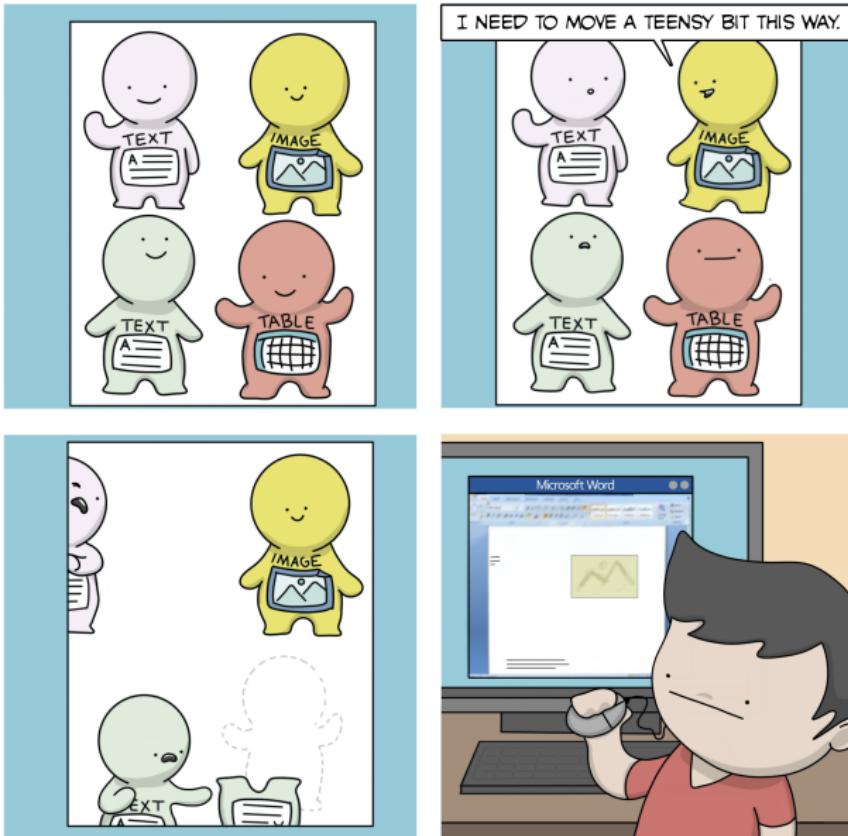


GLSA L^AT_EX Workshop 2019

Michael Kranzelin, Luke Gessler

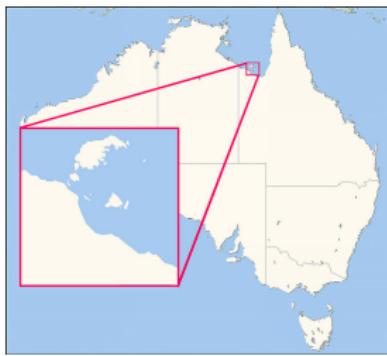
November 9, 2019



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Location



"It was a strange place. Somehow I had expected a lush tropical island. But it was more like a bit of savannah plonked into the sea, [...]. There was a strong odour of inadequate sanitation, mixed with mangrove-wood smoke from cooking fires and what I later came to recognise as the smell of turtle and dugong fat"

— Nicholas Evans, author of *A Grammar of Kayardild*

- Spoken in The Wellesley Islands, Queensland, Australia



Status



- Spoken by ~150 people around 1900
- 40 speakers recorded in 1982
- Only 1 fluent speaker in 2017



Typological Overview

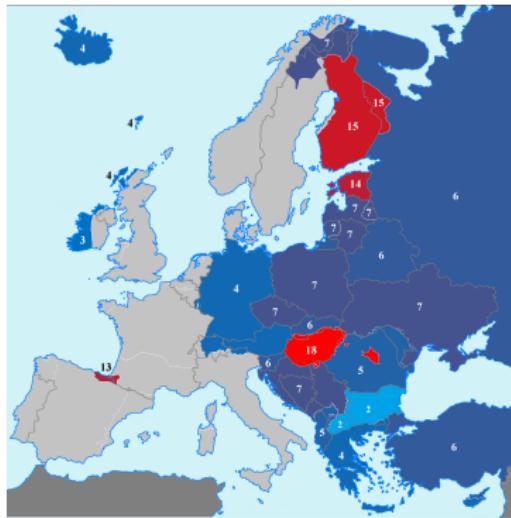
- (1) Mardala-tha kuna-walad-a rirr-nguni ngimi-marr
rub-IMP child-MANY-NOM grease-INSTR night-UTIL
'Rub the children with grease, ready for tonight (because it will be cold)'

- Agglutinative (words tend to have many parts)
- Only suffixes
- Relatively “free” word order
- Very rich case system



Grammatical Case

- Simple definition of grammatical case:
 - A category that describes a **word's role in a sentence**
 - (Usually) expressed using a **morpheme** (an “ending” or something else “added” to a word)





Grammatical Case

English has no case, has fixed word order:

- (2) Mohit likes Brel
Mohit likes Brel
'Mohit likes Brel'
- (3) *Brel likes Mohit
Brel likes Mohit
'Mohit likes Brel'

Latin has case, change in word order is possible

- (4) Marcell-us hort-um colebat
Marcellus-NOM garden-ACC tend
'Marcellus used to tend his garden'
- (5) Hort-um Marcell-us colebat
garden-ACC Marcellus-NOM tend
'Marcellus used to tend his garden'



Curious Cases of Case

Kayardild has many unusual case marking phenomena:

- Tense/Aspect/Mood (TAM) information encoded in non-subject NP case inflections
- Case markings “percolate down indefinitely” into embedded constituents, up to four times
- All words in complement clauses receive case marking
- Independent, second layer of noun cases that is “nouny” in meaning but converts nouns into syntactic verbs



TAM-signifying NP inflections

(6) Dangka-a raa-jarra bijarrba-na wumburu-nguni-na
man-NOM spear-PAST dugong-ABL spear-INSTR-ABL
'The man **speared** the dugong with a spear'

(7) Dangka-a raa-jarra bijarrba-na wumburu-nguni-wu
man-NOM spear-POT dugong-PROP spear-INSTR-PROP
'The man **will** spear the dugong with a spear'

- Information about the event (here, when it happened) is usually indicated on the verb
- In Kayardild, it must be indicated on an NP that is not the subject with a case marking
- Ablative case marking of object means past tense
- Proprietary case marking of object means future tense



Case marking percolation

- (8) dangka-**karra**-nguni mijil-**nguni**
man-**GEN**-INSTR net-**INSTR**
'with the man's net'
- (9) maku-wa yalawu-jarra yakuri-**na** dangka-**karra**-nguni-**na**
woman-NOM catch-PAST fish-**ABL** man-**GEN**-INSTR-**ABL**
mijil-**nguni**-**na**
net-**INSTR**-**ABL**
'The woman caught fish in the man's net'

- (8): NP's modifying other NP's agree with their heads, so 'the man's' also gets instrumental marking
- (9): this combines with the use of case for TAM!



BUT IM NOT DONE YET.



Complement clause case marking

(10) ngada mungurru, maku-ntha yalawu-jarra-ntha
I know woman-COBL catch-PAST-COBL
yakuri-naa-ntha dangka-karra-nguni-naa-ntha
fish-M.ABL-COBL man-GEN-INSTR-M.ABL-COBL
mijil-nguni-naa-nth
net-INSTR-M.ABL-COBL

'I know that the woman caught the fish with the brother's net'

- There's another case slot for when you're in an embedded clause!



Second, Verby Case

(11) ngada warra-jarra dathin-**kiwa-tharra** ngilirr-**iiwa-tharr**
I go-PAST that-VALL-PAST cave-VALL-PAST
'I went to that cave'

- Verbal allative (VALL) case behaves like a normal case inflection: indicates noun is a destination
- But now the noun is a verb, and must agree with the verb! (Note that the PAST inflections are repeated on the NP.)



Computational Challenges

- Kayardild poses novel problems for morphological parsing, like unusual encoding of “verbal” information on non-subject NPs
- Interestingly, some of these morphological phenomena help preserve syntactic information
 - Complement clause case should help systems know when the clause ends
 - Percolating NP case should help systems solve attachment ambiguities
- ...But, Kayardild will not have NLP systems any time soon because it is nearly extinct, and it is everyone's loss