

Twelve canoes (<http://www.12canoes.com.au>)

Language (5: 30). Listen to the feature. What are the main points?

- start The Great Creator's spirit sent the xxx sisters as created beings.
The two sisters travelled a'land.
They gave the people many things. One of them was language.
They would stop at one place and make a water hole,
and they would eat the food of that place.
When they ate that food they would talk the language of that place.
They would use that language to name all the different things in that country.
Then they would go to a different place and eat the food there,
and they would speak that different language.
That's how all the different places around here got their own different language.
Each clan has its own country, so each clan has its own language.
Some of the languages are only a bit different –
what you would call a dialect –
but some of the languages are more different than French is from English.
- 2:10 Our languages are very different from your language.
Our languages are about different things.
They are about a different way of living,
a different way of thinking.
Our words and structures describe a different universe.
You have many structures in your language that do not exist in our language.
That does not make our language simple.
We have a complex grammar, an intricate structure.
Many of our structures don't exist in your language.
We have different levels of language: inside and outside language,
restricted languages that are not known to everyone and are used for specific
occasions.
We sometimes have different words or even a whole different language to use
to speak to people in a certain relationship to us.
- 3:50 Our language is very important to us.
It defines who we are,
as an individual and as part of the clan.
It defines our territory, our country,
and all the things in that country.
Because all our languages are so important
most of us speak three or four languages,
and we know the dialects as well.
That's the way it's always been.
But now some of us know some English as well
though it does not work so well in our world,
for our culture and thinking.
That's why we like to keep speaking in our own languages.

Exercises

Iwaidja, Ilgar and **Maung** are languages of Iwaidjan language family from Northern Territory, Australia. Iwaidja and Maung are highly endangered languages spoken by only around 200 people each. Several languages are used in the region and the inhabitants are fluent in more than one language. The current generation of Iwaidja children and teenagers have either English or one of the stronger indigenous languages of the region as their first language. The last speaker of Ilgar died in September 2003.

Exercise 1

Listen to the recording in **Iwaidja**. The speaker uses words from another language when saying a message to his sons. Can you identify the other language? What might be the reason for borrowing words in this case? <http://languagesindanger.eu/map-html/en/ex-australia-iwaidjan.php>

Exercise 2

Study the Maung material given below and answer the questions.

yiniwun 'He hit him'

yinjawun 'She hit him'

yijniwun 'He hit her'

yijnjawun 'She hit her'

maniwun 'He hit it'

Question 1: How do you say 'She hit it' in Maung?

Question 2: If you were to translate **yiniwun** into English literally by order of appearance of the meaningful parts, the result would be:

a. 'He him hit'

b. 'Him he hit'

c. 'Him hit he'

Exercise 4

What is the meaning of **anmaryarwun**? Find the answer with the help of the following **Ilgar** material.

animaryarwun 'my father'

anjanmaryarwun 'my paternal aunt'

amaryarwun 'my son' (male speaker) or 'my brother's son' (female speaker)

animagan 'my husband'

anjanmagan 'my husband's sister'

amagan 'my wife's brother'

anmagan 'my wife'

aninlagbamijn 'my father's father'

anjanlagbamijn 'my father's father's sister'

alagbamijn 'my son's son' (male speaker) or 'my brother's son's son' (female speaker)

anjanlagbamijn 'my son's daughter' (male speaker) or 'my brother's son's daughter' (female speaker)

Exercise 3

The following are sample sentences from Iwaidja. What are the ways of expressing the concept 'mother' in this language?

1. Ngabi ngandu-wurraka-n, kamu.
1sg 3A>1sgObj-stare-NPst mother
'He's staring at me, mother.'

2. Nyui kabana-wun ngabi ngandu-wula-ng,
2sg 2sgA>3sgObjIRR-kill.NPst 1sg 3A>1sgObj-be.mother.to-PP

lda ngabi abana-wun nyui kundu-wula-ng!
and 1sg 1sgA>3sgObjIRR-kill.NPst 2sg 3A>2sgObj-be.mother.to-PP
'You kill my mother and I kill your mother!'

3. Ngabi ngandu-wula-ng karlu r-ahardalkbi-ny
1sg 3A>1sgObj-be.mother.to-PP NEG 3sg-be.born-PP
'Before my mother was born'

4. Ngabi kamu janad ka-wurakbu-ng
1sg mother 3sg 3sgObj.3sgFA-be.older.sibling.to-PP
'my mother's older sister'

Find answers to the exercises here:

<http://languagesindanger.eu/map-html/en/ex-australia-iwaidjan.php>