LESSON 5

Verbs: Y class/ ‘going to’
(Allative) suffix

In this lesson, we look in some more detail at verbs. Verbs are ‘doing’ or ‘being’ words (‘run, sleep, think, was, be, eat’ are English verbs). In Gamilaraay Yuwaalaraay verbs fit into four groups or classes. This lesson is about Y class verbs, and we consider only one form of the verb – the simple command: e.g. Run! Walk! etc. We also learn about a Gamilaraay suffix, -gu, which has the meaning ‘going to’. The technical term for this -gu is the Allative suffix.

Vocabulary

Play audio: GGU 5.1.mp3

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Garay</th>
<th>Words</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>yananga!*</td>
<td>walk/go!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>banagaya!</td>
<td>run!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>gubiya!</td>
<td>swim!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>baraya!</td>
<td>hop!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>barraya!*</td>
<td>fly!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>dhayn*</td>
<td>person</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mari</td>
<td>(Aboriginal) person</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>giwiirr*</td>
<td>man</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>yinarr</td>
<td>woman</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>wanda</td>
<td>white man</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>wadjiin*</td>
<td>white woman</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bubaa</td>
<td>dad (father)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>gunii*</td>
<td>mum (mother)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Garay | Words
--- | ---
-gu* | to (movement to)

* Yananga! In previous editions, this verb was given as *yanaya*. However, a review of the sources shows that the command form of this verb is irregular – it does not follow the same pattern as other verbs.

* The only information about the verb ‘fly’ is from written sources that generally do not distinguish *alaa* and *rr*, so it is not clear if the traditional form is *baaraya*, *baaraya* or *barraya*, but the last is considered most likely. Yuwaalaraay ‘fly!’ is *baraya*.

The word *dhayn* has an interesting recent history. On the tapes, when a question is asked about a man or woman the informants distinguish between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal. They are speaking Yuwaalaraay, and they use *dhayn* for ‘Aboriginal man’, *yinarr* for ‘Aboriginal woman’, *wanda* ‘white man’ and *wadjin* ‘white woman’. In the early stages of revival, it was decided that it would be good to have a general word for person, not based on race. Uncle Ted Fields pointed out that, before invasion, *dhayn* referred to all people, and it could be used again with that sense. *Dhayn* is now used with that meaning. In Yuwaalaraay it can mean ‘Aboriginal person’ or ‘person’, in Gamilaraay it just means ‘person’.

* It seems very likely that *giwiirr* meant something like ‘man after a certain stage of initiation’ and it is quite possible, from what we know of similar words in other languages, that *yinarr* was not the equivalent of English ‘woman’. In Pitjantjatjara, *minyma* is ‘woman who has had at least two children’ (Eckert & Hudson, 1988, p. 105).

* The word *wadjin* is still sometimes used, but the current pronunciation is generally *wadjan*, influenced by English.

* There is variation in the word for ‘mum’. The older sources have *gunii*, but in some areas the pronunciation is *guni* Englishified to *guni*. This sort of change is common.

* For more information about -gu (Allative suffix) see the Dictionary, pp. 264 and 270, and Giacon (2017). There is variation in the form of this suffix in some sources, but we will just use -gu in this course.
Grammar: ‘Command’ verbs

The main use of the command form of a verb is to tell someone else to do something. Lesson 3 showed how to use *garriya* to negate commands.

**Play audio:** GGU 5.2.mp3

*Yananga!*
Go! Walk!

*Banagaya!*
Run!

*Garriya yananga!*
Don’t go! Don’t walk!

-gu ‘movement to’

-gu is added to nouns and adjectives to indicate ‘movement.to’. Note: -gu is not added to pronouns and demonstratives.

The following sentences show the use of -gu. (These include a dash ‘-’ to show the bits of the word. Later examples will not have the dash.)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Yananga!</th>
<th>Walk!</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yananga gunii-gu!</td>
<td>Walk to mum!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Girrinil-gu yananga!</td>
<td>Walk to the door!</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The **word order** in these sentences can change, depending on what is being emphasised. This is particularly important in negative sentences.

*Gunii-gu yananga!*
Walk to **mum**!

*Bubaa-gu yananga!*
Walk to **dad**!
*Garriya bubaagu banagaya!*
Don’t run **to** dad!

*Garriya banagaya bubaagu!*
Don’t **run** to dad!

*Play audio: GGU 5.3.mp3*

Remember (Lesson 3), *=bala* is suffixed to the first word of a phrase when there is a contrast. *=bala* follows *-gu*. Often it has no translation in the English. Study the following examples:

*Banagaya=*bala! *Garriya yananga!*
Run, don’t walk.

*Garriya bubaa-gu yananga,*
*gunii-gu=*bala banagaya!*
Don’t go to dad, run to mum!

There are a number of ways of using *=bala*, and the difference in meaning is not currently understood. The following three sentences have the same English translation.

*Banagaya=*bala!
*Garriya yananga!*
Run, don’t walk.

*Banagaya!
Garriya=*bala yananga!*
Run, don’t walk.

*Banagaya=bala!*
*Garriya=bala yananga!*
Run, don’t walk.

**Social custom.** There are lots of ways of getting someone to do something. For example:

Take me fishing!
Will you take me fishing?
It’s a nice day for fishing.

are all ways you might use to get someone to take you fishing. In this course, we do not give a lot of attention to that sort of social variation in language, we focus mainly on simpler grammar – what you can say in the language.
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Extension

Later you will learn more pronouns, such as ngali ‘we(2)’. When commands/imperatives are used with ngali the are translated ‘Let’s’.

Yananga ngali! Let’s go.

Pronunciation

For this lesson focus on the long vowel + rr at the end of a word. Listen and say: bandaarr, giwiirr and contrast those with yinarr. Use Gayarragi, Winangali to listen to traditional pronunciation of some of these words.

Practice

play audio: GGU 5.4.mp3

Individually

Say a command and do the action: Gubiya! Swim.

Group

One person says a command, others do the action.

All stand. One person says a command, others do the action. Anyone who does the wrong action, and/or the last person to do the right action sit down. Winner is the last standing.

Pairs/group

One person says a command. The other does the wrong action.

A: Gaba.

Start simply, move to an object and say ‘to X’:

man.ga-gu ‘to the table’
Mary-gu. ‘to Mary’
Individually, in pairs or as a group

Give a command and do the action. If correct say gaba.

A: Man.gagu banagaya. Run to the table.
A: (B complies) Gaba or
A: (B walks) Banagayabala. Garriya yananga.

Not that garriya is only used with verbs.

A: Man.gagu banagaya. Run to the table.
A: (B complies) Gaba or
A: (B runs to bag) Gamil man.garrgu, man.gagubala banagaya.

This is a very good opportunity to use much of the vocabulary you have previously learnt, even if many of the sentences would not normally be used.

Gaalagu baraya! Hop to the cup!

Winangala, garay guwaala, yawala. Listen, say and read.

Play audio: GGU 5.5.mp3

dhayn.gu to the person
Dhayn.gu yananga! Go to the person!

(Remember that n.g is two sounds, ng is one sound. Be careful to include the ‘.’ before suffixes starting with ‘g’ on words finishing with ‘n’.)

marigu to the (Aboriginal) person

marigu yananga go to the (Aboriginal) person

giwiirrgu to the man
Lesson 5. Verbs: Y Class/‘Going To’ (Allative) Suffix

Giwiirrgu yananga.
Go to the man.

yinarrgu
to the woman

Yinarrgu yananga.
Go to the woman.

wadjiiin.gu
to the white woman

Wadjiiin.gu yananga.
Go to the white woman.

wandagu
to the white man

Wandagu yananga.
Go to the white man.

bubaagu*
to dad

Bubaagu yananga.
Go to dad.

guniigu*
to mum

Guniigu yananga.
Go to mum.

*The curse of learning more. You do not need to apply this during this course, but you may be interested. Suffixes like -gu sometimes have a different form on some words, such as names. And when you say ‘Dad’ you are referring to a particular person, so it is like a name. It seems that the way you would say ‘to mum/dad’ is with the suffix -ngunda, not -gu. So, Guniiingunda, Bubaangunda. There is a relatively small number of such examples in the GY sources, but the pattern is much clearer in some better-recorded Aboriginal languages.
Buruma, banagaya galigu.
Dog, run to the water.

Dhigaraa, barraya galigu.
Bird, fly to the water!

Bandaarr, barraya galigu.
Kangaroo, hop to the water!

Gubiya Harry!
Swim Harry.

Harry, gubiya dhagaan.gu!
Harry, swim to (your) brother.

Gubiya Harry!
Swim Harry.

Harry, Garriya gubiya baawaagu!
Harry, don’t swim to (your) sister.

Ngamila Billy, dhuru nhama. Banagaya bubaagu.
(nhama is being used with a meaning like ‘there’; dhuru nhama – ‘snake there’)
Look Billy, a snake. Run to dad.
Lesson 5.

Verbs: 'Going To' (Allative) Suffix

Play audio: GGU 5.8.mp3

Cath:  *Kim, minya nhamalay?*
Kim, what is that? (pointed to)

Kim:  *Girrinil nhama, Cath.*
That's a door, Cath.

Cath:  *Kim, banagaya girrinilgu?*
Kim, run to the door.
   1. Kim runs to the door.

Cath:  *Gaba Kim.*
   2. Kim runs to the table.

Cath:  *Gamil Kim, gamil man.gagu, girrinilgubala.*
   3. Kim walks to the door.

Cath:  *Kim, garriya yananga, banagayabala.*