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# **Barunga Kriol**

## **A Linguistic Analysis of the Use of Barunga Kriol in Children's Books**

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### **1 Introduction**

Contrary to popular belief that there exists just one traditional Australian language with various dialects, linguistic research has shown that the language ecology on the Australian continent is much more complex and exhibits a rich linguistic diversity (Walsh 1993, 1). According to Koch and Nordlinger (2014, 3), up to 800 different language varieties, which can be grouped into over 250 distinct languages, were spoken in Australia at the time of colonisation in the late eighteenth century. Today, more than 200 years after the first European contact, the devastating effects of colonisation are evident, as statistics demonstrate a rapid decline in the use of traditional Australian languages – with a recent study ranking Australia amongst the areas with the highest rate of language loss to date (Bromham et al. 2022, 165). Out of the 250 originally spoken languages, less than twenty are still learned by children, while another hundred are in various levels of endangerment (Koch and Nordlinger 2014, 4). According to the *Language Statistics for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples 2021* provided by the Australian Bureau of Statistics (henceforth ABS), 78 languages are no longer spoken by children aged 0-14 years and are therefore prone to become dormant (ABS 2022a).

However, apart from language loss and endangerment, the sustained contact has also resulted in the development of so-called contact varieties – one of them being Kriol in the Northern Territory. While officially, the number of Kriol speakers is set around 7,400 (ABS 2022a), linguists believe the actual numbers vary between 20,000-30,000 speakers (Marmion, Obata and Troy 2014, 18), making it the most commonly used language in the Northern Territory after English (Dickson 2016; ABS 2022b). Although it is generally classified by the Australian government as a “new Indigenous language” (cf. ABS 2022a), it continues to be stigmatized. Combining elements of English and several traditional Australian languages, the widespread use of Kriol often tends to be perceived as a threat to the traditional languages spoken in

the respective areas (Meakins 2014, 391). Interestingly, the *Second National Indigenous Language Survey (NILS2)* conducted in 2014 showed that contact varieties count more speakers than traditional languages (Marmion, Obata and Troy 2014, 18). While language demise is generally understood as a loss of culture (cf. Henderson and Nash 1997; McConvell and Thieberger 2001), other scholars stress that the continuing growth of contact varieties represents an attempt for cultural maintenance (Walsh 2007, 88) and should thus be viewed as “the adopted code of a surviving culture” (Malcolm 2001, 217). Evidence for cultural continuity can be found in the structure of the contact languages themselves, as they still contain prototypical elements of traditional Australian languages (Eades 2013, 80).

Given its growing number of speakers and its significant role in preserving First Nations cultural identity and knowledge, this seminar paper provides a linguistic analysis of the use of Barunga Kriol, formerly known as Bamyili Kriol, which is the regional contact variety primarily spoken in the communities of Barunga and Beswick in the Northern Territory. For this purpose, four children’s books written in Barunga Kriol which had been published during the 1990s with the intention of being employed for educational purposes in the local bilingual education program were translated with the help of the Online Kriol-English Dictionary (Australian Society for Indigenous Languages 2014) and linguistically analysed by providing glossed texts following the conventions of the Leipzig Glossing Rules (2008).

The paper is structured into three main parts and commences by outlining the sociodemographic context of Barunga Kriol by offering some general information about its location and speaker community as well as explaining its socio-historical origin and its role in the Barunga community today. The second part of this paper is concerned with the linguistic context of Barunga Kriol and describes the super- and substrate languages of Barunga Kriol, before giving an overview of some of its linguistic features. The remaining part focuses on the use of Barunga Kriol in a selection of children’s books. This chapter includes a detailed description of the data and methodology employed in this paper, before proceeding to linguistically analyse and discuss the language used in the selected books. It should be kept in mind that languages are not static, which, due to their lack of standardisation, holds particularly true for contact varieties. Thus, the findings and inferences drawn in this paper are solely based on a limited selection of written texts from the 1990s and cannot be generalised.

In complying with the *Code of Ethics for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Research* published by the Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies (henceforth AIATSIS) (2020), as well as the guidelines laid out by Narragunnawali (Reconciliation in Education) (n.d.), this paper uses the term “Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples”, “First Nations” and “First Australians” to refer to people of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander descent. Furthermore, in following the terminology used in the *National Indigenous Languages Report* from 2020, the terms “Australian languages” and “traditional

languages” refer to languages that have been spoken by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples prior to colonisation in 1788 as well as the directly descended language varieties spoken today, while “new languages” or “contact varieties” refer to Australian languages which have developed since 1788 due to sustained contact between speakers of traditional languages and speakers of English in particular (Commonwealth of Australia 2020).

## 2 Sociodemographic Context

### 2.1 “Kriol”, Barunga Kriol and its Speakers

“Kriol” is the term used to collectively refer to a number of English-lexifier contact varieties spoken in the Top End in the Northern Territory (henceforth NT), which covers the northern part of the NT, parts of Queensland and Western Australia (see Figure 1 below). Remarkably, it is currently the most commonly spoken language in the NT after English (ABS 2022b) and counts between 20,000-30,000 speakers (Marmion, Obata and Troy 2014, 18).

Since academic interest in Kriol studies began in the 1960s, linguists have identified several regional varieties, which, on a very general level, tend to be grouped into “eastern” and “western varieties”. Towards the west of the Kriol-speaking area, linguists have described varieties such as Fitzroy Valley Kriol (cf. Hudson 1985) and Westside Kriol, which is spoken around the Timber Creek area. Eastern varieties include Roper River Kriol (cf. Sandefur 1979) and Barunga Kriol (cf. Ponsonnet 2010). This paper focuses on Barunga Kriol, which is the contact variety spoken in the communities of Barunga, Weemol and Beswick.

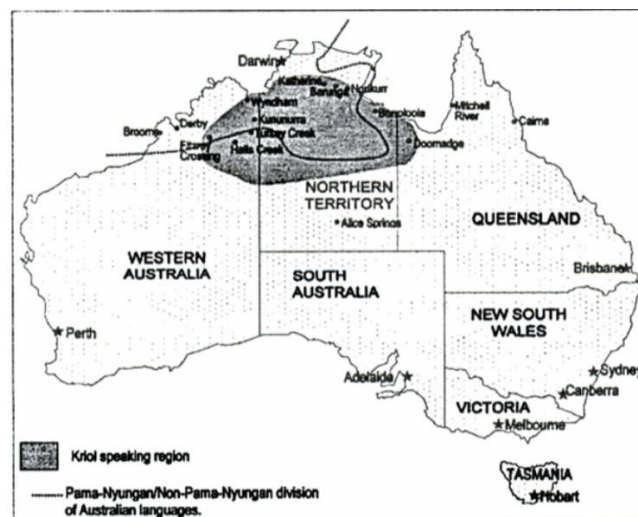


Figure 1: Kriol Speaking Area (Munro 2000, 246)

Barunga, also known as Bamyili, is located 80 kilometres south-east of the service town of Katherine on the Central Arnhem Road. It has around 340 inhabitants, almost all of whom identify themselves as being of Aboriginal and/or

Torres Strait Islander descent and speak Kriol and/or a traditional language at home (ABS 2021). Moreover, Barunga is a closed community and a permit to visit it needs to be obtained from the Northern Land Council beforehand, which serves as a measure to protect the privacy of the communities and preserve their culture (Northern Land Council 2023).

The town also holds an important place in Australia's First Nations history and is often associated with *The Barunga Statement* which, issued in 1988, was directed at former Prime Minister Bob Hawke and called for the establishment of a treaty. Although the statement was signed, it has never been brought before Parliament (AIATSIS 2022). However, in 2018 treaty negotiations were resumed and the famous *Barunga Agreement*, a Memorandum of Understanding, was signed, by which the NT Government agreed to the establishment and funding of a Northern Territory Treaty Commission to consult and lay out a possible framework for a treaty in the NT. Their final report was provided in 2022, and their proposed measures are now being processed by the Treaty Unit within the Department of the Chief Minister's Office of Aboriginal Affairs (Northern Territory Government of Australia 2023).

## 2.2 Socio-Historical Background

As Meakins (2014, 379) explains, Kriol has its roots in Queensland Pidgin English which ultimately stems from New South Wales Pidgin (henceforth NSW Pidgin). Historically, NSW Pidgin developed during the invasion of Australia in 1788 with the establishment of the penal colony at Warrane (now Sydney Cove) and was born out of the need for communication between the Eora and the Europeans (Troy 1990, 15). As the new penal settlement in Moreton Bay (now Brisbane) was formed, NSW Pidgin eventually diffused north into Queensland, where it led to the development of Queensland Pidgin English which later on continued to spread inland through the pastoral industry (Meakins 2014, 371).

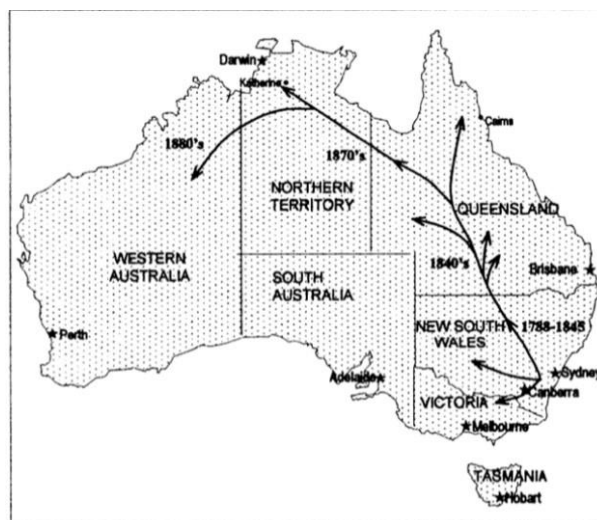


Figure 2: Path of NSW Pidgin and Queensland Pidgin English (Munro 2000, 260)

It should be noted here that another English-based contact variety emerged in the NT, the so-called NT Pidgin English which developed relatively independent of NSW Pidgin in the late 1830s before Queensland Pidgin English had even found its way into the NT. It originally developed in Port Essington, a port established by the British colonists with the aim of facilitating trade in the Asian region. However, as Meakins (2014, 376) points out, NT Pidgin was only short-lived, as the settlement lasted for merely eleven years and the pidgin was eventually replaced by varieties based on Queensland Pidgin English. However, some scholars (cf. Ponsonnet 2010; Dickson and Durantin 2019) often refer to NT Pidgin English as the origin of Kriol. Yet, evidence for the influence of NSW-/ Queensland Pidgin English on Kriol has been found, with Kriol still exhibiting some structural similarities and a number of words from the old Sydney language, which served as the substrate language for NSW Pidgin, such as *bogi* 'to swim', *gabarra* 'head' and *binji* 'stomach' (Troy 2003, 47).

Regarding Kriol itself, the earliest observation of its emergence was recorded at Roper River Mission (now Ngukurr) (Harris 1986). As the pastoral industry moved into the Roper River area in NT in the late 1870s, First Nations men started working as stockmen for cattle drovers, who most likely brought Queensland Pidgin English with them. In 1903, the Eastern and African Cold Storage Company were seizing land in the area for pastoral leases and undertook measures to remove traditional owners from their land. In an attempt to escape the brutal massacres, First Nations in the region sought shelter in the Roper River Mission, a mission that had been established in 1908 by the Christian Mission Society. It is believed that the mission provided refuge for people from different language groups. Since multilingualism was common among First Nations communities, most were likely fluent in two or more of these languages, while they would have also been speaking the pidgin English in addition. Given that they were now living in closer proximity, the pidgin soon became the lingua franca used at the mission between First Nations and European colonists as well as disparate groups of First Nations itself (Munro 2014, 378). However, the exact process by which creolisation at Roper River Mission occurred is still unclear. Reports suggest that by the early 1900s, the pidgin no longer merely served as a lingua franca but was now being learned as the first language of many First Nations children (ibid., 374).

While the development of Roper River Kriol has been thoroughly described, little is known about the circumstances under which it occurred in the Barunga region. However, Sandefur (1979, 14) points out that Kriol is likely to have emerged in the Barunga community a few decades later than in the Roper River region. Yet, the exact origins of the regional variety are still debated. In following a monogenesis hypothesis, Munro (2000) suggests that Kriol originated at Roper River Mission (now Ngukurr) and later spread across northern Australia as a fully developed creole due to language shift. The multi-regional theory, on the other hand, proposes an independent creolisation of Queensland Pidgin English in different regions as the pidgin diffused across the north driven by the pastoral industry (cf. Sandefur and Harris 1986). Regardless of genesis scenarios, evidence for the influence of Roper

River Kriol on Barunga Kriol persists. However, as Ponsonnet (2016, 299f.) points out, it is unclear whether these influences stem from past diffusion or more recent contact.

### **2.3 The Role of Barunga Kriol in the Community**

Given that Barunga is a largely Kriol-speaking community, the sociolinguistic situation of the regional contact variety needs to be further outlined. In fact, of the 340 inhabitants, 270 reported speaking Kriol and/or a traditional language at home, while 37 reportedly spoke English only (ABS 2021). According to Ponsonnet (2018, 100), many of the older Barunga Kriol speakers still speak one or several traditional languages in addition to Kriol. However, mastery or knowledge of a traditional language declines with the younger speaker population. This makes Kriol the main language of daily interaction in the household and community, while English is reserved for areas such as education and media. In general, Kriol can be classified as an in-group or “insider” language as it is only spoken by First Nations to First Nations (Dickson and Durantin 2019, 173). As Rhydwen (1995, 117) observed during fieldwork in Barunga, there are special rules about the appropriateness of the use of Kriol. These apply especially in conversations with non-First Nations people and include the decision about whether Kriol or English was the more appropriate language to use in certain contexts. This choice generally extends to First Nations (ibid.).

Rather than a type of English, Kriol has been recognised as a language in its own and is often categorized as a “new Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander language” (cf. ABS 2022a) as opposed to traditional languages. As Meakins (2014, 391) outlines, the positioning of Kriol as a distinct language has had several advantages for the Kriol-speaking communities in the NT. As such, Kriol has gained recognition in the education system, with the establishment of bilingual education programs, where Kriol was used alongside English as a medium of instruction for first language learners. One of these programs was also set up in Barunga in 1976 and lasted for twenty-two years, until it was disbanded by the Northern Territory Department of Education and Training along with the other twelve operating bilingual schools in the NT in 2009 (ibid., 392). In addition to Kriol having been used in the classroom, the Northern Territory Aboriginal Interpreter Service was established in 2000. The main aim of the service lies in providing linguistic support to First Nations, including Kriol speakers, to assist them with navigating the health and legal system (ibid.). Today, Kriol is also a language used in media, music and arts. The ABC News radio, for example, offers a radio news program in Kriol, and there is also an Indigenous retelling of Shakespeare’s *King Lear*, called *The Shadow King*, which was written in Kriol, not to mention the complete translation of the Bible into Kriol which was completed in 2007.

While all of these measures have contributed to improving the perception of Kriol, a low esteem of the contact language among some communities in the NT

remains. Dickson and Durantin (2019, 173) point to the general tendency of Kriol speakers to attest higher status to substrate languages, i.e. traditional languages, as well as English. According to Meakins (2014, 391), Kriol is sometimes even labelled a “killer language”, a perceived threat which is frequently observed in areas where traditional languages have remained stronger. This may be linked to the impact the development of Kriol has had on the language ecology of northern Australia, by which substrate languages of Kriol are now only being spoken by older generations (ibid., 393), thus making the low prestige of Kriol an attempt to keep traditional languages in the respective areas strong. Yet, as regards Barunga Kriol, its speakers acknowledge it as a proper language and view it as an important identity marker and act of resistance to cultural domination (Ponsonnet 2010, 168). At the same time, speakers also perceive Kriol as a bridge to facilitate conversation between members of different cultures, as well as an opportunity for children to ease their acquisition of English and traditional languages (ibid., 175).

### 3 Linguistic Context: Barunga Kriol

#### 3.1 Super- and Substrate Languages

As an English-lexifier contact variety, Kriol draws on English as the superstrate language and, depending on the region, a number of traditional languages, which serve as substrate languages. In the case of Barunga, four main languages have been proposed as the local substrate languages – mostly Bininj Gun-wok, Dalabon, Jawoyn and Rembarrnga (Ponsonnet 2018, 101).

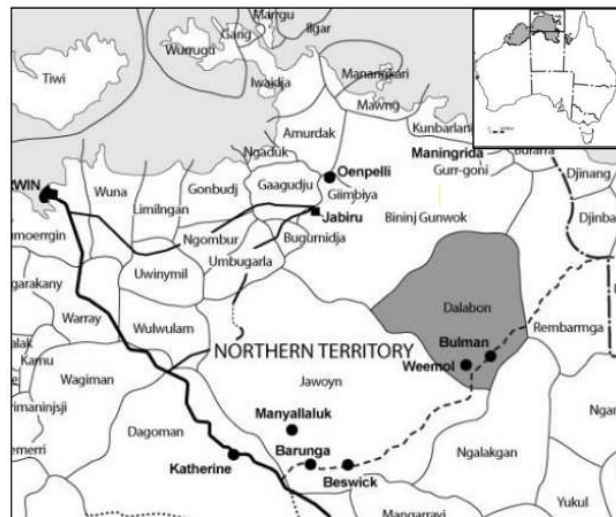


Figure 3: Language Ecology in the Barunga Region (Ponsonnet 2010, 353)

According to Ponsonnet (2018, 100), these four languages have been identified as potential substrate languages of Kriol since they were spoken in the Barunga region prior to colonisation, with each of them having a couple of hundred speakers. Nowadays, the vitality of most of these languages has changed drastically,

with Jawoyn having been declared nearly dormant, while Dalabon and Rembarrnga are critically endangered due to their speakers' descendants having shifted to Kriol. Bininj Gun-wok remains the only language enjoying better vitality as it is spoken by an estimated number of 1,500 speakers. However, as Ponsonnet (*ibid.*) points out, Bininj Gun-wok is rarely used in the Barunga Region itself nowadays, where Kriol remains the dominant language of daily interaction.

Interestingly, the four potential substrate languages are all part of the non-Pama-Nyungan language family – a term which relates to the so-called 'Pama-Nyungan idea', the current common position which arose out of the desire to achieve an internal classification of Australian languages. In following this idea, Australian languages are grouped into Pama-Nyungan- and non-Pama-Nyungan languages. Geographically, the non-Pama-Nyungan group consists of a number of families in the northern part of Australia, while Pama-Nyungan languages are spread across the other two thirds of the continent (see Figure 4). It has been established that the languages of Pama-Nyungan and non-Pama-Nyungan differ considerably in grammatical organization. As such, prototypical Pama-Nyungan languages such as Warlpiri, for instance, mark grammatical relations on the noun phrase, use suffixes only, and lack genders. Typical features of non-Pama-Nyungan languages such as Mayali can be found in their marking of grammatical relations on the verb, the use of both prefixes and suffixes and the distinction between four genders. However, exceptions to these prototypical characteristics tend to occur along the Pama-Nyungan-non-Pama-Nyungan border, where languages from one group might display features typical of the other group and vice versa (Evans and McConvell 1998, 175). As Ponsonnet (2018, 100) explains, in the case of the potential substrate languages of Barunga Kriol, all four of them belong to the Gunwinyguan family, a sub-group within the non-Pama-Nyungan language group, which are head-marking and highly polysynthetic. This is important to consider, given that Barunga Kriol is an English-lexifier language, meaning that English as the superstratum language lends most of its vocabulary to the language, while grammatical structures are derived from substrate languages (Munro 2004, 4).



Figure 4: The Pama-Nyungan-Non-Pama-Nyungan Border (Harvey 2011, 347)



### 3.2 Some Linguistic Features

When describing the linguistic features of Kriol, it needs to be considered that due to its sociolinguistic situation, it is often described as existing on a continuum, ranging from a basilectal- to an acrolectal speech. In the case of Northern Australian Kriol, a distinction is made between 'heavy-' and 'light Kriol', depending on whether the use of Kriol can be positioned more towards the basilectal- or acrolectal end on the continuum (Sandefur 1979, 48). In this regard, Bundgaard-Nielsen and Baker (2016, 177) also stress that Kriol speakers' language behaviour exists on a 'creole continuum', a situation in which speakers possess the ability to switch between a range of ways of expressing themselves, with some being closer to standard English, others being closer to the original pidgin and many positioning them somewhere in the 'middle' of these two extremes. This continuum should be kept in mind when it comes to describing linguistic features of contact varieties such as Kriol.

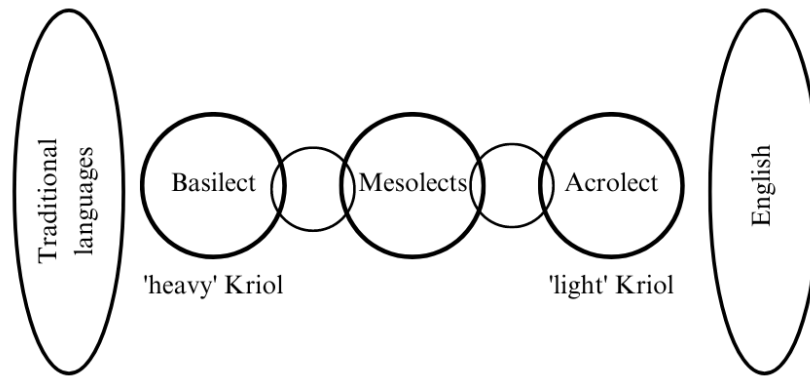


Figure 5: The Kriol Continuum Based on Sandefur (1979, 49)

Based on the extensive descriptions provided by Sandefur (1979) (Roper River and Barunga Kriol) and Schultze-Berndt, Meakins and Angelo (2013) (Roper River, Barunga, and Katherine Kriol), the following subchapters provide a brief overview of some of the linguistic features that characterise Barunga Kriol – and Kriol in general.

#### 3.2.1 Lexicon

The lexicon of Northern Australian Kriol holds a combination of mainly English words, words from other contact languages which have influenced the development of Kriol as well as words from the substrate languages. As Harris (2007, 145) points out, the lexicon of Kriol is mainly derived from English, which especially includes words denoting non-Aboriginal and Torres Straits Islander concepts such as *pitja* 'picture', *reilwei* 'railway' and *draibim* 'to drive'. Furthermore, Kriol speakers also use a number of words from the old Sydney language such as *gabarra* 'head' and *binji* 'stomach', which point to the influence of NSW Pidgin English in the formation of Kriol (Troy 2003, 47). Interestingly, evidence for the influence of South Seas Jargon on the development of NSW Pidgin English is also still evident in the use of

words such as *sabi* ‘to know’ and *piccaninny* ‘child’ in Kriol (Meakins 2014, 372). Leaning more towards the basilectal end of the speech continuum, Meakins (ibid.) highlights that heavy Kriol speakers tend to use an increased number of words derived from the substrate languages which primarily include categories such as body parts, bodily functions, place names, animal and plant names, and kinship terms.

### 3.2.2 Phonology

In his extensive description of Roper River Kriol and Barunga Kriol, Sandefur (1979, 29) describes the Kriol sound inventory as having derived from a complex combination of the sound systems of traditional languages and English.

As Sandefur (ibid., 35) explains, traditional languages in the Barunga region such as Dalabon and Rembarrnga, which are also potential substrate languages of Barunga Kriol, distinguish between six vowel sounds. Given that the substrate languages make fewer sound distinctions than English when it comes to vowel sounds, Kriol is characterised by a reduction of vowel sounds which collapsed into a five-vowel system in the Barunga region, with an additional number of four to five diphthongs (ibid., 38) (see Figure 6 below).

|             | Front          | Central | Back |
|-------------|----------------|---------|------|
| Close       | i              |         | u    |
| Mid         | e              |         | o    |
| Open        |                | a       |      |
| Diphthongs: | ei ai ou oi au |         |      |

Figure 6: Kriol Vowels (Schultze-Berndt, Meakins and Angelo 2013, 242)

Regarding the consonant sounds, Kriol exhibits a combination of English sounds, as well as additional sounds which are derived from its substrate languages, such as a glottal stop /ʔ/, which occurs in Rembarrnga and Dalabon, and the interdental stop /d/ present in Dalabon (Sandefur 1979, 34). Given a lack of fricatives and affricates in some of the traditional languages in the area, during the initial stage of the formation of Kriol, they were usually reproduced as stops:

- labiodental fricatives /f/ and /v/ → labial stop /b/
- dental fricatives /θ/ and /ð/, alveolar fricatives /s/ and /z/, postalveolar fricative /ʃ/ and /ʒ/, and postalveolar affricates /tʃ/ and /dʒ/ → lamino-palatal stop /dj/

In addition, voicing was not a distinctive feature, with voiceless stops being replaced by voiced stops (ibid., 37). However, as Sandefur (1979, 42) stresses, due to the sustained contact with English, Kriol phonology has continually been influenced

by English as speakers began to perceive and reproduce English sounds. This has led to a process of levelling, by which specific sounds, particularly from English-derived words, gradually returned or levelled towards the original English sounds. One of these levelling patterns, for instance, include the lamino-palatal stop /dj/, which as described above, replaced eight English sounds during the initial stages of Kriol which did not occur in the traditional languages in the area. To illustrate this, the following examples have been taken from Sandefur (ibid., 43):

- (1) /θ/: /dj/ → /d/ → /t/ → /θ/  
       /djing/ → /ding/ → /ting/ → /θing/ ‘thing’
- (2) /s/: /dj/ → /s/  
       /djabi/ → /sabi/ ‘know, understand’

Yet, although Kriol phonology appears to be moving more towards English due to the sociolinguistic situation and the remaining contact with its superstratum language, it is still mostly unintelligible for most English speakers – especially when it comes to speech on the basilectal end of the spectrum.

### 3.2.3 Noun Phrase

What is particularly striking about the noun phrase in Kriol is the more complex pronoun system which distinguishes between person, number, and inclusive- versus exclusiveness (see Figure 7 below). Unlike English, number distinctions in Kriol include singular, dual and plural and a further distinction between inclusive and exclusive is made in regard to non-singular first person (Schultze-Berndt, Meakins and Angelo 2013, 243). As Sandefur (1979, 85) explains, the distinctions between inclusive and exclusive are characteristic of traditional languages and the choice of pronoun depends on whether the person spoken to, i.e. the recipient, is considered part of the ‘we’. An example is provided in (3).

|          | Subject  | Object  | Independent pronoun      | Adnominal possessive             |
|----------|--|---|--------------------------|----------------------------------|
| 1SG      | <i>ai, mi<sup>a</sup></i>  | <i>mi</i>   | <i>mi</i>                | <i>main, mi, mai<sup>c</sup></i> |
| IDU.INCL | <i>yunmi, <sup>a,b,c</sup> minyu, <sup>d</sup> wi<sup>e</sup></i>              | <i>yunmi</i>  | <i>yunmi</i>             | <i>yunmi</i>                     |
| IDU.EXCL | <i>min(du)bala<sup>a,b,c,d</sup>, wi<sup>e</sup></i>                           | <i>min(du)bala, as<sup>d</sup></i>                              | <i>min(du)bala</i>       | <i>min(du)bala</i>               |
| IPL.INCL | <i>minolabat, <sup>c</sup> wilat, <sup>d</sup> wi<sup>e</sup></i>              | <i>as, <sup>d</sup> minolabat</i>                               | <i>as, minolabat</i>     | <i>as, minolabat</i>             |
| IPL.EXCL | <i>mibala, <sup>a,b,c,d</sup> wi, <sup>e</sup> mela(bat)<sup>a,b,c,d</sup></i> | <i>mibala, as, <sup>d</sup> mela(bat)</i>                       | <i>mibala, mela(bat)</i> | <i>mibala, mela(bat)</i>         |
| 2SG      | <i>yu</i>  | <i>yu</i>   | <i>yu</i>                | <i>yu, yus<sup>c</sup></i>       |
| 2DU      | <i>yundubala<sup>a,b,c,d</sup></i>   | <i>yundubala</i>  | <i>yundubala</i>         | <i>yundubala</i>                 |
| 2PL      | <i>yubala, <sup>c,d</sup> yumob<sup>a,b</sup></i>                              | <i>yubala, yumob</i>  | <i>yubala, yumob</i>     | <i>yubala, yumob</i>             |
| 3SG      | <i>im ~ i ~ hi<sup>c</sup></i>   | <i>im</i>   | <i>im</i>                | <i>im, is<sup>e</sup></i>        |
| 3DU      | <i>dubala</i>  | <i>dubala</i>   | <i>dubala</i>            | <i>dubala</i>                    |
| 3PL      | <i>olabat, ol, <sup>d</sup> dei<sup>c</sup></i>                                | <i>olabat, ol, <sup>d</sup> dem</i>                             | <i>olabat, dem</i>       | <i>olabat, deya<sup>e</sup></i>  |
| REFL     |  | <i>mijelp, <sup>a,b</sup> jelp<sup>d</sup></i>                  |                          |                                  |
| RECP     |  | <i>gija, <sup>a</sup> mijelp, <sup>b</sup> jelp<sup>d</sup></i> |                          |                                  |

<sup>a</sup> Roper River <sup>b</sup> Westside <sup>c</sup> Barunga <sup>d</sup> Kimberley <sup>e</sup> Acrolectal form

Figure 7: Personal Pronouns in Kriol (Schultze-Berndt, Meakins and Angelo 2013, 243)

(3) *Mibala bin luk boniboni.*

1PL.EXCL PST look colt.RED

‘We (myself and some others but not you) saw a colt.’ (Sandefur 1979, 86).

According to Schultze-Berndt, Meakins and Angelo (2013, 244), other features include the determiner or indefinite article *wan/wanbala*, which, as is the case with several other creole languages, is derived from the numeral one. There are no plural forms of nouns, instead plurality is generally marked using the plural determiner *ola*, or by adding the plural suffix *-lot* on determiners. For noun phrases with human reference, a collective plural suffix *-mob* is often used:

(4) *Len-kanjil-mob thei jabi.*

land-council-COLL 3PL know

‘The land council people know (about this).’ (ibid.)

Adjectives usually precede the noun and are generally marked by the suffix *-wan*, or *-bala*, when used in NPs with animate reference. Moreover, possession is marked using a possessive construction with the dative preposition *bla(nga)*, which generally precedes the possessor as shown in (5) (Schultze-Berndt, Meakins and Angelo 2013, 244).

(5) *motika blanga det gel*

car POSS the woman

‘The woman’s car’ (Meakins 2014, 383)

### 3.2.4 Verb Phrase

As Schultze-Berndt, Meakins and Angelo (2013, 245) point out, Kriol speakers tend to mark tense, aspect and mood using preverbal auxiliaries or particles. While the present tense is unmarked, the particles *bin*, and *garra* are used to mark the past and future tense respectively. When *bin* is used with the third person singular personal pronoun *im*, the auxiliary is usually contracted and occurs in the form of *imin* as shown in (6) (Sandefur 1979, 127).

(6) *Imin gaman.*

3SG-PST come

‘He came.’ (ibid.)

Verb morphology, on the other hand, is limited to reduplication, a progressive aspectual suffix *-bat*, and the transitive marker *-im* as shown in (7) (Schultze-Berndt, Meakins and Angelo 2013, 245).

- (7) *Ai bin binijim mani.*  
1SG PST finish-TR money  
'I finished (i.e., used up) the money.' (Sandefur 1979, 115)

## 4 The Use of Barunga Kriol in Children's Books

### 4.1 Data Collection

The data analysed in this seminar paper was obtained from the Territory Stories at Library & Archives NT (<https://territorystories.nt.gov.au/>), which holds a collection of materials in Kriol that were formerly available from the Living Archive of Aboriginal Languages – a digital archive which holds around 4,000 books in 50 traditional languages of the NT (Living Archive of Aboriginal Languages n.d.). Using the term 'Barunga Kriol' in the search function, a total number of four books were selected from the archive. The main selection criteria included language, date of publication, and text type. In accordance with these criteria, the selected texts had to be written in Barunga Kriol, and they had to be books published by Barunga Press between the years 1990 and 2000. This yielded a total number of 144 results. To further reduce the amount of data, authorship, length, and thematic choices were considered. Thus, the selected books had to be written by different authors in order to provide a broader view of the use of Kriol. To make the amount of data more manageable, only texts with a length between 150 and 200 words were considered. Given that the seminar paper focuses on the use of Barunga Kriol in children's books, only books which were specifically intended for children were considered. Therefore, medicine books or cookbooks were excluded. Finally, thematic choices were made so as to select stories that specifically deal with dreamtime, nature, and animals in order to explore First Nations culture through children's books. Applying the criteria, the following four books were randomly selected and downloaded from the archive:

1. *Mun en Maus* (1993) by Annette Murray
2. *Debuldebul Gadim Redwan Ai* (1993) by Lily Bennett
3. *Drimtaim Stori* (1998) by Queenie Brennan
4. *Lilboi Im Los* (1998) by Judy Galmur

### 4.2 Data Processing and Analysis

Once the data had been obtained, the texts were copied into a word document and glossed following the conventions of the Leipzig Glossing Rules (2008). The grammatical descriptions provided by Sandefur (1979), Schultze-Berndt, Meakins and Angelo (2013) as well as the Online Kriol-English dictionary (Australian Society for Indigenous Languages 2014), were consulted in the process of glossing. Part of the glossing process also included the translation of the texts. Since all of the chosen books already provided a broad English translation of the story, these translations were taken as the starting point and further edited, with the assistance of the Online Kriol-English Dictionary in cases where given translations were too broad or non-

existent. The aim of the glossed text was to investigate potential superstrate and substrate influences. The glossed texts and the translations can be found in the appendix.

### 4.3 Findings and Discussion

#### 4.3.1 Thematic Level

On a thematic level, the selected stories provide an insight into First Nations culture by focusing on dreamtime stories, nature and animals and can be understood as capturing and transferring traditional knowledge. One of the re-emerging topics in the stories is the First Nations understanding of land as being inhabited by Ancestral spirits, which is linked to the creation/ dreamtime stories, generally referred to as *Tjukurpa*, *Wongar* or *Bugari* by First Nations. By describing the time of creation, it captures the underlying philosophy of First Nations spirituality (Edwards 1994, 79). While it should be noted that creation stories differ from region to region, there still exist universal elements which are shared by all stories. These include tales of creator Ancestors or spirit beings moving across the country and creating the landscape, flora, fauna and humans (Grieves 2009, 8-9). As Edwards (1994, 81) explains, First Nations regard all land as sacred, with Ancestral spirits inhabiting the land as animals, rocks, trees and other forms of the landscape.

The sacredness of land features in all four of the selected stories. In Annette Murray's story *Mun en Maus* (1993), the reader is introduced to the idea that the moon was once a human, who, after he got into a fight with his friend and grieved his death, changed himself and went up into the sky. The idea of people or animals turning into objects is also present in Queenie Brennan's *Drimtain Stori* (1998), where an elderly woman sets out to collect food for her dingos, who she calls her children. When she returns home, she finds out they have died and turned themselves into big stones. Grieving the death of her beloved animals, she turns herself into a bird. Interestingly, birds also play an important role in Judy Galmur's *Lilboi Im Los* (1998), in which a boy gets lost while he is wandering around in the bush and is eventually led back home by a group of birds.

Contrary to the Ancestral Creators, other spirits, who are believed to live alongside humans, are often greatly feared as they are thought to prey upon people (Clarke 2007, 142). Interestingly, Clarke (ibid., 148) explains that the terms 'witch', 'devil' or 'debbil-debbil' are frequently employed in Aboriginal English to refer to these kinds of spirits, especially when they appear with human-like characteristics. Stories about such evil spirits are often used by adults as threats towards children as a means to control their behaviour (ibid.). In *Debuldebul Gadim Redwan Ai*, Lily Bennett (1993) an evil spirit that lives in a cave underwater appears when a boy goes swimming in a river. Described as having red eyes, long ears and fingernails as well as big teeth, the devil follows the boy back to the camp and tries to take away all the children. Fortunately, the parents manage to scare him away with bright fire sticks and save the children. The story finishes by explaining that the boy never went

swimming in that river again. Bennett's story quite obviously serves as a warning to children to stay away from waters, which is a frequent theme of First Nations stories about dangerous water spirits (Clarke 2007, 149).

Although the strong focus on culture is due to the thematic choices in the data selection, it is still remarkable that the uniting feature these four stories share lies in *Tjukurpa*. Thus, in teaching young children about traditional knowledge and distinct cultural concepts, these Kriol books play a vital role in the attempt to maintain Aboriginal and Torres Straight Islanders culture.

#### 4.3.2 Structure and Style

On a structural level, what can be observed from the findings is that all of the four stories follow the typical conventions of storytelling. Beginning with expressions such as *longtaim* or *wantime*, meaning 'a long time ago' or 'one time', the stories are set in a past context as shown in (8) and (9) below, before the authors continue to narrate a series of chronologically ordered events.

(8) *Longtaim          Mun   en   Maus   bin   pipul   laigi   wi*  
Long.time.ago   moon   and   mouse   PST   people   like   1PL.INCL  
'A long time ago, the moon and the mouse were people like us' (Murray 1993,1)<sup>1</sup>

(9) *Wandei    ola   olgamen    en   olmen    bin   go   hanting*  
One.day   PL   old.woman   and   old.man   PST   go   hunting  
'One day, all the old women and old men went hunting' (Bennett 1993,1)

What stands out from the stories is the overall tone, which resembles a spoken narration rather than a written story published in a book. This might be due to the very nature of Kriol which originally developed out of a communicative need between speakers from different language backgrounds. It was not until the 1960s that scholarly research into Kriol began and grammatical descriptions as well as the establishment of bilingual education programs attempted to conventionalize the language. Yet, the spoken character still shows in two of the stories with repeated use of interjections such as *wal*, meaning 'well' (10) or juxtapositions where the same subject is referred to twice in different ways, as in (10, 11, 12).

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<sup>1</sup> In this example and all subsequent examples, the line in Barunga Kriol is taken from the author of the story, whereas the glossed line was added by the author of this paper. The translation is based on the one provided by the author of the story and was partially edited in cases where it was too broad.

- (10) *Wal dis olgamen imin stad na*  
 Well PROX old.woman 3SG-PST set.out now  
 ‘Well this old woman set out now’ (Brennan 1998)
- (11) *Imin hepi riliwei det lilboi langa bush*  
 3SG-PST happy really DEM little.boy LOC bush  
 ‘The little boy was really happy out in the bush’ (Galmur 1998)
- (12) *Det lilboi imin wok thro langa rok en hill*  
 DEM little.boy 3SG-PST walk through LOC rock and hill  
 ‘The little boy walked through the rocks and hills’ (Galmur 1998)

In (11), both the third person singular pronoun *im* and *lilboi* serve as the subject which would literally be translated as ‘He was really happy, the little boy, out in the bush.’. The same counts for (10), where *olgamen* and the third person singular pronoun *im* are the subject. These instances occur inconsistently throughout the stories written by Galmur (1998) and Brennan (1998).

#### 4.3.3 Lexicon and Orthography

As regards the lexicon, the majority of words from the texts are derived from English. Exceptions include the words *biginini* ‘child’, and *sabi/ jabi* ‘to know’, which, as Baker (1993) noted, stem from the influence of South Seas Jargon. Words derived from traditional languages are rare and include the word *bogi* ‘to swim’, which was originally used in traditional languages of NSW and points to the influence of NSW Pidgin English in the formation of Kriol (Troy 2003, 47). The fact that even words denoting body parts as can be seen in (13) and animals (14) are Kriol renderings of English words points to a rather mesolectal/ acrolectal use of Kriol in the texts.

- (13) *Jad debuldebul bin abum longwan irriwul*  
 DEM devil~RED PST have long-ADJ ear  
 ‘The devil had long ears’ (Bennett 1993, 9)
- (14) *Det lilboi bin ranran na en imin fraitnem sneik*  
 DEM little.boy PST run~RED along and 3SG-PST scare snake  
 ‘The little boy was running along and he scared the snakes’ (Galmur 1998)

The Kriol word *irriwul* is a rendering of the English word ‘ear-hole’, while *sneik* refers to ‘snake’. One word, where no clear origin could be found was *kuliman*, which was not featured in the Kriol Online Dictionary, but had been translated by the authors as ‘basket’ in the context of being an object used for carrying water, as in (15).



- (15) *en imin budum woda na kuliman*  
 and 3SG-PST put water LOC basket  
 ‘and she put the water in a basket’ (Brennan 1998)

As noted on a factsheet provided by the NT Department of Education (2020), spelling is based on pronunciation, but no official spelling standard exists. However, given the different local varieties of Kriol, great variation in spelling can be observed across different Kriol-speaking communities. What can be observed from the analysed texts is that spelling and pronunciation have been adapted to fit the Kriol sound inventory described in chapter 3.2.2. Examples include *pipul* ‘people’, *tri* ‘tree’, and *lait* ‘light’. The vowel substitution can be observed in examples such as *kamp* ‘camp’, where /æ/ becomes /a/, and *bed* ‘bird’, where /ɜ:/ becomes /e/. Fricatives are generally, though not by all authors, replaced by voiced stops such as in *libum* ‘to leave’, *brom* ‘from’, *laigi* ‘like’. Th-stopping is a frequent phenomenon, with /θ/ being replaced by /d/ as in the proximal demonstrative *dis* ‘this’, or /j/ in the distal demonstrative *jad* ‘that’. Moreover, voiceless stops tend to be replaced by their voiced counterparts. Examples include *gedim* ‘to get’ and *woda* ‘water’, where /t/ is replaced by /d/. However, it should be noted that spelling sometimes varies within the same text. As such, for the third person dual personal pronoun *dubala*, for example, both *dubala* and *tubala* have been attested in Annette Murray’s *Mun en Maus* (1993). Initial h-dropping was also observed, such as with the word *abum* ‘to have’. Reduction also frequently occurs in words such as *en* ‘and’, *fren* ‘friend’ and *wail* ‘wild’.

#### 4.3.4 Noun Phrase

What stands out from the analysis regarding the noun phrase is the number distinction with the pronouns, as noted in 3.2.3, by which Kriol speakers distinguish between singular, dual and plural. Since the stories were written using the third person perspective, the distinction between inclusive- versus exclusiveness was not overly present. One instance where this distinction was found can be seen in (16), where the first person plural inclusive pronoun *wi* is used in order to refer to all people in general, thus also including the reader.

- (16) *Longtaim Mun en Maus bin pipul laigi wi*  
 Long.time.ago moon and mouse PST people like 1PL.INCL  
 ‘A long time ago, the moon and the mouse were people like us’ (Murray 1993,1)

The number distinction between dual and plural is most apparent in Murray’s story *Mun en Maus* (1993), since it revolves around two characters. While it commences with an introduction of the two central figures and initially establishes their friendship by referring to them in the plural, the story then shifts the focus to narrate about the two of them using the third person dual pronoun *dubala/ tubala*.

Moreover, the texts display a heavy use of demonstratives such as *det* and *jad* for adnominal distal demonstratives and *dis* for the adnominal proximal demonstrative, which function as a determiner in the noun phrase, as in (17) and (18).

(17) *Det lilboi bin kamat langa kemp*  
 DEM little.boy PST arrive LOC camp  
 ‘The little boy arrived at the camp’ (Galmur 1998)

(18) *Dis olgamen sabi la wanbala Kantri*  
 PROX old.woman know LOC DET land  
 ‘This old woman knew of a land’ (Brennan 1998)

In the selected stories, adjectives precede the noun, however they are only occasionally marked with suffix *-wan* or *-bala* (see 19 - 21). Both marked and unmarked cases have been identified in the data.

(19) *Jad debuldebul bin abum longwan irriwul*  
 DEM devil~RED PST have long-ADJ ear  
 ‘The devil had long ears’ (Bennett 1993, 9)

(20) *Wal dis olgamen imin meigim bigwan sheid*  
 Well PROX old.woman 3SG-PST make-TR big-ADJ shade  
 ‘Well this old woman, she made a big shade’ (Brennan 1998)

(21) *Jad debuldebul bin meigim big nois*  
 DEM devil~RED PST make-TR big noise  
 ‘The devil made a loud noise.’ (Bennett 1993, 7)

#### 4.3.5 Verb Phrase

As for the verb phrase, the data shows the use of the particles *bin* and *garra* as tense markers for the past and future tense respectively. What needs to be noted is the heavy use of contractions, especially with the past particle *bin* in combination with the third person singular or plural pronoun. Examples can be seen below (22-23).

(22) *Imin singad olabat*  
 3SG-PST call.out 3PL  
 ‘She called out for everyone’ (Brennan 1998)

- (23) *deibin bringim im hom*  
3PL-PST bring-TR 3SG home  
'they brought him home' (Galmur 1998)

Furthermore, the suffix *-bat* is used as a progressive marker (see example 24 below). If it occurs with a transitive verb marked by the suffix *-im*, the following order of suffixation has been attested in the data: verb + -TR + -PROG, as in (25).

- (24) *Bla im mami en dadi bin woribat im na*  
DAT 3SG mother and father PST worry-PROG 3SG now  
'His mother and father were worrying about him now' (Galmur 1998)

- (25) [*Maus*]: *Yu meikimbat mi wail*  
[Mouse]: 2SG make-TR-PROG 1SG angry  
[Mouse]: You are making me angry (Murray 1993, 6)

Finally, reduplication is a frequent phenomenon and either functions to mark the continuous aspect (26) or as an intensifier (27-28). While in (27), the reduplication of *luk* 'to look' intensifies the action of looking to imply that the woman was searching very hard, the reduplication of *debul* 'devil' in (28) likely serves to emphasize the evilness of the creature.

- (26) *Dubala bin gibgon faitfait*  
3DU PST continue fight~RED  
'They continued fighting' (Murray 1993, 7)

- (27) *Imin lukluk ebriwei bla olabat*  
3SG-PST look~RED everywhere DAT 3PL  
'She looked everywhere for them' (Brennan 1998)

- (28) *jad debuldebul bin lukinatbat la im*  
DEM devil~RED PST watch-PROG LOC 3SG  
'the devil was watching him' (Bennett 1993, 3)

## 5 Conclusion

Emerging as a contact language in the first half of the twentieth century from NSW Pidgin and Queensland Pidgin English, Kriol is now the second most commonly spoken language in the NT after English (Dickson, 2016), with the number of speakers amounting to almost 30,000 (Marmion, Obata and Troy 2014, 18). Linguistically, Kriol combines elements of English and, depending on the region, a number of traditional Australian languages. With English being the lexifier language, the strong influence shows in a high percentage of English-derived words; however, grammar and phonology remain heavily influenced by the traditional languages (NT Department of Education 2020).

The contact variety discussed in more detail in this paper is Barunga Kriol, which is the variety spoken in a small remote community of 340 inhabitants, almost all of whom speak Barunga Kriol as a first language (ABS 2021). The community was home to a bilingual education program which was established in 1976, where children were instructed in Kriol and English (Meakins 2014, 392). For these educational purposes, a collection of children's books and other material written in Kriol were created, which can now be accessed online via the Territory Stories at Library and Archives NT (<https://territorystories.nt.gov.au/>). A number of four books written by different authors published in the 1990s with a special thematic focus on dreamtime, animals and nature were selected and analysed. The texts were glossed according to the Leipzig Glossing Rule (2008) with the help of the grammatical descriptions by Sandefur (1979) and Schultze-Berndt, Meakins and Angelo (2013) and translated using the Online Kriol Dictionary (Australian Society for Indigenous Languages 2014).

The findings show that the general tone resembles a spoken narration rather than a written story. Moreover, orthography represents pronunciation and due to the lack of standardization, a great variation in spelling within the same texts was identified. While the lexicon is mainly derived from English, words have been changed to fit the Kriol speech inventory. The linguistic features identified in the texts are in line with the grammatical descriptions provided by Sandefur (1979) and Schultze-Berndt, Meakins and Angelo (2013) and include, inter alia, the extended pronoun system, the transitive marker *-im*, the progressive marker *-bat*, the use of reduplication and contractions.

On a thematic level, the four stories are deeply centred in First Nations creation stories, with spiritual beings as a re-emerging theme. The stories feature people turning into objects or animals, birds appearing as 'good' spirits and an evil water spirit posing a threat to children who come too close to the water. Thus, it is argued in line with Malcolm (2001) and Walsh (2007), that contact varieties such as Kriol are a symbol of a surviving culture and as such play a vital role in the maintenance of traditional knowledge and culture. This does not only hold true on a linguistic level, where some features from traditional languages have remained in Kriol such as the extended pronoun system or the marking of grammatical relations

on the verb, but also in the way Kriol serves as a medium for transferring cultural knowledge.

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## Appendix

### Glossed Text: *Mun en Maus* (Murray 1993)

*Longtaim Mun en Maus bin pipul laigi wi.*  
Long.time.ago moon and mouse PST people like 1PL.INCL  
'A long time ago, the moon and the mouse were people like us.'

*Deibin rili gud fren en dubala bin oldei alumbat miselp.*  
3PL-PST really good friend and 3DU PST always help-PROG RECP  
'They were really good friends and they were always helping each other.'

[*Maus*]: *Mi gada bi bos bla ebrijing.*  
[*Mouse*]: 1SG FUT COP boss DAT everything.  
'[*Mouse*]: I will be the boss of everything/ everyone.'

*Wandei jad Maus bin git wail.*  
One.day DEM mouse PST get angry.  
'One day, the mouse got angry.'

*Imin gidap, gedim stik bla kilim im fren.*  
3SG-PST get.up get-TR stick DAT hit-TR his friend.  
'He got up, and got a stick to hit his friend.'

[*Maus*]: *Ai gada kill yu na!*  
[*Mouse*]: 1SG FUT hit 2SG now!  
'[*Mouse*]: I will hit you now!'



[Mun]: *Weit na ai gada git main stik.*

[Moon] Wait now 1SG FUT get my stick.

‘[Moon]: Wait now, I will get my stick.’

*Bat Mun bin gadim stik du, bla stopim miselp.*

But moon PST have stick too, DAT protect-TR REFL

‘But the moon got a stick too, to protect himself.’

[Maus]: *Yu meikimbat mi wail. Ai gada belta yu na.*

[Mouse]: 2SG make-TR-PROG 1SG angry. 1SG FUT whip 2SG now.

‘[Mouse]: You are making me angry. I will whip you now.’

[Mun]: *Wot ai bin do?*

[Moon]: What 1SG PST do?

‘[Moon]: What did I do?’

*Dubala bin gibgon faitfait.*

3DU PST continue fight~RED

‘They continued fighting.’

[Mun]: *Main ten na bla kilim yu.*

[Moon]: My turn now DAT hit-TR 2SG.

‘[Moon]: My turn now to hit you.’

[Maus]: *Yu gan kilim mi.*

[Mouse]: 2SG cannot hit-TR 1SG.

‘[Mouse]: You cannot hit me.’

*En dubala bin fait til dei bin rili taid.*

And 3DU PST fight until 3PL PST really tired.

‘And they fought until they were really tired.’

[Maus]: *Ai gada luk yu afta.*

[Mouse]: 1SG FUT look 2SG after.

‘[Mouse]: I will look after you.’

[Mun]: *Mi nomo fraiten bla yu.*

[Moon]: 1SG NEG afraid DAT 2SG

‘[Moon]: I am no longer afraid of you.’

*Tubala bin toktok, bla jad trabul, hu gada bi boswan.*

3DU PST talk~RED DAT DEM problem who FUT COP boss-ADJ

‘They were talking about this problem of who is going to be the boss.’

*Wen tubala bin finish tokabat jad trabul,*  
When 3DU PST finish talk.about DEM problem,

‘When they finished talking about this problem,’

*tubala bin go silip na.*  
3DU PST go sleep now.

‘they went to sleep.’

*Wen imin wan wik pas, Mun bin gidap*  
When 3SG-PST one week past, moon PST get.up

‘When it was one week later, the moon got up’

*en imin faindim Maus bin ded, bobala.*  
and 3SG-PST discover-TR mouse PST dead, poor.fellow.

‘and he discovered that the mouse was dead, poor fellow.’

*Mun bin krai bla im fren en imin berim.*  
Moon PST cry DAT his friend and 3SG-PST burry-TR.

‘The moon cried for his friend and buried him.’

*En Mun bin jeinjim miselp en gowei antop langa skai.*  
And moon PST change-TR REFL and go.away on.top LOC sky.

‘And the moon changed himself and went up into the sky.’

**Glossed Text: *Debuldebul Gadim Redwan Ai* (Bennett 1993)**

*Wandei ola olgamen en olmen bin go hanting.*

One.day PL old.woman and old.man PST go hunting.

‘One day, all the old women and old men went hunting.’

*Deibin libum bla olabat kid la kamp.*

3PL-PST leave DAT 3PL child LOC camp.

‘They left their children at the camp.’

*Wen jad san bin godan olawei,*

When DEM sun PST go.down all.the.way

‘When the sun went down,’

*dis wanbala lilboi bin go bogibogi la riba.*

PROX ONE/INDF little.boy PST go swim~RED LOC river.

‘this one little boy was going swimming in the river.’

*Wen imin bogibogi im nomo bin sabi*

When 3SG-PST swim~RED 3SG NEG PST know

‘When he was swimming, he didn’t know’

*jad debuldebul bin lukinatbat la im brom wanbala big tri.*

DEM devil~RED PST watch-PROG LOC 3SG from ONE/INDF big tree.

‘that the devil was watching him from a big tree.’

*Jad lilboi bin lisiin ola debuldebul bed bin singatsingat.*

DEM little.boy PST listen PL devil~RED bird PST call.out.

‘The little boy heard all the devil birds calling out.’

*Najing imin jis kamat brom jad woda*

Nothing 3SG-PST just come.out from DEM water

‘He just got out of the water’

*en imin stat ranran langa kamp*

and 3SG-PAST start run~RED LOC camp

‘and he started running towards the camp’

*en imin dalim jad najalot kid.*

and 3SG-PST tell-TR DEM others child.

‘and he was telling the other children.’

*Imin naitaim na.*  
3SG-PST night.time now.  
'It was night time now.'

*Jad debuldebul bin meigim big nois*  
DEM devil~RED PST make-TR big noise  
'The devil made a loud noise.'

*en ola kid bin kamat en luk jeya imin stendap.*  
and PL child PST come.out and look where 3SG-PST stand.  
'And the children came out and looked where he was standing.'

*Ola kid bin fraitin, dei bin gowin insaid langa olabat hampi haus.*  
PL child PST scared, 3PL PST going inside LOC 3PL humpy house.  
'The children were scared, they went inside their humpy house.'

*Jad debuldebul bin abum longwan irriwul*  
DEM devil~RED PST have long-ADJ ear  
'The devil had long ears'

*en bigwan tuth en longawan fingga neil.*  
and big-ADJ tooth and long-ADJ finger nail.  
'and big teeth and long finger nails.'

*Jad debuldebul bin wokaran raidaran la jad haus*  
DEM devil~RED PST walk.around right.around LOC DEM house  
'The devil walked right around the house'

*bla gowin en deigimwei olabat.*  
DAT going and take.away 3PL.  
'to go and take them away.'

*Bat bla olabat mami en dadi bin kaminap gadim faiya stick*  
but DAT 3PL mother and father PST appear with fire stick  
'But their mothers and fathers came with fire sticks'

*en jad debuldebul bin luk jad lait*  
and DEM devil~RED PST look DEM light  
'and the devil saw the light'

*en imin jis goweigowei na.*  
and 3SG-PST just go.away~RED now.  
'and he just ran away.'

*Imin ran streitap la jad riba*  
3SG-PST run strait.ahead LOC DEM river  
'He ran straight ahead to the river'

*en daibin la jad woda weya imin abum keib insaid.*  
and dive.into LOC DEM water where 3SG-PST have cave inside.  
'and dove into the water where he had the cave.'

*Brom jeya ola kid nomo bin go bogibogi la jad riba enimo.*  
From there PL child NEG PST go swim~RED LOC DEM river anymore.  
'From now, the children never went swimming in the river again.'

**Glossed Text: *Drimtain Stori* (Brennan 1998)**

*Longtain langa drimtain, wanbala olgamen imin abum loda biginini*  
Long.time.ago LOC dreamtime DET old.woman 3SG.PST have lots.of baby  
'A long time ago in the dreamtime, there was an old woman who had lots of babies'

*bat nomo brabili biginini, dumaji dei bin ola dinggo.*  
but NEG very baby, because 3PL PST all dingo.  
'but they weren't really babies, because they were all dingos.'

*Bat dis olgamen laikim olabat brabiliwei*  
But PROX old.woman like-TR 3PL very-way  
'But this old woman liked them very much'

*en imin lukabdum olabat gudbalawei.*  
and 3SG-PST look-after 3PL good.manner  
'and she looked after them in a good manner.'

*Wantaim imin draisisin bla olabat.*  
One.time 3SG-PST dry.season DAT 3PL  
'One time, it was dry season there.'

*Im nomo bin rein, wal ebrijing bin drai dumaji no bin woda.*  
3SG NEG PST rain, well everything PST dry because NEG PST water.  
'There was no rain, well, everything was dry because there was no water.'

*Ola biginini bin kraikrai bla daga en woda.*  
PL baby PST cry~RED DAT food and water.  
'All the babies were crying for food and water.'

*Dis olgamen sabi la wanbala kantri*  
PROX old.woman know LOC DET land  
'This old woman knew of a land'

*weya imin abum loda daga en big riba,*  
where 3SG-PST have lots.of food and big river,  
'where there was lots of food and a big river,'

*bat imin longwei bla wokwok.*  
but 3SG-PST long.way DAT walk~RED  
'but it was a long way to walk.'

*Wal dis olgamen imin meigim bigwan sheid*  
Well PROX old.woman 3SG-PST make-TR big-ADJ shade  
'Well this old woman, she made a big shade'

*gadem ola gras bla ola biginini.*  
with PL grass DAT PL baby.  
'with the grasses for the babies.'

*En imin talem olabat bla sidan en weit bla im.*  
And 3SG-PST tell 3PL DAT sit and wait DAT 3SG.  
'And she told them to sit and wait for her.'

*Imin talem olabat, "Mi go mijalp*  
3SG-PST tell 3PL, "1SG go REFL  
'She told them, "I go by myself"

*en ai gidim loda daga en woda bla yubala*  
and 1SG get-TR lots.of food and water DAT 2PL  
'and I get lots of food and water for you.'

*en ai kambek tumoro."*  
and 1SG come.back tomorrow."  
'and I come back tomorrow."

*Wal dis olgamen imin stad na.*  
Well PROX old.woman 3SG-PST set.out now.  
'Well this old woman set out now.'

*Imin go en imin silip apwei.*  
3SG-PST go and 3SG-PST sleep halfway.  
'She went and she slept [when she had gotten] halfway.'

*Neksdei imin kamad la jad kantri.*  
Next.day 3SG-PST arrive LOC DEM land.  
'The next day, she arrived at the land.'

*Im nomo bin weit longtaim,*  
3SG NEG PST wait long.time,  
'She didn't stay for a long time,'

*imin jis gidim ola daga en yem*  
3SG-PST just get-TR PL food and yam  
'she just got all the food and yams'

*en imin budum woda na kuliman.*  
and 3SG-PST put water LOC basket.  
'and she put the water in a basket.'

*En imin wokbek na la kemp.*  
And 3SG-PST walk.back LOC LOC camp.  
'And she walked back to the camp.'

*Imin silip apwei en neksdei imin kamad la olabat kemp.*  
3SG-PST sleep halfway and next.day 3SG-PST arrive LOC 3PL camp.  
'She slept halfway and the next day she arrived at their camp.'

*Wal imin kamad la kemp.*  
Well 3SG-PST arrive LOC camp.  
'Well, she arrived at the camp.'

*Imin singad olabat.*  
3SG-PST call.out 3PL.  
'She called out for everyone.'

*Imin lukluk ebriwei bla olabat.*  
3SG-PST look~RED everywhere DAT 3PL.  
'She looked everywhere for them.'

*Bat nobodi bin hom.*  
But nobody PST home.  
'But nobody was home.'

*Ola biginini bin dai en deibin meigim mijalp bigwan ston.*  
PL baby PST die and 3PL-PST make REFL big~ADJ stone.  
'All the babies had died and they had turned themselves into big stones.'

*Wal dis olgamen imin krai til imin meigim mijalp laigi bed.*  
Well PROX old.woman 3SG-PST cry until 3SG.PST make-TR REFL like bird.  
'Well, this old woman cried until she turned herself into a bird.'



**Glossed Text: *Lilboi im Los* (Galmur 1998)**

*Wantaim dijan lilboi imin ranawei from im mami en dadi.*  
One.time PROX little.boy 3SG-PST run.away from 3SG mother and father.  
'One time this little boy ran away from his mother and father.'

*Imin hepi riliwei det lilboi langa bush.*  
3SG-PST happy really DEM little.boy LOC bush.  
'The little boy was really happy out in the bush.'

*Det lilboi bin ranran na en imin fraitnem sneik,*  
DEM little.boy PST run~RED along and 3SG-PST scare snake,  
'The little boy was running along and he scared the snakes,'

*keinggurru, gowena en ola ent.*  
kangaroo, goanna and PL ant.  
'kangaroos, goannas and ants.'

*From deya imin go silip langa sheidi tri.*  
From there 3SG-PST go sleep LOC shady tree.  
'After that, he went to sleep under a shady tree.'

*Den det lilboi imin go faindim big mob bush epul*  
Then DEM little.boy 3SG-PST and find-TR big lot bush apple  
'Then the little boy went to find a lot of bush apples'

*en idimbat.*  
and eat-TR-PROG.  
'and was eating them.'

*Det lilboi imin wok thro langa rok en hil*  
DEM little.boy 3SG-PST walk through LOC rock and hill  
'The little boy walked through the rocks and hills'

*en ola bed bin singatsingat.*  
and PL bird PST call.out~RED  
'and the birds were calling out.'

*Imin wok langa bilabong en luk ebrijing langa woda.*  
3SG-PST walk LOC billabong and look everything LOC water.  
'He walked beside the billabong and looked at everything in the water.'

*Lilboi bin sidan en kraikrai en ola bed bin ebriweya langa im.*  
 Little.boy PST sit and cry~RED and PL bird PST everywhere LOC 3SG.  
 ‘The little boy sat and was crying and the birds were everywhere around him.’

*Bla im mami en dadi bin woribat im na*  
 DAT 3SG mother and father PST worry-PROG 3SG now  
 ‘His mother and father were worrying about him now’

*en tubala bin redi bla go.*  
 and 3DU PST ready DAT go.  
 ‘and they got ready to go (and look for him).’

*Dadi en mani bin go en lukaraunbat det lilboi na.*  
 Father and mother PST go and look.around-PROG DEM little.boy now.  
 ‘The father and mother went and were looking around for the little boy now.’

*Imin dak olawei na, det lilboi bin kraikrai bobala.*  
 3SG-PST dark all.the.way now, DEM little.boy PST cry~RED  
 ‘It was almost dark now and the little boy was crying, poor fellow.’

*Bambai ola bed bin flaiflai lida*  
 Later PL bird PST fly~RED in.front  
 ‘Later the birds were flying in front’

*en det lilboi imin folorum bihain langa olabat.*  
 and dem little.boy 3SG-PST follow behind loc 3pl.  
 ‘and the little boy followed behind them.’

*Det lilboi bin kamat langa kemp*  
 DEM little.boy PST arrive LOC camp  
 ‘The little boy arrived at the camp’

*en imin singat langa im mami en dadi*  
 and 3SG-PST call.out LOC 3SG mother and father  
 ‘and he called out for his mother and father’

*en tubala bin hepi en ola bed bin kipgon pas,*  
 and 3DU PST happy and PL bird PST keep.going past,  
 ‘and they were happy and the birds kept going past,’

*en detlot na ola bed bin album langa det lilboi*  
 and DEM now PL bird PST help LOC DEM little.boy  
 ‘and those birds helped the little boy’

*deibin bringim im hom.*  
3PL-PST bring-TR 3SG home.  
'they brought him home.'