

Yugambeh-Bundjalung Grammar

0. General Introduction

There were a number of dialects of this language in the past. Many have almost gone out of use, and by the mid 1950s, the older identification of a person by their clan was dropping out and being replaced by the ‘station’ where Aboriginal people lived. The settlement at Baryulgil was unusual in being independent of government supervision, but those at Mulli Mulli (Woodenbong), Tabulam, Box Ridge (Coraki), Cubawee (Lismore) and Cabbage Tree Island were government ‘missions’.

Since about the 1940s there has been an increasing tendency, both by indigenous people and by others, to designate the language by the name of one of its most populous groups, the Bandjalang in the Lismore-Coraki area (Bandjalang Proper). The language was in regular use until perhaps the 1960s in this area, in the Tabulam-Baryulgil area and at Woodenbong, and perhaps elsewhere, and even those not fluent in the language used a number of words and phrases from the traditional dialects. Aboriginal people in the Tabulam-Baryulgil group adopted the name Bandjalang (usually spelt Bundjalung), as did those in the Lismore area north of Coraki, but at Woodenbong the Gidhabal (or as they now spell it Githebul) did not acknowledge the name Bandjalang for their dialect. The northern groups (from Byron Bay north) used other names for their dialects.

The map in Fraser (1892) lists the name paikal-yung for the area this language was spoken in: *Baygal* is the word for ‘Aboriginal man’ or ‘person’ in all but the more northerly dialects. Smythe (c. 1946) stated that some among the people themselves said the tribal name should be ‘Beigal’, i.e. *Baygal* (Smythe 1978:252).

Traditionally, marriages were commonly between a man of one dialect area and a woman of a neighbouring area. A common practice was that a young man would take the role of *ngarbindja* and spend about 18 months in his prospective wife’s country with her family, while they assessed his suitability as a future son-in-law (Calley 1955: xvii, 1959: 158). He would then return with his wife to his own country and dialect area. Those who came from another dialect area were expected to change to use the dialect of their new home. This pride

and possessiveness towards each local dialect, as well as past wariness towards those from other areas, has perhaps contributed to the decline in use of the language. There is a reluctance to fill unremembered vocabulary and structures from neighbouring dialects, sometimes as a result of knowing that a word in one dialect may have an unsavoury or partly taboo meaning in another.

0.1 Features distinguishing this language from its neighbours

The Y-Bj language (omitting here the Copmanhurst dialect or language, for which information is meagre and a little contradictory) is clearly marked off from neighbouring languages for which we have sufficient comparative material by peculiarities well-summarised by Crowley (1978: 171):

- (i) The widespread occurrence of fricative realisations of the *b, d, dj, g* series.
- (ii) The neutralisation of the opposition between *d* and *j* intervocally.
- (iii) The collapsing of the original contrast between a rhotic continuant and a flap/trill into just one *r* phoneme.
- (iv) The presence of a four vowel system, as against a more usual three.
- (v) The use of the O-suffix marker (accusative or object marking) on human nouns, of the form *-ngi/-nyi*.
- (vi) The occurrence of a desiderative suffix *-gi(ri)*.
- (vii) The generalisation of the reflexive-reciprocal to indicate a general anti-passive.
- (viii) The loss of the plural number in pronouns, and the generalisation of the dual to mark non-singular.
- (ix) The use of the peculiar second person singular forms *wudja, wahlu, wiya* etc. No form related to the more common Australian *nginda* is found, and no other language is known which reflects the Y-Bj second person singular form.
- (x) The presence of a very complicated set of demonstratives, indicating distance, presence or absence, and visibility and invisibility.
- (xi) The form of the purposive on verbs, which is *yah*, not *gu*.

To this list can be added the following:

- (xii) Some dialects show that at one time the language had four genders, with appropriate endings on adjectives, as well as marking on feminine nouns (e.g. *mudjumgan* 'daughter', *mudjum* 'son'). The gender system apparently went out of use in some dialects, but traces remain, including the feminine ending *-gan* as illustrated. (This ending occurs in other languages, some remote geographically, but no neighbours have such a gender system.)
- (xiii) Verb morphology is fairly similar through all dialects, and differs from that in neighbouring languages.
- (xiv) Many Pama-Nyungan languages have up to four verb conjugations; Y-Bj verbs all follow one pattern, but has up to 14 irregular verbs.
- (xiv) For some cases, case inflection on nouns differs from the forms in neighbouring languages.

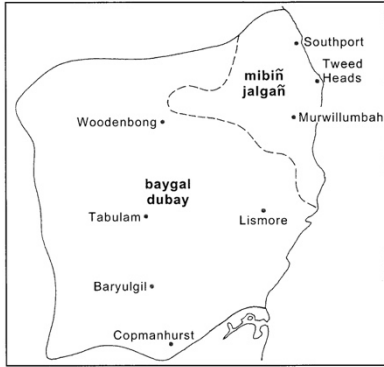
0.2 Dialect differences

Dialect differences include the following:

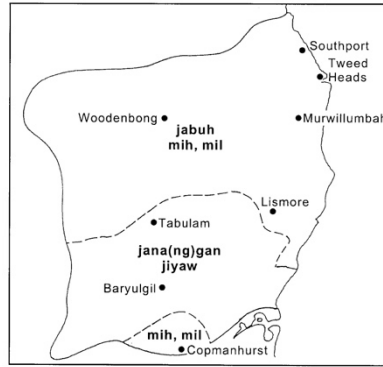
- Vowel shifts between /a/, /e/ and /i/ in some words, and between /a/ and /u/ in others, e.g. *nyula/nyule/nyuli* ‘he’ (Wa, Gd, My resp.) *ngahn/ngehn/ngihn* ‘who, someone’ (N, S), *yagam/yugam* ‘no, not’ (Wa and Gd vs Yg, Wi), *nangany/nungany* ‘vegetable food’ (Wa and Gd vs Yg)
- Lenition of the archiphoneme /dj/ of /d/ and /j/ intervocalically to /y/, e.g. *ngaju/ngayu* ‘I (ergative)’ (coastal vs inland, see Map 3)
- Loss of the absolutive form for the second person singular pronoun, and use of the ergative form for both absolutive and ergative subject, e.g. *wudjeh, wehlu* (Casino) vs *wahlu, wahlu* (Gidhabal) ‘you singular’
- Some instability between /l/ and /r/ between dialects
- Loss of /r/ between identical vowels or elsewhere (although this appears to be a recent diachronic shift)
- Possible loss of a vowel between two consonants, e.g. *walagan/walgan* (Gd/Wa) ‘shoulder’ (but see comments in §1.2.3 on the realisation of /l/ syllable finally)
- Different words for some common items (e.g. ‘man’, ‘woman’, ‘boy’, ‘dog’, ‘hand’, ‘eye’, ‘sun’, ‘father’, and ‘water’)
- Meaning shifts in some words
- Use of the suffix *-djam* ‘without’ on nominals only in southern dialects or also on verbs in the north.

Maps 3-7, adapted with some correction from Crowley (1978: 160-163), show isoglosses for certain vocabulary and phonological shifts, and Map 8 from Crowley (1978: 163) shows his suggested grouping of the dialects. The following sound shifts and words help define the different areas:

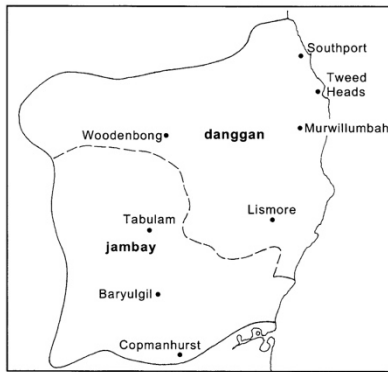
- /dj/ to /y/ lenition: *ngayu* vs *ngadju* ‘first person singular ergative’ (and other similar shifts): coastal vs inland (Map 3)
- baygal* vs *mibiny* ‘Aboriginal man’ and *dubay* vs *jalgany* ‘Aboriginal woman’: north-east vs all others (Map 4)
- jabuh* vs *jana(ng)gan* ‘boy’, *mih/mil* vs *jiyaw* ‘eye’ and *ngagam* vs *dabahy* ‘dog’, north vs south (Map 5)
- danggan* vs *jambay* ‘hand’ north-east vs south-east (similar areas) (Map 6)
- nyangga* vs *yalgan* ‘sun’ (Map 7)
- and
- gung* vs *nyabay* ‘water’
- gamay*, *gijuhny* and *jehr* ‘big’
- ngirihmang* vs *bulagan* ‘you plural’
- bidjang* vs *berang* ‘small’
- biyang* vs *bidjang* ‘father’
- juwan* vs *bilah*
- etc.



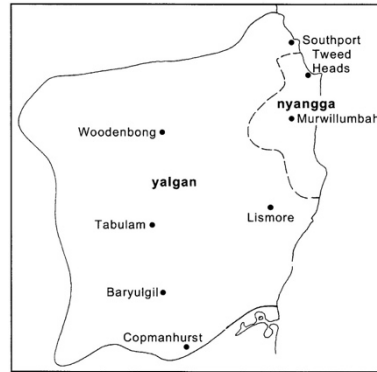
Map 3 Words for 'Aboriginal man' (upper word) and 'Aboriginal woman'



Map 4. Words for 'boy' (upper word) and eye

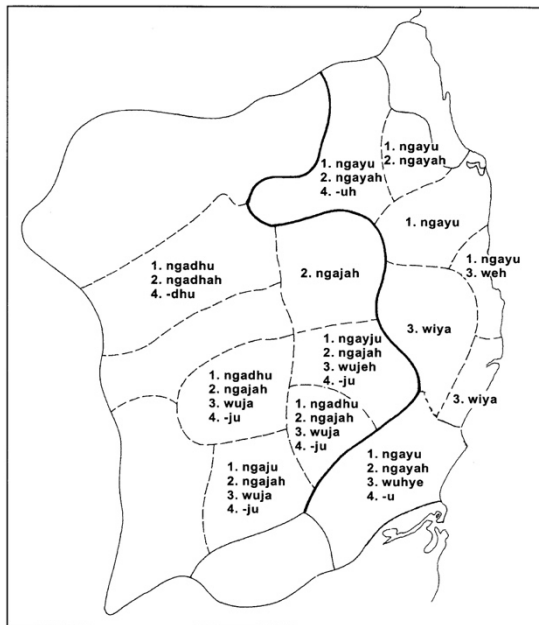


Map 5 Word for 'hand'



Map 6 Word for 'sun'

Maps adapted from Crowley 1978: 160-163



Map 7 Pronominal forms
 1. 1st sg ergative, 2. 1st sg benefactive,
 3. 2nd person sg absolutive,
 4. ergative suffix after /y/



Map 8 Yugambeh-Bundjalung dialect groupings according to Crowley (1978: 163)

0.3 Where the information comes from

We have vocabulary lists and some meagre grammatical information from other areas, some from recent work by linguists (Cunningham, Sharpe (née Cunningham), Geytenbeeks, Crowley and Holmer), some from work in the last fifty years by those with some linguistic understanding (Calley, Smythe), some from a remember of the language with his non-Aboriginal friend (Allen & Lane 1913), and one from a non-Aboriginal man (Hanlon) who worked closely with one speaker of the language (**Mary Graham) and published his list in 1935, and some from much earlier work by untrained people, in lists in *Science of Man* and in Curr (1887) and elsewhere. The more recent work helps in the interpretation of the old lists, which have some mis-readings of handwriting as well as using sometimes ambiguous English spelling conventions.

0.4 Best estimate of the older language forms

On the basis of the available evidence, it would seem that, of the dialects which have been comparatively well studied, the phonology of Wahlubal most closely reflects an older phonology which accounts for the different forms found in the different dialects; Minyangbal, Gidhabal, Manandjali and Bandjalan-Propser preserve some other features absent from Wahlubal. This grammar will draw on the strengths of the various grammars and their data. Points in some of the accounts can be clarified from comparison with others: where data is meagre, comparison can often clarify the probable structural and semantic detail in a particular dialect. Nonetheless, there do remain subtle grammatical differences, or preferred grammatical realisations, in different dialects.

1. The Sound System of the language (Phonetics/Phonology)

Yugambah-Bundjalung is a stress-timed language, where unstressed syllables have less prominence both in volume and in timing. Unstressed vowels can be centralised to or towards the neutral vowel [ə], just as happens in English.

1.1 Vowels

The various Yugambah-Bundjalung dialects have three to four short vowels and four long vowels which correspond in position to the short vowels. Length is symbolised by /h/.

- /i/, /ih/ high front vowel
- /e/, /eh/ mid front vowel
- /a/, /ah/ low central vowel

/u/, /uh/ mid to high back vowel

In a number of dialects, the final vowel in the absolutive form of the third person singular masculine pronoun, and in the singular demonstratives for the visible or unmarked set can vary between /a/ and /e/, in others between /e/ and /i/, although dialects to the south favour /a/ and to the north favour /i/. For example, *nyula* (Wa), *nyule/nyula* (Gd), *nyule/nyuli* (Yg) ‘he’, *mala* (Wa) *male/mala* (Wi), *male/mali* (Yg, Gl) ‘that’. Otherwise short /e/ only occurs when a long /eh/ is shortened (see below under long vowels **§1.6.).

The low central vowels (/a/ and /ah/ can be fronted and raised following a palatal consonant (/j/, /ny/ and /y/ to sound more like English ‘a’ in *cat* or ‘e’ in *bet*; it can be moved back in the mouth following a velar consonant (/g/, /w/) to sound like English ‘a’ in English *what*, *was* i.e. there’s the same shift as happens after ‘w’ in English. The high front vowels (/i/, /ih/, can vary between English ‘ee’ and ‘i’ (in *pin*); the high back vowels (/u/ and /uh/ can vary between English ‘u’ in *put* and a lower sound more like English *or*.

There is evidence, from reduplication patterns and from verb affixes in particular, to suggest vowel length has phonemic status of itself. Certain verb affixes lengthen the stem vowel (or vowel of a preceding affix), and reduplication of nouns commonly lengthen the vowel in the final syllable of the repeated form. That’s why we use /h/ rather than doubling the vowel as they do in other Aboriginal languages.

Any apparent sequences of dissimilar vowels are analysable as two vowels separated by a semivowel (/w/ or /y/). Syllable forms are CV or CVC, where V can be either long or short.

1.2 Consonants

Table 1.1 The consonants

	bilabial	alveolar	lamino-palatal	velar
obstruents	<i>b</i>	<i>d</i>	<i>j</i> and <i>dj</i>	<i>g</i>
nasals	<i>m</i>	<i>n</i>	<i>ny</i>	<i>ng</i>
lateral		<i>l</i>		
rhotic		<i>r</i>		
semivowels			<i>y</i>	<i>w</i>

1.2.1 Obstruents

Crowley used the term ‘obstruent’ rather than ‘stop’, as fricative or affricate allophones of these consonants are more common than stop allophones. Obstruents are lenis and lightly voiced or devoiced except following a homorganic nasal. Word initially and before a long vowel (i.e. when the syllable is stressed), there is less noticeable voicing, particularly with /g/. The peripheral obstruents are often realised as fricatives except when following a homorganic nasal, in which position they are voiced stops. Obstruents do not occur syllable finally, except for /dj/, which occurs rarely in syllable or word final position.

The laminal and palatal obstruents contrast word initially and following a nasal (except that /d/ does not occur following /ny/). The palatal obstruent was commonly pronounced with the blade touching the alveolar ridge and the tongue tip behind the lower front teeth, and is spelt /dj/. Intervocally, and in rare word-final occurrence, /d/ and /j/ fall together as a laminal stop or affricate, a somewhat sibilant palatal flat fricative, or a voiced interdental fricative, the particular realisation varying from dialect to dialect, as well as exhibiting some free variation. Intervocally this archiphoneme is always voiced. In Wahlubal this archiphoneme can fluctuate between a laminal stop or affricate and an interdental fricative; in Gidhabal it is most commonly a voiced interdental fricative but also occurs as a palatal affricate preceding /i/ or /ih/ with some speakers; in Bandjalang and Wiyabal it is most commonly a laminal stop or affricate (although occasionally it is heard as an interdental fricative), and in Yugambah it varies between the laminal stop or affricate and a flat somewhat sibilant fricative. Smythe recorded all these variants in his data. In practical orthographies chosen in consultation with speakers and descendants of speakers of the various dialects, the symbols *j*, *dj* or *dh* have been used for this archiphoneme. Here I am using *dj*. It should be noted that in Gidhabal and western dialects in particular, this can be realised as a voiced interdental fricative between vowels or syllable finally.

1.2.2 Nasals

Word or syllable final nasals, as well as the lateral, often have a stop onset as a free variant, especially following a long vowel. This is due to a slight timing difference in the movement of the articulators — the oral closure occurring just before the nasal release for nasals, or the alveolar closure preceding lateral release for /l/.

1.2.3 Lateral

The lateral can be flapped (or have a stop onset) syllable finally. In Wahlubal, Crowley also noted that the word medial consonant cluster /lg/ is often pronounced as though the lateral was lengthened, or else as though a quick neutral vowel intervened between the /l/ and the /g/. He proposed that /lg/ developed from an earlier /lVg/ (where V is a vowel); /lVg/ is attested in other dialects in the same words, which corroborates his proposal.

1.2.4 Rhotic

The rhotic tends to be flapped between vowels, and trilled syllable finally, although it can occur as a continuant, similar to /r/ in English, particularly intervocalically. It is not thoroughly certain whether this pronunciation as a continuant has come from the influence of English, the loss of teeth in older speakers, or is a long-standing variant. The area where the language was spoken is adjacent to areas where the languages spoken had a contrast between a continuant and a flapped rhotic (and in some cases a third rhotic), and cognates show contrast between the flap and the continuant has been lost in Yugambeh-Bundjalung.

1.2.5 Semivowels

Semivowels occur word initially and finally and between dissimilar vowels. Word initially, as is rather common in Australian languages, the sequences *yi* and *wu* may phonetically lack the semivowel. Crowley found the semivowel could be replaced by a glottal stop in his data (Wahlubal), although I cannot confirm this.

1.3 Stress

Stress falls on the initial syllable and on syllables with long vowels. In two syllable words with a short syllable followed by a long one, stress varies freely between the two syllables, but if the word is longer the stress falls on the long syllable(s). The language is stress timed, and unstressed short vowels tend to be centralised and shortened, often being heard as the neutral vowel (schwa).

1.4 Syllable patterns

Syllables are of the form CV or CVC within words. All consonants except /l/ and /r/ may begin words; although /l/ occurs initially in words borrowed from English, e.g. *laygima*- 'to like'. /l/ and /r/ can also occur intervocalically within words, but not after other consonants.

Some borrowed English words (e.g. bread) or language words said quickly, you hear ‘br’ and ‘bl’ at the beginnings of words, but that’s because a /u/ vowel in such a position disappears in speech (so *burehn* ‘bread’ and *blagan* from *bulagan* ‘you plural’).

Except for a few words ending in /dj/, obstruents do not occur at the ends of words or syllables; only nasals, the lateral or rhotic and vowels may end words. Long vowels do not occur in successive syllables, see **§1.6.

The absence of certain sequences may help account for the allomorphs of the stems of certain irregular verbs. ‘While hitting’ is *bumanyun*, not **bumnyun* which could have been predicted from the patterns of other irregular verbs, and irregular verbs whose stem ends in /n/ lose /n/ and lengthen the vowel in the analogous forms, e.g. *yahnyun* ‘while going/walking’, not **yannyun*. **See §3.1 and Tables 3.1 and 3.2.

1.5 Long vowels

As Crowley points out (1978: 16) vowel length and the contrast between /e/ and /eh/ are partly predictable. One syllable words generally have a long vowel, and long vowels do not occur in successive syllables. However, some affixes have long vowels, and some add length to a stem final vowel. When whole words are reduplicated, the final syllable is often lengthened, or if already long the first repetition loses the length. Certain affixes also lengthen the final vowel in the stem to which they are affixed. Long vowels are never lengthened further, and if affixation would result in two successive syllables with long vowels, the second syllable will be short. For the progressive affix in Gidhabal and Yugambeh, the lengthening appears to ‘hop’ a syllable if two long vowels would otherwise result, but in Wahlubal this was not noted by Crowley. When a tense/aspect affix which lengthens the stem vowel is added to a verb stem ending in /i/, or follows the reciprocal/reflexive (and antipassive) affix *-li*, the lengthened /i/ vowel becomes /eh/. A long vowel cannot be further lengthened.

gannga- + *-hla* → *ganngahla*
 hear PRG ‘hears’

gannga- + *-li* + *-hla* → *ganngalehla*
 hear/feel REFL PROG ‘hear each other/feel oneself’

(Gd) *burji-* + *-hn* → *burjehn*

pelt IMPF ‘pelted’

ñah- + *-hla* → *ñahla*
see PRG ‘sees’

nyah- + *-li* + *-hla* → *nyahlela(h)*
see REFL PRG ‘look at each other’

When this pattern results in /eh/ being shortened, the resulting vowel is /e/. But Crowley says that in Wahluwal the change of /i/ to /e/ only happens if the vowel can be ‘made long’ in the first place. Compare

e.g. (Gd) *ngahri-* + *-h* → *ngahre*
play/dance IMP ‘play!/dance!’
nyah- + *-li* + *-hla* → *nyahlela(h)*
see REFL PROG ‘look at each other’
(Wa) *ngahri-* + *-h* → *ngahri*
play/dance IMP ‘play!/dance!’
(Wa) *nyah-* + *-li* + *-hla* → *nyahlila*
see REFL PROG ‘look at each other’

When nouns are reduplicated, the whole word is repeated and the final vowel lengthened unless it is already long. In a very few cases where the last vowel is already long, Geytenbeeks note that this vowel is shortened in the first occurrence and the length is retained in the repetition. The suffixation of *-bur* ‘a little one’ and *-gir* ‘class’ often also induces a lengthening of the final vowel of the stem. Reduplication in verbs and other words does not show vowel lengthening.

baygal ‘man’ *baygal-baygahl* ‘men’ (Wa), ‘little man’ (Gd) (of a
boy wearing a man’s hat)
yawun ‘afternoon’ *yawun-yawuhn* ‘evening’
gumbi ‘many’ *gumbi-gumbih* many-many ‘some, a few’
yabur ‘one’ *yabur-yabuhr-be* one-one-only
‘only one here or one there’
muli ‘hill’ *muli-mulih* ‘small hill’
ngagam ‘dog’ *ngagahm-bur* dog-DIM ‘little dog’
dubay ‘woman’ *dubahy-gir* woman-class
‘looks like a woman’ (in a blurred picture)

Reduplication pluralises some nouns, has an attenuating or diminutive meaning with some other nouns, and has a distributive and attenuating action for verb stems.

1.6 Morphophonemic change in case affixes

Among the affixes which have been classed as case affixes are a number which vary in form to harmonise with the final consonant of the noun or adjective final vowel. There are two series, of forms *-DV* and *-NV*, where D is commonly an obstruent, and N commonly a nasal, and V a vowel, /a(h)/ /i/ or /u/. These case affixes are:

<i>-Du</i>	ergative (ERG)	<i>-Nu</i>	ablative (from, out of) (ABL)
<i>-Da(h)</i>	locative (LOC)	<i>-Na(h)</i>	possessive (POS)
<i>-Di</i>	locative non-present (Gd, Yg) (LOCNP)	<i>-Nahjil</i>	past possessive (Gd, Yg) (POSP)
		<i>-Ni</i>	accusative (ACC)

Table 1.2 ‘Harmonising’ suffix patterns

word ending in	<i>-DV</i> suffixes	<i>-NV</i> suffixes
<i>m</i>	<i>-bV</i>	<i>-V</i>
<i>n</i>	<i>-dV</i>	<i>-V</i>
<i>ñ</i>	<i>-jV</i>	<i>-V</i>
<i>ng</i>	<i>-gV</i>	<i>-V</i>
<i>l/r</i>	<i>-V</i>	<i>-nV</i>
<i>dj</i> (Gd)*	<i>-V</i>	<i>-ngV</i>
<i>y</i> (often dropped except in Wa)	<i>-djV</i>	<i>-nyV</i> (<i>-nyi</i> , <i>-nga</i> , <i>-ngu</i> in Wa)
<i>w</i> (Wa)	<i>-bV</i>	<i>-mV</i>
<i>w</i> (other dialects), V	<i>-yV</i>	<i>-ngV</i> , <i>-nVh</i> (Wa sometimes)
Special cases, demonstratives, etc.		
<i>gahri</i>	<i>-yV</i>	<i>-nV</i>
<i>mahnyu</i> , <i>manyeh</i> sets (Gd,Wa), <i>mayu</i> , <i>gayu</i> (Gd, Wa), <i>-a</i> dependent verbs (Gd), and following <i>-nah</i> POS, <i>-bah</i> ‘towards’	<i>-lV</i>	<i>-nV</i>

* This is an interdental fricative in Gidhabal.

The vowel in the locative and possessive is long in Gidhabal and Yugambah, and possibly Bandjalang Proper, but not, it seems, in Wahlubal.

Following a nasal, /D/ is realised as the homorganic obstruent, and /N/ is lost. Table 1.2 shows all the forms.

There are a few special cases in various dialects, including the affixation of a suffix indicating plural kin terms (noted by the Geytenbeeks in Gidhabal).

1.7 Intonation

In general the intonation patterns are the same as in English. But there was one question intonation pattern recorded in Githebul (which was still used when the Geytenbeeks were there): rising intonation reaching a peak on the last stressed syllable and then falling suddenly. As in English, questions introduced by an interrogative (so-called ‘wh-words’ in English) begin with a higher pitched interrogative word followed by the normal statement

intonation, as in other Aboriginal languages. But ‘echo questions’ can be introduced or ended by (*mi*)*nyang* ‘what, something’ or ended with the interrogative particle *ngi* ‘isn’t it? (etc.)’ both of which have a sharply rising intonation.

2. Grammar

English arranges grammar by putting the subject before the verb, and (if there is an object) putting it after the verb. Australian Aboriginal languages use suffixes to show the ‘subject’ (the person or thing doing the action) and the object, and the place where the action is happening. As words have these suffixes, the speaker doesn’t need to use word order to show who is doing the action, or who is having something done to it (the object). You can change the order for emphasis on one or another word or phrase. These languages also use affixes to show where the action is, or to show what the ‘subject’ is moving towards or away from.

Nouns and adjectives are more like each other in Aboriginal languages than they are in English. The adjective meaning ‘big’ can also be used as a noun for a big man, big woman (which a feminine suffix) or big thing. But adjectives can also be turned into verbs by adding a verb suffix for ‘be’ or ‘become’.

The language used to have four genders, all distinguished by suffixes:

- Masculine for male humans and occasionally introduced animals (horse, etc.)
- Feminine for female humans and sometimes for introduced animals
- Arboreal for trees and shrubs
- Neuter for everything else

Not all dialects still use these, except that the feminine suffix *-gan* is used on some words for females (but not common words for ‘woman’, ‘girl’ etc. *-gan* is used on adjectives, and for the ‘winter women’ (the Peiades or Seven Sisters). The arboreal suffix *-gah* often occurs on tree names. Don’t bother memorising these — you’ll pick them up as you come across them.

The category of pronouns includes the usual items for different persons and numbers, and the interrogative or indefinite pronouns. The same forms of the latter function as interrogatively and indefinitely. In pronouns singular and plural are distinguished, and in the third person singular masculine and feminine. Some dialects have compounded ‘we’ and ‘you singular’

to make an inclusive plural, and we have rare examples of gender distinction in plural pronouns.

While pronouns and demonstratives follow the same case system as nouns, a number of the inflections have irregularities when compared with noun inflection.

The most important emphasis in verbs is on aspect, not tense. In English we emphasise tense, but any time you see the *-ing* suffix it is showing continuous aspect, not just a one-off action. This will be explained under the section on verbs.

2.1 Nominals: nouns, adjectives, pronouns and demonstratives

All these can be marked for ‘case’. Case suffixes are a way of showing who or what is doing an action, who or what is ‘object’, that is being acted on, location (in, at, on, out of or through), the possessor (like English *my*, *John’s*, etc.), who it’s done for (dative) or what’s called adversative (like *afraid of*).

2.1.1 Nouns and adjectives

Adjectives (*big*, *little*, *smooth*, *red*) can act as nouns, so *bidjang* can mean ‘little’ and also ‘little thing, little child’. They can also take a verb suffix, so *bidjang-wan-* can mean ‘become little, shrink’.

Nouns and adjectives can have ‘gender’ suffixes, but most dialects have lost some of the details here. There were four genders: masculine (for male humans and introduced animals), feminine (for female humans and introduced animals), arboreal (trees and plants), and neuter (everything else). The survivors are *-gan* ‘feminine’ which can occur on adjectives and words like *waringihn.gan* ‘winter women’, i.e. ‘the Pleiades’, and *-bah*, *-gah* on some tree names in some dialects. Words for woman and girl don’t have a feminine suffix.

2.1.2 Reduplication of nouns and adjectives

Nouns and adjectives can be reduplicated. On some noun stems it shows plural. More commonly it adds a diminutive meaning, or makes an adjective from a noun.

<i>muli</i> ‘hill’	<i>muli-muli(h)</i> ‘hilly’
<i>bdijang</i> ‘little’	<i>bidja(ng)-bidjang</i> ‘only a little’
<i>jahdjam</i> ‘child’	<i>jahdjam-jahdjam</i> ‘little child’ (Wa)

<i>buluny</i> ‘kidney’	<i>buluny-buluhny</i> ‘cumulus cloud’ (puffs of the cloud resemble kidneys)
<i>deber</i> ‘white’ (Wa)	<i>deber-debehr</i> ‘plover’ (Wa) (the bird is mostly white and grey in colour)
<i>ngamban</i> ‘ritual scar’	<i>ngamban-ngambahn</i> ‘snake with striped back’

You’ll notice that usually the repeated word has a long syllable.

Many bird names are in reduplicated form, even if the unreduplicated form is not attested. Like the English name *peewee*, the reduplicated names appear to be mimetic of the bird’s call.

mumbir-mumbir ‘Tawny Frogmouth’
bihm-bim ‘Noisy Miner’
dihn-din ‘peewee’
bun-bun ‘owl’

Monosyllabic borrowings from English are reduplicated without lengthening:

bing-bing ‘pig’ (final obstruent is replaced by the corresponding nasal)
jugi-jugi ‘chook (domestic fowl)’ (adding /i/ avoids replacement of *k*)
jaw-jaw ‘Chinese person’

Location words, with locative case suffix and a noun with similar case, are much used to take the part played by English prepositions, for example:

numbihl ‘behind’ *numbihl-a ngumbiny-djah* ‘behind the house’
behind-LOC house- LOC

2.1.3 Noun suffixes

The Geytenbeeks, for Gidhabal, were the only researchers to define an order of noun suffixes, and occurrence or non-occurrence of certain suffixes helps define various categories of nominals, and various noun types. Geytenbeeks placed nominal suffixes into ten orders, not all of which were exclusive to nouns and other nominals. Although the use of a long series of suffixes is of low frequency, examples from a number of dialects support the order they have postulated. A rough semantic content of the ten orders is given here; most of them you will gradually pick up as you use the language or read stories, although you should especially get to know the case suffixes.

1. function, class, plural suffixes; these can be suffixed to selected nouns, and a number of them to nominalised verbs also. Demonstratives have separate but related forms for plurals.
2. feminine suffix *-gan*; this can be suffixed to nouns referring to human females (though not to a number of common terms for females such as ‘Aboriginal woman’, ‘girl’), and to the third person singular feminine pronoun, and in some dialects also to the third person plural pronoun. Demonstratives are never marked for gender.
3. diminutive suffix *-bur*, which can be suffixed to the same nouns as listed for order 2, to nominalised verbs and a few nouns with the first order suffix *-bihñ* ‘place’, and to human status nouns marked for plural.

4. possessive suffixes (present and past), which follow morphophonemic rules as shown in §1.7., and can be suffixed to nouns, nominalised verbs with or without certain suffixes, adjectives with or without gender or plural marking, and to pronouns and demonstratives.
5. ‘same as’, ‘similar to’, ‘with’, ‘without’ suffixes. Suffixes are *-jahr* ‘same as’, *-ginyer* (Wa) or *-nginyehr* ‘similar to’, *-djam* ‘without’ and *-nguhragan* ‘with’. In northern dialects, *-djam* can also be suffixed to verb stems and nominalised verbs.
6. ‘movement towards’ suffixes: *-bah* ‘motion towards’ and *-mir* ‘motion to nearby’. The first, *-bah*, bleached of meaning, is also added to human nouns before certain of the case suffixes in order 7, the particular list varies slightly in different dialects. In this usage, I have followed the Geytenbeeks in calling it ‘associative’.
7. case suffixes. There are eleven suffixes, a number of which obey the morphophonemic rules shown in §1.6.; the others are invariant. They indicate ergative subject or instrumental, accusative (for humans and some large animals), location, and a number of other relationships. First and second person singular pronouns are slightly irregular in form.
8. two modifiers which add enhancement or a limitation to the word they are attached to: *-jahng* ‘very’ (intensifier) and *-bu* ‘merely, only, now’ (limiter). These, as well as ninth order suffixes, occur on all major and several minor word classes.
9. a mild intensifier *-beh* which has been glossed ‘indeed’, and which can occur on all major and several minor word classes.
10. sentence level clitics, which occur on most word classes. Many of these are suffixed to the first word in an utterance, but some occur suffixed to another word, often the last in the utterance.

Within these categories the only

2.1.4. *The case suffixes*

The eleven suffixes in the seventh order mark various cases. The nominative or absolute, used for subject of an intransitive verb and most objects of a transitive verb, has zero marking. The other case suffixes are defined below with examples of their use. Ergative and/or accusative marking can be omitted if no ambiguity results; there is however a possibility that this is an artefact of the influence of English. Except for disambiguating an utterance, ergative or accusative marking can emphasise the referent they are used with. Table 1.3 shows the suffixes.

2.1.4.1 -Du ergative and instrumental marks the person or large animal transitive subject, and also instrument, which is usually non-animate. At least in Gidhabal, it can also mark accompaniment.

Gidhabal examples:

Nyule-yu darbang-gu badji-ni jabuh.

3M-ERG stick-INST hit-CP boy

‘He hit the boy with a stick.’

Ngali yanba-le-hn bulah-yu Townsville-gu.

1PL go-INTN-APS-IMPF cattle-INST Townsville-GL

‘We went with cattle to Townsville.’

Nyule-yu gidja-ni nga-nyi “j-----“ ba-hla ngandur-u.
 3M-ERG tell-CP 1SG.ACC “j-----“ say-PRG others-INST
 ‘He warned me about saying “j-----“ in the presence of others.’

Wahlubal examples:

Jarge-h gindil-u jambay-dju walange-h.
 stop-IMP knee-INST hand-INST crawl-IMP
 ‘Get down on your hands and knees and crawl.’

Mahny-lu bunihny nyah-li-la ngali-ngi jiyaw-bu.
 those-ERG echidna see-APS-PRG 1PL-ACC eye-INST
 ‘Those echidnas are eyeing us (watching).’

Mala baygal yehn.ga-la garbulu malung-ga.
 that man sit-PRG buttocks-INST shade-LO
 ‘The man is sitting down on his backside in the shade.’

Mala balahya-ni gulungba-dju.
 that die-CP flu-INST
 ‘That man died from the flu.’

Mahny dabahy yung-ba-le-hla gibam-bu mali-yu.
 those dog bark-say-APS-PRG moon-INST that-INST
 ‘The dogs are barking because of the moon.’

Mala dabahy gibing-we-hn guygum-bu.
 that dog sick-INC-IMPF salt-INST
 ‘The dog got sick because of the salt.’

Wanah yirali-ngah-yu-ma-h!
 leave-IMP whiteman-POS-INST-CS-IMP
 ‘Don’t speak in English!’

Nyule yan-dih-ndi-n nyula-ngah bargan-du. (Ca)
 3M go-carry-carry-IMPF 3M-POS boomerang-INST
 ‘He went away with his boomerangs.’

2.1.4.2 -Ni accusative/dative, marking the object of a transitive verb and the recipient of ditransitive verbs like ‘give’, ‘say to’, ‘show (to)’. The use of *-Ni* with non-human and non-animates is rare and only for emphasis or clarity.

Both *-Du* ergative and *-Ni* accusative are optional if no ambiguity results; otherwise either or both may occur. As noted above, their use where there is no ambiguity tends to emphasise the referent they mark. However in the dative sense *-Ni* is obligatorily present, and the object has no case inflection unless it is a pronoun. Constructions with pronouns (or demonstratives) for both accusative and dative sense do not occur.

Ngagam gahja-le-hn ñule-ngi.

dog chase-APS-IMPF 3M-ACC
 ‘A dog chased him.’

Nyule-yu yigam wula-ni ngagam-i.
 3M-ERG meat give-CP dog-ACC
 ‘He gave meat to the dog.’

Ngay wahnyi wula-hny ganydjabul-ni.
 1SG 2SG.ACC give-IM constable-ACC
 ‘I will give you to the policeman.’

Baygal jabuh-ngi yana-h ba-ni.
 man boy-ACC go-IMP say-CP
 ‘The man said to the boy “Go away!”’

The following examples illustrate the use of ergative and accusative marking to give emphasis.

Nyule-yu galga-ni male jali.
 3M-ERG cut-CP that tree
 ‘**He** chopped down that tree.’

Nyule galga-ni male jali-ngi.
 3M cut-CP that tree-ACC
 ‘He chopped down that **tree**.’

2.1.4.3 -Na(h) possessive (alienable) is used for a person’s or animal’s possession, but not for a part of their own body, which would have the same ending as the person or animal.

Baygal-nah juwan
 man-poss spear
 ‘the/a man’s spear’

ngagam-ah darigan
 dog-poss bone

2.1.4.4 –gaye/-gayi benefactive can only occur on animate referents.

Gunu gung mahmang-gaye.
 this.GEN water father-BEN
 ‘This water is for father.’

Bira-h gale burehn bunduhny-gaye.
 throw-IMP this bread lizard-BEN
 ‘Throw this bread to the lizard.’

Yeh-ni gabal-gu gahnga-li-yah muruhn ngali-gaye.
 go-CP scrub-GL fetch-APS-PURP wood 1PL-BEN
 ‘(He) went to the forest and get some wood for us.’

2.1.4.5 –Dahgan ‘to get’

gudjim-bahgan ‘to get wild game’
 game-to.get

muruhn-dagan ‘to get firewood’
 wood-to.get

mani-yahgan ‘to get wallaby’
wallaby-to.get

gung-gahgan ‘to get water’
water-to.get

2.1.4.6 –gi desiderative ‘(want, like)’ can occur on nouns and on nominalised verbs. Livingstone’s description of Minyangbal preserves a longer form –*gir*. There is no change in the initial consonant of the suffix.

Burehn-gi-bu ‘wants bread again’
bread-DES-LIM

Nyule nangany-gi.
3M food-DES
‘He wants food.’

Gawari-h-gi nyule.
run-NM-DES 3M
‘He wants to run.’

Guwang-gir ngay. (My)
rain-DES 1SG
‘I wish it would rain.’

Yugum ngay mala-gir jalgany-gir. (My)
not 1SG that-DES woman-DES ‘I do not like that woman.’

Ja-bi-h-gi wuya?
eat-AUG-NM-DES 2SG
‘Do you want a feed?’

2.1.4.7 -Nu ‘from, through, over’

Miyi-ngu gaye-hn barehny. (Gd)
eye-ABL enter-IMPF splinter
‘The splinter pierced the eye.’

Yaraman waruwaruh-ngu julba-ni. (Gd)
horse fence-ABL jump-CP
‘The horse jumped over the fence.’

Jahdjam julba-ni diranggir-nu. (Gd)
child jump-CP log-ABL
‘The child jumped from the log.’

As is common in Australian Aboriginal languages, -*Nu* ‘from, out of’ is used where English would use ‘in’ when talking about languages:

baygal-nah-ngu ‘in Bundjalung’
Aboriginal.man-POS-ABL

yirali-ngah-nu ‘in English’
white.man- POS.ABL

2.1.4.8 –Da(h) locative ‘in, at’, ‘on’) in all dialects: -*Da(h)* has a long vowel in northern dialects (Gd, Yg, and probably also Bj), and a short vowel in south-western dialects (Wa etc.). To clarify the location further, location words can be used, see §2.7.

Jabuh male jali-yah.
boy that tree-LO
‘The boy is in the tree/on the log.’

Jahdjam munah numbihl-a ngumbiny-djah.
 child that.NVIS behind-LO house-LO
 ‘The child is behind the house.’

2.1.4.9 –De/-Di(h) locative non-present: Northern dialects also have a suffix *–De* (Gd), *–Di(h)* (Yg), which has been interpreted as meaning ‘in, at, on in the past (or non-present time)’, although in Gidhabal the Geytenbeeks found that *–Dah* (Gd) was also used in narratives of past events. Smythe considered the difference between *–Dah* and *–De* to be that the first indicated where something lies or is, and the second where something is put or some action takes place, although his textual examples in particular would allow the other interpretation, especially as what Smythe (and Geytenbeeks and myself) analysed as tense affixes in the verbs are more neatly analysed as signalling aspect. Crowley found that his Baryulgil consultant used both forms, but he did not have sufficient data to see any pattern. Compare and contrast the examples below.

gung-ge
 water-LONP
 ‘was/will be in the water’

Gayih-nde-n gung-gah ñule.
 enter-carry-IMPF water-LO 3M
 ‘He dived! He is in the water now.’

bala-yah danggan-dah
 under-LO hand-LO
 ‘is under the hand’

Yahn.ga-nyule yabur-bah-ye.
 sit-IMPF 3M one- SOC-LONP
 ‘He was sitting alongside one man.’

2.1.4.10 –gu goal can be used on nouns and nominalised verbs. This suffix is invariant, and is found in most Pama-Nyungan languages.

Nyule yeh-ni gabal-gu.
 3M go-CP scrub-GL
 ‘He set out for the scrub.’

Ngalawa-le-hla guruman-gu.
 hunt-APS-PRG kangaroo-GL
 ‘(He) is hunting for kangaroo.’

Nyule gawari-h-gu.
 3M run-NM-GL
 ‘He intended/intends to run.’

Gunu gung budjuh-gu. (Gd)
 this.GEN water shrub-GL
 ‘This water is for the shrub.’

Mala jahjam dunga-ni gumbil-gu.
 that child cry-CP milk-GL
 ‘The child cried to get some milk.’

3.1.4.11 *-(ng)gahl* ‘after’ has two allomorphs, *-gahl* and *-nggahl*, the latter occurring on nominalised verbs.

Ngujumbuny-gahl bahya-ni jubar-e. (Gd)
 Woodenbong-after appear-CP Glen.Station-LONP
 ‘After leaving Woodenbong I arrived at Glen Station.’

Guwang-gahl gawuny-weh-n manjahy (Gd)
 rain-after refreshed-INC-IMPF feeling
 ‘After the rain I felt refreshed.’

Galga-li-h-nggal ngurahmbil-weh-n. (Gd)
 cut-APS-NM-after sleepy-INC-IMPF
 ‘After the chopping he felt sleepy.’

2.1.4.12 *-nyi* **aversive** ‘than, for fear of’ is used in comparison statements, and also to indicate something that needs to be countered, and to indicate something an animate being is afraid of. When used in the sense ‘than’, an adjective will have the suffix *-jahng* ‘very’.

Waybar- ma-h waring-nyi.
 fire-CS-IMP cold-AVS
 ‘Make a fire because of the cold!’

Gile ngagam dulung malah-nyi baygal-bah-nyi.
 that.DISTANT dog afraid that-AVS man-SOC-AVS
 ‘That dog is afraid of that man.’

Gale bugal-djahng malah-nyi.
 this good-very that-AVS
 ‘This one is better than that.’

Jarge-h malah-nyi deberdebehr-gan-bah-nyi. (Wa)
 stoop-IMP that-AVS plover-PL-SOC-AVS
 ‘Duck down because of the plovers!’

Mani mala gaware-hn jali-nyi malah-nyi mahny-i yala-nyi. (Wa)
 kangaroo that run-IMPF tree-AVS that-AVS those-AVS bee-AVS
 ‘The kangaroo ran away from the tree because of the bees.’

2.1.5 Compound nouns

Formation of compound nouns is not particularly common in the data, but has been found in Wahlubal, Gidhabal and Yugambeh. The compound for ‘black swan’ is found in Yugambeh as well as in Wahlubal.

From Wahlubal:

nugal ‘jaw’ + *dalahn* ‘white’ → *nugal-dalahn*
‘species of turtle with white jaw’

murū ‘nose’ + *gūjihny* ‘red’ → *murū-gūjihny*
‘black swan’ (it has a red bill)ny

ganggar ‘neck’ + *bundur* ‘rough’ → *ganggar-bundur*
‘species of turtle with a rough neck’

bawur ‘head’ + *biriny* ‘crack’ → *bawur-biriny*
name of a place where a hero made a crack in a rock with his head

From Gidhabal:

bilang ‘River Oak’ + *duwa-hny* ‘dig-IM’ → *bilang-duwahny*
‘a large species of bandicoot’ bandicoots root around a lot)

ganggar-gali ‘neck-type’ = ‘bull’

From Yugambeh:

jalngay ‘a light, shiny’ + *ngahri-yan* ‘dance-PPT’ → *jalngay ngahriyan* ‘dancing lights’, the Richmond Birdwing butterfly¹

2.5 Adjectives

Yugambeh-Bundjalung had a system of gender marking on adjectives, although it was not shown in all the dialect data we have, and was confined to a small number of adjectives in Gidhabal. The gender marking is obligatory in that dialect on the four size adjectives (big, little, tall/long, short), but not for quality adjectives.

The four genders were masculine for male humans, feminine for female humans, arboreal for trees and wooden objects, cf. 2.2.2.1, and neuter for all other objects. In Gidhabal they were marked with the following suffixes (Geytenbeek 1971: 20):

- gali* masculine
- galigan* feminine (normal quality)
- gan* feminine (weaker quality)
- Nahgan* feminine (size)
- Nahn* arboreal
- gay* neuter

Geytenbeeks also note that adjectives with these inflections can act as nouns, e.g.

bugalgaligan ‘good woman’. They state that

Of the two forms of feminine for quality adjectives, the second conveys a weaker meaning than the first. For feminine referents this form of weakening of meaning, omitting *-gali*, is preferred to reduplication of the stem used with referents of the other three genders. (Geytenbeek 1971: 20)

<i>gulil-gali</i> ‘active man’	<i>gulil-gulihl-gali</i> ‘fairly active man’
<i>gulil-gali-gan</i> ‘active woman/girl’	<i>gulihlgan</i> ‘fairly active woman/girl’

¹ Before intensive white settlement, these large butterflies, with iridescent green, yellow and black wings, used to be seen in large flocks. They are returning now people are planting their food plant.

yuwahn-gan ‘fairly kind woman/girl’
jehnagan (*jehr* + *-Nahgan*) ‘big woman/girl’ (Ca)
gulil-gulihl-gan ‘fairly active woman’

Geytenbeeks also note that the four size adjectives occur frequently, and are among the few adjectives which can be applied to items in all four genders (Geytenbeek 1971: 20). For these, the pluraliser *-gam* is used for all four genders, although *-hngbil* may also be used for plural arboreal. These adjectives are *bijang* ‘little’, *gamay* ‘big’, *gurahr* ‘long’, and *mul* ‘short’; *Gamay* has a plural allomorph, *gamajihn*, and *bijang* and *mul* take a variant affix *-galang* for masculine referents, in preference to *-gali*. In dialects where the gender suffixes are little used, *bijanggalang* and *mulgalang* (and especially the latter) are the common forms for ‘little’ and ‘short’ respectively.²

Adjectives can be created from nouns or pronouns with the privative suffix *-djam* ‘without’, the proprietive suffix *-nguhrgan* ‘with, having’, by the affix *-gali* (or *-galigan*) ‘typified by’, and by a suffix *-ginyehr* or *-nginyehr* ‘similar to’. The avoidance of one syllable words with short vowels may have led to the favouring of the form *mulgalang*.

Gabay-nguhrgan mala jali. (Wa)
 honey-with that tree
 ‘That tree has got some honey in it.’

Mala bargan-nguhrgan gaware-hla.
 that boomerang-with run-PRG
 ‘He is running with a lot of boomerangs.’

Mala jahdjam guyir malah-nyl dandaygambah-nyl dirang-jam-bah-nyl.
 that child afraid that-AVS old.man-SOC-AVS teeth-without-SOC-AVS
 ‘The child is frightened of the old man with no teeth. (Wa)

2.6 Quantitative words and numerals

As is common in hunter-gatherer groups, highly developed numeral systems are rare. Words for ‘one’ and ‘two’, ‘many/all’, ‘some/little’ and ‘some/others’ are used, and can be considered to function like other adjectives. ‘Three’ and ‘four’ are made by juxtaposition of ‘two one’ and ‘two two’; ‘five’ is either ‘2 2 1’ or ‘hand’. No distinction is made between ‘many’ and ‘all’, and the word for ‘little, small’ can be used for ‘a little’. Words differ somewhat in the different dialects. The forms are shown below.

‘one’ *yabuhr*, *yabur*
 ‘two’ *buruhr* (Gd), *burur* (B), *bulah(bu)* (Wa)
 ‘five’ *danggan* (hand)
 ‘a few, a little’ *bidjang* (= ‘little’)
 ‘many, all’ *mabehr* (Bj, C), *gumbi(h)* (Wi, G, Wa, We), *garahl* (Wi, Ng, Y)

Smythe regarded four words (including the last on this list) as ‘indefinite pronouns’. They could be classed with these words, and possibly all of these including words for ‘two’, etc. could be grouped with adjectives. Smythe’s other three words are:

² One syllable words with short vowels seem not to be used; this may have contributed to the ‘favouring’ of the form *mulgalang*

gulgi ‘other, another’
wule ‘any, some, anyone’
banang ‘all, everyone’

Examples:

Gahnyu mabehr-u nyula-ngi buma-ni.
 these many-ERG 3M-ACC hit-CP
 ‘They all struck him.’

Nyang wehlu nyah-la wule?
 Q 2SG.ERG see-PRG anything
 ‘Do you see anyone/anything?’

Wula-hny ngay-ju malah-ni gulgi-ni.
 give-IM 1SG-ERG that-ACC other-ACC
 ‘I’ll give it to that other (person).’

2.6 Pronouns

Pronoun means ‘instead of a noun’. There are three types of pronouns, personal, demonstrative and interrogative/ indefinite. All have singular and plural forms, and forms corresponding to the fourth and seventh order of noun suffixes. The third person singular feminine personal pronoun usually incorporates the feminine suffix *-gan*. In addition, at least in some dialects, the third person plural pronoun, if referring to an all-female group, can have this same suffix. In the personal pronouns Smythe found some duals in the dialect he studied (Smythe 1978: 284), as did Livingstone for his Minyangbal (1892: 6) and Holmer for Manandjali (1983: 419). However, Smythe’s and Holmer’s duals are based on *bulah(bu)* ‘two’, and Livingstone’s forms are compounds, one of which I also found in Yugambah: *ngaliwahlu* (Yg), *ngaliweh* (My) ‘we-you(SG)’, and also in Minyangbal *ngalibulah* ‘we two’, almost certainly coined to reflect patterns in languages to the north which distinguish first person exclusive and inclusive plural pronouns. The other forms from Minyangbal either add *ngering* ‘both’ to the pronoun (*weh ngering* ‘you(SG) both, you and another’), or are based on the word for ‘two’ (*bulayli(gan)* ‘you/they two (F)’).

2.6.1 Personal pronouns

Three persons and singular versus plural are distinguished in the pronouns. Masculine and feminine are distinguished in the third person singular and with rare exceptions these pronouns are only applied to humans. Holmer found a singular/dual/plural contrast in his research on Manandjali; no other researcher has found this distinction in any of the dialects studied, including Manandjali (Cunningham 1969). This dialect, adjacent to Yagara(bal), a language with some inclusive/exclusive distinction in the first person plural, had a coined pronoun for the inclusive: *ngaliwahlu* from *ngali* ‘we’ and *wahlu* ‘you singular subject’.

In Tables 2.5 and 2.6, stem 2 is used before *-djahr* ‘same as’ and *nguhrgan* ‘with’, and stem 1 before all others, including *-djam* ‘without’, *-bah* ‘motion towards’ (or ‘associative’ when bleached of meaning), with the exception of *-Dahgan* ‘to get’.

Table 2.5 First person singular pronoun

	Wa	Casino	Gidhabal	Yugambeh	Bj	Wiyabal	Minyangbal
NOM	<i>ngay</i>	<i>ngay</i>	<i>ngay</i>	<i>ngay,</i> <i>ngayu*</i>	<i>ngay</i>	<i>ngay</i>	<i>ngay</i> <ngai>
ERG	<i>ngadju</i>	<i>ngadju</i>	<i>ngadju</i>	<i>ngayu,</i> <i>ngaw</i>	<i>ngayu</i>	<i>ngayu</i>	<i>ngayu</i> <ngai>
ACC	<i>nganyi</i>	<i>nganyi</i>	<i>nganyi</i>	<i>nganyi</i>	<i>nganyi</i>	<i>nganyi</i>	<i>nganyi</i> <ngunyi>
POS	<i>nganyah</i>	<i>nganyah</i>	<i>nganyah</i>	<i>nganyah</i>	<i>nganyah</i>	<i>nganyah</i>	<i>nganyah</i>
BEN	<i>ngadjah</i>	<i>ngajah</i>	<i>ngajah</i>	<i>ngayah</i>	<i>ngayah</i>	<i>ngayah</i>	<i>ngayah</i>
stem 1	<i>ngadj-</i>	<i>ngadj-†</i>	<i>ngadj-</i>	<i>ngay-</i>	<i>ngay-</i>	<i>ngay-</i>	<i>ngay-</i>
stem 2			<i>ngay-</i>				

* Hanlon (1935) recorded *ngayul*.

† Smythe has *ngay* before *gali* and *-ginyehr*.

Table 2.6 Second person singular pronoun

	Wa	Casino	Gidhabal	Yugambeh	Bj	Wiyabal	Minyangbal
NOM	<i>wudja</i>	<i>wudjeh</i>	<i>wahlu</i>	<i>wahlu</i>	<i>wuhye</i>	<i>wiya</i>	<i>wih</i> <wé>
ERG	<i>wahlu,</i> <i>wehlu</i> (By)	<i>wehlu</i>	<i>wahlu</i>	<i>wahlu</i>	<i>wahlu</i>	<i>wahlu</i>	<i>wahlu</i> <walo>
ACC	<i>wihnyi</i>	<i>winyi</i>	<i>wanyi</i>	<i>wanyi</i>	<i>wangah</i>	<i>wungah</i>	
POS	<i>wangah</i>	<i>wangah*</i>	<i>wangah</i>	<i>wungah</i>			
BEN	<i>wudjah</i>	<i>wudjah</i>	<i>wudjah</i>	<i>wuyah</i>			
stem 1	<i>wudjah-</i>	<i>wudjah-†</i>	<i>wudjah-</i>	<i>wuyah-</i>			
stem 2			<i>wahlu-</i>				

* Holmer also recorded *wahlungah* for ‘your (SG)’ in Bj from one speaker, although it is likely that this form is due to language loss. Even in the contemporary English spoken at Baryulgil (‘Baryulgil Square Talk’), the traditional form is used in their English, e.g. *That’s wangahz*. ‘That’s yours.’

† Smythe has *wudjeh-* as the stem before *gali* and *ginyehr*

Pronouns for other persons and numbers inflect regularly for the various cases, e.g. *ñulayu* ‘he-ERG’, *nyulangi* ‘him (ACC)’, *nyahn.ganah* ‘her (POS)’, *nyulangambu* ‘they-ERG’, *ngaligaye* (BEN) ‘for us’. Some researchers did not find evidence of case inflection for all cases for some of the plural pronouns; it could well be because their examples did not need ergative or accusative marking to disambiguate the utterance.

Minyangbal also has some duals, one being a sequence of two words:

wih ngering ‘you two, you both’

bulayli ‘they two (M)’

bulayligan ‘they two (F)’

Table 2.7 Other personal pronouns

	Wa	Casino	Bj	Wi	Gidhabal	Yugambeh	Minyangbal
3M 'he'	<i>nyula</i>	<i>nyule</i>	<i>nyula</i>	<i>nyule</i>	<i>nyule</i>	<i>nyule/nyuli</i>	<i>nyuli</i>
3F'she'	<i>nyahn.gan</i>	<i>nyahn.gan</i>	<i>nyahn.gan</i>	<i>nyulagan</i>	<i>nyulagan</i>	<i>nyulagan</i>	<i>nyahn</i>
1PL	<i>ngali</i>	<i>ngali</i>	<i>ngali</i>	<i>ngali</i>	<i>ngali</i>	<i>ngali</i>	<i>ngali</i> <nguly>
2PL	<i>blagan</i>	<i>bulagan</i>	<i>bula</i>	<i>ngirih- mang (?)</i>	<i>ngirih- mang</i>	<i>ngirih- mang</i>	<i>buli</i> < <i>buly</i> >
3PL	<i>nyulamang, nyulangam*</i>	<i>bulagan</i> (dual)	<i>nyulamang</i>	<i>nyulamang</i>	<i>nyulangam, nyulamang</i>	<i>janabang</i>	<i>janabi</i>

* In the Casino dialect and probably elsewhere –*gan* can be suffixed to the third person plural form when referring to an all-female group.

In the Casino dialect, Smythe has recorded 1st and 2nd person 'superplurals': *ngalihrban*, *bulaganmih*, duals *bulahbu* 'you two (M)', *bulahbunahgan* 'you two (F)' (these from *bulah(bu)* 'two', and *nyulamanggan* 'they (F)').

Inclusive first person plurals have been coined in some dialects: 'we and you' *ngalibula* (My), *ngaliwujeh* (Ca), *ngaliwahlu* and *ngaliwahñi* according to Smythe.

From other dialects of the language, as well as from comparison with other languages, we can be sure that *nyahn* was the original form for third person singular feminine; Wahlubal and Bandjalang Proper have added the feminine suffix, hence the form *nyahn.gan*. *Nyulagan* has been calqued from *nyula/nyuli* 'third person singular masculine' with the addition of a feminine suffix. While Wahlubal, Bandjalang and Minyangbal have a second person plural form derived from *bulah* 'two', Gidhabal and Yugambeh use *ngirihmang*. If, as Crowley noted, the plural pronouns in Yugambeh-Bundjalung are derived from more widespread duals, the **wudjeh* proto-form for second person singular as well as the *ngirihmang* form for second person plural appear to be innovations in this language. –*mang* is a plural suffix.

Culham gave me the form *janabang* for 'they' in Yugambeh, whereas southern dialects use *nyulamang* or the metathesised *nyulangam*, a form clearly developed from *nyula* 'he' plus a pluralising suffix –*mang*. Note Holmer lists this second form for 'they two'. *Janabang* or *janabi* (My) continues a form used in a number of languages across Australia, and is clearly the older form.

2.6.2 Demonstratives

To the best of our knowledge, distinctions made in the demonstratives in Y-Bj are not shared by any neighbouring language. As well as distinguishing singular and plural, Y-Bj demonstratives distinguish three degrees of distance, **whether the demonstrative refers to something visible or not, present now or formerly**, and whether the referent is extended in space or localised. However, the 'visible' series is the default or least marked series, and this series is often used in the way 'this' or 'that' can be used in English, to refer to something or someone in a narrative, even though the referent may not be visible or even currently in existence. The demonstratives are often used to indicate singular or plural, as only a minority of nouns have overt marking for this. The most common 'unmarked' demonstratives used in this way are *mala/male/mali* (according to dialect) for the singular, roughly equivalent to English *the*, and *mahny(u)* for the plural, roughly equivalent to English *some, the*. Also

gala/gale/gali ‘this’ is very often used after the first person singular absolutive pronoun, where it appears to just add emphasis.

Livingstone either did not recognise or did not have enough data to see this pattern, and both I (Cunningham 1969) and Holmer (1971) also had insufficient evidence from our Yugambah/Manandjali data to establish the pattern described, although Holmer correctly noted that the words for ‘this’, ‘that’ and ‘yonder’ were also used as ‘here’, ‘there’ and ‘there (distant)’ respectively. Smythe does not seem to have recognised the visible/invisible pattern, and there are only a few examples of any ‘invisible’ series in his texts. There appears to be a slight difference in semantics between time reference of the two singular number non-visible or non-present series in Wahlubal and Gidhabal, the dialects for which we have the best information, although a comparison of the examples in Crowley’s Wahlubal texts suggest the same analysis that Geytenbeeks made for Gidhabal would hold. It could be presumed that Wahlubal *gunahmir* series has been coined by using one of the plural suffixes on the *gunah* series. The stems for the three degrees of (visible) distance are *ga-*, *ma-* and *gah-*; they indicate relative distance which could be near the speaker, near the hearer, and further off, or at longer spacings (e.g. this town, that town). Demonstratives, like other word classes, can be reduplicated, although no analyst has been able to define any semantic difference between reduplicated and unreduplicated forms. In reduplicated forms, the first CV is reduplicated, without length in the case of those with a long vowel, hence *gagale*, *gagahm(u)*. Table 2.8 below compared the series and their descriptions for Gidhabal (Geytenbeek 1971: 17) and Wahlubal (Crowley 1978: 39, 71-76, 103).

The case suffixes for these demonstratives are generally the same as for nouns. However, the ablative suffix is always *-nu*, and ergative and locative suffixes have forms *-lu* and *-la(h)* with any of the demonstratives that do not already have /l/ (such as *gale*). The *gala/gale/gali* series and the *gahnyu* series have different stems for some or most suffixes. These are:

gala/gale/gali etc.: *gali-* or *galah-* etc. before the ergative, *galah-* etc. elsewhere. When referring specifically to humans, the ‘associative’ suffix *-bah* is added before some of the suffixes, as it is for human nouns, and in its sense ‘motion to’ is used on demonstratives rather than *-gu* when the motion is towards a person.

gahnyu series: these are often contracted to *gahny*, *mahny* and *gahm* in the absolutive, or when reduplicated to *gagahny*, etc. Aversive case forms are *gahnyi*, *mahnyi* and *gahmi* in Wahlubal, and the accusative forms for these are *gahnyuni*, *mahnyuni* and *gahmuni*.

Crowley states that the ablative *-Nu*, aversive *-nyi* and the desiderative *-gi* are derived regularly, but follow the ‘associative’ suffix *-bah*.

In all dialects the singular visible series stems are *galah-*, *malah-*, *gilah-* before:

possessive (*-na*),
ergative (*-yu*, although forms *gali* etc. may occur before this suffix), accusative (*-ni*, but only used when referring to humans and large animals), locative (*-ya*), and other case suffixes,

although some dialects add *-bah* before these affixes.

Table 2.8 The demonstratives/locationals

Gidhabal (Geytenbeeks's analysis)	Wahlubal (Crowley's analysis)
identificational demonstratives	noun markers
<i>gale, male, gile</i> in sight, singular	<i>gala, mala, gila</i> visible, singular
<i>gahnyu, mahnyu, gahmu</i> in sight, plural	<i>gahnyu, mahnyu, gahmu</i> visible plural
<i>gunah, munah, gahba</i> not in sight, but still present, singular	<i>gunah, munah,</i> invisible, formerly present, singular
	<i>gunahmir, munahmir, gahbamir</i> invisible, formerly present, plural
<i>gayah, mayah, gahya</i> not in sight, presumed removed, singular	<i>gayu, mayu, mayah</i> invisible, not formerly present, singular
<i>Gañ=nyeh, mañeh, gahnye</i> not in sight, plural	<i>ganyih, manyih, gahnyi</i> invisible, not formerly present, plural
locational demonstratives	verb markers
<i>gadji, mdaji, gah</i> in sight, specific area	<i>gadji, madji, gah</i> visible, particular place
<i>gadjungun, madjungun, gahngun</i> not in sight, specific area	<i>gadjungun, madjungun, gahngun</i> invisible, particular place
<i>gunu, munu, gundeh</i> in sight, general area	<i>gunu, munu, gundeh</i> visible, general area
<i>gayu, mayu, gahri</i> not in sight, present tense	<i>gayu, mayu, gahri</i> invisible, general area
<i>gaye, maye, gahye</i> not in sight, non-present tense, general area	
<i>galah, malah, gilah</i> general direction	<i>galah, malah, gilah</i> any direction

Bugal male nangany. 'The food is good.'
good that food

Bugal munah nangany. 'The food (we ate) was good.'
good that.NVIS food

Jiyah gunah jiyaw-nyah-li-ø-gu?
where this.NVIS eye-see-APS-NM-GL
'Where are those spectacles?' (they are here somewhere)

Malah-yu baygal-u galga-ni gile jali.
that-ERG man-ERG chop-ERG that.D tree
'The/that man chopped down that tree over there.'

Mali-yu baygal-u gahdja-le-hn gilah-ni jahdjam-i. (Gd)
that-ERG man-ERG chase-APS-IMPF that.D-ACC child-ACC
'The man was chasing that child.'

Gunah mih-gubih gayu ngehr.
this.NVIS eye-FN here.GEN.NVIS somewhere
'These spectacles are somewhere here.'

Yile gayah ngagam?
where that.NP dog
'Where is the dog that was there?'

Yinydje gingge-hn mayah jabuh walany-weh-n-i.

how how.be-IMPF that.NP boy vanish-INC-IMPF-PREC
 ‘What happened to that boy who was lost?’

Gayah dagay yeh-ni.
 that.NP whiteman go-CP
 ‘That white man went away.’

Nyah-ø malah-ni!
 see-IMP that-ACC
 ‘Look at that!’

Manyeh gidjuhm gidja-ni nganyi munah.
 those old.man tell-CP 1SG.ACC that.NVIS
 ‘Those old men told me that.’

Mali-yu guyba-hla bulang gahm-gu ngaring-gah-gu. (Wa)
 that-ERG cook-PRG meat those.D-GL across-LO-GL
 ‘He (visible to me) is cooking some meat for those men across there (visible).’

Gahnyu-lu baygal-u gahnga-ni munah bulang. (Wa)
 these-ERG man-ERG take-CP that.NVIS meat
 ‘These men took the meat away (so that it is no longer visible).’

Yilah-we-n munah?
 where-INC-IMPF that.NVIS
 ‘Where has he gone? (he could be seen a moment ago).’

Gawa-ni mali-yu dubahdjar-u munah bilahr nyahn.gan-ah.
 break-CP that-ERG girl-ERG that.NVIS spear 3F-POS
 ‘That girl broke her spear (and therefore it is no longer a spear).’

Geytenbeeks do give examples of the *gayu*, *mayu* set, and give examples which they translate as ‘some(one)’. The examples fit with Crowley’s gloss of these forms as ‘invisible, not formerly present.’

Mayu-lu baygal-u galga-dja-hn wanyi. (Gd)
 that.NVIS-ERG man-ERG chop-PST-IMPF perhaps
 ‘Some man chopped it down perhaps.’

Gayu-lu gahnga-lah jubuñ-jah ngali-ngah muruhn. (Gd)
 this.NVIS-ERG get-PRG night-LO 1PL-POS wood
 ‘Someone from around here is taking our wood at night.’

They also illustrate the use of two demonstrative forms to mark the reintroduction of an item.

Male munah baygal yina-li-ja-hn. (Gd)
 that that.NVIS man lie.down-APS-PST-IMPF
 ‘That man (previously referred to) was lying down.’

Gahmu ganye ngagam yanba-le-hn gudjim-bahgan. (Gd)

these these.NVIS dog go-APS-IMPF game-to.get
 ‘Those dogs (previously referred to) were going after game.’

Gale-nguy gunah jali gidja-le-hn-i beh-n? (Gd)
 this-NEW this.NVIS tree tell-APS-IMPF-PREC fall-IMPF
 ‘This tree you were telling me about — did it fall?’

2.6.3 Interrogative/indefinite pronouns

Table 2.9 The interrogative/indefinite pronouns

Form	Meaning	Comments	Derivatives
<i>ngahn</i> (N), <i>ngehn</i> (Gd), <i>ngihn</i> (S)	‘who, someone’	case inflection as for nouns; used for people and for their names	<i>ngahn.garah</i> (etc.) plural
<i>nyang</i> (S), <i>minyang</i> (N)*	‘what, something’	case inflection as for nouns; also an irregular verb stem; <i>ñanggu</i> (what-inst) contrasts with <i>ñahgu</i> ‘what for’	<i>(mi)nyahgu</i> ‘what for, why’; <i>(mi)nyahgi</i> ‘what want’; <i>(mi)nyangbu</i> ‘how many’
<i>jiyah</i> (Wa), <i>yile/yinydje</i> (Gd), <i>yiñu</i> (G, PL)	‘where, somewhere’ particular place, seen or unseen	corresponds to both the <i>gaji</i> and <i>gadjun</i> sets of dlocational demonstratives	<i>yinydjegahl</i> ‘where from’ (Gd), <i>yinydjah</i> ‘which’ (Gd), <i>yinydjahgan</i> ‘when, which time’ (Gd)
<i>junu</i>	‘where, somewhere’ general area, seen or unseen	corresponds to both the <i>gunu</i> and <i>gayu</i> sets of demonstratives/locational demonstratives	<i>jununu</i> ‘where from’
<i>yile</i> (Gd), <i>yila</i> (Wa)	‘where to’	corresponds to the <i>galah</i> set of locational demonstratives	

* The form *minyang* is used in Yugambah and by some Wiyabal and Bandjalang-Proper speakers; *nyang* is used elsewhere.

As is common in many Australian languages, the same words function as interrogatives and as indefinites. Table 2.9 lists the various basic interrogative/indefinite pronouns. Case inflections are the same as for nouns. See also examples of the use of demonstratives in §2.6.2.

(Mi)nyang ‘what, something’ can be inflected as a verb for ‘do what, do something’, see **Table 3.1 and examples under §3.2.5.6 and §3.2.5.8. The ‘who’ forms are always used when asking names of people, as is common in other Aboriginal languages and in Aboriginal Englishes.

Ngehn wangah nyari? ‘What’s your name?’
 who 2SG.POS name

Ngihn-du nganyi nyah-ni? ‘Who saw me?’
 who-ERG 1SG.ACC see-CP

Nyah-ni ngihn-du nganyi. ‘Somebody saw me.’
 see-CP who-ERG 1SG.ACC

Ngadju ngihn-i nyah-ni. ‘I saw someone.’
1SG.ERG who-ACC see-CP

Nyang ngadju nyah-ni? ‘What did I see?’
what 1SG.ERG see-CP

With the suffix *-bu*, the ‘what’ pronoun becomes ‘how many’.

Nyangbu wangah jahdjam? ‘How many children have you?’
how.many 2SG.POS child

An interrogative verb can be made from *(mi)ñang*; see Table 3.1. *Ñang* or *miñang* can also be used as a question marker, used at the beginning or end of a statement it turns it into a question, see §4.6.

2.7. Location words

As noted above under §2.2.7.7 and 2.2.7.8, there are words, sometimes called location nouns, that can add precision to the less defined locative case ‘in, at, on’. They occur inflected for locative case when used with a noun, but also occur uninflected when used alone. A list of many of these is below, followed by examples of their use.

A list of most of these follows, and underneath it are some examples. There are some differences in the different dialects.

babar ‘above’ (Gd, Wa), ‘top, up, upwards, north, over there, sky’ (Ca)
bagar ‘beyond’ (Gd), ‘too, often, too much’ (Ca), *bagar* ‘far away’ (Wa)
bahm ‘halfway’ (Gd)
bale ‘beneath’ (Gd), *bala* ‘below (Wa, Wi), *juhajah, judje, balaya*, (Ca) *bala*
‘underneath, bottom, bases’ (Ca)
bulun ‘inside’ (Gd), ‘body, chest’ (Ca)
bundagahl ‘near’ (Gd)
buram ‘rear, behind’ ‘back, rear (Gd, Wa, Ca)
burgar ‘far away’ (Gd)
dilany ‘outside’ (Gd), *jiliny* ‘outside’ (Ca)

garin ‘close, beside’ (Wa), ‘side, beside’ (Ca)
gawalang ‘outside’ (Wa), ‘outside, exterior’ (Ca)
gihgil ‘middle’ (Gd), *gilgil* ‘middle, centre’ (Ca) *gimbal* ‘far away’ (Wa), *gihmbal*
‘over there (Gd via Sm)
guhgar ‘inside’ (Gd), ‘inside, interior’ (Ca)
gayuhnybar ‘far’ (Ca)

jay ‘over there’ (Gd)
junim ‘right’ (Gd)
juwe ‘middle’ (Gd)
juy ‘down there’ (Gd)
numbihl ‘behind’ (Wa), ‘back, rear, behind’ (Ca)

ngaring ‘across’ (Gd), ‘on the other side’ (Wa), ‘over, across’ (Ca)
ngulung ‘in front’ (Gd, Wa), *ngalung* ‘front, anterior part’ (Ca)
wangan ‘the other side out of sight’ (Wa)
waram ‘left’ (Gd)
waygan ‘on’ (Gd), ‘on top’ (Wa), ‘top’ (Ca)
wungan ‘over’ (Gd) in compounds Ca incl. *wunganwahr* the other side, opposite side, far side, around’ (Ca)

Ngunda-ni nyula-ngi ngalung-ga. ‘He waited for him in front.’ *Buwi-h wehle ngulung(mban)u.* ‘You pull in front.’

Wagalngin wande-hn babar balugahn-ba.
 spirit climb-IMPF above Balugahn-place
 ‘His spirit climbed up to the spirit home.’

Ngay gilah babar. ‘I’m going up yonder.’
 1SG that.way.D above

Gah-nguy nyahn.gan babar-e guygum-be yehya-ni.
 that.way.D-NEW 3F above-LONP sand-LONP sit-CP
 ‘There she sat on top of the sand dune.’

Balugahn gile babar-ah.
 Balugahn that.D above-LO
 ‘Balugahn was up (a tree) yonder.’

Mul bala-ya bigi-ya.
 tobacco under-LO coolamon-LO
 ‘The tobacco is under the coolamon.’

Wangah yuna-ma-h wagar jaru-li bala-gimba-dji.
 2SG.POS lie-CS-IMP axe stone-LONP under-GEN-LONP
 ‘Put your axe under the stone.’

Guyahny ja-le-hla wurahng buram-ba ngumbinydjah.
 possum eat-APS-PRG leaf behind-LO house-LO
 ‘The possum is eating leaves behind the house.’

Ban.ge-h gawalang-gi ngumbiny-dji yehn-a. ‘Go and sit outside.’
 fall-IMP outside-LONP house-LONP sit-IMP

Ngay-dju bura-ni-bu gawalang. ‘I pulled it out again (from the fire).’
 1SG-ERG pull-CP-LIM outside

Gilgil-a gahwang-ga male. ‘It was in the centre of the lagoon.’
 middle-LO lagoon-LO that

Balun yuna-hla gihl-a dugun-dah. (Ca)
 river lie-PRG middle-LO mountain-LO

‘The river runs between the mountains.’

Jadhjam munah numbihl-a ngumbiny-djah.
child that.NVIS behind-LO house-LO
‘The child is behind the house.’

Ngay gilah juy. ‘I’m going down there.’
1SG that.way.D down

Dubaydjar gaware-hn numbihl-gu. ‘The woman ran back.’
woman run-IMPF back-GL

Nyule yaruhma-ni ngaring balun-di.
3M swim-CP across river-LONP
‘He swam across the river.’

Nyule gaware-hn ngaring bridj-i.
3M run-IMPF across bridge-LONP
‘He ran over the bridge.’

Yuna-ma-ni waygan-di balal-i.
lie-CS-CP top-LONP kangaroo.skin-LONP
‘She put it on top of the kangaroo skin.’

Yehn.ga-la marahn waygan-da ngumbiny-djah.
sit-PRG bird above-LO house-LO
‘There’s a bird sitting on top of the house.’

Gaware-hn nyule wungan-wahri ngumbinydji.
run-IMPF 3M round-LONP house-LONP
‘He ran round the house.’

Garbeh wunangwahr-a galah-ya muli-ya.
creek other side-LO this-LO hill-LO
‘The creek is on the other side of this ridge.’

2.7.1 Temporal demonstratives

With the addition of the time suffix *-gan*, the *gunah* and *gayah* sets of demonstratives are used as temporal demonstratives. In Gidhabal they may also optionally take the present location suffix and/or *-bu* ‘still, yet, again, back’ (see Chapter 4). While the *gunah* set is often used when telling of events at which the speaker was present, and the *gayah* set when the speaker was not, the distinction is not always observed. (Geytenbeek 1971: 19)

Gunah-gan nyule-ngi nyah-ni nyula-ngah-ye.
this-time 3M-ACC see-CP 3M-POS-LONP
‘I saw him recently at his place.’

Gahba-gan-dah-bu gidja-yah munah wahlu.
that-time-LO-LIM say-PURP that.NVIS 2SG.ERG

‘You should have said that at the time (of the argument).’

Mahmang-ngehn-du mayah gabal galga-dja-hn mayah-gan. (Gd)
 father-PL-ERG that.INVIS scrub chop-PST-IMPF that-time
 ‘Our fathers chopped down that scrub at that time.’

2.8. Time words

Below is a list of words with temporal reference. As noted below the list, some can take case inflections.

bayahny ‘now, today’ (Gd, Ca)
buruhgan ‘hot season’ (Gd), *burgurgan* ‘summer’ (Ca)
danggahlir ‘early morning, early night’ (Ca)
dihlbi-dihlbi ‘early dawn’ (Gd)
gubanydjahy ‘short time’ (Gd)
jubuny ‘night’ (Gd)
jubunydjahbu ‘morning’ (Gd)
mulagan ‘morning’ (Gd), ‘early morning’ (Ca)
ngagu ‘night, quiet place’ (Ca)
ngaluh ‘darkness’ (Gd)
ngubuh ‘one day away’ (Gd), *ngubu* ‘yesterday, tomorrow’ (Ca)
ngubuhwar ‘two days away’ (Gd)
numgir ‘day’ (Gd), ‘midday, middle part of day, day (generally)’ (Ca)
warahy ‘long time’ (Gd, Ca)
waringginy ‘cold season’ (Gd) (*waring* ‘cold (weather)’)
yawun ‘afternoon’ (Gd, Ca)

gurihnyganbu ‘very long ago’ (Gd), *guriyahbu*, *gurihbu* ‘a long time ago, a long time hence’ (Ca)
gurubu ‘long ago’ (Gd)
guyguy ‘permanent’ (Gd)
mumugahy ‘sometimes’ (Gd)
yuh ‘later’ (Gd), ‘soon, later, by-and-by’ (Ca)

Orders 4-7 of the syntactic suffixes can occur with the last five time-words in the above column. The following suffixes may occur with all other time words: (Gd)

-*Du* instrument (but not ERG or ACC) -*De* locative non-present
 -*Dah* locative present
 -*gu* goal ‘to, for, for the purpose of’
 -*gi* desiderative ‘want, like’
 -*gahl* ‘after’
 -*ñi* ‘than’

3. Verbal Morphology

Unlike the pattern in many other Pama-Nyungan languages, including others in New South Wales, there is only one conjugational class, and there is no marking for person of the actor or subject. There are some changes in suffixes, but these are generally predictable from the phonological rules governing long vowels. There are six orders of suffixes, the most productive of which, the sixth order, has numerous suffixes marking different aspects. Most verb stems in Yugambah-Bundjalung end in a vowel, most commonly /a/. Other stem final vowels found are /i/, /eh/, and more rarely /u/ and possibly /uh/ and /ah/.

Table 3.1 Irregular verbs and their stem forms

English gloss	basic stem	+ a	+ ga	eh form	rwa form
hit, kill	<i>bum</i> -*	<i>buma</i> -	<i>bumga</i> -		
kick	<i>bang</i> -	<i>bangga</i> -	<i>bangga</i> -		
bite	<i>ying</i> -	<i>yinga</i> -	<i>yingga</i> -		
fetch	<i>gahng</i> -	<i>gahnga</i> -	<i>gahngga</i> -		
cry, weep	<i>dung</i> -	<i>dunga</i> -	<i>dungga</i> -		
do what, do something	<i>(mi)nyang</i> -	<i>(mi)nyanga</i> -	<i>(mi)nyangga</i> -		
go, walk	<i>yan</i> -	<i>yana</i> -	<i>yan.ga</i> -	<i>yeh</i> -	
sit, stay	<i>yahn</i> (N),** <i>yehn</i> (S)	<i>yahna</i> - etc.	<i>yahn.ga</i> - etc.	<i>yeh(ya)</i> -	
be, become	<i>-(w)an</i> - (N) <i>-wen</i> – (S)	<i>-(w)ana</i> -, <i>-wena</i> -	<i>-(w)anga</i> -, <i>-wen.ga</i> -, etc.	<i>weh</i> -	<i>-werwa</i>
fall	<i>ban</i> - (N), <i>bin</i> - (S)	<i>bana</i> -, <i>bina</i> -	<i>ban.ga</i> -, <i>bin.ga</i> -	<i>-beh</i> -	<i>barwa</i> -, <i>birwa</i> -
emerge, appear	<i>bahn</i> -	<i>bahna</i> -	<i>bahn.ga</i> -	<i>bahya</i> -	<i>bahrwa</i> -
die†	<i>balahn</i> -	<i>balahna</i> -	<i>balahn.ga</i> -	<i>balahya</i> -	<i>balahrwa</i> -
eat	<i>ja</i> -	<i>ja(h)</i> -		<i>(jah)</i> -	
see	<i>nyah</i> -				

* In Minyangbal, Livingstone's examples show variation in the stem *bum*- 'hit, kill'. sometimes it has the *-ga* augment and sometimes just *-a* with the same following suffixes. Similarly with *nyah*- 'see'.

† This stem has been lost in northern dialects and is replaced with a euphemism *juluhnggi*- 'go down' or *gilangwana*- 'become dead'.

** In northern dialects, *yan*- adds *-ba* before *-li*, hence *yanbalehla*.

3.1. Irregular verbs

There is a small group of irregular verbs, shown in Table 3.1, most with stems of which appear to have ended in consonants. Crowley lists fourteen of these verbs that would have been irregular in the proto-language. Some of these have been regularised or partially regularised in some dialects, some have been replaced, and some are not markedly irregular. In the Minyangbal data for example, sometimes *bum*- appears regular, and sometimes as an irregular verb. The two least irregular end in a vowel (/a/ and /ah/), one ends in /m/, six in /n/ and five in /ng/. Those ending in a nasal have forms augmented by the addition of *-a* or *-ga* which are used with different selections of suffixes. The verb stem *yan*- also has an 'augment' *-ba* in some dialects before *-li* the antipassive suffix. For some irregular verbs,

there are alternate stems ending in /rwa/. The patterns of irregularity correlate with the last sound in the stem. These irregular verbs are suffixed with *-bih* where regular verbs have *-yah* for the purposive form; this is the only marker of *nyah-* ‘see’ as an irregular verb. Table 3.2 shows the variant forms with the affixes that occur on these forms. See also §1.5 on permitted consonant clusters.

Table 3.2 Forms of the irregular verbs

	Stem use	-a form	-ga form for	-eh/-ah form	-rwa form	
Group A* (<i>bum-</i> etc.)	<i>-nyun</i>	<i>-li**</i>	<i>-hla</i>	—	—	
	<i>-De</i>	<i>-h</i>	<i>-hny</i>			
	<i>-bih</i>	<i>-ni</i>	<i>-hn</i>			
	permissive			<i>-luhr</i>		
				<i>-yan</i> (<i>-nyun</i>)		
			<i>-n</i> permissive†			
Group B* (<i>yan-</i> etc.)	<i>-nyun</i>	<i>-h</i>	<i>-hla</i>	<i>-ni</i>	—	
	<i>-De</i>		<i>-hny</i>			
	<i>-bih</i>		<i>-hn</i>			
	permissive					
Group C (<i>ban-</i> etc.)	<i>-nyun</i>	<i>-h</i>	<i>-hla</i>	<i>-ni</i>	<i>-hla, -hny</i>	
	<i>-De</i>		<i>-hny</i>		<i>-hn</i>	
	<i>-bih</i>		<i>-hn</i>		<i>-ni</i>	
					permissive	
Group D (<i>nyah-, ja-</i>)	<i>-nyun</i>	<i>-h</i>	—	<i>-ni</i>	—	
	<i>-De</i>	<i>-hla</i>				
	<i>-bih</i>	<i>-hny</i>				
		<i>-hn</i>				

* *bum-* adds /a/ and *yan-* becomes *yah-* before *-nyun*; see §1.5. *yan-* also can be augmented to *yanba-* before the antipassive affix in northern dialects.

** As with regular verbs, a final /a/ becomes /i/ before *-li*.

† The reflexive/antipassive *-li* has its vowel lengthened before *-n* permissive.

†† *ja-* has its long vowel form before *-ni*. Alternative analyses imputing a long vowel to the stem (*jah-*) and possibly grouping it with *yan-* etc. are plausible. The vowel could be regarded as long and be shortened before certain suffixes.

3.2. Reduplication of verbs

Reduplication in verbs usually indicates a distributed or less directed action, for example:

Bahn.ga-la male baygal gabal-nu.
emerge-PRG that man scrub-ABL
‘The man emerged from the scrub.’

Mahny juruhn ba-bahnga-la ngihrgil-a gah. (Wa)
those scrub.leech RDP-emerge-PRG hillside-LO that.way.D
‘Those leeches emerge all over the place on that hillside.’

Male jahdjam wande-hla munah-ya jali-ya.
that child climb-PRG that.NVIS-LO tree-LO
‘The child climbs the tree.’

Juruhng mahnyu wandi-wandeh-hny (Wa)
 scrub.leech those RDP-climb-IM
 ‘The leeches will climb all around.’

Yagah-le-lah nyule (Gd)
 fix-APS-PRG 3M
 ‘He is fixing (the fence).’

Yaga-yagah-le-lah nyule (Gd)
 RDP-fix-APS-PRG 3M
 ‘He is fixing (the fence) in places.’

Mali-yu buma-ni mala dabahy. (Wa)
 that-ERG hit-CP that dog
 ‘He killed/hit the dog.’

Mali-yu buma-buma-ni mala dabahy. (Wa)
 that-ERG RDP-hit-CP that dog
 ‘He hit the dog about (but didn’t kill it).’

Reduplicated verbs are then suffixed in the same manner as unreduplicated verbs.

3.3. Verb suffixes

The predominant focus of verb suffixes is on aspect. All who have worked on dialects of this language got it wrong, except for Nils Holmer. We ‘saw’ it as past, present and future, because that’s the most obvious thing in English. In English, however, we do mark aspect with the suffix *-ing*.

Holmer worked on Gattang and Dhanggati in NSW, then on Bandjalang at Coraki, then on a number of languages in southeastern Queensland, including Manandjali or Yugambah. He was feeling towards this on the first two languages, but by the time he worked on Bandjalang and Manandjali and other southeastern Qld languages, he was quite convinced it was aspect. He stated (Holmer 1983, p. 12):

The verb stems in the majority of the languages studied here are inflected according to mode or aspect only. This means that neither ‘time’ not ‘person’ is expressed by dependent morphological elements. In most of the languages analysed we found four fundamental aspect or modal forms, which may be referred to as (1) imperative; (2) imperfective; (3) perfective; and (4) intentional.

He saw that there was (in the most common affixes) no marking of the time of an action, but was most prominently marking whether it was a complete action or a continuing action. I visualise it though the speaker is describing the action from the *inside* as it is happening, or *outside* it, as a complete thing. We can mark aspect in English, compare *I went* and *I was going*, but we have to mark tense. In Yugambah-Bundjalung some tense marking occurs in the demonstratives (visible here now, vs invisible, i.e. gone), and in the past possessive (§1.6).

Table 3.4 shows the orders of verb affixes. Horizontal lines show which fourth, fifth and sixth order suffixes can co-occur (to the best of our limited knowledge). Each linguist described affixes differently, but by comparing all their ideas, we can home in on the various meanings more easily.

Although I have described the fifth order of suffixes as aspectual, they can apparently be divided into three groups according to the stem of irregular verbs they occur with. The three affixes which were originally analysed by most of us as marking tense (*-hla*, *-hny*, *-hn* ‘progressive’, ‘imminent’ and ‘imperfective’ resp.) do group together in the form of irregular verbs they occur with. The ‘completive’ *-ni* occurs with the *eh/ah* form of the Group C irregular verbs; the suffixes *-nyun*, *-De* and *-bih* occur with the basic stem, and *-h* ‘imperative’ only occurs with stems augmented by *-a*. **See Tables 3.1 and 3.2.

Table 3.4 The verb affix orders

1 intensive?	2 ‘carry’	3 antipassive	4	5 aspect	6
<i>-ba</i>	<i>-ndi</i>	<i>-li</i>	<i>-ja</i> <i>-ma</i> <i>-wa</i>	<i>-hn</i>	<i>-du</i> <i>-i</i>
<i>-ba</i>	<i>-ndi</i>	<i>-li</i>	<i>-ma</i> <i>-wa</i>	<i>-hny</i>	<i>-i/-dje</i>
<i>-ba</i>	<i>-ndi</i>	<i>-li</i>	<i>-ma</i> <i>-wa</i>	<i>-h</i> <i>-hla</i> <i>-nah/-hna</i> <i>-nyun</i> <i>-luhr/-lugu</i> <i>-yan*</i> <i>-yah</i> <i>-De</i> <i>-djin**</i> <i>-n†</i>	
<i>-ba</i>	<i>-ndi</i>	<i>(-li-ma)</i>	<i>-ma</i>	<i>-ni</i>	

* *-yan* appears to change a stem final *a* to *i*.

** only in Smythe’s data.

† only in the Gidhabal data. Following the reflexive/antipassive, the vowel of *li* is lengthened, hence *-lihn*.

3.3.1 *-ba*

There may be two different affixes here, one indicating more intense or persistent action, and one meaning ‘say this sound’.

3.3.2 *-ndi* do while carrying or persisting in action

3.3.3 *-li* reflexive/reciprocal and antipassive

Crowley was the first to recognise the range of usages of this suffix. Holmer recognised that it marks reflexive or reciprocal, and from comparative evidence, this is its origin. However all examples from the various dialects (including the Geyenbeeks’ examples) show that even for actions recognisable as transitive, the ergative inflection is not used on the subject, even

though an object is often marked as accusative case. Livingstone's data hints at a variant *-ri* which may be preserved in the present-day stem *gawari-* 'run'.

3.3.4 Fourth order suffixes

There are four affixes in this order, described below.

3.3.4.1 *-dja* past action

This is one of only two clearly tense-like affix among the verb suffixes, and this one is always followed by the imperfect aspect suffix .

3.3.4.2 *-ga* obligatory or unavoidable action

It is found on many imperative verbs in Wahlubal, and may be related to *-ga* used as an imperative marker on verbs in a great many Australian languages.

3.3.4.3 *-ma* 'causative'

The suffix *-ma* has been recognised by all researchers in many Pama-Nyungan languages as a causative, having the sense of 'make (someone) do'. However, as Crowley pointed out, a transitive verb stem must be detransitivised by adding *-li* before *-ma*. *-ma* can also be suffixed to adjectives or nouns, e.g. *jehrma-* 'make big'.

3.3.4.4 *-wa* repetitive

This indicates that the action is repeated.

3.3.5 Fifth order suffixes: the aspect suffixes

There are about thirteen suffixes in this order, although some are only attested in older sources. A number of them are poorly attested, with only a few examples not all with helpful glosses, so the exact meanings are unclear. One of them, *-ni* is used for an action viewed as a complete whole; others indicate a more extended action or state, which might give the context for another 'complete' action. Some show a blend of aspectual and modal meanings, and some show an extended action, but situate it in the past, or relative to another action being talked about. One has shifted from an imminent meaning in southern dialects to a more modal irrealis sense in Yugambah, as noted above. The imperfect (*-hn*) and the imminent (*-hny*) can both be followed by a sequence suffix, and the imperfect is the only affix of this order that can be preceded by *-dja* 'past tense' and followed by *-du* 'habitual action'.

A number of these suffixes begin with the vowel lengthener (orthographically *h*), and where the phonological rules allow this lengthening (or in more northerly dialects 'length hopping'), lengthening occurs, with a vowel shift from /i/ to /eh/ in verb stems ending in /i/ or in *-li* antipassive.

The shades of meaning of many of these affixes are not easy to convey in English, and often are only clarified by the use of different affixes on verbs in the same utterance, as well as by the way they have been translated into English. Texts collected by the Geytenbeeks, Smythe and Holmer, together with some of the sentences recorded by Joshua Bray (1887) clarify many points.

3.3.5.1 *-hn* ‘imperfect’

Apart from in Yugambeh, where some limited evidence suggests the possibility that *-ni* and *-hn* are allomorphs of each other conditioned by the verb stem ending, *-hn* is used to indicate an extended action, often within which some other action takes place, and is commonly translatable as a past tense. On the other hand, *-ni* marks an action regarded as a complete entity, often within a context of more extended time shown by a verb with *-hn*, and does not specify when (in respect to the reporting time) the action occurred, occurred just now, or is yet to occur.

3.3.5.2 *-hny* ‘imminent’ or ‘potential’

In most dialects, the affix *-hny* indicates an action which is imminent or about to happen or be done at the time of reference, which may be in the present (i.e. near future) or reported in the past. However in Yugambeh it appears, on the basis of the limited examples, to have a more modal meaning of irrealis, and can be glossed ‘might’. Except for the Yugambeh data, *-hny* is used where English might use future tense, or an imminent action (‘was about to do’). In Yugambeh, any attempt I made to elicit a ‘future’ tense form resulted in a verb with the progressive suffix *-hla*.

The two affixes *-hn* and *-hny* may be followed by an affix *-i* (*-dje* in Gd following *-hny*) which indicates a sequence of actions, glossable either as ‘while ...’ or ‘when ...’. See **.

3.3.5.3 *-h* ‘imperative’

The imperative is shown by a lengthening of the final vowel of the verb stem, unless it is already long, or follows a long syllable. There is some indication in Allen and Lane’s verb tables that it may also have been used in a way that it could be translated as a present tense without a sense of extended or progressive action. However the earlier works including Allen and Lane (1913) did not mark long vowels as such, so we cannot be sure that the form was the same as the imperative form.

3.3.5.4 *-hla* ‘progressive’

This affix is often translatable as a present progressive or continuous tense, but can be used for a past action, or for a future action. Holmer also notes that it can be used as an imperative (a progressive imperative), e.g. *nyahla* ‘see, look!’

3.3.5.5 *-nyun* ‘synchronous action’

This affix commonly marks an action as contemporaneous with another action in the utterance, but can also be used to describe things that are done or were done as a matter of course, i.e. describing a frequent sequence of actions like a ‘recipe’. In the first use it has been seen by analysts as a dependent verb. It may take the form *-nyan* in Bandjalang, according to Holmer (1971:17).

Words with this and the next suffix (antechronous action) can also act as nominals and take noun suffixes.

3.3.5.6 *-nah/-hna* ‘antechronous action’

This affix, which has an allomorph *-hna* noted by the Geytenbeeks in Gidhabal, refers to an action prior to that of the main verb or present state. Geytenbeeks found enough examples of

the form *-hna* to analyse it as *-hn + -a*. Crowley includes examples where this form takes case suffixation.

3.3.5.7 *-luhr/-lugu* ‘progressive in the past’

All sources agree that this suffix, *-luhr~-lur~-lugu* refers to a past action. In Livingstone’s Minyung, we get the clue that it refers to an action that has ceased. A meaning ‘progressive in the past’ seems to fit for examples we have enough information on to define. See Table 4.4**. The suffix is added to the same form of the stem as is the reflexive/reciprocal *-li*.

3.3.5.8 *-Deʒ* ‘potential’

This affix is only attested in Minyangbal, Gidhabal and the Casino dialect, and we only have a few examples of its use. It follows the same phonological rules as the ergative and locative nominal suffixes. It is therefore of the form *-ye* (or *-yi*) after regular verb stems, and has an obstruent homorganic to the final nasal of irregular verbs, thus *bumbe*, *wande*, *dungge*, etc. Smythe records the vowel as /i/:**

3.3.5.9 *-yan* ‘progressive participle’

-yan is glossed as a past tense form in the sources we have. Livingstone (M) gives meaning but no examples. Examples we have allow for interpretation as a progressive participle, rather than a past tense form *per se*. It appears that the stem final vowel it follows is shifted to /i/. As Haworth (nd) discovered in going through old records, it is almost certainly the Richmond Birdwing butterflies, which used to exist in large numbers in Brisbane (and is reappearing now people are planting its favourite food plant), were described as:

jalngay ngahriyan ‘dancing coloured lights’
jalngay ngahri-yan
 bright dance-prog

3.3.5.10 *-yah* ‘purposive, infinitive’

-yah, which can follow *-li*, indicates a purposed action, neatly translatable into English with ‘to’ as in the infinitive. In irregular verbs *-yah* is not used, but an augment *-bi* is added, and the vowel lengthened where phonological rules allow it, usually followed by the goal suffix *-gu*. (The augment *-bi* is also used with other suffixes, see Table 3.)

3.3.5.11 *-(lih)n* ‘permissive’

Only the Geytenbeeks list this suffix, for which they have some examples in Gidhabal (1971:**). They state that the antipassive suffix *-li* (which they regard as repetitive), has the form *-lih* before this permissive suffix *-n*. Unfortunately the examples they give are not in context. Holmer lists some examples ending in /n/ which could be related.

3.3.5.12 *-niban*

This suffix or suffix combination is only attested in Livingstone (1892). He considers it to have some future or imminent and passive sense, and gives only one example (Livingstone 1892:17):

3.3.5.13 *-ni* ‘perfect, completive’

The suffix *-ni* indicates an action which is viewed as a complete whole. It can commonly be translated into English as a past tense action of known occurrence, but some examples show its use where a present or even future tense might be used in English. In Yugambeh there is an impression that the use of *-ni* and *-hn* an aspectual distinction.

Holmer wrote (1971:14):

The difference between, for instance, *ja:la* (progressive) and *ja:hni* (terminative and ‘perfective’) is not one between present (‘eat(s)’ and preterit (‘ate’), but between ‘is **or** was eating (all the time)’ and ‘eat(s)’ or ‘ate’(at the moment); in the same way *nya:ni* means ‘sees’ or ‘saw’, while *nya:la* may mean ‘is **or** was watching’. The imminent aspect does not in itself indicate future time, but merely that the action is or was on the point of taking place.

An example from Bray (in Curr 1887):

Wahlu nyah-ni gilah-ni? <warlo nionee killarney> ‘Do you see that?’
You(sg) see-PERF that-ACC (Bray, Tweed R.)

3.4. Nominalisation of verbs

A nominaliser *-h* may be suffixed to any verb stem; it can also follow either *-ndi* or *-li*, or the irregular verb augment *-bi*. This suffix never shifts /i/ to /eh/, either for a verb stem ending in /i/ or after *-li* (Geytenbeek 1971: 25) and is distinct from the imperative *-h*. The nominalised verb may optionally take the first order noun suffixes *-gubih* ‘function’, *-giñ* ‘person’, *-gali* ‘type’, and *-bihny* ‘place’. Where semantically appropriate it can take the possessive suffix *-Nah*. When a nominalised verb does not bear one of the listed first order noun suffixes, only the following syntactic suffixes of orders five and seven may occur with it.

<i>-djam</i> ‘without’	<i>-gu</i> ‘goal’
<i>-nguhrgan</i> ‘with’	<i>-gi</i> ‘want’ (<i>-gir</i> in My)
<i>-yu</i> ‘actor’	<i>-nu</i> ‘from’
<i>-nggahl</i> ‘after’ (this is an allomorph of <i>-gahl</i> , which occurs only with nominalised verbs.)	

In addition to the above suffixes, nominalised verbs may take *-bilahm* ‘has learned to’, which is restricted to occurrence with nominalised verb and derived nouns (Geytenbeek 1971: 25).

galga-li-h-gubih
chop-APS-NM-FN
‘an axe, an axeman’

gahja-li-h-giny
chase-APS-NM-person
‘chaser, e.g. cattle dog, a drover’

gahdja-li-gali
chase-APS-type
‘one fond of chasing’

wandi-h-gu
climb-NM-GL
‘intends to climb’

wandi-hndi-ϕ-gu
climb-carry-NM-GL
‘intends to take something up’

gurgun-ma-li-h-biny
talk-CS-APS-NM-place
‘public hall’

Galga-li-h-yu giriny-ma-ni.

chop-APS-NM-ERG tired-CS-CP
 ‘The chopping made me tired.’

Galga-li-h-gu giriny-we-n.
 chop-APS-NM-GL tired-INC-IMPF
 ‘I became tired through the chopping.’

Nama-li-h-nggal warahy bira-ni-beh.
 grab-APS-NM-after long.time throw-CP-EM
 ‘After holding it a long time, he just threw it away.’

walanggi-h-bilahn (Gd)
 crawl-NM-learnt.to
 ‘has learnt to crawl’

A nominalised verb can be used to form a causative verb, see §3.4.4.2.

Geytenbeeks stated (Geytenbeek 1971: 26):

There are three derivational nominalisers, *-l*, *-y* and *-ny*, which may occur directly on the verb root, or follow *-ma* ‘causative’. All verb roots may take at least one of the three derivational nominalisers. Several verb roots take two, but the conditioning factors that would indicate which two of the three have not yet been identified. No verb root has been recorded as taking all three.

The following meanings given to the derivational nominalisers account for most, but certainly not all of the data: the suffix *-nj* often indicates a state of being which resulted from the action of the verb; *-l* refers to one able to perform the action; *-y* refers to one actually doing the action at the time of speaking.

However patterns do not seem to be entirely consistent here, and the analysis may not reflect the entire reality.

<i>yarbi-</i> ‘sing’ (verb stem)	<i>yarbil</i> ‘song’ <i>yarbil-gali</i> ‘one who likes to sing’ <i>yarbil-nginy</i> ‘one who can sing’ (Wa) <i>yarbil-gali-gan</i> ‘a female who likes to sing’
<i>jaluba-</i> ‘urinate’	<i>jalubay</i> ‘urine’ (Gd, Wa, Bj)
<i>yan-</i> ‘go. walk’	<i>yanbay</i> ‘a journey/walk’ (Gd, Wa, Bj), ‘a traveller’ (Gd, Wa)
<i>wahri-ny</i> ‘things which have been carried’ carry-DNM	
<i>galga-ny</i> ‘carved ornament’ chop-DNM	
<i>guyba-ny-gir-gan</i> ‘woman who has been burnt’ burn-DNM -class-F	
<i>gawari-ma-l</i> ‘a thing which may be made to run’ (e.g. a car) run-CS-DNM	
<i>gawari-ma-y</i> ‘a thing being made to run’ run-CS-DNM	
<i>wayah-li-ma-l</i> ‘a thing which may be made to fly’ (e.g. a boomerang)	

fly-DTR-CS-DNM

wayah-li-ma-y ‘a thing being made to fly’ (e.g. an aeroplane)

fly-DTR-CS-DNM

gahja-l ‘chaser’ (e.g. a cattle-dog, or a drover)

chase-DNM

gahja-y ‘one engaged in chasing’ (a cattle-dog that is always chasing things

chase-DNM and will not stop)

Like the *-h* nominaliser, the derivational nominaliser *-y* may take *-bilahm* ‘has learnt to’.

walanggi-h-bilahm ‘has learnt to crawl’

crawl-NM-learnt.to

jahna-y-bilahm ‘has learnt to stand up’

stand-DNM-learnt.to

yanba-y-bilahm ‘has learnt to walk’

walk-DNM-learnt.to