4. SYNTAX

4.1 SIMPLE SENTENCES

A simple Guugu Yimidhirr sentence consists of a verb and one or more NPs (noun phrases) that occupy specific functions or roles in relation to the verb. Intransitive verbs require a subject NP (an NP in S function); transitive verbs require one NP as subject (in function A) and another as object (function O). NPs in these three functions are marked in a sentence by case inflection: personal pronouns in S and A function are Nominative, and in O function are Accusative; all other nominal expressions have Absolutive case for S and O functions, and Ergative case for A function. Generally word order within a sentence is very free, and different parts of a noun phrase can be spread around a sentence; therefore, the case affixes on constituents of NPs signal the different syntactic roles of the sentence.

There is, however, an unmarked normal word order for intransitive and transitive simple sentences, as follows:

**Intransitive:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>S</th>
<th>Verb</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

**Transitive:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>A</th>
<th>O</th>
<th>Verb</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

The first pattern may be seen in (33) and (60) and the second pattern may be seen in (6-8).

Although NPs in S, A and O functions may be deleted in ordinary conversational utterances, they are nonetheless obligatory in the sense that they can only be omitted when they are implicitly 'understood' in the context of the utterance. In the absence of such a context, it is not possible to omit a string composed of, say, a nominative personal pronoun and a transitive verb, with no object:

(176) **Nyulu ganda-y.**

3sg+NOM hit-PAST
She hit.

The verb **ganda** 'hit' is, as it were, incomplete without an object. Only in a context in which the O NP can be supplied does a sentence like (176) become appropriate; for example if (178) were uttered after (33) it would be possible to understand the pronoun **nyulu** of (178) as 'the woman', and to supply as implicit object for the verb 'hit' the 'dog' mentioned in (33).

Thus S, A, and O NPs are obligatory in the sense that an intransitive verb is incomplete without a subject, and a transitive verb is similarly incomplete without both subject and object.

Transitivity is both a syntactic and a semantic matter. For example, whereas English uses the single verb **break** both transitively and intransitively (**The toy broke** and **The child broke the toy**), Guugu Yimidhirr has a distinct transitive and intransitive roots for 'break'. **Gadaa** is intransitive, and **dumbil** is transitive. The former verb requires only an NP in S function (denoting the thing that gets broken); the latter requires an O NP (the thing broken), and an A NP (the person or creature that does the breaking).

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(180) **Warrbi**

**gadaa-ba-du**

**tommyhawk** hit-PAST
The tommeyhawk got broken.

(181) **Nyulu bidaa-al warrbi**

3sg+NOM child-ERG **tommyhawk** hit-PAST
The child broke the tommeyhawk.

Simple sentences may also have additional NPs with various case inflections; individual verbs may, in fact, ordinarily 'govern' cases other than the central syntactic cases. For example, a verb like **wu-mun** 'give' normally presupposes a Dative NP (the beneficiary of the act of giving); or, a verb like **mirri-mirri** 'tell, show' usually occurs with an Adessive NP that denotes the person to whom something is
told or shown. Such additional NPs are extensions of the sentence beyond the nucleus of verb and S or A and O NPs; extensions beyond these nuclear NPs are treated in 4.1.4 below.

4.1.1 NOUN PHRASES. A noun phrase may include several parts but it is the NP as a whole which has as function in a Guugu Yimidhirr sentence; accordingly the entire NP attracts case inflection. However, it is not always necessary for every part of an NP to have an explicit case affix; in particular, if a noun is immediately followed by a modifying adjective, numeral, or genitive expression (within the same larger NP) the bare noun stem appears, and the case inflection for the whole NP is found only on the modifier (see (34), (35) and (37) above). The noun may also be fully inflected.

(182) Mina-mina-n guardha-nyn warra-ga-al ngan Aru dyidha-y.
Eng big-ENG leg-ENG Eng+ACC bite-PAST
Your big dog bit me.

In (182) the NP as a whole must bear Ergative inflection, and, in fact, each constituent part - a genitive expression, the head noun, and a modifying adjective - all have explicit ergative suffixes. In (187-8) and (190) an NP-initial head noun is uninflected and the succeeding adjective, numeral, or genitive expression bears the case suffix.

A noun phrase may include:

(a) a specific noun, e.g., warra ga 'boy', galga 'spear', babadha 'bloodwood tree'.

(b) a proper name, e.g., Billy 'Billy', Daagda 'The Doctor', Muundu, Diyag 'Jack', etc.

(c) a personal pronoun (see 3.3.1).

(d) a generic noun - one of a limited set of nouns that denote large classes of things; the commonly used generic nouns are: mayi 'vegetable food', mina 'edible meat', mila 'honey or bee', nguy 'tree, useful wood', guduyu 'fish', and galga 'spear'. A generic noun usually precedes the specific noun it encompasses.

(183) Nguy binirr piwa-ruk!
Eng+ABS ironbark+ABS search-MP
Look for an ironbark tree!

Sometimes the generic noun will follow the particular noun, especially in a utterance like (184) which identifies a plant by its specific name, and then applies the information that it is edible.

(184) Ngayi ngayun dhabin dyiindarmda-l mayi.
Eng+GEN that+ABS 'bush mango'-ABS call+REDUP+NONPAST food+ABS
We call that 'dhabin' - it's edible. Or: We call that edible plant 'dhabin'.

(e) a genitive qualifier. A possessive expression always bears case inflection agreeing with the case of the entire NP of which it is a part, and it may precede or follow the noun it modifies. (Or, as in (38), it may function as the entire NP when the head noun is understood from context.)

And we have seen the possibility of a 'possessor of a possessor' construction, as in (42).

(f) an inalienably possessed part. Inalienable possession requires no special inflection on part or whole (possessor or possessor); both words merely appear together, the part usually following directly on the whole. (See (39-41).) Occasionaally, especially when the possessor is a pronoun, the part may come first; this is the case in the next example, in which the part is Absolutive, but the prounoun Accusative.

(185) Dyidha-linda ngayun nambu ngan naga-y
Eng big-ENG head+ABS Eng+ACC big-PAST
The bird pecked me on the head.

(g) one or more adjectives or adjectival modifiers. Adjectives normally follow the nouns they modify; they are always inflected for case (although frequently the preceding head noun will appear uninflected).

(186) Nyida binirr haawuny naga-ngay.
Eng+REDUP+NONPAST water- water- Eng+ENG water-CAU
We died from [drinking] poison water [i.e., grog].

yindu 'a different one', mundi 'the rest, none, the remainder'. For the inflectional forms of yindu and yindu are 3.2.5[d]; a sentence with an adverbial form yindu is at (54).

(191) Diana xulu-x-xu-a minxa gormadba bisiluna-y 3pl=WNM all-MEM rest-ABS sound-ABS harpoon=PAST

diyirrmung-gur-m-ndi.

old man-PLU-ENG.

All the old men used to harpoon gurung.

(191) has the typical form of a transitive sentence, except that the A function NP has been broken into two parts, the A NP is

The possible constituents of a noun phrase may be put together in various ways. First, if the referent of the noun phrase is an animate being, especially a human or a group of human beings, then it is normal for the whole NP to begin with the appropriate personal pronoun, whether or not there are any other constituents. That is, the normal arrangement for an NP that refers to a human is:

\[
\text{[Personal Pronoun] NP}
\]

where X represents the remaining constituents of the NP, if any. Not all animate NPs are thus adjoined to a personal pronoun, but most animate NPs in A, S or O function are.

The remainder X (which may constitute the entire NP if there is no personal pronoun adjoined, or if the referent of the NP is inanimate - in which case no pronoun is possible) may appear in a continuous string, or its parts may be distributed throughout the sentence. In the former case, there is a preferred order for the central constituents of the NP as follows:

1. generic noun (if any)
2. specific noun (or proper noun)
3. inalienably possessed part (if any)
4. adjective (including numeral)

A genitive qualifier, a logical quantifying modifier, or a deictic may come either at the beginning or the end of this core, though there seems to be a preference for genitive qualifiers to follow the head noun (the most specific noun of (1)-(3)) and for deictics to precede it.

A common stylistic device with an animate NP in A, S or O function leaves a pronominal trace, in the proper case, in preferred sentence position for the NP’s function, with the fully inflected noun elsewhere in the sentence, frequently at the end. (191) is an illustration. Here is another instance:

(192) Hyan gun bitha bitha xhanyu-mu-gul dubu that+ABS child+ABS 3sg=WNM father-3sg=ENG addressee+PAST

xwarram-gul

Moon-ADES

Moon's wife leave their child in his care while they go hunting.

Here the Adessive NP has constituents

[bitha xhanyu xwarram]

[father his Moon]

which are inflected and distributed in the sentence.

An NP may refer to a set of (people, of objects) which may be greater than the individual constituents of the NP. For example, an NP may denote the speaker and some other person, and hence consist of the pronoun ngališk and the name of the other person, as in

(193) Ngališk, dyxag:iŋ yambaw b Hãga-y 1duer=WNM Jean-ENG pitch=PAST

Jack and I made the pitch.

Or consider:

(194) Bula ngadha yamarr ywalt-ınth dhasha-y 3sg=WNM 1sg=ENG father-3sg=ENG beach-all=PAST

These two - my son included - went to the beach.

4.1.2 VERBS - SYNTACTIC TYPES. Most intransitive verbs require a single NP subject; personal pronoun constituents of this NP will receive Nominative inflection, and other constituents will be marked by Absolutive. Reflexive forms normally follow exactly this pattern, acting syntactically just like ordinary intransitive verbs. However, there is also a distinct pattern for some reflexive verbs in some contexts, and for just one non-reflexive (apparently) intransitive verb gaadáyi 'burn, be burned'. Under this pattern, there is still a single subject NP; however, a pronominal constituent of this NP will receive Accusative marking (normally appropriate for pronouns in O function), while other constituents take Absolutive form. This pattern of case marking with reflexive forms is explored further in 4.3 below. Here we shall consider the syntactic properties of the verb gaadáyi.

The Yidiny language (Dixon 1977:257-8) distinguishes two types of reflexive verb. The majority of transitive verbs 'expect an animate (normally human) agent, who controls and regulates the action'. But a very few transitive verbs, including the verb guba-ŋ 'burn', require inanimate subjects.

An appropriate subject for this verb might be the sun, or a torch, and though sentences occur with guba-ŋ, an inanimate noun object, and no explicit subject, Dixon considers that these are elliptical sentences 'with the ergative NP unstated (but potentially statable)'.


Gagga Yimidhirr yaadyil, however, behaves in most cases like an ordinary intransitive verb.

(195) Taag yi aydhi yaadyil gana-ah bulb.  
Tree=ABS burn=PAST burn=PAST west-ALL fall-PAST  
The tree burned and fell down to the west.
A nominal subject normally receives nominative inflection, even if there is an instrumental NP.

(196) Nyundu gawri yaadyil-la!  
Nag=ABS NOT burn=INF  
Don't burn! Don't burn yourself!

(197) Nyuari ullungururrin-tinh yaadyil.  
Nag=ABS flames=INF burn=PAST  
I got burnt on the flames; I burnt myself on/with/from the flames.
And often a seemingly potential inanimate subject (or instrument) does not receive ergative or instrumental inflection.

(198) Guma ngalun-bt yaadyil-la wulwum.  
Let sun-DAT burn=INF road=ABS  
Let the road burn (i.e., dry out) in the sun! (I.e., I hope the road dries in the sun.)

Nonetheless, sentences do occur in which there are an inanimate NP in Ergative/Instrumental case, and a personal pronoun in Accusative case with yaadyil, as in:

(199) Ngyawar minithill-nda ngonh dhumai yaadyil.  
Pot-ABS-ABS pot=INF burn=ABS  
The pot and my foot/my foot got burnt by the hot sand.
Here it seems that yaadyil is acting like a transitive verb with an inanimate subject, like Yidinyi yuba-w. Is yaadyil-l (and the reflexive verbs that behave in essentially similar ways) halfway between intransitive and transitive in syntactic type?

To give an explanation that anticipates later discussion (in 4.3) we recall Dixon's phrase about animate agents 'who control...and regulate...the action'. Surely part of the rationale behind ergative/ablautive marking for nouns and nominative/accusative marking for personal pronouns is this: personal pronouns denote humans, typical agents (who can control and regulate action), whereas many nouns denote inanimate objects - unlike agents themselves but frequently the objects of 'control' and 'regulation' by animate agents.

Thus the unmarked (Nominative) case for pronouns is appropriate for S and A functions, and the unmarked case for nouns (Abolutive) is appropriate for S and O functions. The marked cases (Ergative and Accusative) indicate the more striking situations in which nouns are agents (controlling and regulating other things) and in which pronouns are objects (themselves being controlled and regulated).

Now a word like yaadyil (like most of the reflexive forms of transitive verbs) refers to something that can happen to both inanimate objects (like trees or roads, in (195) and (198)) and to people. But it can happen to people in the same way it happens to things - without their having any control over what happens to them (see (199) where the S pronoun receives ACC inflection and the inalienably possessed body part ABS); or it can happen to people, as it were, with their collusion (as in (197) where the S pronoun is in NOW and the intransitive flavour of this sort of collusion may be seen in (196) which may be glossed: 'Don't let yourself get burnt!'. Verbs of this sort occupy a middle ground between transitive verbs with animate agents and intransitive verbs that merely have subjects; we may say, provisionally, that yaadyil is intransitive in form but 'reflexive' in syntactic type. (For a discussion of 'split S' systems of syntactic marking, see Dixon 1979.)

4.1.3 VERB MODIFIERS. Associated with the verb in a simple sentence may be one or more adverbs. Most adverbs seem to be derived from adjectives with the suffix -gu/-ygu (see 3.2.4[b], (62), (63) and (189)). Adverbs are not, seemingly, formed from nouns, and a few words seem to modify verbs, without having any corresponding adjectival form: mulbaru 'clearly, firmly, tight', wawbarra 'firmly', yarrbarru 'extremely, severely', waly 'all around, around, in every direction', nyuvarmaru 'year over and over', nganu 'quickly'. Particles may also contribute aspectual or modal nuances to a verb: ngupu 'perhaps' expresses doubt, biru 'certainly', certainty; wuri 'expresses the regularity of action, murrum only' its uniqueness. And so on. (See 4.8.)

The 'resultative' adverbial forms in -ngaggu (see 3.2.5, (70-2)) also modify verbs, though they presumably have a more complex origin. That is, in a sentence like (70) the word in(A) =ABS refers to the person who was hit, who is a result of hitting died. That is, it refers to the NP in O function (and not, say, to the NP in A function). Underlying a sentence like (70), then are sentences meaning: 'A hit B' and 'B was dead', which are combined into a single sentence. Thus the verb of the second sentence represented as the resultative adverbial dhanyu-ngaggu. See 4.4 with regard to subordinate constructions.

4.1.4 SYNTAX EXTENSIONS. Following Dixon (1977:258-268) we may consider simple sentences to consist of a nucleus - the verb and S, or A and O, NPs - and 'peripheral NPs', marked by either syntactic or local cases. NPs marked by the various peripheral syntactic cases add additional participles or accessories to the nucleus of a sentence. The following extensions occur in Gagga Yimidhirr sentences:

[a] Instrumental. In 3.2.2[b] we saw that case suffixes for Ergative and Instrumental were identical. In a transitive sentence a nominal A NP will bear Ergative inflection, but an additional (usually inanimate) NP denoting a weapon, tool, or instrument used in performing the action may also occur, and an Ergative/instrumental suffix. See, for example, (102), (161), (228) and (189). Some inanimate things are, of course, more capable of initiating and controlling action than others; in some cases, then, an inanimate NP with Erg/INST inflection will seem more reasonably an agent than an instrument.
(205) Nanu mil qaari wuryqala ngaqala-anda
2sg=GEM+NABS eye=ABS NOT suffer+REDUP+NONPAST smoke-INST
Aren’t your eyes suffering from the smoke?

In such a sentence it does not seem to be possible to interpret ngaqalaanda (from ngaqal ‘smoke’) as an A NP, and nanu mil as the O NP, since substituting a personal pronoun for nanu mil is possible only if the pronoun is in NOM, and not ACC, case.

(206) Nyulu qaari wuryqala ngaqala-anda
3sg=MON NOT suffer+REDUP+NONPAST smoke-INST

Mhangu qaari wuryqala ngaqala-anda
3sg=ACC NOT suffer+REDUP+NONPAST smoke-INST

Isn’t he suffering from the smoke?

An explicit Agent could be incorporated into such a construction only with a derived Causative verb of the form wuryqala-nga-naa ‘cause to suffer’.

(207) Nyulu qaari wuryqala-aqemu-nga.
3sg=ACC NOT suffer-DER=CAUS-IMP
Don’t make him sore! Don’t make him suffer!

Instrumental may thus be distinguished from Ergative on the grounds that only Instrumental NPs can occur with intrasentential constructions. Notably, it is normal for an A NP, marked with ergative, to denote an animate entity (capable of being an agent), whereas an Instrument, marked with instrumental case, is more likely to be some inanimate object; the agent initiates and controls action, whereas the instrument is only a passive tool employed by the agent. (An NP may, of course, be indeterminate between an INST and an ERG interpretation in a particular transitive sentence.)

While it is possible for an intransitive verb to be accompanied by an instrumental NP, frequently a Causal NP will express a similar idea. Contrast the following alternate versions:

(208) Ngqala qarabulâ nga-llan-nga
1sg=MON sick=fall+PAST sun-INST

Ngqala qarabulâ ngalas-nga
1sg=MON sick=fall+PAST sun-CAU

I fell sick because of/through the sun.

Here the second alternative seems to predominate (see the following section).

[b] Causal. A Causal extension denotes the cause of the action or state referred to in the verb; or it may indicate the material from which something is made. See (186) and:

(209) Nyulu mititiq bintiir-nga ngaqala-ba
3sg=MON woman=ABS ironback-CAU make-PAST
He made the woman from ironback (wood).

In modern Hopewell speech the suffix -ngaqala which marks causal (and Abative) NPs seems to be replaced by the Ergative/Instrumental suffix -nga (although most people will correct such usage if it is repeated back to them); it may be that the suffixes (and hence the cases) are undergoing
a process of amalgamation; collapsing the two suffixes would result in little confusion where the ablative sense of -nga is concerned. And there is clearly a close relationship between Causal and Instrumental. (In Yidiny, for example, Instrumental, not Causal, denotes the material from which something is made; see Dixon 1977:283.)

(c) Abessive-Origin, -nga. As in (21-23), a noun phrase in Abessive case can denote action that leaves the conscious presence of an animate being, or that involves something that comes from a source: a one-time possessor, a place of origin. Unlike the plain ablative case which merely describes a location away from which action moves, the abessive normally marks a person with whom, say, interaction has been taking place, but whose company is now abandoned. Often ablative and abessive are both involved in a sentence, the ablative marking a place and the abessive marking the person who occupied the place:

(210) Ngaju daba-n nga kwaau-bu nga ngaju
2sgNOM run-PAST 3pl-ARES camp-ALL
He ran away from them out of the camp.

Here the case usage suggests that it was because of the people that the subject ran away from the camp: he was not just running out of the camp, but he was actively getting away from them. An Abessive extension to a sentence may also suggest that the person denoted by the Abessive NP has been the abessive of some previous action, that relates to the present sentence.

(211) Ngaju galga waabu-bu nga waabu-n?
2sgNOM spear-ABS who-ARES get-PAST
From whom did you get the spear? (i.e., who gave it to you?)

In (211) using the genitive pronoun waabu in place of the Abessive would produce a sentence that meant: 'Whose spear did you get?' - not suggesting that the owner gave it to you, but only that it belongs to him. (Roth 1981:16) declares that there are two possessive suffixes for Gunugu Yimdhirr: 'when the article possessed is not in its real lawful owner's possession, -ga...when the article possessed is actually in its real lawful owner's possession: -me after a vowel, -be or -e after a consonant.' Roth is evidently describing what are here called Abessive and Genitive forms respectively.) Abessive marks a relationship that is in one sense the opposite of that marked by Dative (i.e., leaving someone's possession as opposed to entering it) and in another sense the opposite of Abessive (leaving someone's presence, control etc., as opposed to entering it).

(d) Abessive, -gal. An abessive extension introduces an animate NP in whose presence the action of the verb takes place - someone who is or will be involved in the events portrayed. Examples may be found in (93), (108), (135), (192). Verbs of speaking, showing, and telling use an Abessive extension to mark the person to whom something is said, shown, etc. An Abessive NP marks a person who will be actively involved in the events portrayed in the sentence, or subsequent related events; a location marked with

Locative/Allative NP is neutral in this respect. Contrast:

(212) Ngaju bita-ajaal dada-a
logNOM father-ABSE see-NOMPASS
I'm going to see him

(213) Ngaju bita-ajaal dada-a
logNOM father-GEN-AR-ALL see-NOMPASS
I'm going to my father's [place] whether or not I'll see him.

A sentence like

(214) Geungay birra dharrwuni-gal bula
yasNOM leaf-ABS Thunder-ABSE fall-NOMPASS
The yam leaf that comes into his presence, but will probably act as a result of seeing it.

In reflexive sentences (4.3) an Adessive NP often refers to the perpetrator of some unintentional action; that is, it marks the underlying A NP of a transitive sentence.

[7] Dative. With certain transitive verbs, Dative indicates an indirect object, a third NP whose referent is the beneficiary of some act of giving (with verbs like wa-awa 'give' and maandi 'take, bring'); see (129) and (150). Such a context lends sense to the morphological equivalence between DAT and GEN-ABS inflection by showing the relationship between recipient/beneficiary and possessor. In fact, simple sentences that express possession may be considered to involve a dative NP that stands for the possessor. There are two common constructions of this sort:

(i) X-NOM 1-DAT (expressing the proposition 'X is Y's'), and

(ii) X-NOM 1-DAT 1-GEN (expressing the proposition 'Y has X' or 'Y's X exists'),

Examples of the first sort are in (92), (35) and (89). An example of the second sort is (46); and consider the following sentence:

(215) Nhamu-ma diba-wi yamam wa-awa?
2sgNOM-ma DAT horse-DAT exist-NOMPASS
Does your father have a horse?

The close semantic relationship between dative and genitive in such a sentence can be seen from the equivalence of two possible literal translations of (215): 'Does your father's horse exist?' or 'Does a horse exist to/from your father?'. And the morphological equivalence between DAT and GEN-ABS renders the following sentence ambiguous between a dative and a possessive reading:

(216) Ngaju galga diba-wi maandi-i
2sgNOM spear-ABS horse-DAT take-NOMPASS
GEN-ABS

I am taking the spear to father

I am taking father's spear [to someone else].

Dative extensions can also have a wide range of oblique functions in a sentence, introducing NPs that are involved
in some way in the action or state denoted by the verb, but whose function is not subsumed under the more specific meanings of the other case extensions. See (108), (164), and (198). Here are some further examples:

(217) *oona *ndhada-y biir-yi bumaal bi.
3p*NOM go-PAST river-ALL foot-DAT
They went on foot to the river.

(218) *ndhada mili ngala-ini gudwa-yi.
3p*NOM ear-ABS close-PAST fish-DAT
[Literally: he closed his ear for fish. [i.e., he was completely absorbed in fishing.]

(219) *oona *yirga=na gulu-uway mili-wi.
3p*NOM talk-NONPAST together-yu story-DAT
They get together to have a yarn.

(220) *ngu *hila *ndhada-yi.
3a=NOM now fishhook-DAT go-NONPAST
I'm going fishing (lit., for the fishhook) today.

(221) Baaroway gaay-wi ngaa, ngaa waa=wa=aa=aa.
water- poison-DAT head=ABS bad=INCHO-REP=PAST
[We] get drunk [while drinking] liquor. (Literally: While drinking poison water [his] head became bad.)

Sometimes a Dative, rather than a Purposive extension indicates the specific goal or purpose of action; for example, the conventional way to express 'going fishing' uses the dative.

(222) Gubir=yugubir gudwa-yi ndhada-yi.
girl=REDUP=ABS fish-DAT go=REDUP=NONPAST
The girls are going fishing.

Other kinds of hunting, however, regularly use Purposive extensions.

(223) Barri-yi baari=ngi nga *ndhada-yi.
boy=PLUR=ABS pig-PURF go=PAST
The boys went out [hunting] for pig[s].

A few reflexive constructions use the dative to mark the underlying object of a transitive verb, as is the case with 'anti-passive' constructions in other Australian languages. (See 4.3.6.)

[f] Purposive, -ngu. As in (223), a purposive extension marks an explicit goal or purpose that motivates the action of the verb. Purposive inflection can also mark something which inspires fear (see (81)) or which the speaker is warning about.

(224) Wa-la jhaurbi=ngu ayinda=ga
rise=IMP snake-PURF bit=CAUS
Watch out for that snake - it might bite!

A purposive NP often indicates something that the subject of the verb is actively seeking.

(225) *ngu *bii=ni bараварay-ngu
3a=NOM inside=ABS die-NONPAST water-PURF
[Literally:] my insides are dying for water, [i.e., I'm thirsty for water.]

In fact, a Purposive NP can occur without an explicit verb, as in (57) and

(226) *ngu *njarwayy-ngu.
lag*NOM water-PURF
I'm after water; I want water; I've come for water.

Purposive extensions exactly parallel verbal Purposive complements, which use the verbal suffix -nu. (See §4.3.3[d] above.) In fact, a Purposive extension can often be replaced by a purposive complement clause which itself contains the same NP. Compare (145), which has a purposive complement paanggaa bagarnu 'to dig yams', with the following example which contains a purposive NP.

(227) Njiila *gunggaa *ndhada-a gaa gaa. bi.
1a=NOM yam-PURF go-NONPAST scrub=ALL
We'll go to the scrub for yams.

See 4.4 below.

Purposive NPs also mark the underlying objects of certain nominal and adjectival predicates which are transitive in meaning, although formally intransitive (in that they do not accept NPs in A or O functions); such predicates are *saa-ndhira, 'want', *gul= 'afraid of', *baana= 'familiar with', etc. See 4.1.5.

[g] aathina purposive/dative: GOAL, -ga. Section 3.2.2[f] describes the so-called GOAL case which occurs in a limited number of expressions formed with the suffix -ga which seem to have dative or purposive meaning. Roth (1901a:29-30) describes what seems to be this suffix as indicating (a) 'to, in, at' (b) 'after, for, on the look-out for', to hunt and (c) 'holding or containing'. Not all of Roth's examples seem to be acceptable to modern Guugu Yimidhirr speakers, who generally use Locative/Allative for (a), and Dative (which is morphologically identical to Locative/Allative) or Purposive for (b), and Purposive for (c). Nonetheless, isolated examples of expressions in which the suffix -ga appears in Syntactic extensions to sentences with all of the meanings Roth gives; see (16)-(20). However, by no means all nouns can combine with -ga to give a purposive/allative sense. One can say:

(228) *ngu *nahyngun=ga *ndhada-yi.
lag*NOM camp-GOAL go=REDUP=NONPAST
I'm going towards camp.

But if the destination is home, the allative form seems to modern speakers, much better:

(229) *ngu *[baga=ga] *ndhada.
[bag=bi]
lag=NOM house-ALL go=REDUP=NONPAST
I'm going towards the house.

Younger speakers seem almost never to use the -ga suffix in this way except in the indefinite/interrogative pronoun *anakdakala (as in (17)).
4.1.5 LOCAL AND TEMPORAL EXTENSIONS. Sentences whose verbs are inherently concerned with motion or position will normally include local extensions in locative/allative case (showing rest in or at some place or motion to it), in ablative case (indicating motion away from a place), or in superlative case (showing rest or motion on or above something); see 3.2.2. Often a local extension will receive the post-infl ectional suffix -gu to show proximity: not in or so close to, etc.

(230) Bidi ba yan-bi-gu min, gazungu-ga.
child+ABS house-LOC+gu sit+SEQ+PAST
Child was sitting near the house.

Explicit locational qualiifi ers (described in 3.4) can also be local extensions, often in combination with an NP bearing local case inflection.

1st+HOM East-ALL go+REDEP+NONPAST beach-ALL
We are going East to the beach.

Verbs of perception and speech can also be accompanied by local extensions:

3sg+HOM that+ABS above-me-ALL?/FRG? down see+PAST
He - that one - looked down from above. (Or: that one up above looked down.)

(In (232) nothing in the form of the word wangu:un allows us to decide between the ablative and the ergative readings.)

When the verb of a sentence is not inherently concerned with motion or rest, the sentence may still have a local extension (in locative or superlative case) describing the location at which the action takes place.

(233) Bidi yangu bliin woorabinda.
father+ABS 3sg+GEN+ABS die+PAST Woorabinda+(LOC).
His father died at Woorabinda.

Notably, it seems the rule that a local extension in such a sentence refers to the location (with respect to the action in question) of the S NP, and not to that of the A NP.

Thus the following sentence cannot mean ‘I killed the game while I was on the tree.’

(234) Nguu yuwa:ul minha gunda-ga.
3sg+HOM tree-LOC meet+ABS kill+PAST
I killed the animal on the tree.

(235) Nguu yuwa:ul madaa-adil minha dama-ga.
3sg+HOM tree-LOC/ALL climb+PAST meet+ABS spear+PAST
I climbed up the tree, and I speared the animal.

By contrast, a sentence like (234) is similar in meaning to the following sentence which contains an explicit subordinate verb (of a type also described in 4.1.3).

(326) Nguu yuwa:ul min, gua-gi-gi-ga minha gunda-ga.
3sg+HOM tree-LOC sit+REDUP-SUB1 meet+ABS kill+PAST
I killed the animal (while it was) sitting on the tree.

Temporal extensions add information about the time when the action of a sentence takes place. (See (118)-(120).) Clock time is expressed with the word ngalun 'sun'.

(237) Nguu yuwa:ul ngalun ngayu:naa uruwa:naa-
3sg+HOM sun+ABS what+ABS return+RED+NONPAST
What time are you going back?

One responds to such a question by saying something like ngalun yarba 'sun there', and pointing to the appropriate section of the sky to show the sun's position at the time one plans to leave.

4.1.6 NOMINAL SENTENCES. Guugu Yimidhirr has no real copula, and equational sentences therefore have an explicit verb only when necessary to carry marked tense (see (250) below). In the NONPAST tense, then, such sentences have a subject (an NP inflected as in S function), followed by a nominal predicate which may consist of:

(a) a noun in absolutive case (i.e., in uninflected form), sometimes with gerundive or adjectival qualification. Such sentences often have a deictic as subject, and serve to identify some entity.

(238) Yi yi ngi tiia+ABS food+ABS
This is food. [i.e., this is edible].

(239) Nguu yuwa:ul bliin ngadu.
3sg+HOM that+ABS father+ABS 3sg+GEN+ABS
That one is my father.

[b] a dative expression. See 4.1.4(e) immediately above.

Sentences like (22), (35), (42), (63) and (89) state some sort of possessive relationship between the S NP and the entity that the dative expression refers to. Notice that a sentence like (83) can have two interpretations; if the S NP is the entire expression yi banyu 'this house', and the predicate is the dative expression ngadu-nga 'my own, to/for me alone' then the sentence means 'This house is mine'. The sentence would provide the information that this (particular) house was mine. Or, parsing the sentence according to the construction mentioned in [a] above, the S NP might be simply the deictic yi 'this'; the predicate would then be the entire NP banyu ngadu-nga 'my house', and the sentence would mean 'This (thing here) is my house. I.e., it is not just a pile of sticks; or, it is the house that is all mine, not someone else's!'. The following sentence seems to be unambiguously a declaration of possession, in which the S NP is galgaa yi 'this spear' and the remainder is a Dative expression serving as a predicate.
of the body. For example, qualities associated with intelligence and perception are often connected with expressions about the ear (see (218)); strong emotion is often expressed with reference to gamba 'the stomach', and mangoz 'hand' has to do with industriousness, productivity, and generosity.

Because the body-part in question is inalienably possessed by the person, it is possible to treat the entire body-part+adjectival construction as the predicate in such nominal sentences.

Walu also acts as a kind of preposition meaning 'like, resembling' preceding a noun or adjective.

(245) Kuulu ngulu gaagoa mangai burumbeer.

3sg-GEN larger brother+ABS younger brother+ABS head+ABS hard+ABS
My brother is stinging [literally, my younger brother's head is hard].

(246) Kuugu yuuki walu daban burom=guu

3sg-ABS girl+ABS face+ABS good very=guu

That girl is very pretty.

Many modern Guugu Yimidhirr speakers leave a complement to the predicate wuuu=dhiihrr - sometimes shortened to wuu - in the Absolutive case, but this practice must certainly be regarded as innovative, possibly deriving from English.

(247) Dyirri walu waybi=ku walu ngunu biddiga.

sky+ABS like thus = like plant tree species.

Heaven is like this: it is like the seed of the biddiga tree.

(From a recent local translation of Mark 4:31.)

(As the author understands it, Guugu Yimidhirr Lutherans considered the biddiga, a kind of native fig-tree that bears tiny fruit, but which grows to be an enormous tree, to be an appropriate equivalent for the plant in the 'mustard-seed' passage translated here.)

(248) Kuma-ngun guulu walu yinindyi=ku.

3pl-GEN=ABS language+ABS like different.

Their language is different (in many places) seems different.

Interrogative words, in various forms, can also function as predicates, as in (80), (97), (99), (102); and consider:

(249) Nyumulu ngalak=ku walu wuuu=dhiihrr?

2sg-GEN what+ABS want+COM

What do you want?

Nominal sentences usually have no verb; however, when they occur in other than the unmarked (non-past, non-continuous) tense or aspect, they must have a dummy verb, or they must employ derived verbs, to carry the tense. Wuu-naa 'lie, exist' usually acts as this dummy verb:

(250) Gunnu-nguun ngunu yinli=ku waai=ku, mamlak enath, mamlak before-ABS 3sg-GEN frightened be-PAST, now NOT now

Before I used to be afraid, but now not; now I have become brave ['tume'].

(240) Gama=yi=ku bitha ngulu=wuu.

spear+ABS this+ABS father=ABS
This spear [belongs] to my father.

(Compare sentence (146).)

c) an adjective. See (39) and (60).

d) a noun with Abessive or Purposive inflection. See sentences (23) and (57) respectively, as well as (225).

e) an adjective-like derived expression. See (73-4), (77) (80), (169-70), and the discussion at 3.2.6[d].

f) a locational qualifier, of various sorts. See (17), (58), (65), (102) and (115).

g) a comitative construction. Some comitative (or private) expressions are equivalent to simple adjectives and can stand alone as predicates; see (44), (45), (51-3), (61), (103) and (109). Frequently, however, a comitative construction expects a complement, which will take the Purposive case. The complement is very much like the object of a verb, especially in the case of such comitative predicates as wuuu=dhiihrr 'want (literally, soul-with)'.

(241) Kuugu wuuu=dhiihrr ngali=ngu

3sg-GEN 'want' food-PURF
I want food.

(242) Bitha dhanaa=dhiihrr moko=ngu

child+ABS hungry-GEN meat-PURF
The child is hungry for meat.

(Many modern Guugu Yimidhirr speakers leave a complement to the predicate wuuu=dhiihrr - sometimes shortened to wuu - in the Absolutive case, but this practice must certainly be regarded as innovative, possibly deriving from English.)

(h) adjective plus purposive complement. In a similar way, many adjectives normally expect complements, and these too have Purposive inflection.

(243) Gama-gama-yi=ku ngunu yinli=ku ayaarba=ngu

old woman+ABS that+ABS afraid+ABS snake-PURF
That old lady is afraid of snakes.

Some adjectives and comitative constructions can also take full sentential complements, as in (103) or

(244) Nyumulu wuuu=dhiihrr=ru maana anha-ru.

3sg-GEN soul-GEN COM-AHC get-REF-PURF
He wants to get married.

(i) body-part plus adjective. Members of a special subset of the nominal sentences with adjectival predicates have the overall form:

Whole Part Adjective

in which the whole is usually a person, the part usually a metaphorically significant body-part word, and the adjective one which gives rise to body-part metaphor. Many human pro-
4.2 Word-level derivations.

In 3.2.6-7, and 3.5.5 we discussed the morphology of certain deverbal nouns and also the forms and inchoative verbs formed from nouns, verbs, and adjectives. In this section we summarize the constructions that produce such derived words. (a) **VP+ -bagya, 'agentive'.** Transitive sentences are of the form:

\[
\begin{array}{cccc}
NF_1 & NF_2 & TV \\
A & 0 &
\end{array}
\]

When a transitive verb has a conventionalized noun object (from NPQ), Guugu Yimidhirr speakers frequently form a nominal predicate (with the meaning 'X-er' where X is the verb) of the form:

Object noun verb root -bagya

The resulting expression functions as the predicate of a nominal sentence. (See (189)-(171).)

(b) **Causative constructions.** Nominal sentences whose predicates consist of adjectives or nouns mean something like 'S is P', where S is the subject NP and P is the predicate. Such sentences have the external form of intransitive sentences (i.e., there is a single S NP, inflected like the subject NP of any tense-bearing intransitive verb). We saw in the last section that such sentences can bear the full range of verbal inflection by utilizing a dummy verb, usually *wu-waz*. From a nominal sentence:

\[
\begin{array}{cccc}
NF_1 & Adj & Noun \\
S & 0 &
\end{array}
\]

("S is P")

Fred

it is usually possible, subject to semantic plausibility, to form a causative transitive sentence of the form:

\[
\begin{array}{cccc}
NF_2 & NF_1 & Adj & Noun \\
A & 0 &
\end{array}
\]

which means 'X (=NPQ) causes S to be P'. Hence from (252) with an adjectival predicate, we can derive the causative transitive sentence (253).

(252) *Ga-ga yiil wurru.

spear=ABS this=ABS bad.

This spear is bad.

(253) *Bida-al ngal ngala yiil wurru-gurra-y.

child-ERG 3sg=MON spear=ABS this=ABS bad=CAUS-PAST

The child mined this spear.

Similarly, a sentence like (255) derives from a nominal sentence like (254) which has a purposive extension.

(254) Ngala wangeri guugu-wingu binal.

3sg=MON white man=ABS language=PURP knowing

The white man knows the language.


who+ERG 3sg=ACC white man=ABS language=PURP knowing=CAUS-PAST

Who taught the white man the language?

The causative *gurra* can also apply to noun predicates, as in:

(256) *Mungu=yngu gubiri dyakura=ngaturo-y.

carpet make-ERG girl=ABS wife=CAUS-PAST

Carpet snake made the girl his wife. [Carpet snake abducts the daughter of a spirit and takes her home against her will.]

A very similar process produces a causative transitive version of an intransitive sentence with an intransitive verb, but the causative verbalizer is the NA conjugation root *ma-ma* (see 3.5.5). (172) and (173) show causative forms of the verbs in (257) and (258) respectively.

(257) Bida ngara-adhi nambat-bi.

child=ABS sit-REF=PASS rock-LOC

The child sat on the rock.

(258) *Ngara buik* lurru=NGAW fall-PASS

I fell.

(c) **Inchoative constructions.** Predicates of nominal sentences can be verbalized in another way: from a sentence 'S is P' can be derived the inchoative sentence 'S becomes' to be P'. Two verbalizing suffixes attach to adjectives and noun predicates to form inchoative verb stems: the monocylic *i* conjugation verb *ma*, and the causativizing *ma-ja* with Reflexive inflection.

(259) *Ga-ga yiil wurru.

spear=ABS this=ABS bad

This spear became bad.

ma-adhi

CAUS-REF=PAS
The inchoative construction is also possible with nouns:

(261) Daqu nyuanj wandharram wirrurr-ga=ma-adhi?
So 2sg+NOM how curer-CAUS-REF=PAST
So, how did you become a curer?

There seems to be no semantic difference between the ma- forms and those with ma-naa-REF. (R. Hersberger (n.d.:note 9) describes two clearly cognate inchoative verbalisers in Guugu Yalanjdji and says, of the difference, 'the intransitive verbaliser -manadi- seems to be most used when the action indicated by the verb happens to, rather than by, the subject of the verb.') One difference in Guugu Yimidhirr has to do with dialect: Coastal speakers favour inchoatives with ma- and inland speakers use ma-naa-REF exclusively.

Two other intransitive verb roots occasionally have inchoative force, with two adjectives gilt 'angry, full of hate, savage' and gaga 'poison, sick'. In nominal sentences these adjectives normally occur with the comitative suffix -dharr.

3sg+NOM sick-COM 3sg+NOM anger-COM
He's sick. He's angry.

While inchoatives can be formed from the unsuffixed stems plus ma-naa-REF, more frequently the inchoative forms are:

3sg+NOM sick-PAST 3sg+NOM angry-PAST
He fell sick. He got angry.

(It is possible, although there is no evidence to show it, that the first example here is a borrowing from English phraseology.)

Inchoative constructions can also be based on body-part metaphors of the sort described in the preceding section.

(264) Maseal gina=ma-la.
hand+ABS soft=INGCH-IMP
Be generous. Become generous! (Literally, may your hand be soft!)

And inchoative forms are also used with cardinal-point roots to describe motion in specific directions:

(265) Maseal gina=ma-la! Guwirwirarnawu=ma-yi.
hand+ABS soft=INGCH-IMP west=REUJF-CAUS-REF+IMP
Move to the East. Move slightly to the west.

[4] Loan-word constructions. Nouns, and a few adjectives, may be freely incorporated into Guugu Yimidhirr from English by simple phonological alteration; we have already seen numerous English names in Guugu Yimidhirr, as well as the word glaada 'glass'. Verbs, however, do not enter Guugu Yimidhirr freely; instead, English verbs undergo cer-
tain changes and then are incorporated as noun-like words that require verbalization with causative or inchoative verbalizers. Generally, intransitive verbs from English are borrowed directly, and occur with an inchoative verbaliser.

(266) Nyulu djaraw bincal-yi wakkinyin dhi-nu.
3sg+NOM 3pl+ACC knowing-CAUS-PAST 1sg+REF
He taught them to work.

Transitive verbs are pidginized (roughly, by altering the phonology and by adding the common Cape York Creole transitive suffix -im (Crowley & Rigsby 1975)) and then incorporated into Guugu Yimidhirr as noun-like words that require the causative verbalizer -gurral.

(267) Nyulu warram ndik garee ma-ghi, nyulu
3sg+NOM white man ENS NOT food+ABS give-PAST, 3sg+NOM
'self'+CAUS-PAST
The white man didn't give the food away, he sold it.

This exemplifies the rule that verbs, rather than subjects, are the important element in transitive compounding.

Many younger people, who have very limited knowledge of Creole and in fact are fluent in an English much closer to standard Australian, often incorporate English transitive verbs without the -im suffix, simply adding the causative -gurral.

4.3 REFLExive ConstrucTions

The reflexive stem formed in Guugu Yimidhirr with the suffix -dhi acts like an intransitive stem derived from a transitive stem. What we here call the 'reflexive' suffix -dhi is in many ways functionally parallel (and clearly cognate) to the Guguy Yalanjdji passive suffix -dhi (R. Hersberger 1964b:46-8), to the yidiny -dhi-n which has anti-passive and reflexive uses, among others (Dixon 1977: 273-293), and perhaps to the Dyirbal 'mediopassive' -y/- (K. Hale 1976c:238). All these suffixes derive an intransitive verbal stem from a transitive stem, and all involve some deviations from the normal pattern of case-marking on the central NPs in sentences containing the derived verbs. We call the derived form 'reflexives' after what seems to be the central and most common use of such verbs, although the label should not obscure the fact that the -dhi suffix has a wide range of uses.

4.3.1 Reflexives and Reciprocals. As we have seen, (4.1, 4.1.2), a transitive verb has an animate A NP and a second NP in 0 function; an intransitive verb has a S NP. In a reflexive construction the entity referred to by the A NP performs its actions on itself; if such an action were expressed by a normal transitive sentence (which it cannot be in Guugu Yimidhirr), the A NP and the 0 NP would both refer to the same thing. Instead, Guugu Yimidhirr expresses actions performed by agents on themselves by means of reflexive verbs, with the agent/patient expressed in the S NP; (162) and (163) express such reflexive actions. Often the subject pronoun of a reflexive sentence receives the post-
inflectional suffix -ugu which emphasizes that the action was performed by and on that person himself. Compare the following question and answer dialogues:

(268) A: Rendhó yuqarun ṭhámá ṭandñ-gu?
Who hit your dog?
B: ṭandñ-ugu ganda-y.
I hit him. (i.e., I did it myself.)

(269) A: Rendhó ṭhámá ṭandñ-gu?
Who hit you?
B: ṭandñ-ugu ganda-adhi.
I hit myself. (i.e., I did it myself.)

Exactly the same construction expresses reciprocal action, which can be construed as a kind of generalized reflexive action performed by members of a group on other members of the same group, and vice versa. (167) is a reciprocal sentence of this sort, based on the transitive verb munggil 'beat up'.

(270) Futi (ugu) ganda-adhi.
The two of them hit each other (hit themselves).

The suffix -ugu strengthens the reflexive (as opposed to the reciprocal) reading of the verb in such a sentence. (It would also be possible to use an expression like mḫwum- mḫwum-gu 'one by one, each one at a time' to force a reflexive reading.) Compare the force of the suffix -ugu in the following non-reflexive cases (see 3.2.4, and 3.3.1):

(271) A: ṭandñ-ugu yuqarun ṭandñ-gu.
I hit my dog!
B: ṭandñ-ugu ṭandñ-gu.
I hit myself!

(272) ṭandñ-ugu yuqarun ṭandñ-gu.
I hit my dog (and no one else!).

When an agent does something to his or her own body - expressed usually by an inalienably possessed body part - Guugu Yimidhirr also uses a reflexive construction. (See (168).)

(273) Nyuqari jukurr̕arri yanawuy-gu banggarm
3sg-MOM giant-carry 3sg-MOM giant-instrument
sharku-adih. shaman slavor
open-REFL-PAST 3pi+AUX swallow-PAST.
The giant shark opened his mouth right there and swallowed them.

In all these reflexive and reciprocal constructions, the agent (denoted by the S NP) acts upon itself (or the agents act on one another in the reciprocal case); and generally the action is intentional - it is 'controlled and regulated' by the agent, although self-directed. The S NP receives case marking like the S NP of any intransitive verb: personal pronouns take the Nominative case, and all other nominals receive Absolutive inflection. Whether a reflexive verb form is interpreted as reflexive or reciprocal is influenced, as we have seen, by the presence of the suffix -ugu on the S NP, and also by the number of the S NP: a dual or plural subject suggests reciprocal rather than reflexive action. Similarly, a reduplicated verb stem, with reflexive inflection, also suggests reciprocal action.

(274) Djarra munggil-gu.
3pi-MOM hit-MID-REFL-MOM
They're hitting each other.

Guugu Yimidhirr, like Yidiny (Dixon 1977:281), but unlike intervening Dyanbuguy (Nail 1975c:238) and Guugu Yalandji (R. Horschberger 1964b:45-6), has no separate inflection for reciprocal. Reflexive (and reciprocal) meanings seem to be the first readings that Guugu Yimidhirr speakers will supply for a verb form with reflexive suffixes: those seem, then, to be the central meanings of the derivational affixes we have labelled 'reflexive'.

4.3.2 ACCIDENTS. Another common construction with reflexive verb stems describes actions that are accidental, unintentional results of purposive action, or results set in motion by inanimate entities (which are not capable of intention in the first place). Thus, for example, with the verb wajil 'cut' we can have intentional transitive action:

(275) Nyuqari yuqarun wajil
2sg-MOM meat-ABS cut-ABS knife-INST
You cut the meat with a knife.

and we can have reflexive action, exemplified by (160) which em.libs the addressee to exercise care so as not to cut himself. When things go wrong, however, someone may be cut by accident.

(276) Nyuqari wajil-adhi.
3sg-MOM knife-INST
I cut myself on the knife.

Except for the reflexive form of the verb, this sentence looks morphologically like a transitive sentence, with an Accusative pronoun in 0 function, and an NP with Erg/Inst inflection. An NP is not possible with a reflexive verb (nor, indeed, with any intransitive verb), and thus the word wajil-uh must be read as an instrumental extension: 'with the knife, by means of the knife'. (276) contrasts with two different sorts of sentence. For example, the following sentence implies that I took a knife and deliberately cut myself:

(277) Nyuqari wajil-adhi.
3sg-MOM cut-REFL-PAST knife-INST
I cut myself with a knife.
The only difference between (276) and (277) is the case of the 'subject' pronoun, a difference that would be totally obscured if there were a noun in S function. So for example (278) is ambiguous between two readings:

(278) Dma 'nul mngal gux-adhi
3pl*MIND stand+PAST hand+ABS hit-REF+PAST
They stood up and hit their hands (i.e. clapped)
(Interactively). The: They stood up and
bumped their hands [e.g. against something] (Accidental).

Such an ambiguity can be resolved, syntactically, by the form of a pronoun.

(279) Nggu dma-mi dma-x-adhi galga-ah.
Igsg*MIND foot+ABS spear+REF+PAST spear+INST
I spared myself in the foot with a spear (i.e. punished myself).

(280) Ngsmi dma-mi dma-x-adhi galga-ah.
Igsg*MIND foot+ABS spear+REF+PAST spear+INST
I got spared in the foot, accidentally, with a spear (e.g., it fell out of a tree and got me on the foot).

Contrast both these sentences with the full transitive sentence in which the NP (some indefinite person) has been deleted.

(281) Nggu dma-mi dma-y galga-ah.
Igsg*MIND foot+ABS spear+PAST spear+INST
Somebody spared me in the foot with a spear.

(Omitting an A NP, or using an indefinite pronoun in its place, are both frequent devices to express indefinite agents; see 3.3.2.)

Sentence (276) also contrasts with a sentence with active verb inflection.

(282) Nggu uwag bama-ad.
Igsg*MIND cut+PAST men-ENG
The man cut me.

(283) is a normal transitive sentence, with an ENG A NP bama-ad: the sentence implies that the man actively and intentionally, or otherwise through his own efforts and under his control, cut me. Clearly, ordinarily only animate entities can act as Agents in such actions; however, if an inanimate entity does bring about some action, as it were, under its own power, the verb of the sentence describing such an event will be active and not reflexive. Consider the following example:

(284) Nggu buil bulig bgyudgyar.
The tree fell and covered [i.e., crushed] the bullock.

The unstated but understood A NP of the second verb bgyudgyar ‘covered’ is the tree mentioned in the first clause of (283). Notice that the form of the verb is active, rather than reflexive, even though the A NP is inanimate. In a similar context we could presumably have a sentence like (284), which would contrast with (276); imagine, for example, that a knife that had been balanced on the edge of a table fell and struck my foot. I might say (after saying ‘ouch!’):

(285) Ngadu uwag nbag sngb-unh.
Igsg*MIND cut+PAST knife-ENG
The knife cut me.

I have, as it were, attributed some sort of activity (if not malice) to the knife; now the suffix on sngbun may be analysed as Ergative; and the verb is active rather than reflexive.

Sometimes accidental action is precipitated by an animate entity, which acted unintentionally. In such a case, the actual but inadvertent agent can appear explicitly in a sentence, with Agentive inflection.

(286) Nggu galga nwho tambi.
Igsg*MIND spear+ABS 2sg*GEN+ABS break+PAST
I broke your spear (on purpose).

(287) Nwho galga nwho tambi-ad.
Igsg*ENG spear+ABS 2sg*GEN+ABS break+REF+PAST
I broke your spear (by accident). (Such a form of words also suggests the tone of an apology.)

Consider, again, the verb yaddi ‘burn’ (see 4.1.2 and 4.1.4(a) above). A sentence with yaddi can have an S pronoun in Accusative case, in a way that exactly parallels the Accusative pronoun ‘subjects’ of reflexive verbs denoting accidental action. (See (289).) Moreover, yaddi, and, indeed, many fully intransitive verbs, also allow Agents, marked by Agentive case, which unintentionally engineered some action or result.

(288) Nsma yaddi nga-nbon.
Igsg*yaddi burn+PAST igsg*ENG
You got burned and it was (my) fault (e.g., I spilled the boiling water on you).

And compare the following sentences:

(289) Nsma minha gaddi buil.
Igsg*ENG meat+ABS egg fall+PAST
Your (edible) egg fell (and presumably broke).

(290) Nggu nhw nbm gaddi buil+ab-ni.
Igsg*ENG meat+ABS egg fall+CAUS+PAST
I dropped [literally, caused to fall] your egg.

(291) Nhwm nhw gaddi buil nga-nbon.
Igsg*ENG meat+ABS egg fall+PAST igsg*ENG
I dropped your egg by accident.

(292) is a straightforward intransitive construction, and (290) its causative counterpart. But whereas (290) could hardly be used, for example, as an apology, (291) is tailor-
made for such a purpose since it emphasizes the accidental nature of the event, and my unintentional involvement in it. Here, then, the use of reflexive inflection is one of a set of devices in Guugu Yimidhirr to show deviations from the canonical form of action (when an animate agent 'control' and regulates' action on some patient) in this case, when action is not controlled or regulated but accidental.

(282) [insert text]

4.3.3 'REFLEXIVE-ONLY' VERBS. A 1700 root Guugu Yimidhirr vocabulary contains about twenty verb roots which occur only in reflexive form. Many of these verbs seem to denote actions which could have transitive counterparts (and, indeed subject to the change of final stem vowel some doubtless are the reflexive counterparts of existing transitive verbs: see 3.5.4). Hence, there are such possible pairs as

REFLEXIVE ONLY TRANSITIVE

daga- 'sit down' dugil 'set down, build, erect'
mirra- 'wave, show self' mirrim 'show, tell' (an R conjugation verb)
maumma- 'hesitate, refuse, mauvum 'deny (something), refuse to delay' give (something)

The question remains why other verbal concepts are expressed by reflexive-only verbs rather than by simple transitive verbs. First, it is notable that other languages with syntactically important reflexive constructions have verbs that correspond to the Guugu Yimidhirr reflexive-only verbs that are also reflexive in form. Thus, for example, the Spanish equivalent of daga- 'sit down' is sentarse (literally, 'seat oneself'); or of damba- 'get a fright' asustarse (literally, 'frighten oneself'). Here is a list of the known Guugu Yimidhirr reflexive-only verbs, arranged in rough categories.

a. daga- 'sit down'
   mirra- 'show self'
   maumma- 'hesitate, refuse'

b. damba- 'get a shock, get a fright, start with fright, make self jump'
   manda- 'climb up'
   manda- 'make a noise, make self visible by making noise'
   ngawu- 'move, shift around restlessly, make self visible by moving'

c. badda- 'be finished, come to an end'
   badda- 'explode'
   bana- 'shine, be shining or glittering'
   minbida- 'stick, adhere; keep company with'
   mhanda- 'finish, come to an end, cease to exist'
   ngandu- 'finish, go past some point'

verbs in group (a) are plausibly related to full transitive verbs, with a shift of final stem vowel from i to o; that is, they may well arise by the normal process of reflexive-stem formation.

A notable feature of verbs in group (b) is this: all must have animate subjects (like transitive verbs), and all seem to involve an animate entity moving or manipulating its body, or otherwise acting on itself; that is, they involve inherently reflexive action, with animate agents. The one exception, badda- 'share' seems inherently reciprocal, and also requires an animate (and non-singular) agent.

(283) [insert text]

We'll go hunting and speak game and share [whatever we get].

That is, the meanings of all these verbs seem consistent with their treatment as reflexives, like those verbs discussed in 4.3.1 above.

Verbs in group (c) all seem to denote events that happen to inanimate objects (or to the bodies of animate entities) or conditions that characterize such objects. (Two verbs, ngandu- 'finish' and ngandu- 'be finished' keep company with one another, and badda- 'bump against one another' can, in these senses, also be grouped with the other verbs of group (b) above.) From each of these verbs it is possible to form a transitive causative verb with -gurrul, meaning 'cause it to happen'. But in the reflexive form it seems to denote something that happens to the object or objects in question, as it were, by itself, with no particular outside agency. (Compare Spanish acabarse 'be finished', resurrarse 'explode', ilustrarse 'shine, sparkle', pegarse 'stick', and encontrarse con 'bump into'.)

The spontaneous sense of these verbs is illustrated in the following sentence, which uses badda- 'finish' both in reflexive and causative form.

(284) [insert text]

it may be possible, that is, to explain the reflexive-only form of such verbs by relating their meanings to the use of reflexive forms to describe actions performed without conscious outside agency (as in the use of reflexive to describe accidental, discussed in 4.3.2 above).

4.3.4 BODY-PART METAPHORS. We have seen that a reflexive verb is used when an animate entity performs some action on its own body. Body parts figure heavily in metaphorical expressions denoting personality, propensity, etc., and many expressions that in English take the form of adjectives, are in Guugu Yimidhirr of the form:

Person Body-part Reflexive Verb.
transitive form one NP is in A function. Forming the anti-passive achieves the desired transformation of syntactic function and case inflection.

Gugu Yimidhirr has a construction which produces, with a few verbs, intransitive sentences which look just like antipassives, as described above. One such sentence is (164); another rather different example is the following:

(298) Wuchurr galby dama yarrga-gaay baangarang-gaay-wi ngiit ABS longABS 3pl-IMON boy-PLU+ABS water-poison-DAT
eat-REF/PAST.
The boys drank poison all night long.

And consider:

(299) Ngali gadili-dhirr ngali yarrgu gaay-waayu-waayu-ya. 1sg-IMON name-CON+PASS 1sg-IMON later
tweeze-DAT give-REF/PAN+VERPAST
We are namesakes [literally, with name, i.e., share the same name], so by and by we will exchange spears.

In both these sentences, the verb is reflexive, the underlying agent is realized as an S NP (with nominative or absolute inflection on pronominal and nominal constituents), and the underlying O NP bears dative inflection. However, Gugu Yimidhirr does not have compelling syntactic reasons for an anti-passive construction. Despite the ergative/absolute pattern of noun inflection, very few possibilities for coordination, subordination, or embedding depend on the coreferential passivized NP in S or O function (which would, for nouns, result in unmarked Absolute case marking). In fact, with a few notable exceptions (see the discussion of subordination in 4.4 below) Gugu Yimidhirr links clauses which have common subjects - either transitive subjects in functions or intransitive subjects (S function). Moreover, Gugu Yimidhirr relies heavily on pronouns (which inflect on a nominative/accusative pattern) and deictics to keep referential identity and syntactic role clear. Referential prominence - the degree to which a NP is foregrounded as the topic of discourse - rather than syntactic role seems to decide how sentences will be linked together and what pronouns, deictics, etc. are required. (See 4.10 for notes on discourse.) Consider the following two sentences:

(300) Nyali yarrga gada-y. 1sg-IMON boy-ABS come-PAST
The boy came.

(301) Nyali yarrga-yi buda-y. 1sg-IMON boy-ERG food-ABS eat-PAST
The boy ate the food.

Even though the NP (nyali yarrga) is in S function in (300) and A function in (301), and despite the fact that yarrga in (301) bears ergative inflection whereas yarrga in (300) is in absolute form, there is no difficulty in conjoining these two sentences, in either order, and omitting the co-NOMINAL in the second clause.

(302) Nyali yarrga gada-yi buda-y. 1sg-IMON boy-ABS come-PAST food-ABS eat-PAST
The boy came and ate the food.
In (303) the second occurrence of nyulu is likely but not absolutely necessary. In languages like Dyirbal (Dixon 1972:65-79) and Yidiny (Dixon 1977:277-282, 386-389) such coordination without anti-passivizing the transitive sentence is impossible; whereas in Guugu Yimidhirr a sentence like (303) has the character of a favourite construction. Of course it is also possible to coordinate (303) with an 'anti-passive' version of (301); but the resulting sentence is not better than (309) — it merely means something different.

In fact, there is no general 'anti-passive' construction in Guugu Yimidhirr, since most transitive verbs do not allow a construction like those in (286) and (289). For example, some verbs, when reflexivized have their 'underlying' objects in Adessive case.

Nyulu waranggur mar-nil.  
3sg-DEM white person-ABS get-PAST  
He married a white woman.

Nyulu waangar-gal manac-amii.  
3sg-DEM white person-ADESS get-REP-PAST  
He got married with a white woman.

Nyulu meemungu yamawimbalinba-y.  
3sg-DEM mother-ABS-gu cur resentment-REP-PAST  
He was cursing his mother.

Nyulu meemungu ngal yamawimbalinba-amii.  
3sg-DEM mother-ADSS cur resentment-REP-REP-PAST  
'He was cursing against his mother' (This is the original English gloss.)

and (306) and (308) suggest that getting married (with Reflexive form) and cursing (with Reflexive form) are just things one does, or things that happen to one, which in some tangential way involve others (and the Adessive NPs denote the others). Another revealing example involves the following three sentences.

Ngayu ngalpal dabi.  
3sg-DEM smoke-ABS leave-PAST  
I left my cigarettes/tobacco (literally, smoke). (i.e., I didn't bring them.)

Ngayu ngalpal dabi-amii.  
3sg-DEM smoke-ABS leave-REP-PAST  
My smokes got left. (i.e., I forgot them, they were left by accident.)

Ngayu ngalpal dabi-amii.  
3sg-DEM smoke-ABS goal-(-PURP) leave-REP-PAST  
I left off smoking; I've given up smoking.

In all three sentences there is a different relationship between me, the cigarettes, and the act of leaving: in (309) I leave them; in (310) they get left but I didn't (intentionally) do it; in (311) I leave cigarettes, but for good, in a more generalized way.

If anything, Guugu Yimidhirr uses the derived reflexive forms more as passives than as anti-passives; and this is in keeping with the strong subject orientation of the syntax, a nominative/accusative patterning despite ergative/absolutive noun morphology. Consider the following examples:

(323) Dindil dabi-ndhi-gamu.  
quick leave-REP-PRECAUS  
[so] quickly before you leave [him behind]. (i.e., go and find him and take him — you might miss him.)

It would also be possible to have a sentence with an explicit 3sg-ACC pronoun, especially if the A NP of the verb dabi 'leave' and the precautionary form urges the subject not to be left behind; therefore, the verb must be put into reflexive form so that its syntactic subject will match the subject of the overall sentence. The unreflexivized sentence would have quite a different meaning:

(323) Dindil dabi-ndhi-gamu.  
quick leave-REP-PRECAUS  
He was cursing his mother.

(324) Dindil dhina dabi-ndhi.  
quick 3sg-ACC leave-REP-PRECAUS  
Hurry before (he) leaves you!

The concern in stringing clauses together in Guugu Yimidhirr seems not simply to be keeping one subject throughout a chain of clauses, whether they are transitive or intransitive, but rather to keep the (potentially shifting) topic of a clause or group of clauses clearly foregrounded. Consider the following sequence of sentences:

3sg-DEM Fog-ABS close come-PAST,  
Fog came close,  

b. yamu maga daama-y.  
3sg-DEM maga tree-ABS on the East spear-PAST  
and speared the tree on the Eastern side.

c. Ngayu thurrumal buggwu guunaawuu dama-amii  
3sg-ACC Thunder-ABS knee-ABS-gu-ADSS spear-REP-PAST  
dhim-ndhi-1-gu right through  
Both Thunder's knees got speared right through.

d. yamu gangu galmba dama-amii.  
3sg-DEM West also spear-REP-PAST,  
and the tree on the West side also was speared.

Clauses (a) and (b) focus on Fog's approach and his act of spearing — the first thing he aims for and spears is the
4.3 Reflexive constructions

This example illustrates a general feature of reflexive verb stems: frequently, although a reflexive stem can be formed from a transitive verb for normal and systematic reasons (i.e., to describe reflexive or reciprocal action, or to characterize accidental action), the exact sense of a verb reflexive in form may well go beyond the normal, predictable reflexive meaning. Thus from transitive *má-má* 'get' we have a reflexive meaning 'be married, get married' (sentence (306)); from transitive *budal* 'eat' is derived a reflexive that means 'have a good feed, stuff oneself' (sentence (304)). And so on.

Even the seemingly straightforward *gunda* 'hit, kill' has a reflexive form whose meaning goes beyond the reflexive/reciprocal and accidental senses. (289), (270), and (274) illustrate reflexive and reciprocal uses of the verb, and (287) shows the 'accidental' sense of the reflexive form. However, the following sentence is also possible:

(318) Apya gunda-adhi

NOM hit-REPAST

He had a fight; he was in a fight.

Here the reflexive form seems to suggest a generalized sort of action in which the person in question was a participant, but the sentence itself does not specify whether he was a hitter or a receiver of hits - only that hitting was going on and that it was involved.

The same sort of generalized action is depicted in (298) and (304), with the verb *budadhi*. In both cases the food consumed is relegated to a peripheral role in active case; the reflexive form gives the impression that the participants are not specifically acting on some object but rather just participating in an eating event.

This, then, is a different sort of motivation for reflexive verb forms; it is not to denote specific O NPs to the status of peripheral accessories to a generalized sort of action, in which the underlying A NPs are now participants, in 5 function. Thus, the reflexive form of *ma-ma* denotes the state of being married (and to whom one is married in a central concern, see (306)); the reflexive of *ganyab* 'swear at' denotes a particular kind of verbal behaviour, and the target of the verbal abuse is not particularly relevant to the activity (see (307)).

Notably, reflexive stem forms also occur with a few intransitive verbs; in each case, the meaning of the reflexive form derives from applying to the meaning of the original intransitive root the notion of reflexivity, reciprocity, accidental non-intentionality, or generalized action:

*yirruga* 'speak'  
*yirruga-adhi* 'agree with another; have a conversation'  

*barrab* 'camp overnight'  
*barrab-adhi* 'get married in the bush; i.e. sleep together; illicitly in the scrub, away from camp'
daahal ‘move about, wade’  daabu-adihi ‘make involuntary motion; move or change position (inanimate object)’

gaaadd ‘sing out’ (usually with an Adhesive complement which denotes the person one calls to)

gaaadd-adihi ‘yell (in general), about hoping for someone to hear’

nganggaa ‘be unable to do something, be hesitant about something’ (and the thing one can’t do is usually expressed with a Purposive verb form)

ngangga-adihi ‘be totally incompetent at everything’

4.3.7 SUMMARY OF REFLEXIVE USES. Guugu Yimithirr transitive verbs all require animate A NPs, which refer to Agents who consciously control and regulate some action on some object. Reflexive forms arise when the circumstances of action do not conform to this transitive paradigm. We have distinguished several different cases:

1. When the A NP is also the O NP; that is, when an Agent acts on himself, or when several Agents act on one another;

2. When there is no animate Agent, or when that Agent only accidentally acts;

3. When the focus of a sentence promotes the object of action to a position of prominence, so that the sentence revolves around an entity and what happens to it (rather than on an Agent and what he or she does);

4. And, finally, when the action in question is of a generalized nature, so that the focus of a sentence denotes the Agent from a transitive actor on objects to a participant in the generalized action.

The conditions for the regular use of reflexive verb forms fall into two categories: semantic and pragmatic. First, the nature of the action to be described (reflexive/reciprocal or accidental) affects the form of the resulting verb (cases (1) and (3)), and, to some extent, case (2)).

Second, when the referential emphasis of discourse leads attention away from an Agent towards an Object, a syntactic device (like the use of reflexive forms) may achieve the shift of focus from an A NP to an O NP.

4.4 SUBORDINATE STRUCTURES

There are three kinds of subordinate clause in Guugu Yimithirr: Causal, Purposive, and Simultaneous Action clauses. Each type corresponds to a type of syntactic extension: a Causal clause to a Causal NP, and so on. Whereas Causal NPs or Purposive NPs relate the action of a verb to some cause, or purpose or goal, Causal and Purposive clauses spell out these causes or purposes with full verbs.

Similarly, just as some Dative NPs—especially when the noun in question denotes an activity—specify an action simultaneous with the action of the main verb (see (218)-(219)), another sort of subordinate clause also specifies simultaneous action with an inflected verb.

4.4.1 PURPOSE CLAUSES. As we saw in section 4.1.4(1), purposive NPs are exactly parallel to subordinate clauses whose verbs have the purposive suffix -nu. For example, (227), with a purposive NP, and (145) with a purposive subordinate clause, have otherwise very similar structures. Additionally, those adjectival or nominal predicates that take Purposive complements can usually also take Purposive clauses as complements. Thus, corresponding to (241) is

(319) Ngaa uwa-thiru mayi buda-nuh.

1sg*NOM want-COMTRANS food*ABS eat-PURP

I want to eat food.

And compare (243), with the predicate yinii ‘afraid’ with

(320) Nyuul gaari yinii dhada-nuh, nyuul munmu dhada-nuh.

3sg*NOM NOT afraid*ABS go-PURP 3sg*NOM name*ABS go-PURP

He’s not afraid to go; he is willing to go [literally, brave for going].

A subordinate -nu clause need not share any NPs with the main clause to which it attaches, though there must be some logical relationship between the two clauses.

(321) Nyuul yuقر banned-ya nyuul maru yuقر buda-ruh.

3sg*NOM fire*ABS light-PAST 3sg*NOM food*ABS eat-PURP

She lit the fire so that you could eat food.

Similarly, with verbs of desire or commands:

(322) Ngaa uwa-thiru-gu nyuul dhada-ruh.

1sg*NOM want-COMTRANS 2sg*NOM go-PURP

I want you to go.

However, it is more common for the two clauses to share NPs, and in certain situations, a coreferential NP in the subordinate clause will be omitted. Compare (322) with (319), in which the A NP of the verb buda-ruh is understood to be nyuul, the same as the S NP of the nominal predicate 'want'. (158), (145) and (320) all have the same sort of structure: the S NP in the intransitive main clause refers to the same entity as the S or A NP in the -nu clause. In such cases, the S or A NP of the subordinate clause is omitted. This is true whether or not the S NP in the main intransitive clause is a pronoun or a noun (or, commonly, a noun with adjoined personal pronoun):

(323) Nyuul gabdh dhada-almyu maru banaa-ruh.

3sg*NOM girl*ABS come-PAST-MEG food*ABS cook-PURP

The girl didn’t come to cook the food [i.e., she was supposed to come but never showed up].

Notice that the A NP in the subordinate clause here would be of the form
had it not been omitted - so the rule which deletes an NP in a function in the subordinate clause is based on coreferentiality rather than on equal morphological form with the S NP of the main clause. (What matters is that the same girl who didn't come was supposed to cook the food, and the fact that this word gabirr is in Absolute case in the main clause and ergative in the subordinate clause does not affect the deletion.)

If the S NP of an intransitive main clause is coreferential with the O NP of a subordinate -nu clause, the O NP seemingly may not be deleted. If the O NP is inanimate, the entire NP must remain in the subordinate clause; if it is animate, at least an accusative pronoun trace must be left behind.

Too stand up, so your wife [can] see you.

When the main clause is transitive, the treatment of coreferential NPs is somewhat more complicated. When the main and subordinate clauses share both A and O NPs, these are both normally deleted from the -nu clause.

The boy chopped [down] the tree in order to burn it.

Whether or not we ultimately analyze such a sentence in terms of deletion of NPs, it is clear that there are some sorts of constraints on coreferentiality operating to ensure that a sentence like (325) is understood to mean that the wood was to be burned, and that the boy intended to do it. Sometimes the verb with purposive inflection - all that remains of the subordinate clause once A and O NPs have been deleted - moves to an earlier position in the sentence.

I am stirring the tea now so that I can drink it.

Similarly, when both main and subordinate clauses have the same O NP, this is frequently omitted from the subordinate clause, even when the A NPs differ between the two.

I speared this fish for you to eat.

A verb of ordering (like wendu 'say', garul 'say, make', dyid–purw 'order, instruct') in the main clause takes as object the person who is ordered to do something; what that person is ordered to do appears in a -nu clause, whose A or S NP is coreferential with the O NP, object of the main verb. The A or S NP of the -nu clause is deleted.

I told the child to kill the snake.

Here is another example of a deleted S NP in a -nu clause, coreferential to the O NP in the main clause.

They left me to die.

Furthermore, an A NP in a -nu clause coreferential to the A NP in the main clause routinely is deleted.

I'll cut notches in the tree to get the eggs. (Man cuts notches in a tree so that he can climb to get eggs from a nest.)

Sometimes an S NP in a -nu clause coreferential to the A NP of the main clause will be deleted, but ordinarily Guugu Yimithirr speakers will retain such an S NP.

He brought [up] a large rock for him to sit down on.

But in

I am making a bed to sleep on (for me to sleep on).

the second occurrence of ngaaj seems to resist deletion.

Table 4.1 summarizes the various possibilities for deletion of coreferential NPs in Purposive clauses.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Main Clause NP Function</th>
<th>Deleted NP in Subordinate -nu Clause</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>S</td>
<td>A or S (not 0)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>A (not S)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0</td>
<td>0; sometimes S or A</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Sentences (138), (145), and (319)-(320) illustrate what is by far the most frequent configuration with purposive subordinate clauses: the main clause is intransitive, and its S NP is coreferential with the (deleted) S or A NP of the subordinate -nu clause. (Compare this construction with the very common sequence of clauses sharing a common topic shown in (302), and discussed in 4.3.5 and 4.10.) All other combinations of coreferential NPs in main and -nu clauses are relatively infrequent; the possibilities for deletion seem to depend heavily on the meanings and contexts of such sentences. Roughly, an A or an O NP common to both clauses may be deleted from the subordinate clause. But sometimes the S or A NP of the -nu clause is coreferential with the O NP of the main clause - a fact that suggests that an O NP is also a potential candidate (along with the S or A NP) for being the most prominent NP of a sentence, a possible topic for a string of sentences. We shall return to this question in 4.4.3 and 4.10 below.

Table 4.1 - Deletion of coreferential NPs in Purposive Subordinate Clauses
A purposive clause occasionally looks a bit like a kind of relative clause that describes what some object or person is good for or what it does. See, for example, (146). The following sentence (which comes from the same myth as (146)) makes more explicit the connections between the main clause and the -nu clause that accompanies it.

(333) Yii nganu-un-1 biwa-wi miili baba.
This is my father’s arm, for him to see the earth with.

But it is equally possible to leave understood both the A NP of the -nu clause (in these cases, the owner of the body part) and the instrumental NP denoting the body part itself.

(334) Yii nganu-un-1 biwa-wi ngaagral miili-nu.
This is my father’s arm (for him) to lift me with.

And it is also possible for the descriptive -nu clause to replace the ‘head’ noun entirely, as in the following sentence (from the same story):

(335) Yii nganu-un-1 biwa-wi mayi baba-nu.
This is my father (my head) for eating food (i.e., his mouth).

Purposive clauses anticipate future action: action that will follow that described in the main verb, or action that is intended to follow it. In a similar way, a purposive NP denotes an entity which will be the object of or be otherwise involved in some action subsequent to that of the verb. When I say ‘I’m going for fish’ I mean that after a while I will catch fish, or receive fish, etc. The subordinate structures considered in the next section are oriented to past action, and show the causal antecedents of the action denoted by the main verb.

4.4.2 CAUSAL CLAUSES. As we saw in 3.5.3(j), the verbal suffix -yaga seems to have three distinct uses: on an independent verb it marks perfective action, or remote past action (particularly appropriate, say, to mythological accounts); see (153-4). The suffix also marks subordinate clauses expressing action simultaneous with that of the main verb, under fairly restricted conditions of coreferentiality, as we shall see in the next section. But -yaga may be used to form a subordinate clause that indicates a causal antecedent to the main verb, much as a Causal NP with -ngank expresses cause or origin (see 4.4.4(b)). Examples are (156-7).

The correspondence between subordinate causal clauses with -yaga and causal NPs is apparent in the relationship between (186) and

(336) Nkuta bili biwa-mayi gaga baba-agga.
He died from drinking grog.

Causal clauses relate to main clauses much as Purposive clauses do. Thus, for example, there need be no NP common to both main and subordinate clause, if there is an appropriate logical interrelationship between the two.

(337) Wile-ghun-aq biiri wunyaa dwawwa gawgui.
Ngawgu-daya-ghun-dog ABS run+SUB1
Ngawgu daya-dog+ABS run+SUB1
Ngawgu daya-dog ABS run+SUB1.

Nowadays a great river runs there, as a result of the digong’s blood flowing. (From a story about a river formed where a giant digong was killed in mythological times.)

But ordinarily main and Causal clause share NP(s), and the conditions which allow deletion of an NP coreferential to an earlier one are similar to those governing coreferential deletion on purposive clauses. There is, however, one additional possibility not seen with purposive clauses: it seems to be possible to delete an O NP in a causal clause when it is coreferential with the S NP of the main clause.

(338) Ngawgu buli yaarungu-nyan diawnga-agga.
Ngawgu daya-dog ABS fall+PAST horse-ERG push-SUB1
I fell because the horse pushed me.

(But compare (156), in which the O NP (an accusative pronoun) in the subordinate clause is not deleted despite its coreferentiality with the S NP of the main clause).

In fact, the relationships of coreferentiality in these constructions are extremely varied. Consider the sentence

(339) Nkuta dyanka-ngank malandi dyinda-agga.
Ngawgu daya-dog make-ABL take+PAST bite-SUB1.
( Somebody) took him away from the snake because (it) had bitten (him).

Here the evident A NP of the subordinate clause is coreferential to an ablative adjunct to the main clause: and the O NP is the same in both clauses (and notice the lack of an explicit A NP on the main verb malandi ‘took’). It is an open question whether syntactic constraints on deletion or some pragmatically based canons of interpretation are more appropriate to explain a sentence like the following, which displays both purposive and causal subordinate clauses:}

(340) Nkuta chul-ti wunyaa-dtu shawga gawda-dnu swaggu gawga.
Ngawgu daya-ghun-dog ABS go+PAST north-ALL ABS fall+PAST push+PAST dog ABS yam+ABS bako-agga.
Ngawgu daya-dog ABS yam ABS

He went North to kill him, for having dug up his yam.

Here it may be revealing to represent the three underlying clauses with indices on the noun phrases:

1. He went North
2. He will kill him
3. He dug his yam up.

In subordinating clause 2 to clause 1, the S NP of clause 1 is coreferential to the A NP of clause 2 and (in typical fashion) the latter is deleted. In turn, clause 3 is subordinated to the resulting sentence, and now the A NP of clause 3, coreferential to the O NP of clause 2, is deleted. In the
4.4 Subordinate structures

resulting sentence, the reference of the non-deleted 3rd person pronoun forms switches from person A (S function in clause 1), to person B (O function in clause 2), and back to person A (again) (agents modifier to the NP of clause 3). All other pronouns are deleted.

A particularly interesting Causal clause shows how the Causal suffix -yga may be affixed to a verb which does not, at first sight, seem to be the main verb of a clause.

(341) Biba-nun nhangu ditinga-y nyulu wam-murrarra
father-ENG 3sg:ACC laugh at-PAST 3sg:MON can’t

The subordinate clause here means ‘(because he couldn’t speak) with a spear’. There is no explicit NP. Notably, Causal marking can help clarify the structure of such a clause: the main verb, which receives the suffix -yga, is the form of damaa ‘to speak’, and not wam-murrarra ‘can’t’, which is revealed as a modal qualifier (see 4.8).

However, clauses with full nominal predicates can appear as causal subordinate clauses, with a dummy verb carrying the suffix -yga. The following example comes from a Gunugu Yimidhirr sermon describing the great Flood:

(342) Ngayu dhala warrga ditinga-1 balam-sai bama wulu
bad-CAUS-PURP many-ABS ear-PRIV-ABS sit-REDUP-SUB1

I will send a great flood to the earth to destroy all men, because men have been disobedient.

Here the private form of mala ‘ear’ is a nominal predicate meaning ‘disobedient; the reduplicated form of phin-a ‘seat’ is the dummy carrier of the subordinate suffix (as well as the bearer of the aspectual information contained in the reduplication).

The semantic and syntactic parallel between the Causal verbal suffix -yga and the nominal suffix -gnuh becomes even more striking when we consider that both kinds of Causal marking can indicate both cause and priority in time. Compare (13) with the following:

(343) Ngayu dhada-a magi buda-a-yga
3sg:MON go-NOM-FUT food-ABS eat-SUB1

I will go after eating food.

Similarly, notice the structure and the first reading of the following sentence; (the dog is unambiguously the entity doing the eating).

(344) Ngayu gudaa gundara-y magi buda-a-yga
3sg:MON 3sg:ABS kill-PAST food-ABS eat-SUB1

I killed the dog after because it ate the food.

4.4.3 SIMULTANEOUS ACTION. Whereas purpose clauses denote actions which will follow (or are intended to follow) the action of the main verb, and whereas causal clauses denote actions antecedent to the main clause, two further subordinating suffixes mark verbs which depict action simultaneous to the main verb. And while the conditions of coreferentiality between main clauses and purposive or causal clauses are relatively true, the syntactic functions of the constituent NPs of simultaneous action clauses are central to the choice between verb suffixes -yga and -nhun.

A typical example of the SUB1 suffix -yga marking simultaneous actions is (347). A slightly more complicated case in the following:

(345) Ngayu mula buda budhihlu-1 magi budhur-ja
3sg:MON child-ABS cry-REDUP-NOM-FUT food-ABS eat-REDUP-SUB1

The child is crying (because) another teased him while he was eating.

The suffix -yga may be used to mark simultaneous action precisely when the S or A NP of the subordinate clause is coreferential with the NP in function in the main clause; and in such a case the S or A NP of the subordinate clause is generally deleted. Occasionally, even the O NP of the main clause does not appear, suggesting, as in examples we have seen before, an indefinite sense.

(346) Ngayu thu-thi maga nhangu budhur-ja
3sg:MON see-PAST food-ABS 3sg:MON see-REDUP-SUB1

He saw someone eating his food.

The vast majority of sentences with subordinate clauses marking simultaneous action have a subordinate verb in reduplicated form (indicating, naturally enough, continuous action). Moreover, the favourite form of this simultaneous action construction uses nhau-kaa ‘see’ as the independent verb, to produce a sentence that means ‘X sees Y-zing’.

(347) Ngayu yuma-thi thu-thi phin-kaaluq-ja maga
3sg:MON tree-LOC see-PAST sit-REDUP-SUB1 3sg:MON

He saw (something) sitting on a tree, but he didn’t know what it was.

However, there seems no reason in principle why any transitive verb cannot serve as the verb in a main clause, or why a non-reduplicated verb form cannot, when appropriate in meaning, occur in a clause marking simultaneous action:

(348) Thumun mundu dangu-d ga mundu dambili-ja-ya
3pl:ACC other-ABS swallow-PAST dance-ABS break-REDUP-SUB1

The giant fish swallowed the rest of them while they were dancing. (Literally, ‘breaking the dance’)

(349) Ngayu bama nhauh-d bulji gundamaati-ja
3sg:MON man-ABS see-PAST bullock-ABS big-REDUP-SUB1

I saw a man beating the bullock.

(350) Ngayu bama nhauh-d bulji gundamaati-ja
3sg:MON man-ABS see-PAST bullock-ABS kill-SUB1

I saw a man kill the bullock (i.e., when he killed, who killed, the bullock).
In (348) the verb of the main clause is *dujumtwil* 'swallow', rather than *nkaa-maa* 'see'. And in (350) the subordinate verb of simultaneity is in non-replicated form - so that the sentence suggests 'I saw the man at the moment that he (finally managed to) fill the balloon' - a sentence whose English gloss obscures the sense of simultaneity involved.

The strict conditions on the structure in which simultaneous -*yga* can occur provide another sort of motivation for the 'reflective' -*dhi* forms discussed in 4.3.5 above. A sentence containing a subordinate clause of simultaneous action will have the form:

```
A NP 0 NP, Transitive verb  A or S NP, Verb-SUB1
```

where the subscript shows that both NPs in question refer to the same entity. There is, within this structure, no provision for a subordinate clause of simultaneity in which the referential NP is in O function in the -*yga* clause. So, for example, there is no equivalent to (157), using a transitive form of the subordinate verb, that means 'I saw the balloon being beaten'. Such a sentence can, however, fairly obviously be constructed to meet the structural conditions described by using a -*dhi* form of the subordinate verb.

(351) *Ngayu balsiyi nkaa-dhi gadaan-xaa-dhi-ga.*

This sentence means 'I saw the balloon being beaten'.

The other systematic gap in the structure which admits clauses of simultaneity derives from the fact that the S or A NP of the subordinate clause must be referential with the main clause O NP - something that would be impossible when the main clause is intransitive, or when the linking NP is in O or A function in the main clause. In such cases, which seem to be relatively rare in Guugu Yimithirr, the subordinate clause uses the suffix -*nkaa* to indicate simultaneity; see (158). Most subordinate clauses with -*nkaa* seem to be intransitive; most, if not all, involve verbs of motion (or lack of it).

(352) *Ngayu maa* buda-xi gadaan-nmaa.

I ate the food (while I was coming).

(Notice that the word *gadaan-nmaa*, with a long middle vowel, is equivalent to the full reduplicated form *gadaan-xaa-nmaa*; see section 3.5.3[k].)

(353) *Dhaana ngadhu nkaa-dhi mii-xi yuul-ki-nmaa.*

They watched the games (while they were) standing in the shade. However, it is possible for a subordinate clause of simultaneity to have a transitive verb.

(354) *Ngayu buda-xi gadaan-xaa-dhi-l.*

While (they are) eating food, the children are playing.

Unlike the subordinate clauses with -*yga*, clauses with -*nkaa* are relatively infrequent in current Guugu Yimithirr; speakers seem to prefer instead simply to coordinate (by concatenating clauses denoting simultaneous occurrences:

(355) *Dhama bidos-gaar warril-li.*

The children are playing and eating food.

4.4.4 PAST AND FUTURE ACTION. We have seen that a purposive clause is oriented to a time subsequent to that of the main verb, and a causal clause to a time before that of the main verb. It is natural, then, that when independent verbs have either -*nku* or -*yga* suffixes, their meanings have affinities with what we might call future (with overtones of intention, desire, etc.) and past (with overtones of completion) respectively; see (132).

(356) *Ngayu shada-nku gaa-guar?*  

Is he going to go to Cooktown?

Are you going do you want to go to Cooktown?

And see again (153)-(154).

The suffix -*yga* underscores the completion and factuality of an event, especially in clauses which complement verbs of telling or knowing. Contrast the following sentences:

(357) *Ngayu baanaa-mi wu-nmaa ngadhu balga-ki-xii.*

I didn't know if he was born (or not).

(358) *Ngayu baanaa-mi wu-nmaa ngadhu balga-adhi-ga.*

I didn't know that he was born (and he was).

A sentential complement to a verb like mirriilili 'tell, show' uses Perfective -yga evidently to emphasize factuality:

(359) *Gaarn mirriilili bula ngalbi-ga.*

Tell-PAST 3SGNOM steel-PERF  

They didn't say that they two had stolen it. (That is, they wouldn't admit it but they had stolen it.)

A better understanding of these details must await further research.

4.5 CONTRAFACTUAL CONSTRUCTIONS

Guugu Yimithirr has several straightforward devices for describing situations which do not obtain, i.e., for expressing negation. We have already seen that the negative particle gaarr 'not' immediately precedes a verb (as in (132), (205)) - including an imperative (sentences (144), (360), (207)) - or a nominal predicate:

(360) *Ngayu gaarr burburri.*

That NOT hard*ABS*

That's not strong.

In a sentence like (48), the negative particle seems to modify both the verb, and the positional modifier that immediately follows the particle; the same is true in
Moreover, gaar can appear alone as a simple mark of denial: 'No: that is not the case'.

We have also seen certain other particular negative devices: the opposite of a privative construction with -ar, or a privative suffix with -a. (See (31), (33), (357), (358)). The logical relationship between a privative and a privative may not exactly one of contradiction: the privative and the privative may not exhaust all possibilities. For example, the predicate garrub-smar means 'happy, delighted'; this is a privative form, although there is no independent noun garrub. But the corresponding privative predicate does not exactly mean the opposite of 'happy' - it means 'not (yet) happy' rather than 'unhappy'.

(362) Garru-ba john-mana-qa
happy-GEM=CAU=REFP=IMP
Be happy!

(363) Garru-mol!
happy-PRIV (+TMP)
Don't be too hasty in being happy! Don't count your chickens...

Here, the force of the privative suffix -mol is not simply the absence of some property or condition or thing, but rather its lack in the context of its possible presence. In a similar way, the past negative verbal suffix (section 3.5.3(i)) indicates not simply a neutral negative, but the negation of a proposition that was, in some context, possible or at issue; see (132), (139), (233).

(364) Ngayin-gal gada-altmu ngatmu
1da-ADJS come-PAST=IMP=ASS 3sg=MON
Be didn't come with us. (Moon and his wife were looking for a child, and the wives report that the child did not, as Moon had expected, accompany them on their hunting trip.)

Another very commonly employed negative word, which has the characteristic of a nominal predicate, is gua 'nonexistent, not'.

(365) Namat wu-wa? Ngadu gua
money=ABS give-IMP 1sg=GEN=ABS =nonexistent.
Give me money! I have none.

The emphatic form with -gu, guyagaygu, means 'nothing at all, none at all'.

(366) Minka dasa-y? Gaya-gaya
meat=ABS spear-PAST? non-EMPH
Did you spear any gazou? None at all.

As a single word negative reply, many speakers appear to use gua and guar interchangeably.

In section 3.5.3(e) we met the verbal suffix -nda. When asked to exemplify the use of verbs in -nda, Guugu Yimidhirr speakers ordinarily choose a contrary-to-fact conditional like (147) as a typical case.

(367) Ngayu ngamu dama-wa ngoo-nada damaang-wa mala-nada.
1sg=MON lag=GEN friend die-CONTR water=ABS give-CONTR.
If he were your friend, he would give you water.

A sentence like (367) suggests that he didn't give you water and that, accordingly, he isn't your friend either.

The contrafactual suffix is also used to evoke a hypothetical, but as yet unrealized situation: speakers refer to hypothetical situations normally to comment on their possibility or impossibility. (100-I), and (109) use the contrafactual verb to mark something as impossible. Similarly,

(368) Waakwam dama-wa mali, ngamu ngamu-nda.
how run-CONTR around lag=GEN swallow=NONPAST
How could he run away (around); he was going to be swallowed.
(A creature being pursued by a giant fish.)

On the other hand, the contrafactual form may also be used to comment upon or inquire about the possibility of some as yet unrealized occurrence.

(369) Ngayu ngamu ngamu bongu-nada gara.
1sg=MON that=ABS tree=ABS chop-CONTR also
I could [easily] chop down that tree.

(370) Ngayu bulivi garaa ganda-nda.
1sg=MON block=ABS alright kill-CONTR
Would it be alright for me to kill the block?

And consider the following hypothetical conditional, quoted from an inspirational speech about loyalty to one's own homeland:

(371) Ngayu ngamu dadaangadha nda 'yuwuang yuwarang wakwam?
1sg=MON 2pl=ACC ask-CONTR 2pl=GEN=ABS camp=ABS where
'yuwuay yuwa-yuwa-wu miriri-nda 'Ngadu bida yil.
2sg=MON all=ABS EAT talk-CONTR 1sg=GEN=ABS ground=ABS here
If I were to ask you all 'where is your camp?' you would all say 'My land is here...'

Or consider the following rhetorical question:

(372) Ngandhi ngamu ngamu buliva nda?
what=ABS/GEM 1sg=MON make-CONTR
From what should I make [it]? (Said by someone who is supposed to make a fishing spear for someone else.)

The implication of this question could be either: 'There is nothing I could possibly use to make it, so how can I be expected to do it?' (emphasizing impossibility); or 'What in the world shall I use to do it?' (emphasizing that I can make it, but that I haven't yet done so and am in some doubt about doing so; and have thus framed the event as hypothetical pending other information that you might be able to supply).

Seemingly related to the contrafactual form is a 'critical form' based on the verbal suffix -nda, with an additional suffix -gum appended to it. The resulting verb form is used to chide someone for not doing something that he or she should have done.
4.6 APPREHENSIONAL CONSTRUCTIONS

We have seen that the purposive case on noun phrases can be used in two or less opposite senses. First, purposive indicates a goal or desired, intended object (see (225)–(227)); but it can also mark an object that inspires fear or ought to be avoided (see (224)). Purposive subordinate clauses correspond to noun phrases with purposive inflection with the former meaning. But there are also clauses that correspond to purposive noun phrases that denote objects to be avoided. Such clauses are used to issue warnings, cautions and admonitions — uniformly about events, actions, and outcomes that are undesirable. (Notice that (224) has both an NP in purposive inflection (in the avoidance sense) and a cautionary verb as well.)

There are three sorts of 'apprehensional' clauses, whose morphology is described in section 3.5.3(g)-(1): a Cautionary clause that suggests an imminent (and undesirable) possibility (see (49), (148)); an 'anticipatory' clause that also expresses an event that is on the verge of happening, and which usually occurs together with a suggestion about what alternative course of action should be followed before the undesirable occurs (as in (149) and (150)). Finally, the precautionary clause is like an English cause introduced by lest, to denote an undesirable occurrence which can be avoided by taking certain prior precautions (see (151), (152), (312)–(314)).

Of these three clause types, only the cautionary forms occur independently.

(375) Bëøa buurøo-gy bul-gu.

The child might fall in the water!

Such a sentence, in socially situated speech, would of course have the force of a (strong and urgent) suggestion that the child be moved out of danger. Normally, however, apprehensional clauses of these three sorts occur together with independent main verbs — often imperatives — which express a remedy appropriate in the face of a negatively evaluated possibility or likelihood.

(376) Yaba-agy buad-ti bëøa buurøo-gy bul-gu.

Go up close; the child might fall in the water.

A more intimate relationship obtains between a main clause and a precautionary clause. A purposive complement expresses a goal towards the realization of which the action of the main verb is aimed. A precautionary clause expresses an undesirable outcome which the action of the main verb is designed to prevent, avoid, or otherwise sidestep.

(377) Yaba-agy buad-ti bëøa buurøo-gy bul-gu.

Go up close so that the child won’t fall.

Notice that it is not necessary for the main clause and the subordinate precautionary clause to share any NPs at all. Frequently, however, there is an NP common to both the independent clause and the apprehensional clause (of any of the three varieties described). For example, in (149) and (312) the 3 NP of the main clause is coreferential with the (deleted) S NP of the anticipatory or the precautionary clause. The only other frequently observed structure in which a coreferential NP in an apprehensional clause is routinely deleted can be seen in (152), where an 0 NP in the main clause is coreferential to a (deleted) S NP in the precautionary clause. However, few unelicited examples of such constructions have been observed to draw firm conclusions about the deletability in general of coreferential NPs.

4.6.1 BEFORE AND AFTER. Nouns that denote events can express time as well; with ablative inflection, such a noun can mean 'after the event' (sentence (119)). And with the preposition magu 'before' and purposive case, such a noun can be used to express 'before the event'. For example,

(378) Nyaga bacteria-ti magu 'møiø-dëngu.

I'll have a bath before eating.

We have seen that subordinate clauses with verbs in -yøgø, parallel temporal expressions formed from nouns in ablative case (see (343)–(344)).

Similarly, magu combines with clauses whose verbs bear either ANTIC inflection (with -yøgø) or the subordinate suffix -ñwø to express time before; see (150). Such a construction does not seem to require coreferential NPs in main and anticipatory clauses, although the conditions on deletion when there is a coreferential NP are not yet clear.

4.7 POSSESSION

As we have seen (4.1.4(e)), and as the forms suggest (see 3.2.3(b)), there is a close relationship between ordinary (or blending) possession, marked by genitive inflection, and the recipient or beneficiary of an act, marked by dative. Thus, for example, what is aiative NP in (379) is identical in form to what is apparently a genitive expression in (380).

(379) Dhane gada-agy, buad-bay ngarrwa-ngay wuñi-iga-kulam

They came (and gave bones and skin to the old lady and to her grandchild.)
In (379) the food (the skin and bones) comes into the possession of the old lady and her grandchild as a result of an act of giving in which they are the recipients; in (380) the food which they received (which they possessed) starts out in their possession, and they finish it. Notice that a GEN plus GEN construction of the sort seen in (380) is possible even with a noun:

(381) A: Yé ḫaṭhār mājā?
this+ABSa géN-ABS food+ABS
Whose food is this?
B: Yé ḫaṭhār gāmbałgaba-ga-mi-
this+ABS l驴+ígéN-ABS grandchild- old lady-GEN-ABS
This is ours - mine and that of the old lady's grandchild.

The identity of forms between DAT and GEN-ABS makes ambiguity possible, as in (216) and the following:

(382) ḫištaw ḫaṭhār gaça ḫaṭaṣatāni
3sg+GEN-ABS spear+ABS take+REDEP+NON-PAST
He is bringing the spear to me.

The morphological identity of dative and genitive inflection suggests that alienable possession, the relationship typically between a thing and the being that has control over it (rights to its use, over its disposal, etc.) resembles the relationship that obtains between the object and the beneficiary of a verb like give.

Let's look more closely at the structure of the possessive expressions in (379)-(381). We saw in section 3.2.3(b) that a possessed NP has the form:

\[ \text{NP} \quad \text{NP}+\text{GEN} \quad \text{NP} \quad +\text{Case} \]

The subject of the intransitive verb ḫaṭhār 'be finished' in (380) shows both a 'possessor of a possessor' construction, and a compound NP with the coordinating gurra 'and'.

(383)

\[ \text{NP} \quad \text{NP}+\text{ABS} \]

\[ \text{NP} \quad 3 \quad \text{PRON} \quad \text{GEN} \quad \text{NP} \quad 4 \quad \text{3rdu} \quad \text{N} \quad \text{ABD} \quad \text{NP} \quad 5 \quad \text{NP}+\text{GEN} \quad \text{gambagamba} \quad \text{gurra} \quad \text{NP} \quad 6 \quad \text{GEN} \quad \text{gambagamba} \quad \text{3sg} \]

'the food of the two of them: of the old lady and of her grandchild'.

The exact status of what is represented here as NP₄, which dominates the coordination of 'old lady' and 'grandchild', is not clear. Guugu Yimidhirr speakers often accomplish such coordination, which is clearly crucial in determining the form of the adjoined pronoun ḫaṭa '3du', without the explicit conjunction gurra 'and': but seemingly any nonsingular NP carries with it, as it were, the potential for making explicit its exact composition in terms of individual components. (See (188), (189)-(194).) The case associated with each constituent in a tree like (383) can be thought of as being distributed downwards onto each component constituent liable to case inflection. Thus mājā bears ABS inflection; the components of NP₄ will have GEN+ABS inflection. Hence the pronoun ḫaṭa will be marked for GEN+ABS, as will gambagamba. Similarly, constituent NP₃ as a whole will carry GEN+ABS inflection: the noun gambagamba appears alone, and the pronoun carries the entire case load – both its own genitive, and the further genitive of the whole NP:

\[ \text{whang-um-i} \]

3sg+GEN-ABS.

An ordinary possessor will normally be animate, often human: not every sort of entity in the world can be a recipient, or can exercise control over a possession. Nor, indeed, can every sort of thing be possessed in this way. Guugu Yimidhirr distinguishes alienable (socially constituted) possession, which requires genitive inflection on the noun denoting the possessor, from so-called inalienable possession, which involves the relationship between whole and part. See 3.2.3(b), 4.1.1(f), and 4.3.4. Normally an inalienably possessed NP has the form:

\[
\begin{array}{c}
\text{Whole} \\
\text{Part} \\
+\text{Case} \\
\text{NP}
\end{array}
\]

where the case of the entire NP is distributed over both whole and part, with no genitive inflection at all. The relationship between alienable and inalienable possession is clarified somewhat by the observation that while the whole can itself be an alienably possessed NP, the Part cannot.

(384) ḫaṭa-aw ḫava ḫama ṭam-ānhi-
boy-GEN+ABS father+ABS cut+REDEP+PAST
The boy's father's foot got cut.

When the possessor is animate, especially human, it also appears to be possible to express the part-whole relationship with an alienably possessed construction, using genitive inflection. Compare (42) with (384). I have been able to discern no difference – in meaning, in contextual appropriateness or syntactic acceptability between the following possibilities:

(385) ḫaṭa-aw ḫava ḫama ṭam-ānhi-
boy-GEN+ABS father+ABS hand+ABS cut+REDEP+PAST

He cut my hand/cut me in the hand.
However, when part and whole are inanimate Guugu Yimidhirr speakers resist the explicit genitive construction. Thus, the following two sentences are not equivalent:

(386) ngayu yugu magili branch.
    lsg=GEN tree branch chop>PAST
    I chopped the tree branch.

(387) ngayu yugu-wa magili branch.
    lsg=LOC tree branch chop>PAST
    I chopped the branch [while I was or while it was?] on the tree.

Sentence (387) is of doubtful acceptability in the first place, and there is a clear temptation to interpret the suffix -wa as locative rather than genitive. In fact, (387) immediately suggested to a native Guugu Yimidhirr speaker the following less puzzling example, in which the word yugu-wa is unambiguously interpreted 'on the tree'.

(388) ngayu yugu-wa minka guna-y.
    lsg=LOC tree kill>PAST
    I killed the game [while it was] on the tree.

Similarly, although a few speakers will accept the second alternative in the following sentence, the appositional rather than the genitive construction is certainly preferred.

(389) yugu-wa
    branch
    { magili lsg ngnwa ngayu-wa.
        branch branch-GEN กรเรม
    }

The tree
The tree's

Within the genitive construction to express possession, there is no difficulty in describing the possessor of a possessor (or of a whole). Thus, for example, the phrase yarrgaye ngayu-wa m biiba-wa mi? 'the boy's father's eye'

in sentence (42) represents both the inalienable relationship between the father and his eye, and the alienable relationship (from the point of view of Guugu Yimidhirr syntax) between the boy and his father. When the inalienable relationship is between an inanimate whole and its parts, it is at least in some cases also possible to express the possessor of the inalienable possessor (the whole), as in the following sentence:

(390) ngayu dindi midgai ngayu.
    lsg=GEN boat-GEN at>PAST NONE
    My boat has no petrol.

However, so far no examples have been encountered displaying constructions like 'my tree's branch' or even 'the point/tip of my spear', which combine both alienable possession and a strict part/whole relationship.

Furthermore, although the constructions of the language provide for 'possession of a possessor', or even for 'possession of a possessor of a whole (which has a part)', further embedding of possession is impossible, within the mechanisms that have been described. There is, however, one situation which may frequently require description in terms of more complexity than exhibited in examples so far: the description of complex kin relationships. Imagine, for example, how one might describe the homeland of one's father's mother. We need, it seems, a structure of the form:

[homeland [of the mother [of the father [of the [of well]]]]

Here there are too many levels of embedding to be handled by existing mechanisms (although much could be accomplished by the lexicalization of such complex notions as 'father's mother' (= 'grandmother') etc.). However, consider the following sentence:

(391) ngayu bini ngayu ngayu-wa m biiba-wa.
    land-GEN at>PAST land-GEN father-GEN+ABS
    Jack River: that is my father's homeland on his mother's side.

(Literally: my father's land from his mother.)

Such constructions appear repeatedly in genealogical discussions - which celebrate the socially constituted relationships par excellence; but their productivity in other contexts is not yet attested.

4.8 PARTICLES

In this section we discuss several independent particles: largely non-inflecting words that give modal or other qualification to sentences. We have already met the most important of these: gaari 'not' and guya 'none'. Gaari is the negative particle used with most verb forms and with nominal predicates as well. Ordinarily gaari precedes the word it negates, although it can also stand alone to mean simply 'not'. The word guya behaves rather more like a predicate on its own, meaning 'non-existent'; however, guya does not inflect for case, behaving like a predicative-only adjective. Both gaari and guya occur with the emphatic suffix -gu-.

Several other particles deal with the factuality of statements. Biri 'indeed, certainly' usually follows a predicate and emphasizes its truth; nguba 'perhaps' also follows a predicate to suggest some doubt about a proposition, or lack of information. The same particle is used to express a notion like English 'or':

(392) ngayu bini ngayu ngayu-gaari
    lsg=GEN die>PAST PERHAPS PERHAPS NOT
    Either he died or he didn't [i.e., perhaps he died, perhaps not].

The related particle budhu 'if' signals uncertainty, or questions the possibility of some outcome, sometimes very much like a subordinate conjunction, sometimes in a more modal sense.
2sg+HON if go-NON-PAST 2sg+HON meat+ABS get-NON-PAST indeed. If you go you’ll get meat for sure. Should you go, you’ll get meat for sure.

who+ABS come-PAST who+ABS if
Who came? Who indeed? [i.e., I have no Idea, or an uncertain and would like to know, too.]

By contrast, the particle bira emphasizes certainty: ‘certainly, for sure, in any case’. The particle may be attached
to a declaration to suggest an outcome that might have been called into question.

(385) Tiimiyimi-dehnu wam.waun, nyudu gada-a bira, this+REDUP-COM tomorrow 3sg+HON come+N-PAST surely
Just the same tomorrow (i.e., let’s do the same thing again
tomorrow); [because] he’s bound to come again tomorrow.
(Two brothers, who have been waiting to ambush another
sarcasmic character, plan after failing on one day to try
again the following day.)

The desiderative particle gana frequently cooccurs with
imperative verb forms; see (145). It can also occur
alone, usually with the suffix -gu/-gyu.

Is there any meat very likely [hopefully].

The word ganaa ‘alright’ acts like an adjectival
predicate, although it seems to have no attributive use. For
example, a frequent greeting formula is depicted in the follow-
ing sentence.

(387) Nyardu ganaa? Ganaa.
2sg+HON OK OK
How are you? [are you OK]? I’m fine.[OK]

However, no noun phrase occurs with ganaa modifying a noun;
one cannot say tama ganaa to mean ‘the man (who is) alright.
Following an entire clause, and separated from the following
words by a pause, the word gives a sense of (satisfactory?)
completion, creating a construction that means ‘once X, then Y’.

(388) Nyardu maga hwada-y ganaa, ngali dhada-a
2sg+HON food+ABS eat-PAST OK 1sg+HON go-NON-PAST
When you have eaten enough?, then we’ll go.

Interestingly, a normal conversational device to allow a
speaker to hesitate, or to rephrase some remark which has
not come out right uses the expression ganaa ganaa (literally,
‘not right’):

(389) Oddi, wanyigu - gaari ganaa - Victor.
name+ABS 3sg+GENABS not OK
His name is - uh - Victor.

(There seems a very likely relationship between ganaa and
the words gana ‘the bottom, the underside, underneath’ (a
noun) and the time word ganaayngu ‘long ago’.)

4.8 Particles 183

Munya ‘only’ can point to different constituents within
a sentence:

(400) Munya nabaun-gu daaw-y nyulu
only one-pu spear-PAST 3sg+HOM
He speared only one [i.e., not two].

(401) Munya nyulu minha daaw-y.
only 3sg+HOM meat+ABS spear-PAST
Only he speared meat [no one else got any].

And so forth: munya immediately precedes the constituent
which it encompasses (and so far no clear cases are attested
in which munya seems to modify a verb, as e.g., in ’He
only fell down (i.e., he didn’t hurt himself)’. However,
munya also can follow an entire clause (again separated
from succeeding material by a pause), to give a modal sense:
‘if only X; then Y’ or ‘if it should just happen that X,
then Y’.

(402) Nyardu dhada-a munya, nyardu nhau-moa
2sg+HOM go-NON-PAST only 2sg+HOM see-NON-PAST
If you just go, you’ll see.

Possibly related to munya is the particle munyarga, which, often in combination with wun ‘soul, breath, want’, signifies inability and impossibility.

(403) Nyayu (www)munyarga dhada-a, 1sg+HON (breath)unable go-NON-PAST
I can’t go

(See sentence (341)). Whereas an expression like wun-dhimm
‘wants’ takes an imperative complement (see (319) and (322)), the particle munyarga, or the expression munya+munyarga, always occurs with the non-Past form of a verb (no examples
with a past tense verb have been encountered). Furthermore, transitive sentences with munyarga show the same pattern of case marking as normal declarative transitive sentences.

(404) Nyulu gabirum-ling wuun wwwunyarga inti-l.
3sg+HOM girl-KEF tree+ABS unable chop-NON-PAST.
The girl can’t cut down the tree.

A further particle, dhillinh ‘in return’, emphasizes
that an action or an event was to pay back some previous action
or event (the word is sometimes uttered alone with the
meaning ‘that serves you right: that pays you back: that’s
what you deserve!’).

(405) Nyayu dhillinh ganda-yu.
1sg+HON in return hit-PURP.
I intend to hit [his] back [e.g., because he hit me].

Two particles indicate habitual action. Nhuyim and
muwun both mean ‘always, regularly’; the coastal expression
magwa+bada-agu (literally, ‘before and after’) is regularly
used to mean ‘always, forever, eternally’.

(406) Bidaa-guun yel bidaa-yi nhuyim mutiri
child-PUTABS these dirt-LOC always play-REDUP+N-PAST
These kids are always playing in the dirt on the ground.
(Always/regularly, habitually)
The word garra acts both as a conjunction 'and', and as a particle meaning 'again' or giving an emphatic definiteness to an action. The -gu suffix emphasizes the meaning 'again'.

(407) Nyulu dhadh-ya garra(-ngu).
3sg+MOM go-PAST again (-gu).
He really did go, he finally went after all; ... and he went. 
OK: he went again.

Galmha 'also' suggests that the action depicted in a sentence took place in addition to some ongoing activity or independent happening.

(408) Nyulu dhadh-ya galmha
3sg+MOM go-PAST also 
He went, too [i.e., someone else was going and he also did].

Note the clearly related expression: galmhaa=galmbaru 'piled one on top of another', which is used figuratively in the following dismaying accurate portrait of Gungu Yimdhirr by one of its most accomplished native speakers:

(409) Ngamiiyamun garra warru galmhaa-galmbaru
1pl+GEN+ABS language+ABS very piled on top of another 
Our language is just piled on top of itself [i.e., very complex].

4.9 NEGATIVE HOPPING AND MODIFYING EXPRESSIONS

Sentences like (341) and (404) show that an expression like wawu=marrgarra 'unable, can’t' is some sort of a modal qualification to a verb; it is not, in itself, an independent intransitive predicate which has some sort of a complement bearing non-past or other inflection. This situation is rather different from that of such comitative expressions as wawu=dharrr 'want' and wawu-mul 'not want'; these appear to serve as intransitive predicates (whose S NP will bear ABS and/or NOM case marking), regardless of whether the complement clause, with purposive inflection, is transitive (see (319)) or intransitive (see (322)).

Even here, however, speakers occasionally produce sentences which display what might be called 'ergative-hopping' in which a transitive complement clause engenders ergative inflection on what appears to be the S NP of the predicate wawu=dharrr or wawu-mul.

(410) Yarrga-en wawu-mul warru bandii-nhu. 
boy-ERG want-PRIV tree+ABS chop-REDUP-FUTURE 
The boy doesn’t want to chop the tree down.

This sentence seems to be somewhat less likely to occur than the following equivalent in which there is no ergative NP:

(411) Nyulu yarrga wawu-mul warru bandii-nhu. 
3sg+MOM boy+ABS want-PRIV tree+ABS chop-REDUP-FUTURE 
The boy doesn’t want to chop the tree down.

However, (410) is perfectly acceptable, and the transitivity of the complement verb bandii-nhu 'chop' seems enough here to force the ergative suffix onto yarrga (which, in a full transitive sentence, would be the A NP for the verb bandii), despite the fact that yarrga in (411) is transparently the S NP of the predicate wawu-mul.

Ergative inflection even hops, occasionally, from a transitive clause onto a prior NP which is at once the A of the transitive clause and the S NP of an intransitive full verb which precedes it - something which seems especially likely to happen if the preceding intransitive verb is a verb of motion (compare auxiliary verbs in many languages):

(412) Garraa-ngu gadaa-ya ngalan bongan 
younger brother-ERG come-PAST son+ABS wait-PAST 
The younger brother came and waited for the son to rise.

In such cases, 'ergative hopping' is unusual but not considered incorrect. But contrast the following sequence, which exhibits a more common discourse construction (see next section).

(413) Nyulu biydha warrma-ahdi nhuru baaiv garrmaa-ya. 
3sg+MOM child+ABS return-REF-PAST 3sg+ACC loofa+ABS grab-PAST 
The boy went back and grabbed his [father's] genitals.

Here the NP shown as nyulu biydha '(he) the child' appears in nominative/absolutive form as S of the intransitive (reflexive) verb in the first clause, although the same NP is the underlying A of the second verb garrmaa-ya. (See also (302).)

A few adjectives can also occur with ergative inflection, giving a particular qualification to an act. Here is one example. The word binaal acts like an adjectival predicate meaning 'know'; it can take a variety of complements.

(414) Nganu binaal-mul nyulu bidha warrmaa-khoo-bi bidaa-yu 
lag+NOM know-PRIV 3sg+MOM child+ABS where-ALL go-PAST
I don’t know where the child went.

(Gavan Breen has pointed out to me that historically binaal means 'ear'; Gungu Yimdhirr makes heavy use of the current word milga 'ear' in expressions having to do with knowledge, attention, intelligence, etc.)

(415) Nyulu yidiirnarrpurr garra binaal-ya gaiga balga-a-nhu. 
3sg+NOM old man+ABS very know-ABS spear+ABS make-REDUP-FUTURE 
The old man is very good at [i.e., knows how to] make spears.

However, although binaal never functions as an attributive adjective, in combination with the suffix -gu it forms an adverb-like expression which modifies (and agrees in case with) an S or an A NP to mean 'voluntarily, knowingly, with purpose'; in this use it must bear the case appropriate to a nominal expression in S or A function:

(416) Gumbaganka binaal-ga dhadh-yu 
old lady+ABS know-gu+ABS go-PAST 
The old lady went knowingly, on purpose.

(417) Nyulu ngadhu marrgim binaal-ing-gu dhamba-paamin 
3sg+NOM lag+GEN+ABS rifle+ABS know-ERG-gu throw-PAST
He lost his rifle intentionally.

Similarly, other modifying expressions accept ergative inflection when they modify an A NP, as in:
In sentences so far encountered, expressions like *binaa-*gu 'knowingly' do not occur in cases other than Absolutive and Ergative. (See (124).)

4.10 DISCOURSE NOTES

Gangu Yimidhirr makes heavy use of personal pronouns and demonstrative in anaphoric constructions to facilitate chaining sentences together, and to maintain NPs as prominent topics in strings of discourse. We have already seen that, despite ergative morphology on nouns, Gangu Yimidhirr frequently links clauses so that the S NP in the first clause is coreferential with the (deleted) A NP in the second clause. So, a sentence like (302) is very frequent in Gangu Yimidhirr narrative, and sentences of the reverse type (for example (303)) are also possible, if less common.

The use of adjoined pronouns and explicit demonstratives to keep topics straight over a sequence of sentences is illustrated in the first few lines of the story of the Moon and his two wives.

Here the main character of the narrative is introduced - *Waarrigan 'the Moon' - with a noun starting the sentence and an adjoined pronoun accompanying it. The next sentence in the story is:

(420) Gangu yiriya guudiirmirr wa-nay,
3sg GEN-NOM wife +ABS two ABS lit -PAST.
He had two wives.

The Moon is still the topic, and it is clear that *nhangu means 'his' (wives).'

(421) Gangu nalaun, bidha yarrma,
child +ABS one ABS little one ABS boy +ABS
... and one child, a son.

Here is still more information about Moon's family.

(422) Bidha nhawuun yarrmgala buzaam-gul guudu-gul waarrma
child +ABS that ABS house +ABS one +ABS house +ABS very
binaa buzaam-gul nhawuun-adi
sweet very -gu see+REP+PAST
That boy was very dearly loved by the two wives. (Literally, the boy seemed very sweet to the two wives.)

Here the focus of attention shifts momentarily to the boy and his mothers' feelings towards him: the narrative accomplishes the shift by using the demonstrative *nhawuun 'that'.

In these sentences the individual constituents of each clause are present. Near the beginning of each clause is a reflex of the topic of the current segment of discourse. In (410) the topic is introduced by the initial noun and joined pronoun; in (420) the same topic is reflected in the possessive pronoun which starts the sentence, a pronoun which is elided (almost audibly) in (421). In (422) the topic shifts, and this shift is signalled by highlighting the new topic, the child, with the demonstrative *nhawuun. Gangu Yimidhirr seems to use the device of bringing the most prominent constituent of a sentence to the front - introducing it to attention, and then remarking about it in some way.

In sentences like (302) and (303), two clauses have been collapsed by deleting an identical topic in the second clause, and chaining together the remainders. Such 'topic chains' also occur regularly with intransitive clauses sharing coreferential S NPs, and transitive clauses with coreferential A NPs.

(423) Nhauu nhawuun waarrigan gada-y waarrugamawuwaarrma-y.
3sg NOM that +ABS moon +ABS some -PAST sleep +ABS see+REP+PAST
[Then] the Moon came and lay down to sleep.

The topic, *nhauu nhawuun waarrigan 'that Moon', is the S NP of both *gada-y 'came' and wunargamawuwaarrma-y 'lying'. In the following sequence of sentences, the topic of the first clause is superseded in the second, which in turn is part of a topic chain in which a common A NP is deleted in its second occurrence.

(424) a. Bidha nhauu buni.
child +ABS 3sg NOM die +PAST
The child died.

b. Nhauu bidha nhawuun-wa-n dibag-y.
3sg NOM father +ABS that ABS house +ABS free +PAST
His father let [him] loose.

c. Bidha nhawuun buna-wa gindha-wurin.
child +ABS that ABS house +ABS ground +LOC put +PAST
...and then he set his child on the ground.

(Except for the placement of a pause after *dibag-y, in (424b), the last two clauses could also be parsed so as to read: 'His father released his child and set him on the ground'.) In (b) the shift of focus is accomplished by introducing a new noun and adjoined pronoun at the beginning of the sentence (though note that the possessive pronoun in (b) is still taken to refer back to the previous topic, the boy). Part (c) is chained directly to (b), and both clearly share the same A NP - namely 'the father'. Note also that the possessive pronoun in (c) now refers to the father, i.e., to the topic in the previous sentence. We have now seen topic chains that link two clauses together, and by which the repeated NP in the second clause is deleted. The chains we have observed have linked an S NP in the first clause to either an S or an A NP in the subsequent clause; or an A NP in the first clause to either an S or an A NP in the following clause. In these cases, the NP in the first clause which inspires chaining is clear topic of the sequence. If two transitive sentences share both A and O NPs, then they may be freely chained together; after the first clause, both A and O NPs can be deleted.
A topic chain built around an initial clause in which an NP precedes an animate A NP is likely to be somewhat odd or confused. Consider, for example, the sequence in (425).

(425)Prosecutor bidaa-ya nyulu mezi banya-y.  
 3sg-GEN-ACC 3pl-ACC food-ABS cook-PAST eat-PAST  
  My father cooked the food and we ate it [lit].

(426)Iguu warriga-ay bayanan bayaaga-ru, (bayyan)  
  tree-big-ENG house-ABS that-ABS cover-PAST house-ABS  
  dumb.  
  break-PAST  
  The large tree fell on [literally, covered] the house, and  
  crushed it.

In (426), according to some speakers, the second occurrence of the O NP bayyan 'house' makes the sentence marginally clearer. It also seems possible for the S or A NP of the first clause to be coreferential with a deleted O NP in a subsequent clause, as in the following examples:

(427)Bhanday-yu buku, dhaana iindi.  
  road-LOC tree-ABS fall-PAST 3pl-ACC chop-PAST  
  The tree fell on the road, and they chopped it up.

(428)Nyulu bidaa bayani-bi ganda-ya nyagu (rangu) ganda-ya.  
  3sg-GEN child-ABS house-LOC come-PAST 3sg-GEN 3sg-ACC hit-PAST  
  The child came into the house and I hit him.

In (428), the accusative pronoun can appear in the second clause but it can just as well be omitted. The prominent NP in the first clause again appears to function as the topic of the entire construction; in interpreting the second clause, which has, as it were, only the O position empty, the normal reading is to treat the topic as the (deleted) O NP.

There is only one other case in which two sentences are chained together, and in which a coreferential NP in the second clause can be omitted: the details are somewhat complicated. Occasionally, it appears, an O NP in the first sentence of a sequence can be interpreted as the topic of a sentence, and hence be chained to a second clause with a coreferential (deleted) S NP. But the conditions under which such a topic chain can be built appear to be heavily restricted. First, such an O NP in the first clause must appear before the A NP in order. And there is a strong presumption, in such a construction, that the A NP will itself not be animate, especially not human. The following sentence illustrates the sort of sequence involved:

(429)Birra gawrida waamuya-ru daz.  
  leaf-ABS yam-ABS blow-PAST wind-ENG south-ALL  
  dhoramaa-zi buku.  
  Thunder-ABS fall-PAST  
  The yam leaf was blown South by the wind, and it landed in  
  front of Thunder.

If the A NP of the initial transitive clause is animate, then there is some possibility for confusion or ambiguity.

(430)Birra waamuya-ru nyagu, rangu buku.  
  leaf-ABS blow-PAST 3sg-GEN there fall-PAST  
  I blew the leaf, and [it] fell over there.  
  (But, in the absence of any special clarifying context, the sentence could also  
  mean: I blew the leaf, and I fell over there.)

Such a topic chain is unclear, because the ordinary presumption that the A NP of the first clause will be the continuing topic of the sequence conflicts with the special prominence of the O NP which derives from its initial position. Ordinarily, the second clause of such a chain would contain an explicit S NP, consisting of at least a pronoun: nyulu buku 'he fell', or nyagu buku 'I fell'.

An attempted topic chain whose first clause has a verb requiring an animate NP, and in which no overt A NP appears, is totally confused and unintelligible without some context to supply the missing A NP.

(432)Dhangu ganda-yu, buku.  
  3sg-ACC hit-PAST fall-PAST  
  Somebody hit him, and he fell down.

Such a string could only occur as part of a longer topic chain, in which it would be possible to interpret both the A NP of ganda-yu 'hit' and the S NP of buku 'fell' as coreferential with the topic of the entire segment of discourse. If neither of the conditions mentioned above is fulfilled — that is, if the A NP of the initial transitive chain is animate, and if it precedes the O NP — then the deleted S NP of the second clause of this sort of topic chain is always understood to be coreferential with the A NP of the first clause. This is the case, for example, in (309). In fact, whenever the A NP precedes the O NP in the first clause in such a construction, chaining which links a coreferential O NP in the first clause with the S NP of the second is impossible.

(433)Nyagu dhaana buku.  
  3sg-ACC 3pl-ACC chop-PAST fall-PAST  
  I chopped the tree, and I fell down.

The first alternative here, the topic chain with deleted coreferential NP, has only one reading, in which the chain links the A NP of the first clause to the S NP of the second — a familiar and ordinary sort of topic chain. The second reading is only possible if the S NP nyagu 'tree' is made explicit.

These considerations suggest, tentatively, that only topics, introduced in a first clause, can form the basis for chains to a second clause, in which the noun phrase coreferential with the topic can be deleted. Moreover, there are seemingly, several interrelated features that define topicality: first, S NPs are unambiguously available as topics, and can be linked with S, A or O NPs in second and subsequent clauses. Second, the leftmost NP in a sentence seems to have
some higher prominence or salience as a topic than do NPs that follow it. Third, A NPs seem themselves to have more prominence than 0 NPs, so that the inherent prominence of an A NP can override or at least mitigate the prominence of a leftmost 0 NP. And, evidently, animate NPs are more likely to have prominence than inanimate ones. This is an area of Gungu Yimidhirr syntax which remains to be explored in detail.

TEXT

The following narrative, told by Tulo Gordon of Hopevale, a well-known narrator and storyteller, comes from a mountainous area just north of the Endeavour River. Tulo learned the story, which tells of supernatural snakes and an angry old lady, from his mother Minnie.

1. Yidi, wulka dama gumbu dambirni, this+ABS story+ABS 3pi+MON crocodile+ABS break+PERF
   This is a story about how they had a great dance.

2. Dhamu yincharrin gumbu dambilimbil-ga wathaurr-bi.
   3pi+MON these dance+ABS break+REDUP+PERF night-LOC
   These people would have a dance at night.

The expression gumbu dambirni, literally 'dance break', is the normal idiom for 'have a dance, have a crocodile.' Although the expression is frequent enough in speech that the initial [d] of dambirni is occasionally pronounced as a trilled chotch [sr] (see section 2.1), producing a string that sounds like gumburmbiri, it is not entirely frozen. That is, it is possible to modify the word gumbu, as in gumbu warraga dambirni '[they] had a great dance'. The delocated yincharrin 'these' and warraga 'these' behave somewhat unusually, in that neither bears case inflection in A, S or O functions; the NPs which they accompany are normally inflected.

   people+ABS big+gu
   Lots of people. (i.e., there were lots of people.)

   sun-LOC 3pi+MON these hunting go+REDUP+PERF
   In the days, these people would go out hunting.

The expression wadhin dhudhuru means 'go hunting'; again the expression is not totally frozen as it commonly occurs in either order: ngalar dhudhuru wadhin 'he went hunting'. The word wadhin appears to be related to the adjective wadhil 'wounded' which applies to animals spared but not killed or caught. The suffix on wadhil- however, is not productive and there are no further cases known for it.

5. Ngalar-ganugu dama gada-agga, evening+REDUP 3pi+MON come+PERF
   In the evening they would come home.

   meat+PLU+ABS bring+PERF honey+ABS bring+PERF yam+ABS bring+PERF
   They would bring meat, honey, and yams.

   3pi+MON sit+REF+PERF food+ABS cook+PERF meat+ABS also
   They would sit down, cook the [vegetable] food, and the meat, too;

8. Minna yidi ganu-y ngal, extra-LOC - or have (mergence)
   [then they] would eat and eat and eat.

A frequent narrative device lengthens the final syllable of a word, or appends the conventional long /i/ sound, to indicate extended duration of an action.

9. Wamuyi-i-aga, gumbu dambirni wathaurr-bi, arise+PERF dance+ABS break+PERF night-LOC
   then they would get up and dance all night long.

10. Muyu bula gambagamba wula-gautom-ga, yam, that+ABS yonder old lady+ABS sit+REDUP-PAST
    That old lady was [literally: sitting] down there,

11. Muyu yincharrin gaijika.
    3pi+GEN+ABS grandchild+ABS also
    along with her granddaughter.

12. Muyu yincharrin gumbu dambirni-i yidi... mayi buda-agga
    3pi+MON these dance+ABS break+PERF food+ABS eat+PERF
    These ones had their dance, and they danced... and they ate the food.

    3pi+MON come+PERF bone+PLU+ABS skin+PLU+ABS give+PERF 3s+DAT
    gambagambarra-ga wula gaijika yincharrin wula-yi.
    old lady+DAT and grandchild: 3pi+GEN+au+DAT
    They came, and gave the bone(s) and skin [from their game] to both
    the old lady and to her grandchild.

    3pi+MON eat+REDUP+PERF
    They would eat [it].

15. Ngulu ngal ngulu gambagamba guli-gada-y.
    3pi+MON that+ABS old lady+ABS angry+come+PAST
    That old lady got angry.

    3pi+MON all+ABS hunting go+PAST
    They all [i.e., the rest of the people] went hunting.

17. Ngulu ganu ngulu ngulu wula-yi, 3pi+MON Yamstick+ABS 3pi+MON old lady+ABS take+PAST
    She [the old lady] took her own yamstick;

18. Bulu ngal ngal ngal ngal ngal ngal ngal ngal.
    3pi+MON bring+ABS down+ABS river+ABS go+PAST river+ABS
    and the two of them [the old lady and her grandchild] went down to
    the river.

19. Minna yidi gana-ga ngulu, animal+ABS stingaree+ABS kill+PAST 3pi+MON
    She killed an [edible] stingaree.

20. Minna gana-ga ngulu, manda bagan-bi, animal+ABS kill+PAST 3pi+MON take+PAST house+ALL
    She killed the meat, and took [it] to the house.
as-bum-LOC bury-PAST cooked=CAUS-REF-CONTR open-PAST
She buried it in the ashes, until it was cooked, (and then she) opened it.
The word `as' apparently requires the catalytic *u* before it can carry non-absolutive inflection. Notice, further, the use of a contextually verb form (with the reflexive form of the causative verbalizer *mwa-*na) to suggest `until such time as it might be cooked'.

22. *Mhinsa banggara bula bula-ny tii...*
`meat=ABS flesh=ABS 3dsusom=ABD eat-PAST eat-PAST [continuation] They ate the flesh of the animal, and they ate and ate and ate...

23. *Baluhay nuu-nti, ngirmu nuu-nti, bone=ABS GET-PAST skin=ABS GET-PAST [Then she got the bones and skin.

24. *nglna baluhay ngirmu yarra manga dambu-rrin, bone=ABS skin=ABS yonder East=ALL throw-PAST she threw the skin and bones over there to the East,

25. *Baluhay ngirmu yarra gwa daamba-rrin, bone=ABS skin=ABS yonder West=ALL throw-PAST she threw the skin and bones over there to the West,

26. *yrраа dambu-rrin yarra gwa daamba-rrin, yonder South=ALL throw-PAST yonder North=ALL throw-PAST over yonder to the South and to the North she threw [them].

27. *Bula nhma-ngang-ju wanggii daasa-ya yarra monguayal-bi. 3dsusom then=ABL=PLG arise=PASS go-PAST and mountain=ALL after that, they two got up and went to the mountains.

28. *Bula monguayal-bi daasa-ya. 3dsusom mountain=ALL run-PAST They ran off to the mountains.

29. *Manguuyal-bi daa-ndi, ngaldha-adhi. cave=ALL enter=REP=PASS hide=REP=PASS They entered a cave and hid themselves.

Note that the verb *daa-* is a reflexive-only verb, meaning `enter'.

30. *Nnhma-ngang-ju dambu-bi nga yirmbaal-ngay, yirmboa=ngay, snake=PLG=ABS supernatural serpent=PLG=ABS damaabu, snake=ABS.
After that, the snakes - the supernatural snakes -

The supernatural serpents, introduced here in 30, are now the topic of the narrative; the third person pronouns in 31-39 all refer to these snakes. The word yirmbal `supernatural serpent' is also the word for `rainbow' (hence, `rainbow serpent'), although other sorts of creatures are also the supernatural guardians of certain places - giant eels and fish, for example. These, too, may be called yirmbal.

31. *Dhama nguwal nhmaa-y ngbaga minha yidi.*
`snake=ABS scent=ABS smell-PAST that=ABS meat=ABS sting=ABS they smelled the scent of that stinger.

Notice that nguwal `scent' is here inalienably possessed.

32. *Dhama gada-y nguwaar-ngab, 3ag-MOM come-PAST outside=ABL.
They came from the outside (i.e., from inland).

33. *Yuwa auwaar-ngab ynhmaa-y ngalaaka gadaa-y, 3adsom sea=ABL also come-PAST and they also came from the water, from the sea;*

34. *Mhinsa bagu-u-bi bagu-u-bi gadaa-y, some=ABS ground=LOC under=underneath come-PAST some came underneath the surface of the earth;*

35. *Mhinsa wanggara=gwaar bagu-u-bi gadaa-y, some=ABS above=REP=PPY ground=LOC come-PAST others came above the ground;*

36. *Mhinsa biiri bagu-u-bi gadaa-y, some=ABS river=above come-PAST and others came up the rivers. The preposition-like positional words in these sentences derive from boda 'down, below' and wanggara 'above, high'. The reduplicated form *bagu-u-bi* in 34 means `just under, just beneath'. The complicated form with *-gwaar* in 35 is perhaps a reduplicated form of *wanggara* (but notice the flapped chotic form the form shown). In 36, the construction shown may be a contraction of *biiri-tu wanggara* `on the upper waters', with an explicit locative suffix on *biiri*.

37. *Yuwa auwaar-ngab auwaar-ngab ynhmaa-y nguwaar-ngab gadaa-y, 3adsom then=ABL=PLG arise=PASS go-PAST and mountain=ALL Very very many snakes came from inland [literally, from the outside].

38. *Yuwa auwaar-ngab auwaar-ngab ynhmaa-y nguwaar-ngab gadaa-y, 3adsom then=ABL=PLG arise=PASS go-PAST and mountain=ALL Very very many snakes came from inland [literally, from the outside].

39. *Dhama wulu gadaa-y, 3pl-MOM all=ABS come-PAST they all came.

40. *Dhama ynhbirrin wawhaauhara-gala daa-ndi.*
`snake=ABS these how=EMPH run-CONTR They these people (i.e., the dancers) - how could they run away? The story now shifts back to the perspective of the people who were having the corroboree, a shift signalled by the deixic ynhbirrin with *dhama*; in telling such a story, the narrator might well accompany the expression *Dhama ynhbirrin* `these people' with a gesture to indicate that he was shifting attention from the snakes back to the celebrants.

41. *Nnhma=bagu-u-bi dala-ny.
soul=usable run=NON-PAST They couldn't run away.

42. *Dhama messi gauh-gala dynabab.*
`snake=ABS there=ABS just then and there swallow=PASS Many of them were swallowed right there.

43. *Dyambar-ni dynabab guluu, snake=ERG=ABS swallow=PASS dance=ABS break=REP=SUBJ.
The snake(s) swallowed them while [they were] dancing.
In 42 there is no explicit A NP (although it is clear that the snakes are doing the swallowing), and this allows the sequence to maintain the dancers (who in this sentence are denoted by the O NP dhawa) as topic. Notice the conditions on coreferentiality between the O NP in the main clause and the A NP in the subordinate (simultaneous time) clause in 43.

44 * Mandal: duda-y duda-y namghyal-br duda-y, other+ABS run-PAST run-PAST mountain+ALL run-PAST Others ran away, off to the mountains.

45 * Mandal: wiali duda-y wanhka-buwa, other+ABS around run-PAST where+ALL-[dubitative] Others just ran about, who knows where.

46 Nyulu yii warra bungyel... 3sg+MON here+ABS old+ABS frill lizard+ABS Now this here Frill-Lizard...

47 Nyulu warlhakar gaarna duda-wa wali? 3sg+MON how also run-CONTRO around How was he, too, to run around?

48 Shanggu dynamb-l. 3sg+ACC swallow+NONPAST He would be swallowed [by and by].

49 Nyulu bili wali thawa-endur warlhakar duda-wi. 3sg+MON ground+ABS around see-PAST where+ALL run-PURP He looked all around the area to find where to run.

50 Nyulu dhillin wanyaar ungbarn-bi duda-y. 3sg+MON then up cloud+ALL go-PAST Then he went up to a cloud.

51 Nyulu duda-yi lai nyulu namgha yambarran ma-ni. 3sg+MON run-ARTIC 3sg+MON rock+ABS ABS gigantic+ABS get-PAST Before he ran off, he got a gigantic stone.

52 Namgha wanyaar ungbarn-bi, take+PAST up cloud+ALL and he took (it) up to the cloud;

53 Nyulu darya-ba naa ma-n buda-um-n gadaat-pa. 3sg+MON snake+ABS see-NEG down-sm-AVL come+REDUP-SURF so that if he should see a snake coming up from below,

54 Nyulu binaal diga-l thanggu bygylu-mu. 3sg+MON stone+ABS send-NEG 3sg+ACC cover-PURP he would drop the stone, and crush it.

55 Nyulu khonam wanga-um-n thawa-dhi, wannhaka? 3sg+MON that+EGR above-sm-AVL see-PAST where That one [frill lizard] looked down from up there, 'where is everybody?'

56 Daga darya-ba dhonmarial nyulu thawa-endur wanyaar thing snake+ABS greensnake+ABS 3sg+MON see-PAST up gadaat-pa bira birra. come+REDUP-SURF river along. The fact was, he saw a green snake coming up along the river.

A common conversational habit in Guugu Yimithirr is to introduce an utterance with the word daga which literally means 'thing'. The device lends a bit of informality to a conversation. Languages to the North evidently had a different word which served the same function; for example, the people who spoke the language known as Guugu Yimaa were reputed to begin every utterance with the word yina. The force of daga at the beginning of a stretch of talk seems to be to focus attention; as if one said, 'This is the thing, this is the case, listen to this...'

See line 56.

57 Nyulu buzakun-ga: Walaa Walaa, 3sg+MON yll-PAST rise+IMP rise+IMP He sang out, 'Watch out, watch out!'

58 Nyaggu nambal nhila-buwa ditga-l bana... 3sg+MON rock+ABS now-EMPH send-NEG run-PAST down I'm going to let go of this stone [and let it drop] right now!

59 Nyaggu guaggu gaardi thawa-dhi. 3sg+MON word+ABS NOT see-PAST But he [the snake] didn't hear.

60 Nyaggu guaggu gaardi-ilmu that+ABS word+ABS see-PAST NEG He didn't hear those words.

61 Nyulu bungyel-wa mandal ditga-y bana. 3sg+MON frill lizard-NEG rock+ABS send-PAST down Frill Lizard dropped the stone.

62 Nyaggu nambal bana-ga-wa illi that+ABS rock+ABS down come-PAST... That rock dropped...

63 Wangu man guaggu bygylu-rrin. 3sg+ACC back+ABS cover-PAST and crushed his [the snake's] back.

64 Bhurma-manuy-gu nyulu dharresali djaownu-run gadaat-pa, then-ABL-ga 3sg+MON thunder+ABS South-AVL run-PAST After that, Thunder came from the South.

65 Dharresali-yi man guaggu dhaaban-dhi, thunder-ERG 3sg+ACC ask-PAST Thunder asked him [frill lizard]:

66 'Ngar dati-nguy-ga?' what-CMO-ga 'What's this all from, eh?'

The clitic particle -ga conveys a sense of informality and friendliness. For example, a common greeting is warlhakar-ga 'howdy'.

67 Nyulu bungyel gadaat-pa dharresali-qal mirriri-len. 3sg+MON frill lizard+ABS come-PAST thunder+ERG tell-PAST Frill Lizard came up and told Thunder of

68 Daga nyaggu gombagombu bulu anggu gomindhanka... thing that+ABS old woman+ABS 3sg+GEN+ABS grandchild+ABS Well, that old woman and her grandchild...

69 Bulu nhawanu mirtha yidi gadaat-pa. 3sg+GEN+ABS animal+ABS stinga+ABS kill-PAST Those two killed a stinga...
The snakes came to swallow us.

Some were eaten, and some ran away.

In 73, munda 'some, others' is in 0 function in the first clause, and in S function in the second (in both cases, the case form is absolutive). But there is no explicit A NP for buday 'ate'.

'Nygu marga yarba wangeren yada-y.'
1sgvNOM only this way up (see-PAST)
I only came up here (i.e., only I managed to come up...)

'Hmm,' Nyulu Charrumau shoalilang wanda-shai,
3sgvNOM thunder+ABS then say-PAST REF
'Hmm,' Then Thunder said [to himself]:

'Nygu dhu-dhala will yisa-wa xurrutha bula.'
1sgvNOM go-PAST around search-NONPAST where+LOC 3rdvNOM 'I'll go and look around to find out where those two are.'

Nyulu dhu-dhala yisa-yi wanda-yi itii
3sgvNOM go-PAST search-PAST search-PAST...
He went and he looked and he looked...

Garrugu nyulu Dhu-dhala nhe-a shi nhta-gunteg gurrugon-bi
afterwards 3sgvNOM foot(print)+ABS see-PAST new-gu save-ALL
dhu-dhala-adu-gu.
enter-REF-SUBJ

Then he saw fresh footprints going into a cave.

Nyulu bonggaly buka wongu yanya-wa
3sgvNOM wait+PAST 3rdvNOM outside jump-PAST
He waited until they jumped (i.e., poked their heads out).

Nyulu wonggalya-ngu Dhu-dhala-ngu nanggalya-ngu yandu-y
3sgvNOM up-pu-ABL thunder-ERG light-INST hit-PAST
yandu-y gunda-y buala gudhitiri-gu.
hit-PAST hit-PAST 3rdvNOM 2ndvABS-gu

Thunder, from above, hit the two of them (again and again) with thunderbolts.

Dhu-dhala, nyulu mitirri-lin bonggalya-gal.
go-PAST 3sgvNOM call-PAST frill lizard-ADES
[Then] he went, and he told Frill Lizard [about it].

Daru bonggalya-ngu ngadi galgal buada-yu mana-nil.
ting frill lizard-ERG lawyer came+ABS long+ABS very-gu get-PAST
Well, then Frill Lizard got a very long lawyer came.

Duka dita-gu dita-gu itii
sum send-PAST send-PAST...
And he let it down, down, down...

VOCABULARY

We give first an alphabetical listing of the words used in simple sentences in this grammar; this is intended as an aid to following the examples and text. There is then a listing of important vocabulary items by semantic fields, following the basic 500-word list prepared by the editors of the Handbook. Note that forms occurring in the semantic field listing will only appear in the alphabetical vocabulary if they have been used in a sample sentence in the grammar.

ALPHABETICAL VOCABULARY

For each word is listed the part of speech and a rough gloss. Verbs are specified for transitivity class, and conjugation membership is shown by the final consonant or vowel - |, V, or -r - or by a final syllable -ma- or -ma- for MA and NA conjugations. Other words are shown in normal citation form, NOM for pronouns, and ABS case for other nominals. The words are listed in normal English alphabetical order. The following abbreviations are used:

- N gen: generic noun
- N: other noun
- Adj: adjective
- Loc: locational qualifier
- Time: time qualifier
- Num: numeral
- Deic: deictic
- Int: interrogative/indefinite pronoun
- Pron: personal pronoun
- Vint: intransitive verb
- Vtr: transitive verb
- Vref: reflexive-only verb
- Adv: adverb
- Part: particle
- Excl: exclamation
- Eng: probable loan from English

In reading the example sentences it may often be instructive to see whether a particular verb is transitive or intransitive, or what the absolutive form of a particular noun looks like; this is the information this wordlist can
provide. It does not pretend, however, to exhaust the semantic and syntactic properties of the words shown.

bawbaw, Vint: cry
bawwogaw, Vint: sing out, yell
beaga, M: lots, crotch
bealles, Vint: cook, burn
bea, Loc: below, down
bealg, Vint: be finished
bealshe, N: bone
beann, Vint: nipa palm
beaun, N: fishhook
baga, Part: (agentive, cautionary)
bagal, Vint: dig
bali, Vint: make, wash, fix
balf, Vint: go (Kespect language)
ballygarr, N: flesh, meet
bama, N gen: person, Aboriginal
bambo, N(Eng): bamboo
bamb, Vint: chop, cut down
banging, Vint: wait for
bareb, Vint: camp, spend the night
banny-bal, Part: along
bann, N: south
bann, N: house
bannar, Vint: cover, crush
bide, Vint: harpoon
bida, Adj small
bida, N: fig species with edible fruit
big, N: pig
bid, N: father
biti, Vint: paddle
blio, Vint: die
blu, N: hip
bina, Adj: sweet, delicious, well-loved
bina, N: ivory
blat, N: ironback tree
bila, Part: for sure
bills, N: leaf
biri, N: riwer
bili, N: mother-in-law
bili, M: land, dirt, place
bali, Vint: eat
bally, N: nose
baltu, Part: if, (dubitative)
baldu, Part: very
bapal, N: antbed
bila, Pron: 3du
bali, N: bullock
bali, Vint: fall
bawbaw, N: knee
beaneb, N: frill-lizard
beawe, Adj: not
beaww, Adj: hard
buryw, N: emu
burryw, N: water
darn, Vint: spear
darn, N: water
darnag, Vint: wind
darnag, Ngen: kangaroo (Respectful language)
darn, Adj: good
darnag, N: Time: early
(darnag, N: bush mango tree
darnag, Vint: sit, be seated
darna, N: thing, introductory particle
darn, Adj: slow

dasawu-qual, Vint: ask for
dasawil, Vint: call, summon
daswil, Vint: kick
dasad, Vint: go
das, N: front
dasu, N: ear
daswi, N: foot
das, Vint: throw
dash, Pron: 3pl
dasw, N: acatch
dasw, N: thunder
dasw, N: friend
bith, Part: then, in return
bith, N: rough
bith, N: road, path
bith, N: chicken
bith, N: flood
bith, Vint: tangle up, ensnare
bith, Vint: eject
bith, Vint: push
bith, Adj: dead
deing, Vint: send, free, let loose
deing, Vint: laugh at
deing, N(Eng): boat
dei, Vint: leave
dei, Vint: go
dei, Vint: run
dei, Vint: be frightened
deit, Vint: break
-dei, N: drum, dance
di, N: chest
dei, N: water rat
dei, Vint: bury

dawg, N: snake
dawg, N: kangaroo rat
dawg, N(Eng): bathe
di, Loc: south
di, N: bird
di, Adj: weak, fresh, unripe
di, N: grass
di, N: sky, heaven (Coastal)
di, N: male, man
di, N: peace, bite
di, N: sand
di, Vint: swallow

dawg, Vint: wake, disturb, nudge
dawg, N: yan

dawg, N: yam

dawg, Vint: walkstick
dawg, N: younger brother
dawg, Part: no, not
dawg, N: girl
dawg, Vint: come
dawg, Vint: break
dawg, Adj: rotted

dawg, N: cause, unconcealed

dawg, Loc/Adj: distant

dawg, N: last, final

dawg, N: poison, sick, salty

dawg, N: gut, sick

dawg, N: arms, few, five

dawg, N: arm (emphatic)
dawg, Adj: long

dawg, Adj: apear

dawg, Part: also

dawg, N: old woman

dawg, N: pitch

dawg, N: stomach, metriline
dawg, N: son's child

(gale), N: undersize

gale, N: before, long ago
gale, Part: alright, okay
ge, N: blood
ge, N: quartz, Cooktown
ge, N: child

gaw, N: kangaroo species
gawl, Vint: traditional song
gev, Vint: bold, grab
gewgaw, N(Eng): happy, contented

guy, Vint: (8 conjugation): hook, near

gila, N: Moon (Coastal dialect)
gila, N(Eng): glass
gina, Adj: soft
gina, N: dugong
gina, N: dog
guba, N: two
guba, Adj: together, in a mass
guba, N: class
gub, Adj: angry, hatred, angry
gub, N: dance, corroboree
gub, Vint: hit, kill
gub, N: egg
guana, Loc: north

gub, N: scrub, forest

gub, Part: more, and

gub, Vint: say, tell, CAUS

guana, N: earth oven

guana, N: fish

guana, N: talk, language, word

guana, Part: let, (declarative)
guana, N: Num: three

guana, Loc: want

guana, Part: none, nonexistent

ma, Excl: come, well, so...
ma, Vint: get, take, marry
ma, Vint: bring, take
ma, Vint: express
mag, N: branch
mag, Part: before
mag, Part: (causative)
mag, N: fat
ma, Vint: cause, CAUS
mag, N: hand
mag, N: mountain
mag, N: cave
mag, N: fire
mag, N: vegetable food
mag, N: lawyer-count
mag, Vint: lift
melt, N: eye
melt, N: shade
melt, Vint: (2 conj): tell, show
melt, N: story, news
melt, N: woman
melt, Vint: promise (to give)
melt, N: ear
melt, N: oil, grease, liquid

tin, N: meat, edible animal
melt, Adj: hot
mig, N: back, seed
male, N: honey, bee
meln, N: Adv, tightly, firmly
mend, N/Adj: the rest, the others
mell, Vint: beat, gather in
(large catch of fish, etc.)
mell, N: scrub python, large
carpentry snake
yarnomar, N: horse
yarrba, Deic: this way, thus
yarrbeerun, Adj: severely
eyarra, N: boy
yelchurr, Vtr: turn
yelurr, Vint: speak
yelurr, Vtr: search for
yis, Adj: near
yuulon, From: 2du
yugar, N: tree, wood, fire
yumin, N: child (of male)
yurna, From: 2pl
yurl, N: beach

VOCABULARY IN SEMANTIC FIELDS

Ordinary everyday Guugu Yimithirr words are shown with rough English glosses. For many, but by no means all, of these words, a few older speakers still know a respectful 'Brother-in-law' language alternate form (see 1.4), to be used in place of the ordinary word in the presence of avoided or especially respected relatives. Such respectful equivalents are shown preceded by a dollar-sign ($). When no respectful equivalent is shown for an everyday word, either no special word is needed to replace it in respectful speech, or the equivalent is simply unknown. (Briefly, some words could be pronounced in everyday form with tabooed relatives if they were spoken in a slow and soft tone; those were often words denoting non-sensitive objects - particular plant or game species, for example. Thus, although the word may ($vegetable) food' has the respectful equivalent gudhunubay, the phrase may ($bad) word the edible out of the badhurr 'zamia palm' would be rendered in polite speech by replacing may ($bad) by gudhunubay, but leaving the word unaltered. However, very many respectful equivalents for common words have been forgotten, even when speakers know that a respectful term used to exist.)

When well-known Inland or Coastal variants are shown, the Coastal term is marked ($). The word list also characterizes a few words by rough labels, like 'ruddy' or 'vulgar'; the implied hierarchy is, from least to most unacceptable, 'impolite', 'ruddy', 'vulgar'. Verbal etiquette in traditional Guugu Yimithirr society was an elaborate matter, which such labels can only crudely suggest.

NOUNS

A - Body Parts

bidi; $gaman, forehead
wali; $gaman, temple, side of face
huwardi; $gaman, cheek
mity; $gah, eye
jirppi; $gah, nose, face
mitga; $daaba, ear
uwart; $dyhm, chin

bidi; $gaman, forehead
wali; $gaman, temple, side of face
huwardi; $gaman, cheek
mity; $gah, eye
jirppi; $gah, nose, face
mitga; $daaba, ear
uwart; $dyhm, chin
E - Reptiles

gaugarr; guji, crocodile, large
bomhga; gaugarr, salt-water lizards
gaugarr; garri, sand goanna
djandiwalkura; guji, freshwater crocodile
guji, spotted tree python
wolumbura; guji, sandhill goanna
djaji; guji, freshwater turtle
ngmiy; ngjari, sea turtle
ngii; ngmiy, pinky
ngi; ngmiy, blue-tongue lizard
baungari; ngmiy, frill lizard
ngi; ngmiy, tree-climbing gecko
ngjara; ngjara (C); ngjara, snake (generic)
njanjara; ngjara, black-headed python
marungura; ngjara, scrub python
chik; ngjara, carpet snake
nji; ngjara, green snake (generic)
dhurungara; file snake
dhura; ngjara, death adder
chik; ngjara, egg
wolumbura; ngjara, brown snake
kakamungah ("black REDUP"); red-bellied black snake
wolumbura; (poisonous sea snake
chum; (non-poisonous) river snake

F - Birds

nji; ngjara, bird (generic)
ngi; ngjara, egg
bii; ngi, bird’s nest; tea
ngara; ngjara, feather (generic); tail-feathers
marungura; ngjara, native companion
biti-womma (lit., ‘hip-had’), pelican

G - Fishes

nji; ngjara, garri, fish (generic)
chik; ngjara, silver bream
marbbur; freshwater barramundi
bigi; ngjara, jewfish
bili; ngjara, poisonous fish (salt)
ngi; ngjara, stonefish
guddo; ngjara, blue banded mullet
marungura; rock cod
maungura; black catfish
wolumbur; perch
bigi; ngjara, small river eel
chum; large sea eel

H - Insects, etc.

nji; ngjara, ant
ngi; ngjara, ant (generic)
gi; ngjara, ant (generic)
maungura; green ant
maungura; wuungura; ant

I - Language, Ceremony, etc.

nji; ngjara, word, speech
ngi; ngjara, story, news, myth
nji; ngjara, song, dance, song
chim; ngjara, dance, song
nji; ngjara, song, dance, song,
chim; ngjara, body decorations

J - Artefacts, etc

nji; ngjara, boomerang
chibi; ngjara, womera
ngara; ngjara, stick (and wild ‘hopwood’ tree to which
ngara; ngjara, fighting
nji; ngjara, spear (generic)
ngara; ngjara, four-pronged
nji; ngjara, four-pronged

K - Food, Fire, Water

nji; ngjara, meat, animal
mi; ngjara, vegetable, food
taung; ngjara, tree, wood, fire
aka; ngjara, smoke, cigarettes
marungura; flames, light
marungura; (salt, poison)
wolumbura; (salt, water, liquid
wolumbura; (C); creek
marungura; (C); river
marungura; swamp
wolumbura; rain

L - Celestial, Weather etc.

nji; ngjara, rain
ngara; ngjara, supernatual
wuungura; cloud
ngara; ngjara, mist, drizzle
nji; ngjara, fog
marungura; thunder
nji; ngjara, thunder

M - Geography

nji; ngjara, place, ground,
country
marungura; camp
nji; ngjara, house
nji; ngjara, path, road,
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Affix</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>-gam</td>
<td>Standard gloss for the most important affixes and particles discussed in this grammar.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-fert</td>
<td>Formative affix for the reflexive form.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-past</td>
<td>Perfective formative affix.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-abs</td>
<td>Absolute formative affix.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-kat</td>
<td>Suffix for the present tense.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-tur</td>
<td>Suffix for the past tense.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-neg</td>
<td>Negative formative affix.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-en</td>
<td>Infinitival formative affix.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**LIST OF AFFIXES**

As an aid to the reader, the following list shows the most important affixes and particles discussed in this grammar, the standard gloss for each, and a list of the sections where each is discussed.

**REDF (adjectives)**
- gamu, pregant, 3.5.3.1, 4.6
- garr,_builtin, 3.2.2.1, 3.2.2.1

**REDF (verbs)**
- U, ALL, 3.3.3, 3.5.5
- ?, ERG/INST, 3.2.2.1
- ?, nonpast, 3.5.3
- ?, suf, 3.2.2.1
- ?a, purf, 3.2.2.1

**-en, 'hesitation', 3.3.2**
- hoga, caut, 3.5.3.1, 4.2.2
- ?kat, suf, 3.2.2.2

**-kat, -tur, -nen, 3.5.3.3, 4.2.3**
- ?kat, purf, 3.5.3.3, 4.2.3
- ?tur, general, 3.5.3.3, 4.2.3
- ?nen, er, 3.5.3.3, 4.2.3

**-kat, -tur, -nen, 3.5.3.4, 4.2.3**
- ?kat, purf, 3.5.3.4, 4.2.3
- ?tur, general, 3.5.3.4, 4.2.3
- ?nen, er, 3.5.3.4, 4.2.3

**-kat, -tur, -nen, 3.5.3.5, 4.2.3**
- ?kat, purf, 3.5.3.5, 4.2.3
- ?tur, general, 3.5.3.5, 4.2.3
- ?nen, er, 3.5.3.5, 4.2.3

**-kat, -tur, -nen, 3.5.3.6, 4.2.3**
- ?kat, purf, 3.5.3.6, 4.2.3
- ?tur, general, 3.5.3.6, 4.2.3
- ?nen, er, 3.5.3.6, 4.2.3
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