

Translation of series 50

Role of NLC Council, executive and Elections

The research for these Radio Programs was undertaken by Yolŋu co-producers in their home communities. These Yolŋu co-producers were also the very Yolŋu people who usually fill the role of interpreters in government meetings and community court sessions. Their level of confusion around many of the academic English words and contemporary issues is deeply concerning and shows why most government programs fail due to poor communication and lack of access to information for these First Australians.

Yolŋu Researchers/Co-Producers:

Mainstream English First Language

Producers:

- | | |
|-----------------------|-------------------|
| - Maratja Dhamarandji | - Richard Trudgen |
| - Nikunu Yunupingu | - Timothy Trudgen |
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| - Djiniyini Gondarra | |

It's important to understand that Yolŋu people speak English as a fifth or sixth language and English is still an uncharted language for them. Consequently, many questions that come from the community will revolve around the confusion Yolŋu people have about understanding academic/intangible English words and concepts, together with their very traumatic interface experience with the broader Australian community. This reality leaves most Yolŋu feeling as though their culture, language and way of life is inferior to mainstream dominant Australian people and culture.

The radio program/podcasts below reflect this lived reality and offers mainstream readers a rare opportunity to glimpse some of the real issues facing Yolŋu people. The production of these radio programs has also offered the Yolŋu researchers/co- producers, and their community, the first in a lifetime opportunity to gain answers and clarity regarding many of the subjects raised, in their own language.

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INTRODUCTION

Even though I have spent over 40 years working with Yolŋu exploring many subjects I was still shocked to see the depth of the confusion that emerged for my Yolŋu colleagues as we discussed potential topics for these radio programs/podcasts. When the levels of confusion

become apparent it's little wonder that the Gap is not closing. Little is achieved through most government programs, despite all the money and effort that goes towards them. How can it be expected that Yolŋu people will respond like others in the mainstream when they have no access to information in a language they can understand? Information is power so the lack of information has to be powerlessness.

At last they are now able to get real information in a consistent way, allowing some of the veil of confusion to be lifted across the Yolŋu lands.

Programs produced around these subject headings go to air on Yolŋu Radio and on

<https://www.djambatjmarram.com/>

Richard Trudgen,

Podcasts number 1 Role of NLC council and executive 283

NY: Yo Wamut.

RT: Yo Waku gu

NY: one thing I'd like to ask you. Like yesterday we were talking about the full Council for the Northern Lands Council. Now I'd like to see what is the role or what is it for, the executive?

RT: the executive Yo.

NY: for the executive.

RT: There are 9 people on the executive. One from each region. So there's one from Borroloola Barkly region. One from Darwin Daly Wagait region. One from East Arnhem Land. One from West Arnhem Land. One from Ngukurr. One from Victoria River. And one from the Katherine region. So that takes up 7 on the executive. And the Regional Councils probably send who they want on the executive. And then there's the chairman and deputy chairman from the full Council. So the full Council has a chairman and a deputy chairman and those 2 also joined the executive Council. And your question was what they do?

NY: yeah what is it that they do?

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RT: well it's very hard to get the whole Council, the Northern land Council, together. When they all come together in one meeting at one place. That's be over 100 people they're getting together. By the time they get 73 and 5, that's 82, and all the workers together in one place. That would be a big job to organise.

And I think it says in the Act that they need to meet at least 2 times a year. But they can meet at other times if so many Council members ask for a meeting. I am thinking it's 6 Council members. If 6 Council members asked for a special meeting then workers have to organise that.

NY: and there's one other things that I want to ask is. If an executive member was sick and couldn't attend the meeting, could he send a proxy? Or nothing.?

RT: it doesn't say anything about a proxy. So I don't know the answer to that. If there is a proxy if they are sick or not, I don't know. But to come back to the other question the executive should carry the mind of the full Council into that executive meeting. As we said before that full Council is extremely powerful, in that if they give authority to something or refuse something that's it, they have said it in law in relation to your estates.

I'll give you an example nephew. If mining companies are looking for a lease or something and they do all the work, and all the workers in the Lands Council go and talk to the landowners. And they get all the information and bring it back to the full Lands Council. Or if no full Lands Council they bring it back to the executive. That full Lands Council should obtain all the information and think through carefully what the Estate owners really want. They should check whether the workers have brought back correct or incorrect information. If incorrect information they should refuse to give permission to what is being asked. They shouldn't agree to this contract over the Estate owners land called a lease. A lease is like a djugu' contract over the land. They shouldn't agree to a djugu' contract over a person's country and give a lease to the mining company or whoever.

Note: the full implications of a lease over land is not well understood amongst the Yolŋu population. There is no similar well-known concept in their own law. There is one we have investigated at this stage but hardly any living Yolŋu leaders understand or even know about it. So it's a hard topic to discuss well in their own language and through their legal structure. It is quite likely that most Yolŋu Lands Council members do not understand what a lease is or have much of an idea of its full ramifications.

They should tell the workers to go back and get the correct information. Make sure you talk to all land and Estate owners in relation to that Estate. So, the lands Council can straighten up those workers and the executive can also straighten up those workers. And nobody should tell them to hurry up, hurry up, hurry up .

NY: so they shouldn't tell them to hurry up to make a decision, is that correct?

RT: Yaka - no that's a lawless action.

NY: hmm

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RT: and I know executive members have told me that they have been told to hurry up.

NY: hurry up, hurry up they have. They have hurried them up. Like that.

RT: yeah, yeah - now that's against the law. Because the Commonwealth government in Canberra, the Australian government, the federal government, gave the authority not to the workers, they are just workers. It gave the authority to the full Council and to the executive who are representatives of the full Council and of those regional councils. Not sure how you'd say that in Yolŋu Matha.

NY: Yo. They should look back to the 7 regional councils. They should recognise them and remember what they have said.

RT: yes they should remember their pronouncements and they should also think back to, right back to the Estate owners, because their true representation on the (Lands Council) is to represent the views of the Estate owners.

NY:Hm. Hm

RT: because it says in the Act, the Act says, whoever has the statutory authority according to your Madayin law, at traditional law they say in English, they alone are the ones with the authority, they have the authority to give consent or to refuse it.

NY: Yo, yes

RT: for mining or for other leases or what Balanda or other people want to do. The Act says this. How should they go about getting this consent? They should use the Madayin way, traditional law way of obtaining consent. It should be from there.

NY: Hm, yo/yes

Note: (Aboriginal Land Rights Act NT 1976). 77A Consents of traditional Aboriginal owners, where, for the purposes of this Act, the traditional Aboriginal owners of an area of land are required to have consented, as a group, to a particular act or thing, the consent shall be taken to have been given if:

(a) in a case where there is a particular process of decision making that, under the Aboriginal tradition of those traditional Aboriginal owners or of the group to which they belong, must be complied with in relation to decisions of that kind—the decision was made in accordance with that process;

RT: and if anyone is to hurry them up, any of the workers or whoever, they are really, I think I say, they are totally illegitimate when they do that because, they are lawless.

NY: yeah, Yo.

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RT: I say it again. When all the Balanda gave the authority, through the Commonwealth government, the Australian government, the Federal government, 3 names that one government in Canberra.

NY: Yo?

RT: when they return the authority back to Yolŋu, to Aboriginal people in the Northern Territory, they wanted that authority to come to a place where it was totally consistent with your system of law. Where it was totally consistent with your systems of law and with your foundation of law.

NY: Yo

RT: not some Balanda autocratic system or dictatorship.

NY: Yo, Yo

RT: any form of autocratic or dictatorship control is totally lawless according to Yolŋu Rom law and completely lawless at our law, the Balanda law. Completely lawless.

NY: Yo. It's true what you're saying Wamut. The Northern Lands Council is one. It's one body at law, made up of the executive and the full Council. You see they dhäruk-bakmaram discuss the key legal issues but they are talking for the estate owners.

RT: yes, what they're thinking (the estate owners).

NY: yes what they're thinking. Hm. Yes what the yirralka waŋanju estate owners want. Inside this legal chamber of the Northern Lands Council, whether they are in either the Executive Council or the full Council they should act like this. Bakmaram-dhäruk discuss the legal issues according to Madayin law inside that Northern Lands Council legal chamber.

RT: Yo

NY: inside that legal law chamber. Yolŋu

RT: nephew let's come back and will keep talking on this one. On the subject.

NY: Yo

Podcasts number 2. NLC council and executive 284

NY: Yo Wamut.

RT: gu Waku

NY: Yo, let me ask you? Like in this executive meeting or in the full Council meeting. In a meeting where they're discussing legal issues about our living places or they're making law. Or their following the information given to them by anthropologists or whoever. And what is..... The full Council or the Executive should be representing different Yolŋu when they're speaking?

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RT: Yo

NY: Yolŋu they should be representing. But there is one thing. They don't seem to bring any information back to the people. You see.

RT: Hmm

NY: they don't bring information back to the people what legal things are being talked about inside that legal chamber of the Northern Lands Council. So, this is one thing I'm teasing out. This is one thing where we are missing information with no feedback. This is one thing that's a bit of a problem for us Yolŋu. If that representative is a true representative when they participate in discussions (inside the council) they should be feeding information back to Yolŋu people.

RT: Yo

NY: Yo. It seems we are missing out on information from the last meeting and previous meetings. All the information from the past. We haven't received any the real fundamental information from these meetings. This is what midikirri corrupts the process. If this is really their work they should let the community know what they have been talking about, to their own people.

RT: yeah there should be. Because as you say they're representing the Estate owners, Yolŋu people. But it's also hard if you're busy and on the council and yeah it's not a real good process for communication back to the people. But if you're right, if it was the Balanda Council and I was a landowner, and they were making decisions over my property, I'd want to know what they're doing.

But that's the problem Waku, the fact that our researchers have now shown that a lot of Yolŋu are confused and mystified as to what is the role and purpose of the NLC. What? After 43 years? 43 years ago they passed this Act, Aboriginal Land Rights Act Northern Territory 1976. It is 43 years ago.

NY: that's a long time.

RT: that some peoples whole lifetime! For Aboriginal people. Some (Yolŋu) people are passing away in their 40s now. So it's a lifetime that the Lands Council has been there, and as you say, Yolŋu are still confused about what is its role and purpose.

NY: Yo

RT: and I think even some Council members might be confused about it too? Some maybe know, some maybe are still confused. And I've had lots of council members and even people on the executive say to me, well I don't really know what our authority is inside that Council. So it's a massive problem this communication problem. It's a communication problem that affects everybody. Every government department. Even Aboriginal Medical Services, Aboriginal organisations, homelands associations and the like. It comes back to

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this. It comes back to this good communication. It's not working very well this communication.

NY: Yo

RT: And that's not good communication, very bad communication. Or bad communication, we say in English, is killing Yolŋu. Is killing your businesses. It's killing your opportunity for good employment. It's killing people in the health area. It's extremely serious, it's a very serious situation.

NY: Hm. True Wamut. It's like, ah, they give their information inside (inside the council). But they don't give any information back to Yolŋu and the yirralka estate owners. They don't give any information so confusion reigns supreme.

RT: Yep

NY: and that leaves us sitting here worrying about everything. And we are in a continuous state of confusion, so we just follow them in every issue that happens. We just follow everything they say, we don't really answer them, give them good information (what we want to say), we don't, because there is no (clear) information coming to Yolŋu people. They ah? Those in the Commonwealth government, when they look at the Northern Lands Council, do they understand? This is a question I'm asking you Wamut. Does information go from the Northern Land Council to the Commonwealth government?

RT: about what the Lands Council does, or..?

NY: yeah does the Northern Lands Council send good information to the government in Canberra or not?

RT: yeah whatever the Lands Council says it goes all over Australia and all over the world because mining companies are waiting to hear from them. Even people who are after a small lease wait to hear from them.

NY: Hm, , Yo

RT: like this one about the water on the beach. The intertidal zone. Everyone was waiting for the full Council, Lands Council, Northern Lands Council. They were waiting to hear from them whether they were going to give permission or refuse it. Whether they were going to give authority /permission for non-landowners, not the land or property owners, to come onto their estates.

NY:Hm,hm

RT: everybody is waiting for it. All the Courts in Australia. Even to the High Court, that biggest court in Canberra. They are waiting to hear what that Council is going to say. But what they don't know nephew, is maybe that Council is still totally confused about most of the subjects that they are discussing. They think that the Council understands all the things that are put in front of them, right through. And they think they discuss lots of things and that they have a consensus of understanding (inside the council). And government and all

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the Balanda across Australia they think that the Lands Council and the Executive follow the expressed desires of the **yirralka waṯaṅju** estate owners. The expressed desires of all the different Estate owners. They think there is really good communication (on the council). And they think there is really good communication coming back to the (Yolṅu) estate owners. This is their understanding of the situation. They don't understand the real situation on the ground.

NY: yo yo true.

RT: nephew let's come back again, we're always running out of time on this one. Let's come back and we'll keep talking on the subject.

NY: Ma okay

Podcasts number 3. NLC council and executive. 285

NY: Yo Wamut. I want ask some more information on this same subject, the subject of the Northern Lands Council. Inside the legal meeting of the Land Council, there is both the full Council and the Executive. When do they hold these separate meetings? The council meeting is held at one time, where they discuss things. In the Executive maybe they meet at another time? They don't meet as one combined meeting, the full Council and the executive?

RT: yeah

NY: they don't meet and discuss things together. Is this true?

RT: yeah they don't. The Executive is temporary between meetings, because it's too hard to get that full Council together where everyone comes together. Too hard for them to organise all those people. So, they have that Executive in between council meetings, in between.

NY: Yo, hmm.

RT: but it still. It should be ah... the big decisions, the really big decisions where they have to give approval or refuse approval should go before the full Council meeting, not just the executive. But some, that Executive should follow the mind of the full Council.

NY: and who is it that has the final decision Wamut? Who is it?

RT: the final decision?

NY: the full Council?

RT: always the full Council.

NY: yeah

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RT: and if the full Council hears something that the executive has done something inappropriate or whatever, they can call a meeting of the full Council.

NY: yeah I see yeah.

RT: because the executive comes out of that Council. And I'm looking at NLC website again and it says the top Council is the full Council that's the most important Council. And in the Act, it says, that the full Council is the major decision-making body within the organisation. So if the council members hear that the Executive have done something, and they think that it's not correct, like they haven't followed the expressed desires of the Estate owners, they could call for a full Council meeting.

NY: yeah.... Yeah I see.

RT: those Council members nephew can call a meeting of the full Council. Because the full Council is the most important body in the Lands Council. And under them come the regional Councils, the executive Council, and then under that comes the chairperson of the full Council, he has just got a job there every day. Because he shouldn't just be thinking is own thoughts. His mind should be consistent with the full Council, what the thoughts and directions of the full Council are.

NY:Hm, yo

RT: his thinking should be consistent with their thinking. Then under the chairman, comes the CEO the head Djungaya manager for the NLC. Then under the CEO comes all the anthropologists, and the legal workers lawyers and so on and all the separate workers for the NLC. But the council is the body with the most important authority. And all the courts in Australia, all courts, including as I said before the High Court in Canberra, will listen to what or who the Council gives authority to. If they give authority to a mining company that mining company has authority to do things. If they give authority to Fishers to go fishing, they are giving that authority them to go and fish. If they refuse to give them any authority to do anything they have no authority. And no one else, the workers, the Prime Minister, the Queen of England, or anything forcing them to say yes and give authority can do it. They can't.

NY:Hm.

RT: even the Queen of England can't force them to say yes and give authority to someone.

NY: yeah, I see yeah

RT: they have a separate authority that comes through from the Aboriginal Land Rights Act. If somebody forces them to say yes, and give authority then that person/people rom midikuman (makes the law putrid). That's a lawless act. It does not matter if it's a top lawyer, or he thinks himself as the top lawyer, or whatever, it doesn't matter.

NY: yeah, that's a disgusting act if they act like that.

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RT: Yo. It is extremely bad because that Council should sit in a state of Mägaya - peace, tranquillity, harmony, completeness, health, peace, prosperity, fullness, perfectness, rest, safety and absence of agitation or trouble, protection for all. They should be able to sit there in complete harmony and protection and think of what the estate owners would want to happen in relation to the issue. Traditional Aboriginal people according to law, not a state of some form of dictatorship, but in a process that is according to traditional Aboriginal Law. Not according to contemporary mainstream Aboriginal Law or culture.

NY: Yo

RT: not the Balanda way of doing things. Not the Chinese way of doing things or anyone else's way, none of them. It should be whoever is the Estate owners, it's their thinking, it's what they want (that should be paramount). This is really what land rights means.

NY: yeah

RT: land wäṅa - homeplace or property ganydjarr authority (having authority over your own home or property) returning into your hands. In the year 1976.

NY: Yo, as I see it, the Northern Lands Council, or The Council in this case. They have to look at a whole range of different issues like people working in fishing (Fishers), or cattle on our lands and Estates, or looking at leases on housing in communities. It's like they have to look at all these issues. Or recreational fishermen entering into our property and Estates. They have a responsibility to overview all these issues. Overview everything. Not just the one issue they are talking about (in Council). Not just that one issue but everything. Everything (all assets) that exist on our estates, on Yolṅu yirralka estates.

RT: yes, yes. If anything, anyone wants authority to access or diminish your authority on your yirralka estates. This is the body (at Balanda law) to yurama agree, say yes or yaka'yun say 'no'. This Northern Lands Council, The Council. Not the workers, the Council. Not the chairman, not the CEO, not any of the workers or other highly qualified workers. Not any of them. The NLC council, the Northern Lands Council, the Council when it's in session have the authority. And all the courts and other companies and institutions listen to what that Council says, according to a process of law.

NY: yo yo

RT: Waku nephew we need to come back again. Let's return again to this conversation. We've got one more program this morning.

NY: Ma okay.

Note: the English word consent is not well understood by the Yolṅu population. When it's used in English conversations such as in situations like above most Yolṅu see it as a situation where they have to agree and there are no options to disagree. This

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makes it very dangerous for Yolŋu and other Aboriginal people who are English 5th or 6th language sitting in Council meetings that are all conducted English. It should be possible to use well established practices from the United Nations and European scenarios to give Original Australians who speak one of the Original Australian languages access to their own Australian language in legal situations like the NLC. Even the Northern Territory Legislative Assembly has now agreed to allow Indigenous languages to be spoken in its chamber.

Podcasts number 4 NLC 2019 Elections meaning 286

NY: Yo Wamut.

RT: Yo Waku

NY: Ah ah, if I ask you? First off I want ask you, what is election, the word election. And what is its galk (the way something presents itself, its characteristics) this election?

RT: that's for the Northern Lands Council or what for?

NY: yes, for the Northern Lands Council, and how many Yolŋu are being elected onto it.

RT: Yeah

NY: how many Yolŋu are elected onto it? And what is the process behind getting them there? Like the other thing we've got a lot of people in ringitj alliance. Yolŋu are existing ringitj alliances so how do they get elected in an election. Who are the elected people?

RT: let me first say. Here on the, on the NLC website, on their website, there is going to be a new Council election in 2019. That's this year.

NY: Yo.

RT: and they're saying nominations for Council membership will be called for in mid-2019. Now mid-2019 means...

NY: in the middle of, ah

RT: yeah in the middle of, in the month of June.

NY: Yoo yess

RT: that's now. Now is the month of June. When we are recording this now. But have you heard anything about them calling for nominations for Council or anything like that?

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NY: Yo? Where? No nothing. We just sit here in an ignorant state. The date we have received already. What you saw where was? 2020 was that the year it said?

RT: 2019. That's this year were in right now. You should know by now. See this is the part of the problem nephew in the communication breakdown. What I'm reading here is information that was put out to everybody (in English) in December, 21st of December 2018. That was before Christmas.

NY: last year?

RT: last year. NLC put out the information (in English) that there will be an election this year in 2019. For new Council members for the NLC. And nobody's heard about it (Yolḡu have not heard about it).

NY: Yo that's correct.

RT: there is a massive problem around communication. Ye.

NY:HM yuwalk true.

RT: speaking to you all or letting you all know. You collectively. What Balanda say, are the main stakeholders. You yirralka Estate owners are the main people. And you should know about this.

NY: Yo that's true

RT: so, let's talk about this. You were asking what is the meaning of election?

NY: ...Yo, Yo that's correct

RT: what election means. What, you collectively don't understand what elections mean, true?

NY: some understand but some don't understand, like that.

RT: yeah. A lot don't know.

NY: yes, the people that sit here in this place.

RT: a lot of people don't know what it means yeah.

NY: Yo that's correct

RT: Just another English word. An election. If you look at a dictionary or something it'll say, a formal or organised choice by voting. For a political office or other position, you see. So, election is, you (collectively) need to think through who you want to stand on the NLC council, Northern lands Council, Council. Who can stand? You the Rom waṭaṅu walala (Rom-Law, waṭaṅu- denotes ownership, walala- they (3 or more) the extended citizens of a yirralka estate). You the yirralka waṭaṅu estate owners. You are the ones who need to think who you want. So, election means you collectively say who you want (to stand) through a legal process. NY: Yo

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RT: now we will have to talk about that legal process. This legal process has two ways to it. Two. There are two active processes. One of the processes is this English word "nomination". Yeah, first there will be nominations. That means you yirralka waṭaṅu need to say who it is you want to stand and contest for the council. And that should be happening right now. Mid-2019. In the big dry season time 2019.

NY: Hm, hm..

RT: and there must be some paperwork. Balanda?? The NLC is still the Balanda organisation because it came out of that parliament in Canberra and that means there would be a special/particular piece of paper where you'd have to write (the name on) and send it into the staff. To the NLC staff.

NY: to the staff of the Northern Lands Council. Or lands Council they say.

RT: yeah.

NY: send the paper in.

RT: but how many people know about that? How to nominate? Do Yolṅu understand that process? How you nominate?

NY: yes nominate is where they say like this. "Yes, this one person will go from Galiwin'ku. One other will go from Lake Evella (Gapuwiyak)."

RT: well see nephew that was the old process.

NY: yeah? RT: But that's not what the law says. The law says the yirralka waṭaṅu estate owners.

NY: Yo yeah?

RT: Or maybe? Because the Balanda are still completely ignorant of your ringitj alliance. But maybe it should be your ringitj alliance. Your main ringitj alliance. They should be saying who is nominated.

NY: Hm. Hm.

NY: Yeah that is the process, like that. Maybe it should be our ḷiya Ṇarra'mirri mala political leaders who send them. Or they should be the ones to work out, sort out who to send. They should sort out who is the good person for us and they should be the one who we send and that person will listen to us from inside the council. Yo.

RT: now there's 16 members. 16 members to cover East Arnhem region. Yolṅu Matha region, your region. All that area there are 16 members. In the past the Northern Lands Council used to get 2 people from Galiwin'ku maybe 2 from Milingimbi, Ramingining, Gapuwiyak. But it really it should be from the yirralka waṭaṅu mala all the Estate owners. Ah?

NY: Yo

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RT: because the Balanda don't understand your names yirralka estate/s.

NY: Yaka yuwalk that's true they don't. This is true.

RT: that's why they jump in and put in those communities, all the different towns. Ya? But it should be your *liya Njorra'mirri mala* political leaders, for you to decide who you want, to be the 16 members, for north-east Arnhem land region .

NY: from our ringitj alliances.

RT: well some process that fits in with your rom Law. Could be like that ringitj alliance. I think there is about 16 top-level (nation state) ringitj alliances isn't there?

NY: Hmm yes.

RT: In north-east Arnhem land. And we should change this process to fit in with your foundation of Law, not into a process that fits the Balanda foundation of Law.

NY: Hm, yo yes.

RT: nephew we are out of time again.

NY: Ma okay.

RT: but to come back another day and we will records some more programs on this election and other subjects in relation to the Northern Lands Council. And the *gakal* characteristics or way of Lands Council.

NY and RT: Yo yes.

NY: Yo ma yes okay.

RT: Yo Djutjutj (keep on going; be off with you; goodbye) walala everyone.

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Glossary

CKB - Cultural Knowledge Base

Balanda: Balanda comes from the word “Hollander”, from the Yolŋu contacts with people from former Dutch colonies in Asia; and is used to refer to European or English-speaking “Western” person or people.

Balanydja: Balanydja was a payment for goods or service rendered under djugu contract. The payment received at the completion of a contract is called 'balanydja'. All the goods that Yolŋu received as payment from the Macassans were called balanydja.

dhäruk- bakmaram Talk around the Law (Madayin Law) issues, not our own thoughts, ideas or desires, but only the legal position according to the Madayin Law.

Djaka measurement

Djuŋgaya: traditional police, master of ceremonies, lawyer, public servant, manager. Nurruruŋu Djuŋgaya is the head Djuŋgaya, similar to the CEO of an organization.

gakal the way something presents itself, the life cycle, its characteristics, persona.

ganydjarr power strength. Authority

liya Njërri'mirri mala political leaders

Madayin [ma – day – in]. The underlined d is the d sound made with the tongue curled back in the mouth.

The Madayin is the name for our complete system of Law including all the laws, legal processes and practices, plus legal objects, law chambers and the places that have been proclaimed through the processes of Madayin law. Even animal or fish production sites can be called a Madayin wäŋa – Madayin place/home.

It is not easy to translate Madayin into English as English does not seem to have a word like Madayin. The closest to it is when we say, “The Westminster system of law”. “The Westminster system of law” includes all the laws, legal processes and practices of the Westminster system.

Madjapala An instrument of order that is used to formalise a formal contract to initiate marradjiri. (Called mayawala' in North East Arnhem Land.)

Mägaya peace, tranquillity, harmony, completeness, health, peace, prosperity, fullness, perfectness, rest, safety and absence of agitation or trouble, protection for all.

mägaya - dhukarr (peace, security, serenity –road, process, way of life) that come from the Madayin Law and the Madayin dhukarr processes given to us by Waŋarr.

midikirri do badly, do wrong, go wrong.

Translation of series 50

Role of NLC Council, executive and Elections

ṅurru-dakthun compete against, vie with. Compete eagerly with someone in order to do or achieve something.

Wamut - Wedge Tail Eagle is the skin name for Richard Trudgen. See skin names in “Yolṅu Names” <https://www.whyyarriors.com.au/shop/>

Märr: (spiritual power, strength) The spiritual power or force of strength that is imparted to an article of primary produce, a manufactured product, or a service provided. In all cases märr is enacted where sweat is produced. It is a person's 'sweat' that transmits the worker's spiritual power, or force of strength into the article or service. Per quote "This märr will increase to dangerous levels if not discharged through reciprocal trade or payments".

Ringitj alliance

rom midikuman (makes the law putrid).

Rom waṭaṅu walala – Rom- Law, waṭaṅu- denotes ownership, walala- they (3 or more). The extended citizens of a yirralka estate. The larger group of interconnecting tribes and clans that have a right under Madayin law to monitor, protect and to discipline or past judgement on an offenders if necessary. And to support the wäṅa waṭaṅu - landowners, yirralka waṭaṅu - estate owners in decisions over their property and estates.

Wäṅa waṭaṅu: Land or property owners

yirralka waṭaṅu: estate owners.

Yolṅu: Yolṅu traditionally means human or humans, person or people. It also now means an Aboriginal person or people from northeast Arnhem Land, usually used by outsiders. However, if you asking a Yolṅu person if they are Yolṅu you really asking if they are a human being.

Yuwalk: true; truly.

Richard Trudgen
Why Warriors Pty 2019.