Complex Referential Gestures[1]

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**** Comments welcome!!! *****

1. Directions

Like many anthropological studies, this paper begins with an ethnographic tidbit. At Hopevale Mission, an Aboriginal community in southeastern Cape York Penninsula in the Australian state of Queensland, over several years, I have been learning the local Paman language (called Guugu Yimidhirr, hereafter GY) and studying the history of the community. Not surprisingly, people frequently need to give and follow directions.

1.1 GY locational cases

In fact, GY seems to concern itself deeply with location, not only in the frequent practice of *describing* where things are, or in the universal need to *locate referents*, but as a matter of what Fillmore (1983:317, in a commentary on Talmy 1983) calls the "semantics of grammar" --- fixed, closed-class, and schematized devices within syntax and morphology for characterizing space, location, position, and motion. The language, first, has an elaborate system of nominal cases, including a set of three 'locational' cases. The LOC(ative)/ALL(ative) case indicates position at (example 1), or motion to (2) a place or thing. The ABL(ative) case indicates motion from (3) or origin at (4) a place or thing. And the (relatively infrequent) SUP(erjacent) case suggests position or motion above, on top of, or along the top of something. (See Haviland 1979: 46ff.)

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(1) mundal   baarrabaarra-wi  nhayun guwaalu
    rest+ABS mangrove-LOC/ALL there  West
    The rest (were) in the mangroves there to the West.

(2) guwaalu mission-bi      gada-y
    West           -LOC/ALL come-PAST
    Afterwards they took me to the dormitory.

(3) ngali  dhadaayga guwa mayi      maaniiga McIvor-nganh
    1duNOM went-SUB  West food+ABS  took-SUB       -ABL
    We used to go west, and bring the food from McIvor.
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[1] This paper began as a short talk delivered to the joint session on Language in Cultural Context of the meetings of the Australian Anthopological Association and the Australian Linguistics Society in October 1981. It has since undergone extensive revision. I am grateful to Carlota Smith, Paul Rozin, Stephen Levinson, Leonard Talmy, John Gumperz, Michael Silverstein, Robert Laughlin, Lourdes de León, and Judith Aissen -- among others -- for comments on both written and orally presented parts of this material. I am especially indebted to the late Jack Bambi, for his splendid storytelling, and to Roger Hart, for his expert commentary.

(4) yindu-umun dyin.gurr-mala-ngun walaarr-nganh gundaarnda-y wuuguul
other-ERG sister-agent-ERG beard-ABL kill+REDUP-PAST louse+ABS
The other younger sister kept on killing the lice from his beard.

(5) bayan mugu-unh wunaarna.
house back-SUP lie+REDUP
It is (lying) on the top of the house.

There are some specific locational words, as well. Hopevale people use a familiar contrast in two deictic roots (*yi-* 'here, this', and *nha-* 'there, that'), along with the roots *bada* 'down, below', and *wanggaar* 'up, above,' to locate and identify things. There are two further complex deictic words, both typically requiring a gesture to specify their meanings: *yarrba* 'thus, in this way' (a kind of generalized demonstrative manner word), and *yarra* 'there, that', whose use implies: 'Have a look at that' or 'There it is!' These roots themselves combine with locational cases to produce such forms as those in the following examples:

(6) minha-angu *yii*-muu gad-ii
meat-PURP here-ALL come-IMP
Come (to) here for meat!

(7) nyulu *bada*-amun nhangu-ngal diiga-y
3sNOM down-ABL 3sg-ADESS send-PAST
He sent him from below to (stay with) him.

Or even, with what appears to be an ABLative suffix on a demonstrative:

(8) Nicholas biini, Hector nyulu biini, *yarrba*-nun dhana dhaday
died 3sNOM died thus-ABL 3plNOM went
Nicholas died, Hector died, and they all went (from, in?) that way.

Despite these seemingly complex combinatorial possibilities, as Australian languages go[2], the GY repertoire of distinct locational or deictic *roots* is actually somewhat meagre and underspecified: a simple proximate/distal deictic contrast, supplemented by a basic, if hardworking, vertical opposition, and two further demonstratives which, as I say, typically require gestural supplementation.

1.2 GY directional roots

Where GY begins to shine is in the realm of cardinal directions. There are four roots which GY speakers use heavily in discourse about position, direction, orientation, or motion. The roots correspond roughly to the English words for north, south, east and west.

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[2] Compare the deictic systems of two well-known Australian languages, Dyirbal and Yidiny, described by R. M. W. Dixon. The former has demonstratives that code such dimensions as upriver/downriver, or uphill/downhill, as well as relative distance (Dixon 1972:48ff.). Moreover, Dyirbal has a system of obligatory ostensive evidentials (see Hanks(1984) for a description of similar elements in Yucatec Maya) that index whether a noun is present, close or far, visible or non-visible. Yidiny has a three-term system of deictics, arranged by relative distance, in which the remote term can mean either 'remote from speaker' or 'out of sight of speaker' (Dixon 1977:180ff).

(8.1)

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                gungga- (north)
guwa- (west)              naga- (east)
                dyiba- (south)
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(One of the traditional relativistic tasks for the anthropologist is, of course, to iron out the *roughness* of this equivalence --- to do so requires an appeal to certain geographic, topographic and astronomical facts. The GY compass seems to be rotated slightly clockwise -- perhaps fifteen degrees --- so that while the sun is said to rise *naga-almun* 'from the East,' regardless of the season of the year, so too the town of Cooktown, which lies south-east of Hopevale Mission by a standard compass, is described as *naga-ar* 'to the East.' Similarly, the basic orientation of the coastline, in that part of Queensland, runs slightly NW to SE, rather than North-South; generally points up the coast are reckoned as *guwa* 'West', and points down the coast *naga*, 'East.' Often, in fact, GY speakers translate the terms differently depending on what places they have in mind, so that my friend Roger Hart, whose homeland is unambiguously *guwa* from Hopevale, sometimes says that this means West and sometimes that it means North.)

These four cardinal point roots combine with a wide variety of suffixes, and the morphological and semantic facts require some explanation. I will turn to the details in a moment. Let me say, here, that the ordinary system I have sketched of locational noun cases is further elaborated with these directional roots, and presents considerable expressive complexity.

Hopevale people use these compass-point words heavily in ordinary talk, and learning to speak Guugu Yimidhirr, in practice, requires careful attention to direction and orientation. For example, in GY people do not describe location or motion in terms of 'left' or 'right', or even 'front' or 'back'. Characteristically, instead, they use compass-points.[3] Instead of 'move back from the table' they might say *guwa-gu-manaayi* 'move a bit to the West'. If someone asks 'Where are you going?' you usually reply not *store-wi* 'I'm going up to the store' (which lies west of most houses at Hopevale Mission) but more appropriately *guwa store-wi* 'West to the store,' or perhaps just, in context, *guwa.* When people talk to me about America they ordinarily refer to it simply as *gunggaalu* 'Northwards.' And so on. Given a point of reference, it is possible to specify an absolute orientation. But to use the system you have to keep either your wits about you, or a compass in your pocket.

Needless to say, people from Hopevale cultivate a 'sense of direction' both highly developed and insistent. My friend and co-author Tulo Gordon, first arrived at my home in Canberra by airplane at night. His authoritative directional instincts led him to insist for some days

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[3] Talmy 1983:268 cites Wintu as another language which avoids "reference to any intrinsic right/left laterality, even for mobile objects, and instead ... refer[s] in fact to earth-based geometry.. That is, the speakers of this language would say 'My east arm itches.'" Pitkin's grammar of Wintu (Pitkin 1984:262ff) mentions the roots *nom* 'west,' *nor* 'south,' *puy* 'east,' and *way* 'north,' which belong to a small class of uninflected "directional words" (a class that also includes words for 'up' and 'down,' 'back,' 'ahead,' and a few more, but notably no words for 'left' and 'right.') These directionals also combine with locational suffixes with locative, ablative, and allative meanings. Pitkin's description gives few details about usage, although he presents a Wintu text in which a mythological flood's movements are tracked from north to south, using inflected forms of the directional words, and occasionally combining a cardinal point root with a verb of motion to form a complex stem: *wayken-hara.* 'recede northwards', whose analysis includes "{way} prefix 'north' + {ken} prefix 'in, down' + {har} root 'motion away from speaker' + {a} indicative stem-formant" (Pitkin 1984:279). The style is highly reminiscent of GY narrative.

that, there in the heretefore uncharted regions of southeastern Australia, against all odds, the sun rose in the North! It took an overland trip by car to convince him, finally, that he had somehow lost his bearings on that first visit, and that the world remained properly oriented even in southeastern Australia.

GY speakers are also aware that most non-Aborigines are not skilled at keeping directions straight, and they characterize English speech as being hopelessly underspecified about location. There are, as we shall see, interesting ramifications for gesticulation. GY speakers are often confused by Europeans' rather haphazard use of pointing gestures (when they point in the wrong direction from the entity they wish to signal), and, indeed, the initial motivation for this study was my realization that, to speak GY properly, I was going to have to learn to pay closer attention to direction than I was accustomed to doing. A frequent game, in the bush, is to ask people to point in the direction of some distant place; the parallel practice from my youth, of pointing, say, North, when on an expedition in the woods, would be a trivial task for Hopevale people, because people *always* know which way is North. We touch again on a traditional anthropological matter: behaving properly in Hopevale means, among other things, giving and receiving directions appropriately, and doing so using GY; and to do *that* properly, one *must* know which way is North.

Notice that although proper use of cardinal point terms in GY requires speakers to keep absolute track of orientation and direction, the system does not guarantee greater precision or specificity of reference: saying something is 'to the North' may be as vague and indeterminate as saying 'to your right', or just 'over there'. Specificity, here, as with Wittgenstein's signposts, depends on the existence of a *practice* of giving directions, and is not simply somehow a matter of language matching more or less perfectly with an independently specified reality. This is a matter I shall return to.

As I say, these words figure prominently in ordinary GY speech of all kinds --- they are not confined to giving directions, or especially motivated talk about position and location. As a rough measure of their frequency, I have counted their occurrence in a text, delivered in conversational form, that recounts the mythical adventures of Wurrbal, 'Fog', a somewhat lascivious culture hero who travels about the countryside tricking people. The cardinal point roots occur in fully ten per cent of the lines of the text; in fact, one in about every thirty-eight words in the story is an inflected form of a direction term.

It is perhaps misleading to connect these lexical devices only to direction and orientation, for the same mechanisms are clearly part of a wider system of 'determiners' which function to pick out the intended referents of nominal expressions from the universe of possible referents. They contribute to identifying formulae. Someone may ask *wanhu banydyiilndyi nyundu* 'Who are you waiting for?' and receive the reply *yarra nagaalu* '(Look) there to the East', to be read as 'The person I am waiting for will be identifiable if you have a look there to the East.' Simple referential tracking in spoken discourse, then, is *typically* tied to this system of directional pointers.

1.3 The morphology of directional roots

Let me turn, briefly, to some of the morphological details. When I first began to learn GY, I was taught that different forms of the cardinal point words could be used to denote motion (great or small) in or from a particular direction, location (far or near) in some direction, orientation (towards or away from some direction, or relative to some given point of reference). The resulting collection of words constitutes a system of quite remarkable subtlety and complexity, although I now know that the description I present in Haviland 1979, section 3.4., is in substantial respects,

wrong. Let me present a more adequate account, based on a study of over 1800 occurrences of inflected forms of these roots in natural conversation, and then try to reconcile it with the partial account that emerged in GY speakers' explicit explantions.

Whereas ordinary GY nouns display basically two locational case forms, LOCative/ALLative and ABLative, the cardinal point roots form *three different* LOC/ALL forms and at least *four* different ABL forms. When I first learned GY, speakers taught me that the differences involved relative distance, as in the following sets of LOC/ALL expressions:

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(8.2)   gungga-rra      'just to/on the North'          N
        dyiba-rra       'just to/on the South'          S
        naga            'just to/on the East'           E
        guwa            'just to/on the West'           W

        gungga-arr      'a medium distance North'       N-R
        dyiba-arr       ' " "       "       South'      S-R
        naga-ar         '  "  "     "       East'       E-R
        guwa-ar         '  "  "     "       West'       W-R
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and finally

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        gungga-alu      'a long way North'      N-L
        dyiba-alu       etc.                    S-L
        naga-alu                                E-L
        guwa-alu                                W-L
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Similarly, there are two pairs of ABL suffixes, which I was told denoted relatively greater or lesser distance *from* some direction: *-nun* and *-nunganh* "from a short distance in that direction", as opposed to *-:lmun* and *-:lmunganh*[4], "from a relatively longer distance in that direction."

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        gungga-nun      'from the North (medium)'       N-N
        dyiba-almu-nganh 'from the South (distant)'     S-MABL
        naga-nu-nganhg  'from the East (medium)'        E-NABL
        etc.
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Note that *-nganh* itself is the normal nominal ABLative suffix.

Let me call the different LOC/ALL forms the 0-form (or simply N[orth], S[outh], E[ast] and W[est]) for *gunggarra, dyibarra, naga* and *guwa*), the R-form (N-R, S-R, etc. for *gunggaarr, dyibaarr* etc.) and the L-form for those ending in *:lu.* The ABLative forms can be represented as N and NABL (for *-nun* and *-nunganh*), and M and MABL (for *-:lmun* and *-:lmunganh* respectively). There are also derived forms with the endings *-:lnggarr* or *-:nggarr* (I will call them G-forms), and specialized reduplicated and verbal forms of the cardinal point roots, as in the following examples:

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(9) ngayu nhamu-nhamu nhaadhiil-dhi  dyiba-alnggur dyuubi-ngay
    1sNOM then        see+REDUP-PAST S-G            palm-PL
    In those days I used to see palm trees on the South side (of a creek).
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[4] In these formulations, the ':' preceding a suffix marks the fact that it engenders lengthening in the second syllable of the root to which it attaches. See Haviland 1979: 144ff.

(10) yugu nhayun budhu dagu guwagu-gurral-a
wood+ABS that+ABS INTENS thing West+REDUP-make-IMP
Just move that (very) piece of wood a little bit to the West.

(11) yii ngalan guwa-ar-madhi
Here sun+ABS West-R-become+PAST
And then the sun went down (= became west).

The G-forms denotes sides, aspects, or faces of things: the West side, the northerly aspect (of a mountain range) etc.

This list does not exhaust the morphological complexity of directional roots. More detailed study of GY usage, however, suggests that the different locational forms have rather specific meanings that do not, in fact, record relative distance at all, except perhaps by indirect (and defeasable) inference. Instead, the various LOC/ALL and ABL forms combine absolute direction, from some established 'origo' or point of reference, with various sorts of *perspective* --- in the first instance, locational, but often extended to perspective within a particular universe of discourse[5]. Briefly, the three LOC/ALL forms all denote motion, or location in the direction specified by the root. But whereas the L-form suggests unmarked motion in a certain vector, without regard to either starting point or end point, the 0-form focusses on (presupposes, emphasizes, draws attention to, or otherwise brings into perspective) a *final end-point*; on the other hand, the R-form suggests motion in a certain direction, but with some *starting* reference point, a given or focussed *origin*. Diagrammatically, there are three possibilities, where the arrow shows direction, the exclamation point shows the assumed point of reference, and the asterisk shows where the cardinal point, denoted by the directional root, lies in relation to the directional arrow.

(11.1) 0-form ---------->!*
R-form !---------->*
L-form -------(!)---->*

Another way to capture the apparent difference in meaning is with notional formulas like the following:

0-form: "motion or location in direction X, thinking about a point p at X, as final goal or destination."

R-form: "motion or location in direction X, thinking about a point p, not at X, from which motion starts or from whose vantage point the location at X is conceived."

L-form: "motion towards or location at some unspecified place on the vector in direction X."

The point here is that, although in all cases, motion or location is in the same *direction*, relative to the pertinent origo, the L-form is unmarked with respect to starting and end points,

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[5] Very similar sorts of perspective, including what Fillmore (1983b) calls goal-oriented, source-oriented, and neutral, seem necessary to an analysis of *verbs* (especially the contrasts between 'come' and 'go' and their relatives). To my knowledge, such perspective has not been described in connection with locational expressions, or deictics, where dimensions like relative distance, visibility, and certain evidential properties are more frequently encoded.

whereas the other two forms presume the relevance of either an origin or a destination. The following sentences give some clear examples of these distinctions.

(12) guraaban gada-y, yarra dyibarra waguur ganbarr-in
BrownPeak come-PAST yonder S-0 outside jump-PAST
They came to Brown Peak, and then went inland there (at that point) to the south.

(13) nhaa-muunh shift-em-gurr-ay nhayun dyibaarr
that-ABL shift-do-PAST that+ABS S-R
After that, they shifted (the cattle) from there south.

(14) nhayun dyiba-alu Cape Bedford breakwater-wi dhambarr-in
that+ABS S-L -LOC throw-PAST
They anchored (the boat) off to the south from the breakwater at Cape Bedford.

Similarly, the ABLative forms contrast motion (or origin) *from* some direction, with emphasis either on a *point* of origin (the N forms), or on some general direction from which motion procedes, but with no particular focus on a starting point (the M forms). The parallel with LOC/ALL forms is clear. In the case of the ablative forms there seems to be a further complexity: the perspective of the speaker is also a relevant factor. The NABL and MABL forms (with the added *-nganh* suffix) contrast with the simple N and M forms by specifying motion or origin from some direction, but not necessarily *to here* (the indexically given, or discursively established, deictic origo). If, in the following formulas, the symbol '+' is taken to represent the 'here' of speaker's perspective, we may represent the ablative forms as follows:

(14.1) N-form +<----------!*
NABL-form *!---------->
M-form +<----------*
MABL- form *---------->

Consider the following examples:

(15) nha-gala nyulu dyibanun nguundu-nguundu-madhi.
that-EMPH 3sNOM S-N to here-REDUP-becom
That very one got closer to here, (coming) from that point in the south.

(16) nhayun dyibanunganh gaarbaarr-nganh
that+ABS S-NABL middle-ABL
That one (comes from, is native of) the south, from between (two other previously named tribal areas).

(17) coconut nhayun dyibaalmun galmba dagaarrgarr-in
that+ABS S-M also grow+REDUP-PAST
Coconuts used to grow (there) on the south (coming up some unspecified distance from the south).

(18) some of them bama people come from yimu-unh dyiba-almunganh
here-ABL S-MABL
Some of the people (who used to live there) were natives of (places unspecified) in the south.

1.4 Directional words in context

I can illustrate these forms with some extracts from conversational material in which GY speakers use them to trace movement and location. In the second part of this paper, I will connect these linguistic devices to gestural means for indicating direction and location, in an extended example of GY storytelling. But first, it is important to see both the expressive subtlety, and the sheer frequency, of directional words in GY discourse.

(19) {BP2a lines 491-496} RH, a native of the area called *wuuri*, is describing the boundaries of his tribal territory, having recently returned to his birthplace, after an extended overland trip from the Hopevale mission. In the extract below, I show a rough translation of his comments. Directional words are given in the notation introduced above. Line numbers from the original text are also attached to numbered arrows on the accompanying figures. (A full text of this and following fragments can be found in the appendix.) This extract is diagrammed in Figure 1.

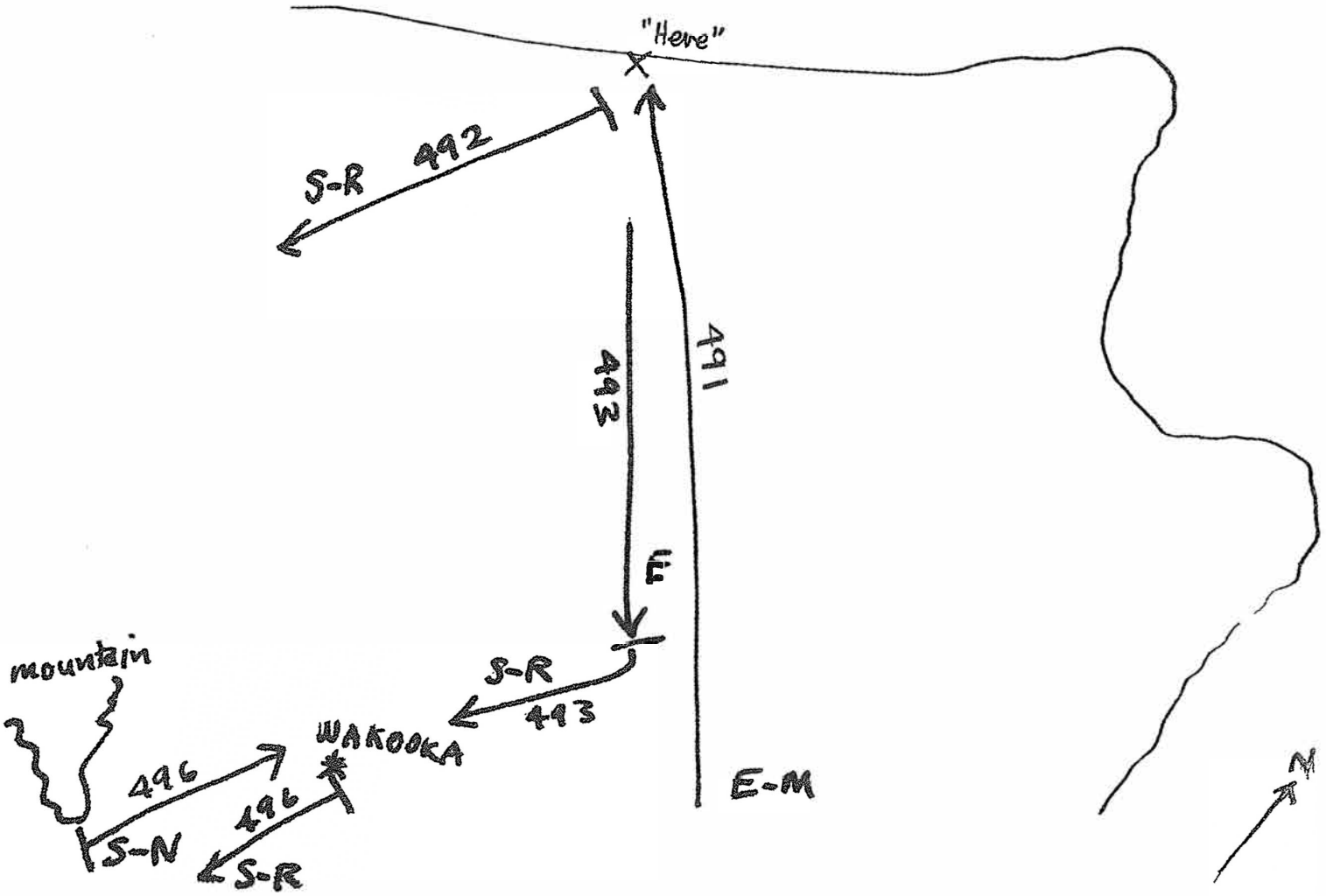
(19) {BP2a lines 491-496}
491: This is my (country). Here, from there, E-M.
492: There, right through that way S-R.
493: My country came E, S-R.
494: Our (country).
495: We are two nations, see, our people.
496: One S-N from the tail (of that mountain), from there at Wakooka, S-R.

((Figure 1 about here))

At line 491, the speaker makes reference to a trip we had recently made, travelling up from the east, to a point on the coast at the western extremioty of his home territory. At an (unspecified) point on that east-west vector we had entered his country; he uses the E-M form to show that his country started somewhere on the trip "from the east." At lines 492 and 493 he points out that his tribal country continues towards the south from that *point* (S-R) *in the east* (E). Then he identifies the tribal area of the other half of this two part tribe: its country begins in (from) the south (S-N), from a specific point on the end of a mountain ridge, which in turn can be seen, starting at the known reference point of Wakooka, and going south *from there* (S-R).

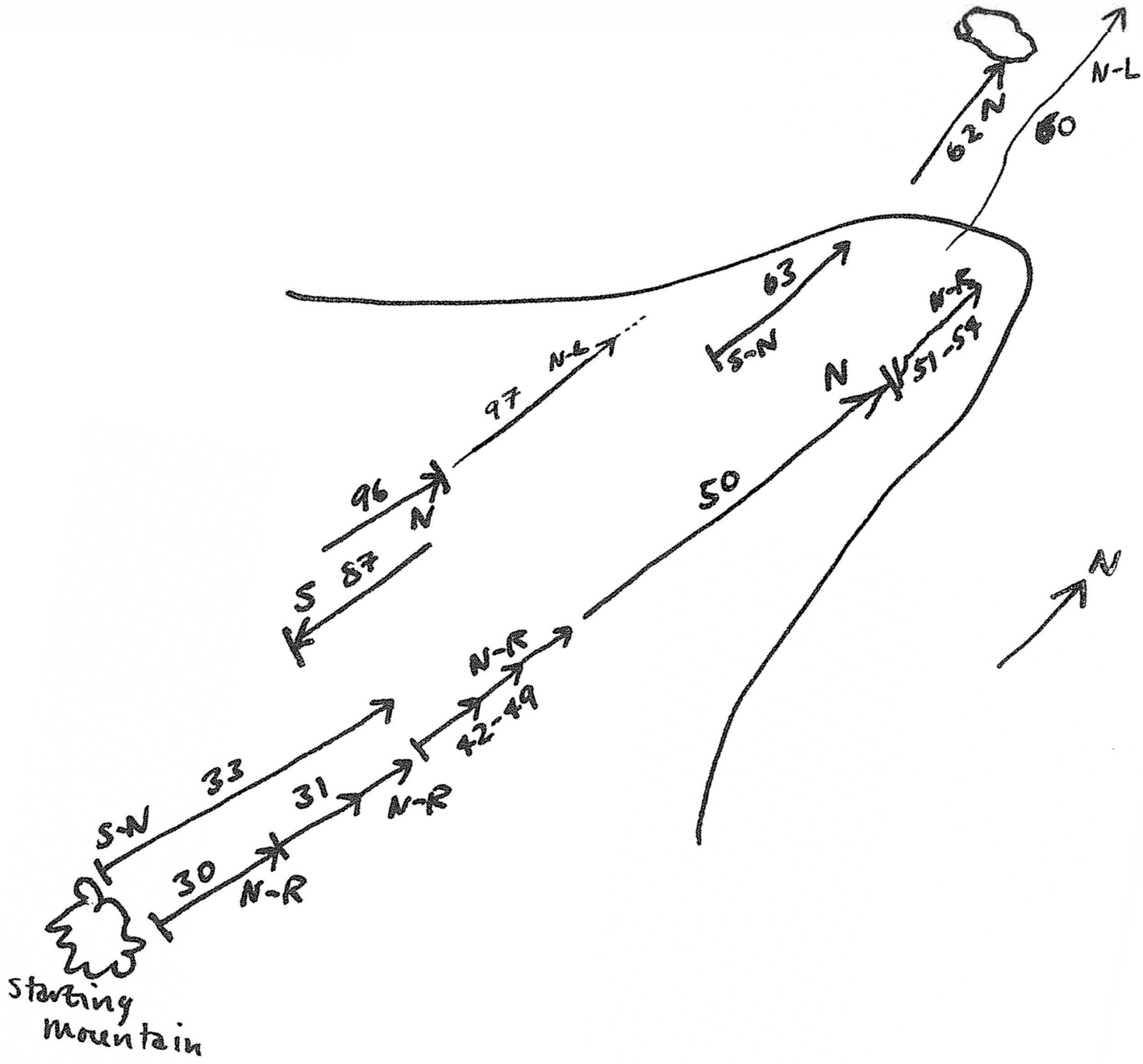
(20) {Mungurru lines 30-63} These lines are extracted from a story about a mythological python that journeyed underground northwards from his home, ultimately coming out of the earth and turning into stone, to form a huge rocky chain of mountains on the coast at a place called Cape Melville. See Figure 2.

Figure 1 (Example 19)



26: He made up his mind
27: He came down from above (*wangga-amun*).
28: He entered the earth.
30: He went along underground N-R.
31: He kept going N-R, going N-R, going N-R.
{He started moving N-R, towards the north, continuing *from each point* in a northerly direction.}
32: Then he came up there.
33: That little mountain, see, when we came S-N, see.
{When 'we' came up S-N, *from that same point in the south* -- the storyteller and his interlocutors are the 'we' of this sentence --- we passed and saw the mountain in question in the course of a journey that also began at the python's starting place.}
35: He came up there, that's his head.
36: The first one (i.e., the first time he surfaced).
41: Then he went down again (underground).
42: He went N-R, went N-R, went N-R.
47: He came up N-R ---
48: Kept crawling N-R
49: Kept crawling N-R.
{He kept going towards the north, seen from the point where he again submerged to continue his travels.}
50: A long way, N.
{And finally came to that point in the north (N), where he is now known to rest.}
51: His body then surfaced N-R.
53: His whole body,
54: It kept coming out N-R.
{He then emerged still further north, from there (N-R).}
55: He got sick.
59: He died right there.
60: (interlocutor:) His head was in the water N-L? {pointing}
{pointing in the northerly direction (N-L) that his head was oriented.}
62: Yes, his head was in the water N.
{emphasizing the point, in the north, (N) where his head formed an island that is still visible.}
63: His tail was outside (inland) S-N.
{coming from that point in the south where his tail is, i.e., where the mountains stop, S-N.}
86: (interlocutor:) Where did his head first come up?
87: S, where he first started out.
{A known point in the south (S) where the journey began.}
91: That first big river is there.
95: His head first came up there.
96: And then he went again, and then he came up again N.
{At that known first place to the north (N) where his head left a small mountain.}
97: And then he continued a long way N-L.
{an unspecified long continuing journey in a northerly direction (N-L).}

FIGURE 2 (Example 20)



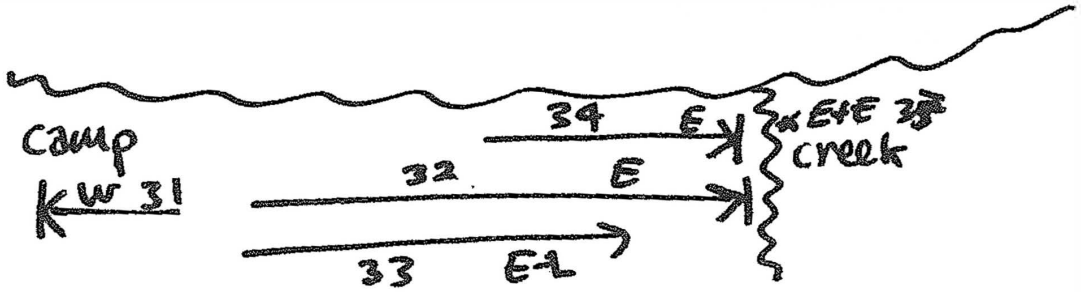
((Figure 2 about here))

(21) {T82/8a 31-93} RH tells how, as a child, he and some friends once flushed a large lizard from the grass, when playing by a creek near the camp where they lived. Afterwards, they shifted camp.

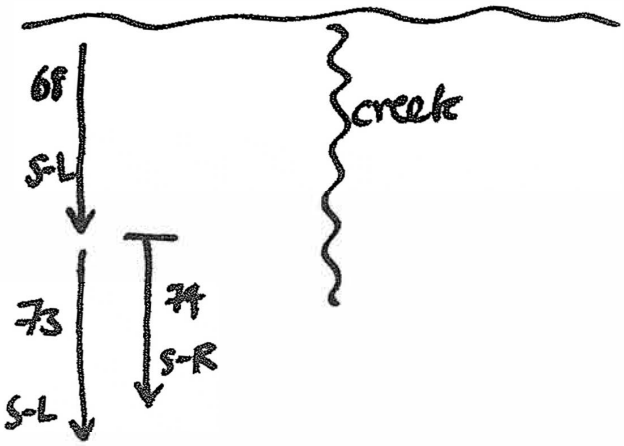
31: We ourselves were staying W.
{In the camp, at a known point west (W).
32: From there we used to go E.
{To the known point, a river, in the east (E).}
33: To that little river, E-L.
{Not sure that his interlocutor remembers the place, he suggests that he try to conjure a vision of the river that was, given the reference point of the old camp,
towards the East on that beach (E-L).}
34: We used to go E.
{That *place* in the east (E) was where the kids went.}
37: E+REDUP, that was the same (as now), shallow.
38: Only up(stream) was it deep.
39: There might be a crocodile there now down(stream)
...
68: I kept chasing after (the lizard) S-L.
{towards the south, who knows how far (S-L).}
69: We kept following his tracks.
70: His tracks went on and on and on.
71: He was lying in the short grass.
72: He got frightened.
73: He suddenly ran off that way S-L {pointing}
{in that southerly direction (S-L).}
74: I kept on chasing him that way S-R.
(South, *from there*, where he had been hiding (S-R).}
75: He jumped in the water.
76: (I) couldn't get him.
...
79: And after that we shifted W.
{To a specified *place in the west* (W).}
80: Where you saw the crocodile.
81: There N-R. 83: There N-R.
{North *from that place* just identified (N-R).}
84: Not that river
{where the crocodile was seen, just mentioned in 80}
85: There's another river.
86: But farther N-R.
88: (interlocutor:) Not as far as Eumangin?
89: no
90: They also stayed at Eumangin.
{There was another Aboriginal camp there.}
92: But here towards here (*nguundu*).
{Still using the previous reference point, the creek where the crocodile was seen, the camp was 'towards here' (i.e., towards that creek) from Eumangin.}
93: We used to go that way {pointing} E, to the reef.
{From the camp, they used to make hunting forays *to the reef on the east* (E).}

FIGURE 3 (Example 21)

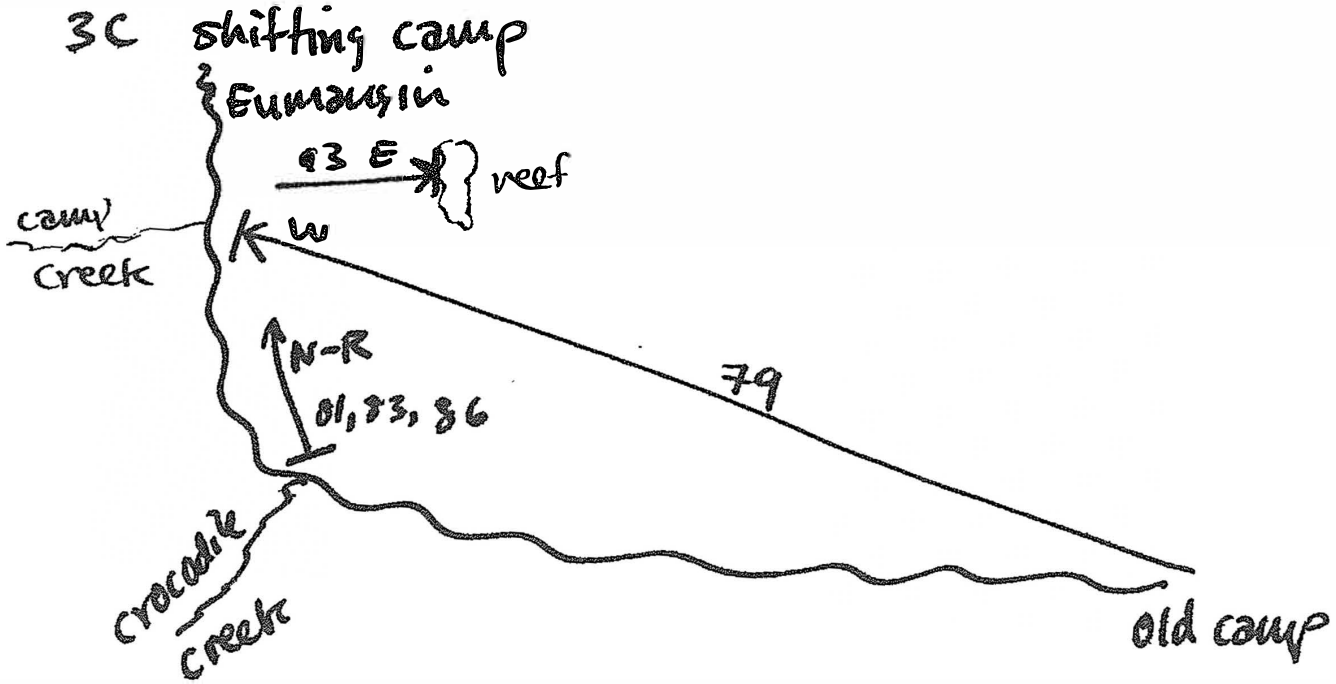
3A On the beach



3B Chasing the lizard



3C Shifting camp



((Figure 3 about here))

1.5 Perspective, and points of reference

These GY directional words are clearly complex referring devices. They mix a variety of dimensions. First, they trade on GY's highly codified linguistic representations of space (the locational cases, for example, and the absolute grid of cardinal directions codified in the directional roots themselves).

Second, they depend for succesful reference on a directional 'origo' (Bühler 1934, 1982) which is either established indexically (as the same as the place of the speech event in question, as the fragment quoted as (19) above --- told while the speakers were *on the territory* being described), or discursively, as when a secondary point of reference is introduced: "we went east from our camp; there we chased the lizard into the grass; from there he headed south."

Notice that this directional 'origo' may interact with, but must be distinguished from, the deictic origo of the speech event itself. This latter deictic origo allows speakers to select the appropriate application of, among other things, the GY words *gadaa* 'come' and *dhadaa* 'go.' Although the details are slightly more complicated than this, the GY version of this familiar opposition (see Fillmore 1971, reprinted as Fillmore 1983b, and Coseriu 1977) seems to operate, in the simple cases, on the basis of whether the speaker presents motion as towards or away from his or her *own* point of reference (again, either indexically or discursively established), independent of that of the hearer.

That there is an unmarked presumption that this speaker's origo will coincide with the reference point from which the directional grid of GY cardinal point roots is appled can be seen in a single statistical fact: the various ABL forms of the direction words only rarely occur together with the verb *dhadaa* 'go,' whereas they frequently occur in sentences in which the verb is *gadaa* 'come' (about 45% of such sentences have ABL forms). (In GY there is no corresponding transitive opposition between 'bring' and 'take' nor is the distinction captured in the Tzotzil opposition *yul* 'arrive to here' and *k'ot* 'arrive to there' lexicalized in GY.) Yet the fact remains, that 'come' occurs in contexts where direction is characterized both as 'from' and 'to' a place, as the following examples show, so that the two reference points must, in principle, be distinguishable.

(22) {t82.7a2, 30-36} I ask RH, while we are both far in the south of Australia, about some people at the camp of his birthplace, conceived of as *guwa* 'west' from both our current location and his ordinary home at Hopevale.

```
(22) {t82.7a2, 30-36}
     30: (JBH:) Where were you then?
     31:        Not born yet?
     32: (RH:) No not yet
     33:       That was earlier.
     34:       And when Y. came W.   gadaaray guwa
     35:       He had B. with him.
```

((Figure 4 about here))

At line 34, RH adopts the perspective of his home camp (even though the events he is recounting took place before his birth), and thus uses the verb *gadaa* 'come', together with the end-point focussed 0-form *guwa* 'to a point in the west' to say that Y came to where he was, travelling

in a westerly direction, and starting her travel from some other (presumably more easterly) point of reference. Contrast this usage, 'come to W,' with the following extract, where 'come' cooccurs with the ABL N-form:

(25) {BP1/ab 380-399} A well-known man from Barrow Point, in the west, took his wife back to his native territory from near Cape Bedford, in the east. Then he returned. The interlocutors tell the story from the perspective of Cape Bedford (although they are actually *telling* the story at a place called Starcke River, which lies about half-way between Cape Bedford and Barrow Point, that is, well to the west of the obvious reference point).

379: But old J. didn't like it
{living with this woman}
380: and hehhh he said
381: "well, I think I'd bettwr take this woman W"
382: He took her W.
384: W to Barrow Point. {*guwa*}
385: and then he returned.
387: and he met him
{another person named H.} at Elderslie.
{Elderslie is a place southeast of Starcke, east of Barrow Point, but slightly west of Cape Bedford, the mission where the interlocutors were living at the time}
388: he was sitting by the trunk of a mango tree
389: well he {H.} was crawling up S-N in the grass, after tobacco
{coming from S-N, presumably from Cape Bedford mission}
390: and he (J.) spied him (H.)
391: Old man J saw him coming
396: that's when it happened.
398: that time when he came back W-N
{*dhiliinh guwanun gadaayga*}

((Figure 5 about here))

In line 398, the choice of *gadaa* 'come' shows that the speakers' reference point is somewhere closer to Elderslie than to Barrow Point (despite their actual physical location at the time, considerably closer to Barrow Point); and the N-form *guwanun* 'from the west' shows both the absolute orientation of the motion from B arrow Point to Elderslie and the fact that the perspective of the story is set to the east of Barrow Point.

Now contrast example (22) with the following fragment from the same conversation, in which an ALLative form cooccurs with the verb *dhadaa* 'go.'

(24) {t83.7a2 160-165} Later in the same story as example (22), RH talks about a man who left a woman at Cape Bedford (which lies E) and fled to Barrow Point (the camp in the W mentioned in the previous fragment), again at a time before RH was born. The storyteller has now, however, adopted the perspective of Cape Bedford, so the verb is now *dhadaa* 'go,' although he again uses the 0-form ALLative *guwa* 'to a point in the west.'

FIGURE 4 (Example 22)

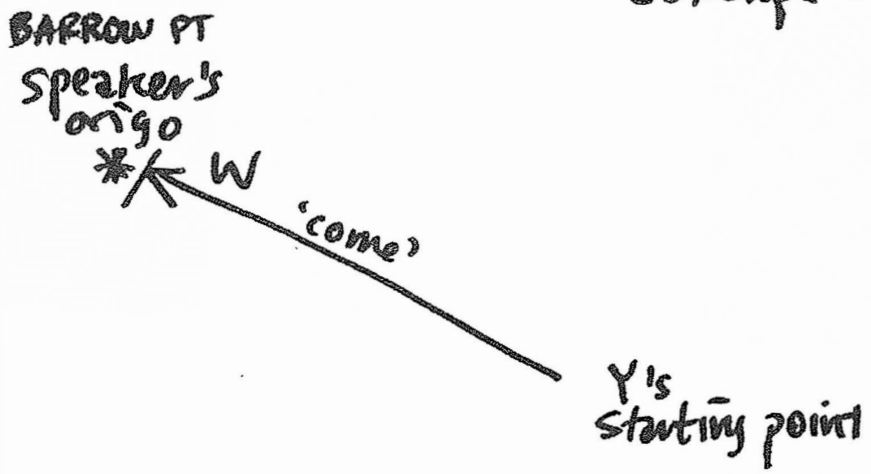


FIGURE 5 (Example 23)

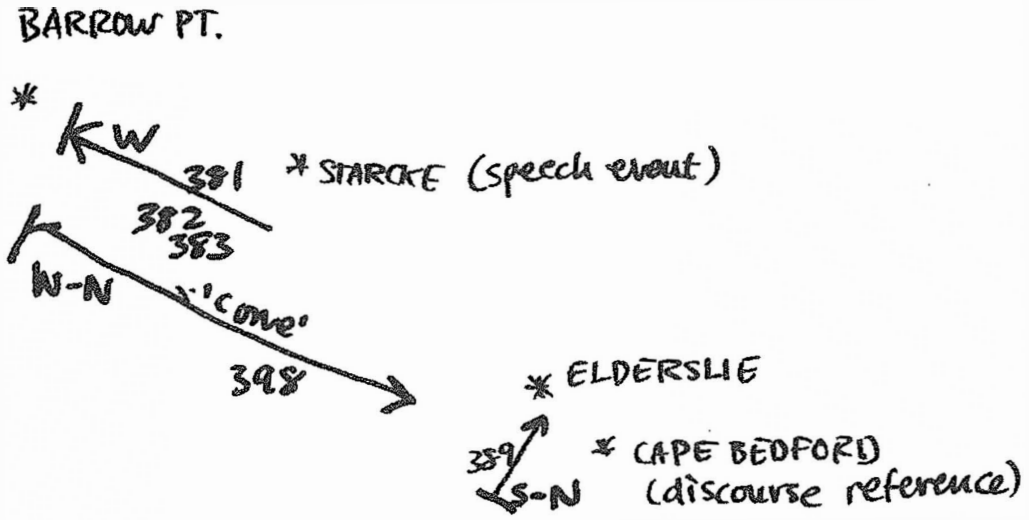
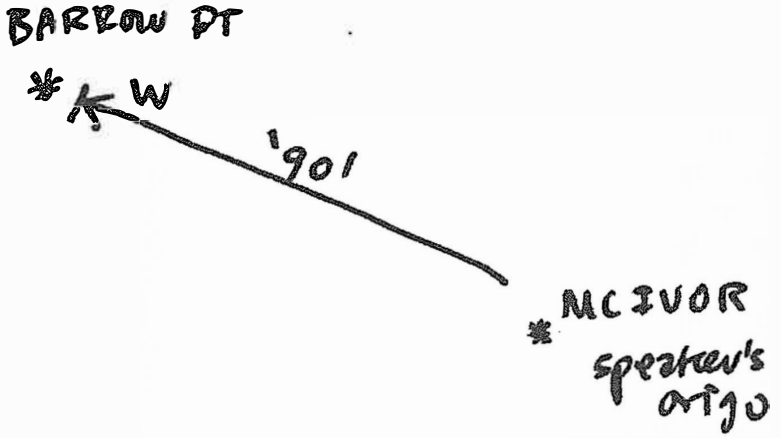


FIGURE 6 (Example 24)



(24) {t83.7a2 160-165}
160: They (the elders) were opposed.
161: They said "Don't marry that woman."
162: (when he got to the McIvor station, where the elders lived)
163: "Leave her."
164: So he left that woman.
165: and he went on foot W to Barrow Point. dhaday guwa

((Figure 6 about here))

The different morphological forms here provide speakers with an elaborate set of devices to juggle, in fact, three locational points of reference: (1) the absolute perspective by which all motion (though *not* all location) can be seen as directional on a cardinal grid (motion from Cape Bedford to Barrow Point is *always* to the West, *guwa*, no matter where one is); (2) the current speech event's 'here,' by relation to which all points have an absolute directionality (Barrow Point is always probably West [or perhaps north] of Canberra); and (3) the discursively established 'here' which the speaker incorporates into the universe of discourse. And there may be concurrently more than one of the last[6]. Part of the interest of *gesture*, in this connection, is that somewhat surprisingly it, too, must be understood within the context of a conceptual space that can have shifting reference points. One does not point *to* or *at* something in a conceptual vacuum.

1.6 Givenness, shared knowledge, and aspectual perspective

Choice of one directional form or another also invokes other kinds of perspective and information that are not so clearly related to direction, location or the representation of space. Correct use of the terms also depends on assumed shared or constructed knowledge about locations and places, or the *givenness*, in a certain discursive context, of certain points on the landscape. Using the 0-form of a directional is like using a definite pronoun: it presupposes that one's interlocutor can identify or infer the relevant point in space that its use signals. Notice, too, that givenness can be explicitly achieved in the text, by mentioning a place explicitly; or it can be *assumed*, as when conversationalists trade on understood shared knowledge about geography: based on recent travels, or well known landmarks, as in the examples I have just presented. The mutual construction of a shared spatial map is even more notable in the case of referring pointing gestures of the sort I will shortly consider.

GY directional terms also allow inferences of a more *aspectual* nature: the R-form often suggests the *inception* of an associated action or movement, or focusses on protagonists' desires to *embark* (see example (26)). On the other hand, the 0-form suggests the *termination* of an action or it *achievement* as a goal (example (25)). By contrast with both of these, the L-form can be used to

---

[6] As Fillmore(1982:49 points out, there is the additional possibility that the speaker's reference point and that of the hearer may not overlap --- if they are some distance apart, for example. Different languages resolve such conflicts of origo differently, giving precedence to one perspective or another. The different sorts of centering or perspective possible for the application of oppositions like front/back or left/right, contrasted for Hausa and English in Hill(1982), can produce an analogous confusion of perspectives and points of reference. An absolute directional grid is, notably, no protection against such differences in perspective. If we are standing some distance apart, what is, say, south of me may be north of you. I am unsure how GY speakers resolve such potential conflicts of point of view.

FIGURE 7 (Example 25)

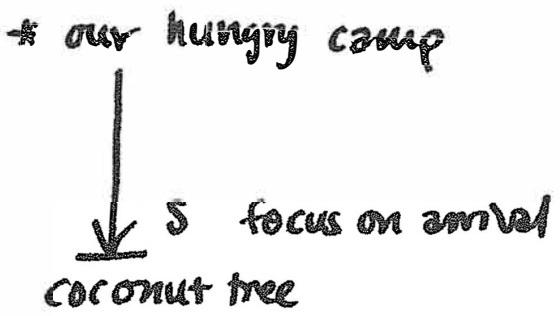


FIGURE 8 (Example 26)

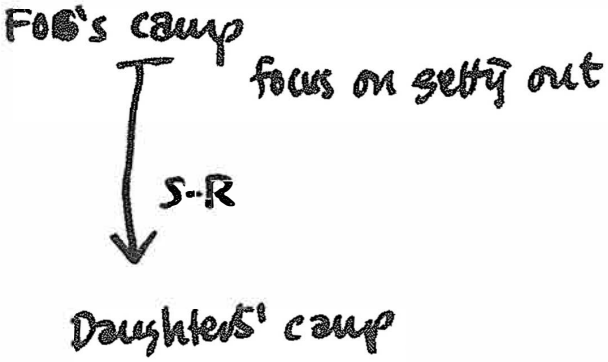


FIGURE 9 (Example 27)

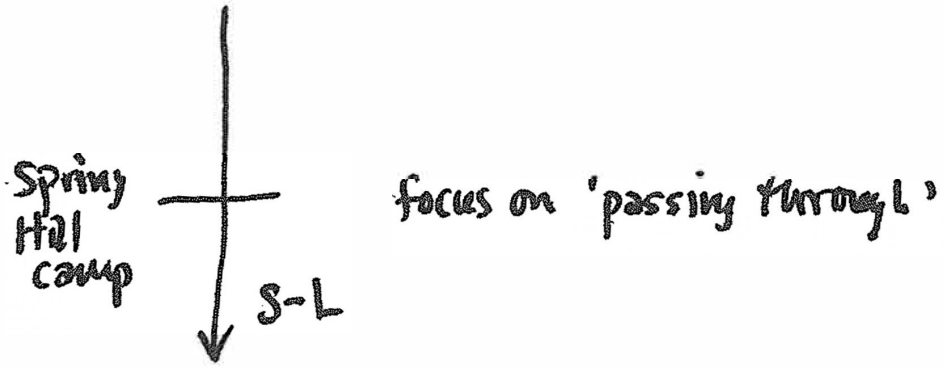
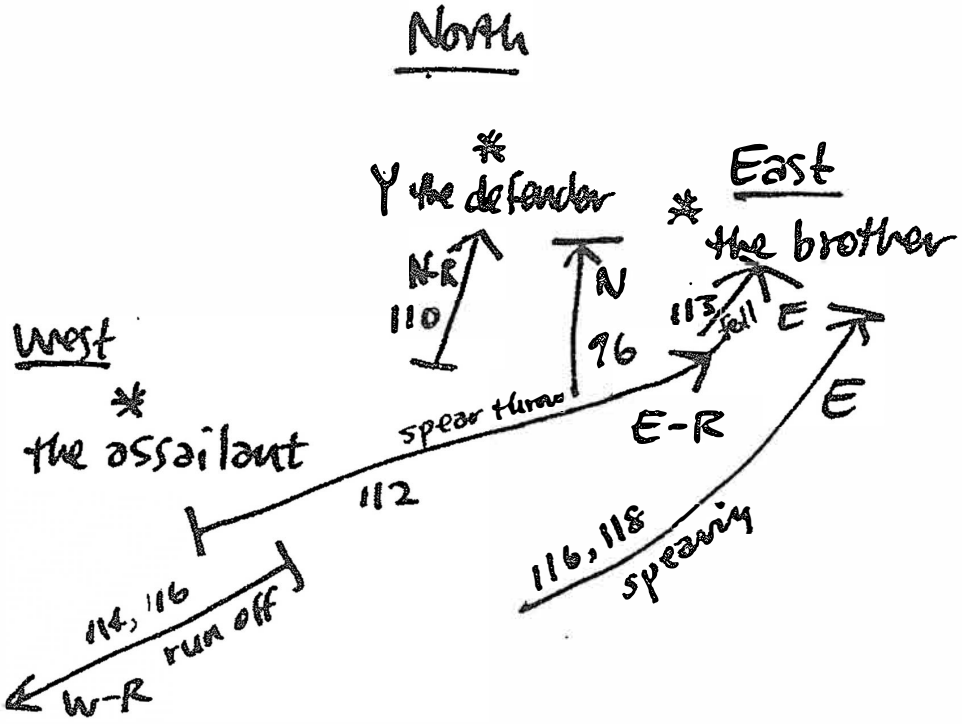


FIGURE 10 (Example 28)



convey a continuing, durative aspect to motion, without fixed end points,in time or space, or with respect to foregrounded intentions of actors (example (27)).

(25){bp4a/2 lines 97-98} Leaving a camp site, about to embark on a long and hungry walk towards the south, TG comments on the fact that we have almost run out of food and water. RH reminds us that we will come to a place where we can get refreshment, using the 0-form to mark a clear *goal.*

```
(25) {bp4a/2 lines 97-98}
     97: This country is a long way (from anywhere).
     98: We'll be able to eat plenty of coconuts S.
```

((Figure 7 here))

(26) {wurey6 lines 1-6} The mythological trickster, Fog, begins to long to see his daughters, who are married to Thhunder, far in the south. His desire to see them seems to surface in his use of an R-form, to suggest his desire to *set out* on the journey to visit them.

```
(26) {wurey6 lines 1-6}
     1: He stayed there for a long time.
     2: then he began to miss (his daughters).
     3: "I wonder how my daughters are S-R" {from here towards south}
     4: He decided to go.
     5: From Muunhdhi, S-R.
```

((Figure 8 here))

(27) {t82/7a2 lines 426-427} TG remembers that certain old people used to be "on the walkabout", travelling southwards from their home at Bridge Creek, and passing through the camp at Spring Hill, where he was a small child. By his use of the word 'come' he records the fact that his perspective is that of the little boy living there at Spring Hill. But his use of an L-form suggests that they were, indeed, just travelling through, aiming for some other place (or perhaps no fixed place at all).

```
(27) {t82/7a2 lines 426-427}
     426: They used to come S-L, to Spring Hill too.
     427: I still remember that they used to come.
```

((Figure 9 here))

Finally, it will not surprise us to learn that the GY directional terms interact with other anaphoric devices in familiar ways. It frequently happens, in narrative, that different protagonists will be established in clear directional relations to one another. From then on it will be possible to refer to these protagonists, and to keep them straight, simply by mentioning their *locations* or *directions:* the one in the north, the one on the west, and so forth. I will return to this issue below as I trace the use of gestural reference which relies on the same sort of principle.

(28) {t84/3b lines 96-118} RH tells how one of his older brothers was speared in a fight. The spearer, Y, had a grudge against the brother, who was in turn defended by I, a man accomplished at fending off spears thrown by an attacker at his unarmed target. But I accidentally receives a spear wound himself, at which point the assailant spears the brother straight out, and runs away.

Directional words and relative location are, in the text, the only clues to who's doing what to whom.

```
(28) {t84/3b lines 96-118}
     94: So Y  became furious.
     95: {he Y said} to him {the brother}
     96: "Jump up there to the N."  {the brother is on the North}
     97: He wanted to spear him. Ok, the other one was knocking away the
           spears.
     98: Old man I was defending him.
     100: He was the defender
     106: But when he deflected the last spear
     107: Old man I, who was in front (of the brother)
     108: Ohe spear's butt flew up and hit him in the eye
     110: And that one N-R fell to the ground
     111: From having his eye speared
     112: So then he  threw another  spear and speared him E-R.
         {The one on the west, having speared the defender on the N,
         then speared the brother, who was behind, on the E.}
     113: and he fell, E, with a spear in him.  {there in the East}
     114: and the culprit {the one who did that spearing}
           ran off W-R  {towards the West, starting from where he was}
     115: Y. ran off W-R.
     116: "Why did you spear my nephew, E?" {they accused him, so he ran}
     117: He ran off.
     118: He speared him, E, the old man speared him.
```

((Figure 10 here))

Here it is not only the relative positions of the protagonists (the defender I is north, the assailant Y west, and the brother who is speared east) that help keep the story straight. In addition, in line 112, the choice of an R-form makes it clear that the Y speared his victim, by spearing *from his starting point* (on the west) towards the east. In line 113, the 0-form emphasizes that the one who falls, is the one *at the point in the east.* In a language like GY which allows both almost totally free word order and massive ellipsis, such precise directional devices are clearly of some importance in keeping track of what is happening in narrated events.

1.7 Conventionalized use of directionals as pseudo-names

The directional terms appear sometimes to become *frozen*, so that their morphological shapes do not fully determine their referents. In these cases the directional words seem to behave somewhat like proper place names. At modern Hopevale there are two clear examples of such frozen usages, both of which can perhaps be explained by reference to past circumstances. HV people use the word *gunggarra* (the 0-form N, "to a given point in the north") to refer conventionally to the old mission site at Cape Bedford: the single most salient place to the north from any point on the coast between Cooktown and Cape Bedford itself. Similarly, they use *nagaar* (E-R) to single out Cooktown, speaking from the vantage point of Hopevale mission, and by contrast with other points that also lie east from the mission. Perhaps the conventionalized usage suggests that Cooktown is a frequent and salient destination when people *leave the mission.* In both cases, the underlying meaning of the form seems to make a transparent contribution to the frozen usage.

1.8 Directionals and 'metapragmatic awareness'

Before turning to gestures and GY storytelling, I must address a final puzzle: why did my GY teachers explain the directional forms in the way they did --- not in terms of given or focussed end points of motion and direction, but rather by reference to relative distance? It is clear that the relative distance account, which I present in my GY sketch grammar (Haviland 1979:3.4) simply fails to account for the subtleties of contexted usage, and the examples I have presented above provide ample evidence. We know, however, that speakers' native glosses of even the most frequently used terms embody a high degree of principled *typification.* Such glosses seize on a limited set of canonical instances of use. Correspondingly, they may extract and cite as criterial, features of these canonical instances that may obscure details of meaning or the application of a linguistic system to more complex situations[7]. Similarly, native glosses may take as criterial of meaning, features of the canonical situation that are in ordinary circumstances *implicated* by the proper and appropriate use of the form.

Consider how such implicatures or inferences might produce the relative distance accounts of the GY directionals that speakers offered me. The 0-form focusses or takes as given and known on an *end point* for motion; the R-form takes a *starting point* as given but remains silent on exactly where the end point will be; and the L-form specifies motion and direction, but without reference to terminal points at either end. Seen in terms of *information about distance*, then, the three terms can be arranged in what Levinson (1983, 1985), following Horn(1985) and Gazdar (1979), calls a Horn scale, from stronger to weaker, as follows:

<0-form, R-form, L-form>

That is, the 0-form tells you just how far motion extends (up to a given end point); the R-form tells you that motion started at some given point but does not specify how far it was to extend (but at least bounds the motion in some way); and the L-form tells you nothing about end points at all, but only about motion and direction. Following familiar Gricean principles of Quantity, one can construct implicatures that link the use of a weaker form, on this scale, to a lack of information about relative distance. Or, conversely, one could argue that the L-form is typically appropriate in cases where the speaker does not know, or cannot state, how far (or to what point) motion extends --- and hence, that the L-form is appropriate for longer distances than, at the opposite extreme, is the 0-form, which specifies or presupposes a specific endpoint. Here native glosses have seized on a (cancellable) implicature rather than a criterion of meaning.

I should mention that directional *gestures* DO permit a fairly clear encoding of relative distance (represented by the relative amplitude and height of a pointing gesture, and the details of its formation). Pointing gestures also seem to encode the distinction between 0-forms and R-forms, that is between motion in some direction that *starts* somewhere as opposed to motion that

---

[7] Hanks' treatment of Yucatec deictics (1984) develops this argument in a convincing and detailed manner. Hanks (1984:159) demonstrates, for example, that the Yucatec "ostensive evidential" *hé'ela'* here take it' has both maximally presupposing usages (in which someone actually hands the object in question over to his interlocutor) and maximally creative ones (in which the deictic is used to indicate to an addressee who is within earshot but out of view that another person, near the speaker, has arrived to speak to the addressee). The contrast between relatively presupposing and relatively creative indexes is due to Silverstein(1976b). Following Fillmore(1982:43-45), the presupposing uses are maximally 'acknowledging,' and are taken as highly 'prototypical.' That is, native glosses of the Yucatec repeatedly define the form as 'I extend it to you in hand' --- citing the maximally presupposing case as canonical.

finishes somewhere. It is to the connection between gestures and this system of directional orientation, in an extended example of GY storytelling, that I now turn.

2. Referential gestures

Typically, in conversation, a nominal expression in GY will be accompanied by *both* a directional or deictic determiner *and* a pointing gesture; both, somewhat redundantly, help pick out the intended referent of an expression. In my rapid survey of GY deictic words in section 1.1 I mentioned both *yarrba* 'thus, this way,' and *yarra* 'yonder' --- words which typically are accompanied by gestures which show *how* or *which* way.

(29) {bp3b 93-108} On the beach where he was born RH describes the boundaries of his homeland.

```
 93: Our country runs

the south (S-N).
        94: gunggaarr yarrba, nhaadhi
            N-0       thus    see
            That way to the north, see?
        95: yarrba dyiba-nun
            thus   S-N.
            that way from the south
        96: gunggaarr
            N-0
            to the north.
        97: nhayun dyibanun yarra  gunggaarr, yeah yarrba
            that   S-N      yonder N-0             thus
                            ((pointing to spot north))
            From there in the south, yonder to there in the north, yes there.
```

In line 97, the speaker invites his interlocutor to look at the spot he is pointing out, on the coast, that marks the northern boundary of his tribal land, and is picked out by the 0-form *gunggaarr*. The speaker also acknowledges, in the last part of his utterance, that his addressee has evidently looked in the right direction and seemingly identified the relevant spot.

(30) {t84/5b lines 444-451} Describing where different people had been born, RH points out a person whose name he has just recalled, not sure that his interlocutor will recognize him by name.

```
(30) {t84/5b lines 444-451}
        446: I think he was born at McIvor.
        447: JJ.
        448: bama yarra  nagaalu nyulu dhadaara
             man  yonder E-L     3sNOm go+REDUP
                  ((points out window))
             There the man  is now, over there, he's walking east.
```

Here the speaker catches a fortuitious glimpse of the man he is talking about, walking eastward, and just visible out the window of the building where the conversation is taking place. The word *yarra* 'yonder' in such contexts typically *requires* a clarifying pointing gesture (and thus

has both an ostensive and a directive function: it *shows* you its intended referent, by telling you to look at it, and where).

Even in narrative, when the protagonists of a story are absent (or long dead), these deictics, which in ordinary conversation have gestural accompaniments, can transport their directive *force* to the narrated context.

(31) {t84/4 lines 568-578} RH recounts how a celebrated wildman of the past hacked an enemy with an axe and left him for dead; when he returned to camp the others asked about the missing man, and the villain replied that he didn't know where he was. Later, however, the supposed victim appeared, walking into camp.

```
(31)  {t84/4 lines 568-578}
        568: He came home.
        569: "So, where's the old man?" (the others asked).
        570: "Where, indeed? I don't know," (replied the culprit).
        572: "Where, indeed?"
        573: Nyulu garrgu nyulu gada-y
             3sNOM later  3sNOM come-PAST
             Later on, he came.
        574: bama yarra  dyiba-nun ganbarr-in nha-way   yarra
             man  yonder S-N       jump-PAST  there-LOC yonder
             He appeared over yonder, from the south.
        575: In the afternoon.
        576: He came again.
        577: nyulu gurra-y  yii  ganaa   ngayu dhuyu-ngay-gu   gunda-y
             3sNOM say-PAST this alright 1sNOM dead-RESUL-EMPH hit-PAST
             And this one said, "I thought I had left him good and dead."
        578: He  had  about nine lives, I think, like a cat.
```

In this passage, there is a potential confusion about which, of two possible protagonists --- M, the murderer, and V, the victim --- the storyteller is talking about at any given moment. GY permits considerable ellipsis, and often a pronoun like *nyulu* '3sNOM' seems to leave a breathtaking ambiguity about its intended referent. The intended sequence, here, of course, is:

```
(31a)   568: M came (back to camp)
        573: V came later.
        574: V appeared coming in from the south.
        576: V came back.
        577: M expresses his surprise, thinking that he had left V dead.
        578: V had nine lives like a cat.
```

When the speaker reintroduces V as subject, at line 573, a potential confusion of reference arises. It seems that the explicit deictic expressions in 574 serve to clarify this reference: he (necessarily the *other* one, the supposed victim) appears suddenly *there*, from the south. The audience to the story is, as it were, implicitly *directed* to look in the indicated direction in order to visualize the victim unexpectedly appearing from the south, by the use of the deictic *yarra*. The victim is thus clearly distinguished from the murderer, the man already *here* in the deictic frame of the story. (See line 577, where M is mentioned with the explicit deictic *yii* 'here.')

2.1 Pointing and reference

In cases like these it is not unreasonable to argue that the gesture, itself, like the deictic word and the directional expression, forms part of the system of determiners. The pointing gesture and the demonstrative do not just accompany one another; they are in certain sentences potential replacements for each other. If a basic feature of language form is establishing and maintaining reference ('what one is talking about'), then pointing, by both word and gesture, is a central *linguistic* device.

The fact that it is in principle possible to carry on referentially precise conversation in the absence of gesture should not obscure the fact that ordinary talk is normally anchored to particulars by ostension. We may be able to worm our way out of deixis by elaborate verbal formulas ('the blue car parked immediately to your left as you exit the Blue Chip Cookie shop on Fisherman's Wharf'; or citing coordinates of latitude and longitude; and so on), but commonly our language includes (and often depends upon) a few simple gestures that point out the relevant entities to which we wish to refer[8]. Language is *designed* so as to locate interlocutors in face-to-face contact, sharing space and time, and hence in a position to use gesture.

2.2 Gestures and speech

My main interest in this study is the set of *pointing* gestures in GY speech, and in particular their interaction with the system of directionals that I have described above. But pointing is barely the beginning of the story: the plain ethnographic fact is that GY speakers point and otherwise gesticulate *a lot*, perhaps as much or more as the demonstrative Italians in Efron's classic study of gesticulation (Efron 1941, 1972). For the past several years I have studied films of GY speakers in conversation. Their use of gesture is ubiquitous, constant, striking, and, seemingly effective (in the minimal sense that it seems routinely interpreted and intended as interpretable).

I have paid particular attention here to a single episode of storytelling, and to the non-verbal accompaniments of the narrator's words. Let me briefly introduce some of the most obvious phenomena, although I will neither raise many of the central questions in detail in the present essay, nor, indeed, try to grapple with the basic definitional issues involved[9]. I follow Kendon's definition (Kendon nd:1) in considering as 'gesture' "any distinct bodily action that is regarded by participants as being directly involved in the process of deliberate utterance."

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[8] Levinson (1983:65-67), following Fillmore distinguishes two kinds of deictic usage: a *gestural* usage (in which a deictic is like a gesture, often requires one as well), and a *symbolic* usage, which does not make reference to a particular spatio- temporal context for a particular speech event, but only to contextual information available prior to the speech event itself. Contrast: '*this* finger hurts' (gestural), with 'this city stinks' (symbolic) (Levinson 1983, 66). Levinson also notes that most languages have words "that can only be used gesturally: for example there are presentatives like French *voici*, and toasts like Bristish English *cheers*." Similarly, he points out that gesture can be *vocal* as well as kinesic: 'Harvey can only speak about *this loud*.' or 'Don't do it *now*, but *NOW*!'

[9] My thinking about gesture, including my understanding of *what it is*, owes a good deal to the work of Adam Kendon (see References, in particular 1980a and in press a), and I am grateful to him for sharing his thoughts on the matter with me. I fear that what I have to say here will probably run counter to his rigorous inclinations, however, and therefore I make no claim to be *following* his example.

2.2.1 Gestural contributions to narrative

First, one can seemingly discern *uniquely* gestural contributions to narrative. I think these are of roughly three kinds:

[a] There are iconic gestures which depict objects, events, and aspects of events in the narrative, often in ways that are not spoken (perhaps, even in ways that *could* not be spoken, or not easily). The formatives of gesture and the nature of iconicity are matters I cannot take up here in detail[10], although I will discuss some particular GY examples shortly. It is often supposed that gesture is particularly suited to representing, in its three-dimensional channel, aspects of shape, form, space and position that are not often lexically encoded[11], or that it can depict actions and motion that unfold in time in a way that bypasses the essential linearity of speech. In the episode of storytelling I consider in this essay, JB, the narrator, uses gestures to illustrate the effort of swimming from a sinking ship, to show how the boat capsized, to depict the size and motion of the waves in the storm, and so on. Importantly, JB also points, as we shall see.

[b] Gesture provides a vehicle for characteristic narrative meta-comment. The natural division of the ship-wreck story into episodes, and indeed into component events seems in part to be accomplished by bodily punctuation: changing the scene, setting the stage and the protagonists, framing extra- narrative commentary, and so on. Illustrative gestures are typically synchronized with narration, and the class of illustrators called 'markers' are also precisely timed[12]. Again, I will not develop these observations in detail, but it seems clear that part of JB's narrative skill comes from his ability to signal changes of scene or to enact (by embodying) different perspectives, thus leading his audience through the story at a controlled pace.

[c] There are gestures in the GY narrative material I am considering here that have the status of independent and conventionalized signs, called 'emblems' by Ekman (Ekman, 1976) or 'symbolic gestures' by Morris et al (1979). The existence of such standard gestural signs raises the issue of the relation between gestural accompaniments to talk, of the seemingly haphazard and extemporaneous kind I am concerned with here, to established gestural sign languages, especially

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[10] Ekman 1977 lists eight different "types of illustrators" --- gestures that accompany and in one way or another relate to the content of speech. Poyatos 1983 carries this classificatory exercise even farther, listing at least twelve types of 'illustrators,' each subdivided by channel (kinesic, paralinguistic, proxemic, even chemical and dermal). McNeill and Levy 1982 present two notionally distinct types of illustrators (one class of directly iconic gestures, another class of 'metaphorix'). See section 4.3 below for more substantive discussion.

[11] There are, of course, some languages that excel at lexical elaboration in the domain of shape (Friedrich 1978, Berlin 1968). In Tzotzil, a language that has the characteristic Mayan explosion of positional roots, I often wish that people *did* use gestures instead of employing specialized roots which encode specific and complicated shape categories, and which are difficult both to learn and to explain. See Haviland (n.d.).

[12] In interactive settings, Scheflen's well-known research established the phenomenon of 'quasi-courtship' between interactants (Scheflen 1964, 1965) which involves the precise sychronization of bodily movements, including major body shifts. Such results show how closely people attend to each others' conversational cues, including gesture and gaze (Kendon 1972, C. Goodwin 1981). The relative timing of iconic gestures and speech is another issue I will not develop here, but which has been the focus of detailed investigation. See Kendon 1980a, Butterworth and Beattie 1978, Beattie 1983; but also the doubts expressed in McNeill and Levy 1982:284.

in light of Kendon's recent work (Kendon, 1983b, 1980b, nd) on such 'alternate' sign-languages among Warlpiri speakers who have spoken language as well. For the moment, without looking at particular cases, it is worth noting that standardized gestures can be incorporated into otherwise spoken utterances as equivalents to and total replacements for other sign vehicles.

2.2.2 Maintaining reference

In narrative a storyteller must be scrupulous about keeping his audience on the track: this involves, minimally, maintaining referential precision (within the parameters required by the narrative) with respect to people and places. In Zinacanteco gossip (Haviland 1977), one can demarcate a separate identificatory segment, in which people establish who protagonists are, and link them through appropriate chains (of kin, of hamlet affiliation, of political and religious careers) to the various participants in the gossip session. I will have more to say about this, but the striking thing is how, at least in JB's speech, such matters seem to be handled indirectly, and almost mysteriously. The storyteller's style seems deliberately to *minimize* specificity and explicitness, while nonetheless keeping the story clear; it involves almost studied understatement.

I have been trying to characterize this *style*, and to relate it to some recent observations of Stephen Levinson (Levinson 1986) on minimization, syntax, and conversational inference. Levinson suggests that there are features of GY syntax (zero anaphora, lack of verbal agreement with nominal themes, not to mention massive ellipsis and free word order) that, in the absence of exagerated specificity, can render GY discourse referentially ambiguous; gesture can have a special remedial role here vis a vis syntax. Levinson remarks: "it is hardly surprising that a language with zero anaphora and no verb agreement would find an ancillary channel of gestural information very useful, displacement into the non-verbal channel itself counting as minimization" (Levinson, 1986:45). It is presumably the character of the non-verbal *channel* that makes gesture count, for Levinson, as 'minimal' (or, in some sense, reduced or displaced) communication. The chief property of the channel is, I think, its *silence*, and I think it will be clear why this is important in what follows. One needs to examine the virtues of available communicative channels in respect of the task of referential tracking, to understand why one device is chosen over another.

2.2.3 GY directions and pointing

I want to say something more specific about the Guugu Yimidhirr directional system, and the nature of deictic and referential devices more generally, returning to the old philosophical warhorse about the possibility, the precision and the primitive status of ostension. There is a related anthropological and cognitive issue about background knowledge, how to specify it, and when to appeal to it, even in the seemingly straightforward matter of intepreting a pointing gesture. How can these simple gestures work? How do they interact with the elaborate *linguistic* devices we have met for describing direction and location? (For example, how, if at all, do they record the relevant aspects of situations captured by the 0-, L- and R-forms of cardinal point words?) What sort of complexity must models of interlocutors' knowledge and understandings have to be account for the full interpretive capabilities we can observe in routine practice?

2.3 Subtractive thinking, and the study of gesture

There has been remarkably little work done on gesture, especially by students of language, despite Adm Kendon's persuasive arguments that, to quote a recent title, "gesticulation and speech" are "two aspects of the process of utterance" (Kendon 1980a)[13].

Studies of gesture, like those of kinesics, proxemics, and many paralinguistic phenomena, suffer from a syndrome that might be called 'subtractive thinking'. Gesture and speech, on such a view, are taken as occupying distinct realms, with different properties and virtues, different relationships to postulated psychological processes, different communicational burdens. Thus practitioners undertake to discover what gesture can do that speech can't do or can't do as well, and vice versa.

On the language side, such subtractive approaches ("what's important about a conversation is everything left when the 'non-verbal' stuff is removed") operate with formal notions like 'ellipsis' or 'deletion' (not to mention trickier matters like 'reference', and 'anaphora') which seemingly require, in much natural talk, gestural evidence.

```
(31.1)          A: Where's John?
                B: ((head tilt to office door))
                   ((typing motion with fingers, showing computer
                    keyboard))
                   The usual.
```

The situation is made worse for the linguistic subtractivists when conversational exchanges never get into words (although they could). Such exchanges may involve conventionalized emblems: aping the motion of writing in the palm of the hand, to ask the waiter, across the room, to bring the check, for example. Or, an iconic gesture may be maximally determined by a highly presupposing context: I was recently giving a talk that involved showing a film, and a member of the audience flashed me a questioning raised eyebrow and made a motion like switching off the lights (his hand was just by the light switch) to ask, without interrupting what I was saying, if I wanted the lights out[14].

Moreoever, the tendency to subtract can come from both sides of an issue. Subtractivists loyal to gesture concentrate on phenomena like 'leakage' (when a twitch gives the twitcher away, suggesting that he talks one way but feels another --- this is the old saw that actions speak louder

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[13] See Kendon's recent reviews of the subject (Kendon 198?), and also Beattie 1983, which takes a self-consciously unified approach to speech and gesture. McNeill (1979, and McNeill and Levy 1982) has investigated gesture precisely for the light it sheds on the conceptual processes of speech production.

[14] The fact that deictic expressions are often accompanied by gestures is frequently noted by linguists, but the implications (for multiple channel communication and the design of language) are taken as essentially unproblematic. Systematic attention to gestural sign-languages like ASL (for example, Bellugi and Klima 1982, Klima and Bellugi 1979; and see Stokoe 1980) provides a salutory corrective to the single channel view of language. Note that within the study of language, there are other kinds of subtractivist thinking: as when two-party conversation is taken to be primitive, and n-party conversation taken to be some sort of *extension* of the basic system. Or when categories like 'affect' or worse 'moral discourse' are taken as some kind of add-ons to the essential referential or propositional tasks of language.

than words, elevated to the level of intellectual philosophy[15]). Or there may be a subtractive search, using gestural evidence, for conceptual representations that are somehow independent of their linguistic manifestations[16].

Keeping gesture separate from speech raises both boundary and framing questions, that have whipped researchers in the field into classificatory frenzies: What *is* gesture? What distinguishes it from self-adaptors, displacement grooming, nervous twitches, and so forth? What are the components of gestural formation (that would, for example, allow an adequate notation, or permit a somewhat less random or notional gloassing than I indulge in here)? What particular communicative properties accrue to gesture by virtue of its channel? Adam Kendon (1980b and in personal communication), following Hockett (1978), points out that gesture not only unfolds in time (like speech), but also exploits three dimensional space. Moreover, its temporal structure can be foreshortened, rapid, and multiple, with simultaneous gestures capturing ideational gestalts. In a clear sense, the multi- dimensionality of utterance is part of the *design* of natural language, and it should thus not surprise us to find it exploited in ordinary face-to-face talk. But once we have a gestural system, now autonomously constituted, how can it be reintegrated --- be seen to interact --- with speech and discourse?

2.4 Ethnographic knowledge

There is a more natural starting point. An ethnographic perspective lets one step back to situations and *activities*. As they go about their lives we see GY people (for example) talking, and we wonder how they produce language and understand each other. Or, to omit what could be argued to be a subtractive emphasis on language, we might consider how people manage to do such things as 'tell a story', or 'gossip' or 'just sit around and talk' (all reasonable English glosses for *milbi miirriinhu*, the conventional label for a commonplace pastime at Hopevale). Here the emphasis is on an activity that involves, among other things, *coordinated* speech and gesture; that partakes, routinely, of the same 'syntactic' multi-dimensionality that Hockett attributes to gesture; and that is inescapably *interactive*, so that organizational facts become essential components of its form.

My own interest in such situations concentrates on the knowledge that people need to render natural talk comprehensible. (I take it as a first desideratum of an anthropology of language --- and a central part of *all* anthropology --- to characterize this knowledge.) With storytelling, the mere first level of 'comprehensibility' is maintaining reference, conveying 'what the story is

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[15] Psychologists seem to have been especially attracted to the study of 'non-verbal communication' precisely because it seemed both below (or beyond) conscious control, and because it did things language didn't. Consider the remarks of Bateson (1968: 614-615), cited by Adam Kendon (n.d. note 3) as a statement of the nature of 'non-verbal' communication that rendered unlikely a study of gesture as a 'mode of discourse': "our iconic communication serves functions totally different from those of language and, indeed, performs functions which verbal language is unsuited to perform... It seems that the discourse of nonverbal communication is precisely concerned with matters of relationship... From an adaptive point of view, it is therefore important that this discurse be carried on by techniques which are relatively unconscious and only imperfectly subject to voluntary control."

[16] See McNeill 1979, and McNeill and Levy 1982. McNeill seems to suggest that the conceptual structure that underlies gestural production is in some ways *also* the deepest structure that underlies spoken language as well.

about'. That more than reference is involved in telling stories is obvious, but one can't get far without characters and a plot. If we look at the whole activity of storytelling, as I have in a few particular cases in GY, gesture and speech coordinate with one another in peformance, to allow the storyteller to trace characters and events in a way his audience can follow.

2.5 Creative and presupposing gestures

Intuition suggests that maintaining reference *is* frequently accomplished by gestural means. As we have already seen, languages are generally well-stocked with words which ordinarily --- in non-anaphoric usages, at least --- require gestural supplementation to refer at all: *this*, *that*, *here*, *there*, *this way*, etc[17]. In fact, in research about how people do, in practice, *refer*, Marslen-Wilson et. al (1982), following Silverstein (1976ab), draw a distinction between initial 'creative' acts of reference, and subsequent relatively 'presupposing' acts of reference. Speakers must initially *identify* an entity, and fix it as the referent of an expression, creatively, often with the help of pointing gestures. Thereafter, gestures can support (or indeed replace) referring expressions by calling on contextually presupposing understandings about what there is to refer to[18].

2.6 Implicature

To say that a gesture has referential import, however, must not obscure the fact that it may, at the same time, require complex interpretation, that it may enable inference or 'implicature', or rely on presupposition, in exactly the same way that an ordinary bit of linguistic material may. Offered as a conversational move, a gesture that indicates some entity by pointing may implicate a message of more than ostensive import, as in the following case of the 'pointed lip gesture' among San Blas Cuna:

> "One afternoon in the congress house one of the 'chiefs' spokesmen' is telling obscene jokes and everyone is laughing. At one point one of the men present makes the *plg* at the joke teller, as if to say 'how about that guy'." (Sherzer 1973:125)

Sherzer argues that 'pointing' is the *unmarked meaning* of the *plg*, from which certain conventional or perhaps conversationally implicated further meanings can be derived.

But how can *pointing* implicate? According to familiar Gricean notions, one only bothers to point, in context, for some identifiable reason (relevance); the object at which one points must be

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[17] There are, of course, also deliberate gestures, not just twitches, which ordinarily have to do with non-referential matters: showing deference [or its absence], displaying feeling, or even making meta-conversational remarks. A good example of the last variety is the gesture, in Kurosawa's *Sanjuro*, when the captured samurai, from the enemy camp, waves his face impatiently in the face of one of the good samurais, as if to say: "No, no, what you are saying makes so little sense that I'm not even paying attention." Although we seemingly can *gloss* such gestural meta-remarks (I just tried to do so) they seem to be characteristically *about* the conversation rather than part of it. (One waves away another's remarks much as one might wave away his breath.) Note that to say that some gestural usages are "non-referential" does not mean that they cannot still be *iconic*. The wave expresses itself, and deferential greeting gestures often *look* deferential.

[18] See Marslen-Wilson et al 1982:350-351.

identifiable (quantity); but there must be some reason for *pointing*, as opposed to referring by some other means (manner). Moreover, as I shall show, deictic gestures can be framed as relative to a point of reference which is itself established by discourse (partly, perhaps, by gesture). Through the application of familiar conversational principles, then, pointing gestures can be made to convey complex referential meanings of a peculiar, and perhaps characteristic, sort. What has to be *known* in order for participants to do the necessary inferential work?

3. How the boat sank

Hopevale is a Lutheran Aboriginal community, descended from a Mission established, in the aftermath of the Palmer River goldrush, in 1886[19].

I have spent some time studying conversations that I filmed at Hopevale, beginning in July 1980. Men frequently sit in front of the Curio Shop to exchange stories and news, and generally to monitor the progress of the day. Friends, who knew I was interested both in GY language and in historical reminiscences, often suggested that I should haul my Super8 camera up to the Curio Shop and film some of these sessions. On one occasion I was lucky enough to film one of Hopevale's expert storytellers, retelling, amid other items of conversation, (to men who had doubtless heard the story many times, both when it was news [in the 30's] and since) an event which has special significance in Mission history.

The storyteller, Jack Bambi, and another older man had been on a trip with a mission boat, delivering clothing, wood, and provisions from the main station at Cape Bedford to an outstation at the McIvor River. Caught in a storm, they were forced to abandon the boat at sea, and swim more than three miles to shore. They then walked several hours back to Cape Bedford and knocked exhausted on the missionary's door. His first thought, however, was for the boat, and after feeding them, he sent them straight back to try to recover it. The story has a pointed moral about the missionary's character and priorities, and is well-known and widely enjoyed at Hopevale[20].

4. Mechanics

There is, for me, a further ethnographic (or perhaps it's *personal*?) goal in this work. One supposes that, idealizing assumptions aside, not everyone is equally good (or adept, or expert, or

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[19] My work at Hopevale, with Dr. Leslie K. Devereaux, has concentrated on a social historical study of the origins and evolution of the community. See Haviland and Haviland 1980, Haviland 1979, 1980, 1982 and in press. The story I consider here is part of a much wider corpus of materials that Hopevale people have offered in support of our work. Acknowledgements here...

[20] In the Appendix I present several fragments of the story transcribed with gestures marked, and also a full linguistic transcript of the narrative. In what I have to say about this story, I perhaps slight the importance of the particular *nature* of this kind of account: a first person, probably somewhat mythologized, narrative about events well-known and partly shared not only by the other participants in this telling but by many other people at the mission. Moreover, the story was in a clear sense being told for my benefit --- I had, after all, been invited to film, both because JB, the narrator and (on his own telling) the principal protagonist, was a storytellerof high renoun, and also because the events in question are judged to be important in mission history. Still, my remarks about the ubiquity of gesture in GY speech, and the complex mutual knowledge upon which reference rests for such gestures, stand, I think, for other sorts of discourse as well.

fluent) in his or her own culture (or language) Hence, there is a special interest in an *exceptional* storyteller like Jack Bambi: what is the basis of his superb style?

To my eyes a good deal of his narrative skill derives from clever and expressive use of gesture. Accordingly, transcribing his performance (despite the fact that there is very little overlap or conversational by-play --- his narrative is essentially an extended monologue) does not produce neat text. A transcript that supplements words with a set of elaborate 'stage-directions' best depicts the performance, but nonetheless fails to provide a motivated path through the narrative, showing the artful shifts of topic and perspective, the affective asides, or even simply tracking the plot. In what follows, I refer to several different sorts of transcript that record features of the original videotaped performance, and all of which appear in the appendix. Here are a few observations about the structure of the story, as told.

4.1 Parsing

A narrative monologue seems to fall naturally into pieces, just as texts notionally segment into clauses or sentences, and conversations into utterances or turns. But segments draw their coherence and integrity from different (and perhaps conflicting) sources[21]. A particular stretch of speech may count as a discrete segment because (i) it is, in a way that can be language-specifically stated, syntactically complete; or (ii) it falls between discernable pauses; or (iii) it displays a particular closed intonational curve (for example, having a single nuclear tone); or (iv) it corresponds to an interactionally defined turn (for example, fits between two contiguous 'transition relevance points', assuming that such things can be independently motivated); or (v) it coincides with a stretch of body movement that can be parsed as a single gesture (on the basis, for example, of movement from a specifiable rest position, through some active position, and back to rest again; see Kendon 1980a). How one decides upon a parsing strategy for a given performance is clearly motivated as much by the phenomena one is interested in as by organizational facts that allegedly *inhere* in the performance itself.

I divided the accompanying transcripts into lines roughly by following the narrators's pauses, on an audio recording of the performance. One striking finding of past studies of gesture (Kendon 1972) is the remarkable coincidence of gestural phrasing and pause phrasing, and one observes the same phenomenon in my material. The gestures that I have marked and notionally glossed seem to provide a running visual commentary, clearly synchronized with the speakers's words. Here is a single example, from lines 11-13.

(32) {Boat lines 11-13}

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[21] Tony Woodbury, in a recent paper (Woodbury 1986), summarizes a similar set of possible, distinct but often mutually interacting systems of "recurrent hierarchic organization" --- components of a larger organization he calls "rhetorical structure" --- in narrative. He confines himself to verbal aspects of a transcribed narrative, in particular, distinguishing among: pause phrasing, prosodic phrasing, syntactic constituency, global form-content parallelism, and adverbial particle phrasing. Woodbury goes on to describe the dramatic *exploitation* of the tension or discontiuity between these different organizations by storytellers themselves, with special reference to Central Alaskan Yupic Eskimo.

```
11          ngadhu dharrudha    murrga ngayu birrbay . nhayun =
             1sGEN  trousers+ABS only   1sNOM wear-PAST that+ABS
             I just had my trousers on, and..
                    !..........!            !.........!
                    "trousers"               "put on (trousers)"

12          =ganaa   budhu and   nyulu    galmba dharrudha nhayun .
             alright intensifier     3sNOM also   trousers+ABS that+ABS
             that was all, and he also had his trousers.
             !.........!         !.................!
             'that's all"          "he..."

13          m- mundal dharrudha  <1 galmba 1> inside
               rest+ABS trousers+ABS also
            And the rest of those trousers were inside (the hold).
                 !........!                !............!
                 "those (the rest)"        "down and in"
```

The gestural phrases, defined by hand and body motions, bracketed by a position of rest where motion starts and to which it returns, as shown by the marked stretches of gesticulation, clearly track the words with precise synchrony.

Related issues arise in treating 'pauses' --- blank, verbally unfilled space, in the middle of the performance. Conversational analysis shows clearly that pauses, delays, and hesitations are read as variously significant in relation to adjacency pairs and other structured sequences of turns, and to the preference structure of interchanges: as when a pause can be read as 'negative answer' or 'resistance to answering' rather than simply a 'non-answer':

```
(33) {Atkinson and Drew 1979: 52}
        A: Is there something bothering you or not?
           (1.0)
        A: Yes or no?
           (1.5)
        A: Eh?
        B: No.
```

Or consider the different kinds of organizational significance of silence (albeit short silence) demonstrated by the behavior in the following two telephone openings (from Schegloff 1979:37, 39).

```
(34) {Schegloff 1979a, 37}              {Schegloff 1979a, 39}
        C: ((rings))                    C: ((rings))
        R: Hello?                       R: Hello?
        C: Hello Charles.               C: Hello.
           (0.2)                           (1.5)
        C: This is Yolk.                R: Who's this.
```

In terms of inferential and organizational consequences, then, pauses can be parts of the *substance* of conversation.

But time that is free of vocalization may or may not be filled with *action* or event (including gesture), and the resulting seconds or fractions of seconds may constitute independent segments of

narrative or may accrue to the beginnings or ends of stretches of speech. As Goffman reminds us, even a commentable *appearance* can serve implicitly as a distinct conversational turn:

```
(35) {Goffman 1983:47}
       A: [Enters wearing new hat]
       B: [Shaking head] "No, I don't like it."
```

In JB's story, what I first transcribed from the audiotape as a three second pause, I revised, on the basis of gestures, to show as two independent segments of 1.5 seconds, each filled with discrete gestures.

```
(36) {Boat, line 50}
       Well mi-  three mile 'n a half  (3.5)
             !....!
             "that way"           !..(0.5)..!
                                     ((hold position))
                                          !...1.5...!
          ((sights along right thumb))     "long way that direction"
                                                    !...(1.5)...!
          ((backhand flip of hand to SW))           "starting off that way"
```

A similar example can be found in Transcript A at lines 9.1 and 9.2.

Gestures attached to or associated with utterances may also have interactional significance. An utterance that ends with a pointing gesture held well beyond the accompanying speech frequently seems to be read as *demanding* a response from the audience: it hangs there waiting to be released by back-channel.

```
(37) {Boat, 89-91}
 89     j;      nyundu nhila nhaamaalma Bala     yarrba gunggaalu =
                2sNOM  now   see+REDUP-NONP      this way NORTH-ALL/LOC
                Well, if nowadays you look that way, north, from Bala.
                                !.................................

 90             =gaabu (1.7)
                 reef+ABS
                 There's a reef there.
                ..............................!
                ((pointing high, North, gesture held))

 91     r;      mmm
```

J, the narrator, is asking his audience to visualize the scene, and to call to mind the reef that he knows them to be familiar with, in the direction of his pointing gesture (North, or *gunggaalu*, N-L), from the reference point on the beach called Bala. He *holds* the pointing gesture until he gets an acknowledging response from R, at line 91. In the following exchange, the same sort of process is involved, except that, after motioning to show that it was still a long way to shore (by bringing his left hand to his chest and then sweeping it out in a SW direction), the narrator also appears to engage his interlocutor's gaze, and hold it until, at line 100, T responds.

```
(38) {boat}
 98              nyulu yuuli      gurra ngayu tip-toe yuulili (1.5)
                 3sNOM stand+PAST and   1sNOM         stand+REDUP+NONP
                 He was able to stand on it, and I could stand on tip toes.
                       !............!        !..................!
                        "standing"            "standing and stretching"

 99              well . good distance from there dyibarra too (.4)
                                                  South-ALL
                 Well, it was a good distance from there south (to the shore).
                          !....................................!
                         "long way from here the there" ((held))

100     t;       mm (.8)
```

On the other hand, pauses may most naturally attach to *following* utterances. This may be the case when they are filled with gestures which seemingly anticipate a 'word-search,'[22] as in the following lines, when JB clearly signals that the tired swimmers reached the edge of the beach before he produces the word (for which he has recourse to English, anyway).

```
(39) {boat}
117              nyulu nhayun   dyibarra gaday (1.0)
                 3sNOM that+ABS South-ALL come-PAST
                 When he got to the south...
                                    !..................!
                                    "just there" ((points down to spot))

118              dagu- (0.5)
                 thing
                    !.............!
                    "to the edge" ((hand down, fingers extended, L-R sweep))`

119              water-edge gu=
                            EMP
                 I mean, right up to the edge of the water.
```

Gestures may also presage an as yet unstated image. In line 104, the narrator is telling his swimming companion to stay on his own side, and he precedes the verbal expression of this reported command with a gestural imperative equivalent. (He was worried that the older and weaker man might come to close, while swimming, and grab him in desperation.)

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[22] The work of Chuck and Candy Goodwin shows that there are different *kinds* of 'word-searches', which have interactionally different consequenecs (and purposes?), and which are perhaps most clearly marked by differences in gesture or gaze. See, for example, (M. Goodwin 1983). For some methodological doubts about transcription of both pauses and gaze, see (Beattie 1983).

```
(40) {boat}
103             ma! (1.0)
                Hey!
                "Let's go!"
                     !................!
                     ((head dips)) "ready"

104             (0.3)     nyundu yarrba .
                          2sNOM  this way
                          "You go on that side."
                !............!
                "back that way" ((gaze left, left hand swirls back S and W))2z
```

Similarly, in the following segment, a total pause of 1.8 seconds clearly parses into a 1 second still pause, and a .5 second gesture --- a simulated swimming motion, with eyes narrowed to show mock strain and effort --- which clearly anticipates the utterance at line 41.

```
(41) {boat}
 40.1           (1.3)   (.5)
                !.....! !..........!
                ((pause)) "swimming, effort"

 41             ngali dyibaarr
                1duNOM South+ALL
                So the two of us set out southwards.
```

4.2 Timing

As I mentioned, a striking result of existing studies of gesture is the quite precise synchrony between gestures and the words to which they seem to correspond. At the level of the utterance, Kendon (1972, and 1980a) reports that in English conversation, gestures seem always to begin before or simultaneously with the nuclear tone (Crystal and Davy 1969) of the corresponding spoken tone unit[23]. Gestures often telegraph the coming words before they are uttered, and thus may have the organizational effect of the 'pre-sequences' ('pre-announcements', 'pre-requests', etc.) so dear to conversational analysts. (Consider the case of the conversationalist who reaches out to touch a person to whom he is *about* to turn his remarks[24].)

The same sort of gross relationship of timing, between word and gesture, seems to be confirmed in Jack Bambi's storytelling, as we can see in transcript I. I have already pointed out the additional, more delicate coordination of gesture with individual words and phrases, both in the sense that a single phrase may have distinct gestures corresponding to its component elements ('trousers' ... 'put on'), and also insofar as those non-representational (or at least non-transparent) gestures that McNeill and Levy (1982) call 'beats' frequently trace the rhythm of spoken syllables.(see the wave action depicted at lines 67-70). In the following extract, the speaker clearly

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[23] See also Beattie 1983, Butterworth and Beattie 1978. McNeill and Levy 1982 question these results, but they tie their timing measurements to the *verb* in the English utterances they study.

[24] See Robert Hopper 1986, "Putting the other on hold."

indicates the action of the gigantic waves that surrounded the swimming men; moreover, his hand movements follow the rhythm of his spoken syllables.

```
(42) {boat}
 47              buurraay nhayun     wanggaar yarrba wanggaar yanday =
                 water+ABS that+ABS top      this way top      rise-PAST
                 The water would just rise up like this
                         ((hand flat, drops))            ((rises))
                                    ((rises))    ((drops slightly))

 48              =nhayun ((laughs)) (1.1)
                  that+ABS
                    ((held high.......))

 49              you- couldn't see dyibarra yuwaal (.8)
                                  South-ALL beach+ABS
                 You couldn't even see the beach to the south (over the waves).
                       ((dips same hand and sweps away to point S-SE))
```

Of course, that gestures and corresponding words are timed to occur together, with, if anything, the gesture always coming first, does not mean that gesture need always be *interpretable* until its clarifying words have been uttered. Especially in the case of word searches, Jack Bambi, at least, seems to be struggling to express something, filling his place with a gesture as a first approximation, until he can supply the right word (thereby not only continuing his narrative, but also clarifying what the gesticulation was all about in the first place). Researchers like Kendon and McNeill have used both the raw facts of timing and the supposed gestalt features of gesture as coding devices to argue from gesticulation to models of the processing steps involved, in putting a story, or ideas generally, "into words" (as opposed to "into gesture")[25].

4.3 Sense

Watching Jack Bambi tell a story, I, at least, find it reasonably easy to read many of his gestures --- that is, to assign them a gloss, to be willing to say what they 'mean'[26]. In some cases,

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[25] A danger of the microscopic attention to gesture on videotape is that as analysts we frequently know *too much*: having pored over transcripts we know both what has gone before and what is to come. Accordingly we may be able to offer interpretations for slight, ill-formed movements that participants surely could not have had available, during 'real time'. It is clear that, in any case, two processing models are required: a production model for speakers, and a processing model for listeners who clearly are intended to be able to make sense out of what they see and hear, in real time. See Marslen-Wilson 1980. Furthermore, the fact that 'word-searches' have interactive consequence, and thus can figure in conversational strategy (M. Goodwin 1983, C. Goodwin 1985), suggests that more than a verbal symptom of a psychological stutter or stumble is involved.

[26] The gestures transcribed in the appendix consist almost entirely of a contentious, rich interpretation of JB's gestures, providing them with alleged glosses. Some readers may find the audacity of such a transcript hard to swallow, I think, although the warrant for such interpretive speculation may come from our routine practice of formulating temporary hypothetses about what is happening in a conversation, revising them or simply suspending judgement for the moment. In

the gestures are clearly highly conventionalized signs, or emblems, which often substitute for speech. One example is the *guya* 'nothing' gesture, used to mean 'there is none', or 'it's all gone'. This emblem shows the empty hand, and it clearly has a rather long standing in the Cooktown area[27].

```
(43) {boat}
  6              Ho- ngay- I was a young fellow ngayu you know =
                    1sgNOM                       1sNOM
                 Ho- I was a young fellow, I -- you know --
                        !.........!                !...........!
                           "I"                    ((shrug))= "nothing special"

  7              =(1.1)

  8              Never frightened . nothing (.8)
                       !.........!
                         "nothing"

.t6
(44) {Boat, line 6}
  6              Ho- ngay- I was a young fellow ngayu you know =
                    1sgNOM                       1sNOM
                 Ho- I was a young fellow, I -- you know --
                        !.........!                !...........!
                           "I"                    ((shrug))= "nothing special"
```

The *shrug* here is another possible conventional gesture in Jack's repertoire. It seems to have for him, as no doubt for us, a multiplicity of what Anna Wierzbicka (1980) calls 'ignorative' meanings: 'I don't know', 'I don't care', 'what does it matter?', 'Who knows?', and so on.

In most cases, however, Jack's gesticulation does not have the status of a conventional sign of the sort that one would find, for example, in a gestural sign-language[28]. The basis, then, for interpreting gestures, other than the conventional ones --- if they are indeed interpretable --- cannot be conventionally assigned readings, nor even repeated patterning of gestures over a long sequence (for, if they are not conventional but are, in some sense, extemporaneously created icons they need not repeat themselves so long as they are transparent enough to be read).

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this case, I have also worked through the film with two of the participants, and we jointly watched tried to assign interpretations to JB's gestures.

[27] See Roth, 1908, Bull. #11 p. 90, and plate xviii #20.

[28] Kendon's recent work on an *alternate* sign-language, used by Warlpiri speakers at Yuendemu, suggests that very different coding and communicative processes are at work when speakers accompany speech with the signed utterances of this codified gestural language, from the sort of behavior observed in normal gesticulation that accompanies speech. (See Kendon 1980b, 1983b, 1984, and n.d.) For one thing, Warlpiri sign closely parallels spoken Warlpiri, both in synchrony and syntax. Unconventionalized gesture often codes additional meanings, in rather different ways. In section 5 below I consider some of the issues relating to *pointing* both in gesture and in gestural sign-language.

The basis for iconicity is too large a question to tackle here, and deserves serious cross-cultural study. Form (particularly of hand and arm, or whole body posture), motion, and stylized action are all clearly involved. Let me mention McNeill's proposed categorization of gestures which distinguishes first between two narrative-related varieties:

(i) iconic gestures which "in their form or manner of execution" seem to "bear a formal similarity to some aspect of the situation described by the accompanying speech; that is, if some observable aspect of the gesture appeared similar in form to some aspect of the event described by the speaker" (McNeill and Levy 1982:273). We may think of JB making paddling motions when talking about swimming.

(ii) following a suggestion of George Lakoff, McNeill distinguishes metaphoric gestures, which resemble not aspects of the situation described but which "depict the vehicle of a metaphor." McNeill's example is "alternately lifting the two hands with the palms cupped upwards" --- suggesting balancing two weights --- "in a situation where the verb 'decide' or 'choose' would be appropriate" (McNeill and Levy 1982:274-275). I suppose an example from our story might be the "I'm strong"-muscleman gesture that JB uses, at line 146, to suggest that the long swim didn't tire him out at all.

McNeill's third category includes what he calls 'beats': "small formless gestures, often quickly made, but the essential characteristic is that they do not appear to be iconic" (1982: 273). Subtractive thinking has again reared its ugly head. It is clear, of course, that there is still plenty of range for one to indulge ones classificatory urges. Poyatos (1983, Ch.4) distinguishes at least twelve different sorts of iconic gestures, or 'illustrators,' a category that excludes conventionalized emblems, on the one hand, and all sorts of self-adaptors, on the other. And I do not find, in these schemes, a clear place for the stage-setting or participant marking *poses* or *postures* that we see clearly in JB's performance. Nor is the status of the seemingly most primitive gestures --- pointing --- totally clear, an issue to which I shall turn directly.

What is important is that iconic gestures, at least, are clearly intended to be interpretable, whether or not they succeed. They are meant to contribute to the sense which attachs to the performance as a whole. Moreover, insofar as this 'sense' can be represented as an expanded, or fully spelled-out propositional rendering of the narrative, the gestures will contribute crucially to the full propositional content of the narrative. In the last section of this paper I will turn to the issue of how simple pointing gestures can contribute to this spare referential content.

4.4 Style

What makes a good story? Or, more to the point, what makes a good storyteller? Not only do societies vary in the sorts of things they perform verbally, and in the gestural accompaniments to verbal art (this variability has, of course, been the focus for the classic studies of gesture), but within societies, some people are better practitioners than others of speaking skills. The communicative power associated with verbal and gestural channels is not the same, and a skilled storyteller like JB exploits both systems for their peculiar virtues. We may all waggle our fingers when we talk, but the delicacy and assurance of the master talker may be in both his hands and his mouth, as he acts acts his story, playing the parts with his body and his gaze, as well as with his voice.

I suggest that the master story-teller makes effective use of *understatement* and invited inference. That is, he or she juggles a delicate mix of spare narrative and artful *un-saying*, guiding interlocutors through the narrated events without laboring his role as leader, inviting them to

participate by employing their own knowledge and expertise, indeed, drawing on the supposition that there *is* mutual knowledge. Thus the artful silence, the austere dialogue, the conclusion left undrawn: JB's dramatization of the events at the missionary's house (knocking on the door, the missionary's voice and accent mimed, his angry reaction to the loss of the boat) reminds me of the difference between good modern radio plays and the old, *Lone Ranger* variety where everything was spelled out, right down to the gunfire and the gasping death rattle. Or consider the inferences that Margaret Atwood invites us to supply, about the village and the sort of place it was, in the following passage from *Surfacing*:

> "But the truth is that I didn't know what the villagers thought or talked about, I was so shut off from them. The older ones ocassionally crossed themselves when we passed, possibly because my mother was wearing slacks, but even that was never explained"(p. 54).

If speech by *design* incorporates multiple channels of communication, then the skilled speaker will deploy his resources, talking when talk suits and gesturing when gesture suits. This is partly a matter of the economy of real-time processing considerations, and partly a matter of art[29]. But, as we shall now see, it is also partly a matter of gauging and exploiting the degree of what ones interlocutors already *know* and what they can *infer*.

5. Deixis

Let me now return to those gestures that relate directly to the ethnographic details with which I began. Remember that GY speakers have available a set of specific directional determiners which allow them to refer to entities in terms of an absolute directional grid. Not surprisingly, deictic gestures can replace the specific directional words, so that it is possible to indicate an entity that lies to the north (from the vantage point of the place where talk is ocurring) both by pointing northand by constructing an expression with the root *gungga-*.

5.1 Pointing, again

All languages have deictic words, and presumably all therefore allow deictic gestures. Reference is characteristically anchored in the speech event: through 'personal pronouns' (which refer to participants in the event), through 'tense' (which refers to time relative to the time of the event), and through a variety of particulars which are *given* in the event in other ways: a place ('here'), and entities in the environs ('this, these..'). However, according to the standard account, one can refer as well (if not better) by showing as by mentioning, and accordingly deictic gestures can *replace* rather than merely accompany referring expressions.

Indeed, on some philosophers' accounts (and *most* linguists' accounts), the possibility of referring at all ultimately rests on ostension, as if somehow pointing constitutes referring at its most primitive and direct.

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[29] It may also be a matter of syntax, or the preference organization of conversation, related to what Stephen Levinson has described, using pragmatic, conversational and syntactic evidence, as *minimization*. See Levinson(1986).

If the task of comprehending a narrative can be seen as analogous to specifying fully its propositional content (this oft-disguised, but widely held, view motivates much work on semantic primitives and, indeed, much early work in cognitive anthropology as well) then such an expansion may, on occasion, be forced to rely as much on gestural information as on the spoken word (even if supplemented by precisely specifiable rules to recover deleted constituents, etc., in the usual fashion of syntax).

JB's gestures clearly help to fill out the propositional content of his words. This is true for simple pointing gestures as much as for more complex iconic (or even metaphorical) gestures. Just as these latter gestures stand for whole clause-sized utterances (which may never be uttered --- for example, "we went on swimming", conveyed by a swimming motion with both hands, accompanied by a squinting of the eyes in mock effort), pointing gestures (whether we want to call *them* 'iconic' or not) can single out entities ('I', 'the other one [who was standing there]', 'the boat', etc.), and indicate location, motion, direction, and distance, with or without accompanying words. So, however they manage to do it, we know that pointing gestures can refer, much as words can; and thus our propositional rendering of a verbal performance will have to be able to spell out these pointing gestures as well as the words.

5.3 It's not polite to point

Pointing gestures can also have special interactional significance, implicated by the fact that they are *silent* (and hence possibly covert) replacements for referring expressions. This is the basis for Sherzer's observation that the Cuna *plg* routinely is taken to *implicate* mocking, joking, and criticism: otherwise, why point? why not speak aloud? (Sherzer 1973.) Weren't we all told, as children, "Don't point, and don't stare!"[30]? My brothers and I hit upon the Cuna trick of using the lips (often with an accompanying wink or a long face) as an independent discovery, and by way of evading our parents' injunction not to point with outstretched digit.

Different ways of pointing can amplify and elaborate this *manner* principle: that the *way* one signals something can itself signal something more about what one is signalling. Poyatos reminds us that there are even conventions about manner:

> "It is well known and a source of amusement that, while a Spaniard or American illustrates his littl boy's height with the palm down and horizontal, a Colombian or Salvadorean, for instance, puts out his hand horizontal but perpindicular to the ground, since the former spatial marker is used only to refer ot the height of animals, while a Mexican uses the palm-down gesture for an object, the second one for an animal, and the palm-up closed hand with the forefinger sticking upwards for a person" (1983:110-11).

Gesturing may be efficient, economical, and easy; it is often also impolite, low class, cause for excusing oneself, vaguely Mediterranean.

---

[30] Note the curious fact that, in some places and in some conversational traditions, you don't actually have to be *looking* at the speaker to track his gestures. GY speakers often give each other their backs, but still mysteriously seem to be able to follow gestures out of the corners of their eyes, if not the backs of their heads.

Silence can also have a different valence. Australian Aborigines, who are helpfully explicit about speech and social relations, often use speech prohibitions to mark especially *polite* behavior, or respectful interactions. The well-known reduced vocabularies of 'mother-in-law' languages (Dixon 1971, Haviland 1979ab) are a case in point; a GY man was not able to speak to his mother-in-law *at all*, and used special respectful vocabulary, typically, with his brother-in-law and father-in-law, from whom he had to maintain a deferential and respectful distance. Throughout the continent, it is ordinarily improper to utter the names of recently deceased people, and sometimes all words which *sound like* such names are also forbidden. The gestural sign-language of the Warlpiri speakers at Yuendemu is an example of sign-languages "that have been especially elaborated by women among the peoples of the southern and central desert regions of Australia, where it is the custom for a woman to forego the use of speech when bereaved, sometimes for very long periods" (Kendon 1984:556). In such a context, the silence of gesture can take on an added expressive significance, as we shall see.

5.3 Referential indeterminacy

Despite the standard claims about its primitiveness, as a referring device, pointing is a less precise resource than we might imagine. Although, as I mentioned, in a speculative philosophy of language, ostension seems to have arguably primitive and basic status, as Wittgenstein (1958) has pointed out at some length, ostension itself relies on a whole complex *practice*. (Wittgenstein calls it a "custom".) There is the famous matter of the sign-post.

> 85. A rule stands there like a sign-post. --- Does the sign-post leave no doubt about the way I have to go? Does it shew which direction I am to take when I have passed it; whether along the road or the footpath or across country? But where is it said which way I am to follow it; whether in the direction of its finger or (e.g.,) in the opposite one? --- And if there were, not a single sign-post, but a chain of adjacent ones or chalk marks on the ground --- is there only *one* way of interpreting them? --- So I can say, the sign-post does after all leave no room for doubt. Or rather: it sometimes leaves room for doubt and sometimes not. And now this is no longer a philosophical proposition, but an empirical one.
>
> 87 The sign-post is in order --- if, under normal circumstances, it fulfills its purpose.
>
> 198 Let me ask this: what has the expression of a rule --- say a sign-post --- got to do with my actions? What sort of connexion is there here? --- Well, perhaps this one: I have been trained to react to this sign in a particular way, and now I do so react to it. But that is only to give a causal connexion; to tell how it has come about that we now go by the sign-post; not what this going-by-the-sign really consists in. On the contrary; I have further indicated that a person goes by a sign-post only in so far as there exists a regular use of sign-posts, a custom.

And what constitutes this custom? What is the required *training* supposed to be like? Or, in another philosophical tradition, consider the ontological difficulties surrounding a supposedly straightforward 'deictic gesture,' pointing at a Quinian *gavagai*.

> "For, consider 'gavagai'. Who knows but what the objects to which this term applies are not rabbits after all, but mere stages, or brief temporal segments, of rabbits? In either event the stimulus situations that prompt assent to 'Gavagai' would be the same as for 'Rabbit'. Or perhaps the objects to which 'gavagai' applies are all and sundry undetached parts of rabbits; again the stimulus meaning would regsiter no difference. When from the sameness of stimulus meanings of 'Gavagai' and 'Rabbit' the linguist leaps to the conclusion that a gavagai is a whole enduring rabbit, he is just taking for granted that the native is enough like us to have a brief general term for rabbits and no brief general term for rabbit stages or parts" (Quine 1960:51-52).

> "Does it seem that the imagined indecision between rabbits, stages of rabbits, integral parts of rabbits, the rabbit fusion, and rabbithodd must be due merely to some special fault in our formulation of stimulus meaing, and that it should be resoluble by a little supplementary pointing and questioning? Conider, then, how. Point to a rabbit and you have pointed to a stage of a rabbit, to an integral part of a rabbit, to the rabbit fusion, and to where rabbithood is manifested. Point to an integral part of a rabbit and you have pointed again to the remaining four sorts of things; and so on around. Nothing not distinguished in stimulus meaning itself is to be distinguished by pointing, unless the pointing is accompanied by questions of identity and diversity: 'Is this the same gavagai as that?','Do we have here one gavagai or two?'.... The whole apparatus [of articles and pronouns, singular and plural, copula, identity terms etc.] is interdependent, and the very notion of term is as provincial to our culture as are those associated devices" (Quine 1960:52-53).

It is a commonplace of ordinary discourse that for a pointing gesture to succeed as a referring device, it must occur in a context which sets the parameters of *what can be pointed at*[31]. One does not point at independently given entities in an external reality. Indeed, Quine reverses the priority of ostension and reference with his suggestion that general terms in language themselves serve to fix the referent of a pointing gesture, relative to 'human interests' --- another reference to 'custom.'

> "A general term imposes a division of reference which, once mastered, can thus be exploited in no end of particular cases to fix the intended ranges of application of singular terms. 'This is the Nile', with accompanying gestures but without the general term 'river', might be misconstrued as indetifying a bend in the river; 'This is Nadejda' might be misconstrued as identifying the material of the faithful creature's rude garment; but 'This river is the Nile'., 'This woman is Nadejda', settle matters.

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[31] Wittgenstein, 1958, section 30: "One has already to know (or be able to do) something in order to be capable of asking a thing's name."

> Often 'this' serves as a singular term by itself. If the object indicated contrasts with it surroundings, the intended limits of reference within present space will be evident without help of a general term; and even the intended limits of reference backward and forward in time can commonly be inferred well enough. And an isolated 'this' would usually suffice for the Nile or Nadejda because of what one knows of human interest: rivers and women are liklier objects of identification than bends and fabrics" (Quine 1960:100-101).

5.4 Deictic spaces

What, then, are the human interests or customs that allow pointing gestures to refer? What 'practices' allow us to point at entities in the world? In general, one supposes, the ontological indeterminacy of "simple pointing gestures" is less problematic than the ubiquitous and complex dilemma posed by shifting *origos* and deictic spaces *within which* one points. What spaces are these, and how are they established?

Wittgenstein's speculative language-games provide an intriguing suggestion about how a practice of pointing might work.

> "We said that the sentence "Excalibur has a sharp blade" made sense even when Excalibur was broken in pieces. Now this is so because in this language-game a name is also used in the absence of its bearer. But we can imagine a language- game with names (that is, with signs which we should certainly include among names) in which they are used only in the presence of the bearer; and so could *always* be replaced by a demonstrative pronoun and the gesture of pointing" (1958, section 44).

A strange game, you might suppose, until you remember American Sign Language. Bellugi and Klima (1982:301) describe some of the syntactic and semantic functions of pointing in this language, as follows:

> "If a referent (third person) is actually present in the discourse context between signer and addressee, specfic indexical reference is made by pointing to that referent. But for non-present referents that are intoduced by the speaker into the discurse context only 'verbally', there is another system of indexing. This consists of introducing a nominal and setting up a point in space associated with it; pointing to that specific locus later in the discourse clearly 'refers back' to that nominal, even after many intervening signs...."

Note also that signers use distinct horizontal planes into which nominals of different sorts can be introduced (generics go on a higher plane, for example, as do 'indeterminate references'). They also use different planes for contrasting events. Indeed, it is in terms of this syntax that verbs are marked for agreement, that anaphoric devices are manipulated, and so on. Although Bellugi

and Klima still refer to "simple pointing" and its "putative iconicity"[32], they make it clear that it is only the structured *practice* of pointing in ASL that allows such formatives to refer at all.

To make matters worse, in ASL speakers can *shift* the reference of pointing signs, by making a wholesale change in the space within which pointing pronouns refer. Bellugi and Klima comment:

> "The simple assignment of role in discourse as signer and addressee can acquire an added layer of complexity in the indexic reference system. Third-person non-present referents can be assigned to what is normally a first-person locus through body and head shifts" (1982:305).

Such a shift of body position amounts to a metaphorical device for altering the perspective of the speech event: it corresponds, in a gestural or kinesic idiom, to establishing a deictic origo different from that of the speech event through discourse, or to the setting of scene and protagonist that speakers accomplish through metacommentary and framing devices ("I said... and then she says...").

With this background we are, finally, in a position to see the significance of the still more complex referential gestures made possible by the GY system of directions and orientation. For it should now be clear that the subclass of pointing gestures in JB's narrative *can only* have meaning within the context of direction, orientation, and space --- geographical and social --- that provides, for JB and his interlocutors, a universe of things that can be pointed at. The interest of this detailed study of direction and pointing lies precisely in what it shows about the nature of *shared knowledge* about space and geography that is crucial to understanding GY conversation. One must be *placed*, not only physically and by history, but in terms of social geography, even to be able to make referential sense of GY talk.

GY speakers point a good deal, but they are scrupulous about keeping their points *correctly oriented.* (In fact, they are often confused by the ranmshackle pointing gestures that Europeans use --- talking about the house or the camp 'over there', when it's *really* over *there*[33].) If one is talking about going to the beach, and the beach is east, one points east. If, in tracing a route, one talks about leaving a building, turning left and heading north, then one points *north* and not just left (however one happens to be oriented). When a Hopevale person draws a map, with his toe, in the dust, he keeps north *north,* and does not just say: "Let's imagine that this way is north." In terms I have recently learned from Leonard Talmy, one does not *decouple* from direction. That is, one

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[32] Bellugi and Klima report the apparently surprising finding that deaf children have the same sort of difficulty acquiring ASL pronouns (which are essentially points to the torso of speaker, addressess, present third party etc., that hearing children have acquiring shifting spoken pronouns --- a finding that suggests that children "appear to ignore the apparent iconicity [of pointing gestures] that is available to them" (1982: 309).

[33] Poyatos (1983:114), in his encyclopedic catalogue of gestural illustrators, isolates a special and seemingly unproblematic category of deictics, which "truly point at their referents" "whether or not the referent is present." Interestingly, he claims that pointing at absent referents often involves less sweeping gestures, which would otherwise mislead hearers (I suppose into thinking that absent referents were present?). He comments: "...pointing at places not present, whether buildings or cities, is very typical of rather articulate speakers, but most of the time they are geographically inaccurate" (1983:116).

does not suspend absolute cardinal orientation, but rather maintains it, even when one's point of reference moves away from the immediate here and now. Moreover, one locates oneself, in the here and now, in proper relation to the cardinal points. A common game in the bush, as I have mentioned, is not simply keeping track of which way is north or east --- a trivial and obvious matter for Hopevale people --- but rather involves challenging ones companions to locate, by a precise pointing gesture, some known but distant place: one's house, say, or Brisbane, or yesterday's camp site. "Where's home," is the challenge, answered, after a short period of thought, by an outstretched finger. And when someone gets the direction wrong, he is mocked for "getting bush," or *yiwaarr-ngarraaya* 'being lost.'

Let's return to JB's story. He begins telling about being on a boat, north from the point on the shore called Bala. He describes how he and his companion began to swim towards the south, using the appropriate GY directional words. He also makes pointing gestures, to accompany his description; and these gestures are *properly oriented.* When he talks about swimming south from the sinking boat, he gestures *south* (from where he is sitting, telling the story). When he remembers looking north, from the point where they arrived on the beach, to see a giant shark, he points *north* (again, from where he is sitting). In Figure 11, I diagram the section of the narrative that deals with the swim from boat to beach; solid arrows correspond to numbered utterances containing directional roots, and broken arrows record the direction of pointing gestures (keyed to the numbered utterances which they accompany). That the direction of gestures closely corresponds to the orientation of narrated events should be obvious from the close connected between broken and solid arrows. Moreover, notice that in this section of the narrative, the storyteller *anchors* his pointing gestures in several different places on this conceptual map: first on the sinking boat (from which he and his companions must swim south); later, on the beach at Bala, from which one could look north to see the little reef where they stop for a breather (lines 89-90 on the accompanying full transcript); later on that little reef (from which they must resume swimming south); and lastly, on the beach itself, looking back northwards to make out the ship on the horizon (see example (48) below).

((Figure 11 here))

Thus, keeping absolute cardinal directions obviously does not mean that one cannot decouple from *here.* JB and his interlocutors are actually sitting, as the narrative procedes, in front of the Curio Shop at modern Hopevale. They are seated on a bench, and JB himself is facing WEST (so that to show the direction he had to swim from boat to beach, he must gesture slightly to his left --- southwest, or *dyibaarr*). But the point to which they were swimming on this occasion, actually lies well north (and slightly east) of where they are actually sitting. His precisely oriented gestures can thus not be understood by reference to the moment and place of speech, but must be transferred to the discursively established *origo.* However, things are not so simple: the "here and now" of the speech event is not irrelevant to the narrative, and itself figures in pointing gestures.

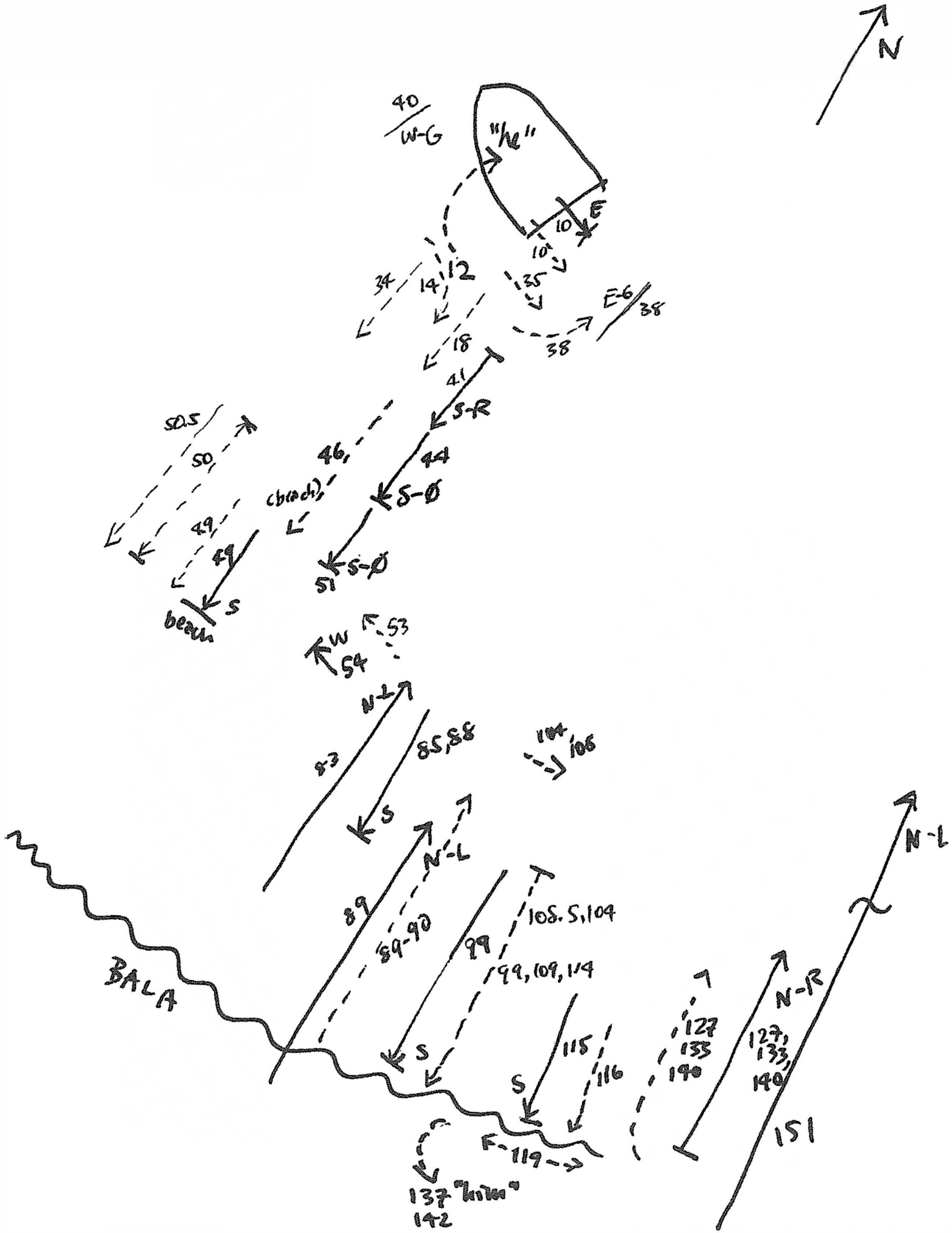
In fact, in JB's narrative it is necessary to distinguish at least three different 'spaces' within which deictic gestures can refer, from which they can take their meanings. I will take them in turn.

5.4.1 local space: the immediate environs of the speech event, within which deixis may aim at observable targets --- speech participants, local objects and geographical features, absolute directions from the current locus.

Within local space, one can clearly point to the protagonists of narrated events, insofar as they are physically present.

FIGURE 11

BOAT



(44) {Boat, line 6}

```
Ho- ngay- I was a young fellow ngayu you know =
    1sgNOM                      1sNOM
Ho- I was a young fellow, I -- you know --
       !.........!                !...........!
          "I"                    ((shrug))= "nothing special"
```

Here the speaker points to his chest in a clear reference to himself.

Other gestures that point at local space have a dual interest: they are highly *creative* acts of reference - that is, they establish an initial reference to people who are being introduced into the narrative (Marslen-Wilson et al. 1982); and they are heavily marked and socially significant references, whose *silent* character generates specific inferences (see section 5.5 below). In the following example, the speaker points, in local space, to the store where the surviving *son* of the man referred to currently works (and can, in fact, be seen). The man mentioned in the story is deceased, and his eldest son in a clear social sense stands as his modern-day *replacement*.

```
(45) {Boat, line 158}
158             nyulu dhawuunh Woibongun yarrba nhaadhi
                3sNOM friend+ABS Woibo-ERG  this way see-PAST
                Old Woibo saw (my) friend that way.
            !......!               !.............!
            "him - you know"        "the one there ((his father))"
```

Local space, immediately available and salient, seems peculiarly appropriate to *establishing* reference, and the points to it are characteristically of this sort (lines 154-8, 169, 230).

5.4.2 global space: a wider space, still focussed on the locus of the speech event, but extending beyond local space to include places and entities outside the range of immediate deixis -- out of sight, over the mountains, away over there. Hopevale people might talk of going *naga* 'east', from the Curio Shop to home, to Cape Bedford, to Cooktown, to Cairns, or even to Canberra --- all, in different degrees, *naga-* from Hopevale.

When Hopevale people talk to me about America, they usually simply refer to it as *gunggaalu*, N-L --- "northwards"; sometimes they refer to it simply by a vague[34] gesture towards the north, as in: *wanhdha- wanhdhaalga dhadaara ((point))* 'when are you going (that way --- home, to your country)?' The following line, from JB's text, talks about seagulls that arrived as a kind of omen to tell the people at the McIvor outstation that the boat had sunk. He gestures in a westerly direction, towards McIvor, as he talks.

---

[34] Even in global space, GY speakers' gestures are meant to be directionally precise. When one gestures towards Brisbane --- a distant and seldom visited city in the south of Queensland --- the suggestion is that if one could follow the pointing finger, as the crow (or the kookaburra) flies, one would arrive at the place in question. Typically one points at distant places with a raised arm, or with an index finger that first points skyward and then settles on its final direction, suggesting, as Leonard Talmy has commented to me, a route up and over intervening obstacles or space, much as one might point at an object shielded from sight by a barrier by means of a curved gesture ('around and behind that thing') that embodies a kinesically signalled *path*.

```
(46) {Boat, line 297}
297             guwaalu mission-bi gaday /to McIvor/
                West-LOC mission-ALL come-PAST
                They came to the mission station to the West (at McIvor).
                !.........!
                ((points high, West))
```

5.4.3 story space

Finally we must distinguish story space (or story spaces):

the constantly shifting, and contextually determined space, constructed from the discourse, and from the perspective of which deictic gestures must be construed.

JB, talking about the sinking boat, kinesically *transports us there*, and, following his pointing gestures, we see the beach three and a half miles to the south through shark infested waters which they have to try to reach. He signals to his companion where to jump in so as to be sufficiently far enough away not to be able to grab *him*, JB, if he begins to panic.

```
(47) {Boat, line 38}
 38             ngayu gurray   nyundu yarrba   ganbarra nagaalnggurr =
                1sNOM say-PAST 2sNOM  this way jump-IMP   East-PROXLOC
                I said, "You jump in there on the East side."
                               !.......................!
                                  "back that way" ((point East))
```

Obviously, the gesture is correctly oriented here only if we adopt the perspective of JB, already swimming around in the water, who wants his companion to jump in to *his* east, or on the east side of the boat (but not if we imagine the speaker top be pointing to an absolute location from the vantage point of local space --- in which case he would have been pointing to some point around on the east side behind the Curio Shop!).

This story space is constructed through discourse, but it maintains its directional integrity. In GY discourse, unlike English I think, although the point of reference is shifting, the orientations are *absolute*. From the sinking ship, North of Cape Bedford, when I point south I mean south *from there*. Directional absolutes, then, give the narrator additional resources for framing his commentary or dramatizing his story: if I shift my body or look to the north when acting out a story conversation, I make clear that I mean to be talking to the person who was, in the story, to my north.

Moreover, a simple shift of perspective can alter the value of the directional gesture[35]. In the following extended extract from JB's story, the *origo* of story space shifts from the beach where the two shipwrecked men watch the boat sinking and set out walking *south* along the beach,

---

[35] Of course, we accomplish similar shifts of perspective in English talk, too, but we do not maintain absolute directional orientation, in both word and gesture. I have been unable to find comparative information about pointing gestures in other Australian languages. Kendon's work on Warlpiri sign is suggestive but not conclusive, as he does not describe fully the perspective within which pointing takes place in that language. Directional pointing is a formative in several YSL signs, as he notes:

to the vantage point of the man, farther south along the same beach, watching them come from the *north.*

> "In some signs the direction of movement of sign is varied according to the referent of the sign... For example, in *wuraji/late afternoon* #280 the arm is extended in the direction of the setting sun... In *ya-ni/to go* #384, the direction of going may be indicated by the direction in which the hand is moved..." (Kendon 1983b:xlv).

In the list of signs, I find, in addition to the two mentioned, only the following that incorporate pointing:

> #519, 'far off, very far, beyond' "Direction of item being described" (note that it is high, with fingersnap) 606-613: touching or pointing at body parts 636: West side, East side... "Direction of movement of sign according to the direction referred to." 713 'to follow somone, or animal' 731 'to go in procession'

There are no separate signs listed for the cardinal points, and we are not informed whether absolute directional orientation is maintained or how.]

```
(48) {boat, lines 150ff}
150             you could see that gulnguy just horizonbi =
                                   boat+ABS      horizon-LOC
                You could just see that boat on the horizon.
                                        !............!
                                        "on horizon, flat" ((north))

151             =gunggaalu black spot
                 NORTH-ALL/LOC
                 Like a black spot to the north.
                                   !.......!
                                    "spot"  ((north))
```

{{Here the speaker maintains a perspective on the beach where they came to shore, whence looking north shows them where the boat was bobbing on the horizon.}}

```
153     j;      ganaa yanday
                alright rise-PAST
                OK, he got up.

154             nhangu Woibo-wi biiba
                3sGEN  Woibo-GEN father+NOM
                Well, old Woibo's father...
```

```
155             dhana nhaadhi ngaliin dyibaarr gadaariga,           nhaadhi
                3pNOM see-PAST 1duACC  South+ALL come+REDUP-PAST-SUB see-PAST
                They saw the two of us coming south, see.
                       !.................................................!
                          "N to S motion"  ((on a westerly arc))
```

{{Now, the perspective has shifted to that of Woibo, at a point southeast of where the men landed, who is watching them walk down the beach.}}

Some of the complexities of shifting deictic spaces are graphically presented in Figure 12, in which both directional gestures and explicit directional words are shown as arrows, each numbered to coprrespond to lines of the full narratrive transcript in the Appendix. There are two close up views of story spaces, one on the beach at Elim and the other at the Cape Bedford mission. I have also included anninset that shows *local* space for this narrative, the correctly oriented map of the part of modern Hopevale mission where the story is being told.

((Figure 12 here))

There are gestural devices for recording aspects of perspective and relative distance that I showed, in the first section, to be criterial aspects of the meanings of the different cardinal point forms in GY. Height of a gesture, and extended duration, seem to suggest distance, and often go along with the typical spoken means, in GY, for representing repeated or interminable action: a repeated verb or directional word and the 'duration' particle *yii*, spoken with an exagerated long vowel.

```
(49) {boat, line 199}
nagaalu nagaalu yiiiii
E-L     E-L     here WE kept going and going east.
!.............................!
((point with rising finger, back over shoulder, towards east))
```

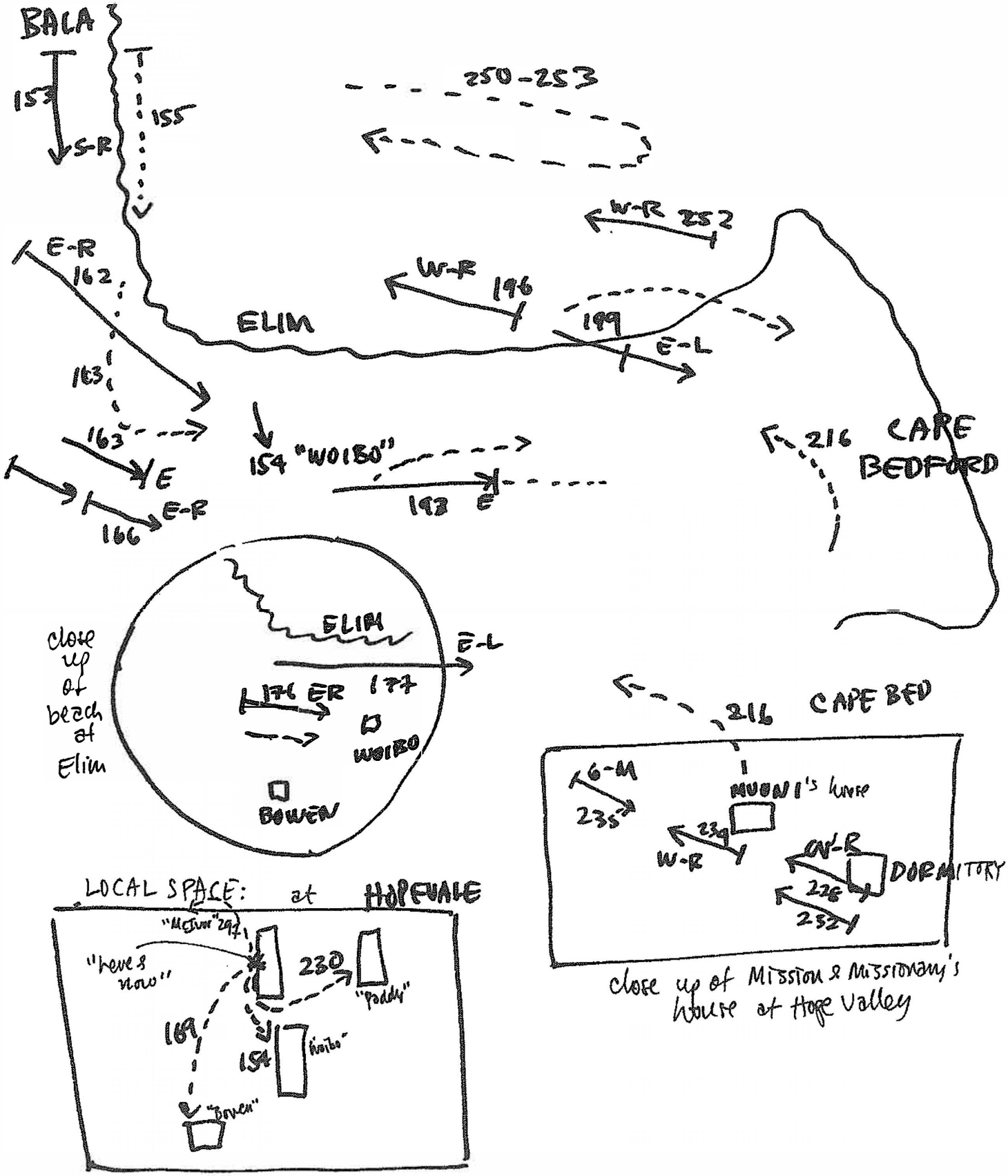
Hand form --- a backhand flick, for example, to indicate *setting out* (the R-form --- see example (50)), and a definite pointing gesture or even a sharp fist-to-palm blow, corresponding to the 0-form and indicating *arrival* (example (51)) --- seems transparently to display the origin and terminus points of motion.

```
(50) {boat, lines 43.1-44}
(1.8)
!..............!
"set out" ((finger flick towards south))

dyibarra maariilin
S-0      swim-PAST
We swam southwards.
```

FIGURE 12

ON THE BEACH (153-199)



```
(51) {boat, lines 115-116}
I tell you that man nyulu nhayun dyibarra gaday
                    3sNOM there  south-0  came
I tell you, when that man got there to the south.

(2.2)
!................!
((extends left hand to south, strikes it with right fist))
 "getting there south"
```

Perhaps the best analysis of the deictic spaces, in which GY speakers can point, maintains the distinction between immediate and remote space for *both* local and story space[36]. That is, just as a speaker can point, in a directionally precise way, both to visible and accessible entities in what I have called *local* space, and then extend his directionally accurate gestures to a global space that extends beyond the bounds of the visible, so too can narrators point to the global space surrounding the discursively defined story space.

Consider the following extract from JB's story. The two shipwrecked men, weary from their exhausting swim and the walk through the night that takes them to the old mission at Cape Bedford, inform the missionary that the boat has been lost. In anger, the missionary tells his helpers to feed the two men straight away, and then, to take them back to the boat to try to salvage what they can of boat and cargo. JB acts out the words of the angry missionary (at the same time imitating his gruff voice and his legendary German accent).

```
(52) {boat, lines 236-239}
236   Them two silly fool there

237   bula   gulnguy  guwa-dhanydyii-mani
      2duNOM boat+ABS sink-CAUS+PAST
      They sank the boat.

238   bulaan mayi     wuwaa
      2duDAT food+ABS give+IMP
      Give them some food!

239   take 'em back!
      !................!
      ((high pointing gesture West, held for 1 second))
```

In line 239, as he says "Take 'em back!", JB raises his arm, as if to point to global space, clearly gesturing as the missionary would have gestured, from his verandah at Cape Bedford, towards the shipwreck site far to the north-west.

As I have mentioned, JB uses both discursive and gestural devices to set the stage, to shift scenes, to move from one episode and locale to anoyther. His major body shifts set up scenes in which protagonists interact, and clearly demarcate these from his own remarks, as narrator, to his audience. Moreover, he uses different spaces for differential effect, taking refuge in local space creatively to *establish* referents which he can therafter presuppose in the narrative. Nonetheless,

---

[36] I owe this suggestion to Leonard Talmy.

how, exactly, a skilled storyteller manages the shifts between different spaces, and keeps his audience on the track is a matter I do not yet understand, and which deserves further study.

5.5 Inferential pointing

One thing is clear: JB's entire performance depends crucially on mutual knowledge --- on shared and continually reconstructed cognitive maps, if you like --- about geography, including the social geography, and the historical transformations of the countryside. JB relies on his interlocutors' ability to orient *themselves* within the spaces he establishes, which he thereafter uses to construct his narrative. This is, of course, a story that his interlocutors know well --- it is, indeed, part of the modern mythology of the mission community --- and they are intimately familiar with its places, its characters, and its morals. Tracking reference is not a difficult achievement under such circumstances, and it would be a worthwhile project, which I leave to another place, to examine other sorts of talk which can presuppose no such shared knowledge[37]. If, however, part of our anthropological task is to understand the shared understandings that *make* communities, that define their boundaries, and provide the common coin of social meaning, we must not overlook even the bare and contingent features of the physical map, and the salient entities that populate it.

But there is a final important point. Once a referent is established, whether by a gesture or by a verbal expression, the full range of inferential and implicational procedures is called into play to establish its conversational significance (in terms of the familiar notions of relevance, quantity, quality, and manner). As Sherzer has pointed out, the very fact that one chooses to *point* (rather than to speak, for example), implies that there is a *reason* for pointing, or suggests that there may be some need to refer in silence.

In JB's story (at lines 206-209), the two sheepish ship-wrecked men approach the missionary's house expecting to be bawled out. Even in the retelling, they approach in silence, gesturing to each other (through the narrator's skilled actions) where to stand, and approaching the missionary's verandah with only a discrete knock.

Moreover, the possibilities for reference, as always, become entangled with *non*-referential matters. Pointing can *refer* simply but *signify* in a more complex way. The best example of what I mean has to do, in JB's story, with chains of kin and the etiquette of language. In gesture, as in most matters linguistic, GY speakers maintain a clear connection between social relations and what *can be said.* A respectful relationship, between a man and his father-in-law, for example, was marked by special respectful *words* (Haviland 1979a,b) just as the opposite sort of joking relationship (between a man and his grandfather) was marked by specially obscene words, too vulgar even for ordinary friends. Similarly, when someone died, GY people, like most Australian Aborigines, forgo his or her *name*, often along with other words that reminded them of the name, and thence by extension, of the dead person[38].

---

[37] I have several times had the experience, with GY friends, of giving up in despair after trying to transcribe a conversation about, say, recent events mustering cattle or mining silica --- frequent jobs that Hopevale men take --- and having no knowledge of the places and circumstances described, no map with which to orient ourselves.

[38] Around Hopevale, people still tell the story of *ngamu bigibigi* 'old man Pig', whose death in the 1930s meant that the people of his camp could no longer talk about 'going to hunt *bigibigi*' when they went after wild boar, but had instead to substitute the eumphemism 'hunt *nanigut*' (another English loan, meaning "nanny-goat").

When JB wants to refer to old people who took part in the events he is recounting --- people now long dead, but whose names are still not lightly pronounced --- he is constrained from simply naming them. Instead he points. (Note the same principle, but the inverse motive, that Sherzer isolated in the mocking or critical use of pointing in San Blas.) But his gesture can aim

(i) at local space, as when he points at the visible son of the actual protagonist to whom he wants to refer (see example (45) above);

or (ii) at global space, as when he gestures in the direction of the now collapsed house of another deceased man who figures in the story

```
(53) {boat, line 230}
nhangu . Paddy
3sDAT !.........!
((hesitation, pointing over shoulder east))
((in direction of Paddy's old house site))
```

or (iii) at story space, when he gestures east, referring to the house of yet another man, whose house stood formerly to the east of the spot where the narrated events were taking place.

```
(54) {boat, lines 174-176}
174   eh, gaari dhadii nhaway
          NEG   go+IMP there
      (I said), "Hey, don't go there!"
                !.........!
                "his house"
   ((point West, in story space, to          where B's house was formerly))

175   ngaliin gurra-ya
      1duACC  say-PRECAUT
      "He might scold us."

176   gadii    nagaar
      come+IMP E-R
      "Come on this way East"
          !...........!
          "to W's house"
((pointing East in the direction that his house formerly stood from there))
```

We see here the construction of a complex referring expression, overlayed with deferential affect. And it all begins with a seemingly primitive and unidimensional waving of the hands.

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"Complex Referential Gestures"

Jack Bambi: How the Boat Sank
Simplified transcript with gestures and putative glosses marked

1 j; one side galmba . flat
also
One side (of the boat) was flat, too.

2 one side gulnguy top part-gu (.8)
boat+ABS part-EMPH
One side of the boat --- the top part ...
!.....!
"top of boat"

3 all the log (underneath-nganh) gaday . wanggaar =
underneath-ABL come-PAST top
all the logs came up from underneath and...
!.....! !.....!
"under" "up"

4 =dhaday .
go-PAST
went up above.

5 nhangu nhaamuunh wanggaar miidaarrin
3sACC that+ERG top lift-PAST
That lifted it up.
!.....!
"lifting"

5.5 (2.0)
!.....!
((change of scene))

6 Ho- ngay- I was a young fellow ngayu you know =
lsgNOM lsNOM
Ho- I was a young fellow, I -- you know --
!.....! !.....!
"I" ((shrug))= "nothing special"

7 =(1.1)

8 Never frightened . nothing (.8)
!.....!
"nothing"

9 Ngayu bada ganbarrin
lsNOM down jump-PAST
I jumped down.
!...! !.....!
"I" "jump down"

9.1 (1.0)
!.....!
"(in the) water?"

9.2 (1.0)
!.....!
"swimming around"

10 buga yarrba naga dhaday yi:
butt+ABS this way East go-PAST here
The stern was pointed this way, East.
!.....! !.....!
"down" "floating, moving"

10.1 (.9)
!.....!
"dressed"

11 ngadhu dharrudha murrga ngayu birrbay . nhayun =
1sGEN trousers+ABS only 1sNOM wear-PAST that+ABS
I just had my trousers on, and..
!.....! !.....!
"trousers" "put on (trousers)"

12 =ganaa budhu and nyulu galmba dharrudha nhayun .
alright intensifier 3sNOM also trousers+ABS that+ABS
that was all, and he also had his trousers.
!.....! !.....!
'that's all" "he..."

13 m- mundal dharrudha <1 galmba 1> inside
rest+ABS trousers+ABS also
And the rest of those trousers were inside (the hold).
!.....! !.....!
"those (the rest)" "down and in"

13.1 (1.8)
!.....!
"swimming in water"

14 ngayu garrbay garrbay yi: (.5) ((laughs))
1sNOM grasp-PAST grasp-PAST here
I kept holding on for a long time.
!.....!
"moving around boat W->E->S?"

15 nyulu wanggaamun baarrngay (.5)
3sNOM top+ABL shout-PAST
He shouted out from up on board.
!.....!
((staging: change of protagonist))

16 wanhdharra <2 mugur ((laughs)) 2>

```
                how        uncle+ABS
                "What shall we do, uncle?"
                    !...................!
                     "he said to me"

17              ngayu gurray eh (.8)
                1sNOM say-PAST
                I said, "Hey..."
                       !.............!
                        "I said to him"

18              ngali maariil    dhuway (1.2)
                1duNOM swim+NONP nephew+ABS
                "We'll swim for it, nephew."
                         !.........!
                         "towards S"

19      t;      dagu  gulnguy   wanhdharra yi ...<3 move... yarrba =
                thing boat+ABS how        here      this way
                But, what happened to the boat? Was it moving this way?
                          !..........!             !...................!
                          ((gaze)) "I'm asking"     "swirling or turning"

20              (.8)

21      j;      dagu gulnguy nhayun   .. miidaarin yarrba gurray
                thing boat+ABS that+ABS lift-PAST   this way say-PAST
                Well, the boat was lifted up; it went like this.
                      !..........!                      !............!
                      "boat (still like this)"           "turn"
                                        [                    ]
22      b;                              nyulu start            =
                                        3sNOM
                                        It began ...

23              =turn it gurray
                         do-PAST
                 to turn over.

23.1            (1.8)
                !.................!
                "you get it?"

24      j;      o- o- one side gulnguy (ngayu nharri)
                              boat+ABS 1sNOM tread on+PAST
                I was stepping on one side of the boat.
                          !......!           !..............!
                          "side"             "bobbing up and down"

24.1            (1.4)
                !...............!
                ((staging: getting ready to act))

25              ((laugh)) nyulu nha-  ngayu bada buurraaywi  wali =
```

```
                    3sNOM     1sNOM down water-LOC   around
            He-  I was down in the water
                                    !.......!
                                     "down"

26          =(fiddle) manaarnadhi=
                  become+REDUP-PAST
             just fiddling around.
            !.....................!
               "moving about"

27          = dagu minha bigibigi galmba salted
              thing meat+ABS pig+ABS  also
              Well, all that pork, salted pork...
                         !.........!
                         "all of it"

27.1   (1.6)
       !...............!
       "nothing, gone"

28          mamba-gu (.5)
            fat+ABS-EMPH
            That fat..
                !...........!
                "you get me?"

29          milinh           guuna dhadiiri (.9)
            fair-weather+ABS let(DESID) go+REDUP-IMP
            It just kept floating away.
                !....................!
                   "gone"

30          bina:na nhayun bada oh bunches and bunches
            banana that+ABS down
            THose bananas down there --- bunches and bunches (of them).
               !.......!                        !.....!
               "all over, own"                  "gone"

30.1   (1.7)
       !...........! !...............!
       "gone, nothing" ((change of scene, ready to act))

31          ngayu nha-gala-  (1.0)
            1sNOM that-INTENS
            So then I -
                    !..........!
                    "and then..."

32          nyulu galmba wanggamun baarrngay
            3sNOM also   top+ABL   shout-PAST
            So he shouted again from up above...
                      !............!
                       "from up"
```

33 wanhdharra mugur.
how uncle+ABS
"What shall we do, uncle?"
!..........!
"acting"

34 ngayu gurray eh ...
1sNOM say-PAST
I said, "Hey..."
!..........!
"that direction"

35 ganbarra (.6)
jump-IMP
"Jump in."
!..........!
"that side"

36 ngayu binaal nhaadhi
1sNOM know+ABS see-PAST
I knew, you see.
!........!
"knowing" ((measuring motion))

37 ngudhu maariilmul yarrba double (.6)
unable swim-PRIV this way
We couldn't swim double like this.
!..........! !........!
"together, side by side" "moving"

38 ngayu gurray nyundu yarrba ganbarra nagaalnggurr =
1sNOM say-PAST 2sNOM this way jump-IMP East-PROXLOC
I said, "You jump in there on the East side."
!..........!
"back that way"

39 =(1.6)
!..........! !..........!
((ready to act)) "jump in"

40 ngayu guwaalnggurr bira
1sNOM West-PROXLOC indeed
"And I'll really be on the West side."

40.1 (1.3) (.5)
!.....! !..........!
((pause)) "swimming, effort"

41 ngali dyibaarr
1duNOM South+ALL
So the two of us set out southwards.

41.1 (1.0)

```
                !...........!
                ((prepare to comment))

42              dagu yii ngadhun.gal fun nhaadhaadhi gurra
                thing here lsgADES         see-REF+PAST and
                I mean, it seemed like fun to me.
                         !......!  !......!
                          "me"      "nothing"

42.1            (1.0)
                !.......!
                "you follow?"

43              dagu- dagu ngayu used nhaadhi
                thing thing lsNOM      see-PAST
                You see, I was used to it.
                   !.........!
                    "swimming"

43.1            (1.8)
                !......!
                "set out" ((finger flick))

44              dyibarra maariilin
                South-ALL swim-PAST
                We swam southwards.
                     !...........!
                      ((storytelling))

*****

127             ngayu yarrba   gunggaarr nhaadhi
                lsNOM this way North+ALL see-PAST
                I looked that way towards the north.
                          !.......................
                             "turn to look..."

128             gulnguy nhaadhinhu, nhadhi
                boat+ABS see-PURP    see-PAST
                ..in order to see the boat, see?
                ............................!
                  "... looking up there"

129             buulga shark
                giant+NOM
                (There was) a huge shark
                        !..........!
                         "this big"

130             gagan that high wanggaar yuulili            ga
                fin+NOM           up       stand+REDUP+NONP PT
                fin standing that high!

131     r;      hmm
```

132 j; three feet of . gagan.gu wanggaar
fin-EMPH up
There were three feet of fin standing up
!.....!
"up and down"

133 dhumbuurrgu gunggaarr dhaday ngaliigu gaday
straight North+ALL go-PAST 1duNOM-EMP come-PAST
It was going straight north right where we had come.
!.....!
"straight that way"

134 (ha ha)

135 others; yuuu:

136 j; ngayu nhangu yarrba bagaalgay
1sNOM 3sACC this way poke+REDUP-PAST
I kept poking him this way.

137 I never seen him what he bin doin you see
!.....!
"him"

138 ngayu nhangu bagay, eh
1sNOM 3sGEN poke-PAST
I poked him (and said), "Hey..."
!....!
"poke"

139 eh
!.....!
"poke"

140 yarra gunggaarr nhaawaa
that North+ALL see+IMP
"Look yonder to the north!"
!.....!
"that way"

141 ngaana dhadaara
what+ABS go+REDUP+NONP
"What's that going along?"

142 ngayu nhangu yarrba bada nhaadhi .
1sNOM 3sACC this way down see-PAST
Then I looked down at him.
!.....!
"look down at him"

143 and nyulu dhirranggurr mangal yarrba garrbaadhi =
3sNOM old man hand+NOM this way hold-REF+PAST
and that old fellow had his hands clasped this way.

!.....!
"praying this way"

144 =ganaa budhu (.)
alright intensifier
that was all.
!.....!
"hard"

145 ha ngayuuugu haa:
lsgNOM-EMPH
Hah, as for me...
!.....!
((comment)) "myself"?

146 ngayuugu think-manaadhi
lsgNOM-EMPH think-become-PAST
Well I just thought...
!.....!
"strong"

147 bama ngayu thought-manaadhi
man lsNOM thought-become-PAST
Well, I thought...

148 muscle ngadhu wunay
lsGEN exist-PAST
I had my muscles..

149 ngadhu strength wunay . maariinhu .
lsGEN exist-PAST swim-PURP
I had my strength for swimming.

150 you could see that gulnguy just horizonbi =
boat+ABS horizon-LOC
You could just see that boat on the horizon.
!.....!
"on horizon, flat"

151 =gunggaalu black spot
NORTH-ALL/LOC
Like a black spot to the north.
!.....!
"spot"

152 t; mm

153 j; ganaa yanday
alright rise-PAST
OK, he got up.

154 nhangu Woibo-wi biiba
3sGEN Woibo-GEN father+NOM
Well, old Woibo's father...

155 dhana nhaadhi ngaliin dyibaarr gadaariga, nhaadhi
3pNOM see-PAST 1duACC South+ALL come+REDUP-PAST-SUB see-PAST
They saw the two of us coming south, see.
!.....!
"N to S motion"

156 madhi past-manaadhi
rain+ABS past-become-PAST
The rain had passed over.
!.....!
"stop"

157 and yuwalin nguumbaarr gudhiirra nhaadhi gadaariga
beach-LOC shadow+ABS two+ABS see-PAST come+REDUP-PAST-SUB
and they could see like two shaodows coming along the beach.
!.....! !.....!
"that way" "two, walking"

158 nyulu dhawuunh Woibongun yarrba nhaadhi
3sNOM friend+ABS Woibo-ERG this way see-PAST
Old Woibo saw (my) friend that way.
!.....! !.....!
"him - you know" "the one there ((his father))"

159 nyulu-
3sNOM
he-

160 nyuluugu gurray bula nhayun nguba guwa-dyandyi =
3sgNOM-EMPH say-PAST 3duNOM that+ABS perhaps sink+PAST
He thought to himself, "perhaps those two sank (the boat)."
!.....! !.....!
((posture: acting)) "might be"

161 =bula

162 nyulu nhayun nagaar miilgu wunaarnay
3sNOM that+ABS East+LOC eye+ABS-EMPH lie+REDUP-PAST
He was still awake, there to the East.
!.....!
"eyes open"

163 ngali naga gadaaray yi:
1duNOM East come+REDUP-PAST here
We came along to the East.
!.....!
"moving E"

164 nyulu margaan.gu gadaaray
3sNOM naked-EMPH come+REDUP-PAST
He was coming along totally naked.

165 ngayu nhangu dharrudha <2 wudhi nhangu

```
                1sNOM 3sDAT  trousers+ABS gave  3sGEN
                I gave him back his trousers.
                       !.........................!
                        "take trousers from neck"

166             <2 nagar     nagar yii 2>
                   East-ALL  East-ALL here
                   Farther and farther east...
                        !.........!
                        "motion E"

167             ngayu gurray, eh
                1sNOM say-PAST
                I said, "Hey..."
                        !.........!
                        ((acting))

168             dagu nyulu galmba
                thing 3sNOM also
                And also he was (there)...
                        !....!  !..........!
                        "who?"   "there" ((place? shop?))

169             old man yii Bowen he-
                        here
                This old man Bowen, he was...
                        !..........!
                        "there" ((his former house))

170             he's the boss
                      !.........!
                        "everything"

171             for all boats, you see
                        !......!   !.....!
                        "all"      "you follow?"

172     r;      mm

173     j;      ngayu gurray
                1sNOM say-PAST
                I said -

174             eh, gaari dhadii nhaway
                    NEG   go+IMP there
                "Hey, don't go over there."
                    !......! !.......!
                    "don't"   "there"

175             ngaliin gurraya
                1duACC  say-PRECUAT
                "He might scold us."

176             gadii nagaar
```

come-IMP EAST+ALL
"Come on towards the East."
!.....!
"back there"

177 nyulu nagaalu nyulu nhayun mayi baaway
3sNOM EAST-LOC 3sNOM that+ABS food cook-PAST
The one there on the East had cooked food.
!.....!
"him, there"

178 ready nhin.gaalnggay
sit+REDUP-PAST
It was already ready.
!.....!
"ready"

179 (who..)
!.....! !.....!
"approach door" ((acting))

180 yumurr
son or nephew
"Nephew!"
!.....!
((acting))

181 eh?
!...!
((other protagonist))

182 ngali
1duNOM
"We two (are here)."

183 ah?

184 nyulu nhayun straight away yarrba gurray
3sNOM that+ABS this way say-PAST
He immediately asked,
!.....!
"straight away"

185 eh, gulnguy guwa-dhanydyyi
boat+ABS sink-PAST
"What, did the boat sink?"

186 a guwa-dhandyi (..)
sink-PAST
"Yeah, it sank."
!.....!
((acting, waiting for response?))

187 mayi buday

food eat-PAST
WE ate our food.
!.....!
"food"

188 ngaliin dii nyulu wudhi
1duACC tea+ABS 3sNOM give+PAST
and he gave us some tea.
!........!
"giving"

189 dharrudha nyulu wudhi
trousers+ABS 3sNOM give+PAST
And he gave a pair of trousers.
!........!
"giving"

190 bama nyulu yabbarran galmba, nhaadhi /Woibo/
man 3sNOM giant also see-PAST
And he was a gigantic man, too, you know, old Woibo.
!.....!
"him"

191 murrga dharrudha birrbay budhu yabarraban
only trousers+ABS wear-PAST intensifier giant
He could only just tie the trousers on, they were so large.
!.....!
"put on trousers"

****

222 j; dagu whistle yiway bada wunaarnay
thing down lie+REDUP-PAST
Well, he had his whistle lying right there.
!.....!
"hanging up and down"

223 nhangu whistle
3sGEN
His whistle.
!.....!
"shape?"

224 scout whistle

225 t; mm

226 j; nhangu
3sDAT
!.....!
"hanging, take it?"

227 (peep)
!.....!

"blowing"

228 bidhagurr guwaar gaday
child-PLU WEST-LOC come-PAST
The kids on the west came out.
!........!
"coming to there" ((perspective))

229 bidhguurrnda gurray, eh
child-PLU-ERG say-PAST
The kids said, "Hey..."
!.......!
"him"

230 nhangu . Paddy .
3sDAT
(speaking to) Paddy..
!.....! !........!
"him" you know?"

231 nyulu in charge for dormitory-ngu nhaadhi
3sNOM dormitory-PURP see-PAST
...you see he was in charge of the dormitory.
!.........!
"thereabouts"

232 nhayun guwaar nhanu dhaawi . bama gudhiirra -
that+ABS WEST-LOC 2sACC call+PAST man two+ABS
That one on the west is calling you. But those two men...
!...........!
"those two"

233 -wanhu-budhu bula nhayun guwaar
who-INTENS 3duNOM that+ABS WEST-LOC
Who can they be, there in the West?

234 ngali guwaar
1duNOM WEST-LOC
We were in the West.

235 nyulu guwaamun gaday
3sNOM West-ABL come-PAST
He came over from the West.

236 them two silly fool there
!......!
"these" ((Muuni acting))

237 bula gulnguy guwa-dhandyii-mani
3duNOM boat+ABS drown-CAUS
The two of them sank the boat.
!.....!
"them"

238 bulaan mayi wuwaa
3duACC food give-IMP
Give the two of them some food.
!.......!
"just now, ordering"

239 take em back
!......!
"off"

240 it might be twelve o clock or 11 o clock, nhaadhi
!........! !......!
"after all" "after all"

John HAVILAND, Complex referential gestures,
Free notional translation of Jack Bambi,
"How the boat sank" with 'pointing gestures' marked

1 One side (of the boat) was flat, too.
2 One side of the boat --- the top part ...
3 all the logs came up from underneath and... {{ "up" motion
4 went up above. {{ "up"
5 That lifted it up. {{ "up"
6 Ho- I was a young fellow, I -- you know -- {{ "I"
8 Never fightened . nothing.
9 I jumped down. {{ "I", "down"
10 The stern was pointed this way, East. {{ "that way E"
11 I just had my trousers on, and..
12 that was all, and he also had his trousers. {{ "him" [head]
13 And the rest of those trousers were inside (the hold).
14 I kept holding on for a long time.
15 He shouted out from up on board.
16 "What shall we do, uncle?"
17 I said, "Hey..."
18 "We'll swim for it, nephew." {{"that way" [from boat]
19 But, what happened to the boat? Was it moving this way?
21 Well, the boat was lifted up; it went like this.
22 It began ...
23 to turn over.
24 I was stepping on one side of the boat.
25 He- I was down in the water
26 just fiddling around.
27 Well, all that pork, salted pork...
28 That fat..
29 It just kept floating away.
30 Those bananas down there --- bunches and bunches (of them). {{"down around"
31 So then I -
32 So he shouted again from up above... {{"down from above"
33 "What shall we do, uncle?"
34 I said, "Hey..."
35 "Jump in." {{"that way"
36 I knew, you see.
37 We couldn't swim double like this.
38 I said, "You jump in there on the East side." {{"that side E"
40 "And I'll really be on the West side."
41 So the two of us set out southwards.
42 I mean, it seemed like fun to me.
43 You see, I was used to it.
44 We swam southwards.
45 Well, out boat had sunk...
46 --well, the beach from there --- {{"that direction [from there]"
47 The water would just rise up like this {{"high like this"
49 You couldn't even see the beach to the south (over the waves). {{"that way"
50 Well mi- three mile and a half. {{"from here to there"
50.1 {{ "long way that direction"
51 We kept swimming south.
52 kept swimming.
53 He would keep coming closer like this. {{"relative distance"

54 And I would keep moving slightly westward.
56 (We) kept swimming.
57 Then the old fellow shouted out.
58 "Uncle!"
59 "I'm going to leave my trousers behind."
60 I mean, those trousers were heavy, thjose whatchamacallits...
61 .. moleskin ...
62 Yeah, moleskin --- no, those other ones, "fever" trousers.
63 You know, the wooly ones.
64 Blanket trousers
65 Oh, blanket
66 So.. "No, give them here!" {{"to me"
67 I took them.
68 and I tied them like this around my neck.
69 He kept swimming in just his shirt.
70 We kept swimming and swimnming.
71 "Uncle."
72 "I'm going to give it up now."
73 "Why?"
74 "I'm going to drown."
75 "Oh, no, no!"
76 "Your shirt --- take off your shirt."
77 He took off his shirt.
78 So I also tied on his shirt.
79 He just -
80 - stripped naked, see?
81 So, the water was deep?
82 Of course it was deep, I couldn't touch (bottom).
83 Of course its deep out there to the NOrth.
84 Three mile and a half.
85 We swam farther south.
86 We kept swimming and swimming...
87 I think you know -- nothing to me.
88 We kept swimming south...
89 Well, if nowadays you look that way, north, from Bala. {{"far that way" [from Bala]
90 There's a reef there.
92 That wave was going like this, see? {{"motion like that"
93 I was just able to touch that reef down (with me foot).
94 --- the top of it.
95 Well, I'm just a short person, but he was tall.
96 I said, "Hey, come here, nephew, what's this down here?"
98 He was able to stand on it, and I could stand on tip toes.
99 Well, it was a good distance from there south (to the shore). {{"long way here to there"
101 So I spoke this way to him, "Well, you okay?"
102 "Yeah, (I'm) okay."
103 "Let's go!"
104 "You go on that side." {{"keep away"
105 He kept coming closer (to me), see?
106 I (wanted to) keep him away from me.
107 I mean, he might grab me.
108 "You go that side."
108.1 {{[swimming hard] "that way" [hard]
109 So the two of us swam and swam and swam, southwards.
110 I had my own clothes, and my own body...

111 ..and HIS trousers and his shirt.
114 We kept going south... {{[swimming] "that way, far"
115 I tell you, when that man got to the south (to the beach)...
117 When he got to the south... {{arriving to there"
119 I mean, right up to the edge of the water.
121 He knelt down right there.
123 Well, I was down there...
124 I came without even thinking about it.
125 you know
126 Well, I just thought of swimming as fun.
127 I looked that way towards the north. {{"from there, that way"
128 ..in order to see the boat, see?
129 (There was) a huge shark
130 fin standing that high!
132 There were three feet of fin standing up
133 It was going straight north right where we had come. {{"straight that way"
136 I kept poking him this way.
137 I never seen him what he been doin, you see. {{"him down there"
138 I poked him (and said), "Hey..."
139 "Hey"
140 "Look yonder to the north!" {{"that one, that way"
141 "What's that going along?"
142 Then I looked down at him. {{"down [at him]"
143 and that old fellow had his hands clasped this way.
144 that was all.
145 Hah, as for me...
146 Well I just thought...
147 Well, I thought...
148 I had my muscles..
149 I had my strength for swimming.
150 You could just see that boat on the horizon.
151 Like a black spot to the north.
153 OK, he got up.
154 Well, old Woibo's father... {{"that one" [local space]
155 They saw the two of us coming south, see. {{"moving W from N" [perspective shift]
156 The rain had passed over.
157 and they could see like two shaodows coming along the beach.
158 Old Woibo saw (my) friend that way.
159 he-
160 He thought to himself, "perhaps those two sank (the boat)."
162 He was still awake, there to the East.
163 We came along to the East. {{"S, and SE" [corner of beach]
164 He was coming along totally naked.
165 I gave him back his trousers.
166 Farther and farther east...
167 I said, "Hey..."
168 And also he was (there)...
169 This old man Bowen, he was... {{[living] "there" [local space]
170 He's the boss
171 for all boats you see
173 I said -
174 "Hey, don't go over there."
175 "He might scold us."
176 "Come on towards the East." {{"that way E" [story space]

177 The one there on the East had cooked food.
178 It was already ready.
179 ("Who?")
180 "Nephew!"
181 "What?"
182 "We two (are here)."
183 "Ah?"
184 He immediately asked,
185 "What, did the boat sink?"
186 "Yeah, it sank."
187 WE ate our food.
188 and he gave us some tea.
189 And he gave a pair of trousers.
190 And he was a gigantic man, too, you know, old Woibo.
191 He could only just tie the trousers on, they were so large.
193 And then we set out East. {{"that way" [from there]
194 Well.
195 You see..
196 We had set out from Bala in the West about 6 o'clock.
198 WE set out walking, might have come to Elim about 9 o'clock.
199 We kept going East and East. {{"that way, long and far"
200 Old man Muuni was also unable to sleep.
202 He was just like that (i.e., awake).
203 He knew what day (to expect us), see?
204 When the boat was supposed to come.
206 So we went up (on his porch).
207 He went up.
208 ((knocks))
209 "Who is it?"
210 "It's us."
211 He immediately sang out:
212 "And (the things) from the boat?"
213 "The boat sank."
214 Why did he have to just go ahead and say it that way?
215 "You silly coon."
216 "You should have stayed on the boat." (ha ha ha) {{"that way N, from CB" [story space]
217 How should we have stayed on the boat, that place was full of...
218 alligator...
219 shark.
220 On the boat...
221 What does he mean you should have stayed on the boat?
222 Well, he had his whistle lying right there.
223 His whistle.
224 scout whistle.
227 ((peep))
228 The kids on the west came out.
229 The kids said, "Hey..."
230 (speaking to) Paddy.. {{"from there" [former house]
231 ...you see he was in charge of the dormitory.
232 That one on the west is calling you. But those two men...
233 Who can they be, there in the West?
234 We were in the West.
235 He came over from the West.
236 Them two silly fool there.

The two of them sank the boat.
Give the two of them some food.
Take em back.
It might be twelve o'clock or eleven o'clock, see?
At night?
At night.
We went back to the East.
We cooked food.
(he gave) us tea, my nephew---
Ganduulbi made us tea.
We ate.
And we all started to walk back.
You know Elim to Bala.
We saw the sun go down. {{"this way and that"
We been pass the night in walk.
back to the West.
Bala daylight.
And just as we were coming up to the place again.
Well, it was just at daybreak that we came to Bala again.
Yeah, I was there too.
Yeah, that's the time.
The boat was right there to the West.
Well, the boat was like that...
Yeah.
It had just split open right through like that.
Half this way
You see, the currents had carried it back.
He (Bartie) was there in the west.
He got all the food and the bananas.
They were all thrown about there in the West.
Thrown all about.
Couldn't find the clothes.
Couldn't find the meat.
The dingos had eaten it.
I mean, the whatsit-- the sharks (had eaten it).
Hre came there to the West.
He said to Woibo, joking, to Woibo...
To Woibo.
Woibo, this Willie's father.
Old man Woibo.
"Nephew,..."
"I'm going."
He said, "Where to?"
"I'm going West."
"No, don't go, don't go."
"Come on back to the East (with me)."
You see, he was reluctant (to go back).
I said, "Hey..."
"No, let's go back."
Well, we got all our things together.
Put them down, and went back East.

Well the old man, he...
..he gave us one day.

292 you know, to rest up.
293 Meanwhile, those there in the West...
294 well, when that all happened.
295 That animal, what's it called, came there.
296 Seagulls.
297 They came to the mission station to the West (at McIvor).
299 They said, "Hey..."
300 "Something must have happened."
301 "(You don't suppose) the boat sank?"
302 We stayed there awhile.
303 The next morning we went again.
304 and came to that place in the West.
305 We told them that the boat had sunk.
307 But old man Bowen, he..
308 you know, he was a carpenter.
310 Shipwright.
311 They went backl west again.
312 To fix that boat up again, in the west.
313 He fixed it and fixed it...
315 And we were still able to use that boat again.
316 ...to transport people.