

How a Man Got off the Grog: A Dalabon ‘Family Problems’ Story

EVANS, Nicholas

School of Culture, History and Language, College of Asia and the Pacific, Australian National University / CoEDL

PAMKAL, Manuel

Top Didj Cultural Experience and Art Gallery

In this paper we present a glossed text in Dalabon from the Family Problems Picture Task as used in the SCOPIC project. Dalabon is a Gunwinyguan language of Arnhem Land, Australia, spoken by just a handful of people, including the second author, who was the one to produce this text. As well as a transcription, translation and interlinear glossing we include a number of notes on usage or special features.

Keywords: Dalabon, social cognition, SCOPIC, polysynthetic, Gunwinyguan, ‘Family Problems’ picture Task

1. Introduction
2. Data collection method
3. How a man got off the grog

1. Introduction*

Dalabon is a Gunwinyguan language of Western Arnhem, in the Northern Territory of Australia. Its status is fragile, with just a handful of fluent speakers left. Being scattered across a number of communities, including Weemol, Maningrida, Kunbarlanja, Wugularr, Barunga and Katherine, they have few opportunities to speak together. One of us, Manuel Pamkal, who is the narrator of the story we give here, is one of the few remaining fluent speakers.

Dalabon is a highly polysynthetic language, and verbal expressions like *ngeynarrinjakah* ‘to where the two of us (in opposing groups) met up’ or *bûlabuhborndokmurrimurridjkang* ‘because they have completely broken up his woomera (throwing stick).’ Glossed versions of these words can be found on pp. 760 and 761 of Evans (2017), which gives a grammatical sketch of the language for those readers wanting more additional information, and gives average figures of 7.35 morphemes per word based on two sample texts by

* We would like to thank the Australian Research Council for their funding support for this project, through the following projects: The SCOPIC project originated as a project funded by the Australian Research Council (*Language and Social Cognition: The Design Resources of Grammatical Diversity*, DP0878126), when the actual task was developed and many recordings made, and further supported through the ARC Research Centre for the Dynamics of Language (CoEDL), funded by the Australian Research Council (CE140100041) and the School of Culture History and Language, ANU College of Asia and the Pacific. We would also like to thank the ILCAA Joint Research Project “Research on Social Cognition Based on SCOPIC: the Social Cognition Parallax Interview Corpus” (2019–2021) for their helpful comments on an earlier version of the manuscript, and for offering us this opportunity to publish the story in this form.



different speakers. In addition to giving detailed information about their subject and object, verbs make extensive use of applicatives, reflexive and reciprocal marking, a complex system of tense, aspect and mood, noun incorporation, and many adverbial prefixes. Transitive subject forms of pronominal prefixes are distinct, for many person/number values, from those for intransitive subjects, although in the speech of Manuel and those of many who are equally or more fluent in Mayali (the local variety of Bininj Kunwok), there is often neutralisation of transitive and intransitive subject forms. Core NPs are generally not marked for case, through there is an optional ergative, formally identical to the instrumental, and some oblique cases (e.g. locative *-kah*); cases are marked by suffix to the final word of the NP. Possession is marked by possessor suffix on the possessed noun, but pronominal or nominal possessors, usually marked with the genitive *-kûn*, may modify them. (As in many other Australian languages, this is formally identical to the purposive case; it is a non-trivial analytic issue to decide whether this is polysemy or heterosemy, but to help the reader here we give separate glosses for each of these two uses).

The Dalabon phoneme inventory (with graphemes from the practical orthography in <> where they differ from standard symbols) is as follows: p , t <d>, t̪ <rd>, c <dj>, k <k>, m, n, ŋ <rn>, ɲ <nj>, ŋ <ng>, l, ɭ <rl>, r <rr>, ɻ <r>, w, j <y>, ʔ <h>, h <H>; a, e, i, o, u, i̯ <û>. As in most Australian languages voicing is not contrastive, but there is a short vs. long contrast in medial position, written in the practical orthography by doubling the grapheme.

There are only a few morphophonemic rules: underlying forms of morphemes virtually always surface directly, except for the optional reduction of *-yelûng-* to *-lng-*, and the flapping of /d/ to /r/ in some positions. This makes Dalabon morphology highly agglutinative and transparent, but removes some of the lines of evidence other languages provide (e.g. vowel-harmony, word-internal sandhi processes) for adjudicating on word-boundaries. Grammatical words are defined by the fixed order within them, which contrasts with the generally free order of words elsewhere in the grammar, though there are a number of intermediate cases where it is difficult to determine the boundaries between affixes and clitics (Evans 2013) and indeed there is considerable variation both within and across clitics. Also relevant is an ongoing innovation whereby pronominal prefixes (and some other prefixes) to the verb are sometimes separated by pause from the rest of the verb (Evans 2017), and if they are monosyllabic they may be prosodically integrated with the preceding word. This is conditioned by prosodic features of both the prefix and the verb (e.g. number of syllables, closed vs open syllable of prefix) and shows a lot of variation between speakers (Evans, Fletcher and Ross 2008); in Manuel's speech there are many examples, as will be seen from the text. Where this happens, an underscore will be used to indicate rejoinings and pauses. Thus the grammatical sequence *biy kahbon* 'man he.goes', if pronounced as *biykah bon*, will be written as *biy_kah bon*, and detached prefixes are simply written as if they were single words, e.g. if in saying the word *kahlngdökkang* 'then he woke up' the prefix sequence *kahlng* gets separated, it is just written as a single word — and sometimes this gets repeated another time, joined on to the verb, giving sequences like *kahlng kahlngdökkang*. 'then he... then he got up.'

Dalabon is a particularly rich language for the categories of social cognition that it

encodes through its grammar, particularly in the realms of kinship, benefactives, mood, and the tracking of who knows about or is attending to the event. For a full discussion, see Evans (2021), in the special SCOPIC edition of *Language Documentation and Conservation*. Where particularly relevant, cross-references to topics discussed in that article will be included in our text.

Each line of text is presented over four lines here:

- (a) ‘unbroken’ form, in Dalabon practical orthography, without division into glosses; hesitations are edited out here which means that sometimes there is material in line (b) without corresponding material in line (a). This is done since it represents the way Manuel would like to see the language written, with light editing
- (b) a version with morphemes divided by hyphens. Dalabon is largely agglutinative so in general there is one morpheme per chunk, except where several inflectional features are represented in a portmanteau (e.g. *da-* ‘2sgA>3sgO’)
- (c) a gloss line. Most glosses follow the Leipzig Glossing Rules; additional glosses are listed in the Appendix. Some morphemes are potentially ambiguous, due to the extensive syncretism found in the pronominal prefix system in particular (Evans, Brown and Corbett 2001) which means that a prefix like *dja-* can mean (a) 2sgS (b) 3sgA>2sgO (c) 1sgA>2sgO; in general we choose the gloss that makes sense in context.
- (d) a free translation line. Material in brackets is to fill out the meaning on the basis of pragmatic inference not made explicit in the Dalabon wording.

2. Data collection method

The text was recorded at Manbulloo station, just to the west of Katherine, on 17th January 2020, in response to the ‘Family Problems’ picture task (San Roque et al. 2012). The recording was made inside, with Nicholas Evans running the task (and adding prompts as helpful), and Amina Mettouchi operating the recording equipment (sound and video). As is standard for the task, the third-person narrative forms the third stage, after an initial stage where individual pictures were described, and a second stage where they are put into a coherent narrative order. In addition to the sound file accompanying this article, there is video version, filename ‘DAL20200117ManuelFamilyProblemsTopView.mov’, which will be lodged in PARADISEC and will enable cross-checking with the story cards, and any relevant gestures.

This is one of four recordings of Dalabon made in response to the task; none are totally ‘standard’ in the way they have been recorded, owing largely to the need to accommodate the difficulty of finding dyads of two fluent speakers in one place. In the text given here, the usual requirement of having another Dalabon speaker present could not be met, so it is a solo effort — though the first author, who speaks Dalabon reasonably well, acted as best as he could as a conversational partner. In any case, the very lively and dramatic rendition suggests that the lack of a second Dalabon speaker did not prevent Manuel from putting on a fluent and compelling storytelling performance.

Although the content of some of the cards is violent and confronting, to the point that it is not always appropriate to use this task for fear of provoking trauma, in this case (as in several other recordings that the first author has been made) the storyteller regarded it as a fairly standard life-situation, indeed one that recapitulates regrettable moments in his own life, and has expressed a wish — still not realised — that we may adapt his telling of the story for the Dalabon Youtube Channel, which features a range of Dalabon language material, e.g. on preparing ‘cheeky yams’, or commenting on the place where Manuel grew up, with bilingual subtitles in Dalabon and English. He sees it as a good way of dramatising the problems which alcohol can cause, through domestic violence and the damage that imprisonment does to family life, and as someone who has successfully conquered alcohol issues that afflicted him earlier in life he is keen to help others do the same.

The recorded material was then transcribed, by the two authors, using Elan software, with an initial transcription right after the recording, followed by checking sessions in January 2021.

3. How a man got off the grog

Preliminary check

(1) I holdim or kahmon?

i *hold-im* or *ka-h-mon*
 1sgs hold-TR or 3sg-R-good
 ‘Will I hold it or is it OK?’

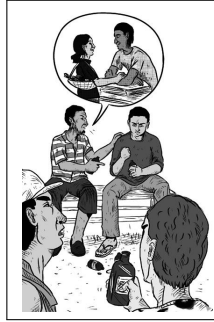


Sitting drinking

(2) Nūnda balahyenjdjung dawo.

nūnda *bala-h-yenjdju-ng* *dawo*
 DEM:PROX 3pl-R-talk-PR story
 ‘Here they are talking.’

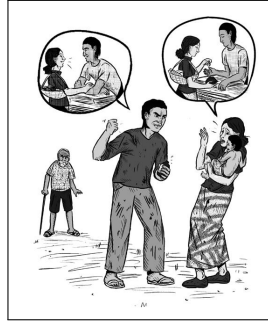
- (3) Bûlahkolhngun wah.
*bûla-h-kolhngu-n wah*¹
 3plA>3sgs-R-drink-PR grog
 ‘They’re drinking grog.’



Drunken gossip

- (4) Nûnda mah,
nûnda mah
 DEM:PROX next
 ‘And this one,’
- (5) kahdjakolhngun wah,
ka-h-dja-kolhngu-n wah
 3sgA-R-just-drink-PR grog
 ‘he’s drinking grog,’
- (6) bah kahyininj,
bah ka-h-yin-inj
 but 3sgs-R-say-PP
 ‘but he said,’
- (7) “Ngahdudjmiyan kirdikirdngah,
nga-h-dudjm-iyân kirdikird-ngan-kah
 1sgs-R-return-FUT wife-1sgPOSSR-LOC
 ‘‘When I go back to [my] woman,’’
- (8) yarrahlngdurruniyan.”
yarra-h-lng-du-rr-uniyan
 1du-R-SEQ-SCOLD-RR-FUT
 ‘we’re going to have a fight.’”

¹ *Wah* can mean either ‘water’ or ‘grog’ (i.e. any form of alcohol), and is given the appropriate translation here.



About to hit

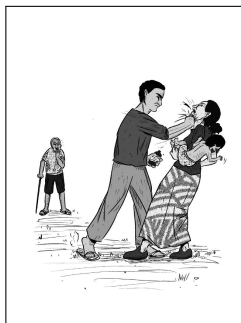
- (9) Kahdudjminj waddanokah.
ka-h-dudjmi-nj wadda-no-kah
 3sgs-R-return-PP home-3sgPOSSR-LOC
 ‘He went back to his home.’
- (10) Kahnûnh kirdikird,
kahnûnh kirdikird
 DEM woman
 ‘That woman,’
- (11) duwayno biyahmarnûyininj,
duway-no biya-h-marnû-yin-inj
 husband-3sgPOSSR 3sgA>3sg.HO-R-BEN-SAY-PP
 ‘her husband said to her,’
- (12) “Ngahkolhnguyan ke wah,
nga-h-kollngu-yan ke wah
 1sgA-R-drink-FUT ASSERT grog
 ‘“Well, I’m going to go out drinking,’
- (13) wulkunngandorrung,
wulkun-ngan=dorrung
 younger.bro-1sgPOSSR-with
 ‘with my younger brother,’
- (14) djaburlhngan,
djaburlh-ngan
 uncle.in.law²-1sgPOSSR
 ‘my uncle-in-law,’

² This kin term covers a range of affinal kin, including (for male ego) one’s wife’s mother and wife’s mother’s brother. It is in this second sense that is intended here, and we translate it as ‘uncle-in-law’ since he is the uncle of his wife.

- (15) *kakkakngan yalahkolhnguyan wah, kahban ke.*
kakkak-ngan yala-h-kolhngu-yan wah Ka-h-ba-n ke
 father's.father-1sgPOSSR 1pla-R-drink-FUT grog 2sgA>1sgo-R-leave-IMP ASSERT
 'and my grandfather, we'll get drunk, just leave me alone.'
- (16) *Kirdikirdno kahyininj: "Kahwehno ke*
kirdikird-no ka-h-yin-inj Ka-h-wehno ke
 wife-3sgPOSSR 3sgs-R-say-PP 3sg-R-bad ASSERT
 'His wife said: "That's no good, you know.'
- (17) *djahmarnûwarndi dahkolhban nûnh wah.*
dja-h-marnû-warndi³ da-h-kolh-ba-n nûnh wah
 1sgA>2sgo-R-BEN-not.want 2sgA>3sgo-R-liquid-leave-IMP DEM:PROX grog
 'I don't like you drinking grog.'
- (18) *Djehwurdurddorrung.*
dje-h-wurdurd-dorrung
 12diss⁴-R-child-COM
 'You and I've got a kid.'
- (19) *Kenbo biyahlngarlbakdalhminj.*
kenbo biya-h-Ing-ngarlbak-dalhminj
 then 3sgA>3sg.HO>SEQ-jaw-punch-PP
 'Then he punched her in the jaw.'

³ This is an interesting construction. To express 'want to do' in Dalabon, there are three structural possibilities, depending on whether the person wanting is conjoint, disjoint, or overlapping with the subject of the desired action (Evans 2006, 2021:47–48). In the disjoint case, the verb of wanting takes the benefactive applicative and is indexed for both the person wanting (as subject) and the subject of the desired action (as indirect object), then followed by a finite verb depicting the desired action; the close constructional integration of the two clauses suggests it should be treated as a complementation construction. That is basically the construction used here, except that (a) the verb is *warndi* 'not want' instead of *djare* 'want', and (b) the second verb represents what the person wants to happen, not what they want not to happen.

⁴ Even though earlier descriptions of Dalabon (Alpher 1982) describe the 'disharmonic' pronominal prefix as focussed on kin who are separated by an odd-number of generations (e.g. parent-child), there appears to have been a semantic shift to using it specifically for spousal dyads (or lovers), even though they count as being in the same generation. See Evans (2021:45–6).



Hitting

- (20) Nunh wurdurd,
nunh wurdurd
 DEM:PROX kid
 'That kid,'

- (21) nunh wurdurdno,
nunh wurdurdno
 DEM:PROX child-3sgPOSSR
 'her child,'

- (22) kahrurun.
ka-h-ruru-n
 3sgs-R-cry-PR
 'He's crying.'



Taken by police

- (23) Kenbo,
kenbo
 then
 'Then,'

- (24) *kirdikirdno kahngdirnikang.*
kirdikird-no ka-h-Ing-dirnika-ng
 wife-3sgPOSSR 3sgs-R-SEQ-sit.down-PP
 ‘his wife sat down (in pain).’
- (25) *Nadjamorro mah barrahbong bard duwayno*
nadjamorro mah barra-h-bo-ng bard duway-no
 policeman next 3du.harm-R-go-PP grab! husband-3sgPOSSR
 ‘And two policemen came and grabbed her husband’
- (26) *Barrahngyirrinjkang.*
barra-h-Ing-yirrinjka-ng
 3du.harMA>3sgo⁵-drag-PP
 ‘And they dragged him off (to the paddywagon).’
- (27) *bûrrah-kang nahda baddunkah.*
bûrra-h-ka-ng nahda baddun-kah
 3du.dISA>3sgo-R-take-PP DEM cell⁶-LOC
 ‘They took him there into the cell.’
- (28) *rurrk... rurrkurdkah ke rurrkno.*
rurrk⁷-urd-kah ke rurrk-no
 cell-small-LOC ASSERT cell-3sgPOSSR
 ‘in that little cell, yeah.’
- (29) *Nûnda mah kahng, kahng*
nûnda mah ka-h-Ing⁸ ka-h-Ing
 DEM:PROX next 3sgs-R-SEQ 3sgs-R-SEQ
 ‘And then he, he...’

⁵ While some more traditional speakers distinguish disyllabic transitive prefixes with third singular objects from the corresponding intransitive prefixes: *bûrra-* ‘3du.harmonicA>3sgO’ but *barra-* ‘3du.harmonicS’. See Evans, Brown and Corbett (2001). Manuel makes this distinction sometimes (see line (27) for an example of *bûrra-*) but not always (e.g. line (26)).

⁶ The basic meaning of the stem *baddun-* is ‘rock cave’ but it often gets extended to mean ‘room; prison cell’.

⁷ *Rurrk* is actually a root from the related language Mayali (a variety of Bininj Kunwok), which Manuel also speaks, more often than he speaks Dalabon, and corresponds to *dun* in Dalabon.

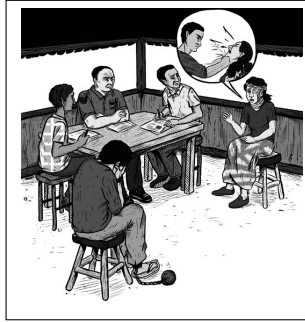
⁸ This is an example of the phenomenon, mentioned in the introduction to this article, where verbal prefixes become ‘detached’ in certain prosodic conditions, such as pausing in this case while the main verb is planned. This feature is common in Manuel’s speech.



Thinking about goal

- (30) *kahlngdokkang kahlng*
ka-h-Ing-dokka-ng ka-h-Ing
 3sgs-R-SEQ-wake-PP 3sgs-R-SEQ
 'he woke up then and he'
- (31) *kurnh... bengkabengkang kahlngkurnhbenghbengkang.*
kurnh bengkabengkang ka-hl-ng-kurnh-benghbengkang
 place REDUP-think-PP 3sgs-R-SEQ-place-REDUP-think-PP
 'he was thinking and thinking about home.'
- (32) *kahbengdi.*
ka-h-bengdi
 3sgs-R-thinkPR
 'He's thinking.'⁹
- (33) *Kenbo mah balahmarnûyininj.*
kenbo mah balah-marnû-yin-inj
 then next 3plA>3sgo-R-BEN-say-PP
 'Then they said to him.'

⁹ The two verbs *bengkan* and *bengdi* both include 'think' in their meaning range, but the first focusses on longer-term mental states (and can also sometimes be translated as 'contemplate', 'believe' or 'know'), while the second focusses on immediate awareness (and can also be translated as 'attend to, become aware of, recall'). See Evans (2007) for detailed discussion of these two verbs. Here the use of both (including reduplicated forms of *bengkan*) covers both the long-term cogitations of the prisoner in the cell, and the ideas he is having at a particular moment.



In court

- (34) *nadjamorrngong*.
nadjamorro-ngong
 policeman-PL
 ‘All the courthouse mob.’
- (35) “*Manjhkenhkunmah, manjhkenhkunmah wah dahkolhnguhkolhngun?*
manjhkenhkunh¹⁰-mah manjhkenhkunh-mah wah da-h-kolhnguh-kolhngu-n
 why-RES why-RES grog 2sgA>3sgO-R-DUR-drink-PR
 ‘‘Why oh why, why oh why are you drinking and drinking grog?’’
- (36) *Kahwehno*
ka-h-wehno
 3sgS-R-bad
 ‘It’s bad.’
- (37) *Kirdikirdngu*.
kirdikird-ngu
 wife-2sgPOSSR
 ‘(think about) your wife.’
- (38) *Narra-h-yidjnja-n ke wurdurdwurd!*
narra-h-yidjnja-n ke wurdurdwurd
 2duA>3sgO-R-have-PR ASSERT kid
 ‘And you have got a kid!’
- (39) *Mak nunh dahlngmarnûkolhngukolhnguyan wurdurdngu*.
mak nunh da-h-Ing-marnû-kolhngu-kolhngu-yan wurdurd-ngu
 NEG DEM:PROX 2sgA>3sgO-R-SEQ-BEN-DUR-drink-FUT kid-2sgPOSSR
 ‘You shouldn’t be drinking, for your kid’s sake.’

¹⁰ *Manjkeninjh* is a more conservative forms of this word for ‘why’.

- (40) Beyngu ke kahlngrarriminj.”

bey-ngu ke ka-h-Ing-rarrim-inj
 son-2sgPOSSR ASSERT 3sgs-R-SEQ-grow.up-PP

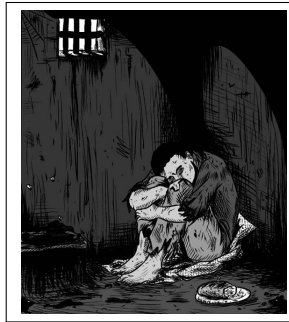
‘Your son’s grown up now (so you should think about him).’”

- (41) Kenbo.

kenbo

then

‘Then.’



Alone in the cell

- (42) Kahdjalngdudjminj baddunwurdkah.

ka-h-dja-Ing-dudjm-inj baddun-wurd-kah
 3sgs-R-just-SEQ-return-PP cell-DIM-LOC

‘He went back into the little cell.’

- (43) Nûnda nunh kahlngebngdibengdi kahbengdi.

nûnda nunh ka-h-Ing-bengdi-bengdi ka-h-bengdi
 DEM:PROX DEM:PROX 3sgs-R-SEQ-DUR-thinkPR 3sgs-R-thinkPR

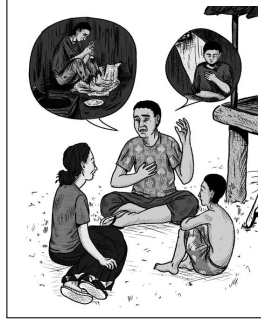
‘Here is thinking and thinking.’¹¹

¹¹ MP comment on re-listening: ‘Like thinking about what they told him in the court house’



Thinking of home

- (44) Nûnda mah, kahdjabengdi.
nûnda mah ka-h-dja-bengdi
 DEM:PROX next 3sgs-R-just-thinkPR
 ‘Well here, he’s just thinking.’
- (45) “Ngale bordokngan wurdurdngan bunu ngahbawong kirdikirdngan.
ngale bordokngan wurdurd-ngan bunu nga-h-bawo-ng
 hey geez child-1sg POSSR3du 1sgA>3sgo-R-leave-PP
kirdikird-ngan
 wife-1sgPOSSR
 “‘Hey I shouldn’t have left my son and my wife.’
- (46) Manjkerninjh mah ngahlngyinmiyan?
manjkerninjh mah nga-h-lng-yin-miyan
 what next 1sgs-R-SEQ-do-FUT
 ‘What’m I going to do? [That thinking now for that feller]’
- (47) Kardu wah ngahlngkolhbawoyan.”
kardu wah nga-h-lng-kolh-bawo-yan
 maybe grog 1sgA>3sgo-R-SEQ-drink-leave-FUT
 ‘Maybe I’m going to stop drinking.’”
- (48) Nûnda nunh kirdikirdno.
nûnda nunh kirdikird-no
 DEM:PROX DEM:PROX wife-3sgPOSSR
 ‘This is his wife.’
- (49) beyno.
bey-no
 (man’s)son-3sgPOSSR
 ‘His son.’



Family talking together

- (50) bukirrinokah,
bukirri-no-kah
 dream-3sgPOSSR-LOC
 ‘In his dream,’
- (51) Bunu kahyinmowoyan dawo.
bunu ka-h-yinmowo-yan dawo
 3du 3sgA-R-tell-FUT story
 ‘He’ll tell the two of them a story.’
- (52) “Ngahlngyolhmon
nga-h-lng-yolh-mon
 1sgs-R-SEQ-feeling-good
 “‘I feel good now’
- (53) Nunh mak ngahlngkolhmiyan mah wah.
nunh mak nga-h-lng-kolh-m-iyah mah wah
 DEM:PROX NEG 1sgA>3sgO-R-SEQ-drink-get-FUT next grog
 ‘Now that I won’t drink grog any more.’
- (54) Norr ngahlngnaHniyan.
norr nga-h-lng-naHn-iyah
 2du 1sgA>3sgO-R-SEQ-watch-FUT
 ‘I’ll keep an eye on you (i.e. look after you).’
- (55) Ngarrahlngningiyan.”
ngarra-h-lng-ni-ngiyan
 12pl-R-SEQ-sit-FUT
 ‘We’ll just down quiet now.’”

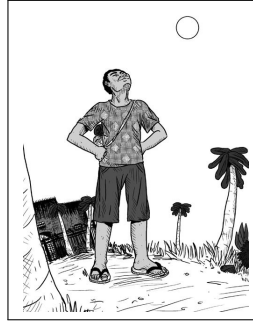
- (56) Kenbo.
kenbo
 then
 ‘Then.’



Receiving clothes

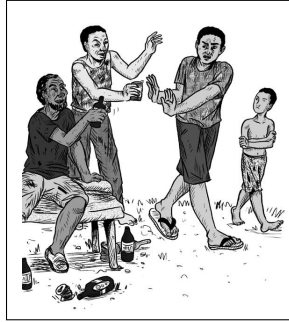
- (57) Nadjamorro biyahmarnûyininj “Nidjarrabay, madjngu.
nadjamorro biya-h-marnû-yin-inj Nidjarrabay madj-ngu
 policeman 3sgA>3sg.ho-R-BEN-say-PP here clothes-2sgpossr
 ‘the policeman said to him “Here, your clothes.’
- (58) Nunh dahlngburlhmiyankuno.
nunh da-h-lng-burlhm-iyankuno
 DEM:PROX 2sg¹²-R-SEQ-get.OUT-FUT-TEMP
 ‘When you get out.’
- (59) Mak mah dahlngkolhnguyan wah.
mak mah da-h-lng-kolhngu-yan wah
 NEG next 2sgA>3sgo-R-SEQ-drink-FUT grog
 ‘Don’t go drinking grog.’
- (60) Dahlngkolhban”
da-h-lng-kolh-ban
 2sgA>3sgo-R-SEQ-liquid-leave-IMP
 ‘Leave that grog.’”

¹² The prefix *dahlng-* here is unexpected, since it usually indicates the 2sg subjects of transitive verbs; one would have expected *djahlngburlhmiyankuno* which uses the intransitive-subject form.



Standing in light

- (61) Nûnda mah kahngburlhminj.
nûnda mah ka-h-Ing-burlhm-inj
 DEM:PROX next 3sgs-SEQ-emerge-PP
 ‘Here is, he’s come out.’
- (62) Kahyininj “Bordokngan, mudda ngahngnan nûnda,
ka-h-yin-inj Bordokngan mudda nga-h-Ing-na-n nûnda
 3sgs-R-say-PP WOW sun 1sga>3sgo-R-SEQ-SEE-PR DEM:PROX
 ‘He said “Oh man, now I can see the sun,’
- (63) dulhngong.”
dulh-ngong
 tree-PL
 ‘all the trees.’”
- (64) Kahyininj “Ngale!
ka-h-yi-ninj ngale
 3sgs-R-say-PP hey
 ‘He said “Hey!’
- (65) Ngahngdudjmiyan kirdikirdngan
nga-h-Ing-dudjm-iyen kirdikird-ngan
 1sgs-R-SEQ-return-FUT wife-1sgpossr
 ‘I’ll go back to my wife’
- (66) kirdikirdngankah.”
kirdikird-ngan-kah
 wife-1sgpossr-LOC
 ‘to my wife.’”
- (67) Kahbong.
ka-h-bo-ng
 3sgs-R-go-PP
 ‘He went.’



Refusing drink

- (68) *Biyko barrah... barrahkolhnguninj wah*
biy-ko barra-h- barra-h-kollngu-ninj wah
 man-DU 3dus-R- 3dus-R-drink-PI grog
 'Two young men were drinking grog'
- (69) *Barrahyininj "Nidjarra-bay, woy, woy.*
barra-h-yin-inj nidjarra-bay woy woy
 3dus-R-say-PP this.way come come
 'They said: "Come here, come, come.'
- (70) *bubay.*
bubay
 here.you.are
 'Here you are.'
- (71) *kardû wah dah...kolhnguyan!"*
kardû wah da-h kolhnguyan
 maybe grog 2sgA>3sgo.R... drink-FUT
 'You might want to have a drink.'
- (72) *Kahyininj "Kahke*
ka-h-yin-inj kahke
 3sgs-R-say-PP no
 'He said "No'
- (73) *ngahwarndih.*
nga-h-warndih
 1sgs-R-not.want
 'I don't want any.'

- (74) Mak ngahlngkolhnguyan ngahlngdudjmiyan nahda waddakah
wurdurndgandorrunggh.”

mak nga-h-lng-kolhngu-yan nga-h-lng-dudjm-iyen nahda wadda-kah
NEG 1sgA>3sgO-R-SEQ-drink-FUT 1sgS-R-SEQ-return-FUT DEM home-LOC

wurdurd-ngan-dorrunggh

kid-1sgPOSSR-COM

‘I won’t drink anything, I’m going to go home with my kid.’”

- (75) Nûnda, nûnda beywurdno.

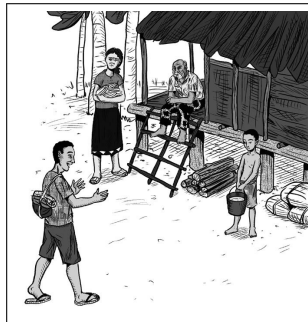
nûnda nûnda bey-wurd-no
DEM:PROX DEM:PROX SON-child-3sgPOSSR

‘This one, this is his son.’

- (76) Nûnda buluno

nûnda bulu-no
DEM:PROX father-3sgPOSSR

‘Here’s his father’¹³



Homecoming

- (77) kirdikirdno.

kirdikird-no
wife-3sgPOSSR
‘his wife.’

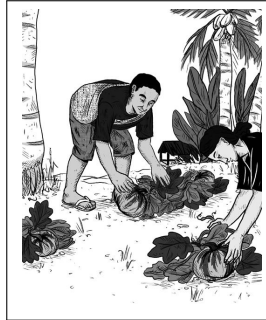
- (78) Nûnda biy kanunh

nûnda biy kanunh
DEM:PROX man DEM.ID

‘This man’

¹³ On listening back at this point, MP commented ‘Maybe his mother passed away, only his father’ [was still alive].

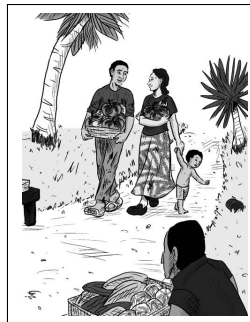
- (79) kahburlhminj baddunwurdkah.
ka-h-burlhm-inj baddun-wurd-kah
 3sgs-R-emerge-PP cave-little-LOC
 ‘has come out from the cell.’
- (80) Nûnda wurd beywurdno.
nûnda wurd bey-wurd-no
 DEM:PROX kid son-child-3sgPOSSR
 ‘That kid is his son.’
- (81) Barrahngkarrayolhmon barrahyenjujung dawo balahyenjdjung.
barra-h-Ing-karra-yolh-mon barra-h-yenjju-ng dawo bala-h-yenjju-ng
 3dus-R-SEQ-all-feeling-good 3dus-R-SEQ-talk-PR story 3dus-R-talk-PR
 ‘They’re feeling good, they’re yarning.’
- (82) Nûnda yibûng mah kahlngbong.
nûnda yibûng mah ka-h-Ing-bo-ng
 DEM:PROX 3sgEMPH next 3sgs-R-SEQ-go-PP
 ‘Here he’s gone.’



Garden together

- (83) meyngong kahngmang.
mey-ngong ka-h-Ing-ma-ng
 food-PL 3sgs-R-SEQ-get-PR
 ‘and is getting food.’
- (84) Kardu
kardu
 maybe
 ‘Maybe’

- (85) kahlngyolhmon.
ka-h-lng-yolh-mon
 3SGS-SEQ-feeling-good
 'he's feeling good now.'
- (86) mak mah kahlngkolhngun wah kahke.
mak mah ka-h-lng-kolhngun wah kahke
 NEG RES 3SGS-SEQ-drink-PR grog nothing
 'He's not drinking grog at all, nothing.'
- (87) kirdikirdno kahyolhmon.
kirdikird-no ka-h-yolh-mon
 wife-3SGPOSSR 3SGS-R-feelings-good
 'His wife is happy.'
- (88) wurdurdno, buluno.
wurdurd-no bulu-no
 kid-3SGPOSSR father-3SGPOSSR
 'his kid and his father.'
- (89) Nûnda mah balahlngdudjmu waddakah.
nûnda mah bala-h-lng-dudjm-u wadda-kah
 DEM:PROX next 3PLS-R-SEQ-return-PR home-LOC
 'They're going home.'



Walking together

- (90) meyngong balahmey.
meyngong bala-h-me-y
 food-PL 3PLA>3SGO-get-PP
 'They've got vegetables.'

- (91) nunh kahlngyolhmon.
nunh ka-h-lng-yolh-mon
 DEM:PROX 3sgs-SEQ-feelings-good
 ‘He’s happy now.’
- (92) kirdikirdno nidjarra wurdurdno kahlng
kirdikird-no nidjarra wurdurd-no kahlng
 wife-3sgPOSSR here kid-3sgPOSSR 3sgs-SEQ-
 ‘His wife here, and his kid, he’s...’
- (93) balahngmon.
bala-h-lng-mon
 3pls-R-SEQ-good
 ‘they’re good.’
- (94) Nûnda mah biy
nûnda mah biy
 DEM:PROX next man
 ‘This man here’
- (95) kahdjani bulu kahnanHnan balahbobon.
kahdjani bulu ka-h-nanHna-n bala-bobo-n
 3sgs-R-just-sit 3pl 3sgs-watch-PR 3pls-walk-PR
 ‘is just sitting watching them walking past.’
- (96) kahlngngurdkarrinj
ka-h-lng-ngurdka-rr-inj
 3sgs-SEQ-make.quiet-RR-PP
 ‘He’s just gone quiet’¹⁴
- (97) ngurd.
ngurd
 quiet
 ‘quiet.’
- (98) Mah bonj.
mah bonj
 next finished
 ‘That’s it.’

¹⁴ On relistening, MP commented ‘like minding his own business’.

- (99) Ka-h-mon.
ka-h-mon
 3sgs-R-good
 ‘OK.’

Abbreviations (not listed in Leipzig glossing rules)

A	transitive subject	PI	past imperfective
ASSERT	assertive	POSSR	possessor
DEM.ID	demonstrative (identifiable)	PP	past perfective
dis	disharmonic (see Evans 2021:44–48)	PR	present
EMPH	emphatic	R	realis
h	higher or human object (just in combinations 3sg > 3sg)	REDUP	reduplication
harm	harmonic (see Evans 2021:44–48)	RES	restrictive
ho	human object	RR	reflexive/reciprocal
o	object	S	intransitive subject
		SEQ	sequential
		TEMP	temporal
		TR	transitiviser

Ideophones like *bard* ‘representing grabbing or snatching’ are glossed with an exclamation mark, e.g. ‘grab!’

References

- Alpher, Barry. 1982. “Dalabon dual-subject prefixes, kinship categories and generation skewing”. In Heath, Jeffrey and Francesca Merlan and Alan Rumsey (eds.) *Languages of Kinship in Aboriginal Australia*. Sydney: Oceania Linguistic Monographs 24. pp.19–30.
- Evans, Nicholas. 2006. “Who said polysynthetic languages avoid subordination? Multiple subordination strategies in Dalabon”. *Australian Journal of Linguistics*. 26(1). pp.31–58.
- Evans, Nicholas. 2007. “Standing up your mind: Remembering in Dalabon”. In Amberber, Mengistu (ed.) *The Language of Memory in a Crosslinguistic Perspective*. Amsterdam: John Benjamins. pp.67–95.
- Evans, Nicholas. 2013. “Instability in stability: Therapeutic periphrasis in the Dalabon verbal prefix paradigm”. *Proceedings of the British Academy*. 180. pp.53–76.
- Evans, Nicholas. 2017. “Polysynthesis in Dalabon”. In Fortescue, Michael, Marianne Mithun and Nicholas Evans (eds.) *The Oxford Handbook of Polysynthesis*. Oxford: Oxford University Press. pp.759–781.
- Evans, Nicholas. 2021. “Social cognition in Dalabon”. In Barth, Danielle and Nicholas Evans (eds.) *Language Documentation and Conservation Special Publication No. 12. Social Cognition Parallax Interview Corpus (SCOPIC)*. Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press. pp.22–84.
- Evans, Nicholas, Dunstan Brown and Greville Corbett. 2001. “Dalabon pronominal prefixes and the typology of syncretism: A Network Morphology analysis”. *Yearbook of Morphology* 2000. pp.187–231.
- Evans, Nicholas, Janet Fletcher and Belinda Ross. 2008. “Big words, small phrases: Mismatches between pause units and the polysynthetic word in Dalabon”. *Linguistics* 46(1). pp.87–127.
- San Roque, Lila, Lauren Gawne, Darja Hoenigman, Julia Colleen Miller, Alan Rumsey, Stef Spronck, Alice Carroll and Nicholas Evans. 2012. “Getting the story straight: Language fieldwork using a narrative problem-solving task”. *Language Documentation and Conservation* 6. pp.135–174.