LESSON 19
More Pronouns: Dual and Plural

This lesson introduces more pronouns – more first person (I, we) and second person (you) pronouns. Lessons 19–21 all have more pronouns. They fit into patterns already done in previous lessons, so you are learning more vocabulary, but not new structures.

These take most people a while to learn, so try, for a start, to understand the system and see the patterns. Also practise the pronunciation – a good way to do that is to listen to and repeat these words on Gayarragi, Winangali, especially when they are in sentences from the old tapes.

The vocabulary includes a Case column, to help you to know when to use the form.

Vocabulary

Play audio: GGU 19.1.mp3

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Garay</th>
<th>Words</th>
<th>Case</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ngali</td>
<td>we two</td>
<td>Nominative/doer and Ergative/doer.to</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ngiyani</td>
<td>we mob(&gt;2)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ngalinya</td>
<td>us two</td>
<td>Accusative/done.to</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ngiyaninya</td>
<td>us mob(&gt;2)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ngalingu</td>
<td>our(s) two</td>
<td>Dative/possessive/owning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ngiyaningu</td>
<td>our(s) mob(&gt;2)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ngindaali</td>
<td>you two (doer)</td>
<td>Nominative/doer and Ergative/doer.to</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ngindaay</td>
<td>you mob(&gt;2) (doer)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
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<td>nginaalinya*</td>
<td>you two (done to)</td>
<td>Accusative/done.to</td>
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<td>nginaaynya</td>
<td>you mob(&gt;2) (done to)</td>
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Words

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*This and the following forms starts with ngina, not nginda.*

**Grammar**

**Reminder:** Pronouns are, most of the time, the second word in the sentence. However, interrogative (question) pronouns, like other interrogatives, are first in the sentence.

These pronouns are used the same way as the corresponding singular pronouns introduced in previous lessons; that is, you need to know what case is used in a particular situation. An important distinction is between **dual** and **plural** pronouns. Dual pronouns refer to two people: ‘us(2)’, ‘you(2)’, etc. English does not have dual pronouns, but they are found in many languages including Māori. When speaking of Gamilaraay, **plural** refers to **3 or more**, whereas in English **plural** refers to **2 or more**. (The symbol > means ‘more than’, so >2 means ‘more than 2’; that is, 3 or more.) You might like to look at the pronoun table in Appendix 5 or in the references section of yuwaalaraay.com as you read this section.

**Doer/doer.to**

![Audio](GGU 19.2.mp3)

You have already learnt most of the patterns for these pronouns. You have learnt how to use the doer/doer.to pronouns ngaya and nginda, starting in Lesson 4.

**Gaba ngaya.**
I am good. (no verb)

**Gaba nginda.**
You(1) are good. (no verb)

**Yananhi ngaya.**
I went. (doer)
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Yananhi nginda.
You(1) went. (doer)

Gali ngaya ngarunhi.
I drank the water. (doer.to)

Gali nginda ngarunhi.
You(1) drank the water. (doer.to)

Some may by now be comfortable with using Nominative case for ‘doer’, Ergative case for ‘doer.to’ and Accusative case for ‘done.to’.

Ngaya refers to 1 person: ‘I’.

The new doer/doer.to pronouns are used the same way, but they refer to different groups.

ngali ‘we’ refers to 2 people: me and someone else
ngiyani ‘we’ refers to more than 2 people: me and someones else
ngindaali ‘you’ refers to 2 people
ngindaay ‘you’ refers to >2 people

Remember, these are for Nominative and Ergative case, doer/doer.to, and follow the pattern above for ngaya and nginda. Anywhere there is a ngaya or nginda you can use ngali, ngiyani, ngindaali, ngindaay. Compare these sentences with the ones above.

Play audio: GGU 19.3.mp3

Gaba ngali.
We(2) are good. (no verb)

Gaba ngindaay.
You(>2) are good. (no verb)

Yananhi ngindaali.
You(2) went. (doer/Nominative)

Yananhi ngiyani.
We(>2) went. (doer/Nominative)
(Remember, the symbol > means ‘more than’, so >2 means ‘more than 2’ – 3 or 4 or …)

**Done.to**

(Accusative case)

![Play audio: GGU 19.4.mp3](audio)

You have already seen how *nganha* ‘me’ (done.to/Accusative, first person) and *nginunha* ‘you(1)’ (done.to/Accusative, second person) pronouns are used in Lesson 15:

*Giirr nganha burumagu yiiy.*
The dog bit *me*.

*Giirr nginunha burumagu yiiy.*
The dog bit *you(1)*.

The other done.to/Accusative pronouns are used the same way.

*Giirr ngalinya burumagu yiiy.*
The dog bit *us(2 people)*.

*Giirr nginaalinya burumagu yiiy.*
The dog bit *you(2)*.

*Giirr ngiyaninya burumagu yiiy.*
The dog bit *us(>2 people)*.

*Giirr nginaaunya burumagu yiiy.*
The dog bit *you(>2)***.
Owner/Dative

(Dative = given.to, and other uses)

Play audio: GGU 19.5.mp3

‘Owner’ (or ‘Possessive case’ or ‘Dative case’) was introduced in Lesson 8. You can use all the possessive pronouns the way *ngay* is used in:

*Buruma ngay.*
My dog.

So you can say:

*Dhalaa buruma ngay?*
Where is my dog?

*Dhalaa buruma ngalingu?*
Where is our(2) dog?

*Dhalaa buruma nginaayngu?*
Where is your(>2) dog?

Remember, possessive pronouns are also used for ‘given.to’. Another way to say this is that recipients, with the verb *wuurri* ‘give’, are Dative case. The pattern is the same for all Dative/possessive/owner pronouns. (They are in one row or column in pronoun tables.)

*Bubaagu ngay yarral wuunhi.*
Dad gave me money.

*Bubaagu ngiyaningu yarral wuunhi.*
Dad gave us(>2) money.

*Bubaagu nginaalingu yarral wuunhi.*
Dad gave you(2) money.
Practice

There is a lot in this lesson, so do not try to absorb it all in one go. Gradually build up your knowledge.

Play audio: GGU 19.6.mp3

In a group: gayadha/in turn each one guwaali/says:

- ngaya and points to themself.
- ngali and puts their arm around other person.
- ngiyani and puts their arms around a few people.

When you have got that, start on nginda, ngindaali, ngindaay, pointing to one, two and more than two people in turn. Notice that the words all start with nginda.

Describe actions.

Similar to the previous exercise.

While sitting:

Ngarriylanha ngaya, ngali, ngiyani.
I, we(2), we(>2) are sitting.

Then

Ngamildanha nginda, ngindaali, ngindaay.
You(1), you(2), you(>2) are looking.

Accusative case

Play audio: GGU 19.7.mp3

Use a similar pattern. This works well in a bigger group, or you need to have some ‘pretend people’ around.

Ngamildanha nginda nganha.
Ngamildanha nginda ngalinya.
Ngamildanha nginda ngiyaninya.
You(1) are looking at me, us(2), us(>2).
Then change the number of people looking: ngindaali, ngindaay.

Then change who is doing the looking: ngaya, ngali, ngiyani. You will also need to change the ‘looked at’.

Or if you have a pet or toy dog:

Burumagu nginunha ngamildanha.
Burumagu nginaalinya ngamildanha.
Burumagu nginaaynya ngamildanha.
The dog is looking at you(1), you(2), you(>2).

With a little imagination you will create other variations, so having the repetition that is essential to language learning.

**Dative/possessive**

![Play audio](GGU 19.8.mp3)

Holding an item (1 person, then 2, then more)

*Man.garr ngay, man.garr ngalingu, man.garr ngiyaningu.*

My bag, our(2) bag, our(>2) bag.

*Man.garr nginu, man.garr nginaalingu, man.garr nginaayngu.*

Your(1) bag, your(2) bag, your(>2) bag.

**With wuurri ‘give’**

Have two groups, the number in each group needs to change from time to time.

One person A is giving pens to group B, to one person, then to two and three people.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>A: Wiyayl ngaya nginaalingu wuurri.</th>
<th>Wiyayl ngaya nginaalingu wuunhi.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I will give you(2) pens.</td>
<td>I gave you(2) pens.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B: Wiyayl nginda ngalingu wuudhanha.</td>
<td>Wiyayl nginda ngalingu wuunhi.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>You(1) are giving us(2) pens.</td>
<td>You(1) gave us(2) pens.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Extension

This course does not look at another important distinction, inclusive–exclusive, which is shown by dual and plural first person pronouns (we, us, our, etc.) in Gamilaraay and in many Aboriginal languages.

Inclusive means that the person(s) spoken to are included. So ‘we’ then includes both the speaker(s) and listener(s) (we = me and you(s)).

Exclusive pronouns exclude the listeners (we = me and she/he/they, but not you). Exclusive ‘we’ includes the speaker(s) but not the listener(s). This distinction only refers to first person dual and plural pronouns. The distinction is also found in other languages, for instance Māori. See Giacon (2014, 2017).

For recent analysis of pronouns see Appendix 5 and Giacon (2017). The information there on third person Nominative/Accusative singular and third person dual pronouns has been updated, so has some differences from earlier sources, including the Dictionary (pp. 286ff) and Gaay Garay Dhadhin (the Picture Dictionary).

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

Giirr ngali gundhigu yananhi.
We(2) went to the house.

Yaama nginaalingu nhama gundhi?
Is that house yours(2)?

Gamil ngalingu nhama, Billgubala.
It is not ours(2), it is Bill’s.
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Giirr burumagu ngiyaningu nginaaynya yiili.
Our(>2) dog will bite you(>2).

Giirr ngaya nginaalinya ngamiy.
I did see you(2).

Yaama, ngindaay.
Hello to you(>2).

You can listen to Arthur Dodd and Fred Reece say many of these pronouns on Gayarragi, Winangali. Remember that they are speaking Yuwaalaraay. These pronouns are the same in Yuwaalaraay and Gamilaraay, but other pronouns and words may not be.
This text is taken from *Wiidhaa: An Introduction to Gamilaraay*, by John Giacon, published 2020 by ANU Press, The Australian National University, Canberra, Australia.