

Abstract for consideration for the 2006 ALS conference

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Pronominal accretions in languages in Cape York Peninsula

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Pama-Nyungan languages tend to have similar systems of pronouns, allowing the reconstruction of such protoforms as **tyana* ‘they’, whose reflexes include *thana* in Kalaw Kawaw Ya (in Torres Strait) and *tjana* in Pitjantjatjara (in central Australia). In occasional languages the same pronouns are found with an additional consonant or syllable. For example, in south western Cape York Peninsula, Kurtjar *dhanabh* ‘they’ could reflect an earlier **tyana-pV*, with the addition of a syllable **pV* that could perhaps be cognate with a syllable *-bha* found in longer forms of many pronouns in Uradhi, near the tip of Cape York Peninsula. The present paper explores this and other ‘additions’ to pronominal forms, including the consistent historical addition of *-w* or *-ntuw* (perhaps reflecting **-kV* or **-ntVkV* respectively) to pronouns in the Koko-Bera language of western Cape York Peninsula.