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## Case marking and grammatical relations: Pitjantjatjara

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Pitjantjatjara (IPA: [ˈpɪtʃaŋˈtʃaːrɑ]) is a Pama-Nyungan language spoken by about 3,000 people in the central desert region of Australia. The following data are from the central variety, presented in the standard orthography. Underlined consonants are retroflex. The digraphs *ly*, *ng*, *ny* and *tj* represent singleton consonants, however, knowing the precise pronunciations is not necessary to solve this problem. An entertaining overview of the Pitjantjatjara language, including pronunciation, can be found at: <http://www.ngapartji.org/> (by the way, this website will not help you solve this problem!).

Your tasks:

- A. Give the probable English translation for #38 and the Pitjantjatjara for #39.
- B. Describe the case marking system of Pitjantjatjara, giving a chart or charts of all the relevant forms. Be sure to take into account all variations, and make reasonable hypotheses as to whether the variations are based on form (morphophonemics) or function (genders). Give any evidence for your claims.
- C. Discuss whether and why the Pitjantjatjara case marking system is consistent or inconsistent with universal expectations.

Note: There is some intriguing verb morphology here, but the problem is concerned only with the case system.

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| 1. Ma <u>l</u> u ngalyapitjangu.<br>The kangaroo came.                         | 11. Tjiti ngurangka nyinangu.<br>The child sat in camp.                       |
| 2. Un <u>l</u> alpa pak <u>l</u> anu.<br>The daughter got up.                  | 12. Watingku ma <u>l</u> u wak <u>l</u> anu.<br>The man speared the kangaroo. |
| 3. Ngali ngalyapitjangu.<br>We (two) came.                                     | 13. Ma <u>l</u> ungku wati pirinu.<br>The kangaroo scratched the man.         |
| 4. Nyuntu pak <u>l</u> anu.<br>You (sg) got up.                                | 14. Pili <u>l</u> u ngayunya nyangu.<br>Pili saw me.                          |
| 5. Ampintu ma <u>l</u> u nyangu.<br>Ampin saw the kangaroo.                    | 15. Ngayulu minyma wa <u>l</u> anu.<br>I followed the woman.                  |
| 6. Nyuntu un <u>l</u> alpa kulinu.<br>You (sg) heard the daughter.             | 16. Ngayulu mirpa <u>l</u> aringu.<br>I became angry.                         |
| 7. Ma <u>l</u> ungku nyuntunya nyangu.<br>The kangaroo saw you (sg).           | 17. Nyuntu ngayunya nyangu.<br>You saw me.                                    |
| 8. Un <u>l</u> altu ngalinya kulinu.<br>The daughter heard us (two).           | 18. Minymangu nyuntunya nyangu.<br>The woman saw you.                         |
| 9. Ngali ma <u>l</u> u nyangu.<br>We (two) saw the kangaroo.                   | 19. Minyma mapitjangu.<br>The woman went away.                                |
| 10. Un <u>l</u> altu ma <u>l</u> u kulinu.<br>The daughter heard the kangaroo. | 20. Palu <u>l</u> u wati wa <u>l</u> anu.<br>She/he followed the man.         |

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| <p>21. Watingku palunya kulinu.<br/>The man heard him/her.</p> <p>22. Watingku Ampinnga yaltingu.<br/>The man called Ampin.</p> <p>23. Ampinnga paka<u>nu</u>.<br/>Ampin got up.</p> <p>24. Palu<u>ru</u> mapitangu.<br/>She/he went away.</p> <p>25. Ngana<u>na</u> nyinakatingu.<br/>We (pl) sat down.</p> <p>26. Ngana<u>na</u> un<u>ta</u>lpa yaltingu.<br/>We (pl) called the daughter.</p> <p>27. Ngali un<u>ta</u>lpa tja<u>pi</u>nu.<br/>We (2) asked the daughter.</p> <p>28. Watingku ngana<u>na</u>nya wa<u>na</u>nu.<br/>The man followed us (pl).</p> <p>29. Ampintu ngalinya yaltingu.<br/>Ampin called us (2).</p> <p>30. Nyura tji<u>tji</u> kulinu.<br/>You (pl) heard the child.</p> | <p>31. Pililu nyuranya nyangu.<br/>Pili saw you (pl).</p> <p>32. Tjana tji<u>tji</u> makatingu.<br/>They (pl) took the child away.</p> <p>33. Tji<u>tji</u>ngku tjananya pirinu.<br/>The child scratched them (pl).</p> <p>34. Tjana tji<u>tji</u>ngka nyinangu.<br/>They (pl) sat on the child.</p> <p>35. Ngayulu Pilinya nyangu.<br/>I saw Pili.</p> <p>36. Tjana paka<u>nu</u>.<br/>They got up.</p> <p>37. Pilinya mirpa<u>na</u>ringu.<br/>Pili got angry.</p> <p>38. Nyura paka<u>nu</u>.<br/>_____</p> <p>39. _____<br/>The child sat on the man.</p> |
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Reference:

Goddard, Cliff. 1996. *Pitjantjatjara/Yankunytjatjara to English Dictionary* [Revised 2nd edition]. Alice Springs: Institute for Aboriginal Development.