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ABBREVIATIONS

The following abbreviations are used:

A — A gender of nouns (mainly animals)	LOC — locative
ABL — ablative	M — M gender of nouns (mainly topographic features and natural phenomena)
ALL — allative	N — N gender of nouns (many artefacts, entities produced by humans or animals)
B — B gender of nouns (human beings, regardless of sex)	NP — nominal phrase
C — consonant	PA — paucal verbal suffix
CHAR — characteristic	pl — plural pronominal
COMIT — comitative	PL — plural verbal suffix
DAT — dative	PP — postpositional phrase
DU — dual postposition and verbal suffix	PRES — present tense
E — exclusive	PST — past tense
FUT — future	PURP — purposive
GEN — genitive	REP — repeatedly
I — inclusive	sg — singular pronominal
INDEF — indefinite	V — vowel
INST — instrumental	W — W gender of nouns (mainly trees and things)
INT — intensive	
IRR — irrealis	
IT — iterative	

The numerals 1, 2, and 3 denote the first second and third persons respectively in pronouns; and inflecting verb roots are cited in all capitals (e.g. -MA 'do, say').

An asterisk following a word indicates that it is attested in one of Capell's writings as a Gunin word; a dagger following a word indicates that it is attested in one of Capell's writings as a Forrest River word; and a double dagger following a word indicates that it is attested in some Gunin source other than my own and Capell's corpora. Otherwise, all Gunin data used in this description has been recorded by myself.

The following conventions have been used in transcribing the texts and examples from texts: non-phonemic length in word final vowels is indicated by one or more colons, the number impressionistically suggesting its duration; the end of an intonation contour is marked by a comma, even where it occurs at the end of a sentence; and a semi-colon indicates a pause which is followed by more material on the same intonation contour. In examples and texts, due to their morphological complexity, inflecting verbs are generally not divided into morphemes; rather, they are glossed as full words according to their particular sense in the context.

0. Introduction

0.1. Gunin and neighbouring languages¹

Gunin is an Australian Aboriginal language traditionally spoken in the northern Kimberley region of Western Australia, on the western side of the Joseph Bonaparte Gulf, in the region between the Forrest River and Drysdale River (see map on page 6 below). It is a non-Pama-Nyungan language belonging to the Wunambalic group of the Worroran or Northern Kimberley language family (O'Grady, Voegelin & Voegelin 1966:35; Oates & Oates 1970:40-42; McGregor 1988a:123).

There is some confusion in the literature as to the name of the language, and its location. Some sources refer to it as Gunin, others as Kwini.² In fact, it appears that Gunin is the name of the language, while Kwini ([ˈgɔwini]) is a "tribal" name, the name of the people who speak Gunin (Oates 1975:57; my own fieldnotes). But even this is not universally agreed to. Tindale 1974:153, for example, suggests (following Lucich 1966) that Gunin is the proper name of the people who live on the King Edward River and lower reaches of the Carson and Drysdale Rivers — see also Hernández 1941a:212 — and that "[t]he Jeidji people living near the Forrest River Mission, sometimes called Gwini, have also been termed Miwa", which "means in some areas 'salt water' or 'the sea'." He further suggests that the term Kwini is a directional term, possibly meaning 'east' or 'easterners', or alternatively 'lowlanders' (because they live near the sea) — see also Hernández 1941a:212. The term Pela was also used by early missionaries such as Gill (e.g. Gill 1934a, 1934b, 1934c) in reference to a language which could be Gunin (since it is spoken in roughly the same region as Gunin). However, there is also confusion over the term Pela: according to Capell & Coate 1984:4 it is neither a tribal nor a language name, but possibly the name of a region; Hernández 1941a:212 disagrees, and lists it among the tribal and language names of the Drysdale River area.

These confusions in the literature attest to the complexities of the traditional language and tribal situation in this part of the Kimberley. Speaking of their designations for northern Kimberley languages, Capell & Coate 1984:2 have this to say:

It must be emphasised from the start that some of these designations are made for convenience of treatment, especially in regard to the northern subdivision [i.e. the Wunambalic group — WMcG], where the variations are slighter than the other two [subgroups, the Worroric and the Ngarinyinic — WMcG], and the application of names by the people themselves quite uncertain.

¹ My Gunin fieldwork was supported by grants from the Australia Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies and the Australian Research Council (Grant A58930745). The analysis of the data and writing up of this description has been made possible by an ARC Research Fellowship, held at University of Melbourne, which has provided me with the time and facilities which would not otherwise have been available. My greatest debt is, of course to Dolores Jedmoro (Little Dolly), who willingly sacrificed her time to teach me her language, and also to Laurie Wainer and Wilfred Goonack.

² Both of these terms show a number of variant spellings, among them the following: Ginan, Ginan Goonan, Guna, Gunan, and Kunan for Gunin; and Cuini, Gwini, Kuini, Kuwiyini, Kwiini, and Kwiyni for Kwini. Gunin is not to be confused with Gooniyandi (also sometimes spelt Gunian), which language is spoken four hundred kilometres (as the crow flies) to the south, near Fitzroy Crossing in the southern central Kimberley (see map).



Approximate locations of the Worrorran and nearby languages

There has been much disagreement among anthropologists as to the application of names to the various 'tribes' in the north and east of the NK area, and the terms used here are in some cases a matter of convenience. The people of the Forrest River (FR) area do not seem to have a tribal name at all. They have variously been called Miwa, Yeidji, Gwini, all of which terms have a validity, but none of them is currently accepted by all the people. The terms Wilar and Manunggu refer to sections only of the FR tribes and are not primarily linguistic terms even though they do seem to correspond with dialectal variations within the north-eastern section. On the other hand, the names in the central and western columns are used and recognised by the people themselves. One man is definitely a Worora, another a Ngarinjin, and so on.

Capell & Coate 1984:4 go on to say that Wilar and Manunggu "show only slight variations from Gwini". (Compare also Tindale 1974:150; Hernández 1941a:212.)

Approximate locations for Gunin and other Kimberley languages are shown in the map above.

No boundaries have been marked in because, as Capell & Coate 1984:2 point out, it is difficult — if not impossible — these days to identify territories associated with particular languages with precision, due to post contact demographic changes and so on. In fact, I suspect that it was no easier to do so in pre-contact times, and that boundary regions have always been "mixed" (as many Kimberley Aborigines put it in Kriol) — that is, associated with more than one "tribal" group. Furthermore, it is impossible, on the basis of presently available evidence, to give more than an approximate location for Gunin and its immediate neighbours. I have chosen the location shown on the map simply on the balance of evidence presented in various sources. Gunin may well have been spoken further to the west.

The Worrorran or Northern Kimberley language family consists of approximately a score of languages, all of which are spoken in the mountainous northern Kimberley region and islands off the Kimberley coast. They fall into three groups: the Worrorric, the Ngarinyinic and the Wunambalic, these names having first been given in O'Grady's lexico-statistical classification of Australian languages (O'Grady, Voegelin & Voegelin 1966). As I have pointed out elsewhere, this division is identical with that proposed on typological grounds by Capell 1940. The above remarks suggest that the eastern members of the Wunambalic group are particularly closely related, and indeed may be mutual intelligible, and thus dialects rather than as separate languages. This hypothesis is by and large confirmed by my own lexicostatistical counts, and those of Glasgow, Hocking & Steiner nd, as shown in Table 0.1. (Figures given in brackets come from lexicostatistical tables in Glasgow, Hocking & Steiner nd.)

Gunin	Oombulgurri	Wunambal	Gambere	Miwa	Yiiji	Worlaja	Ngarinyin	Worora
(76)	(78)	(73)	(75)	(74)	(73)	(66)	(84)	(51)
54 (69)	(64)	(68)	75	(68)	60	(72)	(66)	16
65 (81)	(64)	(68)	75	(74)	60	(72)	(66)	16
85	—	68	75	—	60	(72)	(66)	16
(80)	(98)	(68)	(74)	—	60	(72)	(66)	16
(65)	(76)	(66)	(72)	60	(73)	(66)	(84)	51
28 (64)	(60)	(62)	(72)	30	(66)	(84)	(66)	51
24	—	32	31	20	—	16	51	51

Table 0.1: Lexicostatistical comparison of Gunin and select Worrorran languages

It is fairly clear from the statistics presented in this table that there are three major groupings — which, in terms of percentages, approximate lexicostatistic groups: one associated with Gunin, Oombulgurri,³ Wunambal, Gambere, Miwa and Yiiji; another with Worlaja and Ngarinyin; and a third with Worrorra. Within the first group, two subgroup are identifiable, Gunin, Oombulgurri and

³ This designation is given in Glasgow, Hocking & Steiner nd for the variety spoken in the Oombulgurri community, which may well be identical with the variety I have called Miwa.

Yijji constituting one, and Wunambal and Gambere the other. Figures for the varieties in each subgroup suggest status as dialects according to lexicostatistical counts (greater than 70% shared cognates).⁴

To the south and east of the Worroran languages are other non-Pama-Nyungan families: the Nyulnyulan family, constituted by about a dozen languages spoken on the Dampier Land peninsula and adjacent parts of the Kimberley, and represented by Warrwa and Nyikina on the map above; the Bunuban family, which consists of the two languages Bunuba and Gooniyandi (McGregor 1988a:23), spoken near Fitzroy Crossing; and the Jarrakan family, spoken in a long band along the eastern Kimberley, following the course of the Ord River, represented on the map by Kija and Miriwung (McGregor 1988a:31). Beyond these languages lie the Pama-Nyungan languages, which cover the major part of the continent. To date, no genetic links have been established between the Worroran and any of these other families.

0.2. Fieldwork situation

During my 1988 field trip I was lucky enough to meet Dolores Jedmoro, a speaker of Gunin, in Derby, where I was working on two moribund languages, Nyulnyul and Unggumi. She was holidaying there with her daughter, and this afforded an excellent opportunity to begin work on the language — an ambition which I had been harbouring for some years, but had been thwarted by the inaccessibility of Kalumburu, the community where most remaining speakers of Gunin reside. I recorded three hours of Gunin: approximately two and a half hours of elicitation (principally a basic wordlist of some five hundred items, together with some fairly simple sentences); half a dozen texts (amounting to about ten minutes of speech), all but one of which was transcribed with the help of Dolores; and about a quarter of an hour of discussion of the sociolinguistic setting of Gunin. The present sketch is based primarily on the information gathered during this field trip.

In subsequent fieldtrips (1990 and 1992), Dolores was, unfortunately, not in Derby. I sought other speakers of the language without success. However, two middle aged men with Gunin affiliations — Laurie Wainer and Wilfred Goonack — were located and interviewed. Although they recalled few words of the language, they were able to provide useful information on the sociolinguistics of language use in Kalumburu.

A field trip to Kalumburu is planned for 1994, and a detailed descriptive grammar will eventually be written by the present author. In the meantime, this sketch should give the reader an inkling of the complexities and typological interest of Gunin.

⁴ It will be noted that there are significant discrepancies between my own figures and those of Glasgow, Hocking & Steiner *nd*. These are no doubt due to the small sizes of wordlists available for the various pairs of languages: small differences in our respective wordlists may give rise to large differences in the percentages. In addition, I suspect that some of the differences reflect the provenance of the wordlists: for instance, my Ngarinyin wordlist represents a western dialect spoken near Derby, whereas Glasgow, Hocking & Steiner's represents the Kalumburu dialect.

0.3. Sociolinguistic setting

Very little can be said with certainty about the sociolinguistic situation in Kalumburu, or of the present state of Gunin. This section provides a brief description of some of the salient features of the present sociolinguistic situation, in as far as it can be determined from the reports of the few Kalumburu residents and former residents who were interviewed.

Although the collaborators all agreed that a good number of Kwinj people still reside in Kalumburu (and a few live elsewhere, primarily in Oombulgurri and Wyndham), it was difficult to determine how viable the language itself is. My primary collaborator indicated that the language was in a particularly bad state, and only a few speakers remain. Other collaborators suggested that there were still a fair number of speakers around — compare Oates 1975:57 who suggests there were at least 50 mother tongue speakers of the language residing in Kalumburu in the late 1960s, and Glasgow, Hocking & Steiner *nd* who indicate that there were "quite a few" speakers of Gunin at Kalumburu in late 1970 when they visited the mission. All collaborators were in agreement, however, that the children are no longer learning Gunin as their mother tongue, and are learning some variety of English as their first language — indeed, Glasgow, Hocking & Steiner *nd* report that the mission superintendent of Kalumburu told them this was the case as early as 1970. It was further suggested that the children probably understood some words of Gunin, but definitely would be unable to speak it, or understand a conversation in it.

The attitudes expressed by my collaborators was fairly typical of those I have heard from older speakers elsewhere in the Kimberley region: it is a pity that the language is not being learnt by the children, but little can be done about this state of affairs. It would be good if they could speak the language, and also if the school had a language programme. However, whether a school programme would improve things significantly was doubted.

0.4. Recent history

Due to the inaccessibility of the region, significant contact with whites dates from the early decades of this century, more than two decades after significant contact in the more accessible regions of the western, southern and eastern Kimberley.⁵ Furthermore, major contact seems to have been with missionaries, rather than with pearlers (as was the case along the coastline closer to Broome) and pastoralists (as in the southern and eastern Kimberley). Nevertheless, the effects seem to be the same: drastic decrease in population, adoption of a sedentary lifestyle, and loss of traditional languages and cultures.

The first attempt at setting up a mission in the area was made by the Anglicans at Forrest River, in 1897; due to the hostile reception by the local people, the attempt was given up in the following year. Subsequently, in 1913, the Anglicans made a second, this time successful attempt, and established a mission in the same place. Meanwhile, in 1908 Catholic missionaries of the

⁵ Prior to white contact, Macassans visited the Kimberley coast and off shore islands in search of trepang; the extent of their contact with Aborigines in the Drysdale-Forrest Rivers area is not known, however.

Benedictine order established the Drysdale River Mission at Pago, on the lower reaches of the Drysdale River. In 1936 the mission was shifted a short distance away to Kalumburu, a permanent waterhole on the King Edward River (confusingly the name Drysdale River Mission was retained for many years).

Both missions are now defunct. Forrest River mission closed in 1968, and Kalumburu during the 1980s. The mission lands were handed over to the Aboriginal owners, and there are now two Aboriginal communities at the locations of the former missions, Oombulgurri and Kalumburu. (Green 1988 provides an excellent account of the history of the Oombulgurri from first contact, and Parez nd a rather one-sided account of the history of Kalumburu.)

Following the First World War, a portion of the Marndoc Aboriginal Reserve on which Forrest River mission was located was excised and divided into small holdings which were given to war veterans. Other than an abortive attempt by the Victorian Pastoral Company to establish a sheep station in 1886 (it was given up the following year), this seems to have been the only incursion of pastoralists into the area. It seems however that very few veterans took up holdings, and fewer remained for long. (Both missions, of course, ran cattle and grew vegetables for their own needs, in the hope of eventually becoming self sufficient.)

Despite the fact that contact with whites in this part of the northern Kimberley appears to have been rather less intensive than in other parts of the Kimberley, and that the local Aborigines asserted their independence of the missions for a number of years, the population decreased at an alarming rate during the first half of this century. Parez nd:56 estimates that at the time of the first establishment of the Drysdale River mission upwards of 2,000 Aborigines lived in the mission reserve area; by the 1930s this had reduced by 60-70%. He suggests introduced diseases as the main contributing factor. Epidemics of influenza — which, as is well known, Aborigines had little resistance to — venereal disease and leprosy drastically reduced the Aboriginal population. Available evidence, however, suggests that leprosy came rather late to this remote region, and peaked in the late 1940s and early 1950s (Davidson 1979), about a decade after the peak elsewhere in the Kimberley. But this did not lessen the impact of the disease on the Aboriginal population — 78 cases of leprosy were recorded during the period 1936-1976 in Kalumburu alone. Not only did considerable numbers die, but many sufferers were shifted to the leprosarium in Derby (Bangaran).

Other factors also contributed to the decimation of the Aboriginal population, and thus to significant demographic changes. Hernández (1941b:123) suggests as most significant a very low birth rate — for which he could find no explanation (he cites evidence against venereal diseases as being responsible) — coupled with a high death rate (which he estimated to exceed the birth rate by a factor of at least three to one) (see also Hernández 1941a:213-214).

Even more importantly, Hernández indicates that this situation was not new: when the Benedictines first arrived, they were struck by the almost complete absence of children. Initially they had put it down to the adults hiding the children for protection; but as time went on, they realised that there were in fact very few children. However, he categorically states that evidence from family trees indicates that this had not always been so, and that at an earlier time — prior to the 1880s — there had indeed been larger numbers of children. It appears that introduced diseases such as influenza preceded whites, with devastating effects on the local populations who had no immunity against them. Hernández (1941b:123) mentions that Aborigines of the mission spoke of a great

epidemic, possibly of influenza, of 50 to 60 years previous — i.e. the 1880s-1890s — in which such large numbers of people died that it was impossible to perform the funerary rites, and the corpses had to be left where they lay.⁶

One other factor cannot be ignored. In 1926 Hays, one of the veterans who took up land under the War grant scheme, was speared by a Forrest River man Lumbia, allegedly for raping his wife. Lumbia was captured by Gribble, the superintendent of Forrest River Mission, and taken to Wyndham for trial. Meanwhile, however, the police together with special constables (men sworn in to act as unofficial police) were travelling throughout the area killing every Aborigine in sight (Fitzgerald 1984:21). Gribble, who made the massacre public, estimated 30 Aborigines were killed; others have estimated higher number. Biskup 1973:85 suggests that two entire hordes of the Andajin were virtually annihilated. Irrespective of the exact numbers massacred on this occasion, the affair resulted (as did other massacres in the Kimberley) in the effective colonisation of the region. Increasing numbers of Aborigines left the bush to come in to the missions.

By the 1940s it appears that few Aborigines remained in the bush. A report from Constable Reginald Carr of Wyndham, who undertook a long 2,000 mile patrol through the northern Kimberley from May 1944 to January 1945, provides some useful additional demographic information.

During that time I saw about 1,400 natives, that is, including Missions, Stations and Myall natives [i.e. "bush" Aborigines, those living away from white institutions — WMcG]. As regard to the Missions I have nothing to say about them, the natives that are under the care and control of the Missions are a credit to them.

But the bush natives are in a shocking state, they are dying in large numbers and the main cause is the fact that they have no food, they are just dying from malnutrition.

I can safely say that all the bush natives between Drysdale River Mission and Forrest River Mission will not exist very much longer. The number of natives that I contacted in that area was 60 and I saw only two natives that looked at all healthy all the natives are past middle age and cannot fend for themselves. (cited in Davidson 1979:86)

Numbers of "bush Aborigines" continued to decrease until the 1960s, by which time no one lived permanently away from the mission.

Both Kalumburu and Forrest River missions employed the dormitory system in which children were separated from their parents, and brought up by the missionaries. Doubtless, as elsewhere in Australia, this was a significant contributing factor to the demise of the traditional languages (Schmidt 1990:12): by separating the young children from their parents, they would be exposed to less traditional language, and significantly more English; moreover, use of traditional languages was normally forbidden in dormitories and in the mission schools — although there seems to be no direct reference in the literature to this having been enforced in either Forrest River or Kalumburu, it is virtually certain that it was. (In fact, neither mission appears to have taken much interest in language, and no missionary attempted a description of any of the languages.)

⁶ One wonders whether there is not a connection between this epidemic and either the arrival of the Victorian Pastoral Company at Forrest River in 1886, or a decade later with the arrival of the first missionaries.

0.5. Traditional culture of the Gunin

The entire region from the vicinity of the Forrest River in south-east to the King Edward River in the north-west seems to have constituted a single socio-cultural bloc. Within this region people spoke linguistic varieties which were mutually intelligible, and shared many social norms and cultural practices; it seems that the bulk of what was written by anthropologists about the culture of the Aborigines of the Forrest River area holds true for those living in the vicinity of Kalumburu.

As in other Australian Aboriginal groups, the tenor of interpersonal interaction was to a large extent governed by kinship ties between the interactants; these spanned the entire social universe: everyone was related to everyone else by a kinship tie, either "real" (by birth or marriage) or classificatory. There is no space to go into details of the complex kinship system of Gunin here (and in any case my data is at best very preliminary). For details, the reader should consult Elkin 1932, 1938/1974:97-99, Kaberry 1935:422 and Hernández 1941a:226-232.

Hernández 1941a and Elkin 1932:473-475 identify three further major social groupings for the tribes of the Drysdale and Forrest River areas, respectively: moieties, local hordes and totemic clans. In each area, tribes are divided into two exogamous patrilineal moieties, one associated with the *bamaarr* 'wild turkey' and a night bird, *jirrin.gr*, the other with the *girranggarlu* 'broлга' and another night bird, the *wadee*. Each moiety is divided into a number of small patrilineal groups, or totemic clans, named after a natural species (see Hernández 1941a:215ff for further discussion and complications). Finally, within each tribal area, different groups of people inhabit certain parts of the country on a more or less permanent basis; these groups are called hordes (*djog*) (Hernández 1941a:220-221). Hernández 1941a:221 hypothesises that these hordes were originally totemic groups, or "localised totemic clans" (as Elkin put it in an editorial comment to Hernández 1941a:221), and that recent demographic changes have interfered with the original system.

Throughout the region it was believed that spirit children inhabited the large permanent waterholes, where they reside in large numbers (Hernández 1941b:122, Kaberry 1936), having been placed there by mythological snakes (Crawford 1968:105). According to Kaberry 1936:394 the process of conception is believed to occur as follows:

A father finds a spirit-child when he is out hunting or fishing alone. He may spear a fish or animal which is near the water-hole; this either disappears or is brought back to the camp by the man, cooked, eaten, and sometimes shared with his wife. That night he dreams that he sees the spirit-child playing with his spears or his wife's paper bark; he thrusts it towards her and it enters by the foot.

As is the case elsewhere in the Kimberley, the dead — particularly males — were placed on platforms in trees, rather than buried in the ground (see Kaberry 1935 for details). According to Capell 1938:385, the Kwini believe that on death a person becomes a *juwaaari*, and the *bumanggin* 'shade' goes to Bundulmirri, who lives on an island located to the east or north-east (Capell 1938:386); this Bundulmirri is the son of Wolaroo, the creator of all things, including the moieties.

The northern Kimberley peoples, particularly the Ngarinyin and Worrora, are widely known for their Wandjina (/warnjina/) paintings, which depict *Wandjinas*, mouthless mythical beings associated with the weather (Crawford 1968). It seems however that these paintings were largely associated with those groups of the far northern Kimberley people who resided to the west of the Drysdale

River. To the east of the Drysdale, the *Wandjina* cult is less in evidence. Snakes predominate in the paintings and mythologies of the Forrest River peoples, where they play a similar role to *Wandjinas* (Crawford 1968:103); in addition, many paintings in the eastern region depict natural species, and represent child spirits associated with the snake Brimera (Crawford 1968:105, Capell 1938:388). Furthermore, whereas *Wandjinas* were traditionally painted on the walls of caves, to the east of the Drysdale paintings were done on cliff faces (Capell 1938:388).

Among the texts I recorded in 1988 are two myths: one a rather lengthy flood story, the other short a story about the emu (see §4.2 below). Translations of other myths from Kalumburu area may be found in Parez nd:37-39, and from the Forrest River region, in Kaberry 1935:434-436 and Capell 1938:387. More importantly, Capell 1972:157-168 contains a number of mythologically significant texts from the Forrest River area, in the local traditional language, together with interlinear and free translations, as well as extensive commentary.

0.6. Previous work on Gunin

Little previous work has been done on the Gunin language, and there is no available description other than the present work. A short wordlist of approximately 500 words in the language, however, is included in McGregor forthcoming a.

Missionaries were the first to study the language, and possibly some also learnt to speak it with some degree of fluency. The Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies holds three manuscripts by T. Gil, superior of the mission from 1926 to 1943 — a wordlist (Gil 1934a), and two translations of religious texts (1934b and 1934c) — into the Pela language, which may be Gunin. The former New Norcia Mission (the one-time parent mission for Kalumburu) holds a number of exercise books of wordlists from the Drysdale River area, in which Gunin may be represented. (Unfortunately, it has not yet been possible to peruse these materials, although a visit to New Norcia is planned for late 1993.)

During his extensive northern Australian field trip of 1938-1939, in which he gathered data on many Kimberley and Arnhem Land languages, Arthur Capell visited the Forrest River Mission where he recorded some lexical and grammatical information on the local language varieties (see above pages 5-6), as well as a few texts. He collected sufficient lexical information to compile a 34 page wordlist (Capell nd), which remains unpublished. Various of his writings on Kimberley languages include snippets of information on Gunin (e.g. Capell 1940, Capell 1966, Capell & Coate 1984), and his collection of cave painting myths (Capell 1972) contain some texts in the Forrest River language.

Anthony Peile, a missionary linguist, recorded (probably in the 1960s) a wordlist in Gunin (Peile nd). Shortly afterwards, in 1970, three Summer Institute of Linguistics linguists surveyed the north east Kimberley region (Glasgow, Hocking & Steiner nd), and recorded a number of words and sentences in Gunin (Summer Institute of Linguistics 1971).⁷ There is a high level of agreement

⁷ I am grateful to the Summer Institute of Linguistics, Australian Aborigines and Islanders Branch, for permission to copy these manuscripts, and use them in this study.

between their wordlist and my own.

Due to the limitations of my own Gunin corpus, I have employed information from various of Capell's writings — including not just material he specifies as Gunin, but also (where it helps to fill in gaps in the description) material on other Forrest River languages⁸ — and from Summer Institute of Linguistics 1971. Information from these other sources is clearly distinguished as such (see Abbreviations, page 4 above), and has been retranscribed into the present orthography; in places words and sentences have been reglossed, where the earlier sources are clearly in error (e.g. in glossing second person forms as first person forms).

Various anthropologists have studied the Kwinin and neighbouring peoples of the Kalumburu to Oombulgurri region. These include Adolphus Elkin (1930s), Phyllis Kaberry (1930s), Peter Lucich (1960s), and Ian Crawford (1960s). Dom Theodore Hernández, a missionary stationed at the Drysdale River Mission during the early years of its relocation to Kalumburu, also undertook some anthropological investigations. Amongst the writings of these anthropologists a number of Gunin words may be found, although they are not always distinguished as such. Most important among these are Crawford 1982, which provides an extensive list of plant names from the Kalumburu area, as well as words for various geographical and seasonal phenomena. Although Crawford, unfortunately, does not give a name to the language, it is almost certainly Gunin: his main collaborator was Mary Pundilow, a Gunin woman (according to Dolores Jedmoro), and of the five terms I gathered for plants, four are identical with words in this source.

1. Phonology

1.1. Phoneme inventory

Gunin has seventeen consonant phonemes and six vowels, for all but one of which length is distinctive. They are as shown in Tables 1.1 and 1.2 and respectively (see next page).

This inventory is identical to the phoneme inventory for Wunambal (Vászolyi 1972/1973), and is reasonably typical for an Australian language (Dixon 1980:129ff.). The consonant inventory is quite unexceptional; Worroran languages from all groups display the same sets of consonants (only Unggumi and Worlaja (Alan Rumsey pers.comm.) appear to be exceptional in distinguishing between lamino-dental and lamino-palatal stops and nasals). As in other Australian languages, there are corresponding stops and nasals for each point of articulation, and corresponding laterals at each non-peripheral point of articulation. There are two *r*-like or 'rhotic' segments: /*rr*/, an apico-alveolar tap or trill; and /*r*/, an alveolar to post-alveolar glide. These phonemes pattern quite differently phonotactically, and belong with the laterals and glides respectively (McGregor 1988a). The most unusual feature is the large number of vowels: many Australian languages show only three contrasting vowels, sometimes without a length distinction — although five vowel systems are found in Ngarinyin (e.g. Rumsey 1982:1-2) and Worrorra.

⁸ I am mindful, of course, of the dangers of including such information; however, linguistic data included in Capell's writings attests to his claim that the Forrest River languages are particularly closely related, and nothing critical hangs on the non-Gunin materials.

	Bilabial	Apico-alveolar	Apico-post-alveolar	Lamino-palatal	Dorso-velar
Stops	<i>b</i>	<i>d</i>	<i>rd</i>	<i>j</i>	<i>g</i>
Nasals	<i>m</i>	<i>n</i>	<i>m</i>	<i>ny</i>	<i>ng</i>
Laterals		<i>l</i>	<i>rl</i>	<i>ly</i>	
Tap		<i>rr</i>			
Glides	<i>w</i>		<i>r</i>	<i>y</i>	

Table 1.1: *Consonant phonemes*

	Front		Central	Back	
	Short	Long		Short	Long
High	<i>i</i>	<i>ii</i>	<i>i</i>	<i>u</i>	<i>uu</i>
Mid	<i>e</i>	<i>ee</i>		<i>o</i>	<i>oo</i>
Low				<i>a</i>	<i>aa</i>

Table 1.2: *Vowel phonemes*

As might be expected given the small corpus, minimal and near minimal pairs are almost non-existent. However, it is useful to illustrate the phonemic status of at least the 'suspicious pairs'; to this end, some examples are listed which show these segments in similar phonetic environments — where it would appear unlikely that they could be allophones of a single phoneme.

[1] Apical contrasts

• Stops /*d*/ and /*rd*/

/gadi/ 'run' /bardaw/ 'bandicoot'
/wida/ 'upper leg' /birdeeni/ 'liddle'

• Nasals /*n*/ and /*rn*/

/ngaan/ 'sing' /ngame/ 'listen'
/winmira/ 'take this' /gammin/ 'cave'

• Laterals /*l*/ and /*rl*/

/galumbu/ 'spear' /gaarli/ 'boomerang'

/wulu/ 'spirit place' /murlu/ 'bluetongue lizard'

• Rhotics /r/ and /rr/

/baran/ 'widow' /baarra/ 'speech, language, words'
 /nguree/ 'hungry' /ngurru/ 'maybe'
 /giraa/ 'country' /birra/ 'ground'

[2] Vowel contrasts

• Length

/bama/ 'you do' /maaba/ 'old man'
 /wiji/ 'sore' /jiimi/ 'devil'
 /wungurr/ 'snake' /luumbaana/ 'mullet'
 /nyine/ 'with' /boonee/ 'big turtle'
 /wunborlu/ 'blue bone' /dooru/ 'beard'

• /i/ vs. /i:/ vs. /e/ vs. /a/

/bindi/ 's/he fell' /bini/ 'he, she' /been/ 'climb up' /bani/ 'you sing'

• /u/ vs. /i:/ vs. /o/ vs. /a/

/burra/ 'they did' /birra/ 'sand, ground' /boorra/ 'far away' /baarra/ 'speech, word'

• /e/ vs. /o/

/geeji/ 'now' /gooya/ 'crocodile'

1.2. Phonetic realisations of the phonemes

1.2.1. Consonants

Stops are generally unaspirated, and show both voiced and voiceless allophones. Voiceless allophones are most commonly found in word initial position. However, not all word initial stops are voiceless, and there are differences in the frequency of voiced allophones according to place of articulation. Thus, word initial /j/ is almost always realised by the voiced [j], as in *jiimi* 'spirit', pronounced [ʃi:mi]; and the apical stop /d/ is also usually realised as a voiced [d] (or [d̪], presuming the apical contrast is neutralised in this environment — see §1.3 below). However, the peripheral stops /b/ and /g/ are often voiceless word initially, as in the not uncommon pronunciation of *gaabu* 'not' as [ka:bu] — which appears to be in free variation with [ga:bu]. In other environments voiced

allophones predominate for all stops, although voiceless allophones do occasionally occur intervocalically, apparently in free variation with voiced allophones. Thus, one may hear [ka:pu] or [ga:pu] for *gaabu* 'not'. Following nasals and laterals, only voiced allophones appear to occur: thus, for example, *wumbul* 'eye' is pronounced [wɔmbɔl], and *yalgi* 'teenage boy' is pronounced [jælgɪ].

Nasals and laterals are normally voiced throughout, and show little allophony as far as I can determine. The tap /rr/ is normally realised by a single apical tap, sometimes by a trill. Phonetically, the glide /r/ is an alveolar or post-alveolar frictionless continuant, IPA [ɹ] or [ɻ]. The glides /w/ and /y/ are normally realised by [w] and [j] respectively, except in the environment of /u/ and /i/ respectively, where they are frequently elided.

1.2.2. Vowels

As might be expected, there is somewhat less allophonic variation in vowel quality in Gunin than in languages such as Gooniyandi which show the more typical (for Australian languages) three vowel system (e.g. McGregor 1990:58ff). And in fact, some vowels show no discernible allophonic variation. This holds true for all long vowels, which are realised by phonetically long vowels as follows: /ii/ by long cardinal [i:]; /uu/ by long cardinal [u:]; /aa/ by the long back low vowel [ɑ:]; /ee/ by long cardinal [e:]; and /oo/ by long cardinal [o:]. Likewise, the two mid vowels /e/ and /o/ are realised by segments close to cardinal [e] and [o] respectively, with little detectable allophony.

Two important qualifications must be made. First, an apico-postalveolar consonant almost always induces *r*-colouring in a preceding vowel — and incidentally, *r*-colouring of the vowel is perhaps the most important phonetic cue to post-alveolar articulation of apical consonants. This is illustrated in the following examples (where the dot under the vowel indicates *r*-colouring)

/mirdmirdgaalu/	→	[mɪ̣ḍmɪ̣ḍgɑ:lu]	'policeman'
/gurlii/	→	[gɔ̣lɪ:]	'blood'
/wunborlu/	→	[wɔ̣nbɔ̣lu]	'blue bone fish'

R-colouring does not necessarily extend throughout the duration of a vowel, and particularly if the vowel is long, difference in the quality over time may be discerned as the articulators move into position for the consonant: long vowels tend to show a "pure" quality until almost the beginning of consonantal occlusion. Short vowels, by contrast may sound *r*-coloured throughout. Following vowels seem not to be affected as significantly by *r*-colouring as preceding vowels.

Second, in a similar way, a following palatal segment tends to induce an *i*-glide towards the end of the vocalic articulation — unless the vowel is /i/, in which case the allophone [i] is invariably heard. Thus, for example:

/geeji/	→	[ge: ⁱ ji]	'now'
/mayalmirngay/	→	[ma: ⁱ ælmɪ̣ŋgɑ:]	'long necked turtle'

where the raised ⁱ indicates a diphthongal glide towards [i].

In keeping with their relatively unmarked character, short /i/, /u/ and /a/ show somewhat greater allophonic variation than do long, central and mid vowels. Perhaps the most striking feature is that /i/ and /u/ are generally realised as laxer [ɪ] and [ʊ] respectively, except word finally, where the normal allophones are [i] and [u] respectively, as illustrated in the following examples:

/dinjil/	→	[dɪnʝɪl]	'navel'
/jiimi/	→	[ʝi:mi]	'devil, spirit'
/dili/	→	[dɪli]	'heart'
/muru/	→	[mʊɾu]	'face'
/wuyu/	→	[wʊ'ju]	'ear'

The high central vowel /i/ is generally realised by [i]; however, it is sometimes more fronted, and sometimes more backed than this, contributing to some confusion with the vowels /i/ and /u/ which have allophones towards the central region. Sometimes it is realised by a vowel within the upper region of [ə], thus giving rise to confusion with raised central allophones of /a/.

The low vowel /a/ shows (as might be expected) perhaps the widest range of allophonic variation, from fronted [æ] to backed [ɑ], and into the lower to middle regions of [ə]. Although conditioning factors are not yet understood fully, it does seem that neighbouring palatal consonants have a fronting effect (in addition to the *i*-glide commented on above), while neighbouring velars have a backing effect, engendering the allophone [ɑ].

1.3. Phonotactics

Roots in Gunin almost always begin with a consonant and usually end in a vowel. The first tendency is the strongest, and less than a score of free roots in the present corpus have initial vowels: eight begin with /a/, six with /aa/, one with /e/ and two with /oo/. However, there is a cross-referencing morpheme *a-* (phonemically /a/) which may be prefixed to certain bound nominal roots and inflecting verbs, and because of it a significant number of polymorphemic words begin with a vowel. No known words begin with /i/, and whether any words begin with /i/ or /u/ (or their long variants) is an issue yet to be resolved: it is probable that the occasional word that has been heard with an initial /i/ or /u/ — e.g. the word for a type of snake, which has been written *ungud* in many sources — should be analysed phonemically as having an initial sequence /yi/ or /wu/ respectively, as is the case in many Kimberley languages (see e.g. Rumsey 1982:14 and McGregor 1990:54). If this is the case, then the only permissible root initial vowels are non-high vowels.

Not every consonant, however, may occur word initially. /ly/ and /rr/ are not permitted at all, and apical stops, nasals, laterals and glides are relatively infrequent in this position. Thus, peripheral and laminal stops, nasals and glides are the most frequent initial segments. At this stage it is not known whether the contrast between apico-alveolar and apico-postalveolar articulation is maintained (as in Ngarinyin — Rumsey 1982) or neutralised word initially (as in Wunambal — Vászolyi 1972/1973).

The second tendency is somewhat weaker, and over ninety roots in the corpus have final consonants. The liquids /l/, /rl/ and /rr/ are by far the most frequent word final consonants,

accounting for around 50% of instances: /rr/ for almost 30%, and /l/ for almost 20%. As in other Kimberley languages, the liquid /ly/ does not occur word finally. Nasals are the next most frequent final consonants, and account for about 30% of root final consonants: /n/ for around 15%, /m/ for around 8%, while the other nasals contribute just a few percent each. The only attested word final stops are /j/ and /g/, which are found almost exclusively in a handful of preverbs. Finally, the glides /r/, /w/ and /y/ each occur word finally in only one or two roots.

A fair number of intramorphemic consonant clusters are permitted in Gunin. The overwhelming majority are found intervocally, the only exceptions being the initial sequence /br/ and the two final sequences /lg/ and /n.gr/.⁹ The phonetic sequences /brr/ and /gr/ have been occasionally heard, both by myself and by other investigators, including Capell, Kaberry and Elkin. However, it seems highly likely that these are in fact realisations of the sequences /birr/ and /gir/ respectively; this is attested to by stress placement (which in a number of words showing the putative consonant sequences would be assigned to the wrong syllable), and by virtue of the fact that in careful speech the high central vowel can be heard. The sequence [bɪ] is attested once only, in the word ['bɪnggar] 'daytime', and it is possible that phonemically it also involves an /i/ intermediate between the first two consonants. (Capell & Coate 1984:15 agree, and suggest that initial clusters in all Worrorran languages always involve an intermediate /i/.) The two root final sequences /lg/ and /n.gr/ are each attested once only.¹⁰

Intervocalic consonant clusters within morphemes are subject to a number of constraints. With three exceptions, they involve two consonants only. The exceptional three member clusters are /lmb/, /lngg/ (i.e. /lŋg/) and /mbr/ (and as per the discussion of the last paragraph, the last of these may well involve an intermediate /i/ between the /b/ and the /r/); each of these is attested once only.

Table 1.3 (next page) shows the permitted two member intervocalic consonant clusters. As this tabulation shows, only a small fraction of the possible two member consonant clusters are actually attested; what is striking, however, is the comparability with other Kimberley languages, including the related language Ngarinyin (Rumsey 1982:14-16), and unrelated Gooniyandi (McGregor 1990:73-77). Although more clusters will no doubt be found in a larger corpus, a couple of generalisations are striking enough to warrant mention. First, the bulk of consonant clusters are either nasal-stop, liquid-nasal or liquid-stop clusters; in a few instances the first member is a nasal or liquid, second a glide, /r/ or /w/.¹¹ If we assume a sonorance hierarchy from least to most sonorant — viz. stop, nasal, liquid, glide — we can state the generalisation that in a consonant cluster, the first member may not be less sonorant than the second. The only exceptions are the three relatively rare glide-final clusters. Second, in terms of place of articulation, non-peripherals (apicals

⁹ In the practical orthography adopted for writing Gunin in this description, a dot separating an *n* and a *g* indicates the consonant sequence of the apical nasal /n/ followed by the velar /g/; the digraph *ng*, by contrast, represents the velar nasal, IPA ŋ.

¹⁰ Interestingly, the sequence /rn.gr/ is the only permissible three member intervocalic consonant cluster in Gooniyandi (McGregor 1990:73).

¹¹ Thus, as in other Kimberley languages, /r/ and /rr/ pattern quite differently phonotactically: /r/ patterns most like the glides /w/ and /y/, whilst /rr/ patterns most like the laterals. This argues against grouping /r/ and /rr/ together as rhotics, as has been suggested by e.g. Dixon 1980:144-145; see further McGregor 1988a.

and laminals) account for the vast majority of first segments in non-homorganic clusters, whilst preipherals predominate as the second member of such clusters. (Granted these two observations, the fact that /lŋg/ and /lmb/ are the only attested three member clusters involving an initial lateral is not surprising.) Third, homorganic nasal-stop clusters occur at all places of articulation; these are the most frequent consonant clusters by dictionary count.

First member

	<i>b</i>	<i>d</i>	<i>rd</i>	<i>j</i>	<i>g</i>	<i>m</i>	<i>n</i>	<i>m</i>	<i>ny</i>	<i>ng</i>	<i>l</i>	<i>rl</i>	<i>ly</i>	<i>rr</i>	<i>w</i>	<i>r</i>	<i>y</i>
<i>b</i>				X		X	X		X	X		X		X			
<i>d</i>						X											
<i>rd</i>								X									
<i>j</i>							X	X	X							X	
<i>g</i>							X	X		X	X					X	
<i>m</i>								X			X					X	
<i>n</i>																	
<i>m</i>																	
<i>ny</i>																	
<i>ng</i>											X	X			X		
<i>l</i>																	
<i>rl</i>																	
<i>ly</i>																	
<i>rr</i>																	
<i>w</i>												X					
<i>r</i>						X										X	
<i>y</i>																	

Table 1.3: Intervocalic consonant clusters in Gunin roots

It might also be observed that nasals and liquids, the most frequent initial consonants in consonant clusters are also the most frequent word final consonants, while stops and glides are rare in both positions. The rarity of apicals as second consonants in clusters (except for homorganic clusters) is matched by their rarity word initially.

In addition to the clusters shown in Table 1.3, a few more consonant clusters are found between morphemes, and between formatives at reduplication boundaries within monomorphemic roots. For instance, sequences of a stop followed by a nasal are permissible only in these environments, as are virtually all stop-stop and nasal-nasal clusters.

Counts were made of the frequency of roots of *n* syllables in my own corpus, for values of *n* from one to five, with the following results (inflecting verb roots were not included in this count, due to difficulties in segmentation — see below §2.8.2):

No. of syllables	1	2	3	4	5
Non-preverbs	3%	54%	34%	8%	<1%
Preverbs	24%	53%	18%	5%	0%

As this shows, the vast majority of roots in the language have between one and three syllables, with somewhat over half showing just two syllables. It also shows clearly that — as in other Kimberley languages — preverbs (which are almost invariant verbal particles; see §2.8.3.1) show significantly fewer syllables than words of other parts of speech.¹²

Finally I mention that all monosyllabic lexical roots in Gunin must be at least two morae in size: they must be either CV: or CV(:)C (there are no vowel initial monosyllables). Thus, for example, open monosyllabic roots such as *luu* 'snake', *naa* 'you (singular)', *mee* 'vegetable food', and closed monosyllabic roots such as *been* 'climb down', *darr* 'stand' and *wurl* 'lie' are permitted, but open monosyllables involving a short vowel are not.

1.4. Stress

Stress has a purely delimitative function in Gunin: no two words are distinguished by placement of stress. It is entirely predictable, and always falls on the initial syllable of a word. This holds irrespective of the 'size' of the initial syllable. Thus, if the initial syllable is a vowel, it is still stressed, as in *'amaarr* 'bone of an animal', *'aarru* 'stone', and *'anggarra* 'foot'.

We begin by discussing stress in simple roots — that is, roots which are not reduplications. If a simple root has more than three syllables, there is usually another stressed syllable in addition to the first. This is the third syllable, as in: *'galamanda* 'paddle'; *'girranggarlu* 'brolga'; and *'ngarringurdugal* 'apple'. As these examples show, the second stressed syllable is usually somewhat less stressed than the first. If the root has two or three syllables, only the first syllable is normally stressed. However, some trisyllabic simple roots do bear stress on their third syllable, especially if it is closed. For example: *'amangarr* 'ankle' and *'jungurram* 'boab tree'.

Roots which are reduplications of meaningless formatives, as well as stems which consist of reduplicated roots, show somewhat different patterns of stress assignment. Each reduplicated formative or morpheme is separately stressed, as though it were a separate unit. This holds

¹² Interestingly, the figures for preverbs are almost identical with those for the corresponding part of speech in Gooniyandi (McGregor 1990:90), although for roots of other parts of speech Gooniyandi shows significantly more trisyllabic roots, and considerably fewer bisyllabic roots. I suspect that there is an explanation for the latter discrepancy: my Gunin word list is a short one of around 400 of the most common roots. For parts of speech other than preverbs, these roots also tend to be shorter than less common roots — an observation borne out by an inspection of the words for plant species listed in Crawford 1982.

irrespective of the number of syllables in the reduplicated unit, and whether reduplication is partial or total. For instance, the word for policeman is *mirdmirdgaalu*, a complex root or stem involving the reduplication of the monosyllabic *mird* plus *gaalu*; *mird* is unattested in Gunin, but means 'tie up' in a number of languages to the south (including Gooniyandi and Kija); likewise, *gaalu* is not yet attested in Gunin, but is clearly cognate with *-gali* 'good at doing' in Gooniyandi. This four syllable word appears to have its first two syllables equally stressed; moreover, the third syllable is also assigned some stress. Some other examples are: *'yali'yali* 'tiger snake'; *'wirri,mul,mul* 'eyelid'; and *'waa'wanba* 'crazy'.

Stress in polymorphemic words consisting of a root plus one or more prefixes appears to be governed by the same rules of stress assignment as in simple roots. That is, the initial syllable of the (morphologically complex) word is stressed, and so is the third in words of more than three syllables. Thus, the first and third syllables of *'gayamangu* 'your shadow' and *'gamal,manda* 'your chest' are stressed, even though these are the second syllables of the bound roots *-yamangu* 'shoulder' and *-malmanda* 'chest' respectively. Similar patterns occur in inflecting verbs. Suffixes are somewhat different in behaviour. Monosyllabic suffixes appear to 'cohere' with the root to which they are attached, whereas suffixes of two or more syllables are stressed on their initial syllable. Thus, for example, *'ngawagu* 'to/for water' and *'ngimda'bagu* 'where to' are stressed as words of three and four syllables respectively, but *'na'ngindalu* 'at/by you' and *'anggaranyina* 'with a foot' are each stressed as separate one, two and three syllable words.

The phonetic correlates of stress are not known for certain. Although stressed syllables tend to be more phonetically prominent than neighbouring unstressed syllables, the cues for stress appear to be quite different in Gunin from English, and has this caused some difficulties in determining the location of the stressed syllable. Both pitch and length are independent of stress. Although a stressed syllable may be higher pitched than a neighbouring unstressed syllable, this is not invariably the case, and especially when words are cited in isolation, the pitch often rises on each successive syllable, independent of the placement of stress. And whereas in some Aboriginal languages long syllables attract stress — e.g. Gooniyandi (McGregor 1990: 121-123) — this does not hold in Gunin. Short and long syllables may equally be stressed. For instance, the first syllable of *'amaarr* 'bone of animal' is stressed even though it consists of a single short vowel and the following syllable is not only closed, but consists of a long vowel.

If these facts make it somewhat difficult for the English speaker to distinguish stress, the major difficulty they face is the fact that stress is independent of vowel quality.¹³ In English there is a correlation between vowel quality and stress such that the central vowel schwa is always unstressed. In Gunin, by contrast, the high central vowel may be stressed. In fact, in initial syllables it is always stressed, and usually quite short. Thus in a word such as *'gira* 'country', both duration (the first vowel is short, the second long) and vowel quality conspire to give the impression to the English speaker that stress falls on the second syllable — thus, many early anthropologists spelt this word *gra*. It requires careful listening to attune the ears to the phonetics of Gunin stress, and perceive the first vowel, and the initial stress on the short syllable /gi/ in which it occurs. Once this difficulty

¹³ I am grateful to Janet Fletcher for assistance in identifying stressed syllables in Gunin, and distinguishing phonetic features which do not serve as cues for stress in the language.

is overcome, it becomes possible to understand the stress pattern in a word like *'birreng,gaana* 'they sit'. In non-careful speech this sounds like a trisyllabic word with stress on its first two syllables, a configuration of stressed syllables which would contradict the rules described above. In fact, it is a four syllable word, with stress on the first short syllable, whose vowel is central, and the penultimate long syllable — which is perfectly in keeping with the above stress rules.

2. Morphology

2.1. Parts of speech in Gunin

The following word classes may be identified in Gunin:

NOMINALS: an open class of words which can occur with postpositions, and denote entities and qualities; §2.2.

PRONOMINALS: a closed set of indexicals which index by means of person and number features; §2.3.

ADVERBIALS: an apparently closed class of words which convey circumstantial type meaning of time, place and manner; §2.4.

PARTICLES: a small closed class of non-inflecting words which may contain full clauses in their scope; §2.5.

PREVERBS: a small but possibly open class of (almost) invariant verbal particles which precede inflecting verbs, and convey most of the lexical meaning of the verbal construction — recall also that preverbs are phonotactically distinctive (§1.3 above); §2.8.

INFLECTING VERBS: a very small and closed class of verb roots which take inflections according to person and number of the subject and object (if transitive), tense, mood, aspect, etc.; §2.8.

INTERJECTIONS: a small possibly closed class of words which often stand by themselves as complete utterances; §2.5.

In addition to these classes of free words are a number of different types of bound morphemes, including nominal and verbal prefixes and suffixes (§2.2 and §2.8), postpositions (§2.6) and enclitics (§2.7).

2.2. Nominal morphology

A number of different subtypes of nominals are identifiable in Gunin, the most important of which are: ordinary open class nouns; adjectives; prefixing nominals; determiners; kinterms; quantifiers; and proper nouns. All of these bar the open class nouns (and possibly adjectives) belong to relatively small closed classes, the members of which may be listed. We discuss the various types in order the following subsections. It should be noted, however, that it is not claimed that these classes are emically significant; nor, as presently defined, are they mutually exclusive; for instance some determiners are also prefixing nouns.

2.2.1. Nouns and adjectives

Open class nouns in Gunin belong to one of five genders. One gender includes all nouns denoting human beings, irrespective of sex; the other four genders contain all and only the non-human nouns. Adjectives, by contrast, do not have their own inherent genders, and may occur in NPs with nouns of any gender, in which case the phrase takes the gender of the head noun.

Gender is not marked on the noun itself; rather, it is marked by agreement or cross-referencing prefixes attached to prefix taking nouns and inflecting verbs. The forms for the nominal cross-referencing prefixes are given in Table 2.1 of §2.2.3 below, and for verbal cross-referencing prefixes, in Table 2.4 (§2.8.2.1.2); the genders are labelled according to the initial consonant of the cross-referencing prefix. The following examples illustrate gender concord in Gunin:

- (1) B gender:
benyjin bi-yangga[†]
man B -goes
'The man is walking.'
- (2) A gender:
leewa gadi a -yanga[†]
dog run A -goes
'The dog is running.'
- (3) W gender:
darr wi-rranggu laanggi
stand W -be tree
'The tree is standing.'
- (4) M gender:
gunurru bugurr mi-rranggu[†]
wind blow M -be
'Wind is blowing.'
- (5) N gender:
duurr nin-da warna
down N -put honey
'Put down the honey.'

The B gender is the human gender, and all human nouns belong to it. The principles of assignment of the non-human nouns to the other genders is not quite so clear. It does seem however that most animals have A gender, while the majority of trees and other objects are assigned to the W gender; exceptionally, the boab tree (itself an exceptional tree!) is classified as A. M class words seem to generally denote topographic features and the elements — which are non-entity like in nature. Included in this gender are words for the sea, wind, grass, rocks (but not individual stones, which are of the W gender). Only a few nominals in the corpus are definitely known to be of N gender — *wama* 'honey', and *dinggi* 'dinghy' (a borrowing from English) are two; Capell & Coate 1984:81 suggest a semantic designation for this class as "artificial". It should be cautioned, however, that the genders of only a small number of nouns are known, and much more work is required to establish whether genders are semantically motivated — and if so, according to what criteria.

2.2.2. Nominal suffixes

Gunin shows few nominal suffixes. There appears to be a single suffix, *-ngay* CHAR, which forms new nominal stems, and a non-stem forming suffix *-nba* 'much, a large quantity of'. In addition, there is a set of pronominal suffixes which cross-reference the possessor of certain kinterms (see §2.2.5 below). The first two suffixes are discussed in order in this section.

[1] *-ngay* CHAR(acteristic)

This suffix appears to form a nominal stem from another nominal, where the new stem indicates the possession of the property or quality denoted by the original root. Sometimes species names are formed in this way, the quality being a prominent characteristic of the species; for example, *mayilm ima-ngay* (long:neck-CHAR) 'long necked turtle'. Terms for colours are mostly constructed in this way, as illustrated by e.g. *raabungay* 'white', *juwangay* 'black', and *malangay* 'red' (none of the forms to which *-ngay* is added are attested as separate roots, however). *-ngay* appears to have only stem-forming uses; there is no evidence that it can be used to relate the nominal to which it is attached to the remainder of the clause in the manner of a comitative (as in *Come with me!*).

It seems highly likely that *-ngay* CHAR is cognate with the (almost) pan-Worrorran comitative *-ngarri* (which is even found as far away as Gooniyandi), through a process of tap lenition and subsequent vowel loss. The fact that, like the Ngarinyin *-ngarri*, it may also be attached to the verb of a subordinate clause — on which see §3.3.2 below — adds further support to this suggestion.

[2] *-nba* 'much, a large quantity of'

This suffix indicates an abundant quantity of the referent, and is illustrated in (6) below:

- (6) aamba oormurru ganyi -nba -ngurru oormurrung
kangaroo hunt something-much-INDEF hunt
mee -nba jaarri mudna gunuba jaarri
food-much dig they:acted:on:it round:potato dig
mudna ganyanggu -nba jaarri mudna,
they:acted:on:it long:bush:potato-much dig they:acted:on:it
'They used to hunt kangaroos, and other things too; they had plenty of food, bush potatoes, etc. they dug up.'

2.2.3. Prefixing nominals

Like other Worrorran languages, Gunin has a set of pronominal prefixes which may be attached to nominals. These prefixes make the same category distinctions as do the free pronouns (see §2.3 below), and index some NP or entity bearing a specific relationship to the referent of the nominal to which the prefix is attached (the nature of this relationship will become clear shortly). These nouns do not have an inherent gender; rather, the prefixed noun takes the gender indicated by the prefix itself, and any agreeing pronominal prefix will be the same — see example (10) below. Table 2.1 shows the forms of these prefixes.

	Singular	Non-singular
1 exclusive	<i>ng- ~ ngV-</i>	<i>nyarr-*</i>
1 inclusive		<i>ngarr-*</i>
2	<i>g- ~ gV-</i>	<i>girr-*</i>
3	<i>b- ~ bV-</i>	<i>birr- ~ birra</i>
	<i>a-</i>	
	<i>w- ~ wV-</i>	
	<i>m- ~ mV-</i>	
	<i>n-*</i>	

Table 2.1: *Pronominal prefixes to nominals*

As this table indicates, there is some allomorphy in these prefixes. It is beyond the scope of the present description to account for the distribution of the allomorphs, and to address the question of whether it is possible to assign single forms to the morphemes, deriving the allomorphs by sandhi rules. In any case, little would be gained by developing such an account, since much machinery would be required to account for a relatively small closed set of forms.¹⁴ For to date only around a score of nominals in Gunin are definitely known to be prefixing, although one would expect possibly up to twice this number: Wunambal has around fifty (Vasse forthcoming).

The class of prefixing nominals includes nouns, adjectives and determiners.

A number of prefixing nouns are terms for parts of the human body. However, only a small fraction of body part nouns are prefixing.¹⁵ The following list includes not just terms for parts of the body, but also terms for entities closely associated with human beings: entities such as names, reflections and totems which contribute to the definition of human beings as persons — aspects of the personal domain or sphere (Bally 1926/forthcoming):

<i>-alama</i>	'mouth'
<i>-arl̩m̩ il̩m̩</i>	'shoulder'
<i>-nanggu</i>	'arm'
<i>-malmanda</i>	'chest'
<i>-olerr</i>	'muscle'
<i>-narr</i>	'bone'
<i>-rambal</i>	'body'
<i>-yamanggu</i>	'shadow, reflection'

¹⁴ For the same reason it seems pointless to analyse the non-singular forms further into person prefixes followed by number prefixes, although *rr* clearly marks the plural.

¹⁵ In Wunambal around a score of body part terms are prefixing; I have checked most of these with my Gunin collaborator without adding to the list.

<i>-arlngi</i>	'name'
<i>-dere[†]</i>	'totem' ¹⁶

Whether it is reasonable to characterise the above prefixing nouns as those most central to the person as I have suggested above remains a moot point, and requires further careful investigation; the list is merely suggestive. A rather different proposal has been made by Capell in various places (e.g. Capell 1972). He suggests that a single principle governs whether or not a nominal may take prefixes in any northern Kimberley language: "no prefixation without initial vowel". This is not borne out by the list above, although it would of course be easy to justify it by postulating underlying vowels for all of the above consonant-initial prefixing nouns. But nothing would be gained by doing this. The point is that in all northern Kimberley languages it is impossible to segment the prefixes from the roots in a mechanical way; it depends on how one sets up the morphophonemics. (See also Rumsey 1982:42-45 for criticisms of Capell's principle for Ngarinyin, and McGregor forthcoming b for Nyulnyul.)

Other than these ten nouns, another three known nouns are prefixing: *-enyjin* 'man'; *-amdi* 'thing'; and *-mirrige* 'individual'. (These glosses must be taken with a grain of salt.) It is not known whether the root for 'man' also means person (the word for 'woman' is non-prefixing); as might be expected, it has not been observed with A, M, W or N gender prefixes! The second noun *-amdi* which I have glossed 'thing' is particularly interesting, as it is sometimes translated as 'thing' (with an A prefix), and elsewhere as 'other' (with a B prefix, reference being human) and 'some' (with a third person plural prefix, in which case an indefinite number of human beings is referred to). The third noun is discussed below in §2.2.6.

The only known prefixing adjectives are: *-ormdide* 'long, tall', and *-ariwa* 'bad, wicked'; Capell 1940:256 also gives *-neewurr* 'big', but this noun does not occur in my corpus (it does however occur in Wunambal with the same meaning — Vasse forthcoming). The prefixing determiners are discussed in the next subsection.

2.2.4. Determiners

2.2.4.1. Definite determiners

Gunin displays a rich and complex class of determiners, definite and indefinite; but unfortunately the corpus is too small to permit resolution of a number of problems of analysis, and the exact senses of most (if not all) of the determiners remain obscure — and in places apparently contradictory. Definite determiners all take a prefix cross-referencing the referent of the NP. Tentatively, it is suggested that the definite determiners may be divided into two sets, demonstrative and endophoric determiners.

Demonstratives locate the referent with respect to the deictic centre of the speech situation, and

¹⁶ This prefixing noun is cited in Hernández 1941a:216, and claimed to be pan-Drysdale River area. Vasse forthcoming indicates that there is a prefixing noun meaning 'ritual meatfood' in Wunambal, but unfortunately does not give the term, so it is not known whether it is cognate with *-dere*.

at least two — and probably three or even four — degrees of distance are distinguished. The following are represented by partial paradigms in my corpus, and to a lesser extent in Summer Institute of Linguistics 1971:

-nyja proximal 'this'; and
-ngga distal 'that'

Confusingly, Capell & Coate 1984:134 give *-ngga* as the "base" form for an alternative set of first degree deictics 'this' in the Wunambalic languages, although they do not specifically say that it occurs with this sense in Gunin. They go on to give (Capell & Coate 1984:135) a set of three deictic roots: *-nya* (degree 1), *-gaya* ~ *-garra* (degree 2), and *-gali* (degree 3). Only the first of these is instantiated in my corpus (see below).

Other demonstratives found in the corpus include: *anyirngga* 'this', *winyjngga* 'that', *bugaya* 'there', and *gurrba* 'over there'. How the last two differ semantically remains unclear.

By endophoric determiners I mean determiners which index an entity not in terms of its spatial relation to the speech situation, but in respect to a more abstract deictic centre established within the here-now of the text itself. Two degrees of (conceptual?) distance appear to be distinguished by the endophoric determiners:

-nya proximal 'this'; and
-gila distal 'that'

The proximal endophoric determiner appears to be used in texts whenever the phrase has definite and specific reference, irrespective of whether it has been previously mentioned — apparently it serves a foregrounding function. Thus, in line (1) of §4.2 it actually establishes the referent as the individual the text is about. The distal endophoric determiner appears to be used for less specific and/or individuated referents, whose exact identity may not be relevant; they are relatively backgrounded in the text (see e.g. lines (1) and (8) of text 1, §4.1).

Paradigms for the determiners are rather incomplete. However, it is known that some of them do occur with first and second person prefixes, with senses that are difficult to pinpoint precisely. In addition, *-gila* 'that' shows some unusual allomorphy: predicted forms for the B and A genders, as well as the third person plural occur; however, for the first person singular and W, M and N genders, the nasal is inserted between prefix and root, as in *nga-nggila* (I-that) 'that in regard to me'.

2.2.4.2. Indefinite determiners

As in a number of Australian Aboriginal languages, Gunin has a set of determiners which show two major uses: interrogative and indefinite (Mushin 1993). The main ones are as follows:

nginde 'who, someone, somename'
ganya 'what, something'
ngindaba 'where, somewhere'

wunyjeya[†] 'when, sometime'
-ngunyja 'who'

A few possible additional members of the class are included in Summer Institute of Linguistics 1971 and Capell & Coate 1984, including: *wadi* 'how many' (Capell & Coate 1984:143), *ngindenginde* 'how many' (Summer Institute of Linguistics 1971), and *ngunda* 'how' (Summer Institute of Linguistics 1971). *Wadi* is almost certainly the particle 'perhaps' (§2.5); *ngindenginde* 'how many' is clearly a reduplication of *nginde* 'who'; and *ngunda* 'how' looks suspiciously like a misrepresentation of *nginde* 'who'.

As argued in McGregor 1990:146, the two major senses for each determiner are linked. What the determiners indicate is that the identity of the entity is not known to the speaker; the interrogative sense may or may not be engendered, depending on context. The plain determiner normally (but not always) has the interrogative interpretation. The following examples illustrate three of the above determiners in their roles as interrogative determiners:

(7) *ngirnde nguj bumangu*
 who hit he:hit:him
 'Who hit him?'

(8) *ngindaba giyangga*
 where you:go
 'Where are you going?'

(9) *ganya -gu ngurd gumara*[†]
 what -DAT hit you:hit:me
 'Why did you hit me.'

The indefinite interpretation is most commonly found when the determiner occurs with the enclitic *-nguru* INDEF (see page 42 below). Thus, *ngindenguru* 'something, I don't know what'.

Only one of the indefinite determiners is prefixing, *-ngunyja*. The only instance I have recorded shows the second person singular prefix ((10) below); however, Capell & Coate 1984:143 give a paradigm for all the third person categories.

(10) *gaalngi ga -ngunyja ganya*
 your:name you-what what
 'What is your name?'

This example suggests that *-ngunyja* may be the form used in requesting the name of a person or thing. Although there are no examples to hand of the usage of this root with third person prefixes, it seems reasonable to suppose that they are used when it is not so much the identity of the thing that is at stake, as its name. (In many Australian languages the regular word for 'who' is used in seeking the name of a non-human — see Mushin 1993 and McGregor 1990:148.)

2.2.5. Kinterms

In the Worroran languages it is common for kinterms to take suffixes indicating the person and number of the “possessor” of the relative (Capell & Coate 1984:116-124 and Rumsey 1982:46-51). Moreover, according to Capell & Coate 1984:117, the pronominal suffixes are normally identical with the set of pronominal enclitics which attach to verbs and indicate the indirect object of the verb, or someone affected by the action. Such a system of pronominal suffixes exists in Gunin. Unfortunately, however, details of the system remain unclear, and the forms for just a few of the suffixes are known. They appear to be as follows:

1sg	-φ ~ -ngu	naamba ‘my wife’; w imangu ‘my husband’ (w ima ‘husband’)
2sg	-nung ~ -nu	naambanung ‘your wife’
3sg	-ngung	naambangung ‘his wife’
3pl	-rrungburru	w imarrungburru ‘their husbands’ (cf. w ima ‘husband’)

Although Capell & Coate 1984:120 speak of a single set of possessor suffixes in the Worroran languages, Vasse forthcoming shows that there are in fact two sets in Wunambal: one a suffix cross-referencing the possessor and the other cross-referencing the possessed. These suffixes occur in the order possessor followed by possessed. And indeed, -rrungburru looks suspiciously like a complex form: -rrung indicating a third person non-singular possessor and -burru indicating a third person non-singular possession. If this is the case, then the other forms above may also be analysable: -nung as -nu-ng 2sg possessor and 3sg possessed (which fits semantically); -ngung as -ngu-ng 3sg possessor and 3sg possessed. And the exceptional -ngu for 1sg may in fact be the 3sg possessed form, with the regular -φ 1sg possessor. (Capell & Coate 1984:120 give -ra for 1sg in Forrest River language; this does not appear anywhere in my corpus.) No forms for the first and second person plurals appear in my corpus. However, Vasse forthcoming gives -ngarru[†] 1plI, -nyarru[†] 1plE, and -nurru[†] 2pl for Wunambal, which forms appear to be found with little variation across the Worroran languages (Capell & Coate 1984:120).

According to presently available information, not all kinterms are suffixing: some take the genitive form of the pronoun to indicate possession. Suffixing kinterms include: naamba- ‘wife’, w ima- ‘husband’, ngawu- ‘son (of a male)’, ngalya- ‘daughter (of a woman)’, ngurlu- ‘brother’, garra- ‘mother’, jiya- ‘father (of a male)’ and boo- ‘mother’s father (of a man)’. Non-suffixing kinterms include many of the corresponding kinterms where related through a female — e.g. baaba ‘mother’s father (of female)’ is non-suffixing, whereas boo mother’s father (of a man)’ is. Why some kinterms are suffixing and others are not is not yet known; nor is it known whether the two sets are mutually exclusive.

2.2.6. Quantifiers

Like most Aboriginal languages, Gunin shows few number words. In fact, there are distinct words (it appears) for the first two numbers only: -mirrige ‘one’ and majerri ‘two’. The term for ‘one’ is a prefixing noun, which takes a different prefix according to the class of the referent entity — e.g.

bumirrige ‘one person’, but amirrige ‘one dog’.¹⁷ Majerri may also have the dual postposition attached to it, presumably reinforcing the duality of the referent: majerri-miya ‘two’. There is no distinct term for ‘three’ or ‘a few’, as is the case in most Aboriginal languages, and ‘three’ is expressed by the combination of the words for ‘two’ and ‘one’, in that order:

- (11) majerri amirrige[†]
 two one (A gender entity)
 ‘three A class items’

A small number of other quantifying nominals are known: balangarra, which denotes a large but indefinite number, ‘many’; jaama ‘much, many’, which is used as a measure of non-countable masses, as well as countable collections of entities — see line (1) of text 2 (§4.2); amarrige[†] ‘very many’; and en.ga ‘all’. Summer Institute of Linguistics 1971 also gives the phrase jamu gaabu (much not) for ‘few’.

2.2.7. Proper nouns

These nominals are names for persons and places. In texts, proper nouns frequently occur with the definite endophoric determiner -nya — see line (3) of text 1 (§4.1).

2.3. Pronominals

Gunin free pronominals appear to be as shown in Table 2.2 (see next page). As the daggers on various forms indicate, this table has been compiled from various sources, since my own corpus contains only a few pronominals, these being rather difficult parts of speech to elicit (one is frequently given non-pronominal forms in response to requests for pronominals).

Like other Worroran languages, Gunin makes an inclusive vs. exclusive distinction in the first person non-singular; and interestingly the inclusive form is perspicuously composed of the second person singular and the first syllable of the first person singular, plus a further augment -rra. This additional augment would appear to involve a plural marker rr, which occurs in each of the plural free pronouns, as well as the pronominal prefixes (see Table 2.1). A four way distinction is made within the third person singular according to the gender of the referent; this distinction is not made in the third person non-singular, where a single form occurs. As the tabulation suggests, it is not so much that the contrast between the genders is neutralised in the non-singular as that only the third person human gender shows a non-singular form. What is neutralised, that is, is the number in the non-human genders — not gender in the non-singular.

¹⁷ In fact, this root is probably better glossed ‘individual’ than ‘one’, as it also takes the non-singular prefix birra-: birraimirrige ‘more than one person (individual)’ (see 2.2.3 above). Thus, majerri birraimirrige means ‘two people’.

	Singular	Non-singular
1 exclusive	<i>ngaya</i>	<i>nyarra ~ nyarru</i>
1 inclusive		<i>nangarra</i> [†]
2	<i>naa</i>	<i>nirra</i> [†] ~ <i>nirru</i> [†]
3	<i>bini</i>	<i>bireni</i>
	<i>aani</i> [†]	
	<i>wini</i> [†]	
	<i>mini</i> [†]	

Table 2.2: *Gunin pronominal roots*

Case-marking and number-marking postpositions may be attached to the above forms. Possessive pronouns are formed completely regularly by adding the genitive postposition *-nangga* to the above forms (see §2.6 below): e.g. *naa-nangga* (you-GEN) 'your, yours' and *ngaya-nangga* (me-GEN) 'my, mine'. *-miya* DU may be added to non-singular pronominal forms to specify dual number. Thus, *nangarra-miya* 'we two inclusive' and *nyarru-miya* 'we two exclusive'.

2.4. Adverbials

At least three different types of adverbials may be distinguished on semantic grounds: spatial adverbials, temporal adverbials, and manner adverbials.

[1] Spatial adverbials

Only a few spatial adverbials are represented in the corpus: *goyinbu* 'outside'; *boorra* 'far away'; *gude*[†] 'near'; *wunowee*[†] ~ *wunongay*[†] 'wide'; *burreni*[†] 'narrow'; *mayinggi* 'south'; *man.gunu* 'west, north'; and *marangu birdibirdi* 'east'.¹⁸

¹⁸ Since all other Kimberley languages I am familiar with have distinct terms for each of the four cardinal directions north, south, east, and west, which terms are used many circumstances, and in preference to left and right egocentric deixis, I was very surprised to elicit the same term for 'north' and 'west'. On inquiring further I was assured that there was no difference. The only explanation I can suggest is that it may have something to do with the fact that Kalumburu is located almost at the northern extremity of the Kimberley, from which point movement both to the north and to the west takes one quickly to the sea. Further, the status of the term for 'east' is also somewhat dubious: it would appear to be 'sun rise' — *marangu* means 'sun' — rather than a directional term as such. One wonders whether there may not be simply a south vs. non-south contrast in the cardinals.

[2] Temporal adverbials

Temporal adverbials provide information on the temporal location or extent of the referent situation. The known temporal adverbials of Gunin are:

<i>wununggule</i> 'long ago'	<i>wunyuju</i> [†] 'wet season' (January-February)
<i>geeji</i> 'already, now, before'	<i>mayarru</i> [†] 'wet season' (February-March)
<i>jarrga</i> 'now, today'	<i>bandemanya</i> [†] 'end of wet season' (April)
<i>wanggi</i> [†] 'soon'	<i>golorruru</i> [†] 'end of wet season' (end of April)
<i>wanggi</i> [†] 'by-and-by'	<i>yirma</i> [†] 'winter' (May-August)
<i>wuguli</i> [†] ~ <i>wugulwe</i> [†] 'tomorrow'	<i>yuwala</i> [†] 'summer' (September-November)
<i>gumamuni</i> [†] 'morning'	<i>jaward</i> [†] 'early wet season' (November-December)
<i>aama</i> 'night time'	
<i>biranggarr</i> 'daytime'	

The most interesting of these is *geeji*, which, as the gloss shows, can be used for an event that has already occurred (as in (13)), or that is occurring now, or even that is about to occur (as in (12)). All of these are, I suspect, contextualisations of a single core meaning. *Geeji* locates the event temporally with respect to some deictic centre — either that of the speech situation (as in (12)), or of the referent events (as in (13)) — and indicates that it is relevant to that point. Where the event occurred prior to the temporal deictic centre, the event must be currently relevant in that the effects of its occurrence remain; if it is located subsequent to the deictic centre, the relevance must be that the event is about to occur, or should occur. *Jarrga* 'now' also locates events with respect to the deictic centre of the speech situation or referent situation, but specifies that this provides a temporal location for the event. It is not used of events which are merely currently relevant to the deictic centre.

(12) *geeji bayeda*
now you:go
'You go.'

(13) *wurndij bindi geeji-di bambaning*
throw he:fell now -INT he:killed:him
'He threw a spear and killed him now.'

[3] Manner adverbials

These are also poorly represented in the corpus. The only known manner adverbials are: *golangu* 'on side' (as in 'lie on one's side'); *mamamangay* 'fast, quickly'; *bunyje* 'quickly'; and *wunyjin.ga* 'still, unmoving'.

(14) *marnamarna-ngayi baarra burranggu*[†]
fast -CHAR speak he:is
'He speaks too quickly.'

2.5. Particles and interjections

These are really two distinct word classes; they are treated together simply for expository convenience. Interjections always occur independently, as distinct minor clauses assigned to their own intonation unit. Particles, by contrast, normally occur in syntagm with a clause or part of a clause which they hold in their scope; however, particles are sometimes used as interjections.

[1] *gaabu* 'no'

This word is found in three main contexts: (a) as a clause level negative, indicating that the referent situation did not occur; (b) as an NP negative, where it conveys a privative sense — that the situation occurred despite the absence of the referent of the NP; and (c) as an interjection in a minor clause of its own. These uses are illustrated in the following examples, respectively:

- (15) anyarrga minya, marraya minya marraya; gaabu andirriwurru,
sick:one this sickness this sickness no it:fell:on:them
'They didn't get these sicknesses.' (Literally: 'These diseases did not fall on them.')
- (16) yirra gaabu nyerru^t
meat not we
'We have no meat.'
- (17) gaabu anguleningga^t
not it:is:alive
'No, it's still alive.' (In answer to question 'Is your dog dead?' — (22) below)

This particle sometimes takes the enclitic *-de* INT, which has the effect of intensifying the negative meaning expressed, as illustrated in the following example:

- (18) wajbala ga; maarlngarri gaabi-de birrgila wajbala
white:person ? white:person no -INT those white:person
gaabi-de,
no -INT
'There were no white people then.'

Finally, when used in an NP in the privative sense, *gaabu* 'not' sometimes takes the suffix *-n.ga*, the meaning of which remains opaque — as does the meaning of their combination.

- (19) marriya gaabun.ga yurr burrwone::, wanyjimayeningga,
sickness without sickness they:emerged good
'They used to be well, without sicknesses.'

[2] *munun.ga* 'don't'

The corpus shows just a single instance of this particle, which, it will be observed, also involves the (apparent) suffix *-n.ga*. *Munun.ga* occurs in a negative imperative clause, and for this reason has been glossed 'don't'.

- (20) gaabide, mary binya, miyal minya; jagal munun.ga: lalayi
oh:no Mary this hand this put don't dreamtime
thing, lalayi; bunga,
thing dreamtime ?
'"Oh, no!", Mary told us "Don't put our hands in the water, or the dreamtime thing will get angry and want to revenge you".'

[3] *wardi* 'perhaps'

This is perhaps the most interesting of the particles, and appears to normally occur clause initially. It indicates that the speaker is not certain of the validity of the proposition; it is thus a type of indefinite marker. And interestingly, like the indefinite determiners (§2.2.4.2 above), may be used both in the context of a question, where the hearer's opinion on the proposition is sought, and in plain statements of lack of knowledge. Furthermore, in the former case the particle usually occurs alone, whereas in the second, it normally occurs with the enclitic *-ngurru* INDEF. These two contextual senses are illustrated in the following examples, respectively:

- (21) wardi -ngurru gaala nganburrubin.gaa
perhaps-INDEF see they:might:see:us
'They might be looking at us.'
- (22) wadi naa-nangga leewa debarra anguna^t
perhaps you-GEN dog dead it:went
'Is your dog dead?'

[4] *yawu, aya, yaa* 'yes'

These three words translate as 'yes'; as yet, the semantic difference between them is unknown. They appear to be always used as interjections, never as particles. In the following example, *aya* is used as an interjection, set off on its own intonation contour, apparently reinforcing the validity of the proposition; presumably it can be glossed in this instance as 'yes indeed' or 'really'.

- (23) waj -biji andiwurru ganyaganyangurru agila, goya
throw-REP it:fell:on:them all:types that alligator
ngane ngud-biji, aya,
even hit -REP yes
'It fell on them, everything, things of all types; even the alligator fell down on top of them — really.'

[5] *ngay* 'here!'

This word, like the words for 'yes' discussed under [4], is invariably used as an interjection. It accompanies an offer of something to the addressee, as in:

(24) *ngay banmira yiirra*
 here! you:take:it meat
 'Here! Take this meat.'

2.6. Postpositions

Gunin does not show nominal case marking by means of suffixes, as is the case in some Pama-Nyungan languages. Instead, there is a system of postpositions which mark 'case-relations' (see Rumsey 1982:57-59 and McGregor 1990:174, 278ff. for more on the difference between case-marking postpositions and suffixes) — as well as number. Postpositions are bound morphemes which normally occur one per phrase; however, due to the paucity of nominal phrases with more than one word, it is not certain how strong this tendency is. Nor is it clear which constituent word the postposition will be normally attached to — a few examples show it attached to the final word while about the same number show it attached to the initial word. (In Ngarinyin it is most usually attached to the final word of a phrase (Rumsey 1982:58), whereas in Gooniyandi it is attached to the most important element (McGregor 1990:276).)

Table 2.3 shows the known postpositions in Gunin. It will be observed that there is neither an ergative nor an accusative postposition: NPs fulfilling the roles of subject in transitive and intransitive clauses and object in transitive clauses are unmarked by postpositions (or suffixes). In this respect Gunin resembles all other Worroran languages, but contrasts with languages from the nearby Nyulnyulan and Bunuban families, all of which show an ergative postposition.

Postposition	Gloss
<i>-ngindalu</i>	LOC(ative)
<i>-gu</i>	DAT(ive)
<i>-yanga</i>	ABL(ative)
<i>-we</i>	PURP(osive)
<i>-nyine</i>	INST(rumental)
<i>-gude</i>	COMIT(ative)
<i>-nangga</i>	GEN(itive)
<i>-miya</i>	DU(al)

Table 2.3: *Gunin postpositions*

Postpositions follow suffixes, and sometimes other postpositions. Line (5) of the first text (§4.1) shows a postposition following a pronominal suffix. And the corpus shows just one instance of a sequence of postpositions: *-nangga* GEN followed by *-nyine* INST, in *ngaya-nangga-nyine modogaa* (I-GEN-INST car) 'with (by) my car'. Other sequences may of course be possible; in particular, it is expected that *-miya* DU may be followed by case-marking postpositions.

As far as I can determine, there is no allophony in the postpositions, which appear to be phonologically invariant. The GEN postposition, however, does show some phonetic variation: the vowels, particularly the first, may be raised in harmony with a preceding non-low vowel, though not, it would appear, outside of the normal range for /a/.

Below we briefly illustrate some of the main functions of each postposition.

[1] *-ngindalu* LOC

This postposition indicates location in space of a situation or entity in a situation (or both), and translates as 'at', 'in', 'on', 'by', 'under', and so on, depending on context. These five contextual senses are illustrated in the following examples, respectively.

(25) *birrarnarr wee jojog birrengga bingga-ngindalu gurrba,*
 their:bones ? heap:up they:are there -LOC over:there
boorra gurrba boorra,
 far:away over:there far:away
 'Their bones are heaped up over there, far away.'

(26) *bugaya benyjin ada burranggu ganmen-ngindalu[†]*
 there man sit he:is cave -LOC
 'That man lives in a cave.'

(27) *biyanda been biyanga aarru-ngindalu[†]*
 child climb he:goes stone-LOC
 'Child is getting up on the stone.'

(28) *agurra jamayina banmira narra banu*
 ?? axe you:take:it put you:act:on:it
laanggi-ngindalu[†]
 tree -LOC
 'Put the axe next to the tree.'

(29) *aarru -ngindalu waa nandi luu[†]*
 stone -LOC go:under it:fell snake
 'The snake went under the stone.'

In the examples available *-ngindalu* LOC shows spatial senses only; it does not show temporal senses in the present corpus, unlike the LOC postposition in a number of other Kimberley languages (e.g. Gooniyandi (McGregor 1990:181), Nyulnyul (McGregor in preparation), etc.).

[2] *-gu* DAT

As in Wunambal (Vászolyi 1976b), this postposition covers most of the senses covered by dative and allative markers in other Australian languages, including the following:

• direction towards which motion is oriented:

- (30) *ngaya ngiyangga darwin -gu[†]*
 I I:will:go darwin -DAT
 'I will go to Darwin.'

• purpose of an action:

- (31) *goyinbi ngiyingga ngawa -gu*
 outside I:go water -DAT
 'I'm going outside for water.'

• recipient or beneficiary of an action:

- (32) *baarra janbu ngaya -gu[†]*
 speak you:speak I -DAT
 'Speak to me!'

• something in respect of which the situation obtains — in other words, something involved with the situation, usually indirectly:

- (33) *naa jeli murra luu -gu[†]*
 you fear ? snake -DAT
 'Are you frightened of the snake?'

[3] *-yanga* ABL

There appears to be a single ablative postposition in Gunin, and it marks the source or origin from which an entity or situation, usually one of motion, began, and moved away from. (There are no examples available in which this postposition indicates temporal source, or cause, which are two senses frequently found with ablative markers (e.g. McGregor 1990:182).¹⁹) Some examples are:

- (34) *biyanda barda bundi laanggi-yanga[†]*
 child fall he:did tree -ABL
 'The child fell from the tree.'

¹⁹ It would seem likely that *-yanga* ABL is related to the Gooniyandi ablative postposition *-yangga*, which indicates direction from, together with focus on the beginning — i.e. the action is represented as emanating from a source, rather than just coming from it (see further McGregor 1990:182-185).

- (35) *garmen-yanga bogu buwina[†]*
 cave -ABL emerge he:did
 'He came out of the cave.'

[4] *-we* PURP

The corpus shows just a few instances of this postposition. In two of them it marks something (generic or non-individuated) sought after or hunted for:

- (36) *birreeni: mangguru-we wurrmurangay::,*
 they turtle -PURP they:used:to:get:it
 'Another lot used to go for turtle.'

In one instance, it appears to convey a comitative meaning:

- (37) *mayaru gaabu, labalab bunggu-we daj bindirri*
 dress no laplap that -PURP put:on they:fell
 mayaru gaabu:
 dress no
 'They had no clothes; they only wore pubic apron.'

Whether or not these two distinct senses of *-we* will ultimately prove to be linked remains unclear, and will need to be resolved by further fieldwork. I have chosen to gloss the postposition as purposive simply on the basis of the greater frequency of this sense in the corpus. However, Capell & Coate 1984:149 suggest that it is a comitative,²⁰ and Vasse forthcoming glosses the apparently cognate *-wa* in Wunambal as a comitative derivational suffix.²¹

[5] *-nyine* INST

This postposition indicates an instrument used in the performance of an action. This may be either an object used as a tool, or a body part used instrumentally to bring about the situation, as illustrated by the following examples, respectively:

- (38) *lirr ngurrangu yiirra knife-nyine[†]*
 cut I:was meat knife-INST
 'I cut the meat with a knife.'

²⁰ They cite as evidence the following Gunin example, recorded by Peter Lucich:

jooli bindi benga-ngu gabu-ngay ngolo -ngu-we
 return he:was mother-his not -CHAR brother-his-with
 'He came back with his brother instead of his mother.'

²¹ It is possible that the final syllable of the prefixing adjective *-arriwa* 'wicked' is in fact an instance of this postposition functioning as a derivational suffix with a comitative meaning.

- (39) anggarra-nyine duwaarr ngambaning
 foot -INST kick I:kicked:him
 'I kicked him with my foot.'

The only exception I am aware of is (41), in which the postposition appears to convey a comitative sense only.

[6] *-gude* COMIT(ative)

There are just a few examples of this morpheme in the corpus, and due to the paucity of instances, it is not certain that it is indeed a postposition, rather than a stem forming suffix (see above §2.2.2). I have provisionally opted to treat it as a postposition as it appears, in examples such as the following, to relate the nominal (or NP) to which it is attached to another nominal (or NP), via an action or event, rather than to simply indicate something inherent to some entity (as is the case for the stem forming suffix *-ngarri* CHAR).

- (40) biyanda-gude biyanda burdeni[†]
 child -COMIT child little
 'Woman has a new baby.'
- (41) biyanda-nyine gadi winmirangay:: biyanda-guda,
 child -INST run she:was:taking:it:along child -COMIT
 'The kangaroo ran along with the joey in her pouch.'

However, it does seem that *-gude* COMIT may also be used as a stem forming suffix, as in examples such as *lena-gude* 'sharp (of a knife)'.

[7] *-nangga* GEN

The GEN postposition *-nangga* is most frequently found attached to pronouns, where it indicates that the referent of that pronoun is the possessor of some entity. This may be by right of ownership, as in (42), or by kinship relationship, as in (43):

- (42) ngayang-nangga leewa debarr anguna anarnu[†]
 I -GEN dog die it:went night?
 'My dog died last night.'
- (43) ngayang-nangga naamba
 I -GEN wife
 'my wife'

This construction is sometimes also used to express possession of non-prefixing body part nominals — see §3.1 below.

However, *-nangga* GEN may also be attached to nominals to indicate their status as possessor, although there are few examples of this type. Thus, in (43), *-nangga* GEN marks the natural possessor of the egg:

- (44) jebarra-nangga yilumban[†]
 emu -GEN egg
 'emu's egg'

In a single example in the corpus, the GEN indicates not the possessor status of the nominal to which it is attached, but instead indicates a meaning more like 'pertaining to' or 'concerned with' (see also Capell & Coate 1984:91):

- (45) lalayi -nangga ngawa
 dreamtime-GEN water
 'water pertaining to the dreamtime; dreamtime water'

[8] *-miya* DU

This postposition indicates not the relationship of the phrase to which it is attached to the constituent to which the phrase belongs, but rather it indicates a quality of the referent of the phrase itself: that it consists of two entities of the type referred to by the head nominal. It may be attached either to pronouns or to nominals; in either case, this is the regular way of forming the dual. Examples of this postposition attached to pronominals are *nangarra-miya* 'we two inclusive (you and I)', and *birreni-miya* 'they two' (both from Summer Institute of Linguistics 1971:12). The corpus shows no examples of *-miya* attached to ordinary nouns; however, Capell & Coate 1984:86 give *birrenjin-miya* (man-DU) 'two men' as a dual nominal in the Forrest River language. In my own corpus, *-miya* DU is found only attached to the number word *majerri* 'two', as in *majarri-miya laanggi* (two-DU tree) 'two trees'.

As distinct from most Worroran languages, Gunin does not appear to show a paucal postposition (or bound morpheme); and Capell & Coate 1984:86 explicitly say that the Forrest River language does not show the trial marker *-na* of Wunambal. A relic of such a number postposition does, however, appear in the third person plural pronoun *birreni*.

2.7. Enclitics

[1] *-nguru* INDEF

This enclitic is typically attached to an indefinite determiner, and indicates that the identity of the thing concerned is not known, and of no particular relevance in the discourse. For example:

- (46) aarru::, ganya-ganya-ngurru, gaandan, bardide mindirri
 stone what -what -INDEF falling:stone fall -INT they:fell
 ngud-ngud andirriwurru, balanggarra birrgila,
 hit -hit they:fell:on:them many those
 'Rocks and stones of all kinds fell onto them, hitting them all,
 lots of rocks.'

- (47) bari nganmiri, nginda-ngurru
 come it:will:take:us who -INDEF
 'Something (I don't know what) is going to happen [come] to us.'

[2] -ngane 'even'

The few instances of this enclitic were all translated as 'even', indicating that the referent of the NP in its scope is involved in the process, although this is contrary to the speaker's expectation — according to which the entity might have been expected not to be involved. (48) is an example:

- (48) binga-ngane minya binga-ngane; ngud-biji amawurru,
 that -even this that -even hit -REP it:did:to:them
 'Even that thing was hit.'

[3] -di INT(ensive)

This enclitic, whose meaning might be best glossed as 'intensive', contextualises variously as 'precisely', 'exactly', 'really', and so on. It is a type of degree modifier, which stresses that the word to which it is attached applies to a strong degree. In (49), for example, the strength of the negative *gaabu* 'none' is intensified: what is being spoken about is a time before there were any white people at all in the Gunin social universe.

- (49) wajbala ga; maarlngarri gaabi -de birrgila
 white:person um white:person no -INT those
 wajbala gaabi-de,
 white:person no -INT
 'There were no white people at all then.'

In line (3) of text 1 (§4.1), the effect of intensifying *gaabu* 'no' by *-de* is rather different: here *gaabu* is being used as an interjection, and it is the force of the interjection that is intensified by the enclitic — thus the speaker's gloss for this word "Oh no!".

Attached to the temporal adverbial *geeji* 'now', the meaning conveyed becomes 'right now' — see (13) above; a similar effect results when *-di* is attached to the spatial adverbial *gurrba* 'over there', as shown by the following example:

- (50) birrarnarr jojog birreengi gurrbaa -di,
 their:bones heaped:up it:is over:there -INT
 'Their bones are heaped up right over there.'

2.8 Verb morphology

2.8.1. Structure of the verbal complex

As indicated in §2.1, there are two distinct types of verbal word in Gunin: preverbs and inflecting verbs. Preverbs are largely invariant in form, while inflecting verbs are extremely morphologically

complex, and inflect according to the person, class and number of subject, object and beneficiary, as well as tense, mood and aspect. Most inflecting verbs may occur as the sole constituent of a verbal complex. Preverbs, however, normally occur in construction with an inflecting verb; and as might be expected, they normally precede inflecting verbs. Thus, as in the majority of Kimberley languages, Gunin shows two distinct types of verbal construction: simple verbs (consisting of just an inflecting verb) and compound verbs (consisting of a preverb and an inflecting verb). The following pair of examples illustrate the two types respectively:

- (51) bunungu ngawa
 you:give:him water
 'Give him water.'

- (52) ngaya baarra ngumi
 I speak I:say
 'I am speaking now.'

The structure and semantics of both inflecting verbs and compound verb constructions is extremely complicated, and not yet understood well. In what follows I provide a brief description of some major features first of inflecting verbs, and second of the compound verb construction.

2.8.2. Inflecting verbs

As indicated above, the inflecting verb consists of a verb root together with a number of prefixes and suffixes. Some verb roots are monovalent, and take a single pronominal prefix cross-referencing the subject; others are bivalent and take two pronominal prefixes, one cross-referencing the subject, the other cross-referencing the object. One or two verb roots are ambivalent, and may occur with either a single pronominal prefix, or with two. As might be expected, there is some correlation between the valence of a root and transitivity. Intransitive clauses, for instance, always have monovalent verbs. However, this correlation is imperfect, and a reasonable number of transitive clauses have monovalent verb roots. For example, the preverb *ngud* 'hit' may occur in a transitive clause with the monovalent verb root *-MA*. The object is then not cross-referenced by a pronominal prefix, but by a suffix (see §2.8.2.1 below).

The following formula provides an initial schematic representation of the morphological structure of inflecting verbs. It must be stressed that the highly complex structure of inflecting verbs is only very partially understood, and refinements and extensions will be necessary.

(OBJECT PRO) + SUBJECT PRO + (TENSE/MOOD/ASPECT) + ROOT + (TENSE) +
 (NUMBER) + (OBLIQUE PRO) + (ASPECT)

As this formula indicates, there are two obligatory elements in any inflecting verb: a subject pronominal prefix and a verb root; for bivalent roots, the object prefix is also obligatory. In addition the inflecting verb may be filled out by various other optional morphemes, including tense and aspect markers as well as number markers and oblique pronominals. There are a number of

complexities in the formation of tenses, moods and aspects: sometimes they are marked by prefixes and sometimes by suffixes. Sometimes they are even marked by the form of the inflecting verb root; for instance, the root -MA 'do, say' takes the form *ma* in past tense, but *mi* in the present.

Below are a few illustrative examples (the glosses should be taken with a grain of salt):

<i>mun-φ-bu</i>	3sgM-2sg-BU	'act on an M class entity!' (imperative)
<i>wun-φ-bu</i>	3sgW-2sg-BU	'act on a W class entity!' (imperative)
<i>ngu-ma-ngu</i>	1sg-MA-3sg	'I did it to/for him'
<i>nga-rranggu</i>	1sg-RRANGU	'I am'
<i>jan-φ-ung</i>	1sg-2sg-UNG	'give me it' (imperative)
<i>nyarr-ngune</i>	1plE-NGUNE	'we (exclusive) went'
<i>ngarra-ngi-mda-mu</i>	1plI-PST-RNDI-DU	'we two (inclusive) will go together'

Although this formula accounts for many of the simplest inflecting verb forms, an examination of the texts in §4 will reveal verb forms which do not appear to satisfy this structure. Part of the reason for this is the presence of other morphemes which do not fit into this formula. It is also partly because the simple item-arrangement organisation is obscured by the operation of a number of morphophonemic rules. In order to make such an item-arrangement description work for Gunin, it is necessary to set up underlying forms for the various morphemes, and devise rules for deriving the actual forms from them.

2.8.2.1. Verbal prefixes

2.8.2.1.1. Pronominal prefixes

Table 2.4 lists the pronominal prefixes, including most known allomorphs. The close similarity to the pronominal prefixes to nouns will be apparent (compare Table 2.1).

	Singular	Non-singular
1 exclusive	<i>ng-</i> ~ <i>ngV-</i> ~ <i>jan-</i>	<i>nyarr-</i> ~ <i>nyan-</i>
1 inclusive		<i>ngarr-</i> ~ <i>ngan-</i>
2	<i>g-</i> ~ <i>gV-</i> ~ <i>ba-</i> ~ <i>φ</i>	<i>girr-</i>
3	<i>b-</i> ~ <i>bV-</i> ~ <i>ban-</i> ~ <i>φ</i>	<i>birr-</i> ~ <i>birra-</i> ~ <i>biri-</i>
	<i>a-</i> ~ <i>an-</i>	
	<i>w-</i> ~ <i>wV-</i> ~ <i>wan-</i>	
	<i>m-</i> ~ <i>mV-</i> ~ <i>man-</i>	
	<i>n-</i> ~ <i>nV-</i> ~ <i>niri-</i>	

Table 2.4: Pronominal prefixes to inflecting verbs

The various allomorphs are chosen according to the phonological environment, as well as to mood and the particular configuration of person in the subject and object. Of particular interest are the *n*-final allomorphs, which mark the accusative in just those circumstances where absolutely necessary — where there is no subject prefix (otherwise, prefix order serves a distinguishing function). There appear to be two main circumstances in which a pronominal subject prefix does not appear where expected, or is zero in form — see Nordlinger forthcoming. One is in the imperative, where the second person prefix is frequently zero. Another environment is in bivalent inflecting verbs whose subject is third person singular, of any gender. Thus, for example, we have *ngiri-m ira-ng* (1sg-MIRA-PST) 'it took me', *wiri-m ira-ng* (3W-MIRA-PST) 'she took it', and *an-m ira-ng* (3A-MIRA-PST) 'it bit it', where the subjects are third person singular of A class, B class and A class, respectively.

Some additional allomorphy is specific to the imperative mood. The *ba-* allomorph of the second person singular appears to be restricted to the imperative of (some?) monovalent roots, as in *ba-ma* 'speak' and *ba-yanga* 'go'. And the *jan-* allomorph of 1sg is apparently restricted to second person imperatives, as in *jan-bu* 1sg-2sg-BU 'act on me'.

At this stage I cannot account for the various vowel qualities in the singular pronominal prefixes, some of which are no doubt conditioned by the phonological environment. Furthermore, in order to make the above item-arrangement description work, it is necessary to set up a set of underlying forms for the prefixes, together with a set of sandhi rules. To attempt this is well beyond the scope of this description. However, to give some notion of what might be involved, I propose informal versions of three necessary sandhi rules: (i) /i-bi/ → /u/; (ii) /rr/ → /d/ before a nasal; and (iii) /rr/ → φ before a nasal stop sequence or the apical tap. (i) and (ii) are required to derive the form *mudna* 'they acted on an M class entity': the verb root is -NA 'do', and the relevant pronominal prefixes are *mi-* and *biri-*. (iii) is required to account for forms such as *nyarnda* 'we fell' and *birrangana* 'they are'; the first derives from *nyarr-mda* (1plE-RNDI), and the second from *birr-rrangana* (3pl-RRANGGU).

For illustrative purposes, the available past tense forms for one monovalent and one bivalent verb root are given below:

-MA 'do, say' (monovalent)	-NI 'act on' (bivalent)
1sg <i>ngu-ma</i>	1sg→3sgB <i>bu-nga-na</i>
1plI <i>ngarr-ma</i>	1sg→3sgW <i>wu-nga-na</i>
1plE <i>nyarr-ma</i>	1sg→3sgA <i>a-nga-na</i>
2sg <i>gu-ma</i>	3pl→3sgM <i>mud-na (mi+biri-na)</i>
3sgB <i>bu-ma</i>	
3sgA <i>a-ma</i>	
3pl <i>burr-ma</i>	

2.8.2.1.2. Tense, mood and aspect prefixes

Knowledge of these morphemes is slim indeed. There is a prefix *biri-* which occurs with the verb -NA 'act on', which seems to mark an action as iterative: thus *nyan-biri-na* (1plE-IT-NA) 'it acted on us

repeatedly' — see line (9) of text 1 (§4.1) where with the preverb *yaraj* 'rock' this inflecting verb appears to indicate the iterative action of waves on the boat. There is also what appears to be an irrealis marker, *nV-*, where the quality of V depends on that of the vowel of the immediately following syllable. This indicates the unrealised status of the referent situation; thus: *ngu-nu-ma* (1sg-IRR-MA) 'I might do/say', and *a-na-ma-nu* (3A-IRR-MA-2sg) 'it might do to you'. According to Capell & Coate 1984:198 the major use of the irrealis is in the expression of negation; however, no examples of this mood in negative clauses appear in the corpus. A third prefix is *-ngu*, which marks the future tense for some inflecting verbs: *ngarra-ngi-mda-mu* (1plI-FUT-RNDI-DU) 'we two will fall', and *ngu-ngu-mdu* (1sg-FUT-RNDI) 'I will fall'.

2.8.2.2. Verbal suffixes

2.8.2.2.1. Pronominal suffixes

There is a set of pronominal suffixes which may be attached to either monovalent or bivalent verb roots. These cross-reference an indirect object, beneficiary, and sometimes even a direct object. They are commonly found in clauses of speech with -MA, where they cross-reference the addressee, as in *bu-ma-ri* (3sg-MA-1sg) '(s)he said to me' (see line (5), §4.1). But even such a prototypically transitive verb as *nguj* 'hit' collocates with -MA, and its object is cross-referenced by a suffix. The forms of the pronominal suffixes are shown in Table 2.5.

	Singular	Non-singular
1 exclusive	<i>-ra</i>	<i>-nyarru*</i>
1 inclusive		<i>-ngarru*</i>
2	<i>-nu</i>	<i>-nurru*</i>
3	<i>-ngu</i>	<i>-wurru</i>
	<i>-nung(u)</i>	

Table 2.5: Pronominal suffixes to inflecting verbs

It will be observed that only two third person singular suffixes are given. Identical suffixes are found in Wunambal, and according to Vászolyi 1976c:633, the first cross-references a B class nominal, whilst the second cross-references nominals of any other class (i.e. non-humans). A preliminary examination of the corpus suggests that this does not hold across the board for Gunin — see for instance, (39) above. On the other hand, inanimates in the relevant roles are quite often simply not cross-referenced at all. What conditions the choice of allomorphs is not known.

2.8.2.2.2. Number suffixes

There are three number suffixes: *-m ~ -ma* DU, indicating two; *-ni* PA, indicating a few; and *-rri* PL indicating two or more. These suffixes are optional, and normally indicate the number of the subject,

as in *nudnama* (3N-3pl-NA-DU) 'they two acted on it' and *bi-rrengga-na* (3B-RRANGGU-PA) 'they few are'. The plural suffix *-rri* is infrequent, and appears to only occur when the number of the subject is not determinable from the prefixed verb form, which is ambiguous between singular and plural interpretations. For example, the third person plural form of -RNDI 'fall' would be expected to be *bir-rndi*; but the sequence /rr-rnd/ is inadmissible, and the /rr/ is lost, giving rise to the form *bindi*, which is ambiguous between 'he/she fell' and 'they fell'. Another context in which the plural suffix is found is (very occasionally) with non-human subjects, as in *andirri* (3A-RNDI-PL) 'they (A gender) fell'. The plural forms of -RRANGGU 'be' should involve sequences of apical taps, which are inadmissible; however, instead of the expected *-rri* PL, only *-ni* PA is attested — *birrengana* (3-RRANGGU-PA) 'they are'.

2.8.2.2.3. Tense and aspect suffixes

Two inflecting verbs mark present tense with the suffix *-ga ~ -gu* PRES. They are -YANG 'go' — *ngi-yang-ga* 'I go, I am going' (compare *ngi-yanga* 'I will go') — and -NA 'act on' — *wu-nga-mbi-n-ga* 'I am acting on it (W class)'. Not all verbs, however, appear to mark their present tense in this way. Another suffix of limited applicability is *-ngu*, which marks past tense for -MIRA 'take' (but no other verb roots in the corpus).

The nominal stem forming suffix *-ngay* CHAR can be suffixed to an inflecting verb, indicating an action characteristic of the subject. As illustrated by (53) and (54), the characteristic action may be one the actor habitually preformed, or one which continued over a relatively long stretch of time.

(53) mee -we wurrmira -ngay, malgarrawa birririj
 food-PURP they:got:it-CHAR smoke make:smoke
 mudne,
 they:acted:on:it
 'They used to go for food, and make smoke.'

(54) biyanda-nyine gadi winmira -ngay:: biyanda-guda,
 child -with run she:took:it-CHAR child -COMIT
 bugila-di -ngurru bugila,
 that -INT-INDEF that
 'The kangaroo put it inside its pouch and was running along.'

Sometimes *-ngay* CHAR is followed by the further suffix or enclitic *-gula*, which appears to have an intensifying effect, indicating that the characteristic process is particularly strongly associated with the subject.

2.8.2.3. Inflecting verb roots

Eighteen verb roots have so far been established; it is known that there are others, but they are instanced too infrequently to permit any hypotheses as to their forms or meanings. Of the eighteen, one seems to be definitely ambivalent, nine bivalent, and eight monovalent. They are listed in Table 2.6 below — again it must be stressed that both the forms and the glosses are at best approximate.

Sometimes, as has already been observed, the form of a root varies according to tense.

Monovalent	Bivalent	Ambivalent
-MA 'do, say'	-BU 'effective action'	-WINA 'emerge'
-RNDI 'fall, finish'	-DA 'put down'	
-NGUNE 'go'	-NA 'act on'	
-(M)BAN 'kick'	-LI 'cook'	
-YANG 'go'	-MIRA 'get, take'	
-RRANGGU 'be'	-RRANGGU 'connect with'	
-RRANDI 'smell'	-UNG(U) 'give'	
-RNASDI 'go/be under'	-MARNDANGANI 'think of someone'	
	-MARIDIMU 'block, prevent'	

Table 2.6: *Known verb roots in Gunin*

One puzzle is whether -RRANGGU, which appears in both the monovalent and bivalent columns is in fact a single ambivalent root, or a pair of accidentally homophonous roots. Semantic considerations strongly suggest the latter possibility.

All roots bar -RRANGGU 'be' have been encountered in simple verb constructions. Four — namely -RRANDI 'smell', -LI 'cook', -MARIDIMU 'block, prevent' and -UNG(U) 'give' — appear to be restricted to simple verb constructions, and never occur with a preverb. All of the others may occur in either simple or compound verb constructions.

2.8.3. The compound verb construction

2.8.3.1. Preverbs

Preverbs almost always occur with an inflecting verb; furthermore, no more than one preverb may occur in construction with an inflecting verb. There are just a few systematic exceptions to the first generalisation, where a preverb is found without an inflecting verb: (i) as suggested by (55), a preverb alone may form a non-finite clause complement of a verb of perception; (ii) commands are sometimes expressed by a bare preverb, as illustrated by (56); and (iii) negatives are sometimes expressed as a type of privative (see §2.5 above) as in (20) above and (57).

(55) ngarna ngindingu baarra
hear I:acted:on:him speak
'I heard him.'

(56) biyanda gadi-gadi
child run -run
'Come quickly child.'

(57) naa ganya-gu yej gaabu[†]
you what -DAT laugh not
'Why don't you laugh.'

Preverbs show very little variation in form. The only known morphological modifications they may undergo are reduplication and suffixation. Reduplication may have an intensifying effect, as in *gadi-gadi* 'run-run' in (56) above, or it may indicate that an action has gone on for a long time — for example, *gorr-gorr*, the reduplication of *gorr* 'swim' was used in a text to indicate that the actors swam for a long time — or it may indicate that an event occurred repeatedly, as in *ngud-ngud* (hit-hit) 'hit repeatedly'.

Three preverb suffixes occur in the corpus. One is *-me*, which apparently indicates that action was done distributively, by a number of actors acting independently of one another, as in *bern-me* 'climb, of many actors'. A second is *-biji* REP, which appears to indicate that an action was done repeatedly — see examples (23) and (48) above. The third suffix, instanced once only, is *-wu*; the meaning of this suffix remains completely opaque. (It is highly likely that there are many more such suffixes, as Wunambal has a fair number — Vászolyi 1976c:639.)

2.8.3.2. Preverb-inflecting verb combinations

The compound verb construction in Kimberley languages is of great interest, and presents the linguist an extremely difficult but rewarding field of study. In particular: what motivates the particular pairings of preverbs and inflecting verbs? It is frequently suggested that the preverb conveys most of the lexical meaning, and that the inflecting verb functions as a type of auxiliary, providing grammatical information, its lexical meaning having been "leached out" (e.g. Vászolyi 1976c). Moreover, it is commonly believed that the association of preverb and verb root is not governed by general rules. I have contested these beliefs in relation to Gooniyandi (McGregor 1990) and Nyulnyul (McGregor 1993), arguing that the compound verb construction is a system of verb classification (see also Silverstein 1986 on Worrora). I plan to investigate the semantics of this construction in depth during my 1994 fieldtrip. In the meantime, it is remarked that the available evidence strongly suggests that the Gunin compound verb construction is also a verb classifying one in which the verb roots classify the process types denoted by the preverbs according to aktionsart, and to a lesser extent transitivity. To illustrate, I provide just a few suggestive illustrations of the semantic contrasts effected by different choices of verb root for just three preverbs:

	<i>baarra</i> 'speak'	<i>minyjal</i> 'eat'	<i>ada</i> 'sit'
-MA 'do, say'	'talk, speak to someone'	'ate, used to eat'	'remain, stop' (imperative)
-RRANGU 'be'	'speak a language'	'be eating, eat habitually'	'live, sit'
-BU 'effect'	'tell someone'		
-NGANE 'go'	'speak to someone'		
-RNDI 'fall'		'consume, eat up'	

3. Syntax

3.1. Structure of noun phrases

Noun phrases may be of one of the following types:

- (a) a noun (prefixing or non-prefixing) either by itself, or together with another qualifying noun, adjective or determiner
- (b) a noun together with another noun or pronoun denoting its possessor
- (c) a determiner alone
- (d) a pronoun alone
- (e) an adverbial plus a determiner
- (f) a noun together with a particle

Any such NP may occur in syntagm with a postposition or enclitic.

NPs are usually continuous. However, as in many Australian languages, discontinuity is permissible, as illustrated by the underlined words in (58).

- (58) marnmarna munggila, gaabu mindi -ngee yeeji nguwaana
 waves that no it:fell-CHAR glad I:emerged
dirlnggir nyeendi-nge -gula, giraa,
 shore we:fell-CHAR-? place
 'The waves finished, and I was glad to reach the shore.'

NPs consisting of nouns by themselves are not uncommon in the corpus, especially in elicited sentences. In texts, however, single word NPs are less common, and mainly refer to things such as water, food, rocks and so on, which lack individuation and discourse salience.

A couple of word order generalisations may be made concerning NPs of type (a) which consist of more than one word. First, determiners almost always follow the head noun, as in *aamba minya* (kangaroo this) 'this kangaroo', *gulangi minya* (blackberries this) 'these blackberries', *anyarra minya* (sick this) 'this sickness', etc.. One of the few exceptions is the phrase *binya warde* (this hole) 'this hole' (line (5), text 2, §4.2). Second, modifying nouns, including adjectives and quantifiers, may precede or follow the noun they modify. In elicited NPs, the preferred order seems to be that the modifying noun occurs first, perhaps reflecting the order of the English prompt. For example, *gijaal yirra* (raw meat) 'raw meat'; *oorlban mee* (cooked vegetable food) 'cooked vegetable food', etc.. In the texts, however, the dominant word order, adhered to by almost all examples, is for the modifying noun to follow the noun it modifies, as in: *bubiyarnda jaama* (children plenty) 'many children'; *dinggi birdeeni* (dinghy little) 'little dinghy'; *biyarnda birdeeni* (child little) 'little child'; etc..

As to type (b) NPs, the possessor element always precedes the possessed. Three main subtypes are identifiable. First, alienable possession is denoted by the genitive form of a personal pronoun:

- (59) ngay-a-nangga / bini-nangga giraa
 I -GEN he -GEN country
 'my/his country'

Second, if the possessed item belongs to the small class of prefixing body part nouns, the possessor must be referred by a nominal prefix. Prefixing nouns apparently represent inalienable possessions (see §2.2.3), and do not occur with genitive pronominals denoting the possessor.²² Third, non-prefixing body parts terms appear to form the possessive either by apposition of the part noun to the whole noun, as in *biyarnda murru* (child face) 'the child's face', or by use of the genitive form of the pronoun, as in example (63) below. (Presumably these two possibilities contrast in meaning, possibly according as to whether the body part is treated as an alienable or inalienable possession — see McGregor forthcoming b.)

There is little to say about the remaining types. (c) and (d) consist of a single word only. And as for type (e), which is quite rare, the determiner is always the endophoric determiner *minya* 'this'. Thus, a mythological flood narrative begins with the NP *wununggule minya* (long ago this) 'in a long ago time'. Type (f) consists of a noun together with the negative particle *gaabu* 'no, not' or *gaabun.ga* 'without'; what results is a privative phrase. The particle always follows the noun. Examples are given in §2.5 above.

Finally, it should be noted that in texts one frequently finds two NPs in apposition, both denoting the same entity; the second generally provides additional information to permit the identification of the referent. An example is provided by the underlined NPs in (60).

- (60) ngawa durrurrug burrmi -di, edi enyeme, bingga minya,
 water drown they:did-INT come it:came that:one this
aamba minya, ingunenga:,
 kangaroo this it:came
 'When they all drowned in the water, this kangaroo came along.'

3.2. Structure of clauses

Two main clause types are identifiable in Gunin (as in many Australian languages): verbless and verbal. The latter refer to situations in which one or more participants are engaged; the former do not denote real world situations as such.

Verbless clauses may be divided into three types: minor, existential and relational. Minor clauses consist simply of an interjection such as *Gaabi* 'Oh no!' (see line (3) in §4.1), *Ngay* 'Here!', and so on.

Existential clauses either introduce some entity into the discourse, or, if negative, assert the non-existence of an entity. The first two words of text 2 (§4.2), *emu manya* 'this emu' serve precisely

²² A contiguous pronoun is sometimes found denoting the possessor of a prefixing noun; it is always in root form, as in *ngaya ngalngi* (I my-name) 'my name'. However, it is not known whether the pronoun and prefixing noun are actually sister constituents of an NP or constitute a separate NPs — as is the case in languages such as Gooniyandi (McGregor 1990:253).

this function, and arguably together constitute an existential clause (note that these two words also occur together in a separate intonation contour). An example of a negative existential clause is (18) above, which asserts that there were no whites in the old days. I suggest that examples such as (61) below and (16) above are also a type of existential clause — a negative possessive existential, which asserts that someone has no items of a specified type. (Ordinary existentials are normally restricted in terms of time and/or place; these are restricted by possessor.)

- (61) ngawa gabungu[†]
water none
'He has no water.'

Relational clauses establish relationships between entities, or between an entity and a quality or property. Such clauses typically consist of two NPs in apposition, as illustrated by (10) above, which is identifying (it identifies (or seeks the identity of) an entity; and (62), which is attributive (it attributes a property of an entity).²³ These and other examples suggest that the NP identified or attributed of always occurs before the identifying or attributing NP.

- (62) ngaya ngoorndide
I I:tall
'I'm tall'

It is possible to identify various types of attributive clauses: (63) is comparative, while (64) is possessive; presumably there is also a locative type, but there are no examples in the corpus.

- (63) bini-ningga muru sheep maniye[†]
he -GEN face sheep like
'His face is like a sheep's face.'
- (64) bini lanarn worndowornde[†]
he teeth big
'He has big teeth.'

Verbal clauses, by contrast, refer to states, happenings, events, processes, and the like. They consist of an obligatory verbal complex (simple or compound — see §2.8 above), together with one

23 Sometimes one finds corresponding to a verbless clause, a verbal clause which differs from it only in having a verb. Thus, the following clause is equally acceptable with or without the verb.

- ngaya nguree (ngarrangga)
I hungry (I:am)
'I'm hungry.'

Such pairs could be taken as evidence that verbless clauses derive from verbal clauses by deletion of the verb. However, preliminary examination of the Gunin corpus suggests that (as is the case in Gooniyandi — McGregor 1990:293ff.) the corresponding verbless and verbal clauses in fact contrast semantically, the verbal clause denoting a state of being, as distinct from verbless clauses which merely relate an entity and a quality. This matter warrants further intensive investigation.

or more NPs (depending on transitivity) — which may be ellipsed if given — and optional PPs, adverbials or particles. Virtually any permutation of these constituents is grammatically acceptable; furthermore, constituent order does not appear to affect referential meaning. Usually, however, the words of a constituent are contiguous; discontinuity in both NPs and the verbal complex is rare (though not ungrammatical — (58) above). The optional PPs and adverbials provide circumstantial modification of the clause, indicating when or where the situation occurred, by what means it was achieved, and so on — see §2.4 and §2.6 above for examples of the various possibilities. Particles (and some enclitics) modify the propositional content of the clause — see §2.5.

Verbal clauses may be either intransitive or transitive. Examples are, respectively:

- (65) ngaya gaadi ngungune
I run I:went
'I ran.'
- (66) gurndili minya marnu bunmirangi biyarnda budibeeni,
Gurndili this carry she:took:it little:roo little
wununggule,
long:ago
'Gurndili carried a little joey in its pouch, long ago.'

This brief description does not do justice to the complexities of the syntax of verbal clauses in Gunin. I conclude the section with some examples which indicate that the simple transitive-intransitive typology requires elaboration: (67) shows an intransitive clause with a second NP, and (69) appears to indicate that a dative marked PP can be cross-referenced by a pronominal prefix — usually it is by means of a suffix.

- (67) ngaya gunin barra ngirranggu[†]
I Gunin speak I:am
'I speak Gunin.'
- (68) jaarrii bungana
dig I:acted:on:him
'I dug a hole.'
- (69) jaarrii wungana ngawa-gu
dig I:acted:on:it water-DAT
'I dug a hole for water.'

3.3 Complex sentence constructions

There is, as might be expected, little information on complex sentence constructions in Gunin. The following sections are thus quite tentative and incomplete.

3.3.1. Coordinate clauses

A pair of clauses may be simply juxtaposed to one another to form a complex sentence, as illustrated in (70), where the relation between the clauses is one of temporal succession:

- (70) been ngirndi durr ngindi-di
climb:up I:fell descend I:fell-INT
'I climbed up, then down.'

Various other interclausal relationships are identifiable, including: repetition (where the clause is repeated word for word, or with some minor changes in the words or their order — lines (2) and (5) in §4.2); addition (where the clauses are connected simply by the relation 'and'); elaboration (where the second clause elaborates on the first, further specifying or describing it — line (7), §4.2); consequence (where the second clause indicates a consequence of the first — e.g. line (11), §4.1); purpose (where the second clause indicates the purpose of the action of the first); reason (where the second clause indicates the reason for the occurrence of the first); and so on. There is no space to illustrate all of these possibilities here; one further example will suffice:

- (71) nguree ngarrangga mee jangu
hungry I:am food you:give:me
'I'm hungry; give me food.'

At this stage it is not known whether these various possibilities are emically distinct (as seems to be the case in Gooniyandi (McGregor 1990:444-448)), or simply different interpretations of a single multifunctional type of construction (as many Australianists have assumed (after Hale 1976) of similar constructions in other languages). Another problem which must be addressed is whether (and if so how) coordinate constructions contrast grammatically with sequences of clause-sentences.

3.3.2. Subordinate clauses

The nominal stem forming suffix *-ngay* CHAR, as we have seen (§2.8.2.2.2), may be suffixed to a verbal complex to indicate characteristic aspect. It also marks the verb of a subordinate clause, in which case it would appear to be in constituency with a full (subordinate) clause, rather than a single word (cf. Rumsey 1982:146). *-ngay* clauses appear to be of the multifunctional type typical of Australian languages (Hale 1976) — or alternatively there are a variety of distinct *-ngay* type clauses (as per McGregor 1990:444-448) — although the limited corpus available shows only a few of the expected range of functions. Both relative (adnominal) and adverbial (adsentential) uses are found. The former is illustrated in (72), in which the *-ngay* clause functions as a place relative, indicating the place where the situation occurred.

- (72) wununggule minya, buju bindi, yawuyawu burrma -ngay
long:ago this finish they:fell drown they:did-CHAR

- gira, buju bindi gulaali, wununggule wununggule,
place finish they:fell that:place long:ago long:ago
'Long ago everyone was finished up at that place where they were
drowned long ago.'

Capell 1940:256 gives a number of examples of NP-relative clauses in Gunin — i.e. clauses which relativise on an NP rather than on a place. However, they all involve the (no doubt cognate) suffix *-ngarri*, rather than *-ngay*. Since his are the only examples available, one is cited here:

- (73) amba agila aneewurr ayanga -ngarri mara angana'
kangaroo that it:big it:went-CHAR see I:saw:it
'That big kangaroo than went away, I saw it.'

Adverbial uses of *-ngay* subordinate clauses are illustrated in the following pair of examples. In (74), the subordinate clause indicates a reason for the occurrence of the situation of the main clause; in (75), it indicates a condition under which the situation of the main clause is to occur.

- (74) wulula laa ngirranggu yirra nurru minyjala ngindi -ngay'
sick ? I:am meat rotten? eat I:fell -CHAR
'I'm sick because I ate rotten meat.'
- (75) ajalwarra darrug arrunje-ngay barramara'
rain falls it:does-CHAR you:tell:me
'If it rains, tell me.'

3.3.3. Quotative constructions

A third type of complex sentence construction is the quotative construction, in which one clause (the framing clause) frames another or others as the speech of another person. There are not a large number of quotative constructions in the corpus, but all of them are of the type which one would (on cross-linguistic grounds) identify as direct quotation — the deictic categories of the quoted clause are those of the referent speech situation. As in the closely related language Ngarinyin (Rumsey 1982:157-166), the framing clause involves the inflecting verb *-MA* 'say, do', which usually follows the quoted clause. The framing clause never contains a preverb like *baarra* 'speak'. Examples are (76) and line (5) in 4.1.

- (76) bayanga bamangu
come:here you:tell:her
'Tell her to come here.'

However, as in (probably) all languages, quotes are not necessarily framed by clauses of speech: sometimes the status of a clause as a quote is marked only by a special voice quality, as in line (3) of the first text (§4.1).

What appears to be the same type of framing construction is also used to represent thoughts rather than speech. This is illustrated in (77) and (78). As (78) indicates, quoted thoughts may be represented indirectly as well as directly.

- (77) wununggule gula ngawa gula gorrgorr birndirri:: juru burme::
 long:ago ? water ? swim they:fell swim they:did
 nginde nyarrmii burrma::,
 who we:will:do they:did
 'Long ago, they were swimming in the water, not knowing what to do.'
- (78) birrmi nyarru nyarrma
 they:will:do we we:did
 'They will think we made smoke.'

4. Texts

The following subsections provide two short texts in Gunin. It should be noted that a number of details in the transcription and analysis remain unclear; what is given below is my current 'best guess'.

4.1. A boat trip to Sir Graham Moore Island

The following narrative tells about a trip Dolores Jedmoro made to the Sir Graham Moore Islands a number of years ago with her son-in-law, her aunt Mary Pandilow, and Ian Crawford. The trip was presumably organised to show Crawford (an anthropologist who has made extensive investigations of Kimberley art) rock paintings on the island. As the text suggests, the island apparently has a significant sacred site on it, associated with *wunggurr* (often spelt *ungud*), a dreamtime snake, who does not like strangers.

- (1) gooya minya nyarrngunena: doctor crawford dinggi
 [place:name] this we:few:went Doctor Crawford dinghy
 burdeeni ninggila burdeeni dinggi,
 little that little
 'We went with Dr. Crawford in a very small dinghy.'
- (2) dinggi burdeeni nyarrngunena,
 dinghy little we:few:went
 'We went in a little dinghy.'
- (3) gaabidi, mary binya, miyal minya; jagal munun.ga:
 oh:no Mary this hand this put don't
 lalayi thing, lalayi; bunga,
 dreamtime thing dreamtime thing
 "Oh, no!", Mary told us "Don't put our hands in the water, or the dreamtime thing will get angry and want to revenge you".
- (4) bun.gu, yaal birni anamanu;
 salt:water not:recognise he he:will:do:to:you
 "The salt water (thing) will get angry with you, not recognising you".

- (5) winyjali ngurlu -nu -nanga minya wulu;
 conception:site brother-your-GEN this spirit:place
 warriwa²⁴ gee winya ngarlibirri minya, bumaaridi mary binya,
 no:good ?? this [place] this she:said Mary this
 "This is your brother's conception site," Mary said.'
- (6) nyarrngune nyarrngunena nyarrngunena nyarrngunena
 we:went we:few:went we:few:went we:few:went
 nyarrngunena nyarrngunena nyarrngunena,
 we:few:went we:few:went we:few:went
 'The three of us kept going and going and going and going.'
- (7) gaabu jaali nguma geeji gaabu jaali nguma,
 no frightened I:did now no frightened I:did
 'No, I was really very frightened.'
- (8) bun.gu munggila bun.gu; marnmarna munggila;
 salt:water that salt:water waves that
 babaraj mirndi marnmarna minya marnmarna,
 come:up it:fell waves this waves
 'The big waves came to us.'
- (9) yaraj nyanbina marnmarna munggila yaraj nyanbina
 rock it:acted:on:us waves that rock it:acted:on:us
 yaraj nyanbina,
 rock it:acted:on:us
 'It rocked the little dinghy.'
- (10) babaray mindi,
 come:up if:fell
 'More waves came up.'
- (11) nyarrngunena:: dilnggirr nyeendi guluwedi yeeji nguwaana::,
 we:few:went shore we:fell ?? glad I:emerged
 'We kept going until we finally arrived there, and I was glad.'
- (12) marnmarna munggila, gaabu mindi ngee yeeji nguwaana
 waves that no they:did ? glad I:emerged
 dirnggirr nyeendi-nge -gula, giraa,
 shore we:fell-CHAR-?? place
 'The waves finished, and I was glad to reach the shore.'

4.2. Traditional myth about the emu

The following short text is one of two myths I recorded (the other was a much longer story about a flood in the *lalayi* 'dreamtime'). I was told that there is a dark spot somewhere in the Milky Way (though I could not determine exactly where) which is in the shape of an emu: this is the emu of the following story. While she was gathering blackberries, one of the two night birds, *wadee* and

24 This would appear to be an instance of dysphemism of a type which I have frequently observed in the Kimberley, in which the most sacred things are referred to as 'bad' or 'rubbish' (in Aboriginal English or Kriol).

jirrin.gr — two unknown species which characterise the moieties (see §0.5 above) — threw a spear at her. The spear hit her coolamon, making a hole in it; the blackberries fell through it, scattering all over the place.

- (1) emu manya, jagurr wunmiranga:: mee, mee -gude jaama,
emu this carry she:carried:it food food-COMIT plenty
'This emu was carrying berries along, plenty of berries.'
- (2) jagurr angune -di -nyine jagurr angune -di wanda -nyine,
carry it:went-INT-INST? carry it:went-INT coolamon-INST
'She was carrying it along in a coolamon.'
- (3) edii birrinymam; wadee jirrin.gr mad
?? those:two:did night:bird night:bird point
gurrmirangam -ngeeyi,
they:two:got:it-CHAR?
'Those two, the wadee and the jirrin.gr (two night birds),
got a spear and threw it at someone.'
- (4) wanda daj nudnama,
coolamon make:hole they:two:acted:on:it
'They made a hole in the coolamon.'
- (5) wanda daj noonadibinyam warde nimba binya
coolamon make:hole they:two:did:to:it hole ?? this
warde,
hole?
'The two of them threw (a spear) and made a hole in the
coolamon.'
- (6) yaa gulangi yaa jawarraj andi -nge::, gulangi
yes blackberries yes scattered it:fell-CHAR blackberries
minya jawarraj andi -nge,
this scattered it:fell-CHAR
'Yes, the blackberries were all scattered about (having fallen
through the hole in the coolamon).'
- (7) jaama andi -di, balangarra-ngindalu andi guluwe,
plenty it:fell-INT many -LOC it:fell ??
'They (the blackberries) fell all over the place.'
- (8) mee anyirringga minyjaj ngarrengu anyirringga minyjaj
food this:one eat we:are this:one eat
ngarrengu jaama andi jaama,
we:are plenty it:fell plenty
'"This food we eat."'

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Saliba

Ulrike Mosel (Canberra)

ISBN 3 929075 33 4

Saliba is an Austronesian, Western Oceanic language which is spoken by fewer than one thousand people on the island of Saliba in Milne Bay Province, Papua New Guinea. Genetically it belongs to the Suaic languages of the Papuan Tip Cluster. It seems to be closely related to Suau which functions as a mission language of the area. Whether Saliba and Suau have to be classified as dialects or as different languages is unclear, as this is the first grammatical description of any Suauic language.

Saliba is a verb final head marking language of the nominative-accusative type which shows some interesting typological features such as internal relative clauses, verb serialisation, clause chaining, and a clitic particle which can mark noun phrases, verb phrases, clauses and even clause chains as topics.

After a sketchy phonology, the present monograph describes various types of verbal and non-verbal clauses, the word classes, the noun phrase and so-called possessive constructions, the verb phrase, transitivity, nominalisation, subordinate clauses and clause chaining. In order to provide a good illustration of the Saliba discourse structure, the grammatical sketch concludes with the analysis of three short texts. (LW/M 31)

Koiari

T.E. Dutton (Canberra)

ISBN 3 929075 10 5

Koiari is a Papuan (or non-Austronesian) language spoken by about 1600 people living in the foothills of the Owen Stanley Range just inland of Port Moresby, the capital of Papua New Guinea. It is a member of the Koiarian family, one of about sixty families of Papuan languages found in Papua New Guinea and the surrounding area. In most respects Koiari is a typical Papuan language. It is typologically SOV with core relations indicated by affixation on the verb and peripheral ones by postpositions. The verb is the centre of the clause and is morphologically complex. Special forms of verbs are also used to show various types of relationship between clauses. There are no articles and no formal noun classes except that body part, kinship and certain other nouns are inherently

possessed. The language has only six pronouns and no inclusive-exclusive distinction is made. The Koiari counting system is based on two. In other respects, however, Koiari is unusual amongst Papuan languages. It is phonologically relatively simple -- all syllables are open and there are no unusual vowels or consonants and no complex consonant clusters. Its verb system is also unusual in making dual reference to subjects and objects, one set of suffixes reflecting the number of subjects and objects ergatively, the other agreeing with subjects nominatively. Moreover, all non-verbal words in Koiari, except for a small subset of function words, are inherently marked for category by morphemes which appear in the surface realisation of sentences under certain conditions. Possessive case marking is also unusual in Koiari in the manner in which it is marked, notably by suffixation, and the range of suffixes and constructions used to indicate different possessive relations. Koiari is also interesting historically. Because of its geographical location it has been in contact with AN languages spoken in the surrounding area for a long time. This contact increased following pax Britannica. At the same time other languages were introduced. The language is in danger of becoming obsolescent as younger Koiari use the local lingua franca, Hiri (formerly Police) Motu, in domains formerly the sole preserve of Koiari. (LW/M 10)

Kwamera

Lamont Lindstrom (Tulsa)

John Lynch (Vanuatu)

ISBN 3 929075 05 9

There are slightly more than one hundred languages spoken by the 150,000 inhabitants of the Republic of Vanuatu in the southwest Pacific. Kwamera is one of five languages spoken by almost 3000 people on the island of Tanna in that country. Like its close relatives, however, it is somewhat aberrant phonologically, morphologically and lexically in comparison with most of the 400 or so other members of the Oceanic subgroup of Austronesian.

This monograph describes the structure of Kwamera, paying particular attention to phonology and morphophonemics, to the complex verb morphology, to the range of possessive constructions, and to inter-clausal phenomena of various kinds. (LW/M 02)

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