical evidence, kin and ethnobiological terms, and verbs from traditional languages, arguing that rather than viewing all of the relevant languages as having made approximately equal contributions to grammar and lexicon, it is likely that some languages contributed more than others, specifically those in the Marran family.

An under-researched area in language contact in Australia, that of Kriol phonology, is addressed in *The continuum in Kriol: fact or furphy?* by Rikke Bundgaard-Nielsen and Brett Baker. The authors use production and perception studies to investigate early claims that the phonological systems of Kriol speakers are best characterised as a continuum ranging from basilectal styles (more like the systems of Australian languages) to acrolectal styles (more like the system of Australian English) (Sandefur 1979, 1984, 1986), and that obstruents in Kriol do not have a voicing distinction. They find that speakers of Kriol as a first language produce and perceive Kriol obstruents in a manner consistent with a single, invariable phonological system. This system has elements from the Australian substrate languages, and from English, but is identical to neither.

Phonology and morphology interact in Carmel O’Shannessy’s study of the dynamics Light Warlpiri ergative and dative case marking, in *Entrenchment of Light Warlpiri Morphology*. A longitudinal study of ergative and dative case morphology in children’s texts is examined at two time points, five years apart. A surprising finding is that the frequency of ergative case marking has increased in that time period, from occurring on an average of 59% of overt subjects of transitive verbs in 2005 data, to occurring on an average of 79% of overt transitive subjects in 2010 data, bringing the amount of marking in line with that in Warlpiri texts by the same cohort of speakers. The unexpected increase is attributed to continuing contact with Warlpiri. An examination of the allomorphy of the two cases shows that an earlier trend of reduction in the number of allomorphs (O’Shannessy, To Appear) had become entrenched over a five year period. The findings show both dynamism and regularity in the two systems of case morphology.
Section 3 turns to transfer of function, structure, distribution and semantics, where varieties of Kriol are influenced at multiple levels, by other Kriol varieties and by Australian languages. Denise Angelo and Eva Schultze-Berndt begin the section with their chapter, Beware of ‘bambai’ – soon it may turn apprehensive. In the study they present evidence for a semantic extension of a temporal marker *bambai* (‘soon’, ‘later’, ‘then’) which is attested in English-lexified contact languages of Australia and the Pacific, to the function of an apprehensive modal, in at least some varieties of Kriol. Through very detailed tracking of available data they show that substrate influence and internal grammaticalisation are both likely to have played roles in the semantic change. Australian languages typically have a category for expressing apprehension, providing a semantic motivation. This is coupled with crosslinguistic evidence that a temporal category can conventionalise to create an apprehensive reading.

Structural transfer as a likely result of contact with other Kriol varieties as well as Australian languages, including substrate languages, is seen in Barunga Kriol, documented by Maïa Ponsonnet in *Refl exive, reciprocal and emphatic functions in Barunga Kriol*. Early descriptions of reflexive, reciprocal and emphatic functions in this variety show that they patterned similarly to English, in that reflexive and reciprocal functions were distinguished by different words. Now the word that described reflexive situations is also used to describe some reciprocal situations; and the word that formerly described all reciprocal situations now applies only in some of those contexts. The choice is made according to degree of transitivity – one word is used in semi-transitive clauses, and the other in transitive clauses. In addition, the emphatic marker, which used to be segmentally identical to the reflexive marker, has now developed as a distinct form. It appears that multiple levels of language contact have contributed to the innovations.

Nicholls’ paper continues the examination of substrate influences of Australian languages on Kriol. In this study, Nicholls provides evidence for stages of the grammaticalisation of the English distal demonstrative *that* into a recognitional article *det* in Roper Kriol and suggests pragmatic motivations for such a change. Nicholls describes the use of *det* in discourse to introduce familiar referents to the discourse while allowing the speaker to maintain a high level of circumspection, particularly in relation to place and people reference. She argues that this function is not found in article systems in other creole languages, such as Melanesian pidgins, but rather is the result of influence from Australian languages which have articles that precede proper names, generic terms and mark topics in the same manner as Roper Kriol. Nicholls suggests that the transfer of this feature from Australian languages has created a continuity of discourse practices from traditional Aboriginal languages into Roper Kriol.
Meakins’ chapter on the grammaticalisation of the locative case marker in Gurindji Kriol into a present tense suffix begins Section Four which focuses on (further) developments of new structures. Gurindji Kriol is a mixed language spoken in northern Australia which is a lexical and structural fusion of Gurindji, a Pama-Nyungan language, and Kriol, an English-lexifier creole language (§3.3). Gurindji Kriol has maintained the case system of Gurindji, albeit with some innovations. One of those innovations is the use of the locative case suffix -ja/-ngka to mark the present (progressive) in Gurindji Kriol in presentative constructions. Cross-linguistically, it is not unusual for locative constructions to grammaticalise into progressive markers and later present tense markers (Bybee, Perkins, & Pagliuca, 1994). This process occurs as the locative undergoes a metaphorical extension from indicating space to indicating time. Insusbordination involving case markers such as the locative seems to be one path which contributes to this grammaticalisation process and has been historically reconstructed for a number of Australian languages (Evans 2007). In the case of Gurindji Kriol, the process has occurred within a single generation of Gurindji people and seems to have been accelerated by language contact. Thus Meakins suggests that situations such as these provide a window on language change processes such as grammaticalisation.

In other language contact situations, an expansion in a minor use pattern occurs as a result of accommodating material from another language (Heine & Kuteva 2005). Mansfield demonstrates such a change in *The rise of phrasal verbs in Murrinhpatha*. Murrinhpatha is a polysynthetic language of the Daly River region in the Northern Territory which is one of the few Australian languages still being learnt by children. Mansfield argues that a recent and substantial increase in the use of a phrasal verb structure in Murrinhpatha, alongside the existing morphologically complex verb, is largely due to an influx of verb borrowings from English/Kriol. This structure is widespread in its usage amongst younger Murrinhpatha speakers and is one of many linguistic differences now apparent between generations of Murrinhpatha speakers.

The volume ends with *Gender Bender: Realignment of Gender in Jingulu*. Meakins and Pensalfini argue that obsolescence situations where languages are undergoing rapid change may provide valuable data for understanding change in languages with stronger speaker bases. They claim that, although obsolescing languages are often characterised as displaying high levels of variation and optionality, changes are nonetheless highly rule governed. Meakins and Pensalfini use the noun class system of Jingulu, a highly endangered non-Pama-Nyungan language, as an example of such principled change. Jingulu was documented by Chadwick in the 1970s and later by Pensalfini in the 1990s. During this time, Jingulu had undergone a number of changes attributable to language obsoles-
cence. One change occurred in the noun class system. Jingulu distinguishes four
genders: masculine (I), feminine (II), vegetable (III) and neuter (IV). NP modi-
fiers such as adjectives and demonstratives generally show agreement in gender
with the head noun, however Pensalfini (1999a) also observed that modifiers
can optionally ‘disagree’ with their head. Disagreement is principled and hierar-
chical with masculine-marked modifiers optionally found with heads of all four
genders and neuter-marked modifiers optionally found with heads of the vegeta-
table gender. This system was not in place when Chadwick first documented the
language 20 years prior, suggesting the phenomenon described is the result of
language change. However similar patterns have also been observed in other
languages, for example Wambaya (Nordlinger 1998) and a number of Gunwiny-
guan languages (Evans, Brown, & Corbett 2002) but are not considered the
result of obsolescence, suggesting that the health of a language is irrelevant as
an explanatory mechanism for gender disagreement.

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