Continuities and Discontinuities Affecting Aboriginal Learners

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1. Evidence for continuity in grammar

a) Morphological Continuity of Aboriginal English with Traditional Languages and Pidgin/Creole

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Morphological feature</th>
<th>Aboriginal English</th>
<th>Continuities (TL; K or TSC)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Noun plural marking</td>
<td>Those.. are nothing but piece of paper [La Perouse]</td>
<td>TL: Eades 2013:61; Harkins 94:45-6 K: Sandefur 79:78</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>MK 97:62</td>
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<td></td>
<td>KM79:421</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>KM82:102; me'n'you = 1p dual incl; youtwofella = 2p dual [Barrow Ck] (Koch 2000:41)</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>KM 79:422</td>
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b) Syntactic continuity of Aboriginal English with Traditional Languages and Pidgin/Creole

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<tr>
<td>Non-use of copula to relate a subject to a complement</td>
<td>Where John? [Port Hedland]</td>
<td>TL: Geytenbeek 77:40; Eades 2013:61</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

c) Morphological Continuity of Aboriginal English with Kriol or Torres Strait Creole

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Morphological feature</th>
<th>Aboriginal English</th>
<th>Continuity (K, TSC)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Adjective suffixing</td>
<td>muticar, red-one [pan-regional]</td>
<td>K: Sharpe &amp; Sandefur 77:59,56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Butcher 2008:635</td>
<td>gulbala ‘cool’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Numeral for definite article</td>
<td>They saw one man [Leonora]</td>
<td>K: Sandefur 1979:79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Collard 1979:122</td>
<td>wanbala bont ‘a pony’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Superlative suffix for extent</td>
<td>catch one biggest turtle</td>
<td>K: Sandefur 1979:102</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Butcher 2008:635</td>
<td>bigiswan bijibiji ‘very big fish’</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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c) Syntactic continuity of Aboriginal English with Kriol or Torres Strait Creole

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<tr>
<td>Continuous aspect without be auxiliary</td>
<td>they comin this way [Perth]</td>
<td>K: Sandefur 1979:132</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Existential clauses with get ('there is/are')

<table>
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<tr>
<th>English</th>
<th>Aboriginal English</th>
<th>Suggested Continuity</th>
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</thead>
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<tr>
<td>E got some sand [Broome]</td>
<td>meet you at the big crates [Perth]</td>
<td>Irish English</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Passive voice with get</td>
<td>them girls mighta got picked up [Perth]</td>
<td>Non-standard English variety, possibly N/S Australian English</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Serial verbs</td>
<td>wind blow me knock me over [Gnowangerup]</td>
<td>Non-standard English variety or Melanesian &amp; NSW Pidgin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Preverbal past tense marker bin</td>
<td>I bin run [Leonora]</td>
<td>Simplification feature (pidginization)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

2. Evidence for continuity in Lexis and Semantics

2a) Switches from Traditional Languages

- **pikurta** = kangaroo (Yamatji, Carnarvon) I killed a pikurta (EKM 1982:221)
- **marlu** = kangaroo (Wongai, Kellerberrin) “My pop shot one, one, one um one marlu right in the um um eye...” (Malcolm et al 1999:58)
- **jinung** = foot (SE Queensland) Move your big jinung [eye] or something.” (Harkins 1984)
- **kurlungka** = schoolchild (Wongai, Kellerberrin) “I know what a kid is...kurlungka. My dad..my dad told me...” (Malcolm et al 1999:59)

2b) Traditional Language items with English affixes

- **yorgas/yorks** = females (Nyungar, Perth) (Collard 2011:5, 37)
- **djerupin/jirrapin** = excited, excitable, happy (Nyungar, Perth) (Collard 2011:39)
- **kepered up** = being drunk (Nyungar, Perth) (Malcolm et al 1999:44)

2c) English items with Traditional Language affixes

- **We been see Megan-watha’ We saw Megan’s family’** (Roebourne, WA) [Yindjibarndi] (Malcolm et al 1999:46)

2d) Switches from Traditional Languages with Semantic Shift

- **monartj** = uniformed policeman (from Nyungar ‘cockatoo’) (Collard 2011:9, 23)
- **boya** = money (from Nyungar ‘trading rocks’) (Collard 2011:17)
- **kepa** = alcoholic drink (from Nyungar ke:p, ‘water’) (Malcolm et al 1999:44).
e) English items with Semantic Shift

- **liar/lie**: pretend, deceive, break a promise, lie.
  
  "E bin lie-drop it' "He pretended to drop it" [Broome WA] (KM 82:98)

- **country**: traditional land, c.f. *kantri*, 'one’s people’s country' (KK 93:46)
  
  "E bin lie-drop it' "He pretended to drop it" [Broome WA] (KM 82:98)

- **auntie**: fathers’/mothers’ sisters, wives of mothers’ brothers, nieces may also be used as a term of respect for older women (Nyungar, Collard p.c.)

  c.f. Kriol *anti* = ‘father’s sisters and other females in her subsection’ (Hudson 1981:146)

- **uncle**: mother’s brothers, husbands of mother’s sisters, nephews (Nyungar, Collard p.c.)

  Ungkul, ‘mother’s brothers and other males in his subsection (Hudson 1981:146).

- **mummy**: ‘mother or baby’ (Malcolm 2001:229)

- **grannies**: grandchildren and/or grandparents (Malcolm et al 1999:45)

- **man**: ‘initiated man’ (Arthur 1996:46)

  Make someone a young man ‘initiate him’ (Koch 1985)

- **kine**: way (from ‘kind’)

  "Mummy lie-say dis kine... ‘Mummy said pretendingly this way...' [Broome, WA] (EKM 1982:98)

- **fly** (metaphorical) “Bird [name] flew in and flew out” (Collard, p.c.)

- **jar**: sternly reprove (Malcolm et al 1999:45). In the South West, this carries association with *jarra* = jarrah tree, which could provide punishment sticks (Collard, p.c.)

- **open**: empty, penniless, pathetic, exhausted, etc. (Malcolm et al 1999:45)

- **learn**: teach ‘they learn me to talk all Nyungar words’ (KC 2002:83)

f) English items with Semantic Shift Shared by Melanesian or NSW Pidgin

- **stop**: stay (at least overnight)

- **sit down**: camp, c.f. Kriol *jidan*, be, dwell (Sandefur 1979:184)

  (also occurring “in most Australian languages” (Dixon 1980:116)

- **d’rekly**: soon (Collard 2011:39).

- **blackfellow**: Aborigine (Simpson 1996:187)

- **along/longa/la**: multipurpose preposition (Koch 1985:183; KM 79:429; EKM 82:88; Simpson 1996:187-8)

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3. Evidence for Continuity in Speech Use

- kin relationships are crucial to interaction (Eades 1982)
- questioning may be less necessary (Eades 1982)
- answering questions promptly (if at all) may not be required (Eades 1982)
- one may need to offer information to trigger information in return (Eades 1982)
- oral narrative employs preferred modes of organization (e.g. travel, hunting, etc.) (Malcolm & Rochecouste 2000)
- interaction may be “communal” or “broadcast” (Walsh 1991) with observations, inferences and intended action being announced (Malcolm 2009)

4. Evidence for Continuity in Conceptualization

- re-schematizing of SAE input to conform to cultural conceptual patterns
• utterances in English may follow cultural conceptual patterns (Sharifian et al 2004)

References


Douglas, Wilf H. (1977) “The problems experienced by vernacular-speaking Aboriginal children when English only is used as the medium of instruction.” In Ed Brumby and Eric Vaszolyi (eds.) *Language Problems and Aboriginal Education* (pp. 61-68). Mount Lawley: Aboriginal Teacher Education Program, Mount Lawley College of Advanced Education.


Sharpe, Margaret C. and Sandefur, John (1977) “A brief description of Roper Creole.” In Ed Brumby and Eric Vaszolyi (Eds.) *Language Problems and Aboriginal Education*. (pp. 51-60). Mount Lawley: Aboriginal Teacher Education Program, Mount Lawley College of Advanced Education. (SS77)
