

## **Content-question words in Gija conversations**

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This study uses interactional linguistic methods to examine how content-question words are used to perform three essential social practices in everyday Gija conversations (i.e., other-initiations of repair, requests for information, and word-searches). It uses 3 hours of conversational data to document and describe language use among elderly speakers of Gija, an endangered Australian language from Warmun, Western Australia. Everyday interactions in Warmun combine Gija and Kimberley Kriol, an English-lexified creole language. Gija is a fusional head-marking language with a relatively canonical gender system that extends agreement to content-question words. Kriol, however, does not contain grammatical gender. The study investigates the utility of Gija's largely canonical gender system, and how it is used flexibly in a bilingual language ecology. Gender-inflected content-question words provide a salient resource for connecting turn components and tracking reference. In spates of bilingual Gija-Kriol talk, uninflected Gija content-question words signal a return to genderless Kriol antecedents or instances of zero reference.