Goemulgaw Lagal: Natural and Cultural Histories of the Island of Mabuyag, Torres Strait.

Edited by Ian J. McNiven and Garrick Hitchcock
Ngalmun Lagaw Yangukudu: the language of our homeland


Something like over a quarter of the speakers of the Western and Central Language of Torres Strait speak the Kalaw Lagaw Ya dialect. The language may have started its formation as early as over 2600 years ago, through the colonisation of Torres Strait by a mixed South-East Papuan Austronesian and East Trans-Fly Papuan group, who overlaid local Paman Australians on the western and southern islands. Though the language is Australian, it has been heavily influenced by both Papuan and Austronesian languages.

Typologically the language is between the Paman and South-Central/Eastern-Trans Fly Papuan languages. It is on the continuum between declensional and agglutinative in morphology and has A O V // S V word order. Case inflections are suffixed to nominals to mark their syntactic role in the clause. Verb stems are modified to show attainative versus active telicity, number, aspect, mood and tense. Grammatical number encodes singular, dual and plural. There are two genders, masculine and feminine, marked only on the singular, which for non humans encode cultural significance (masculine) and innate significance (feminine). A complex agglutinative system of deictics also exists.

There is a range of speech styles, much of which has a direct ancestry in pre-colonisation times – formal, archaic, poetic, joking, colloquial, “baby” language, and so on. Though there is a tradition of over a century of writing in the language, starting with the mission schools in the 1870s, education through the language has been sadly ignored by educationalists, and the language faces all the typical problems of those spoken by indigenous minorities.

Australian Paman, East Trans-Fly Papuan, Austronesian, Mixed Languages, Minority Languages, Australian Indigenous Languages, Torres Strait Languages, language contact

Rod Mitchell
Brighton, United Kingdom
roidhrigh@yahoo.com
This work endeavours all too briefly to describe Kalaw Lagaw Ya within its own terms as well as it being a part of the language of the Western and Central Islands of Torres Strait. The only works in the past that have taken such an encompassing view were Ray and Haddon (1897) and Ray (1907), other works being descriptions of parts of individual dialects or sketch grammars thereof, such as Bani and Klokeid (1971 – Kalaw Lagaw Ya), Comrie (1981 – Kalaw Kawaw Ya), Kennedy (1981, 1985a, 1985b – Kalaw Kawaw Ya) and Ford and Ober (1991 – Kalaw Kawaw Ya). Mitchell (1995) differs somewhat in being a detailed description of the phonology and morphology of all the dialects as well as being an initial approach to historical and comparative linguistics.

The first part of the present work, The Western and Central Language of Torres Strait – Kalaw Lagaw Ya, gives an overview of the language, the relationships between the dialects, the pre- and post-colonisation history of contacts and relationships with neighbouring peoples and outsiders. Within and departing from this discussion this will be a summary of the history of writing the language.

The Torres Strait Area Languages and Peoples, the second part, deals with the relationships between the peoples of the area, and their languages, from the end of the Ice Age to the present. This has been complex for around the last 2800 years, with Australian Paman, East Trans-Fly Papuan and South-East Austronesian Papuan peoples in particular playing important roles. Clues from archeology, human biology, folk history and comparative linguistics will be all-too briefly presented to give a very broad overview of the evolution of the language.

The third part, The Language, presents the forms of the language itself from a linguistic perspective, moving from the sound system (vowels, consonants, glides), the description of the word, including stress, syllabification and word shortening, intonation, parts of speech, morphology and syntax, case marking categories, gender, verb formation, derivation, compounding and collocation, tense, aspect, mood, verb number, the role of the verb and nominal in syntax, such as transitivity, voice and modality, a discussion of non-declining parts of speech such as word and clause modifiers, and all too brief notes on various aspects of clause syntax. It differs from most earlier works in taking into account the underlying forms of words and how the surface forms derive from these. This part closes with an overview of how the language varies within society as reflected in its speech styles.

The work makes no claim to exhaustion, and there is still much work to be done on the language.

Ngath mura Mabuygilgaka a Badhulgaka mina kœyma eso pœybayka, ngaw ngœnakapungu, nithamun iiibupuydhayka a nithamun kapu wakaythamamka. Inaabi thusi nithamun yangukuduw yakamzinga, nithamun lagaw yangu minarpœlayzinga. Kay paypa kulay nithamun gaar Athen a Akana ya a wakay a wakaythamam Kalaw Lagaw Yadun umamikœruyg, kaybaw thonara nithamun ya a wakay a wakaythamam matha Kalaw Lagaw Yadun umamika – a bangal ingaru nithamun kaziw kaziw ya a wakay a wakaythamam matha umikœruyg, Awgadhaw wenab a paawdha nithamuniya, a ngalpuniya muraray.
CONVENTIONS AND ABBREVIATIONS

The conventions used here-in will be those normally used in linguistic works of this type. Reconstructed forms of the Torres Strait languages and the Eastern-Trans Fly Languages are those of the author, while all other reconstructed forms (PP, PCD, etc.) are those of the works noted in the literature cited (Alpher, 1991 Alpher et al., 2008; David et al., 2004; Dixon, 2002; Lynch, 1994; March, 1994; O’Grady, 1979; Ross, 1994; Ross et al., 1998; Wurm, 1972, 1975). For reasons of simplicity, in general the sources of the reconstructions will not be specified.

Note that forms in capitals represent underlying representations, such as LAI (proprietive, specific locative, plural; surface forms: -lay, -day, -thay, -ray, -de, -the, -le, -i, -r, -Ø), MAYI (verb plural; surface forms: -mayi, -møyi, -may, -møy, -mi) and NGU (genitive; surface forms: -ngu, -u, -w, -Ø). Western and Central Language words in the text are bold, though not in lists and examples that are not within the running text. All language material is in Kalaw Lagaw Ya except where noted. In reference to the Kowrareg people, Kauraraiga (plural Kauraraigalai) is used, this being the correct form of the 1800s. The dialect itself was Kauřařaigau Ya, for which the abbreviation OKY will be used for specific reference; Kaiwalgau Ya, KY, refers to the modern form of the dialect. English translations are in italics.

The Kalaw Lagaw Ya orthography used will be that as developed by Bani and Klokeid in the 1970s, unless otherwise noted; for the other dialects an accepted orthography will be used as appropriate. In the case of Kauřařaigau Ya, ř represents what was probably a rhotic glide, though could have been a rhotic tap, while r represents the flap/ trill, as it does in the modern dialects.

In morphological representations Ø represents zero-affixes where these have semantic or syntactic significance, and contrasts with other affixes. Where verbs are concerned, between the stem and TAM endings, the attainative-active slot and verb number slots will be consistently shown in morphemic representations, as either Ø or an appropriate suffix. Ø in the first slot represents the attainative (aorist - ATT) form of verbs, which contrasts with the -i- active suffix (ACT), and the second Ø represents the singular (or in some cases the animate plural) form, contrasting with the dual and plural affixes (underlying forms respectively NGUAUMA and MAYI).

suula- pour: attainative forms
suadhin
alt. suawmadhin
alt. sualamidhin
suula-Ø-Ø-dhin
suula-Ø-NGAUMA-dhin
suula-Ø-MAYI-dhin
pour-ATT-SG-RemP.PF
pour-ATT-DU-RemP.PF
pour-ATT-PL-RemP.PF
suula- pour: active forms
sulaydhin
alt. sulewmadhin
alt. sulemidhin
suula-i-Ø-dhin
suula-i-NGAUMA-dhin
suula-i-MAYI-dhin
pour-ACT-SG-RemP.PF
pour-ACT-DU-RemP.PF
pour-ACT-PL-RemP.PF

Sample sentences are given as follows:

KLY
Baydhaman nungu ngaara pathadhin.
English
A shark bit his leg.

Morphemes
baydham-na
nu-NGU
ngaara-Ø
patha-Ø-Ø-dhin.
meanings thereof
shark-INS
he-GEN
leg-ACC
bite(fish)-ATT-SG-RemP.PF
The language has a certain amount of idiolect variation, and such variants will be noted where appropriate (as with the dual and plural forms of suladhin poured in the remote past above). In many cases a standard form can be identified, while in other cases this is not the case.

Following is a rough guide to the pronunciation of the language for the benefit of non-linguist readers. The English examples represent the phonics of General Australian English, except where otherwise indicated.

**VOWELS**

a /a/: Ama Mum – like u in hut
aa /a/: kaaba dance performance, a in monosyllabic words like ya speech – like a in father
e /e/: mekey almond – like e in bed (in both cases)
ee /e/: geetha hand, e in monosyllabic words like se chair – like e in father
i /i/: midhikidh how – like ee in feet
ii /i:/ : miitha taste, i in monosyllabic words like ni you – like ee in feet
œ /ə /: thœrthi hole – like a in about
œœ /ə:/: Wœœwra south-east – like ur in hurt
œ /œ/: thoorthi (shortened version of œœ)
ù /ʊ/: kùlay first, before – like u in push
ùù /ʊ:/: múùdha shelter, backyard, house – lengthened version of ù
u /u/: kuduluk brown dove – like oo in shoot
uu /u:/: buuthu sand, beach, u in monosyllabic words like bu trumpet shell – like oo in food

In Kala Lagaw Ya, but not in the other dialects, when a word has two or three syllables with a double vowel in the syllable before last, the final vowel is devoiced, that is to say, merely breathed. Thus, the u in gaabu cold, cool, calmness, the i in mœraapi and the a in siiba liver, centre sound like puffs of air.

**CONSONANTS**

p, b, m, w, t, d, s, z, y, k, g, ng: more or less as in English
th, dh, n, l: pronounced with the tongue touching the top teeth
r: either trilled (as in Scottish English) or ‘flapped’, like the quick pronunciation of tt in better (‘bedder’).

The acute accent is used to mark non-initial stress, thus mœrápil pieces of bamboo, bamboo plants, except in the case of double vowels, which can only appear in the stressed syllable of the word (e.g. mœraapi bamboo). The grave accent is used with ë, ëë to represent /ʊ/, /ʊ:/; and with ø, øø to represent /ɔ/, /ɔ:/; these contrast with u, uu /u/, u: and o, oo /o/, o:/.

**ABBREVIATIONS**

ABL ablative
ACC accusative
ACT active
alt. alternative(ly)
AnimPL animate plural
ART article formant
ATT attainative
AUG augmenting suffix
B Boigu
BY Badhulgau Ya
CA Common Australian
COL collective
CON conjunction
DAT dative
DU dual
ERG ergative
PART ONE: THE WESTERN AND CENTRAL LANGUAGE OF TORRES STRAIT – KALAW LAGAW YA

Kalaw Lagaw Ya is the vehicle of the culture, history, dreams, hates, loves, fun, sadness, past, present and future of Mabuyag and Badu. It is the language through which the people find expression as a people. Their environment, their prehistory, their history and their present has shaped their language, but their language has also shaped them. It is the expression of their being.

The majority of the 1,000 or so inhabitants of Mabuyag (251, ABS census, 2006) and Badu (818, ABS census, 2006; data from the Torres Strait Regional Authority...
website) speak the dialect, as well as many of unknown hundreds from these islands who live elsewhere, at St Pauls on Mua, on and around Thursday Island, in Queensland and further afield. Some outsiders with close cultural, marital and family contacts with the people of Mabuyag and Badu are also good speakers – or at least have some command of it – while some speakers of other dialects are also good speakers of Kalaw Lagaw Ya as well as their own dialect.

Kalaw Lagaw Ya [KLY] forms part of the Western and Central Island Language of Torres Strait [WCL], which is spoken actively and passively by around 4000 people. The other dialects are:

Kalaw Kawaw Ya [KKY]: Saibai/Bamaga/Seisia, Dauan, Boigu

Kùlkalgau Ya [KulY]: the Central Islands

Mualgau/Italgau Ya [MY]: Mua

Kaiwalgau Ya (formerly Kauřařaigau Ya) [KY]: the Mùralag group and Muri (Mualgau/Italgau Ya and Kaiwalgau Ya are subdialects of each other)

These groups have sub-dialects; those of Kalaw Lagaw Ya are Gœmulgaw Ya [GY, alt. Gumulgaw Ya and Mabuygilgaw Ya], and Badhulgau Ya [BY].

The differences between the dialects are not that great, being similar to that between Australian English, British English and American English; the differences between subdialects such as Gœmulgaw Ya and Badhulgau Ya are even smaller, and often very difficult to tell for outsiders, even other Islanders. As a general rule Gœmulgaw Ya is more ‘conservative’ and forms a more ‘formal’ level of speech, and Badhulgau Ya is more ‘colloquial’.

Over 90% of the words of the language are the same or virtually the same in all the dialects (Mitchell, 1995). The main dialect differences include the pronunciation of some words (rarely predictable), words with differences in meaning, different words for the same meaning and some grammar variation.

Words with different forms

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>English Word</th>
<th>KLY/KulY</th>
<th>KKY</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>year</td>
<td>wiyeth/woeyeth/uyeth</td>
<td>MY-KY weeyath/uyath</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>male, man</td>
<td>garka, garkazi-</td>
<td>MY-KY garka/garkai, garkazi-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>red skink</td>
<td>Y/M-Y/M-KY mogay, KKY S-D mogo, B moga</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>namesake</td>
<td>KLY/KulY/MY-KY natham, KKY nasem</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>hornet</td>
<td>KLY gaal, KULY/M-Y-KKYY ga</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ray/beam of light</td>
<td>KLY/KulY/MY-KY ziru, KKY zoeru</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>silly, stupid, idiotic</td>
<td>KLY/KulY/MY-KY dimadim/dimidim, KKY rimarim</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>island</td>
<td>KLY/KulY kaywa, MY-KY kaiwa/kawa, KKY kawa</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>anger, wildness</td>
<td>KLY kerketh, KulY/MY-KY/</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>frog</td>
<td>KLY katube, køtube, kat, B køteko, køteku, kat, KulY,MY-KY, KKY kat</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>that male ahead</td>
<td>KLY/KulY nupa, nupay, KKY nupay, MY nukupai, KY nukupai, nukudhai</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Words with differing meanings:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>English Word</th>
<th>KLY/KulY/MY-KY</th>
<th>KKY</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>saay, saaya</td>
<td>KLY/M-Y-KY</td>
<td>mud</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>berdhar</td>
<td>KLY/M-Y-KY</td>
<td>mud; KKY softness (food etc.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>müdh, müdha</td>
<td>in all dialects: shelter, camp, calm place, backyard KLY/KulY/MY-KY extended meaning: house</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>laag, laaga</td>
<td>in all dialects: place, home, homeland KLY/KulY/MY-KY extended meaning: inhabited island KKY extended meaning: house</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Ngalmun Lagaw Yangukudu: the Language of our homeland

Different words for the same meaning:

significant dance
KLY wasal, KulY/MY-KY wasar, KKY girel

thunder
KLY/KulY/MY-KY dhuyum, KKY gígi

grasshopper
KLY/KulY/MY-KY kœpás[i], GY kœpaasi, KKY pùkath

Grammar differences

dative, present imperfective
KLY/KulY general dative -ka, here and there -pa: kipa/kœpa, MY-KY id.; (in archaic language) general dative -pa, 1st person singular -ka, KKY -pa (Ka in songs)
habitual
KLY -kœryuyg/-kuruyg, KulY/ MY-KY -kœrui/-kurui, KKY -paruy/-paru/-pu (-paruyg, -paruydh)
recent past
KLY/KulY/MY-KY -ngùl, KKY -ngu
negative clauses
KLY/KulY/MY-KY subject and object marked by the genitive, KKY subject and object marked by the expected case forms

EDUCATION AND LITERACY: WRITING THE LANGUAGE

Records of the language date from the 1830s on in the form of words and phrases collected by seamen and others. Apart from these, there is well over a century of written material produced mainly by Islanders themselves or taken down from Islanders. What is clear from the written evidence is that there is relatively little change between the Kalaw Lagaw Ya spoken in the late 1800s and now, as can be seen in the following example from the story of Kuiam, written down by Net Waria of Mabuyag around 1900 (Ray, 1907: 203).

original: Kaika nui mangi, tana lakö keda mata niar garkazil piiu zarazaranu.
modern Kayka nuy mangi, thana lak kedha matha niar garkazil, piyuw zarzar. 

He arrived up there, they the men were just sitting in the same way [as others earlier in the story] in a lean-to of dried coconut fronds.

The only change is the reduction of lakö keda in the same way and zarazara lean-to to lak kedha and zarzar; laka kedha and zarazara are still to be heard as poetic, archaic or idiolect variants.

The ‘Mission’ Orthography

A systematic orthography for the language was developed in the mid-1870s when the Lifu, Polynesian and local Island missionaries took up the task of spreading the Word as well as translating the Bible, other religious literature and writing hymns. All literature until the 1970s was written in the mission orthography: core alphabet: a, b, d, e, g, i, j, k, l, m, n, ng, o, ö /ə/, p, r, s, t, u, z sometimes also: th/tr (= the modern th), dh/ dth/dr (= the modern dh), ch (= s), oe/œ (= ö), f (= p), ê (= ö), w, y, and double vowels to show vowel length glides: ai food, ngau my masculine, ia/ya speech, ua/wa yes, Mabuiag Mabuyag, kain young, new, dauai banana tree, zia/ziaia cloud

It was also used in modified form by the Cambridge Expedition (1898), who used diacritics to show short vowels and vowel
quality: a, ā, b, d, e, ē, g, i, ĭ, j, k, l, m, n, ng, o, ō, ò [ɔ], ů, p, r, s, t, u, ŭ [ʊ], w, y, z.

The mission orthography generally does not distinguish the lamino-dental th and dh from the apico-alveolar t and d, which means it generally does not distinguish words such as pad, alt. padō hill, crest, top from pad, alt. padō nest, even though they are pronounced differently (in the Bani-Klokeid orthography they are written paada and paadha respectively).

The ‘Academic’ Orthography
In the period 1970-1975, Bani and Klokeid developed a revision based partly on linguistic theory of the time, and partly on revisions already underway, such as a greater use of th, dh (and dth) and oe /oe:

a, aa, b, d, dh, e, ee, g, i, ii, k, l, m, n, ng o, oo, oe, ooe, p, r, s, t, th, u, uu, w, y, z

double vowels are long; ooe /əː/ is the long version of oe /ə/. Oe was chosen rather than the preferred œ to simplify typewriting.

glides: aay food, ngaw my masculine, ya speech, wa yes, Mabuyag Mabuyag, kain /kajin/ new, young, daway banana tree, zia/ziya /zija/ cloud

The new system has had lukewarm response from some speakers and refusal with others. Still others have welcomed it with open arms. The main opposition from many speakers of the language is the break with tradition – the mission system is the way the forefathers wrote the language. One issue is the fact that there were no community input or trials to the revision, it being initially an academic exercise. Another is that the representation of the semivowels as y and w, the dentals as th and dh, and the diagraph oe represent problems with some speakers of the language. For most native speakers, w and u appear to be allophones of each other, as do y and i. A word like yana bag, when pronounced very carefully to show the pronunciation, is more often than not pronounced i-a-na. Th, dh and oe seem to present another problem, simply that of using two letters to represent single sounds, particularly as one of the letters, h, has no other function in the language, and oe can be confused with oi/oy by native speakers learning to read and write their language.

Writing in the language
A mislearnt Pidgin English and Drehu influenced version of the Saibai dialect was used for the first published biblical translation, by Elia of Lifu (1884; Haddon and Ray, 1897: 71). A partially corrected Samoan and Pidgin English influenced version was published in 1900 (excerpts of this can also be seen in Haddon and Ray, 1897), made by Isia (sic) of Samoa with the help of Net Waria, Tom Noboa and Peter Papi of Mabuyag. The first part of these men’s names is their “European” name, used by them in dealings with non-islanders, while the second part was their birth, or “Island” name. Net Waria was called Ned in English, whereas he himself, as well as other contemporary Islanders, used Net (pronounced Neth), given to him by a Samoan friend. The Island and neighbouring South-West Papuan custom was to exchange names with a person with whom one enters into a special friend-to-friend relationship with. Neth was the name Waria used to highlight this relationship, while Waria was used in certain formal situations.

Neither translation was well-done, as the following segment from the translation of the parable of the sower shows:

Text:
‘...as he sowed, some fell by the way side, and the birds of the air came and devoured it up.’

Elia:
A nuidōka mata utuipa, durai siēi putizi iābugudanu, ngapa mangizō urui palgizō a purutamoin.
Ngalmun Lagaw Yangukudu: the Language of our homeland

modernised spelling (Kalaw Kawaw Ya)
A nuydha ka matha uthuypa, dhuray sey pudhiz yabugudanu, ngapa mangiz uruy, pœlagiz a pùrthamœyn.

literal meaning:
And he is still planting, some/others fall there on the path, a bird arrives, flies/jumps and eats them.

Author’s translation:
... nuydh nanga kapul thayamœypa nanga, dhuray si(alt.sey) yabugudanu pudhemeœyn/ noeridhemœyn, ngapa palgemœyn (alt. pœlagiz) daparaw uruyl, a pùrthameœyn.

Isia:
A nuid lupan saito, wara si noridi iabugud pasi, a urui ngapa palgin a purutamin.

modernised spelling (Kalaw Lagaw Ya):
A nuydh lupan saitho, wara si nœridhi yabugûd pasi, a uruy ngapa palgin a pùrûthamin.

literal meaning:
And he shakes wheat, another falls there on the road-side, and a bird comes flying and eats them.

Author’s translation:
... a nuydh na saithol thayamika na, warmal si yabugudau pasi nœridhimika/pudhemika, a daparaw uruyl ngapa palgemin (alt. pœlagi/palgi), a pùrùthamin.

The problems with these translations are:
(a) The underlying syntax of both is Pidgin English, with some English features (e.g. iabugud pasi road side):
(b) The use of singular present forms as direct calques on the unmarked pidgin forms, such as putizi (pudhiz) active singular present perfective for pudhemeœyn, the plural, the exception being the word purutamoin/ purutamin eats them.
(c) The word siëi (Elia) is a mispronunciation of sey/si there, perhaps through confusion of the two variants of the word.
(d) Samoan and Drehu phonology come through, as in adding vowels to support word final consonants or to break consonant clusters, e.g. mangizô for mangiz, purutamin for pùrthamin. The reverse is found in the word palgizô for pœlagiz, where palgiz was an imperfectly learnt formulation through extension from another class of verbs.
(e) the use of the singular form wara (an)other for the plural waramal (alt. warmal).
(f) The most interesting mistake was Isia’s translation for what in the King James version of the bible is sow or cast (wrongly translated by Elia as utuipa planting by inserting into the ground). It is clear that Isia was aware of the process of broadcasting seed, though may not have actually ever seen it. Therefore, either (1) he used the Pidgin word sakim ‘throw’ (modern Broken
sake), perhaps mispronouncing it, or (2) he himself did not speak Pidgin well, and so confused sakim with sekim ‘shake’ (modern Broken seke), hence the translation lupan, or (3) he thought that the process was actually shaking the seeds to spread them rather than the spreading throw that is ‘broadcasting’.

Stories and letters and various other manuscripts were written by Islanders, excerpts of some recorded as examples in Ray (1907); others exist only as manuscripts. That of Peter Eseli of Mabuyag has been published by Shnukal and Mitchell (1998). An unpublished Mabuyag writer was Gaulai (186? – 1927), a lay preacher on Yama just before his death. His Island name was Paidan, and Gaulai was given to him on his baptism. He died the 14th of January, 1927, and was of the same buway moiety/clan as Net Waria, the Mœgi Buway Small Moiety, specifically in the Kaygas-Dhangal shovel-nose shark - dugong clan. He was taught to read and write by the South-Seas London Missionary Society missionaries who came to Mabuyag either in late 1872 or in January 1873.

While on Yama Gaulai kept a notebook from 1899 to 192? (Lawrie, cover notes to Gaulai, 1899-192?), a xeroxed copy of which is to be found in the Fryer Library, University of Queensland. The notebook was actually an accounts ledger, and one page towards the center of the book, headed ‘Jimmy Mobyag’, contains some purchase entries. Jimmy Mobyag was probably Gaulai’s European name; ‘Mobyag’ [mœbiæg] is the general European/Australian pronunciation of Mabuyag. The note book includes songs that may have been composed by Gaulai. The pages are not numbered, and the edges are worn and stained, sometimes obscuring words. The notebook contains one or two explanatory annotations in English by Margaret Lawrie. He also recorded some hymns, a short prayer, a record of the date of his appointment as headman of feasts (specified by Margeret Lawrie), a record of Net Waria’s ‘Ten Commandments’ [the Chairman of Mabuyag at the time] and records of his children’s births. At the end of the notebook he also made three lists of the men, women and male youths in the Mœgi Buwai in March 190? (page torn at this strategic point). The very last two pages contain three traditional songs written by another hand, presumably that of Gaulai’s son Kadiab, whose name appears with the songs.

Samples of his writing are:

a) Hymn Language

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gaulai</th>
<th>Bani-Klokeid orthography</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ninu kōi paudo</td>
<td>Ninu kœy paawdh, o,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ninu kikiri kōi za</td>
<td>Ninu kikiri kœy za,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>angelan taumani</td>
<td>Angelan thawumani,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ninu nel mina</td>
<td>Ninu nel mina.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Gaulai, 191?: (8) 3)

Meaning

Your great peace, oh,
Your pain was great,
Praised by angels,
Your name is true.

b) Personal information

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gaulai</th>
<th>Bani-Klokeid orthography</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Agoste.11.1899</td>
<td>Agosthe.11.1899</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ngona Gizu Mabaig</td>
<td>Ngœena Gizu Mabayg</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>aymän Sarare</td>
<td>aymän, Sarare 11.gœyga.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ngœña aymän.</td>
<td>ngena aymän.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ngaw nel Gaulai</td>
<td>Ngaw nel Gawl̄ay.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(Gaulai, 191?: 4)

Meaning

August 11, 1899.
I have been made Head Man,
Saturday the 11th day.
I was appointed.
My name is Gaulai.

Gaulai also made extensive bible study notes in Kalaw Lagaw Ya, including a list of prophets, perhaps in part preparations for sermons. The notes show a keen interest in his chosen way of life, that of a lay preacher.
The written language includes good, native-speaker Kalaw Lagaw Ya besides ‘note-form’ Kalaw Lagaw Ya. The hymns on the whole are native-speaker language, as is the personal information. The biblical/religious writing is in ‘note-form’, probably being notes taken from the Bible or verbatim from South-Seas teacher-missionaries.

c) Bible study notes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gaulai</th>
<th>Bani-Klokeid orthography</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>senab pad kadai tari</td>
<td>Senaabi paada kadaythari.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sinab mura pad nel seira</td>
<td>Sinaabi mura paada nel Seyri.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>senab mura pad keda bal</td>
<td>Senaabi mura paada keda bal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arabi kurusika dada kali</td>
<td>Arabi kurusika dhadhakeesiya, senaabi nel Akapa, 150</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a senab nel akapa 150 mail kurusika senab pad</td>
<td>mayl kurusika senaabi paada</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sinai. 580 senab padau minaman senab pad Aron</td>
<td>Sinayi. 580 senaabi padau minaman. Senaabi paada Aron</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>dan uradan a tana ladudin</td>
<td>danuradhan, a thana ladhudhin,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>inab Pad nel Horo nui dan uradan.</td>
<td>inaabi paada nel Horo, nuy danurdhan.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(9aulai, 191?: 24, lines 19-30)

**Meaning**

*That hill stands up.*
*That whole range is called Seira.*
*That whole range stretches across Arabia as far as the centre, that name is Akapa, 150 miles as far as that hill Sinai. 580 that hill’s measurement. That hill (where) Aron died, and they went, this hill is called Horo, (where) he died. Etoma, also called Esau is inside. Red-Coloured.*

Modern writing tends to either follow the academic orthography or the mission system, with variations. That is to say, in real-life use, the two spelling systems and mixes thereof are to be found, as well as now and then the use of English phonics. Words can also be found written different ways, reflecting the real variation that exists in the language. Examples are **ngath - ngatha** I instrumental, **Goemu – Gumu** Goemu, and **mekay, mekey, mekeyi, mekayi, mekeii, mekei, mekai** almond tree. This depends on age, family, island, stylistics, respect for either the mission or the academic system, degree of education in literacy, and so on.

An example of a mixed system which has some currency is the following, which is the Mission spelling with inconsistent use of *th, dh/dth* and *oe*, and improvising by representing devoiced final vowels by capital letters (e.g. *ngûûki drinking water* is written *ngukI*).

*a, A, b, d, dh/dth, e, g, i, I, k, l, m, n, ng, o, oe, p, r, s, t, th, u, U, z*

*double vowels sometimes used to show vowel length, at times with a dividing apostrophe, e.g. gaabu, ga’abu cold, cool, calmness*

*glides: ai *food, ngau* my masculine, ya/ia *speech, wa/ua* yes, Mabuiag Mabuyag, kain/kaiin/ kai’in new, young, dauai *banana tree, zia cloud*

**SAMPLE TEXTS**

Text 1. Sample excerpts written in the Mission orthography, as adapted for typewriting (Mooke & Simpson, 1972: 13):

Excerpt A:
Mission:

Academic:

Translation:
Our grandparents, then our fathers, it was like that indeed, our fathers did these things. We the children are then very ignorant (of them). I am just straightening it all out (explaining it all). Long ago things were very good in their time, how things were done.

Excerpt B:

Mission:

Academic:

Translation:
When you climb up on the platform, you sit and from the trumpet shell the sides of the platform are like this. It straightens/fixes the wind (= in line with the wind). First thing you insert is an upright. The upright inserted by you is a thag (red mangrove) pole. Next you place two cross poles, in front and behind. With a view to strengthening them do like this coming through from one side, from the front side and from the back side, lashing it with lawyer cane. Formerly they made rope - lawyer cane - for homes, not nails.

Text 2. A story written in the Bani-Klokeid Orthography (Storyteller: Matilda Bani; adapted from Bani & Bani, 2011). The origin story for two groups of rocks at Pulu, just off Mabuyag:

Wa, kay paypa kulay, si miyar kuyku mabayg, nungu nel Kawmayn, Pulunu. Pulu na seenu moegi lag kalnu, Mabuyginu. Kawmayn si miyar, nungu ipil a kazil muray.

Yes, long ago, there lived a chief called Kawmayn, on the island of Pulu. Pulu is a small island at the back of Mabuyag. That is where Kawmayn lived with all his wives and children. Na sena nungu kulay ipi noe, nanu nel Koemuthnab. Nuy koeyma nabeka nagay, kedhamayka, na nungingu koey kazilayg, sena warigal kazigel nungu. Za noe kedha aymayngu, a, nuy nabeka yapoeysi aymayka.

Koemuthnab was the name of his first wife. He depended heavily on her because she was the mother of all his children. His other wives did not have children. If there was something to be
done, ah, he would ask her to take care of it.


When people were to visit Pulu, he told her to shave him, that people were coming after to see him. She would shave him. This was a task that Koemuthnab really hated doing, a bad job, when she shaved him. He always asked her to do that work whenever people were to come soon after to see him.


Right, one day, word came to him from Baw that people were coming from Baw to visit him. He sent a message back, saying ‘Yes, do come.’ They were welcome. When the day came for the visitors to arrive, he said to Koemuthnab, ‘Come and shave me. People are to arrive from Baw’.


Yes, that was a job she really didn’t want to do. So she got really angry when he asked her again to do that task. She was that furious! She ran from here, got a bamboo knife, to shave him, and when she shaved him, cut off his double chin as well (Kawmayn was very fat).


He was really put off from her, didn’t want her anymore – he got really angry back at her. He really and truly did not want her anymore and sent her away – from there, from Pulu, saying: ‘Go away! You have done a bad thing to me.’


When they – when they were sent away, she gathered in all the children. Gathered together all the children, and then she went away, put her young child on her head, with the other children beside her. Walked away into the sea. She sat down way out in the deep water. When she looked back, he was just sitting then behind them. Kawmayn was just looking, right then, and into stone - she turned into stone.

Ni noe nagi noe, Puluka noe, nuy lak Kawmayn lak kula ayimaydhin, nuy a nungu ipil. Nuy kayib Pulunu zey dagamunu sika. Ni noe kedha thonara mangi noe, nidh iman kedha, Kawmayn kay zey dagamunu sika, adhaka kidh nageka nabeka Koemuthnabnaka. Koemuthnab napa adhal sika kazi muray, sena gar moegi kula nanu kuykunu gimay matha sika, moekaziw kula, moekaazi seenu kula aymaydhin nabiya gima, wara moegi kulal pasiya nabiya,
When you look, towards Pulu, he too – Kawmayn also turned to stone, him and his wives. He is standing today on Pulu on the southern side. When you arrive there now, you see that Kawmayn is standing on the southern side, looking outwards up there towards Koemuthnab. Koemuthnab is outside standing in front with all the children, the small rock on top of her head is still standing there, the little child’s stone, the little child turned into that stone on top of her, the other small stones around her are her other children. She is standing out there. Kawmayn is standing here on the south side, with his wives around him. Nowadays that group of stones are still there at Pulu.

Ina gidhaw kuutha. Wa, koeyma eso.
This is the end of the story. Thank you very much.

(On finishing a story, the story teller should always thank the listeners).

EDUCATION IN THE LANGUAGE

Torres Strait Islanders were quick to develop literature in their own languages after the establishment of the mission schools, which taught literacy in the local languages, and through interest created by the Cambridge Expedition (1898). However, later government policy meant that writing in the language on the whole remained largely church driven (hymns and the like), though now and then an enlightened Government school master would encourage literacy. This lasted till the 1970s, when Islanders themselves started taking up the pen once again.

There is still, however, a lack of interest from the Government and Education Department. The language is rarely used in education. Relatively few speakers are literate in it, and in some cases see it as a ‘millstone’. Others work hard to keep this important part of their birthright. While most islanders are proud of their heritage, the viability of the language rests in the hands of the community’s will to retain the clearest marker of their identity. Until an overtly proactive policy of the Western and Central Language as the language of the community is established, alongside English for ‘external affairs’, it could eventually die out, as has virtually already happened on some islands.

THE LANGUAGE BEFORE COLONISATION

The Western and Central Language before European colonisation was the major language of the Torres Strait ‘world’ – those areas that traditionally centred on Torres Strait for trading, cultural and social purposes. It was used by Papuans, Islanders and Australian peoples for intergroup communication. It was once the language of Daru, spoken by the Hiámo, who originally came from Yama (Lawrence, 1989: 102), as well as formerly in two or three villages on the Papuan mainland to the west from there opposite Boigu and Saibai (Lawrence, 1989: 118; Garrick Hitchcock pers. comm., 2007). Folk history tells us that most of the Hiámo migrated to the Mùralag group (and a few into Papua and over to Saibai) to escape Kiwai raiding and colonisation (Landtman, 1927: x; Lawrence, 1989: 102; Haddon, 1935: 49; for Lawrie’s (1971) brief notes, see Appendix 2).

Words, phrases and songs were borrowed from the Western and Central Language into the neighbouring Papuan languages (including Meriam Mir) over the centuries preceding European contact. These loans fall into three broad categories, (1) individual words and phrases, (2) religious/cult songs or formulae, and (3) songs that are retentions from the Hiámo who formerly lived on Daru, and are a window to past forms of the language.
Individual words and phrases are to be found in technology and religio-magic terminology/formulae and ceremonies borrowed from the Western-Central Islanders, such as for dugong-turtle hunting, initiation and fertility cycles, canoes and weather/season/star/navigational terminology. Religious/cult songs are found in ceremonies borrowed from (or given by) Western-Central Islanders, such as the turtle-magic ceremonies of the Mawata Kiwai (Landtman, 1927), songs in the Daru-Mawata Horiomo cycles (partly initiation, partly fertility, and partly other observances all within an overall theme), said to come from the Hiámo (Landtman, 1927), and some of the funeral songs of the Meriam people.

It is clear that many such words, phrases and songs come from the Western and Central Language, in that (1) the language is often clearly the Western and Central Language, and (2) the singers of the songs (the Kiwai and Meriam peoples) are reported to have said so. Their traditions are quite clear on where the songs came from, and that the songs are on the whole unintelligible to them. An interesting characteristic of the songs is that they fit in with the Western and Central Language song styles still in use. Such pre-colonisation era songs are a window to past forms of the language at the very least, as well as to the past links between the peoples of the area.

Historical records such as Landtman (1927) as well as folk history show that quite a few Meriam, Kiwai and other Papuans could speak the Western and Central Language quite well, normally either the Kalaw Lagaw Ya dialect or the Kùlkalgau Ya dialect. Where analysis of the songs is concerned, therefore it can be difficult to decide whether a form that appears modern is so because the singers, through their knowledge of the modern language, had changed the older form, or that there has been little actual change in the Western and Central Language, or that the song is relatively modern.

The following song is an example of an easily understood song. It is part of a pipi (Torres Strait war dance/performance) called by the Mawata Kiwai Kiümam pipi (WCL Kuyaman Pipi Kuiam’s War Dance):

Oh, mátamána kúika patána sínge sigamúka, oh, ngáika ngibéka ngúrupana.

“Kill him man, put him head along gáraóro (head carrier), I learn you (teach) you” (Landtman, 1927: 163)

Reconstructed WCL original:
O, mathaman, a, kuik, a, pathan, a,
singe sigamœka,
O, ngayka ngibeka ngùrùpan, a.

Oh, strike him, ah, behead him, ah, inserting the singe (lawyer cane head/fish carrying loop)

Oh, to me, to you, it has been taught, ah.

The dialect here is song-style Kauřařaigau Ya, as shown by the use of the word ngibeka to you rather than the Kalaw Lagaw Ya/Kùlkalgau Ya nibeka. Kuiam normally spoke in Kauřařaigau Ya, and songs ascribed to him in Torres Strait are often in Kauřařaigau Ya song-style language. Kuiam was a battle hero of both the Kalaw Lagaw Ya and Mua/Kauraraiga peoples. The language suggests composition within very recent centuries. Appendix 2 here-in has examples of songs that are more obscure, perhaps reflecting more ancient borrowing.

Other precolonisation songs were recorded by Myers and Haddon in ‘Funeral Ceremonies’ (Myers and Haddon 1908: 126-162). The following, Zera Markai Keber (Haddon, 1908: 134) was part of a funeral ceremony on Mer, and was said to be introduced by Waiet, who came to the Mer group from Mua some centuries ago and was the founder of a fertility cult (His Muan name is Wayath). The dialect is old Italgau Ya (Italaigau Ya, i.e. the southern
Mua subdialect), though the words were distorted by the Meriam singers. There is reference to the north-west and south-west winds (Meriam Mir Kōki, Kalaw Lagaw Ya Kuki north west wind/monsoon, Meriam Mir Ziai, Kalaw Lagaw Ya Zeeya south-west, capitalised because they have totemic significance), with reference probably to the rain-bearing clouds brought down at the beginning of the north-west monsoon. The song contains archaic word forms similar to the mid-1800s records of Kauřařaigau Ya.

Myers/Haddon’s version:
Wa! wa! wa! wa! wa! wa! wa!
Goke eza gau goki longa gau goki
Wa! a! a! a! a! a! a!
Gaige gaige karapuna sewao ragade
Wa! a! a! a! a! a! a!
Wa banita gasmuneba jai aria pagana koki aria pagana.

reconstructed Italgau Ya (Mua) original:
Wa! wa! wa! wa! wa! wa! wa!
Ngùki, e, za, ngau ngùkilina, ngau ngùki; (ngùkilina: in the modern dialects ngùkilin)  
Wa! a! a! a! a! a! a!
Kai nge, kai nge kařapùn, a, sewau rangadh, e; (kařapùn: in the modern dialects kaipùn)  
Wa! a! a! a! a! a! a!
Wa, banithan gas’moréipa, (gasamoréipa: in the modern dialects gasamaipa)  
Zey ariya pagan, a,  
Kuki ariya pagan, a.

Yes! ...
Water, eh, the thing (i.e. rain cloud) holding my water, my water,  
It will then, it will then be back there soon, ah, that journey, eh;  
Yes, stabbed in so as to catch/get it,  
The South-West wind darted down through the rain, ah,  
The North-West wind darted down through the rain, ah.

THE LANGUAGE AFTER COLONISATION

Through mission pressure and for work in the marine industry (beche-de-mer, trochus, pearling, etc.), the various clans started gathering into centralised villages in the two or three decades around the annexation of Torres Strait in the 1870s. On Mabuyag and Badu, the different clans moved to the peypaydegam near/south-east side of each island. The peoples of the Central group now live on Masig, Puruma (alt. Poruma), Waraber and Yama, though some Nagi people settled on Mua. On Saibai the Aith people joined the Saibai people at Saibai village; the subdialects were slightly distinct, but have since merged. Dauan and Boigu have kept their slightly different speech.

The Kauřařaigalai, on the other hand, were shifted by force to Poidh on Mua in 1921 and 1922. They, the Italgal of southern Mua and the Mualgal of northern Mua then later moved to Kubin on the south coast.

. Starting in 1946 some Kauraraiga families moved back to their own country at Noerupai.

More recently, just after World War 2, Kalaw Kawaw Ya was ‘transported’ from Saibai to Bamaga and Seisia at Cape York by Saibai colonisers, following abnormally high flood tides which contaminated fresh water supplies and gardening areas on Saibai.

Kalaw Lagaw Ya and Kalaw Kawaw Ya have become linguistically dominant, particularly Gœmulgaw Ya and Saibailgau Ya, partly because speakers of these dialects have spearheaded modern literacy and language policies. Kùlkalgau Ya, Mualgau Ya and Kaiwalgau Ya tend to be sidelined, partly through the fact that the younger generations often do not actively speak the language.

Outside Influences

The influences of colonisation on all local Cape York, Torres Strait and Papuan languages have
varied from drastic (to the point of language death), through moderate to minimal. Where languages have maintained their community standing, the main influences have been vocabulary for mainly foreign items as well as English or Broken (Torres Strait Creole, see Shnukal, 1988) loans for stylistic purposes. The loans have been from a surprising variety of sources, though English and Broken dominate:

Indonesian, Philippine languages (e.g. Malay, Makkasarese, Tagalog): thuba coconut toddy; zaru trumps (in cards); suusa non-trump card; bala mate, friend, brother

Polynesian and Melanesian: thusi book, document, letter (Samoan tusi); lawlaw table (Samoan laulau ‘woven coconut leaf used as a tray’); wakasu annointment oil (Drehu wakacu ‘coconut oil’); thawiyan brother-in-law (Vanuatu tawean ‘brother-in-law’)

Biblical loans (Latin, Greek, Hebrew): basalaya kingdom (Greek basileia); aretho holy communion (Greek eucharistia); Sathana Satan (Hebrew Satan); Sabadh/Sabadhi Sunday (Hebrew Sabbath); amen (Hebrew) prayer, church service, church; poewbi (Latin via Samoan) cattle; Keriso (Greek via Latin via Samoan) Christ; Kerubi (Hebrew via Samoan) Cherubim

Broken, English: arawaygul whaleboat (Eng. haul away + guul sailing canoe); dati dirtiness, rubbish, trash; kaitap custard apple; mamiyap pawpaw (English mammy-apple); aransis lemon, orange, mandarin; dhamba bread, loaf, damper; taaynga cake, biscuit, bun; laayna family, clan, ancestry, descent; mòòba mob, crowd, school (of fish), flock (birds), etc.

Papuan: badhara (Agöb) dance performance (war dance); buruburu (Agöb) hour-glass drum

Australian: thatha three-prong nail harpoon bit (Wudhadhi/Yadhaikenu, though the word may ultimately be Papuan, cf. Bine loto ‘nail, lashing’)

Most loans exist beside indigenous words, in the case of the last three below created as a reaction to enculturation:

meyt, GY meetya friend, mate; thœbudh (thubudh) friend
meyt, GY meetya first mate; wagelparu: (wagel-paru next-face)
buut, GY buuta boat; guul, guula sailing canoe
biliz village; mudhawlaaga shelter-GEN+place
sey, GY seeya chair; niáylaaga sitting-GEN+place, niáyza sitting-GEN+thing
beybi/bebi baby; mapeth human baby, bœrarunga newly born baby
pleyn, GY pleeyna aeroplane; gima+wœri+za above+flying-GEN+thing
poon, GY poona telephone; sigamulayza: siga-muláy+za far+speaking-GEN+thing.
polisman policeman; kunumaymœbayg/kunumaykaazi (kunumay+mabayg ~ kaazi hand. tie.up-GEN+person), dhœrdhimaymœbayg/dhœrdhimaykaazi (dhœrdhimay+mabayg ~ kaazi bind.arrest.imprison-GEN+person)

In modern times, the Western and Central Language has given way to Broken on various islands to varying extents. Broken is now the community language of Masig, Yama, St Pauls (Mua), Waiben (Thursday Island) and the islands surrounding Waiben. It is further the language of the middle and younger generation(s) on Waraber and Puruma and at Bamaga and Seisia at Cape York, and is just starting to make inroads on Saibai, where some adults use Broken with their children as they say Kalaw Kawaw Ya is too difficult for them. The other islands vary in usage between the two extremes.

In actual language use, however, a continuum exists in all communities between one extreme of using the language to the other extreme of only Broken, and an ability to fit in at different points of the continuum is the mark of a good all-round speaker and orator. What often results is what is called in Broken Ap-ne-ap ‘Half-and-half’, a mix of language and Broken of varying degrees, from a language base with some Broken words, to a Broken base with some language words.
PART TWO: THE TORRES STRAIT AREA  
LANGUAGES AND PEOPLES

When Europeans started interacting with Islanders and other local peoples in the 1800s, the local Papuan, Island and Australian peoples had been interacting with each other for some centuries at least, through friendship, family relations, intermarriage, traditional adoption, trade, and even battle. The closeness of the interaction between the various groups can be seen in trade words common to neighbouring Papua, Torres Strait and Cape York (Gudang, Urradhi and languages further afield such as Linggithigh and Mpakwithi), as the following list shows (Mitchell, 1995, Introduction: 40-41).

**thanks:** eso, KuY yœsa, MM esoau; Papua: Agöb eso; Australia: Gudang, Urradhi echo, Yir Yoront acha, ngacha, ngaycha, aycha.

**peace:** paawdh, GY paawdha, MM paud 'no fighting' (mapodan 'peace'); Papua: Agöb piuda; Australia: Gudang, Urradhi paawdha.

**cutting tool:** thurik(a), MM tulik; Papua: Agöb turika, Bine turi/turikä, Kiwai turika, Marind turika; Australia: Urradhi thurriya 'crowbar'.

**tobacco:** sœguba, suguba, MM sogob; Papua: Agöb/Bine/Kiwai suguba; Australia: Urradhi tyughubha, Anguthimri tyughubhu.

**knife:** gi, OKY giři; MM gir ‘knife-like formation’; Papua: Kiwai/Wipi girì ‘sharp’; Australia: Gudang girì, Urradhi kiri/ghiri, Anguthimri kiri, Mpakwithi kiri

**bamboo:** mœráp, GY mœraapi, MM märep; Papua: Bine marapi, Kiwai marabi; Australia: Gudang marraapi, Urradhi marrapi, Mpakwithi marrapi

The Islanders and others also had dealings with outsiders such as the Makassans, who had been visiting the area for some centuries (Haddon, 1935: 15). Words which might be evidence of this include the following, which includes words that are loans from Sanskrit or Arabic (Malay, Sanskrit, Arabic data from Ngajedan, 1987). The use of Malay examples here is for reference, and does not imply that such potential loans would be a priori from Malay. Such words are common to a variety of Indonesian languages, and an actual origin will probably never be known:

- adhi *huge, great*, cf. Malay *adi* ‘regal, great’ (Sanskrit *adhi*); aye, KKY aya *come!*, cf. Malay *ayo* ‘come!’; baayu, baaywa *waterspout*, cf. Malay *bayu* ‘wind’ (Sanskrit *vayu*); buyu *bottle*, container, cf. Malay *buyung* ‘pot, container’; kòòda important discussion place, men’s sacred enclosure, cf. Malay *kota/kuta* ‘city etc.’, Javanese *koTa/kuTa* (Sanskrit *kostha* ‘city, city wall, sacred enclosure, etc.’); koedal, GY koedaala *crocodile*, cf. Malay *kadal*, Makassarese *kadalaq* ‘lizard’; laaga place, region, home, inhabited island, cf. Malay *loka/loga* (Sanskrit *loka* ‘place, region’); pawa *deed, action, custom*, cf. Malay *paal/pa'al* id. (Arabic *fa'ala*)

In short, Torres Strait has been the centre of a complex relationship of social ties, trading networks and conflict between Australia, Papua and to a lesser extent the Austronesian world for some centuries at least.

**HOW DOES THE LANGUAGE RELATE TO OTHER LANGUAGES?**

The relationship between the languages of the Torres Strait area is much more complex than simple trade, and most likely goes back to before the end of the last Ice Age, when Torres Strait was dry land. Involved are four language groups, the Paman sub-group of the Australian Pama-Nyungan languages, Papuan South-Central languages, Eastern-Trans Fly languages (which includes Meriam Mir) and the Trans-Fly subphylum, represented by Kiwai, of the Trans-New Guinea Phylum. There is also archaeological, folk-history and linguistic evidence of Austronesian settlement from South-East Papua.

However, the Western and Central Language is not closely related to any of its neighbours. Mitchell (1995) states that Meriam Mir is...
the closest language in terms of common vocabulary, at around 25% (though see further below), followed closely by Gudang at 20%. Daru Kiwai rates at 12% (based on the word lists given in Ray, 1907: 391-412), Bine and Gizra at 11%, and Gidra at 8% (from the word lists given in Reesink et al., 1976). Urradhi, the closest living Australian neighbour, has around 11% common vocabulary (6.5% cognation, Crowley, 1983: 309; Mitchell, 1995, Introduction: 9-10, and Appendix 1: pages 1-10). Mitchell and Piper (unpublished research notes), using the Holman et al. (2008) 40-word list (see below, and Appendix 1), find a higher rate for the Western and Central Language-Meriam Mir of around 40% shared lexical items between Meriam Mir and the Western and Central Language.

Post-war writers, e.g. Capell (1956), Wurm (1972) and Dixon (2002), have stated either that the Western and Central Language is an Australian language heavily influenced by Meriam Mir in particular, or a Papuan language heavily influenced by an Australian substratum. Unfortunately, some works from MacGillivray (1852) to the present have been to varying extents dependent on inaccurate, poorly understood, badly or wrongly translated, limited and limiting materials, leading at times to misanalysis, marring often insightful work. As pointed out by Hunter et al. (2011: 138), claims to relationships often seem to have been based on flimsy or highly selective evidence. Another serious failing is the lack of good, reliable knowledge on the neighbouring Papuan languages, peoples with whom the Islanders have been closely interacting for centuries.

The fact that some researchers have not been speakers of the language and at times have depended on second or third hand sources means a tendency of mistakes arising through the failure to identify correct word forms, derivations, variation according to speech style, misrepresentation of phonemes and morphemes, and so on, such as the above from Alpher et al. (2008: 25-28):

Another failing is also not to take into account variation such as dialect, idiolect, speech style and language change. One example is the association in the same work (Alpher et al. 2008: 28) of goya day, sun with PP *gayga sun. The stem form of goya is goygoyi-, in songs gaigayi-, and the earliest recorded forms of the word in Kauřařaigau Ya were gyriego, gurrii, goraiog, goriig, goriga (as recorded by MacGillivray, 1852; Brierly, 1848-1850 [in Moore, 1979], Ray, 1907), i.e. Kauřařaigau Ya gořigař, stem form gořigaři-, a reduplicated word cognate with the Meriam Mir gerger ‘day’, and originating from PP *gari ‘sun’.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>mistaken form/meaning</th>
<th>mistaken cognate</th>
<th>actual form/meaning/structure</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>naka situated here</td>
<td>PP *ñaaka</td>
<td>naka that female/feminine object up there: na-ka feminine prefix-up.there</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>garrpath- gather, collect</td>
<td>PP *karrpa-</td>
<td>garpatha- gather, collect together: gar-patha- collective prefix-put, place</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>wadhawadagumiya everywhere, all around</td>
<td>PP *wañca ‘where’</td>
<td>warawaradagumiya, warawaradegamuya (&gt; wadhagumiya/wadwadegamuya): wara-wara+degamu/daguma-ya one-one+side-NSpLoc</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Memoirs of the Queensland Museum | Culture • 8 (1) • 2015 | 341
Finally, when researchers do not speak the language and do not have recourse to native speakers, they unfortunately can misidentify material, such as the following quote from Alpher et al. (2008: 17), using a word form (*thanama-) that does not exist: ‘The 3rd-Pl forms continue pPN *cana (*dhana is a notational variant), and additionally show oblique forms based on thanama-, which is shared by a number of other Pama-Nyungan languages, including those of the Yolngu subgroup (cf. Yan-nhangu dhana ‘they’, dhanama ‘theirs’).’

The affixed forms of thana they are based on the augmented stem thanamù-; the augment suffix mú is also found in the affixed forms of palay they DU (palamù-), ngœy we PL EXC (ngœlmù-) and nitha you PL (nithamù-). Similar misassociation through mistranslation is gath, GY gaatha, with PP *kaca+ ‘coral’, Alpher et al. (2008: 28). Their source had given the Broken meaning of shallows, reef, whereas gath in English actually means shallow, shallows, and only refers to reefs with this connotation; reef is maza.

The Make-Up of the Language
It has been clear since as early as MacGillivray (1852), and confirmed by Mitchell (1995) and Alpher et al. (2008), among others, that by its pronouns, core structures and some core vocabulary, the Western and Central Language is a member of the Australian Pama-Nyungan phylum. However, only 18% of the 279 Proto-Paman words in Sommer (1969: 62-66) have definite realisations in the Western and Central Language. In the Holman et al. (2008) 40-word list based on the Swadesh 100 word list (see Appendix 1), 22.5% of the words are Australian, 22.5% Papuan and 12.5% Austronesian. Of the remaining 42.5%, 15% could be from any of these, one word (‘horn’) is not applicable, eight are derived words, and fully 32.5% are unclassifiable, because not enough is known about the languages of the area. Of the 40 words, Meriam Mir shares 17 (42.5%) items with the Western and Central Language, of which two (gegur ‘skin’ and gerger ‘day’) are Australian in origin, seven are derived (e.g. tirig ‘tooth’ [ereg ‘eat’], osme- ‘full’, a specialised use of the verb osme- ‘protrude, show self’, erkep ‘eye’ [er- ‘see’, kep ‘body part’]), and possibly one is Austronesian (wer ‘star’).

From its Australian core come some concrete and abstract vocabulary, all personal pronouns (including nga who), some verbs, and a lot of the morphology (such as the instrumental, accusative, genitive, ablative, LAI locative, -ka dative, perfective, imperfective, and perfective active). Though these categories exist in the neighbouring Papuan languages, the forms in the Western and Central Language are Australian.

Australian words (Pama-Nyungan/Common Australian): thana they PL (*jana), kœlaaka spear (*galga), ara- enter (*ŋara), Athe Granddad (*ŋaji ‘maternal grandfather’), iwi mosquito (*ŋiwiri), muugu a hill, ant’s nest, termite (*muŋga ‘ant hill’), paga- stab, prick, spear, etc.(*bagal ‘prick, etc.’), isama- transport liquid (*yiija- ‘get’), patha- bite (of fish) (*bajarr/l ‘bite’), kisaayi moon (other dialects kiisay(i), OKY kiisari, *giijar-), thara- stand erect, stand up (*ja[a]rra[y] ‘stand’), gasama- catch, get (*gaja- ‘tie up’), saanaa foot (*jina), gœyga sun, day (OKY gœřigař(i), *gari), siiba liver, centre; centre of “heart-felt” feelings (*jiba ‘liver’)

From Papua as well come concrete and abstract vocabulary, some morphology, syntactic/grammatical structure such as verb number [also possibly archaic Australian] and depletive verbs, the use of state/movement verbs as ‘be’ verbs, and two interrogatives (naag/naga how, namuyth when) in Kalaw Kawaw Ya.

Papuan words (Proto East-Trans Fly): siipi root (*sipi), pe-/pi- specifically there in the
From Austronesian also come concrete and abstract vocabulary, perhaps some morphology such as one of the ablatives, the pa-telic prefix and the KIDHA group of morphemes, some terminology dealing with agriculture, canoes, the weather, the sky and the sea, sky/weather/agricultural gods (Thoegay, Kang and the Zugubal) and a few verbs. There are in many cases clear relationships with the South-East Papuan Austronesian group (Mitchell, 1995; David et al., 2004).

Austronesian words (Proto South-East Papuan Austronesian [Proto Oceanic in some cases as marked]): gamu, GY gaamu body (torso) (*ŋkamo ‘belly’), wœœwra south-east (*waura), bùrùm pig (*mporoma), mapu heavy (*mapa), wœywi mango (*waiwai), aapa garden bed (*[s]apu ‘dust, dirt’), aar dawn (*[s]apu ‘dust, dirt’), daana pool, reef lagoon; eye; life (*dana ‘lake’, *danu ‘water’), maalu deep, sea (*malo, POC *(ŋ)malo/u ‘submerge; reef; hollowed’), maanga fork (POC *maŋa() ‘fork, branching’), thanura-i-sit (*tanu(t)ali ‘sit’), waadha reality/existentiel emphasis (*wada ‘existential’), mura all (*mora ‘numerous’), uur/wér (archaic KKY wér) water (*wair), bëngil/bongil (KKY bongel) last night (*boni ‘night’), barama enormous, most (*bada/bara ‘big, most’), puuyi (OKY puuři) magic charm—medicine—equipment—actions (*puli ‘magic’), sayim(a) (OKY sařima) outrigger float (*nsarima), thawal(a) coast, shore (*tawala), wëru/wuru/uru rope, cord, string (*waro() ‘vine, rope’), aay food (*[k]ani, *[k]ain ‘food, eat’), sal bilge water (POC *sa(dr)a/e ‘dig, bail’)

Examples of words of more than one possible origin are the following:

- guul sailing canoe (PETrF *ŋgola,*ŋgalo, POC *(ŋ)aluwan) – possibly an Austronesian loan to all local languages
- piki dream (PETrF *pi[j]io, POC *(m)pi(t)i)
- sii-/siya- stand, stand doing (CA *ja-n/*ji-n ‘stand’, POC *sir ‘stand’)
- Ama Mum, Mum’s Sister (PP *ŋam[au]ŋ, PETrF *ŋaam[au] ‘mother, breast’)
- Baba Dad, Dad’s Brother (PP *baŋban, PETrF *ba(ba)m ‘father’)
- buthu sand (PP *buju dirt, POC *(ka)pu ‘dust’)
- kapu, GY kaapu seed (PP *gambuŋ ‘egg, seed’, PETrF *kapu ‘egg, seed’, POC *k[ao]mpuŋ ‘seed’)
- thala- chew (PP *ja-l eat, POC *tolon ‘gulp, devour, sip, swallow’)

Where kin terms are concerned, one is Australian, ipi, GY iipi wife, PP *yibi ‘woman, female’, two are probably Australian, Athe Grandad, cf. Urradhi athi, athidha ‘maternal grandfather’, PP *ŋaji, and Aka Grandma, PP *baga. Another, Ama Mum, Aunty could be Australian or Papuan, while Baba Dad, Uncle could be Australian, Papuan or Austronesian – or even simultaneously from all three. The kinship system is fairly different from that of the neighbouring Australian cultures, and is essentially the same as that of the neighbouring Papuans. The Western and Central Language and Meriam Mir kin terms are very similar, surprisingly so for unrelated languages, and the neighbouring Urradhi system is very dissimilar, surprisingly so for related languages:

| father, male of father’s generation in father’s clan/moieties |
|-----------------|-----------------|
| WCL | thathi, GY thathi; emotive Baba, KKY Bab |
| MM | bab |
| Urradhi (Atampaya) | ibhuny; (Angkamuthi/ Yadhaykenu) ibhadha |
On the other hand, the singular personal pronouns (Table 1) are Australian, and are close to their Proto Paman predecessors. The dual and plural pronouns (Table 2), however, show signs of something akin to “pidginisation”. The Australian 1st exclusive dual *ŋanapula, via *ŋampula (cf. Urradhi ampula) became the inclusive dual ngeba, while the 1st inclusive plural *pali ‘we’ became the exclusive plural ngey, i.e. they in effect swapped place. The other two 1st pronouns were formed from *pali with what appear to be deictics, an exclusive -bay and an inclusive -pa/pü-. The 3rd person dual appears to be suffixed by the proprietary suffix LAI, while the most radical change is that the Australian non-singular 2nd person pronouns have been lost, replaced by the “pidgin” forms *ŋin+pal you+two > nipel, KKY/OKY ngipel, and *ŋin+tana you+they > nitha, KKY/OKY ngitha (OKY ngithana, ngitha). In this the pronoun ni, KKY/OKY ngi acts like the demonstratives i- this, here and se-/si- that, there, dual forms ipal these two and sepal/sipal those two and plural forms itha these and setha/sitha those.

On the whole, the Western and Central Language seems to be a mixed language resulting from language shift in the model of Thomason and Kaufmann (1988: 212), where speakers within a long-term multilingual community characterised by mothers of mainly Australian origin, some of Papuan origin, and fathers of mainly Austronesian/Papuan background over time ‘create’ a new language (see further below in the next section).

THE LANGUAGE AS A RECORD OF AUSTRALIAN AND PAPUAN PREHISTORY: HOW OLD IS THE LANGUAGE?

When Island Southeast Asians and then Europeans began visiting Torres Strait from around 500 years or so ago (cf. Haddon, 1935:15) – with intensification after the colonisation of Australia in 1788 – the present-day language situation seems to have been well-established. But how old is the language? That is to say,
TABLE 1. The Paman sources of the singular pronouns.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>WCL</th>
<th>1st</th>
<th>2nd</th>
<th>3rd masculine</th>
<th>3rd feminine</th>
<th>who</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>KLY</td>
<td>ngay(i)</td>
<td>ni</td>
<td>nuy</td>
<td>na</td>
<td>nga</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KKY</td>
<td>ngay(i)</td>
<td>ngi</td>
<td>nuy</td>
<td>na</td>
<td>nga</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OKY</td>
<td>ngayi</td>
<td>ngi</td>
<td>nui</td>
<td>na</td>
<td>nga</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Proto Paman</td>
<td>*ŋayi</td>
<td>*ŋin</td>
<td>*nyu[lu]</td>
<td>*nyaan</td>
<td>*ŋaan</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

TABLE 2. Comparison of the WCL dual and plural pronouns with those of PP

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>WCL</th>
<th>nominative</th>
<th>oblique stem</th>
<th>nominative</th>
<th>oblique stem</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1st exclusive dual KKY archaic KulY</td>
<td>ngalbay</td>
<td>ngalbayni-ngalbeni-ngœibaini-</td>
<td>1st exclusive plural KKY OKY</td>
<td>ngœy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1st inclusive dual</td>
<td>ngœba</td>
<td>ngœebani-</td>
<td>1st inclusive plural KKY/OKY</td>
<td>ngalpa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2nd dual KKY/OKY</td>
<td>nipel</td>
<td>nipeni-ngipeni-</td>
<td>2nd plural KKY OKY</td>
<td>nitha</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3rd dual Boigu/OKY</td>
<td>palay</td>
<td>palamùní-palemùní-</td>
<td>3rd plural</td>
<td>thana</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PP</th>
<th>dual</th>
<th>plural</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1st exclusive</td>
<td>*ŋampula &lt; *ŋanapula</td>
<td>*ŋana</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1st inclusive</td>
<td>*ŋalipula</td>
<td>*ŋali</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2nd</td>
<td>*nyupula &lt; *nyurra-pula</td>
<td>*nyurra</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3rd</td>
<td>*pula</td>
<td>*jana</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

PHASE 1: UP TO AND BEYOND THE END OF THE ICE AGE: 8900–3500 YEARS AGO

Archaeology/Human Biology

The earliest evidence of human presence in Torres Strait is from Badu, 8900 years ago (David et al., 2004), when Torres Strait was still dry land. The rising waters at the end of the Ice Age pushed the local people south and north, though many stayed on the former high hills that stretch from Mabuyag down to Cape York. Archaeological evidence on Badu (David et al., 2004: 6) shows occupation there from 8900 – 6000 years ago, which then ‘tailed off’. The few archaeological records post-6000 years ago indicate either sporadic visits from Australia, if not a continued highly nomadic existence of retained ownership of the islands – or both.

Modern ‘biological archaeology’, namely blood typology, physical appearance and
skeletal evidence, also shows that the Torres Strait Islanders, neighbouring Cape York peoples and Papuan peoples have a close relationship to each other, i.e. genetically, northern Australians and southern Papuans are very closely related (Kirk, 1972: 373; Moore, 1979: 309). However, between Cape York, Torres Strait and Papua there have been untold centuries of intermarriage, adoption and the practice of procuring what Islanders called gasamayzigal captives, i.e. people taken in raids either as wives or workers, or as children. Therefore, comparison of modern Papuan, Torres Strait and Cape York human biology will not necessarily give good clues as to what differences or similarities existed in the far past. There are also interesting local variations; one inland Cape York group, for example, were said to be stocky and thick-set “when they came out of the bush” in the early 1900s, quite unlike their coastal Urradhi relatives (Richard Tamwoy of Injinoo, personal communication, 1994).

Folk History

None as yet identified in Torres Strait itself that refers to this period; all present Torres Strait oral history refers to a world of islands that have always been there bounded by two dhawdhay major land masses to the south and north. Neighbouring Papua could have some oral history dating back to this period, while potential oral history has probably been lost in neighbouring Australia due to loss of language and culture.

Linguistics

Some linguistic evidence north and south of Torres Strait seems to point to the possibility that the northern Paman, Eastern-Trans Fly and South-Central Papuan languages and therefore peoples share common origins; that what is now Torres Strait and the Arafura sea was dry land inhabited by people whose descendants are still in the area both to the north and the south (cf. Foley, 1986; Donohue and Terril, 1996; Moore, 1979: 309).

PHASE 2: 3500–2600 YEARS AGO

Archaeology/Human Biology

From around 3500 years ago occupation intensified, going by evidence from Badu (David et al., 2004) and Mabuyag (McNiven et al., 2006). These are linked to increasing Aboriginal activity in tropical North Queensland at the time (McNiven et al., 2006: 66).

Folk History

Established Aboriginal occupation of certain islands is remembered in Torres Strait folk history that deals with the start of the next phase (Phase 3).

Linguistics

Common Australian influence moved into Cape York from further south in Australia (O’Grady, 1979; Wurm, 1972), ultimately overlaying (at least partly) local languages to form the Paman group; this influence reached Torres Strait quite early, as Australian words in the language are on the whole more archaic in form than the neighbouring Paman languages, which underwent later changes. In particular, there has been little initial dropping, sporadically of *n, *g/*k and *y (see below), unlike Gudang, Urradhi and other Cape York languages, which indicates either that the language was taken out of the Australian sphere just when this had started, or it is independent in the Western and Central Language, or there are later loans from the Australian mainland. The fact that words of Papuan and Austronesian origin also appear to undergo this could suggest independent development:
Ngalmun Lagaw Yangukudu: the Language of our homeland

Furthermore, a few early Common Australian monosyllabic stems have been retained relatively ‘unchanged’:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Proto Paman</th>
<th>gloss</th>
<th>WCL</th>
<th>gloss</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>*ŋara</td>
<td>‘enter’</td>
<td>ara-</td>
<td>enter, put in</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>*nıwiri</td>
<td>‘mosquito’</td>
<td>iwi</td>
<td>mosquito</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>*ŋajji</td>
<td>‘maternal grandfather’</td>
<td>Athe</td>
<td>Grandad</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>*ŋam[au]ŋ</td>
<td>‘breast, mother’</td>
<td>Ama</td>
<td>Mum, Aunty</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(this has essentially the same proto form in the neighbouring Papuan languages, i.e. *ŋam[au])</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>*ŋamb-</td>
<td>‘cover’</td>
<td>aba-</td>
<td>cover</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>*giimV-</td>
<td>‘see’</td>
<td>iima-</td>
<td>see, find</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>*giba</td>
<td>‘scrape’</td>
<td>iiba-</td>
<td>grate, scrape</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>*yibi</td>
<td>‘woman, female’</td>
<td>ipi, GY iipi</td>
<td>woman, female</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>ipika (iipka-), KKY ip-/yip-/ yecpkaz(i)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>*yiga</td>
<td>‘laughter’</td>
<td>either egi</td>
<td>laughter, laugh</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cf. PETrF*gıga</td>
<td>‘joy, happiness’</td>
<td>or ikay, KKY ika</td>
<td>happiness, joy, gladness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PETrF *kiıgro</td>
<td>‘life’</td>
<td>KKY igil</td>
<td>life</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PSEPA *kain/*kani</td>
<td>‘food, eat’</td>
<td>ay</td>
<td>food</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PSEPA *sapu</td>
<td>‘dust, dirt’</td>
<td>aapa</td>
<td>garden bed, garden</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>cf. MM sep ‘ground, soil’, Gudang ampa ‘ground, soil’ Gizrra tiıp ‘ground’ Wipi sopā ‘garden’ apa-</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>cf. MM sep ‘down, below’ Wipi sap ‘down, below’ (in compounds)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A third archaism is the retention of the Common Australian masculine and feminine gender, lost in neighbouring Paman languages. Gender is also found in neighbouring Trans Fly languages, which also have two-gender masculine-feminine systems (except Meriam Mir, which is genderless), though not marked on the pronouns themselves. (Wurm, 1975: 333-334).

**PHASE 3: 2600–800 YEARS AGO**

Archaeology/Human Biology

Settlers arrived from Papua around 2600 to 2800 years ago and colonised the uninhabited and inhabited islands. They brought horticulture, archaeological evidence of this being dated to as early as 2500 years ago on Saibai (Barham, 1999: 79) and the Murray group (Carter & Lilley, 2008: 74,76 – with evidence for coconut, banana and yam). Torres Strait has been horticultural ever since.

Lapita pottery also appeared at the same time, which had been brought to the Central District of south-east Papua by Austronesian
speaking settlers by around 2900 years ago (David et al., 2011; McNiven et al., 2011). Sherds found on the Murray group date from 2600 to 1600 years ago, with one very late anomaly of 700 years ago (Carter & Lilley, 2008: 74). These are made of material that could ultimately be from the Kubor region of the New Guinea Highlands or the Kikori area to the north-east of the Fly Delta, which leads Carter and Lilley (2008) to postulate a Papuan settlement in Torres Strait rather than Austronesian, though as the sand material shows strong wearing it is probably that it had been eroded downstream before use (Ian McNiven, pers. comm., 2011). The same style of pottery has been found at Mask Cave on Pulu near Mabuyag and dates to two periods, 2600 to 2400 years ago and 1700 to 1600 years ago (McNiven et al., 2006: 67-68). It was of local Mabuyag make, crafted with technology and expertise that came from the east in south coastal Austronesian Papua New Guinea. Given such early dates, coupled with the oral history summarised below, it is likely that Austronesians were directly involved in the settlement in Torres Strait.

Folk History

Mabuyag folk history recorded by Laade (Laade, 1968: 146-148, information from the Reverend Seriba Sagigi, Missi Mam and Jimmy Luffman) recounts that light-skinned traders from the ocean to the east established a base at Parema (northeast of Daru), intermarried with local Trans-Fly Papuans, then fairly soon after colonised Torres Strait (from Murray in the east to Mabuyag in the west) to avoid more intermarriage – particularly of their daughters – with the Papuans. At Mua, Badu and Mabuyag they found Aboriginal people, killed the men and kept the women (and presumably the children). Some chose to go north to Saibai, Dauan and Boigu so as to avoid even further intermarriage. Badu folk history further states that others later moved down from Badu and colonised the Muralag group. While the folk history has it that these initial colonisers were a culturally dominant group of Austronesian men who had married local Trans-Fly Papuan women from the Parema area, many, if not most, of the settlers would have been mixed Austronesian-Papuan as well as Papuan.

Linguistics

Carter’s postulation of Papuan settlement ultimately from either the Kikori or Kubor areas is not supported by Meriam Mir. Kikori is on the border of the north-east Kiwai language area. The Kiwai (of the Trans New Guinea Phylum group) descended into the north Fly Delta from the headwaters of the Fly River in the Highlands around 2000 years ago; this, it must be noted, is based on linguistic evidence only (Wurm, 1975: 324). Meriam Mir is closely related to the other East Trans-Fly languages Bine, Wipi and Gizrra, and more distantly to the Pahoturi Family (Agòb, Idi, Taeme and Ende), to the north and northwest. Meriam Mir folk history of the peopling of the Eastern islands is that they first settled Mer, then moved to the other islands of the group (Anna Shnukal, pers. comm., 2012). Whether there were previous inhabitants or not is unclear. The Meriam may have overlaid earlier inhabitants who would have been the same people as the Western and Central Islanders, the Gamle (Koiki Mabo, personal communication, 1980; Lawrie, 1970: 326). Various aspects of the Western and Central Language and Meriam Mir show a period of at least partial bilingualism over a long period, perhaps stemming from such an original settlement pattern.

Austronesian linguistic and cultural influence in the Torres Strait area is not disputed; however such an early date of around 2600 years or so ago is. Carter and Lilley advise caution in blindly accepting linguistic and cultural evidence of pre-colonisation Eastern Austronesian contact in Torres Strait, such as that presented in David et al. (2004): ‘this linguistic evidence, along with
suspected Austronesian traits in Islander oral histories and legends as well as in rock art stylistic affinities, lacks chronological control and may reflect the influx of Pacific Islanders to Torres Strait in colonial times’ (Carter & Lilley, 2008: 79). They also highlight the sea-going capabilities of coastal Papuans (Carter & Lilley, 2008: 79); the migration of Trans-New Guinea Phylum Papuans to East Timor and neighbouring islands is a case in point.

However, as the languages and cultural traits of the Pacific Islanders who came to Torres Strait in the colonisation period are very well known, it is clear that they cannot be the origin of most of the Eastern Austronesian words and (presumed) cultural traits in the language. Many of these words could only have come from the South-East Papuan Austronesians (see Table 3), and at least in some cases clearly predate the Motu trading voyages (the Hiri

### TABLE 3. South East Papuan Austronesian words in languages of the area, comparing Proto-Central District Austronesian (PCD), Proto South-East Papuan Austronesian (PSEPA) and Proto-Polynesian (PPN), subgroups of Proto-Oceanic (POC).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th><strong>outrigger</strong></th>
<th><strong>OKY şařima</strong></th>
<th><strong>MM sîrib</strong></th>
<th><strong>Motu darima</strong></th>
<th><strong>Samoan ’ama</strong></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>KLY sayim</strong></td>
<td>Kiwi şarima</td>
<td>PCD <em>Darima</em></td>
<td>PPN <em>sama</em></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>KKY sayma</strong></td>
<td>Daru Kiwi harima</td>
<td>PSEPA <em>(n)sarima</em></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>ideal song form:</strong> sayima</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Gudang charima (OKY loan)</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Torres Strait Area Proto Form</strong> <em>sařima</em></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>*<em>POC <em>nsaRman</em></em></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>rope</strong></td>
<td><strong>wœru/wuru/uru</strong></td>
<td>Kiwi waro, oro</td>
<td>Motu varo ‘creepersp.’</td>
<td>(not cognate)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>**KKY wœru/<em>wuru/<em>uru-</em></em></td>
<td>PCD <em>waro</em></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>(only in wœrukam[i] rope)</strong></td>
<td>PSEPA <em>waro</em></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>ideal song form:</strong> waru</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Gudang uurru (OKY loan)</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Torres Strait Area Proto Form</strong> <em>waru~</em>waro</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>*<em>POC <em>waRos</em></em></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>south-east (wind, direction)</strong></td>
<td><strong>OKY wœura</strong></td>
<td>MM waur</td>
<td>Motu laura</td>
<td>(not cognate)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>KLY wœewra</strong></td>
<td>Kiwi uro</td>
<td>PCD <em>na waura</em></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>KKY wœwr</strong></td>
<td>(*na definite article)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>ideal song form:</strong> waura</td>
<td>PSEPA <em>waura</em></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Torres Strait Area Proto Form</strong> <em>waura</em></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>*<em>POC <em>waura</em></em></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>magic (as a product, medicine, charms, etc)</strong></td>
<td><strong>OKY puuři</strong></td>
<td>(not cognate)</td>
<td>Motu hui</td>
<td>(not cognate)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>KLY puuyi</strong></td>
<td>PCD <em>pu[r]i</em></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>KKY puy</strong></td>
<td>PSEPA <em>pu[rl]i</em></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>ideal song form:</strong> puuyi</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Gudang upiri (OKY loan)</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Torres Strait Area Proto Form</strong> <em>puuři</em></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>*<em>POC <em>(m)puuluŋ</em></em></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>pig</strong></td>
<td><strong>bûrûm(a)</strong></td>
<td>MM borom</td>
<td>Motu boroma</td>
<td>Samoan pu’a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>ideal song form:</strong> bûrûma</td>
<td>Bine blomo/blome</td>
<td>PCD <em>boroma</em></td>
<td>PPN <em>puaka</em></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Kiwi boroma</td>
<td>PSEPA *mporoma, *mporok</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Torres Strait Area Proto Form</strong> <em>boroma</em></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>*<em>POC <em>(m)borok</em></em></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Motu); that is to say, they are not Motu or similar ‘recent’ Central District Austronesian. Further, the amount of influence shows strong, long-term contact, none of which occurred with any post-colonial South Sea Islanders.

The modern South-Sea Islanders came as seamen (and some women) who were not interested in spreading their language or culture (or in most cases Christianity). Their languages (Samoan, Rotuman, Drehu, Maori, and so on) have made no mark on local languages, apart from some loan words. The South Sea men preferred to keep their languages for their personal communication – these were not for people that they often considered to be inferior, Pidgin English being the preferred language of communication. This also reinforced their position as the co-workers of the White colonisers, along with the Malay, Filipino, Chinese, Japanese, Jamaican and other outsiders. The only real linguistic influence has been the replacement of the traditional languages in some communities by Broken, used by all foreigners to varying extents, including Europeans.

The various forms of South East Papuan Austronesian words appear to show long-term contacts over centuries. Many have a more ‘archaic’ Proto-South East Papuan Austronesian appearance, while a few resemble the more evolved Central District Austronesian languages, the sub-group of the South East Papuan Austronesian languages closest to Torres Strait; PSEPA is the immediate ancestor of PCD. It could be that trading voyages such as the Hiri Motu have a long history (from as much as 2900 years ago) and included some traders settling in areas such as Torres Strait. While the Hiri Motu was much more restricted in range in recent history, a wider range of contacts may have been maintained for a long time, allowing for more recent loans, possibly including loan words that could have arrived through knock-on trade across the Fly Delta. Having said this, on present knowledge, many words can not be assigned to a clear time period, as can be seen in the following list, which contains various items which range from clearly to possibly South-East Papuan Austronesian.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>WCL</th>
<th>PCD</th>
<th>PSEPA</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>aar dawn</td>
<td>*aro ‘sun, day’</td>
<td>*[ ]anso</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>barama</td>
<td>*bada ‘big’</td>
<td>*mpara</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bünge, bünge,</td>
<td>*bonj ‘night’</td>
<td>*mpoji</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KKY bongel</td>
<td>*puya ‘shine,</td>
<td>*mporoma,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>last night</td>
<td>glow, moon’</td>
<td>*mporok</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bürüm pig</td>
<td>*poroma, boro</td>
<td>*mpula</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>buya light</td>
<td>PCD *pula, PECD *vue, PWCD *puya ‘shine, glow, moon’</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>daaka side of</td>
<td>*raq ‘forehead,</td>
<td>*daq</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>face</td>
<td>face’</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>daana pool,</td>
<td>*ranu ‘water,</td>
<td>*dano ‘pool, lake’, *danu ‘water’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>lagoon, eye;</td>
<td>pool, lake’</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>life</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>gamu, GY</td>
<td>*gamu ‘belly’</td>
<td>*ŋkamo</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>gaamu body</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>geeru sugar</td>
<td>*garo ‘garden’</td>
<td>*garo</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>cane</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>kaazi child,</td>
<td>*taDi, PWCD *kati</td>
<td>*tansi ‘child; younger same sex sibling’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>person</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>maalu deep,</td>
<td>*malo ‘hollowed’</td>
<td>*ŋmal[ou] ‘submerge; reef; hollowed’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>deep sea</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>maayi (OKY</td>
<td>*mairi</td>
<td>???</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>maaři) nacre</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>müra all,</td>
<td>*mora ‘big,</td>
<td>*mora</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>total</td>
<td>numerous’</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>natha- cook,</td>
<td>*naDu ‘cook’</td>
<td>*nansu</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>roast, colour</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>paa fence,</td>
<td>*ba</td>
<td>*mpaa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>enclosure</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
NGALMUN LAGAW YANGUKUDU: THE LANGUAGE OF OUR HOMELAND

WCL     PCD     PSEPA
puuyi (OKY) magic, medicine    *pu[rl]ji *mpu[rl]ji
puuři (OKY) magic, medicine    ‘magic, medicine’
sal bilge water                 ??? *nsara ‘bail’
sayima outrigger (OKY sařima)   *Darima *nsarima(n)
susu breast; white sap          *DuDu *nsunsu
thanura-i- sit                  *tanu(t)aru *tanu(tali)
waadha, KKY                     *waDa *wada ‘exist, be present’
waa za reality                  *wai *wair
waa za existential emphasis adverb
waaku mat, sail                 ??? *paqu
waaru turtle                    *ponu ‘turtle, tortoise’
waer/wur/uur water (archaic KKY wœyr) *wai *wair
wœru/wuru/uru rope              *waro ‘vine, rope’
Wœœwra South-East              *(na) waura *waura
wœywi mango                    *(wai)wai *(wai)wai

PHASE 4: 800 YEARS AGO TO COLONISATION AND BEYOND

Archaeology/Human Biology

A significant period of change throughout Island Melanesia as well as elsewhere in the world (McNiven, 2006: 9); mirrored in Torres Strait, and evidenced by ‘a suite of sites across the Strait demonstrating major cultural changes taking place within the last 600-800 years’ (McNiven, 2006: 1). There appeared to have been ‘an absolute increase in activity across the region due to overall population increase. This activity continued virtually unchanged in the archaeological landscape into the modern period. If the archeological evidence from Moore (1979) is anything to go by, the migration of the Hiámo mentioned below may well have happened towards the beginning of this period – his dig at the Port Lihou site on Muralag showed that it was in constant and – perhaps by implication – unchanged use since around 700 years ago; though, of course, if a people with more or less the same material technology and means of making a livelihood as an already resident people moves in, this is not likely to be obvious in the archaeology.

Folk History

Folk history of various types of contacts between Australians, Islanders and Papuans abound, including trade, family ties, marriage, warfare, the spread of cults and religion, inter-tribe adoptions, wife-stealing, and so on. It is also a period when tales of contact with the markayl white spirits show that Makassans or the like were regularly visited the Straits. Within the area, the most significant migrations involve the Kiwai and the Hiámo of Daru. According to local Papuan folk history recorded by Lawrence (1989: 102), Daru was first settled by settlers from Yama. Lawrence’s informant stated that Daru was a mud flat that eventually became an island. As soon as it was habitable, Yama people settled there as a trading base. These people were later to be called the Hiámo (alt. Hiáma, Hiámu) by the Kiwai colonisers of Daru, Mawata and neighbouring villages. Landtman (1927: x, 337), Haddon (1935: 49) and Lawrie (1971 field notes) record that when the Kiwai raided and then colonised the area, the bulk of the Hiámo fled south to the Muralag group via Muri [Mt Adolphus] (see Appendix 2), and a few to Saibai and into Papua. This may also be the time that the Malo-Bomai religion from the Marind to the west (West Papuan border area) came to Mer.

Linguistics

The continuing contacts between Australians, Islanders and Papuans have meant continuous linguistic and cultural influences of various kinds, particularly in religious contexts, such
as the introduction of Kulkalgal turtle fertility ceremonies to Papua and the spread of the Kuiam cult into Papua (Landtman, 1927), the “conversion” of the Meriam to the Malo-Bomai religion, and so on. Language contact with Macassans and/or other Indonesians is also probably reflected in pre-colonisation West Austronesian loan words.

Evidence of the voice of the Hiámo are the words and songs in Daru Kiwai dance cycles and so on (as recorded in Landtman, 1927) said to be in the language of the Hiámo. These are clearly relatable to modern forms of the Western and Central Language, showing that the development of the language predates the Kiwai expansion to the south-west of their territory – and that the language was in existence before the Yama Islanders colonised Daru. The specific forms of the language of the Hiámo link them to the Kaurariga as well as to the Saibai-Dauan-Boigu people.

An example of contacts in this period reflected in vocabulary are words common to Kiwai and the Western and Central Language recorded by Landtman. Certain of the words in the list below show influence from Torres Strait into Kiwai rather than the other way around; i.e. they are words borrowed along with Torres Strait cultural traits into Kiwai, such as dugong and turtle hunting techniques, cosmology and the Kuiam cult, which includes kúbai from the Western and Central Language kùbay woomera. Some are fairly modern, such as karáko ‘metal-tipped spear’, WCL køelak, GY køelaaka spear, while others are older, and their phonology shows this in retaining word forms since lost in the Western and Central Language, such as naráto ‘dugong platform’ (PWCL *naráta > OKY neøratha, MY-KY neyath/nath, KLY/KulY níyath/nath, KKY nath) and Károngo (PWCL *kařanga > OKY Køéranga, WCL Kang, MM Kareg). The word koráre has undergone assimilation (*kolápi > *korapi > koräre), and kokádi shows denasalisation from *kokani (cf. MM kokni ‘knee’). Kwádi-kowódi is an acknowledged loan (the cluster kw~kow is from the WCL [q] allophone of k, mandatory in WCL with round vowels), while others can only be from the Western and Central Language because they have meaning in that language, but not in Kiwai, such as Køídjugubo, Sengérai and Uñoamo.

Among words common to the two languages are those that are ultimately Australian, such as sibo (PP *jiba ‘liver’) and karáko (PP *galga ‘spear’), a further sign that the words are loans into Kiwai. Sibo in Kiwai appears to refer on the whole to what in the Western and Central Language is expressed by ngaena breath, intellect, intellectual feelings, and in the compound ngaenakaapu to the heart, the seat of the breath and intellectual ‘feelings’ such as memory and agreement. The brain, thiigi, deals with intellectual aspects such as wisdom and cunning. Sibo also seems to cover some of the abstract meanings of the Western and Central Language siiba liver as well, which is the seat of the feelings such as love, hate and kindness.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Kiwai</th>
<th>WCL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ámo ‘harpoon rope’</td>
<td>amu, GY aamu id</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Báidam ‘Ursus Major’</td>
<td>Baydhám id. (lit. Shark)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>baidama, baidamo, baidamu ‘shark’</td>
<td>baidham(a) shark</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bobo ‘swamp lake’</td>
<td>peopu (pupu) id.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>djógubo ‘constellation’</td>
<td>zugub(a) god-like being; any star or constellation that is associated with the zugub</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>gábo ‘flat end of canoe’</td>
<td>gaab, GY gaaba flat-sterned canoe</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>gábara ‘sawfish’</td>
<td>gabaro id.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>gópu ‘sucker fish’</td>
<td>gapu, GY gaapu id.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>karáko ‘iron-tipped spear’</td>
<td>køelaaka spear</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Károngo ‘a god-like figure who became a constellation’</td>
<td>WCL Kang, MM Kareg id. one of the two chief Zugub (became a constellation)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>káuta ‘split canoe used for transport’</td>
<td>kautha id.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Overview

The language can be speculated to have originated in the colonisation of the islands by Austronesian-dominated settlers over 2600 years ago. If so, it would be the descendant of the previous Paman language with strong influence from the South East Papuan Austronesian language and the Trans-Fly Papuan language spoken by the colonisers. The Austronesian men formed an ‘elite’ who intermarried with local Trans-Fly Papuans before colonising the Straits. After moving to Torres Strait, there was further marriage with local Pamans. For a period of time, there was probably a multicultural community of speakers of the three languages, presumably with the majority of mothers speaking the Paman language. Such a period of time may have been as short as 3 or 4 generations, though in reality was probably long-term, keeping in mind the continued contacts with the neighbouring Papuans and Australians (to the present), as well as assuming continued long-term trade links from South-East Papua. In time, this multilingualism coalesced to create the Western and Central Language, the mixed Australian-Papuan-Austronesian language still spoken today, created by a people that are not Papuans, nor Aborigines, nor Austronesians, but that have elements of all three. The Melanesian component dominates genetically, and the Australian component linguistically. The language of the North-Western, Western, South-Western and Central islands of Torres Strait is the language of a true Island People.

It must be said, however, that this mix of linguistic and cultural backgrounds seems to be reflected in all the local languages, which have varying amounts of Australian, Papuan and Austronesian content. Meriam Mir, of course, is also the language of a true Island people, with a different mix of the same components reflecting its different – though related – history. None of the
Torres Strait area languages, however, as would be expected, are Austronesian; both linguistics and oral history discount this. The Austronesian men married local women and lived in a world dominated by Papuan and Australian languages.

**PART THREE: THE LANGUAGE**

All four dialects are very similar in phonology, morphology and structure, and therefore much of the following applies to the language as a whole. The presentation differs in minor ways from Bani and Klokeid (1971), Kennedy (1981, 1985a, 1985b) and Ford and Ober (1991), which on the whole took the surface forms of the language at face value without taking into account underlying forms and how these transform according to phonological environment and speech style. In part this was due to the general theoretical approach of the time; the language to be analysed is that which is least likely to be overtly monitored, i.e. normal, everyday speech. The present work takes the point of view that a whole view of the language can only be gained by looking at the whole language with all its varieties.

**THE SOUND SYSTEM OF THE LANGUAGE**

**VOWELS**

There are eight core (i.e. phonemic) vowels with a three-way contrast of round ~ non-round, high ~ low and mid ~ non-mid. Three of the non-mid vowels have short and long members, one is phonemically long, and the four mid-vowels are phonemically short. Previous works assume 6 vowels, presenting two round vowels, u and o, rather than the four herein. That there are four separate round vowels can be shown by near minimal pairs, such as pùs, GY pùùsa fine hair, fur, down, pubic hair and pùs, GY puusi mist, modholpe butter banana and mòdhab price, cost, payment, pay.

Note that /ɔ:/ here represents a vowel more similar to Australian English broad rather French homme.

Comparative linguistics and vowel complementary distribution patterns suggest that the above eight-vowel system derives from an older Papuan style 4-vowel system contrasting high ~ low and non-round ~ round with short and long members. The mid vowels in general (but not exclusively) originate in 1) non-tense and 2) partly assimilated allophones of the short vowels:

| *Co > eC[o] | PETrF*biro, MM bir ‘side, rib’ | ber(a), B bera, SD bero side, rib |
| *Ci > iC[i] | *piti, MM pit ‘nose, beak’ | piti, GY piiti nose |
| *aCa > aC[a] | PP *bagal ‘stab, etc.’ | paga-prick, stick, stab, spear, shoot |
| *aCC > œC | PP *ŋampula (<*ŋanapula) ‘we dual inc.’ | ngaeba we dual inc. |
| *uCa > ùCa | PP *gul(g)a, PETrF *kula ‘stone’ | kula stone |
| *uCu > uCu | CA *bju ‘dirt’ | buthu, GY buthu sand |
| *oNa > ùNa | PETrF *omái ‘dog’, MM omái | ùmáy dog |
| *oNi > ù/ oC[ie] | PSEPA *bonji ‘night’ | bûngil/bongil, KKY bongel last night |

Due to language change such as the development of vowel shortening and lengthening, final and internal vowel deletion, and so on, the original allophonic variations have become phonemicised, with exceptions being either retentions of older forms, or loan words, or later sound changes.
Vowel Length

Vowels before consonant groups are short, except in rare cases of metathesis, such as *guruguy* around, *guurguy/gurguy*, and are long in most monosyllabic words, though exceptions are common, such as *nel* name, *ber* rib, side (of boat etc.), *sar* white tern, *kab* oar, paddle and others, where in effect the final consonant is virtually doubled, and the vowel “clipped”, thus [nelː], [berː], [sarː] and [kabː]. Long vowels do not appear in unstressed syllables except as a result of intonation, and do not appear in modified words except in restricted cases, such as the instrumental of monosyllabic vowel-final nouns (*yaa* speech > *yaadu*) and in the Kalaw Kawaw Ya dialect in the active singular perfective present (*patha*-chop > *pathiz* [paːtiz], *iima*-see, *find > imiz* [iːmiz]), the active singular perfective imperative (*patha* > *pathi* [paːti], *iima*-see, *find > imi* [iːmi]) and in the attainative singular perfective present when the stem has a long vowel (*patha* > *pathan* [paːtan], *iima* > *iman* [iːman]).

There is an uneasy interplay between (a) vowel length that contrasts word meaning, and (b) vowel length that has morphosyntactic force. Comparative and interdialect evidence suggests that vowel length formally contrasted word meaning, however the development of morphosyntactic vowel length has meant that contrastive vowel length is being lost. This is a characteristic of the language as a whole, however Kalaw Lagaw Ya is the only dialect that fully applies (b) and that has almost completely lost (a):

(a) word contrasts:
- *kaaba*, *kaab* dance performance; *node* (of bamboo, etc.); *kaba*, *kab* paddle, oar
- *na* (naa) she, it; *na* if, when, referencing clitic
- *ngaadha*, *ngaadh* appearance, looks; *ngadha*, *ngadh* who instrumental
- *kaazi*, *kaaz* child; *kaza*, *kaz* fathom, length from hand to hand, slack (of tide, rope, etc.)

(b) morpho-syntactic vowel length:

1) the unaffixed word contrasts with forms that are affixed by 1) an elided underlying morpheme, namely the Ø-marked specific locative, and 2) the singular present active perfective, which is a reduced morpheme:

* mùudha camp, shelter, house* nominative-accusative
* mùdh* camp, shelter, house Ø-marked specific locative
* naagi* look! watch! singular imperative
* nag* look(s), watch(es) singular present active perfective

The Ø-marked specific locative comes from an older form from which the final syllable (the ending) has disappeared; that is to say, a phonological morpheme has become a zero-morpheme while leaving the trace of its former presence by (a) the retention of the stem final vowel, and (b) the shortening of the previous long vowel. The former phonological morpheme exists in either fossilised or old-fashioned language, or sometimes in other dialects. The mid-to-late 1800s records of Kauřařagau Ya show that the older form of *mùdha* was variously *mùdhal*, *mùdhali*, *mùdhale*, *mùdhalai*, while the active singular present perfective in Kauarfaiagau Ya was *nagizi*, and in Kalaw Kawaw Ya is *nagiz* [naːgiz].

2) emotive semantics (diminutive/poetic as opposed to non-diminutive/non-poetic). The main vowel of the stressed syllable is long, or lengthened, in the nominative-accusative when non-emotive in bisyllabic and trisyllabic words with antepenultimate stress. When emotive, all vowels are short/shortened.

*kaazi* child, *kazi* kid, *kiddy*; *ipi* wife, *ipi* darling wife; *mœraapi* bamboo, *marápi* bamboo (songs, etc.)

As a result of such variation, all short vowels in Kalaw Lagaw Ya have long allophones,
and all long vowels have short allophones (Table 5).

In words such as gurguy around, in a circular movement (< guurguy < gurugu) and mòdhab (< mòòdhab), the long vowels are normally shortened in Kalaw Lagaw Ya because of the presence of the following voiced syllable.

Devoicing of Vowels

In colloquial speech vowels can be devoiced between voiceless consonants and further elide:

sesithama- > sesithama-, sesithama-, sesthama-
explain, judge, give judgement

kasa kay kedha, kasakay kedha, kas’ kay kedha but, however, on the other hand

Devoicing, however, plays an important part in Kalaw Lagaw Ya, where word-final vowels in non-emotive contexts are devoiced in formal speech when the vowel in the preceding syllable is long, and the word has no affix. In the case of nouns and verbs, this occurs in the nominative-accusative and singular perfective active imperative, though also occurs in particles such as waadha existential/reality emphasis, cf. Kalaw Kawaw Ya waza [wa:za]. Such devoicing also occurs in the gender forms of se-/si- there/that/those and i- here/this/these as well as in words where two or more syllables precede the endings -ka dative/imperfective and -zi ablative and the article formant -bi.

TABLE 5. Long and short allophones.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>long &lt;&gt; short</th>
<th>nominative</th>
<th>specific locative</th>
<th>long &lt;&gt; short</th>
<th>nominative</th>
<th>specific locative</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>liver; centre</td>
<td>siiba</td>
<td>siba, sibanu</td>
<td>wrapping</td>
<td>suupa</td>
<td>supa, supanu</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>dugong flipper</td>
<td>meetha</td>
<td>metha, methanu</td>
<td>wind, air</td>
<td>gùùba</td>
<td>gùba, gùbanu</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>dust, mist, spray</td>
<td>poeeya</td>
<td>poeya, poeyanu</td>
<td>slowness</td>
<td>sooba</td>
<td>soba, sobanu</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>red mangrove</td>
<td>thaga</td>
<td>thaga, thaganu</td>
<td>lung, spit</td>
<td>mòòsa</td>
<td>mòsa, mòsanu</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>mosquito</td>
<td>iwi</td>
<td>iwi, iwinu</td>
<td>baby shark</td>
<td>puri</td>
<td>puri, purinu</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>name</td>
<td>nel</td>
<td>nelay</td>
<td>excreta</td>
<td>kùma</td>
<td>kùma, kùmanu</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>mallard</td>
<td>bœga</td>
<td>bœga, bœganu</td>
<td>brain coral</td>
<td>bonaw</td>
<td>bonawa, bonawanu</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>axe</td>
<td>aga</td>
<td>aga, aganu</td>
<td>payment</td>
<td>mòdhab</td>
<td>mòdhabi, mòdhabinu</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Vowel Processes

In some words there is more or less free and unpredictable variation between two or more variants, some being metathetic variants. Of the examples below, se-/si- and pe-/pi- are in fairly free variation, except in the genitive
and genitive based forms, which always have se- and pe-. For some speakers, the e forms are normal when there is an a or u in the following syllable, otherwise i is found.

Free variation: se- ~ si- that, there, pe- ~ pi- specifically over there, thonar ~ thunar time, period, weather, etc., ugáy ~ ògáy waiting, ngabunan, ngarubi arrive, come PL.

Metathesis, on the other hand, is sporadic. It has been significant in the development of the language, however, as kœlák, GY keelaaka spear in comparison with the Pama-Nyungan *galga shows. Metathesis in the language consists of 1) a vowel or glide shifting to the other side of a neighbouring consonant and being replaced by an a or œ, or 2) o, u or i “jumping” a consonant and either leaving Ø or “itself”, or 3) metathesis of r.

Metathetic variation: palil(a), pœláyl(a), pœléyl(a), pœlél(a), pœlél(a), pilel(a) dry, dried, tekot(a), teukat(a) large puffer-fish, dœgam(u), side, part, direction, variant stems: daguma-, dœgámu-, guruguy > guurguy > gurguy around, in a circular movement, surunu > suurnu boating pole SLoc, tharpu, thapur(a) spoonbill, bireg shelf, stem bœréygï-, biregi-, ipikazil > iipikazil women, females, ùkasar(a), kosar(a) two (ùka- two, -sar(a) small number).

On the whole, however, vowel variation is fairly predictable. Apart from vowel length processes and the associated vowel devoicing, vowels can undergo 1) raising (or gradation) and 2) assimilation. These result in surface variation, with some words resisting change, others having “free” variants, and still others where variation has given sporadic dialect, subdialect, or idiolect variants. Such processes have also resulted in surface variation linked to certain syntactic or phonological environments, giving declensional/conjugational variation, such as in the singular personal pronouns, the dual-plural pronouns and masculine proper nouns.

A to œ raising is extremely common, to the point of being partially grammaticalised. In quite a few words raising can form the major part of the distinction between different forms of the word, as in the following. Though a in such words becomes œ due to

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>singular pronouns: a raises to œ, which can further assimilate to following u</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>case</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1st person singular</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>instrumental</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>accusative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>genitive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>dative</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>dual-plural pronouns and masculine proper nouns: i assimilates to following u:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>nominative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>dative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>locative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ablative</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
its position in a prestressed syllable, words of this category are distinguished only by the vowel quality by those speakers/communities where contrastive word stress has been lost.

mgä-[i-] look, watch: mgäy – active singular remote past imperfective; nögäy, %nögay – verbal noun

pära-[i-] fall, drop (fruit): pärä – active singular remote past imperfective; pöräy, %pöray – verbal noun

wari-[i-] fly imperfective: wärä – active singular present imperfective; wärä, %wärä – verbal noun dative

Verbal noun a-raising is an example of destressed raising, where the word stress shifts from the underlying stressed syllable. Similar raising also occurs when words of two or more syllables are preceded by a phonological word. The modifying morpheme takes the main phrase stress, hence the stressed syllable of the modified morpheme becomes destressed:

mäbayg person: kápü mäbayg ~ kápü m‘bayg (kapu good), sépalab’ mäbayg (sepalabi those two)

kázil children: thánamùn kœzil their children, ithááb’ kœzil ~ ‘thááb’ kœzil these children

märkay white ghost, European: tháwpay mörkay a short, white ghost ~ European, inùúb’ mörkay ~ ‘núúb’ mörkay this white ghost ~ European

Vowels are subject to optional raising in unstressed syllables under somewhat differing rules. “Destressed” raising normally only effects a, and occurs in open and closed syllables. Unstressed vowel raising also optionally affects e (> i), and is only found in open syllables:

mùdhakashter, camp, house DAT > mûdhökkë, müdhkë, müdhökkë, müdhak‘, müdhök’

wanika eat active present imperfective > wanikë, wanikë, wanik'
TABLE 6. The Kalaw Lagaw Ya consonants.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>voiceless</th>
<th>voiced</th>
<th>nasal</th>
<th>“flaps”</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>labial</td>
<td>p</td>
<td>b</td>
<td>m</td>
<td>w</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>velar</td>
<td>k</td>
<td>g</td>
<td>ng</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>lamino- dental</td>
<td>th</td>
<td>dh</td>
<td>n</td>
<td>l</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>apico-alveolar</td>
<td>t</td>
<td>d</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>r</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>alveopalatal</td>
<td>s</td>
<td>z</td>
<td>--</td>
<td>y</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

There is some allophony. The voiceless and voiced labial, velar and lamino-dental stops, normally aspirate, at times become fricatives (i.e. $p^h > φ$, $θ^h > θ$, $k^h > x$, $b^h > β$, $dh^h > ð$, $g^h > γ$). This allophony is normally unnoticed by native speakers. These stops also have unaspirated variants when intervocalic, or when syllable or word final when another consonant follows in the same breath group.

The stops $t$ and $d$ differ by being nonaspirate, and have aspirated allophones only at the end of words as a result of final vowel devoicing. In a few restricted words $d$ varies with $r$, the most common being words based on the morphemes kaday-/karay- upwards: kada/ka/ka/kara/karka upwards, northwards, kadama/karaman rip up/off, pakada/pakaraman break, destroy, tear up, rip up, kadaythari/karaythari stand up, etc. Earlier works included $n$ and $l$ in the apico-alveolar series rather than the lamino-dental series; this was because the first descriptions did not recognise the distinction for the stops, and the series was presented as if it was English ($t$, $s$, $d$, $n$, $l$, $r$). When $th$ and $dh$ were proved to be separate phonemes, it was not realised that (a) statistically, the apico-alveolar $t$ and $d$ are the odd ones out, not $th$ and $dh$, and (b) $l$ and $n$ are also lamino-dental. The alveolar stops are relatively rare, the percentages in a 2059 stem-list being: $th$ 14.7%, $dh$ 12.7%, $d$ 4.2% and $t$ 2.4% (author’s research notes).

The syllabants $s$ and $z$ can be coronal fricatives or palatal affricates except when word final, where only the coronal fricatives are found. In both cases the tip of the tongue is behind the bottom teeth. The fricative and affricative difference is noticed by speakers and therefore can be used stylistically to convey feelings such as embarrassment, age, and so on. For example, susu breast can pronounced cho! by embarrassed children, while ‘so! thanks, the colloquial form of eso, is always pronounced cho!

In the environment of round vowels $k$, $g$ and $ng$ are phonetically [q], [g] and [ŋ], and both these and the labials in this environment often have a $w$ off-glide. This is the source of spelling variation in words such as köoda men’s important discussion place, such as kod, kwod, kud and koad. In the same environments $t$ and $d$ are ever so slightly retroflex, though without the r-colour of true retroflex consonants.

Vowel and Consonant Glides

The present work differs from previous works in assuming two types of glide, (1) those which are vowels in underlying representations, forming surface diphthongs, and (2) those that act as consonants. That is to say, glides can be classified as vocalic or consonantal according to phonological characteristics and origin.

Vowel+vocalic glide combinations are herein termed for convenience ‘diphthongs’. Though they are not separate phonemes as in English, they do have specific characteristics. In essence, diphthongs act as a vowel unit. Diphthongs often originate where an intervening consonant has been lost, as in goeiga (Bani-Klokeid goyga) day, sun, mid-1800s Kaurafaigau Ya gërigar, and in the genitive, where *ngu becomes u: *laa-nga-ku > lagau (Bani-Klokeid lagaw). Metatheis in sporadic cases has also created diphthongs, where a vowel “jumps” a preceding consonant, e.g. Kalaw Kawaw Ya peku, stem peku-, Kalaw Lagaw Ya peuk.
(pewuk), stem peuka- (Bani-Klokeid pewka-) whopper fish (alt. whitelip, sweetlip), PP *gaalu ‘ear’ > kaura (Bani-Klokeid kawra). At times such resulting vowel combinations retain their separate vowel status (as often happens in peuk), and at times the two vowels coalesce to become a diphthong (as in the stem form peuka-/pewka-, and in kaura/kawra). Having said this, in certain styles it is common for diphthongs to be split into discrete vowels. This includes the pronunciation of sounds in isolation clearly to show correct pronunciation, and in singing. In such cases words like gœiga (gœyga) day, sun and kaura (kawra) ear are normally syllabified/ pronounced as gœ-i-ɡa and ka-u-ra.

In contrast, consonantal glides fit into phonological patterns typical of consonants in the language, and are in syllable terms the initial of the syllable they are in, and become syllable-final under segment deletion rules, as happens with all consonants. Furthermore, in quite a few cases, y and w are the modern realisation of older *ř and keep this original consonant characteristic, as in sayim(a) outrigger (older *sařima, cf. OKY sařima), maayi pearl shell (older *maaři, cf. OKY maarί), gengaawu skin, hide, leather (older *gangάru), and (through metathesis) kaywa island (older *kauɾa, cf. OKY kauɾa, KKY kawa, MM kaur).

The contrast has declensional repercussions. Words ending in a consonantal glide, such as away pelican, decline like any noun whose nominative ends in a consonant (in colloquial speech, the situation is more complex, for which see Segment Deletion):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>nominative-accusative</th>
<th>genitive</th>
<th>dative</th>
<th>ablative</th>
<th>plural</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>away pelican</td>
<td>awayaw</td>
<td>awayaka</td>
<td>awayangu</td>
<td>awayal</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>awar fingernail</td>
<td>awaraw</td>
<td>awaraka</td>
<td>awarangu</td>
<td>awaral</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bayag longtom</td>
<td>bayagaw</td>
<td>bayagaka</td>
<td>bayagangu</td>
<td>bayagal</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Words that end in diphthongs decline as vowel-final words, the exceptions being that the genitive ending -w elides (a) when the word ends in a glide (two glides cannot come together in the same syllable), and (b) when the word ends in -u (except in formal speech in Kalaw Lagaw Ya only):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>nominative-accusative</th>
<th>genitive</th>
<th>dative</th>
<th>ablative</th>
<th>plural</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ũmay dog</td>
<td>ũmay</td>
<td>ũmayka</td>
<td>ũmayngu</td>
<td>ũmayl</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>uubi liking, want</td>
<td>ubiw</td>
<td>ubika</td>
<td>ubingu</td>
<td>ubil</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>buuthu sand, beach</td>
<td>buuthu,</td>
<td>buthuka</td>
<td>buthungu</td>
<td>buthul</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>GY buthuw</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Monosyllabic-stem words that end in a diphthong differ from their vowel-final counterparts only in modifying the instrumental (NU > -thu[n]) and the homophonic specific locative, proprietive and plural forms (LAI > -thay):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>nominative-accusative</th>
<th>genitive</th>
<th>instrumental</th>
<th>specific locative, proprietive, plural</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>muuy fire</td>
<td>muyngu</td>
<td>muythu/muythun</td>
<td>muythay</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>maa spider</td>
<td>mangu</td>
<td>maan/maanu</td>
<td>malay</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>lii basket</td>
<td>lingu</td>
<td>lidu/lidun</td>
<td>liday</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Diphthongs can undergo three types of monophthongisation:

Main-vowel assimilation to the glide (œw, œy): dhœœwba > dhuuba swelling; œydha- > wiidha- place, lay, apply

Main vowel partially assimilates to the glide, which can then elide (ay > ey > e, œw > ow > o): kuyay knife, sword > kuyey > kuye; kœwbu battle, raid > kowbu > kobu

Glide sporadically elides: kuykùthal long > kukùthal, danalmayka life dative > danalmaka, napay that F ahead there > napà, mûdhawlaaga home, village > mûdhalaaga, Kalaw Lagaw Ya > Kala Lagaw Ya, Kala Laga Ya, dhawdhaylayg mainlander > dhawdhalayg

This can also have declensional and conjugational effect, particularly in verbs, where in certain paradigms, monophthongisation has become permanent, in others there is variation, while in syllables followed by a syllable containing u/u or i, or by an underlying final r, monophthongisation does not occur:

- wala-i-ka climb active present imperfective > waleka (not *walayka)
- wala-i-ma climb active today past perfective > walema, waleyama (archaic form: walayma)
- wala-i-dhe climb active remote future perfective > waledhe, waleydhe (archaic form: walaydhe)
- wala-i-ngùl climb active recent past perfective > walayngùl (not *walengùl)
- wala-i-dhin climb active remote past perfective > walaydhin (not *waledhin)
- wala-i-r climb active remote past perfective > walay (not *waler)

Glide deletion has become permanent in modified forms of the pronoun palay they dual, thus palamùn GEN, palamûdh SIM, etc.

**THE WORD**

Words in the language vary from one syllable, like nga who, to many syllables, e.g. pabalkabùthayzimayka for/to the thing that has been laid down across something, colloquial form pabalkabùthzimaka. There does not appear to be an upper limit on the number of syllables that can make up a morphologically complex word, though where stems are concerned the upper limit appears to be five syllables. One word, poknintheway long sea anenome sp., however, in postulated underlying form has seven syllables: *pokaninathewaya-.

Kennedy, Ford and Ober assumed that the elicitation form of a word is the basic form of the word, or, where verbs are concerned (in this latter agreeing with Bani and Klokeid), the present singular is the basic form of the verb. This approach led Ford, Ober and Kennedy to postulate consonant-final stems for Kalaw Kawaw Ya nouns that then add unpredictable epenthetic vowels when affixes are added. Because many of the same words in Kalaw Lagaw Ya end in devoiced vowels that are exactly the same as the ‘unpredictable’ epenthetic vowel, Klokeid and Bani’s analysis assumes vowel-final stems for all words except verbs.

Various pieces of evidence favour Bani/ Klokeid’s analysis. In the case of the three words in Table 7, thama is a recognised

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Stem</th>
<th>Bani/Klokeid</th>
<th>Ford/Ober</th>
<th>present work</th>
<th>gloss</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>thaama-</td>
<td>thaama</td>
<td>tham</td>
<td>thaam, GY thaama PL thama-l</td>
<td>branch</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>kaazi-</td>
<td>kaazi</td>
<td>kaz</td>
<td>kaaz, GY kaazi PL kazi-l</td>
<td>child</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>yalkapu-</td>
<td>yalkaapu</td>
<td>yalkap</td>
<td>yalkap, GY yalkaapu PL yalkapu-l</td>
<td>lock of hair</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
variant in Kalaw Kawaw Ya not noted by Ford, Ober or Kennedy, *kazi* exists as the diminutive (and poetic) form, *yalkap, yalkaapu* is a compound of *yal* soft, *hair* and *kapu* seed, body part, fruit, etc., and in ideal song form, the final vowel is restored as a full vowel, thus *thaama, kaazi* and *yalkapu*.

Where verbs are concerned, the rule of thumb was ‘take away whatever appears to be affix, and what is left is the stem’:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Klokeid/Ford/Ober/Kennedy</th>
<th>gloss</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>thari</td>
<td>stands up</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tharan</td>
<td>stands something up</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>thaari</td>
<td>stand up!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tharal</td>
<td>stand (it) up!</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>thar-</td>
<td>stand up (stem)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Looking at the various forms of verbs (around 100 for a regular verb) as well as idiolectal, dialectal and other variants, shows that verbs, like nouns, have vowel final stems, and that the stem-final vowel elides in certain cases – in all cases in the present singular active perfective, *thari*, Kalaw Kawaw Ya *thariz*, and the equivalent imperative, *thaari*, Kalaw Kawaw Ya *thari*. In the case of *thari/tharan*, the stem is *thara-*, the verbal noun *tharay* (*thara-i* VN), the remote past singular active imperfective is *tharay* (*thara-i-Ø-Ø-[r<Ø]*), the today past singular active perfective is *tharema*, beside *thareyama* and *tharima*, as well as the rare *tharayma* (*thara-i-Ø-ma*), and so on.

**WORD STRESS**

Contrastive word stress similar to the contrastive pitch accent of Meriam Mir is present, though being lost in some (sub/idio) dialects. There are two types, inherent and shifted. Inherent stress is either on the first syllable (the majority) or the second (a large minority). Certain affixation can cause the accent to shift from the first to the second, or the second to the third, hence the term shifted stress (in the following the acute accent represents the stressed syllable, and the grave accent secondary stress).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>initial stress</th>
<th>second syllable stress</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>séna, sééna that</td>
<td>kédhá thus</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>káázi child</td>
<td>mœráp, GY mœraapi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>giuway environment</td>
<td>thithúy, GY thithuuyi star</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>kúwath large grey mosquito;</td>
<td>kuwápay cover of coconut</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>brolga</td>
<td>bud</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In reduplicated and compound forms, the stressed syllable of the iteration has secondary stress:

mithimí painter, holding rope (dinghies etc.), pírupíru rainbow bird, yábugúd, GY yábugúùda road, path, way (yabu way, path, road, gùùda mouth, opening), ngœnakáp, GY ngœnakààpu heart (ngœna breath, kapu, GY kaapu body part).

The verbal noun suffix -y and the proprietive suffix LAI cause the accent to shift to the syllable they are attached to in words of two or three stem syllables where the underlying penultimate stem syllable carries the pitch accent:

verbs: núúda- squash > nudáy, niya- sit, stay > niyáy

adjectives, nominalised adjectives: kúla stone > kùlálnga stony object, stoniness, kemáána heat > kemœnálnga hot object, heat (state)

Verbs whose stem have three or more syllables shift the accent from the first syllable to the second in the following finite forms. This is retained in full in Bœigu Kalaw Kawaw Ya and Kaiwalgau Ya, whereas in (old-fashioned) Kalaw Lagaw Ya it is found in the singular active perfective present and imperative, and in other forms in more archaic (or poetic) speech.
Sometimes, the pitch accent shift gives minimal contrasting pairs - though in certain verb forms loss of syllable stress also causes monophthongisation (in some cases optional) of ay to e (and further fronting to i), and fronting of a to œ:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>non-truncating</th>
<th>attainative</th>
<th>active</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>bárpuda- sell</td>
<td>imperative</td>
<td>bárpuúdi GY, bárpúd/bárpud BY</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>today past</td>
<td>bárpudanu</td>
<td>bárpuðima; older form: bárpuðima</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>truncating (internal)</th>
<th>attainative</th>
<th>active</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>púratha- eat</td>
<td>imperative</td>
<td>púraathi GY, púrath/púrath BY</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>today past</td>
<td>púrthanau</td>
<td>púrútahima, púrúthima, púrúthima, younger KLY: púrúthema, púrúthima</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In bisyllabic-stem and 3+-syllable-stem internal truncating verbs, the accent shifts to the final syllable in the verbal noun, while in other 3+-syllable verbs, the first syllable retains the high pitch, while the final syllable has secondary pitch: **púratha- eat > púrthây, bárpuda- sell > bárpudây, thákama- fight > thákamây**.

**SYLLABIFICATION**

There are six core syllable types in the language. The onset can be Ø or C (any consonant, including the consonantal glides y and w), the nucleus is always a vowel, and the coda can be Ø, a vocalic glide, or L (the liquids l and r). The one complex syllable final cluster is in the archaic Kalaw Kawaw Ya **weyr** water, liquid (normally **wær/wur/ur**, Imasu Waigana personal communication 1982).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>core syllable shapes</th>
<th>ONC</th>
<th>ONC</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>uu over-ripe; yellow (leaves, etc.)</td>
<td>ØVØ</td>
<td>CVØ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>aay food</td>
<td>ØVG</td>
<td>CVG</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>aar dawn (a poetic word)</td>
<td>ØVL</td>
<td>CVL</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In unmodified multisyllabic words the first and second syllables can have the same form as in monosyllabic words, though non-initial syllables always have a C-onset. The third syllable has either a Ø or G coda, while fourth, fifth (and nth) syllables can only have a Ø coda. Through segment deletion rules (see below), the onset becomes the coda of the preceding syllable, giving other syllable types, including clusters, which vary from (sub/idio)dialect to (sub/idio)dialect.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>stem</th>
<th>nominative</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>i-ra-</td>
<td>i-ra</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>gür-ba-</td>
<td>gür-ba</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>kür-thu-ra-</td>
<td>kür-thur</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ay-guy-</td>
<td>ay-guy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>stem</td>
<td>nominative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------------------</td>
<td>------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>away pelican</td>
<td>a-wa-ya-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>aybawdh harvest</td>
<td>ay-bawdh</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>gœgayth clanland, country</td>
<td>gœ-gay-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bathaynga morning, tomorrow</td>
<td>ba-thay-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>modholpe butter banana</td>
<td>mo-dhol-pe</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>markel silver mullet</td>
<td>mar-ke-la</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>kœruway</td>
<td>kœ-ru-way (ku-ru-way)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>kuruway</td>
<td>kœ-ru-way (ku-ru-way)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mabuyaagi Mabuyag</td>
<td>ma-bu-yaa-gi, ma-bu-yaa-gi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>zaruwam banana sp.</td>
<td>za-ru-wa-ma -&gt; za-ru-Ma</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sibiriyam banana sp.</td>
<td>si-bi-ri-ya-ma -&gt; si-bi-ri-ma</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Surface deletion creates other non-core monosyllabic word forms (see further below):

surface monosyllabic words:

- [Ø/C]VGC: Ait (Saibai place name)
- [Ø/C]VLC: dharb farm (KKY)
- [Ø/C]VGL: wœœwr south-east
- [Ø/C]VC: aad magpie goose; kab oar, paddle
- [Ø/C]VCC: nanth! dice in! (KLY only)

Consonant Clusters

In the underlying representation of words, at the level before surface vowel and syllable deletion rules come into operation, there are no consonant-consonant or glide-consonant clusters within syllables, apart from the archaic Kalaw Kawaw Ya wœyr water. The members of “permitted” clusters are in different syllables. Those found within stems are the following:

l/r-labial: arpa dawn, modholpe butter banana, gùrba small, dark crab, kulbay old, wœrma/urma drop of liquid, dew-drop, dew, pulma- take out of a bundle

l/r-dental: kùrthur caterpillar, grub, balthay-float, boerdh, boerdha long grass species, yaldha- spread out, stretch out

l/r-palato-alveolar: bœrsa bad luck, misfortune, walsi lagoon, arzi alarm call (but not IZ)

l/r-velar: arkath hole, pit, tunnel, kulka blood, wœrgi/urgi covering, cover, layer, palga spear shaft, kervay initiate, walnga steering board

y/w-labial: peepyiyam closely watched, mawpus dry coconut bunch stalk, mayba trigger, ngawbath same-sex in-law, gayma boil, abcess, wawmer frigate bird, paywa native basil

y/w-dental: gœgaythal clanlands, countries, kawtha half-canoe, maaydha magic, aybawdhal harvests, wœyní pass (by/over etc.) present active, kewni bundle, wad, bayludh dawn, bœwli recently burnt ground

y/w-velar: thaykuy yam species, Awkam Aukam (a name), Boeygu Boigu, awgadh totem, god, bayngan red-bellied snake, lawnga no, not

y/w-palato-alveolar: kaysi audience, kœwsa fruit; blossom, kawza sinker, yœwya- lie down/over (note that many people pronounce this word yuya-)

Unfamiliar clusters in early loans tended to (a) simplify, thus handkerchief > agesip, monkey > mages, custard apple katitap, and/or (b) to become clusters permissible in the language, thus tank > taaynga, bank > baaynga, or (c) a vowel is introduced to split the cluster, thus twenty > tuwente, spoon > sipun. Note, however, that carpenter has been borrowed (via Broken) as kamda, and anchor as angga (the indigenous word is yaadi).
Where words are modified (declined, suffixed, conjugated, compounded, etc.), various other clusters can occur, such as in kùlzi long ago, from way back, kùl- before + -zi ablative. Optional segment reduction can also create various others, as discussed further below:

pa-nanitha-i-Ø: pananith > pananth attack!
babatha-LAI: babathal > babthal cross-sex siblings; awuma-ka: awumaka > awumka, awmka > mourning dative

Segment Deletion (Word Shortening)

Vowels, consonants, glides and syllables can be deleted. This happens in unstressed syllables, the one exception being certain active forms of the verb ma- take, give, move, do, be, etc., where the stressed vowel elides leaving the stem as m- (e.g. ma-i-Ø-IZI > mizi active singular present perfective). Segment deletion depends on word length. It does not occur in monosyllables, is less likely in bisyllabic words, more common in words of three syllables, and so on; i.e. the longer a word is, the more likely shortening will occur.

The most common deletion is that of y and w, which can assimilate to neighbouring homorganic high vowels: wesul > wusul > usul dirty water; yel > yil > il gall bladder; weydha- > wuydha- > uydha- / wøydha- > wiidha- place, apply to.

Generally there is a certain amount of haphazardness in segment deletion, and it varies according to speech style, dialect, age of speaker, and idiolect. Older speakers are perceived to use ‘fuller’ language, while younger speakers are said to ‘cut’ the language short. This is to a certain extent true, though there is also a certain amount of subjectivity involved as well. Records of the 1800s general show much the same variants as now, and so suggest that the ‘old-young’ divide in the language depends more on the formal/deliberate and informal/colloquial divide. Segment deletion otherwise tends to be blocked in poetic language (where deleted vowels are often ‘restored’), proper nominals, onomatopoeic words and emotives.

The most common segment deletion is that of word-final vowels, which are often deleted in the nominative and accusative, in some invariable adverbs, and in colloquial speech in the endings -ka dative; present imperfective; near future, -dha simulative, -zi ablative, -bi demonstrative article formant, and -gi privative, particularly in longer words.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>stem</th>
<th>formal–poetic</th>
<th>colloquial</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>sara- white tern</td>
<td>sara</td>
<td>sar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>waama- bee’s wax</td>
<td>waama</td>
<td>waam</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ngùki- drinking water</td>
<td>ngùuki/ngùki</td>
<td>ngùük, ngùk</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>mœrápi- bamboo</td>
<td>mœraapi</td>
<td>mœráp</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>kuwiku- head</td>
<td>kuwiku</td>
<td>kuwik, kýyk</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>karùma- goanna; clumsiness</td>
<td>karùma</td>
<td>karùm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sayima- outrigger</td>
<td>sayima</td>
<td>sayim</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>modified words</td>
<td>formal–poetic</td>
<td>colloquial</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>gima-zi from above</td>
<td>gimazi</td>
<td>gimaz</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>siga-zi from afar</td>
<td>sigazi</td>
<td>sigaz</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>keødála-dha crocodile-like</td>
<td>keødáladh</td>
<td>keødáladh</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sazi-ka be standing (tree, etc.)</td>
<td>sœzikà/sazika</td>
<td>sœzik/sazik</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bùlika fly (insect) DAT</td>
<td>bùlikà</td>
<td>bùlik</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>maaba-gì don’t walk!</td>
<td>mabagi</td>
<td>mabag</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Equally important is internal vowel deletion, where unstressed a (œ), i and u can elide in stems of three or more syllables where the last two syllables of the stem do not carry word stress, or where the initial syllable does not carry stress; this happens most commonly when the word is affixed, though it can appear colloquially in unmodified forms.

Affixed words

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mabuyaagi Mabuyag</th>
<th>specific locative</th>
<th>non-specific locative</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>aun/awun blue-spotted ray</td>
<td>Mabuyginu</td>
<td>Mabuygiya</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>gôradh long digging stick, crowbar</td>
<td>awwanu, gôrdhanu, gôrdhnu</td>
<td>gôradhiya, gôrdhiya</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Unaffixed words, compounds, reduplicated words, phrases, etc.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>formal</th>
<th>colloquial reduction</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>new, young</td>
<td>kain (kayin)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>back that way, off to the side</td>
<td>paupa (pawupa)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>blue-spotted ray</td>
<td>aun/awun</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>mother’s brother, sister’s child</td>
<td>awadhe</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>spear</td>
<td>kelaaka</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>coconut bud cover</td>
<td>kuwapay</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>dirt, ground, land</td>
<td>bœradhar</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>river, stream, creek</td>
<td>kèsá</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>set free, let go</td>
<td>gethwana-(getha- hand, wana- put, let, leave)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>temporary shelter, lean-to</td>
<td>zarazar (zara, GY zaara cut frond or branch)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a small person</td>
<td>mœgi mœbayg</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>that inhabited island</td>
<td>senuubi laaga</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In the dual of the demonstrative articles, where the reduction of -bi would result in an ‘illegal’ cluster with the initial of the following word, an epenthetic vowel is inserted after the dual suffix:

senuubi laaga > senuub laaga *that inhabited island*
sethaabi lagal > sethaab lagal *those inhabited islands*
sepalbi laaga > sepalab laaga *those two inhabited islands*

In Kalaw Lagaw Ya the adjective balbalgi (bal-bal-gi- cross-cross-PRI not crooked) straight, okay, allright, good, well similar becomes balbalag in verb compounds for the same reason, thus:

balbalagpalan *straighten, fix, cure, heal, repair, make well, resolve*
balbalagtida- *straighten, repair, fix, mend, cure, heal, comb hair, console*

and through extension:

balbalagi-/balbalagasi- *be straight, okay, allright, good, well*

In affixed forms stem final -a tends to delete when the following affix begins with a consonant followed by a vowel; the same happens to word final i and u when the stem ends in -yi or -wu, and word final -ya and -wa when the stem has three or more syllables, including when the following affix is a consonant only; this rarely happens otherwise.
Ngalmun Lagaw Yangukudu: the Language of our homeland

nominative | genitive | simulative | dative | ablative | plural
---|---|---|---|---|---
bùrùm pig | bùrùmaw | bùrùmadh | bùrùmaka, bùrùmka | bùrùmangu, bùrùmal | bùrùm

dagul fish spear | dagulaw | daguladh | dagulaka, dagulka | dagulangu, dagulngu | dagulal

bayludh dawn | bayludhaw | bayludhaddh | bayludhaka, bayludhuha | bayludhangu, bayludhngu | bayludhal

maayi spring, well; pearl shell | mayiw | mayidh, maydh | mayika, mayka | mayingu, mayl | mayil, mayl

naawu song | nawuw, nawu | nawudh, nawdh | nawuka, nawkka | nawungu, nawl | nawul, nawl

away pelican | awayaw | awayadh, awayadh | awayaka, awayaka | awayangu, awayl | awayal, awayl

gabaw purple yam | gabawaw | gabawadh, gabawdh | gabawaka, gabawka | gabawgangu, gabawl | gabawal, gabawl

Where verbs of three or more syllables and whose internal stem syllable is rV or lV, truncation also occurs in most forms except for certain active singular forms:

wœradha- (uradha-) stow, put away, hide, take, steal, die (euphonism), judge

attainative perfective present (truncation in singular form)

wœradha-Ø-Ø-n > wardhan SG
wœradha-Ø-NGAUMA-n > wardhawman DU
wœradha-Ø-MAYI-n > wardhaminu PL (for -nu see p.371)

active perfective present (no truncation in singular form)

wœradha-i-Ø-IZI > wœradhi, uradhi SG
wœradha-i-NGAUMA-n > wardhewman DU
wœradha-i-MAYI-n > wardhemin PL

attainative perfective today past (truncation in singular form)

wœradha-Ø-Ø-nu > wardhanu SG
wœradha-Ø-NGAUMA-nu > wardhawmanu DU
wœradha-Ø-MAYI-nu > wardhaminu PL

active perfective today past (no truncation in singular form)

wœradha-i-Ø-ma > wœradhima, uradhima, wardhima SG
wœradha-i-NGAUMA-nu > wardhewmanu DU
wœradha-i-MAYI-nu > wardheminu PL

attainative perfective remote past (truncation in singular form)

wœradha-Ø-Ø-dhin > wardhadhin SG
wœradha-Ø-NGAUMA-dhin > wardhawmadhin DU
wœradha-Ø-MAYI-dhin > wardhamidhin PL

active perfective remote past (truncation in singular form)

wœradha-i-Ø-dhin > wardhaydhin SG
wœradha-i-NGAUMA-dhin > wardhewmadhin DU
wœradha-i-MAYI-dhin > wardhemidhin PL
The diphthong ay undergoes deletion in 1) verbal nouns of verbs of three or more stem syllables when the following affix is a syllable, and 2) LAI affixes when the stem is of two or more syllables except when the personal nominal suffix is added (see Nominal Derivation for the uses of the impersonal and personal nominal suffixes):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>verbal noun</th>
<th>instrumental</th>
<th>dative</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>barpuda-</td>
<td>barpuday</td>
<td>barpudayka, barpudaka, barpudka</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>thathara-</td>
<td>thatharay</td>
<td>thatharayka, thatharaka, thatharka</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(men’s work)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>create</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ayima-</td>
<td>ayimay, aymay</td>
<td>ayimayka, aymimka, aymimka</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(make, do)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>thathara-</td>
<td>thatharay</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(workmen’s)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>probed for</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ima-</td>
<td>imay</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(see, find)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The only words in Kalaw Lagaw Ya that undergo initial vowel deletion – and then only optionally – are the non-specific locative and the article forms of i- this, here; this is idiolectal:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>masculine</th>
<th>feminine</th>
<th>dual</th>
<th>plural</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>specific locative</td>
<td>inu, GY iinu</td>
<td>ipal</td>
<td>itha</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>nonspecific locative</td>
<td>inuki, nuki</td>
<td>ipalki, palki</td>
<td>ithaki, thaki</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>article</td>
<td>inuubi, inuub,</td>
<td>ipalbi, ipalab,</td>
<td>ithaabi, ithaab,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>nuubi, nuub</td>
<td>palab, palbi</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Consonants are less liable to deletion, though when consonants come together, the first is liable to assimilate to the other. When the cluster is homorganic, including those resulting from assimilation, then the first consonant can elide:

nakadaka, nakarak > nakadka, nakarka, nakatka upwards (na-kada-ka F-upward-DAT)
gudamathamay > gudmathamay, %gubmathamay cover/fill in VN (guda+mathama-yopening+hit+VN)
laka kedha > lak kedha, la’kedha just like that, the same as that (laka again, more of the same, kedha like that, thus)
kursayg > kussayg alone (in KKY kusayg has become the sole form) (kursa-IGA ??+PerNom)
kakuradhaza > kakuradhza, kakuradza, kakurasa egg-like object (kakura-dha+za egg-SIM+thing)
kulkadhaamu > kulkadhgaamu, kulkaggaamu, kulkagaamu red (noun) (kulka-dha+gamu blood-SIM+colour)
koeerkabadh > koeerkapbadh, koeerkabadh sorrow, grief (koerka+badha throat-sore)
iibupuydhay > iibpuydhay, iippuydhay, ipuydhay help, assistance, aid (ibu+puydha-y chin+hang-VN)
uumamathaman > uummathaman, ummathaman, umathaman kill (uuma+mathama-Ø-Ø-n death+hit-ATT-SG-PrPF)
In some words this assimilation and elision have become permanent:


In its realisation of 2), the Kalaw Kawaw Ya dialect displays the only paradigm where the elision occurs to the following consonant, thus: weer/uur water: weer-lay, uur-lay > weir, uray; nuur noise: nuur-lay > nuray; nel name: nel-lay > nelay.

In certain cases a whole syllable deletes. This is regular in verbs of three stem syllables ending in ma, such as *mathama- hit, strike, *siilama-fight, *thakama- fight, *woelama-i- continue, go on, ba going, *idima- ruin, destroy, 'bugger up', *isiilama- load, transport liquid and *ziilama-i-run, drive along, sail along. It is found (1) in the singular of the active present imperfective/near future, the active recent past perfective and imperfective, and the active remote future, and (2) through haplology when the dual and plural suffixes are added in the attainative, as shown in Table 8. In Kalaw Kawaw Ya, the elision of (1) only occurs in the verbs *woelama-i-, thus *ulaypa continue, go on, ba going ATT SG PrIMPF, and *ziilama-i-, in which it is optional, thus *ziilaypa ~ *ziilaypa run, drive along, sail along ATT SG PrlMPF, and that of (2) only in the plural.

Kalaw Lagaw Ya is unique in the plural present perfective in trisyllabic stem verbs of the above type, *ubamnu in comparison to the *ubamin ~ *ubamnyn of the other dialects. In form the ending *nu is the same as the ending for the attainative today past perfective. The present perfective ending in the records of Kaufaraiagau Ya had varying forms, these being (using standardised spelling) -n, -nœ, -na and -nu, with -nu being the full form, and the other three reduced forms thereof. The equivalent today past ending in Kaufaraiagau Ya was variously -nulai, -nule, -nuli and -nul. All modern dialects have lost the final syllable in the today past perfective, i.e. > -nu, and the final vowel in the present perfective, i.e. -n, except in the attainative plural present perfective in Kalaw Lagaw Ya in verbs of this type.

The sound ng sporadically deletes intervocalically or after r, normally nasalising the adjacent vowel(s). This deletion has become permanent, though not the nasalisation, in the genitive of class 2 nouns and the singular pronouns, and, as illustrated by pama- and ubama- in Table 8, in the dual of all verbs except ma- take, give, be, move. This is an early change where the singular pronouns are concerned, witness the retention of the Proto Pama-Nyungan final n in *ninu (*ŋiin+ŋu) your SG, *nanu (*naan+ŋu) her, its GEN, *ngenu (*ŋan+ŋu) whose, and the lack of this in *nungu (*nu+ŋu) his, its.

1) karngemi- > karëmi-, karemi- hear; yangu nuur > yaũ nuur sound of words
2) *ngu genitive

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>nouns</th>
<th>nominative</th>
<th>genitive</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>class 1</td>
<td>paa</td>
<td>*paa-ngu</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>fence, pen</td>
<td>&gt; pangu</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>class 2</td>
<td>puri</td>
<td>*puri-ngu</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>baby shark</td>
<td>&gt; puri (puriu)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>mas</td>
<td>*masa-ngu</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>mouse, rat</td>
<td>&gt; masasaw (masasau)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*ngu-genitive

1st masculine | nuy he (stem *nu-)
2nd feminine | *nd-ها (stem *ng-) | 1st masculine | *ngu-ها (ngaw (ngau) my masculine)
2nd | *ni- (stem *niin-) | *niin-ngu > ninu
3rd | *na-ها (stem *naan-) | *naan-ngu > nanu
who | *nga who (stem *ngan-) | *ngan-ngu > ngœnu/ngunu
3rd | *nu (stem *nu-) | *nu-ngu > nungu
In the following the syllable zi optionally elides, though can become ri in the non-singular subject/singular object perfective imperative of the verb ma-, and always in the dual perfective imperative of all verbs:

- ZIU non-singular subject imperative > -ziw, -riw, -w  
- ma-Ø-ZIU: maziw, mariw NSg S, SG O O (also KLY maraw, reanalysed from maral, other dialects maar~mara ma-Ø-RA SG S, SG O)  
- ma-Ø-MAYI-ZIU: mamayziw, mamiziw, mamayiw, maamiw NSg S, PL O  
- ma-Ø-NGAUMA-ZIU: mangawmariw NSg S, DU O  

yœwtha-i pull, drag  
yœwtha-i-MAYI-ZIU: yœwthemayziw, yœwthemiziw, yœwthemiw PL  
yœwtha-i-NGAUMA-ZIU: yœwthemariw DU

**TABLE 8.** Final syllable elision in -ma final stems.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>tri-syllabic stem: uubama- dress up (final syllable elision)</th>
<th>present</th>
<th>recent past</th>
<th>remote past</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>perfective X-i-Ø-ending</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ubami</td>
<td>ubayka</td>
<td>ubayma</td>
<td>ubayadh</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>singular attainative X-Ø-Ø-ending</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ubaman</td>
<td>ubamana</td>
<td>ubamanu</td>
<td>ubamadh</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>dual active X-i-NGAUMA-ending</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ubamewman</td>
<td>ubamewmaka</td>
<td>ubamewmanu</td>
<td>ubamewmadh</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>dual attactive X-Ø-NGAUMA-ending</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ubawman</td>
<td>ubawmaka</td>
<td>ubawmanu</td>
<td>ubawmadh</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>plural active X-i-MAYI-ending</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ubamemin</td>
<td>ubamemika</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>plural attactive X-Ø-MAYI-ending</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ubamnu (other dialects ubamin)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bi-syllabic stem: pama- dig (final syllable not elided)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>singular active X-i-Ø-ending</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>pami</td>
<td>pameka</td>
<td>pamema</td>
<td>pameadh</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>singular attactive X-Ø-Ø-ending</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>paman</td>
<td>pamáyka</td>
<td>pamanu</td>
<td>pamadh</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>dual active X-i-NGAUMA-ending</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>pamewman</td>
<td>pamewmaka</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>dual attactive X-Ø-NGAUMA-ending</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>pamawman</td>
<td>pamawmaka</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>plural active X-i-MAYI-ending</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>pamemin</td>
<td>pamemika</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>plural attactive X-Ø-MAYI-ending</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

370 | Memoirs of the Queensland Museum | Culture • 8(1) • 2015
Except for the dual, there is fairly free variation in the use of the two variants -w and -ziw, as in the following:
Paypa mimiziw zagethka, parul yamamziw, apasimiw, geth peybaziw, bangalthonarka. (Aleck Tipoti, pers. comm., 2012)

Go forward, present yourselves to work, show your faces, humble yourselves, show respect, give a lending hand, for the future.

pai-pa ma-i-MAYI-ZIU zagethka,ka, paaru-LAI yakama-O-MAYI-ZIU,
ahead-DAT take-.ACT-PL-NSG.SIMP work-DAT front-PL show-ATT-PL-NSG.SIMP
apa+asi-Ø-MAYI-ZIU geth-Ø pari-Ø-Ø-ZIU, bangala+thonara-ka.
below+be.with-ATT-PL-NSG.SIMP hand-ACC give-ATT-SG-NSG.SIMP later+time-DAT

Zi elision has become permanent in all verb paradigms except for that of ma- in the active singular present perfective:

-IZI active singular present perfective > -izi, -i: ma-i-IZI > mizi be, move; para-i-IZI > pari drop, fall (fruit etc.); thanura-i-IZI > thanuri sit

The active singular present perfective ending has the form -izi in mizi take, move, be, do etc., otherwise is -i, and in the speech of some younger Badu speakers -in, where the -n ending found in all other active and attainative numbers, including the singular attainative present has extended by analogy to the active singular form. In Kalaw Kawaw Ya the full form of the ending is -izi/-izin (also with an extended -n), thus mizi ~ mizin; otherwise the ending is -iz, thus pariz [pa:riz], thanuriz. In Kauřařaigau Ya the full form of the ending was -izi, recorded by Brierly (Moore 1979: 86) from an Aboriginal friend in Ngi waerigie mizi, i.e. ngai weregi mizi, modern KY ngai wereg mizi, KKY ngay wereg mizi/mizin, KLY ngay yœraagi mizi. The shortened form was -izi, i.e. parizi, thanurizi.

Zi elision also occurs in the nominative-accusative of kaazi child, person in the following established compounds in Kalaw Lagaw Ya and Külkalgau Ya, and optionally in Mualgau Ya-Kaiwalgau Ya:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>-kaazi person</th>
<th>stem</th>
<th>plural</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>male, man</td>
<td>garkazi-</td>
<td>garkazil</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>female, woman</td>
<td>ipikazi- /iipkazi-</td>
<td>ipikazil /iipkazil</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>unmarried girl</td>
<td>ngewakazi-</td>
<td>ngewakazil</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In Kalaw Kawaw Ya the nominative-accusatives are garkaz, yipkak (also ipkaz, yepkakaz), ngawakaz ~ ngewakaz, and in archaic Mualgau Ya-Kaiwalgau Ya garkai, ipikai, ngewakai (Kauřařaigau Ya ngœœuřakai). Kalaw Lagaw Ya and Külkalgau Ya also have the shortened variants ngewka (ngœwka) and ngoka (ngokai) of ngawaka, also found in the compound ngokakaazi girl, young woman, maiden (as opposed to woman). Where the initials of these compounds are concerned, ipi--yip--yœp- clearly is a reflex of ipi, GY iip, PP *yipi ‘woman, female’. The initials gar- of garka male, man and ngœwa- of ngœwa do not exist elsewhere in the language. The first appears to be from PP *kaala ‘male, man’, while the second is of Trans Fly Papuan origin, cf. MM neur ‘girl, daughter, unmarried woman’, Bine ngœule/ngulo/ngure (dialect variants), PETrF *nuaro.

Word final dh(a) in certain words normally deletes, being retained in more emphatic speech: thakakidh(a) > thakaki those moving along up there; senakidh(a) > senaki that F moving along just there; ngedh(a) > nge then (sequential clitic). This deletion also occurs in Kalaw Kawaw Ya speech in the following: kamedh, kame hey! masculine attention seeker, kakedh, kake hey! feminine attention seeker, and koledh, kole hey! non-singular attention seeker. In Kalaw Lagaw Ya and the other dialects, only the forms without
-dh are found, thus kame, kake and kole. This use of -dh as an emphatic form in Kalaw Kawaw Ya has led to a -dh being added to the Kalaw Kawaw Ya habitual ending -paruy through analogy (-paruy/-paru/-pu > -paruydh beside the more correct -paruyg), to the reduplicated adverb kayke > kaykedh soon after, soon, and to sike > sikedh maybe. The other dialects have retained the older sikay, from sii I don’t know + kay but, however.

Where deictics are concerned, the variation in idiolects of all dialects has developed a semantic difference of a non-specific locative in -ki, e.g. thakaki those moving around up there, and a global locative in -kidh(a), e.g. thakakidh those moving around all over that place up there, particularly in Kalaw Kawaw Ya.

A few words have syllable deletion in parts of their paradigms, in particular the unmarked nominative(-accusative). Quite a few words of three stem syllables ending in -ya or -wa fit in this category, including the following:

- za thing, may time, period, gœyga day, sun, Kuki North-West (Monsoon), singe catch-carrying loop, thunge torch, brand, light, apu, GY apuuwa mother, mother’s sister:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>stem</th>
<th>genitive</th>
<th>proprietive, plural</th>
<th>dative</th>
<th>nominative</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>za-, zapu-</td>
<td>zangu, zapu</td>
<td>zapul</td>
<td>zaka, zapuka</td>
<td>za</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>may-, maypu-</td>
<td>mayngu, maypu</td>
<td>maypul</td>
<td>mayka, maypuka</td>
<td>may</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kukiya-</td>
<td>Kukiyaw, Kukiw</td>
<td>Kukial, Kukil</td>
<td>Kuki</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>singeya-</td>
<td>singeyaw</td>
<td>singeyal</td>
<td>singeyaka, singeka</td>
<td>singe</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>thungeya-</td>
<td>thungeyaw</td>
<td>thungeyal</td>
<td>thungeyaka, thungeka</td>
<td>thunge</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>apuwa-</td>
<td>apuwaw</td>
<td>apuwal</td>
<td>apuwaka, apuka</td>
<td>apu, GY apuuwa</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In established compounds with za – at a colloquial level – the full stem is only normally found in the proprietive, plural and instrumental; in other forms the compound can be treated as a mono-morphemic word:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>stem</th>
<th>genitive</th>
<th>proprietive, plural</th>
<th>dative</th>
<th>nominative</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>kùlbayza ancient object</td>
<td>kùlbayzangu</td>
<td>kùlbayzapul</td>
<td>kùlbayzaka</td>
<td>kùlbayza</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ayzayza</td>
<td>ayzangu</td>
<td>ayzapul</td>
<td>ayzaka</td>
<td>ayzapuka</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

INTONATION

The language is smooth flowing, with an overall pitch patterning of high (H) tones/pitch and low (L) tones/pitch (cf. Ford and Ober, 1979; for Kalaw Kawaw Ya), with intervening intermediate tones/pitch (M). If the initial syllable(s) do(es) not carry the stress (= H), then the first syllable(s) is/are often M. There is an overall fall in pitch over the phrase, though this is not marked. As a rule, intonation patterns tend to be more accentuated in feminine speech, that is to say, women’s intonation can be more “musical”. Though H often coincides with the stressed syllable of a word or phrase group, this not always the case. In certain intonation patterns, particularly in female speech, the H-M-L patterning can reverse, with stressed syllables being lower in pitch.
Words pronounced in isolation have the same overall intonation pattern as clauses, as is to be expected. Compounds and other complex words in general follow the stress patterns of noncomplex words, except in the case where the first part of the compound is a monosyllable, in which case it has high pitch and the next syllable medium pitch. Bisyllabic words with second syllable stress and with a short final vowel are M-H in intonation, though if the second vowel is long, the intonation is M-HL.

monosyllabic words:
falling: HL pitch – bœy palm frond/leaf

bisyllabic words:
falling: H-L – galpis anger, sagul fun, game, dance

rising: M-H or level H-H – kedhá like this/that, thœrá ridge

rise-fall: M-HL or level-fall H-HL – thithuuyu star

three syllables:
falling: H-H-L or H-M-L – galupi shiver, tremble, shake, danalayg living person, life
rise-fall: M-H-L – kwápay coconut bud cover, møraapi bamboo, thithuuyu star

four or more syllables:

rise-fall: M-H-H-L+ – imáyzinga seen/found object, møraapigal bamboo owners/holders/possessors

compound/prefixed words with monosyllabic first member – the first syllable is high, then following syllables lower:
H-M-M-M-L-L+ – pagasamayzinga/pagasamzinga object that is being held, guythwayewmanu take off, leave

Clauses have the same overall pattern as words, except in Kalaw Lagaw Ya, where, instead of L pitch at the end of clauses, often a rising pitch (to H) occurs, particularly in the speech of women. The relative pitch of words/clauses can be higher or lower in relation to other words/clauses according to their relative importance in the overall message; in general the more important words/clauses are higher, and the less important lower, except in reverse pitch intonation.

The main intonation patterns are:

a) declarative: H - M - L, (particularly women)

Guul napakidh pungáyk(a).

     H H M L

alt. H M H M ML

alt. M H M H M H (H)

A/ The canoe is sailing along in from there.

guul-Ø na-Ø-pa-kidha puunga-‘i-ka canoe-NOM F-ahead-GLoc sail-VN-DAT

b) listing intonation: a subcategory of declarative intonation; each part of the list is M-H:

Na na stuwaka ubilmak(a) miyaydhin,
MM M M H H H H H H H H L L

When she went to the store for shopping,

na-Ø na stuwa-ka she-NOM REF store-DAT

ubi-LAI-may-ka miya-i-Ø-dhin,

na-dha bœred-Ø ya bùrùmaw maadh(u) ya biskital

bùrùma-NGU maadhu-Ø ya pig-GEN meat-ACC and

biskita-LAI gasama-Ø-MAYI-dhin.

biskit-PRP get-ATT-PL-RemP.PF

c) Softness, pleasure, politeness, interrogative intonation: the contour covers a wider range; H is relatively higher, and L relatively lower. The first syllables are often at the mid range,
and the very first syllable can even be L, unless the first syllable is the important word of the clause. The final syllable in such clauses, particularly in polite or soft language, tends to be lengthened (or rather, drawled), though this is also a characteristic of surprised or exasperated speech (such as hurt insistence of the type But he did, I tell you! Would I lie to you?!). The major marker of interrogative status is the presence of a question word, which is not fronted, or the appearance of one of the clause final yes-no question clitics aw (aaw) or a (aa):

decisive intonation ‘pleased’ intonation.
Elisabeth mangi. Elisabeth mangi
HHHM  L  L  MMMH  L  L
Elisabeth’s just arrived.
Elisabetha-Ø  manga-i-Ø-IZI
Elizabeth-NOM  arrive-ACT-SG-ACT.PrPF

interrogative intonation
Elisabeth mangi, aaw?
LMMM  H  H  L
Has Elizabeth arrived?

Ngath inaab(i) thuus(i) paladhinngûl? (alt. paladhinngûl?)
H  M  M  (M)  L  (L)  L  L  M
Who wrote this document (book/letter)?
ga-da  i-na-bi  thusi-Ø
who-INS  this-F-ART  book-ACC
pala-Ø-Ø-dhin-ngûl?
cause-ATT-SG-RemP.PF-RecP

Nidh Zonan Dhabangayka wiyangûl aw
H  H  H  M  L  L  L  M
Did you send John to Dhabangai the other day?
ni-dha  Zona-NI Dhabangay-ka
You-INS  John-ACC  Dabangai-DAT
wiya-Ø-Ø-ngûl  aw?
send-ATT-SG-RecP PF  Q

d) Surprised, insistence, exasperated intonation: while other intonation contours can be somewhat ‘musical’; this category is generally a single contour that rises from M to H and then slides down to L.

decisive
Ngath ayiman.
H  M  M  L
I’ve made it.
nga-tha  ayima-Ø-Ø-n
l-INs  make-ATT-SG-PrPF

insistence
Ngath ayimaan!
H  H  H  L
Mina kœy ngœlkáy waadh!
M  H  H  HL  L
It was a bloody great lie!
mina kœy  ngœlka-‘i-Ø
true  big  falsehood-VN-NOM
waadha
existential emphasis

e) Sympathetic intonation: this is the most distinctive and musical contour. The pattern starts at M, falls to L, rises to H, then finishes on M; in musical terms one can say that M is roughly at Do, L at So or La, and H at around Mi or Fa. Normally each word or phrase group is pronounced at one pitch, and then the next word/phrase group at the following pitch. The last syllable is normally lengthened.

The pattern is typical in situations where one feels some sympathy and sadness, such as a parent consoling a child for a minor mishap. The sadness is mixed with the knowledge that for the referent there is something positive, as when a friend is leaving after having stayed for a while on holiday and is now going back to their own home and family. The clitic gaar, used to show or elicit sympathy or empathy, typically appears, and often if the person spoken to is the subject of the sympathy/consolation, they are addressed in the third person.

Bala gaar patheka kaay!
MM  L  H  H  H  M
So, you’re off today! (to a friend leaving that day)
bala-Ø  gaar
brother-NOM  SYM
patha-i-Ø-ka
embark-ACT-SG-PR.IMPF  hereNSp-LOC
Yaagaar, Mapeth gaar muluka pudhemaan!

\[ M \quad L \quad M \quad M \quad L \quad H \quad H \quad H \quad M \quad M \quad M \]

Oh dear, Baby fell down!

ya-gaar, mapetha-Ø gaar

speech-SYM, baby-NOM SYM

mulu-ka puudha-i-Ø-ma

down-DAT fall-ACT-SG-ACT.SG.TodP.PF

f) Exclamative intonation, typically found in such situations as making shouted public announcements or joking in a place such as a pub or at a dance where it is necessary to force the voice somewhat. The intonation can also occur where people become excited, such as telling an exciting story. The intonation either (1) starts at H, or rises from M to H, and maintains H for the whole utterance, though a fall to M may occur at the end, or (2) starts in the same way, but drops to M after the stressed syllable of the key word of the clause, and maintains this to the end of the utterance when less emphatic.

Papudhi!

M H H

He/She’s/You’ve/I’ve gone and fallen over!

pa-puudha-i-Ø-IZI

TEL-fall-ACT-SG-ACT.SG.PrPF

Nitha watikœzil adhaka sizi.

H H H H H M MMM MM

You bad kids get out of there!

ni-tha-Ø wati+kazi-LAI

you-PL-NOM bad+child-PRP

adha-ka si-zi

out-DAT there-ABL

Extra-clause words, such as hesitation syllables, and introductory words such as names or words/exclamatives like kame! Hey! (masculine), as well the conjunctions a and (specific conjunction), ya and (“and others” conjunction), lawnga or (a use of lawnga no, not) and ò or (an English loan), are highlighted by intonation. The hesitation syllables and the conjunctions are always L2 (ie. lower than ordinary low pitch), or falling LL2, while introductory words fall from around M to L, or are L.

Thanamùn, aaw, guul napaki pungáyk(a).

H H H L2 H HMM L H (H)

Their, aah, canoe is sailing along in front there.

thana-mù-ni, aaw, guul-Ø

theyPL-AUG-GEN, HES, canoe-NOM

na-pa-ki puunga-‘i-ka.

F-ahead-NSpLoc puunga‘i-ka.

Garkazin bùrùm a adal uummathamidhin,

M MMM H H L H2H2 H H H H L

nuy na pupuka miaydhin.

H H M H2 H L H L

The man killed a pig and some magpie geese when he went to the swamp lake.

garkazi-n bùrùma-Ø a ada-LAI

male-INS pig-ACC and magpiegoose-PRP

uuma+mathama-Ø-MAYI-dhin

death+strike-ATT-PL-RemP.PF

nuy-Ø na pœpu-ka

he-NOM REF swamplake-DAT

miya-i-Ø-dhin

move-ACT-SG-RemP.PF

Aaw, i-nuub’ garka kùniya tidema. (alt. tidema.)

L H H H H H MMM LL MM H

Umm, this man went/came back.

aaw, i-nu-bi  garkazi-Ø

HES, this-M-ART male-NOM

kùna-ya tiida-i-Ø-ma

back-NSpLoc return-ACT-SG-ACT.TodP.PF

Kame, nidh iman aaw?!?

M L H H L L

(M L M H H M)

Hey! Did you see that?!

ka-me, ni-dha iima-Ø-Ø-n aaw

hey-M, you-INS see-ATT-SG-PrPF Q

THE STRUCTURE OF THE LANGUAGE: MORPHOLOGY AND SYNTAX

The language tends more towards declining than agglutinating. There are split syntax typologies in core arguments and locatives.

Core arguments:

- singular personal pronouns – three-way nominative (S) ergative (A) accusative (O)
- proper nouns and dual-plural pronouns – two-way nominative (SA) accusative (O)
• dual-plural pronouns, KKY only – one-way marking, i.e. S, A and O are all unmarked
• common nouns – two-way ergative (A) absolutive (SO)

Locatives:
• personal pronouns and proper nouns – one locative
• common nouns – three locatives

Words referring to people can have either three locative forms or one locative form, depending on how personalised (+human) the reference is. If the reference is fairly impersonal, then the three locatives are found, regardless of the +human status of the referent. A variation of this are words such as kaazi child, young, offspring, son, daughter, young of animals, young of plants. When the reference is to a human child, particular as a son or daughter or the like, then the word falls into the single locative category, while referring to the young of animals or plants – or even simply of ‘offspring’, or the child of a ‘lesser human being’, the word falls into the category of having three locative forms.

Basic word order is S-(X)-(O)-V, though there is free variation depending on pragmatic features:

Sesere thamanu pudhaydhin.
The willy-wagtail landed on a branch.

Awban thamanu sesere imadhin.
A hawk saw the willy-wagtail on the branch.

... si miyar kuyku mabayg, nungu nel
Kawmayn, Pulunu.
... there (at that place) was a chief, called Kawmayn, on the island of Pulu.

... se/si-i miya-Ø-r
... there-SLoc moveACT-SG-RemP.IMPF
kuwiku-NGU maba-IGA-Ø
head-GEN walk-PNom-NOM (= person)
nu-NGU nel-Ø Kawmayn-Ø Pulunu-nu.
He-GEN name-NOM K.-NOM P.SLoc

Word order is normally fixed, however, in clauses where all or most key members of the clause take the same case marking. These include purposive clauses (marked by the dative), avoidance clauses (marked by the ablative), and negative clauses (marked by the genitive on the arguments and privative on the verb):

a) kazika kathamka púrtháyka
S O V
dative marking
in order for the child/children to eat (a) banana(s); the child/children want(s) to eat (a) banana(s)

b) kazingu kathamngu púrthálay
ablative marking
in order for the child/children not to eat (a) banana(s); not to let the child/children eat (a) banana(s); (we) don’t want the child/children to eat (a) banana(s); the child/children want to avoid eating (a) banana(s)

c) kaziw kathamaw púrtháyinga
genitive marking in conjunction with the nominalised privative of the verbal noun.
the child/children do not/did not/are not going to eating (a) banana(s)

Verbs crossmark the number and syntactic role of the arguments, as well as being marked for tense, aspect, mood and the verbal noun. Nominal inflections indicate syntactic function. There are five types of affix:
derivational prefixes: aspechual/modal, locational/positional
decitic prefixes: specific/nonspecific deictic distance, gender/number deixis
derivational suffixes: modify word class
augmenting suffixes: deictic gender and number, verb number, (singular pronouns)
dative and locative augmented stem(s), (proper nominals, dual-plural pronouns) oblique gender and number (feminine, masculine-unsingular)

endings (inflectional suffixes): carry the syntactic load of the word; they are so termed as they always come at the end of the word

Word stems (roots) are vowel or diphthong final, except for some nominal monosyllabic stems which end in l or r, such as bal across and ger seasnake; this exception includes compounds or reduplications where the final stem is monosyllable, such as tharthar boiling, seething, apnur sound of footsteps (apa- below, nuur noise) and nipel you two, (ni you singular, pel, a variant of the dual morpheme pal). Words can have more than one prefix and/or suffix, though normally only one ending, the rare exceptions being where former clitics have become fully grammaticalised as compounded endings.

WORD CLASSES

There are three broad word classes, two declining/conjugating (nominals and verbs) and one class which does not decline/conjugate. The declining/conjugating categories have declensional classes based on stem syllable number (monosyllabic stem versus bisyllabic/multisyllabic stem):

1) Nominals – Common nominals: common nouns, non-personal names (e.g. nicknames), non-emotive kin-terms, non-modifying adverbs (temporal, locational, etc.), verbal nouns, demonstrative deictics, nominalised words; Proper nominals: emotive kin terms, personal names, boat names, personal pronouns.

2) Verbs

3) Non-Declining Words – Word modifiers, clause modifiers: adjectives, modifying adverbs, demonstrative articles, numbers, particles, clitics, etc.; Extra-clause words.

NOMINAL MORPHOLOGY

Common Nominals have two classes, Class 1, monosyllabic stems, and Class 2, multisyllabic stems, which differ somewhat in their affixation. Suffixes and endings are affixed to the nominal stem. Plural number (three or more) is marked only on the nominative subject and specific direct object by the proprietive suffix, and optionally on the transitive subject when referring to an animate subject. All other cases are neutral to number, including the transitive subject, marked as instrumental (= ergative). Not all cases have overt case marking; that is to say, Ø-case marking is also significant (see below).

Proper nominals differ from common nominals in using the accusative-genitive (which have the same form) as an augmented stem for the oblique cases, except in the case of the singular pronouns, which use the genitive as the base for the ablative and simulative (and the privative, which exists in Kalaw Kawaw Ya only), and a locative augmenting suffix -be/bi- in the dative and locative, except for the first person singular, where the augmenting suffix is -ki-. The locative augmenting suffix -be/bi- may in origin be a locative ending in its own right, though it is essentially identical in form to the demonstrative article forming suffix -bi, perhaps indicating a common origin. The 3rd dual pronoun and the 1st-2nd, 2nd and 3rd plural pronouns take an augmenting suffix -mü- before all affixes; this suffix may be related to müra all, totality, total, whole.

Adjectives, demonstrative articles, numbers and words marked by the genitive immediately precede the noun which they modify and are syntactically dependent on the noun, which is the head. Only the noun takes case marking. The genitives, demonstrative articles and most adjectives when not preceding their noun must be nominalised (by a nominalising suffix), and
are then common nominals. Those adjectives that are not nominalised are syntactic nouns when predicates. The personal 3rd person pronouns also function as definite articles, however retain their separate status in being separate NPs from the noun, such as for decensional purposes, as following:

Nadh kayin ngokakazin kéesanu nangapa dhogay imadhìn.
The young maiden saw a dogai over there on the other side of the river.
na-dha kayina-Ø ngoka+kazi-n she-INS young maiden+child-INS
kéesa-nu na-ngapa-Ø river+SLoc F-beyond-SLoc
dhogay-Ø iima-Ø-Ø-dhin dogai-ACC see-ATT-SG-RemP

This is also true of nominals which fulfil the role of postpositions. These are likewise separate NPs from the declined noun that they collocate with, and do not necessarily agree in case with the noun, thus múdhaniu muyinu in~inside the house (mùdha-nu house-SLoc muyi-nu inside-SLoc), but múdhangu adhaka out of the house, away from the house (mùdha-ngu house ABL adha-ka outside. away-DAT). Though they tend to follow the noun, other discourse-based positioning is also common, thus muyinu múdhaniu in~inside the house and adhaka múdhangu out of the house, away from the house.

The Cases and their Semantics

There are 9 cases, the uses of which are as presented below, with the underlying forms of the endings:

Nominative: elicitation form, vocative, intransitive/antipassive subject
   case marking: none
   In WCL, the antipassive is a transitive whose object is a generalisation or a global/total entity, and whose syntax is intransitive (see further Transitivity and Voice).

Accusative: specific transitive object (i.e. specific direct object)
   case marking: common nominals none; non-singular pronouns, proper masculine singular nominals and dual-plural pronouns -NI (KKY non-singular pronouns – no case marking), singular pronouns, proper feminine singular -NA.

Instrumental: transitive agent (ergative), instrument, generalised/global total object (antipassive)
   case marking: proper nominals none; common nominals -NU; singular pronouns -DHA (first person -THA).

Genitive: possessive; habitual subject; subject/object of negative clause
   case marking: common nominals, singular pronouns -NGU; masculine singular proper nouns/non-singular pronouns -NI; feminine singular proper nouns -NA.

Dative: concrete or abstract motion to, towards or for (purposive, allative, etc.)
   case marking: -ka; -pa in kipa/kœpa to here, sepa/sipa to there, paypa ahead-wards, pawupa off, back, away from, etc. (-pa in all cases in KKY; in archaic MY-KY as well, except for the first person singular pronoun).

Ablative: concrete or abstract motion away from (causative, avoidance, etc.); emphatic subject
   case marking: -NGU (-NGUZI); true adverbials (i.e. adverbials that are not common nouns used as adverbs) -ZI; verbal nouns (active ablative) -LAI

Locatives – Common Nominals:
   Specific Locative: specifically (= fixed) positioned (and normally unmoving) with regard to the location
   case marking: class 1 nominals -LAI; class 2 nominals -NU, -LAI (> -l, -Ø); adverbials -LAI (> -lai, -l, -Ø)

   Non-Specific Locative: not specifically (= unfixed) positioned (and often moving) with regard to the location (comitative, perlative, etc.)
case marking: -YA; demonstratives -KIDHA (> -kidh, -ki)

Global Locative: located or moving all over or throughout the position

case marking: -YABU (class 1 nominals: -pu/-yab/-ab; class 2 nominals -yab); demonstratives -KIDHA (-kidh)

Proper Nominals:
Locative: covers all the functions of the three common nominal locatives; in form the ending is the same as that of the non-specific locative of the common nominals

case marking: overtly human common nominals -YA; proper masculine nominals/ non-singular Pronouns: oblique stem + -YA; singular pronouns: dative/locative stem + -YA.

The common noun/adverb specific locative has three surface forms, the Ø-form, the LAI-form and the nu-form. The Ø-form is used at times for stylistic purposes in songs, and at times as a colloquial form. It is a reduced form of the LAI-form, which is normally only retained (a) in adverbials such as adhal outside, apal underneath, below and gimal over, above, (b) in full form in Class 1 nouns, thus buu trumpeter shell > bulay, and (c) in reduced form in fossilised phrases, such as geethal hand-SLoc, geetha hand, in gethal angan wield, use [hand-SLoc bear-present perfective singular]). The -nu form is used by all common nominals of two syllables or more, except for the adverbs in -l. Through extension it is sometimes found on class 1 nouns.

Interdialect comparison as well as the forms recorded in Kauřařaigau Ya show that the -nu form is from older -nulai, the standard form in Kauřařaigau Ya, where the locative -lai was added to the instrumental, underlying form -NU. Similarly, the ablative -ngu is from older -nguzi, where the ablative ending -zi was added to the genitive; -nguzi was the standard form in Kauřařaigau Ya, and is still to be found sporadically in the modern dialects. The forms of the non-specific and global locatives show common origins. In the case of YA and YABU (-ya, -pu, -ab, -yab) this could very well be yabu path, way, while KIDHA (-ki, -kidh, -kidha) is a use of the morpheme KIDHA, found also as a prefix, kidha-/kidh- cross-movement, stirring movement, criss-cross movement, and the adverbal nominal kidhakidh(a) to-and-fro, back-and-forth, each other.

Adverbial Adjuncts
Some adverbial nominals are normally found in the unaffixed form, i.e. the nominative-accusative, others normally only in the instrumental, and a few with fossilised locative or other affixes, though now felt to be unaffixed words. Such adverbs can take the genitive ending and others when needed.

Unaffixed: kaib/kayib today, kaybaw GEN, kaybaka DAT, etc.; bathaynga this morning, tomorrow, bathayngaw GEN, bathayngaka DAT, etc.; ngul yesterday, ngulungu GEN, ngulka DAT, etc.; kulkul beforehand, formerly (*kul before, first); kulkúb long ago, kulkúbaw GEN (*kul before, first); -ka up there, -gu down there, -ngapa beyond there, etc. (see Nominal Deictics: Demonstratives).

Instrumental: amadhan close to, near, almost; kidhakidhan back-and-forth, to and fro, each other (reciprocal adverb); ûgidhan (KKY mœgan) for no reason, in vain.

Fossilised case forms; kûlay before, first [specific locative], kûlzi long ago [ablative] (*kûl before, first); wagel after, behind, next [specific locative] (wage- behind/opposite part, only in compounds), wagelaw GEN; kaymel (KKY kalmel) together with [specific locative] (kaymi- accompanying, in compounds, cf. kaaymi companionship, which for many speakers is now obsolete).

The noun kût, GY kûtà afternoon, evening and the compounds goegakût, GY goegakûta afternoon, evening have an idiomatic use of the dative as a locative, as well as of the archaic LAI locative suffixed by the dative ending:
kùtaka, kùtalka, gœygakùtaka, gœygakùtalka (KKY kùtapa, kùtalpa, gœygakùtapa, gœygakùtalpa) in the afternoon, in the evening, towards evening: [gœyga+]kùta[-LAI]-KA [day/sun]-evening[-SLoc]-DAT.

The Paradigms

Nominal declension is straightforward where the cases are concerned, though the actual form of endings varies according to nominal class and nominal type. Class 1 nouns tend to have longer affixes, and Class 2 nouns reduced affixes. The instrumental of monosyllabic stem nouns is noteworthy for its variety of forms, with the first given in each case being the more formal (or archaic) form – as is true in all cases where there are variant forms, such as for What, Which (see further Interrogative Nominals).

### The Syntactic Cases:

The Paradigms

Nominal declension is straightforward where the cases are concerned, though the actual form of endings varies according to nominal class and nominal type. Class 1 nouns tend to have longer affixes, and Class 2 nouns reduced affixes. The instrumental of monosyllabic stem nouns is noteworthy for its variety of forms, with the first given in each case being the more formal (or archaic) form – as is true in all cases where there are variant forms, such as for What, Which (see further Interrogative Nominals).

#### The Syntactic Cases:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>common nominals</th>
<th>nominative/accusative</th>
<th>instrumental</th>
<th>genitive</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>class 1</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>banana leaf</td>
<td>ba, PL balay</td>
<td>banu, baan</td>
<td>bangu</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>palm frond/leaf</td>
<td>bey, PL beythay, beythayl</td>
<td>beythu, beythun</td>
<td>beyngu</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>speech, word(s)</td>
<td>ya, PL yaday, yadayl</td>
<td>yadu, yaadu, yadun</td>
<td>yangu</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>water</td>
<td>uur, PL ulay</td>
<td>urnu</td>
<td>urngu</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>class 2</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>speech, word(s)</td>
<td>aga, PL agal</td>
<td>agan</td>
<td>agaw</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>palm frond/leaf</td>
<td>mabayg, PL mabaygal</td>
<td>mabaygan; PL mabaygal</td>
<td>mabaygaw</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>verbal nouns</td>
<td>imay, PL imayl</td>
<td>imayn</td>
<td>imay</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>seeing, finding</td>
<td>muy, GY muuyi (in compounds; &lt; muuyi hollow, hole)</td>
<td>muyin</td>
<td>muyiw</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>adverbs 1)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>inside</td>
<td>muy, GY muuyi (in compounds; &lt; muuyi hollow, hole)</td>
<td>muyin</td>
<td>muyiw</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>adverbs 2)</td>
<td>adh, GY aadha (in compounds)</td>
<td>adhan</td>
<td>adhaw</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>demonstratives</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>mixed paradigms</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td></td>
<td>-kaw</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>proper nominals (names, titles, emotive kin terms, personal pronouns)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>non-singular pronouns</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>masculine proper</td>
<td>ngœba you and I</td>
<td>ngœban</td>
<td>ngœban</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>feminine proper</td>
<td>Baba Dad; PL Babal</td>
<td>Baban</td>
<td>Baban</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>singular pronouns 1st</td>
<td>Ama Mum; PL Amal</td>
<td>Amana</td>
<td>Amana</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3rd M</td>
<td>nuy</td>
<td>nuy(na)</td>
<td>nuydh(a)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3rd F</td>
<td>na</td>
<td>nan(a)</td>
<td>nadh(a)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2nd</td>
<td>ni</td>
<td>nin(a)</td>
<td>nidh(a)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>who</td>
<td>nga</td>
<td>ngan(a)</td>
<td>ngadh(a)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The Oblique Cases:

### common nominals

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>class 1</th>
<th>dative</th>
<th>ablative</th>
<th>specific location</th>
<th>non-specific location</th>
<th>global locative</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>banana leaf</td>
<td>baka</td>
<td>bangu</td>
<td>balay</td>
<td>baya</td>
<td>bapu</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>palm frond/leaf</td>
<td>bœyka</td>
<td>bœyngu</td>
<td>bœythay</td>
<td>bœyya (bœya)</td>
<td>bœypu</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>speech, word(s)</td>
<td>yaka</td>
<td>yangu</td>
<td>yaday</td>
<td>yaya</td>
<td>yapu</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>water</td>
<td>urka</td>
<td>urngu</td>
<td>ulay</td>
<td>urya (uriya)</td>
<td>urpu/urab</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>class 2</th>
<th>dative</th>
<th>ablative</th>
<th>specific location</th>
<th>non-specific location</th>
<th>global locative</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>axe</td>
<td>agaka</td>
<td>agangu</td>
<td>aga, aganu</td>
<td>agaya (agiya)</td>
<td>agayab (agiyab)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>person, community</td>
<td>mabaygaka</td>
<td>mabaygangu</td>
<td>mabayganu</td>
<td>mabaygaya, mabaygiya</td>
<td>mabaygayab, mabaygiyab</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**person dominant:** only one locative form: mabaygaya (mabaygiya)

### verbal nouns

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>seeing, finding</th>
<th>imayka</th>
<th>imaylay</th>
<th>imay, imaynu</th>
<th>imayya (imaya)</th>
<th>imayyab (imayab)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>adverbs 1)</td>
<td>muyika</td>
<td>muyingu</td>
<td>muyi, muyinu</td>
<td>muyiya (muya)</td>
<td>muyiyab (muyab)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>adverbs 2)</td>
<td>adhaka</td>
<td>adhazi</td>
<td>adha, adhal</td>
<td>adhaya (adhiya)</td>
<td>adhayab (adhiyab)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### demonstratives

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>up there mixed paradigms</th>
<th>-kadaka</th>
<th>kizika, kœzika</th>
<th>-ka</th>
<th>-kaki</th>
<th>-kakidh(a)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>what, which here NSp</td>
<td>mika</td>
<td>mingu, minguz</td>
<td>minu</td>
<td>miya</td>
<td>mipu, miyab</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>kœwa</td>
<td>kœzi, kizi;</td>
<td>kay;</td>
<td>kayki;</td>
<td>kaykidh;</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>kœwel</td>
<td>kœzi</td>
<td>kayki</td>
<td>kaykidh</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Proper nominals (names, titles, emotive kin terms, personal pronouns)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>dative</th>
<th>ablative</th>
<th>locative</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>non-singular pronouns</td>
<td>ngoebanika you and I</td>
<td>ngoebaningu, ngoebanungu</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>masculine proper</td>
<td>Babanika Dad</td>
<td>Babaningu, Babanungu</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>feminine proper</td>
<td>Amanaka Mum</td>
<td>Amanangu</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>singular pronouns 1st</td>
<td>ngayka, ngaykika</td>
<td>nagwngu M</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3rd M</td>
<td>nubeka</td>
<td>nungungu</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3rd F</td>
<td>nabeka</td>
<td>nanungu</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2nd</td>
<td>nibeka</td>
<td>ninungu</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>who</td>
<td>ngabeka</td>
<td>ngœnunungu, ngunungu</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Irregular Nouns

Class 1 nouns have two regular types, (a) vowel and -r/l-final (ba banana leaf, pel fish tail), characterised by the instrumental -n/nu, and specific locative/proprietive/plural -lay, and (b) y-final (bœy palm frond/leaf), instrumental -thu, specific locative/proprietive/plural -thay. There are five somewhat irregular nouns that form the instrumental in -du, and specific locative/proprietive/plural in -day, ya speech, talk, etc., li basket, li batfish, lu mound, hump, curve, ay food. Kalaw Lagaw Ya often ‘doubles’ the instrumental and the plural in monosyllabic nouns of the -thu/-thay (thus -thun/-thayl) and -du/-day (thus -dun/-dayl) groups. This does not occur in other dialects.
In Kalaw Kawaw Ya there are two other irregular Class 1 nouns, which though vowel final decline as diphthong-final nouns: na song, instrumental nathu, specific locative/proprietary/plural nathay, and yu cooking spit/skewer, instrumental yuthu, specific locative/proprietary/plural yuthay. In the other dialects, the word for song is naaw, GY naawu, which is a regular class 2 noun; however, it has two instrumental forms, the regular nawun, and the irregular nathu and in Kalaw Lagaw Ya itself nathun. The equivalent to yu is nu, stem nuwa-, also regular Class 2.

Five nouns are irregular, including za thing, maay time, period and goeyga day, sun, as noted in Segment Deletion. The other two are doegam(u) side, part, direction and bireg shelf, rack, which have two stems each, one of which has undergone metathesis. In the case of doegam(u), it is possible that the metathesis has extended to the nominative-accusative and replaced an original *daguma:

doegam side, part, direction, doegam(u)-/daguma-: doegamun/ daguman INS, doegamuw/ dagumaw GEN, doegamuka/ dagumaka DAT, doegamul/ dagumal PRP.PL

bireg shelf, rack, biregi/- boereygi-: biregin/ boereygin INS, boeregiw/boereygiw GEN, boeregika/ boereygika DAT, boeregil/boeregil PRP.PL

A sixth irregular word exists only in Kalaw Kawaw Ya, namely a [a:] ancestor, great-great-grandparent, irregular in being a monosyllabic word declined as a class 2 multisyllable: a [a:] NOM.ACC, an [a:n] INS, aw [a:u] GEN, apa [a:pa] DAT, al [a:l] PRP.PL. In the other dialects it is a regular bisyllabic class 2 word, aay, GY aayi, and has the additional meaning of family, clan based on blood relationship rather than totemic relationship.

Za and maay can be postulated to have lost their final syllable either through frequent use in combinations (e.g. *gitaŋu zapu hand+GEN thing > gethawza hand-held object, small digging stick), initially in the unmarked nominative-accusative, or through backformation from the Ø-marked specific locative zapu and maypu to za and maay, through the model of the global locative of monosyllabic stem words, e.g. lipu covering all the basket < li basket. Alternatively, the words are monosyllabic stems whose global locative form has extended to become an alternative stem.

The one irregular verbal noun is may give, take, make, do, move, be, etc., which has the ablative maythaylay, which in effect is a reduplicated ablative, as well as the optional variants meay or miay, found as active alternatives, i.e. do, move, be, etc., with the equally irregular ablatives meythalay and miythalay.

THE PERSONAL PRONOUNS

The personal pronouns (Table 9) distinguish 1) first, second and third person, 2) singular,
Ngalmun Lagaw Yangukudu: the Language of our homeland
dual and plural, 3) 1st inclusive and exclusive, as well as 4) masculine and feminine gender (a) in the third person singular, and (b) the 1st person singular genitive and genitive-based forms (see The Paradigms for the declensions). Gender is marked on other parts of speech as well, and though is prototypically masculine and feminine, has abstract reference, for which see the section on Gender below.

Note that in fast speech palamùni- and thanamùni- often become palmùni- and thanmùni-; this latter is sometimes pronounced thalmùni-, a rare denasalisation of n when followed by a consonant. The dative of the 1st person singular in full form is ngaykika, however is most commonly shortened to ngayka.

NOMINAL DERIVATION

There are nine nominalising suffixes affixed to nominals, adjectives, demonstratives and verbs. Two (- nga/- may) are suppletive, while four (LAI, DHA, *RA, *LA) are fossilised.

a) impersonal-neutral-abstract nominalisation: nominative-accusative - nga, affixed form: - may- (in certain cases reduced to - ma-, though not in Kalaw Kawaw Ya). Some Kalaw Lagaw Ya speakers see this suffix as a common noun (nga thing, with a suppletive stem may-/ ma-: mina nga a real thing, plural mina mal / mina mayl real things (Ephraim Bani, pers. comm., 1983). The genitive is marked as a monosyllable for Kalaw Lagaw Ya speakers, thus minamayngu of (a) real thing(s), but as a regular multi-syllabic noun in the other dialects, thus Kalaw Kawaw Ya, Kûlkalgau Ya, Mualgau Ya-Kaiwalgau Ya minamay. The suffixes refer to the more impersonal or neutral nuances of nominalization (including when the reference is to people) and are also used to create the abstract nominal form of adjectives, as can be seen in the following list.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>type</th>
<th>base</th>
<th>derived nominal</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>adjective</td>
<td>uma dead, unconscious</td>
<td>umanga dead body; drunk/unconscious person; death; drunkedness, unconsciousness, coma; debt, sin, crime</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>kuykul have a head</td>
<td>kuykulnga state of having a head; leader, chief, boss</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>kisâyigi moonless</td>
<td>kisâyiginga moonlessness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>mabazi, mabawzi walked</td>
<td>mabazinga, mabawzinga place where walking has been done</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>nisadh leaf-like, green</td>
<td>nisadhanga greenery; green, greenness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>genitive</td>
<td>nanu her</td>
<td>nanunga her object, hers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>quantity/number</td>
<td>úrapùn one (in number)</td>
<td>úrapùnanga, úrapùninga state of being one</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>interrogative</td>
<td>midha- what, which</td>
<td>midhanga what one, which one, the one which</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>demonstratives</td>
<td>thangapa beyond there</td>
<td>thangapamal those beyond over there</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

b) personal-abstract nominalisation: - IGA: this suffix refers to the more personalised or non-neutral abstract or “intellectual” nuances of nominalization (including when the reference is not to people).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>type</th>
<th>base</th>
<th>derived nominal</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>adjective</td>
<td>yabay passing by</td>
<td>yabayg passer-by</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>ngagal winged</td>
<td>ngagalayg sea-eagle</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>yagi speechless</td>
<td>yagig speechless person, person left without a word</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>mabazi, mabawzi walked</td>
<td>mabazig, mabawzig person who has walked</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>quantity/number</td>
<td>war/wara one of a group, other</td>
<td>warig one person of the group, the other/another person</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The personal-nonpersonal distinction has various semantic extensions, the personal suffix being more ‘special’, while the impersonal suffix is more ‘down-to-earth’: maytha belly, maythal have a belly/gut; pregnant: maythalayg pregnant, maythalnga having a belly/gut (have a beer-gut etc.); kikir sickness, pain, kikirl Sick, painful, sore: kikirlayg sick, sickness, kikirlnga pain, soreness; daana pool, lagoon, eye, life: danalayg life (KKY person who is awake), danalnga state of having a pool, lagoon, eye; ngulay- have knowledge/ability: ngulayg knower, knowledge, ability, ngulannga home ground, home base, the place one is intimately familiar with, crew; ayima- make, do, ayimayzi made, done: ayimayzinga creator of the creation, ayimayzinga creation; kuyk, GY kuwiiku head, kuykul have a head, headed: kuykulayg some one who has a head (e.g. in headhunting), kuykulnga headman, chief, leader, councillor.

The following group of true adjectives cannot take the personal suffix, and often impersonal suffixation either, being used preferably with nouns such as za thing and mabayg person when predicates. They do take the impersonal suffix, however, where appropriate, particularly to create the abstract state noun: kapu good, kapunga goodness; wati bad, watinga badness; kulebay old, kulebaynga oldness; kain young, new kaynnga youngness, newness; kek big, great, keknynga bigness, greatness; moegi small, little, moeginga smallness, littleness; mina real, true, minanga realness, reality, truth; adhi great, huge, adhinga greatness, hugeness.

Use of the nominalising suffix -nga/-may- is also wide-spread as a relative clause marking device. Often it is only context which shows that these suffixes are to be taken as marking a nominalisation or a relative construction:

Sena war email ngayka yakamaw, senabnga kule mangema. Show me that other email, the one which came first/ before.

Se-na war emaila-Ø that-F other email-ACC ngay-ka yakama-Ø-Ø-ZIU, I-DAT show-ATT-SG-NSg.IMP Pf se-na-bi-nga-Ø kùl-lay that-F ART ImpNom-NOM first-SLoc manga-i-Ø-ma arrive-ACT-SG-TodP PF

Wa, inaabi email kapu yadaynga; kasa kay senabnga warnga adhapudhaynga. Yes, this email is good news (or well-worded); but that other one is excellent.

Wa, i-na-bi emaila-Ø yes, here-F ART email-NOM kapu ya-day-nga-Ø; good talk-PRP ImpNom-NOM; kasa kay just however se-na-bi-nga-Ø there-F ART ImpNom-NOM war-nga-Ø other-ImpNom-NOM adha+pudha-‘i- nga-Ø. out+fall-VN ImpNom-NOM

c) verb nominalisation: -i/y and -n: added to the verb stem to form the verbal noun. The suffix -i/y is from older *ři, recorded in
Kauřařaigau Ya, the following examples in Kauřařaigau Ya being maři, ladháři, piníři, uthúři and yagamaři.

-i/y – standard verbal noun formant, neutral to tense, aspect and mood. Its affixed forms, such as the privative, resultative, dative, ablative and genitive form various modal and aspectual clauses, such as the clause negative, negative imperative, resultative, purposive, avoidative and ‘supposed to’ modality (see further Modality).

ma- take, give, move, go: may VN, mayka DAT, maythaylay ABL
ladha- cut, chop: ladháy VN, ladháyka DAT, ladháylay ABL
pini- paint, smear: piní VN, piníka DAT, pinílay ABL
uthu- plant, shoot, etc: uthúy VN, uthúyka DAT, uthúylay ABL
yagama-i- wonder at/about: yagamay VN, yagamayka/yagamaka/yagamka DAT, yagamaylay ABL

-n: a rare attainative verbal noun, identical in shape to the attainative singular present perfective, and probably in origin an idiomatic use of this; used to focus on the attainment of the verbal noun, and mainly only used in the nominative-accusative form:

minayakathamay belief as the act of believing
minayakathaman belief as the state of having come to believe
minaman act of measuring, estimation, judging, etc.
minaman measurement, estimation, judgement
garweydamay the act of meeting or gathering, meeting, gathering
garweydamayn, garweydamamin meeting, convened gathering
mathamay the act of hitting, striking, killing, murdering
mathaman hitting/striking/killing that has been done, murder
d) Fossilised derivation: the adjective formants LAI (proprietive) and DHA (similative) are also found as fossilised nominal formants. LAI carries the semantics of ‘having’ the base word, thus in the following a minalay mat has lines/marks, and a patalay/pøtalay has needles. DHA shows that the word has a similar appearance to the base word, thus a bawadh is like a wave, baawa.

LAI: geetha hand, crab etc. claw, githalay mud crab; miina line, sign, mark, minalay finely designed mat; paata spike, needle, patalay/pøtalay prickle, thorn; pal deitic dual morpheme, palay they dual; mùra all, total, muraray totality of countable objects

DHA: baawa wave, bawadh bank with wavelike shape; daana pool, lagoon; eye, danadh pimple; kùùpa bottom, base, kùpadh small bay

A few nouns seem to have a fossilised *RA or *LA suffix, similar in appearance and perhaps meaning to LAI, and possibly originating from it:

*RA: kùn, GY kùùna flour, kùnar(a) ash; star cloud; miina mark, sign, minar(a) design, stripe, drawing, painting, writing etc.; berdh(a) softness, tenderness (food/mud), berdhar(a) soft mud, KKY soft food; yawa carefulness, farewell, yawar(a) journey

*LA: kùbi, GY kùùbi charcoal, kubil(a) night; CA *miil ‘eye’, milal(a) stare, observe.

**NOMINAL DEICTICS: DEMONSTRATIVES**

The nominal deictics are a closed set which have physical and abstract (temporal, etc.) uses. They contrast:

(a) relative position with regard to the speaker: higher, eye-level, lower; here, there; ahead/up front/near to, behind/ at the back/away from, beyond/on the other side;

(b) relative distance (near, middle, far) and specificity (specific or non-specific);
(c) in certain cases gender and number (masculine, feminine, dual and plural), as pronominal forms;

(d) demonstrative articles (gender and number)

a) Relative position with regard to speaker (marked by stem form)

higher: -ka, dative stem -kada/-kara- up there;

eye-level: i- (specific), ka- (nonspecific) here; se-, si- there; -pay, -pa, -paypa, -papa, dative -paypa ahead, up front, near to; -pùn/-wupa, dative -pawupa behind, at the back, away from; -ngapa beyond, on the other side;

lower: -gu (KKY -guy), dative stem -mulu- (KKY -ngùl- when prefixed) down there

b) Relative distance and specificity (marked by prefixes)

nearer to speaker: kœw-, e.g. kœwka up there relatively near to here

away from speaker: sew-, e.g. sewka up there in the middle distance

specific distance: pi-; pew-, e.g. pika, pewka specifically up over there

non-specific distance: kay-, e.g. kayka up there in a general sense

ablative: kœzi-/kizi-, e.g. kœzika/kizika from up there

All demonstratives save i- here SP, ka- here NSp and se-/si- there take the same prefixes. Note all the variant stems of -wupa, and -pay, ahead, up front, etc. are found with kay-, thus kaypùn, kayupa; kaypay, kaypa, kaypaypa, kaypapa. The ablative is neutral to distance and specificity.

The prefixes ending in -w are the genitive forms of the demonstratives ka- nonspecifically here and se-/si- there (middle distance), with the extension of this through analogy to the prefix pi- specifically yonder. Pi--pew- and kay- both refer to yonder, however pi--pew- shows a specific referent. Thus, in the sample sentence from the story of Kuiam in the section on Education and Literacy: Writing the Language, kayka refers to a vague positioning ‘up there’ (on a hill). This differs from the use of pika in the example below, the first line of The Lord’s Prayer, where the reference is to the specific being God.

Ngalmùn thaathi, pika dapara.
Our father, up there in heaven.

ngal-mù-n  thathi-Ø,
wePL.EXC-AUG-GEN  father-NOM,
pì-ka  dapara-LAI
SpDem-up.there  sky-SLoc

The unmarked neutral forms of here and there are used with pre-referencing semantics and use equivalent to the French y and Italian ci. These are kay here at this place already established and sey/si/siyen there at that place already established. While sin is an abbreviated form of sina, the feminine, and siyen appears to be the same, kay and sey/si appear to have an -i locative suffix.
Ngalmun Lagaw Yangukudu: the Language of our homeland

This morning they went to church for the service. When they got there, the door was still shut.

Thanana bathaynga yuthaka amenika. Thana na si mangeminu, pasa mamuy matha thamudhayzinga kay.

All demonstratives except for i- here SP and se-/si- there take the gender and number morphemes as prefixes. Ka- here NSp, having non-specific reference, cannot be arked for gender or number. The variant stem of -pùn back there/ off away, -wupa is used optionally in the feminine, dual and plural, but not the masculine:

i- this, here

article: inubi, GY inuubi M; inabi, GY inaabi F; ipalbi, ipalab DU; ithabi, GY ithaabi PL
non-specific locative: inuki M; inaki F; ipalki DU; ithaki PL
global locative: inukidh M; inakidh F; ipalkidh DU; ithakidh PL

se-/si- that, there

article: senubi, sinubi, GY senuubi, sinuubi (KKY senawbi) M; senabi, sinabi, GY senaabi, sinaabi F; sepalbi, sipalbi, sepalab, sipalab DU; sethabi, sithabi, GY sethaabi, sithaabi PL
non-specific locative: senuki, sinuki (KKY senawki) M; senaki, sinaki F; sepalki, sipalki DU; sethaki, sithaki PL
global locative: senukidh, sinukidh (KKY senawkidh) M; senakidh, sinakidh F; sepalkidh, sipalkidh DU; sethakidh, sithakidh PL

Memos of the Queensland Museum | Culture • 8 (1) • 2015 | 387
Abstract extensions of the deictics

Other uses of the demonstratives are abstract extensions of their cores uses. Such include the following:

**kay:** non-specifically near the speaker > soon after, will soon, going to soon – also found in reduplicated form: kaykay, S-D kayke (and a reanalysed emphatic form kaykedh); yet, still, e.g. matha lawnga kay, kay matha lawnga (beside matha lawnga) not yet; in Kalaw Kawaw Ya, and sometimes in other dialects, in this use the clitic is usually reduced to ka: matha lawnga ka, ka matha lawnga.

**-pay:** ahead there > on the south-eastern side (facing the South-East trade winds); poeypay on the near side, on the south-east side.

**paypa:** ahead there (clearly seen) > upstream, upcurrent; kay paypa kùlay in the past, in the old days (and therefore knowable).

**pawupa:** back that way, away from there (and often not clearly seen or even out of sight) > downstream, downcurrent; kay pawupa wagel in the future, in future times (and unpredictable)

**kadaka/kadka:** upwards over there > northwards, upstream

**muluka/mulka:** downwards over there > southwards, downstream

The deictics are also compounded with dœgam side, part, direction to specify the physical area specified by the deictic, such as nangapdœgam the other side, poeypaydœgam near-side, south east side, nagudœgam the down-below side, etc.

**INTERROGATIVE NOMINALS**

The interrogative prefix mii-/mi- what, which forms interrogative nominals. In use it is almost identical to the Meriam Mir prefix na- which, what. In Kalaw Lagaw Ya and to a smaller extent Kûlkalgau Ya, Mualgau Ya and Kaiwalgau Ya, there is a strong tendency for the instrumental/similative form midha (> midha-, midhœ-, midhi-) to replace mii-/mi- as the interrogative formant. One interrogative pronoun and one interrogative adverb also exist, and an additional interrogative adverb in Kalaw Kawaw Ya only:

migoeyga, midhagoeygga which date, what date; mikisaayi, midhakisaayi (KKY mimelpal) which month; miay, midhaay which food, what food; miza, midhaay which thing, what thing; etc.

mimabayg, midhamabayg which person, nga who; milaga[nu], midhalaga[nu] which place, where, wona, unaga, una where (MY-KY wonága, unága, naga, KKY ngalaga where, what place [nga+laga-LAI what+place-SLoc]), mithonaranu, midhathonaranu at what time, when, KKY namuyth when.

**Nga** who is also used when asking for the names of people (common in languages of the world, such as Malay/Indonesian, Brokan and Tok Pisin), while miay, midha and midhakidh are used for asking for the names of things:

Ninu nel nga? What is your name?
Nipen nel ngawal? What are your names? (dual)
Nithamùn nelay ngaya? What are your names? (plural)
Iina nel miay/midha/midhakidh? What is the name of this?

Both miay what/which food and miza what/which thing can be used as the independent proforms which and what:

Sena miay/miza? What is that?
Sena miay/midha-ay? What food is that?
Sena miza/midha-za? What thing is that?

Miay can also be used as the exclamative what!, though in more polite language the exclamative is midha/midh (or midhakidh)
Ngalmun Lagaw Yangukudu: the Language of our homeland  

(mother calling to child)
A. Kùpaasi ay! Grasshopper!
B. Miay? What?
A. Ni milaga? Where are you?
B. Ngay ina giyapalaylaga! I'm here in the kitchen!

(hailing a stranger in order to speak to him
[old fashioned story language - koeymega is an honorific that literally means companion])
A. Koeymega! Friend!
B. Midha/Midhikidh? How can I help you?
A. Ni sey, aw? Are you there?

Unlike the Meriam Mir na-, the Western and Central Language prefix also exists in declined forms as an independent word declined as a common noun, and as a personal pronoun in one of the four variant instrumental forms (midha). The nominative-accusative (miay), nominative-accusative plural (midayl), and one of the variant instrumental forms (midayn/midhen) are based on miay what/which food (PL midayl < mi-aydayl, INS miden < midayn < mi-aydayn). The oblique cases are based on the stem mii- as a class 1 noun: instrumental midu/midun, dative mika to/for what/which, why, ablative mingu (also minguz and minguzi) from, because of what/which, why and the instrumental/similative midh/midha how, like what/which. As a synonym of midh/midha, Kalaw Kawaw Ya has the interrogative adverb naag (also naga) how.

The instrumental/similative has been ‘augmented’ in various ways in Kalaw Lagaw Ya, particularly in similitative uses:

basic form: midha, midh;

extended forms (no semantic difference form the basic form): midhakidh, midhikidh (-kidh[a] -wise, non-specific locative), mimidh (either the prefixed interrogative, or reduplicated stem), midhuy (an older form of the instrumental plus a -y augment).

The nominalised form, however, is midhanga/midhamay- which/what one.
The extended forms are not used in Kalaw Kawaw Ya, and only midhakidh in Mualgau Ya-Kaiwalgau Ya. Kùlkalgau Ya has the variant midhadh, with a doubled suffix. The word in Kaufaraiagau Ya was midhu, and Kalaw Lagaw Ya midhuy appears to have retained this older form.

The interrogative midha (alt. midh, midhikidh) how, like what shows that the speaker is asking or wondering about how, a situation, identity, what’s wrong, what’s the matter, and so on. This has a range beyond that of the English word how, and can be translated in various ways according to context, including what [a translated meaning], as when asking for names (as already noted), such as in the example below. In the second example following, midha focuses on the global action, and represents the global object, expressed by the instrumental, of the active verb, me-/mi-/miyai-, the active form of ma- give, take, move, do, etc.. It contrasts with the third example, where miza/miay what (thing) refers to the product.

Nanu nel midha/midhikidh thœráyka?
What is her name? What is she called?
nan-NGU nel-Ø
She-GEN name-NOM
mi-dha[kidha] thara-'i-ka
what-INS.SIM[=GLoc] call-VN-PrImpf

When asking for people’s names, nga who is used, thus ninu nel nga? What is your name?, literally who is your name?, also common in languages of the world, such as Malay/Indonesian, Brokan and Tok Pisin.

Ni midha meka?
What are you doing?
ni-Ø mi-dha
youSg-NOM what-INS
ma-i-Ø-ka
do-ACT-SG-PrPf
Nidhmiza/miai ayimka?
What are you doing/making?

ni-dha mi+za-Ø // mi+ay-Ø
youSg-INS what+thing-food-ACC
ayima-’i-ka
make/do+VN+PrPf

Other interrogative uses are in 1, 2 (asking about health - both in earnest as well as in greeting), and non-specific wondering (3, 4):

1) Ni/Nipel/Nitha midhakidh?
How’s things? How are you going?
(in colloquial speech simply: Midhikidh How’s things? How are you going?)

2) Ninu kulu midhakidh?
Balbalginga, a, lawnga kikirilnga, a? How is your knee? OK, or feeling painful?
nin-NGU kulu-Ø you SG-GEN knee-NOM

mi-dha-kidha
what-SIM-GLoc
bal+bal-gi-nga-Ø a cross+cross-PRV-ImpNom-NOM Q
lawnga kikiri-LAI-nga a not.or sickness.pain-PRP-ImpNom-NOM Q

3) Rod midha/midhakidh kœy kùthalnga meka?
(I wonder) Why is Rod taking so long/so long away?
Rod-Ø mi-dha-[kidha]
Rod+NOM what-INS.SIM[-GLoc]
kœy kùtha-LAI-nga big end+PRP+ImpNom
ma-i-Ø-ka give.move.be-ACT-SG-PrIMPF

4) Midha/Midhakidh, nuy kay yuthaka uzarika kay, aw?
Is he going to the hall (I wonder)?
mi-dha-[kidha] nuy-Ø
what+INS.SIM[-GLoc] him-NOM
ka-i yœwtha-ka hereNSp-LOC hall-DAT
uzára-i-Ø-ka go+ACT+Sg+PrImpf/NF
ka-i aw hereNSp-LOC Q

Midha(kidh) is also used together with lawnga to express or, as in the first example below, while the second expresses the sense of English or what?

Ni midha, mabayg aw, lawnga ni markay aw?
Are you a person or are you a ghost (I wonder)?
ni-Ø mi-dha
youSg-NOM what-INS.SIM
maaba-IGA-Ø aw
walk-PNom-NOM Q
lawnga ni-Ø or.not youSg-NOM
markay-Ø aw ancestry-spirit-NOM Q

Ngœba ayka a? Lawnga midhikidh?
Will we go eat now, or what?
ngœba-Ø ay+ka a,
weDUinc-NOM food+DAT Q
lawnga mi-dha-kidha
or.not what-INS.SIM-GLoc

The instrumental/similative has special use in the following constructions:

a) how many/much - in collocation with múra all

Nanu tukuypal midha/midhakidh múra?
How many sisters does she have?
nan-NGU tukuyapa-LAI she-GEN same.sex.sib-PRP
mi-dha(kidha) múra what-SIM(-GLoc) all

b) equality, sameness, similarity - comparison in collocation with kedha thus

Ostreya matha kedha/midhakidh múra.
Australia has the same population as Holland
Ostreya-Ø matha ke-dha Australia-NOM only here-SIM
mabayga-LAI-nga-Ø person-PRP-ImpNom-NOM
Olani-ya Holland-NSpLoc
mi-dha(kidha)/ mi-dhu-y na what-SIM(-GLoc) / what-SIM? REF

Nuy kedha midh/midhakidh.
He is like that.
Ngalmun Lagaw Yangukudu: the Language of our homeland

Inuubi thuuthu, nuy kuykùthalnga inuubi midhuy/midha/midhakidh. This waddy is longer than this one.
i-nu-bi  thuthu-Ø, nuy-Ø
this-M-ART waddy-NOM, he-NOM
cœy-kùtha-lay-nga-Ø  i-nu-bi
big-end-PRP-ImpNom-NOM this-M-ART
mi-dhu-y / mi-dha(-kidha).
what-SIM-?/ what-SIM(-GLoc)

War kùla kœynga wara midhuy/midhakidh/midha.
One stone is bigger than another.
war  kùla-Ø  kœy-nga-Ø
other stone-NOM big-ImpNom-NOM
wara mi-dhu-y / mi-dha(-kidha)
other what-SIM-? / what-SIM(-GLoc)

Midhuy acts syntactically as a noun in being directly governed by the demonstrative articles in some cases, unlike midhakidh or midha, thus ithaabi midhuy = itha midhakidh/midha like these

GENDER

Like the neighbouring Papuan languages Bine, Gidra and Gizrra (Wurm, 1975: 333-334) as well as Australian languages further afield such as Pitta Pitta, Diyari, Yandruwandha, Ngamini and Yarluandyi (Austin, 1981: 60), Bandjalang (Crowley, 1978: 78) and Ngalakan (Merlan, 1983), there are two genders, masculine and feminine, that are only partially dependent on natural gender.

Gender is marked on words that have a referential/deictic function, and only appears in the singular. Except for the singular 3rd person pronouns where gender is encoded by the stem, gender is marked by affixes on proper nouns, demonstratives, 1st person singular genitive/genitive-based forms, and the two miscellaneous paradigms of ka-/ko- attention seeker and sikai maybe, perhaps. It is an integral part of the pronominal/deictic number system.

Agreement is with the head noun, and in the case of the 1st person genitives (and their derived forms), the referent is the speaker. The main means of marking gender is in keeping with other Australian languages, nu he, it, masculine, CA *nyu, and na she, it, feminine, CA *nya[n], though there is a third augmenting suffix -ni used by masculine proper nouns and dual-plural pronouns. These form a paradigm with the dual and plural morphemes pal and tha, also of Australian origin, cf. palay they dual (CA *pul[ ]), thana they plural (CA *jana).

Where a pronoun or demonstrative is used in a gender-free sense, the feminine is used:

Nipen bathaynga kuniya tidaylzœpuya, ni Amanaka muledhe kay ina ngay midhikidh umeka. [...] Ina nitha mùra Baban maythal. (Solomon, 1959; Jeremy Becket ms.)

When tomorrow the two of you take back the things you came to get, you tell your Mum this what I am saying. ... What the situation is is that you have all been made pregnant by your Dad.

Here the feminine word ina, this feminine object/person here, refers to a general situation or discourse topic.
At first glance, gender assignment in the language can appear as random as in any Indo-European or Semitic language, as the following words show:

Masculine:
laaga inhabited island, thuuthu waddy, kisaayi moon, puuyi tree, plant, magic, dhangal dugong, nath/nœyath platform.

Feminine:
kaywa island, koelaaka spear, kùùta afternoon, evening, katham banana, waaru turtle.

Rules do exist, however. Where people and human-like beings are concerned, gender is with very few exceptions natural; exceptions have a culturally defined basis:

masculine:
thaathi/thath father, father’s brother, babath female’s brother, garka man, male, kaazi boy, son, awadhe mother’s brother

feminine:
apuuwa/apu mother, mother’s sister, babath male’s sister, ipika woman, female, kaazi girl, daughter, ngœybath father’s sister

Culturally assigned gender occurs (a) where in cultural perception the word refers to a being with a typical gender regardless of real gender, e.g. biblical angels are masculine, or (b) is outside of gender reference. This can be a means of ‘degenderising’, ‘defeminising’ or ‘demasculinising’ the natural gender of the being; having said this, in all cases where overt gender reference needs to be made, then the natural gender is used:

masculine:
angela angel, mabayg person likely to be a male, awgadh totem, god

feminine:
mapeth baby, infant, mabayg female; human being, community, mari spirit of person recently dead
An example of 'defeminising' is **dhogay long eared witch-hag**, a semi-comic/semi-malignant female sometimes referred to in stories by the pronoun **nuy he**.

Where non-human animates are concerned, grammatical gender is the norm with natural gender only being used when overt reference is being made to the natural gender.

**masculine:**
- dhangal **dugong**, dongki **donkey**, nani **goat**,
- malukuyup **flying fish**, mage **monkey**, mamuy **sheep**, thaabu **snake**, saamu **cassowary**

**feminine:**

The words **uruy creature**, **bird** and **waapi fish** are normally masculine when referring to the living animal, particularly when this has

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Concept 1</th>
<th>feminine</th>
<th>masculine</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>pudhu, GY puudhu</td>
<td>street, path, passage-way between houses</td>
<td>clearness, cleanness, clearmindedness, soberness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ya</td>
<td>talking, words, speech; spoken/produced/written words</td>
<td>message, teaching; pronouncement, announcement; explanation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>yabugùuda</td>
<td>way, road, path, street, etc.</td>
<td>way of life/belief</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>wakay, yanguwakay</td>
<td>pronunciation (e.g. of letters, words)</td>
<td>voice, thought, accent, tune</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>wakaythœmam</td>
<td>thinking, thought, opinion (without a sure basis)</td>
<td>thinking, thought, opinion (with a sure basis)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Concept 2</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>gaamu</td>
<td>body</td>
<td>hull (also gulgaamu canoe hull); body as container of life (umagaamu corpse, dead body)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>arkah</td>
<td>hole, pit, tunnel</td>
<td>world, earth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>sama</td>
<td>ball made of food paste</td>
<td>(creation of God)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In the traditional view of the universe, the world is a ‘hole’ at the bottom of an upside-down hemisphere, the sides and top of which is the sky. Arkah as masculine refers to this concept of the world, while as feminine refers to any hole or pit or tunnel.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Concept 3</th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>apawgœwa</td>
<td>garden mound/ditch; world as a place or pathway</td>
<td>world, earth (as a planet inhabited by people)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>guguwœbidhœyayzinga</td>
<td>coil, circular object</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>kiibu</td>
<td>tail bone, lower back, loins; slope</td>
<td>horizon; Kibukûutha (the ‘pagan’ heaven)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>laaga</td>
<td>place</td>
<td>place of cultural significance; inhabited island</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Concept 3</td>
<td>use reference</td>
<td>natural/totemic/cultural/source reference</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>geegya</td>
<td>day</td>
<td>sun</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>kisaayi</td>
<td>month</td>
<td>moon</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>urab/wœrab</td>
<td>coconut</td>
<td>coconut palm</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>maayi</td>
<td>well, spring</td>
<td>well/spring given by a being such as a totem, god or <strong>muruyg</strong> (the real or mythical ancestor of a <strong>buway clan</strong>, <strong>moiety</strong>)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**TABLE 11. The gender marked words of the language**
a totemic or similar importance. However, as animals destined for killing (for food, i.e. for use) they are feminine; they can also be feminine when overtly referring to a female animal.

Inanimates (plants, body parts, abstract nouns and the like) have ‘assigned’ gender. Where plants are concerned, the division is fairly clear; most plants are masculine, while their ‘food parts’ are feminine; in those cases where the word is the same, the gender changes according to the reference. Feminine plants are rare, and are normally not food sources. The food/non-food division is a part of a series of distinctions; that is to say, it fits in Concept 3 of Table 11.

masculine:
biyu white mangrove, ubar/wœbar Torres Strait plum (wongai) tree, urab/wœrab coconut palm, daway banana palm, dhani Moreton Bay fig tree, mascel muscle, ngaara leg, gœngaawu skin, hide, magadh body hair, fur, fleece

feminine:
kawsar screw-pine pandanus, buruwa/ bœruwa young kawsar pandanus, bœupa grass plant, biyu white mangrove pod (a food), ubar/ wœbar Torres Strait plum (wongai), urab/ wœrab ripe coconut, katham banana, giu¿da mouth, opening, gap, kakur egg, kulka blood, suusu breast, kibu tail bone, lower back, loins, slope, kuyk, GY kuwiiku head, maadhu meat, yalbùp, GY yalbüupa hair

Where close synonyms are concerned, gender assignment reflects a difference in semantics:

island
kaywa: feminine - island as a geographical area
laaga: masculine - inhabited island, home island (a specialised use of laaga place, which is feminine)

authority, power
parpar/pœrapar: feminine - authority based on natural power; natural power
bibir/biber: masculine - authority based on developed strength/might; strength, might, power

The variation in masculine and feminine gender marking as shown in Table 11 can give the impression that masculine denotes some sort of significance, and therefore that feminine gender does not. However, feminine words such as the following are counterexamples, as they cannot be shown to have any less cultural (or other) significance:
amen church service, prayer; gidha story, legend, myth; adhawmulay announcing, pronouncing as in reporting, judging, etc; nel name; ngûlayg knowledge, ability; sabi law, regulation; wœnab glory, received or bestowed blessing; buwáy family, clan, moiety, organisation (group of people joined by a common bond); pawa custom, fashion, deed, action

The importance of such words is so much a part of the word in itself that masculinity marking is not needed to highlight them. Masculine in the language is a marked category – something to be attributed, and feminine is unmarked, being naturally and intrinsically significant.

THE VERB

Like nominals, there are two classes of verbs based on the stem syllable number. The stem is the root of the verb. Most verb stems end in -a, and a few in -i, -u or -ay. Affixes can differ according to verb class.

Class 1: monosyllabic stem (four verbs only: ma- take, give, be, move, etc; ni- sit, stay; si- stand; ii-/yu-/yœw- lie, slant, lean)
Class 2A: two syllables in stem (roughly half of all verbs)
Class 2B/C: three or more syllables in stem (roughly half of all verbs): these verbs tend to undergo stem reduction. The stems of Class 2C verbs end in -ma.

Class 1 verbs have monosyllabic stems in some singular forms (and for ma- also in the verbal noun, may), otherwise the stem is bisyllabic. In the case of ni- and si- the bisyllabic stems are nia-
The verb *ma-* is irregular in declining like *ni-* and *si-* in those forms where *nia-* and *sia-* occur, thus *mia-* (*miya-*), variant *mea-* (*meya-*). The verb *ii/-yu/-yœw-* is even more irregular, having *yuwi/-yœwi-* as an alternative to *yu/-yœw-* and otherwise having either *ia-* (*iya-*) or *yuua/-yœwya-* where *nia-* and *sia-* and *mia-* and *mea-* occur. It also has an augmented perfective stem, *yuna/-yœwna-* and an augmented causative stem in Kalaw Lagaw Ya only, *yutha/-yœutha-* and in Kalaw Lagaw Ya; there is also a related plural-reference only attainative verb *nithama-* sit, seat oneself in all dialects. The treatment of stems for the attainative-active contrast (for which The Attainative-Active Contrast) is perhaps the main differentiator of class.

Examples of the verb classes:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Class 1</th>
<th>Class 2a</th>
<th>Class 2b</th>
<th>Class 2c</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ma-</td>
<td>thama-</td>
<td>barpuda-</td>
<td>ubama-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>mayka</em></td>
<td><em>thœmáyka</em></td>
<td><em>barpudaka</em></td>
<td><em>ubamka</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>mani</em> (irregular)</td>
<td><em>thaman</em></td>
<td><em>barpudan</em></td>
<td><em>ubaman</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>meka, mika</em></td>
<td><em>thameka, thamika</em></td>
<td><em>barpudika</em></td>
<td><em>ubayka</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>mizi</em></td>
<td><em>thami</em></td>
<td><em>barpudi</em></td>
<td><em>ubami</em></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Perhaps the one truly irregular verb form is *nay[n(i)],* found only in *ngûkin nay[n(i)]* be thirsty, thirst, cause thirst (*nguki* fresh water, juice), and *thartharnay[ni]* boil (*tharthar* boiling, simmering). This word is unique in the language in having only the following forms. It can be used as a verb or verbal noun with appropriate syntax:

Verb: *ngûkin naynin, ngûkin nay(n)i, ngûkinay(n)i thirst, be thirsty* attainative present perfective

*ngûkinay be thirsty* active present perfective
ngùkinayka, ngukinaynka be thirsty
attainative present imperfective

Ngœna ngùkin naynin
I am thirsty, I have become thirsty
ngœ-na ngùki-n nayni-n
I-ACC water-INS thirst-ATT.PrPF

Ngay ngùkinay
I am thirsty, I have become thirsty
ngay-Ø ngùki+nay-Ø
I-NOM water+thirst-ACT.PrPF

Ngay ngùkinayka/ngùkinaynka
I am thirsty
ngay-Ø ngùki+nay[n]-ka
I-NOM water+thirst-ATT.PR.IMPF

Noun: ngùkinay, ngùkinay(n), ngukin nay thirst
Ngaw ngùkinayn kœyza
My thirst is great, I am really thirsty.
nga-NGU ngùki+nayni-Ø
I-GEN water+thirst-NOM
kœy+za-Ø
big+thing-NOM

Kedha mabayg la ngùkinaynka lawnga
Such a person will never more thirst.
ke-dha mabayga-Ø laka
here-SIM person-NOM again
ngùki-n+nay-ka
water-INS+thirst-DAT not

Privative: ngùkinaygi, ngûkinaygi unthirsty, have no thirst, thirstless
Ngaw ngûkinaynaginga
I am not thirsty.
nga-NGU
I-GEN
ngùki-n+nay-gi-nga-Ø
water-INS+thirst-PRV-ImpNom-NOM.

VERB FORMATION

The verb word has the following matrix:
((prefix[es])-(compound[s])
stem
(suffix A)-(active suffix)-(suffix B)
(number suffix)
ending-(ending)

The stem is the core of the verb. Potentially any number of compounding stems and prefixes can become before the verb stem, this being limited by semantics. The suffix slots A and B in the above can be filled by fossilised suffixes. Verbs do not mark voice or transitivity, these being syntactic properties, but rather telicity, for which see The Attainative-Active Contrast.

Virtually all verb forms must have an ending, the main exception being the active singular perfective imperative, which is Ø-marked. Another partial exception involves the imperfective remote past ending -r, which elides when preceded by the glide -y:

The Verb Stem

The bare stem is the attainative (or aorist) form, thus manga- take to, carry to, bring to, bear to (attainative present perfective singular mangan, dual mangawman, plural mangamayn/mangamin), while the active form is made by suffixing underlying -i to the bare stem, thus manga-i- arrive, reach, come to, take global object to (active present perfective singular mangi, dual mangewman, plural mangemayn/mangemin (see further The Attainative-Active Contrast).
While most verbs have no apparent cognates in the language, some do have the same stem as a nominal, such as the following:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Nominal</th>
<th>Verb</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>adha- outer area/part</td>
<td>adha-, adha-i- move outwards, jut out, go out, exit, take out</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ayim(a) doing, making</td>
<td>ayima-, ayima-i- make; do; happen; move; say; become, be</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>kuykayim(a) start, beginning</td>
<td>kuykayima-, kuykayima-i- start, begin (kuyk-head)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>maanga fork (in tree, road)</td>
<td>manga- take to, carry to, bring to, bear to</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>rapa leg of crab, insect, etc.</td>
<td>rapa-i- limp, be lame</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>silam(a) fight</td>
<td>silama-, silama-i- fight, argue, have a fist-fight, box, battle, have a row</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>thaapa oar, paddle</td>
<td>thapa-, thapa-i row, paddle, swim</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>yawar(a) journey</td>
<td>yawara- journey, travel, take a trip, voyage</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A very small number of verbs show some resemblance to other words; however sound change has hidden the exact relationship between them:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Nominal</th>
<th>Verb</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>wamen(a) speed</td>
<td>wamayay- be running, racing, fleeing, escaping; be sailing quickly</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>yawa farewell; (archaic meaning) carefulness</td>
<td>yawaya- watch and wait; watch, watch over (with care)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Other verbs, on the other hand, have been derived from nominals or other verbs by one of two suffixes, MA and MAI (-may/-møy/-mi), though these are no longer productive. In some cases MAI (MA-I) is clearly the active form of the attainative MA, though there is evidence of a separate suffix MAI with a somewhat different meaning. Verbs suffixed by MAI are the only diphthong-final verb stems, apart from peepathay- till, hoe, prepare ground for planting. The suffixes have an intensive or multiplicative force when suffixed to verbs; the multiplicative force is particularly true of MAI, which may have a relationship with the verb plural suffix MAYI (-mayi/-møy/-møy/-mi-). The suffixes are normally suffixed to the bare stem, in the suffix A slot, though in some cases are suffixed to the active form, in the suffix B slot:

| paga- pierce, stick, stab; spear, shoot; dart down | attainative stem: paga- > pagama- sew; pagamay- head for active stem: paga-i- > pagemay- head for |
| muula- take out, produce; speak, talk, say (i.e. produce words) | attainative stem: muula- > mulama- work out, count, mulamay- retort, answer back rudely; talk bad about active stem: muula-i- > mulema-, muleyma-, mulayma- tell, report to puuda- open, open out attainative stem: puuda- > pudama- spread out (mat etc.); explain, mean; discuss; work out thara- erect, stand up active stem: thara-i- > tharema-, tharima-, tharayma-, thareyma- place so as to be in an erect position (e.g. a mast) naga-i- look, watch, shine attainative stem: naga- > nagamay- reason, think over, ponder thøydha- fetch, get (water, liquid); swallow, be swallowed (by darkness etc.); as active also bite attainative stem: thøydha- > thøydhamay-cover, loom, spread all around (darkness, clouds etc.) iima- see, find, inspect, test, try attainative stem: ima- > imamay- strive, try poeydha- open out, spread out; lie/lay down/out, stretch out
attainative stem: pœydha- > pœydhamay-
spread, spread out all around (cloud, darkness, etc.)

Both MA and MAI also derive verbs from
nominals:
aka fear > akama- dodge, ward off, flinch away
from; keep aloof from, keep apart from
kaday upwards > kadama- move up/off; pull up/
off, rip up/off, tear off
ruway curve, ark, shape, form > ruwama- turn,
veer, go around, curve, move in an curve
suupa wrapping, parcel > ya supama- (ya speech)
make a mistake, muddle up, trick with speech
ùka- two > ùkama- double; add to, increase;
subsidize, calculate, reckon
mina real, true, very > minama- measure,
estimate, judge; minamay- try out for the first
time, make maiden voyage

There are quite a few verbs ending in MA
and MAI which by form and meaning most
likely derive from words which are no
longer found. Internal and external cognates
support this, as in the following:
yakama- show, cf. yakanura-i- forget (a
compound of the unknown nominal *yaka,
and nura- wrap)
isama- load, transport (water, liquid), cf. CA
*yiija- ‘get’
gasama- get, catch; reach, attain, cf.CA *gaja-
tie up’

Examples are:
idima- break, ruin, break up, dismantle, spoil;
get rid of, dispose of
katama-i- get stuck, get bogged
mathama- hit, strike, beat; kill; exterminate; fight
sasima- squeeze, knead; strangle
thakama- fight (each other)

There is a small amount of evidence for
a relationship with the verb pala- (see
Compound and Collocational Verbs), whose
underlying meaning is cause, but in surface
form can have various translations according
to context, such as write, kick, flick, shoot
(arrow, gun), and so on:
guruguy, guurguy, gurguy circular motion,
gurgupa- go around (in circles)
suula- pour, leak, drop, drip, sulpa- pour-spray
liquid on, ngukin sulpa- water (e.g. seeds,
plants), spray (with water)
*ngur-: ngulayg knower, knowledge, ability,
know, ngulaynga the place one knows (home),
ngurpa-, ngurapi- teach, learn, study, train;
recognise, identify
CA *yila ‘lead’: yœlpa-/ilpa-, yœlápi-/ilápi-
lead, guide

One small group of active verbs which end in
the stem syllable -ra has a common semantic
domain which suggests original derivational
suffixation denoting a ‘total activity’ focus.
That is to say, words that fit into this potential
category refer to an activity that involves the
subject or object completely. A suffixed origin
is suggested by possible cognates in four cases:
pauthara-i- roll along
puzara-i- pull, haul; strive for, push for, fight for,
battle for (cf. uzara-i- go, pa- telic prefix)
sizara-i- go/down from/to/over; swoop
down on; wade
uzara-i- go
thanura-i sit, sit down
woenara-i- get stuck; get bogged (cf. wana- put, place)
pinira-i sink into (cf. pini- smear, paint)
thapura-i- float up; swirl up; emerge out of water;
crawl out of water, get out of water (cf. thapawin, swim)

Two Kalaw Lagaw Ya verbs have evidence of
a fossilised attainative causative suffix -tha:
nitha- seat, cause to sit, cf. ni- be sitting, live,
stay and yœutha- (yutha-) lay down, cause to
lie, put down, cf. yœu- (yu-) be lying down, be slanting, be leaning. Other verbs that may also contain this suffix are:

banitha-: pierce, penetrate, stick (in); spit out chewed up remains; touch land, come into land
nanitha- (alt. nantha-): put in, plant, stick upright in ground (post, skewer etc.); penetrate, stab, pierce, jab
pabœitha-/pabayitha-: answer back, retort, give a back answer, talk back (pa- telic prefix)
engitha-: run, run at, attack
kabùtha-: put, lay, lie (down), set (down), settle, place; reveal, show up, lay bare
pinitha-: peel, slip, slide; (idiom) rush along (cf. pini- smear, spread, paint, pinira-i- sink into)
sarkœtha-: add/weave in a new strand (when another gets too short; cf. sarka stream)
azagitha-: compel, force someone to do something against their will

COMPUND AND COLLOCATIONAL VERBS

Though the language has over 300 simple verbs (including those derived by MA, MAI and PA), there are many compound and collocational (i.e. ‘semi-compound’) verbs, this being the main means of verb formation in the language. The initials of compound verbs can be nominals, adjectives, adverbs or even declined words. Verbs do not appear directly as the first members of verb compounds, however their stem or nominal forms can. Collocational verbs consist of uninflected nominals that form part of a loose verbal complex. These differ from compounds in that they can be split, e.g. by adverbs. Many appear to be fixed collocations, while others are productive. Those that are fixed collocations blend into the category of true compounds. Examples are:

uthuy yœwna- (sleep+lie down PF) lie down to sleep; uthuy i-/yœw-/yœwi- (sleep+be lying IMPF) sleep, be sleeping; sagul thara-/thara-i- (game+stand) play, stand playing; sagul si-/siya- (game+be standing IMPF) be playing; kibak puydha- (cough+hang) cough; gaanu puyma-/pulma- (smell+take out) smell, sniff; ya muula-i- (word/speech+produce ACT) speak, say; ya uuma- (word/speech+weave) speak; dhœya thuuda- (small rubbish+clear away) clear away small rubbish, strip off, pluck, weed; wal tiduma- (shout+? [only found in this combination]) shout, call (to one person); wal me- (shout+be.move.do) shout, call (to many people); yal pœyba-i- (clacking noise+give-ACT) call, squawk (birds, etc).

At times such combinations can also be expressed by putting the nominal in the instrumental:
ya muula-i- speak, say; also: yadu muula-i-, ya-du INS
ya uuma- speak; also: yadu uuma-
dhœya thuuda- clear away small rubbish, strip off, pluck, weed; also dhœyan thuuda-, dhœya-n INS

Such combinations are often written as one word. Even so, the parts can be split by adverbs and the like, even when part of the combination has no independent meaning, i.e. appears to be fossilised in the combination. Such include yakanura-i- forget’ (an active reflexive verb, za ngawngu yakanuri I have just forgotten something, lit. za-Ø thing-NOM nga-NGU-ngu me-GEN-ABL yaka+nuura-i-Ø-IZI ?+wrap.bind-ACT-SG-ACT.SgPF something from me has forgotten itself) in clauses such as yaka kay nurayg! don’t forget now! *yaka does not have an independent life of its own, though it may be the stem of the verb yakama- show, demonstrate.

Three verbs in particular are widely used as collocational verb formants, asi-, ma- and pala-:
asi-: attainative only, no active forms independent meaning – be with, accompany, go with, agree with, etc.
collocational meaning – be in the state or attain the state expressed by the first part of the collocation

azir shame, shyness, azirasi- become ashamed, shy; dapargam sky-blue (noun), dapargamasi- become sky-blue; gabu cold, cool, calm, gabuasi-, gabasi- become cold, calm; siga- afar, distant, afar, sigaasi-, sigasi- go far off; imaygi unseen, unfound, imaygasi- be/get/become unseen, unfound; thepadh dry, thepadhasi- be/get/become dry.

ma-: attainative stem, ma-i- (me-/miya-) active stem
independent meaning – do, move, take, bear, put, be, etc.
collocational meaning – forms active and stative compound verbs, including active be-clauses

balgetha harm (bal cross + geetha hand), balgethma-harm; thaawa praise, boast, thawma-praise, boast; uuma death, uumme- die, dry out; kupal empty, naked, barren, kupalma- empty out; dharadh strict, dharadhme- be/become strict; gumi secretive, in secret, hidden SLoc, gumi-me- be secretive, move in secret.

pala-: attainative stem, pala-i- active stem
independent meaning – write, draw (modern unmarked meaning); shoot, fire, flick, tap, hit, kick (context-dependent meanings)
collocational meaning – cause (underlying meaning)

aka fear, akapala- frighten, cause to fear/be frightened; guuda mouth, opening, gudpala-open; koeman heat, koemanpala- heat, heat up, cook; beray loose, slack, weak, etc., beraypala-loosen, slacken, weaken; giya ripe, cooked, giypala- ripen, cook.

In many cases an idiomatic use is to be found in addition to the normal meaning, and in some few cases the underlying meaning is no longer found. Such is minaasi-/minasi-finish, end, based on mina true, real, very, the literal meaning of which (be/become real or true) is no longer current.

The verbs asi- be/go with and ma-i- (me-/mi-/miyai-) go, move, be, do, etc. fulfill most of the functions of be, except for identity, for which there is no verb. Often the state or activity in the ma-i- (me-/mi-/miyai-) construction is marked as instrumental; the state is seen as causing the situation. Where asi- is concerned, the state is an integral part of the situation; it is an attainment. The difference to a certain extent can be likened to the Spanish and Irish distinctions of ser ~ estar and is ~ tā, where me-/mi-/miyai- roughly equates estar/tā as a marker of a temporary state, and asi- roughly equates ser/is as a state where temporariness is not implied; however, it does not mark identity, unlike ser/is.

integral state: kerkathasi- be in/reach a state of wrath, kikirasi- be in/reach a sick or painful state
situational state: kerkathan me- be/get angry, act angrily, kikirin me- be/get sick or sore, act in a sick or sore way

As with Spanish and Irish, certain concepts are restricted in their use with asi- or me-.

integral state: gabuasi-, gabasi- be cold/cool/cool-headed, kulkadhamasi- be red, be blood-coloured, koemanasi- be hot, adirasi- be blinded by flash or glare, mapuasi- be heavy
situational state: danan me- be alive, exist (daana eye), gumime- be/go in secret/unknown to others, magaw me- be strong, give strength, matha me- be, exist, be present, be somewhere still, zagethan me- be working

There are other be-verbs or be-like verbs with specific meanings. All such verbs are imperfective, with no perfective forms, except for thara-i-, the active form of thara-place erect, erect, place in a standing position:

masi- (masika, KY-MY/KKU/KKY marsi-, moersika) be, stand, be situated (mainly buildings)
sersi- (sersika) be in mud, live in mud
thara-i- (thareka) be standing upright-erect, be upright doing an activity (people, animals, etc.)
paga- (pœgayka, sazi- PL - sœzika) be standing upright-erect (plants, clouds, posts, etc.)
wazi- (weezika) be situated, be placed, be (for a purpose)
wazima- (wazimka) be situated (and clearly seen) in the distance
si- (sika) be standing, be standing doing an activity
ni- (nika) be living, be staying, be sitting, be sitting doing an activity
yœw-/yœwi- [yu-/yuy] (yœwka/yuka, yœwika/yuyka) be lying, leaning or slanting.

Other verbs also appear in compounds:

buya light + adha- outwards movement: buyadha- shine
adhaz from outside + thœridha- carry away, lift: adhazthœridha- adopt
maadhu meat.thigh + pama- dig, scoop: madhupama-i- be surprised
geetha hand + guura- bear on body: gethgura- bear in hands
uuma death + mathama- hit, strike, kill: umamathama- move
ya speech, words, talking + mula- produce: ya mula-i- speak, say
milal(a) stare + naga-i- look, watch: milalnaga-i- stare, observe, look
muy fire + nithu- cast, throw: muynithu- singe, burn, scorch; roast, cook
dhœœya cure, healing + nœydha-, nœydha-i- touch, hold: dhœynœydha- cure, heal
siba liver (SLoc), kat(a) frog, underpart of jaw + palgi-, pœlagi- fly, jump: sibakatpalgi- pœlagi- be startled, frightened, afraid
ngaara leg + yœwda-/yuuda- give, donate, ask: ngaryœwda-/ngaryuda- move quickly
ngenapudha-i- rest, spell; be short of breath
nœy tongue + puyuya- blow, play an instrument: nœypuyuya-i- lick, lick up
iibu chin + puydha- hang: iibupuydha- help, aid, assist

miina sign, token, symbol + tida- return, fetch, understand: mintida- explain the meaning of, stand for
mina true, real, wati bad, yaka speech DAT + thama- move: minayakathama- believe, watiyakathama- disbelieve
nel name + thara- call: nelthara- call, name, nominate
aka fear + thaya- cast, throw, twist, push, choose: akathaya- be frightened
wakay voice + thaya- cast, throw, twist, push, choose: wakaythaya-i- recollect, remember, recall
wakay voice + thama-MAI- move-INT: wakathamamay- think, ponder
giizu point + walga- whittle, plane, file: giwuwalga- sharpen, hone
getha hand + wadha- stop, set, establish: gethwadha- forbid, hinder, stop from
kuwiiku head + wakaya- chase: kuykwakaya- question, interrogate
siiba liver + wana- put, leave: sibawana- give something important; pity
gùùda mouth, opening + waya- send: gùdwaya- scatter, set free, undo, leave free
gaamu body + zilama-i- run: gamuzilama-i- escape

While most compounds are transparent, or are extensions of the underlying meaning of the two (or more) parts, some are opaque, in that either the initial or the verb does not exist outside the compound, and therefore in itself has no independent meaning:

Unknown initial:
al + mathama- hit: almathama- smash, grind
al + wœrima/-urima- whip out, hit at, slap: alwœrima/-alurima- knock down/over forcefully (cf. barwœrima- below)

arudaru + thœridha- lift, pick up: arudaruthœridha-i- keep silent, don’t speak up
bar + wœrima/-urima- whip out, hit at, slap: barwœrima/-barurima- knock about, knock across
bar + puda- open: barpuda- buy
guyth (BY guyuth) + waya- send: guythwaya-, guythwayai- leave, set off, take off, throw, have a go at, lose, “pass on”, etc.

pin (KKY pen) + wœnama-i/-unama-i- dive: pinwœnama-i/-pinunama-i- dive, submerge

yaka + nuura- wrap, bind: yakanura-i- forget; cf. yakama- show, reveal

Unknown verb:

guùda mouth, opening + kasapa-i-: guùdakasapa-i- open mouth wide, yawn
daana pool; eye; life + [ng]alba-: danalba-, dannalba- pierce, stab, prick, poke (e.g. sore with a blade of grass); pürka danalba- poke eye (pürka eye)

gaamu body + sisama-: gamusisama- gouge (e.g. eye)
guùda mouth, opening + thadha-: guùdthadha- deny, deny having knowledge
daana pool; eye; life; dhadha- mid, wakay voice + thadhuma-: danthadhuma- make a mistake, be mistaken, dhadhanthadhuma- faint, wakaythadhuma- doubt

guùda mouth, opening + thapama-: guùdthapama- kiss

**VERB MORPHOLOGY**

Verb morphology consists of:
a) prefixes (see Non-Deictic Prefixation)
b) derivational suffixes: verbal derivation (in fossilised form); the active suffix; verbal noun
c) augmenting suffixes: number (dual, plural)
d) portmanteau endings: tense, aspect, mood and to a very limited extent the attainative-active contrast and number.

**The Attainative-Active Contrast**

Attainative and active are semantic properties of verbs realised in morphological marking. Most verbs can be marked for either. The attainative form is unmarked, i.e. is an aorist, while the active form is marked by an underlying -i suffixed to the verb stem. It is otherwise morphologically distinct in the form of the endings in (a) the present perfective singular, (b) the today-past perfective singular, (c) the perfective imperative singular (Ø marked), and (d) in all numbers of the remote future/future imperative perfective (see Verb Endings). The categorization is telic in nature, though not prototypically so.

This differs from previous analyses. Ray (1907: 26-27) portrayed the distinction as between an active that is in essence transitive (= the attainative), and a ‘kind of middle or reflexive voice, or even a passive’ (= the active), while Ford and Ober (1987: 8) described it as transitive and intransitive, using the term deponent to refer to verbs marked for either transitive or intransitive but used in the opposite voice (i.e. an intransitive verb in a transitive clause and vice versa).

When referring to verb morphology, however, the terms transitive and intransitive are inaccurate, as suggested by Hunter et al. (Footnote 18, 2011: 130). The present author, by examining around 3000 sentences, identified a verb distinction between unmarked/aorist attainment and suffixed active forms, while transitivity is expressed at the level of the clause by the interplay of nominal and verb morphology (see further Transitivity and Voice).

The attainative (which subsumes stative) focuses on a relatively specific attainment (goal-focus), such as a specific object, an arrival, a resulting state, or a state in itself. The active (which subsumes reflexive) focuses on the action expressed by the verb, without focusing on a specific attainment (action-focus). Both are found in intransitive and transitive clauses. When the active clause is transitive, the object is affected in a general, non-specifiable, global or total way, while
the attainative transitive has reference to a specific object. The attainative intransitive overtly focuses on arrival, while the active intransitive focuses on the activity. Both active and attainative verbs can be perfective or imperfective; stative attainative verbs are always imperfective.

Examples 1-6 below show the use of the active singular present perfective verbs yœwthi/yuthi (yœwtha-i-) pull, drag, uthi (stem utha-i-) enter into, disappear into, zilami (stem ziilama-i-) run (along), drive (along) and pagi (stem paga-i-) do a pricking, stabbing or spearing activity. When transitive, the focus is (a) on an action that the object does and the subject causes (1, 2), or (b) an activity which affects a generalised or indefinitely total object that in effect the subject uses to do the activity (3). When reflexive, an action that the subject does to itself or part of itself is expressed (4), and when intransitive, the focus is on an intransitive activity that does not overtly entail the subject reaching a goal (5, 6):

1. Kazin uru yuthi.
The child pulls the rope: the rope does the moving.
K. saana-Ø paga-i-Ø-izi
C. foot-ACC stab-ACT-SG-ACT.PrPF

5. Kazi ziyamu uthi.
The child disappears into the cloud: disappearing in itself has no overt goal.
K. ziya-nu utha-i-Ø-izi
C. cloud-SLoc enter-ACT-SG-ACT.PrPF

The child runs along the beach/sand: the running in itself has no overt goal.
K. buhuya ziilama-i-Ø-izi
C. sand-NSpLoc run-ACT-SG-ACT.PrPF

In contrast 7–15 below illustrate the attainative singular present perfective words pagan (stem paga-) spear, prick, stab, jab, go down, dart down, uthun (stem uthu-) shoot, plant in, thrust in, etc., wangan (stem wana-) put, leave, wangan (stem wanga-) drive, sail and the attainative singular present imperfective verbs nika (stem ni-) sit, live, stay, sit doing and pungáyka (stem puunga-) move along (slide, slither, snake, flow, sail, drive, run, move, rush, dash, flee, suffer from, etc). The focus is either on the activity being the means to an end, i.e the attainment of the action, or a state that can be said to be the logical result of a preceding action. Of the sample verbs given, pagi ~ pagan and uthi ~ uthun (an irregular verb) are the active and attainative forms of each other, while wangan and zilami exist as two complementary verbs with the same underlying concept of running, driving or sailing. Wangan being causative in nature, and zilami having an action-focus. Ni- has no perfective forms, while pungáyka is possibly a specialised use of the regular verb puunga- take off, remove (e.g. clothes from a clothesline). When transitive, attainative verbs show that a specific object has been attained, i.e. that the action has a specific result (7–11). This is also the function in intransitive attainment clauses (12 and 13), while in stative and imperfective activity clauses (14 and 15), the focus is on the resulting (= attained) state or activity.
The child puts the rope (somewhere): the rope ends up in a final position, which is the attained result.  
K. uru-Ø   wana-Ø-Ø-n  
C. rope-ACC   put-ATT-SG-PrPF

8. Kazin guul wangan.  
The child sails the canoe: the child attains the result of controlling/driving the canoe.  
K. guul-Ø   wanga-Ø-Ø-n  
C. canoe-ACC   drive-ATT-SG-PrPF

The child spears a fish: the child attains the result of having speared a fish (and one only).  
K. waapi-Ø   paga-Ø-Ø-n  
C. fish-ACC   stab-ATT-SG-PrPF

The child shoots a pig: the child attains the result of having shot a pig.  
K. bùrùma-Ø   uthu-Ø-Ø-n  
C. pig-ACC   spear-ATT-SG-PrPF

11. Kazin saana pagan.  
The child stabs someone else’s foot: the child attains the result of having stabbed someone.  
K. saana-Ø   paga-Ø-Ø-n  
C. foot-ACC   stab-ATT-SG-PrPF

The child darts down to the shallows: the child attains the result of getting down onto the shallows.  
K. gatha-ka   paga-Ø-Ø-  
C. shallows-DAT   stab-ATT-SG-PrPF

The child jumps off the roof: the child attains the result of leaving a departure point by jumping.  
K. thòdha-ngu  child-NOM   roof-ABL  
pelagi-Ø-Ø-n  jump.take off.fly-ATT-SG-PrPF

The child lives on Mabuyag: living is the state resulting form either being born in a place, or taking up residence.  
K. Mabuyagi-Ø  child-NOM   M.-SLoc  
ni-Ø-Ø-ka  live.sit.stay-ATT-Sg-PrIMPF

15. Ziya nakaki pungáyka  
A cloud is sailing along up there: the cloud is in a state ultimately caused by a push (wind).  
K. ziya-Ø   na-ka-ki  
C. cloud-NOM   F-upthere-NSLoc   puunaga-‘i-ka  movealong-IMPF-VN-PrIMPF

It could be said that the intransitive use of paga- spear, stab, prick, etc., that is to say, dart down, in 12 above is idiomatic; however, the category in most cases exists where an idiomatic meaning is not the case, such as 13 above and 16–20 below, which carry a distinction not easy to get across in English. In the perfective clauses 16 and 17, 16 expresses the attainment of the state of being sick, the word kikir sickness, pain being an integral part of the verbal phrase (see Compound and Collocational Verbs). When the activity of getting sick is focused on, 17, kikirin is in the instrumental form, and the active verb shows that the process happened, rather than focusing on the resulting attained state. This contrast is also carried by the choice of verb, asi- be with, accompany, go with, be (attainative) and me-, mi-, miya- do, move, be (active), get/ become (change position or state), go, etc., the active form of the verb ma-, mani- take, give, bring, do, get, etc. In the imperfective clauses 18 and 19, the same contrast is found between 18 and 19, while 20, like 18, shows that the sickness (alt. pain) has been attained and at the moment of speaking is/was ongoing.

16. Nuy kikir asidhin  
He got sick  
nuy-Ø   kikiri-Ø  
he-NOM   sickness.pain-Ø  
asi-Ø-Ø-dhin  accompany.be-ATT-SG-RemP.PF

17. Nuy kikirin miyaydhin  
He got sick  
nuy-Ø   kikiri-n
he-NOM sickness.pain-INS
miya-i-Ø-dhin
do.move.be-ACT-SG-RemP.PF

18. Nuy kikir asir
He was sick
--- asi-Ø-Ø-r
--- accompany/be-ATT-SG-RemP.IMPF

19. Nuy kikirin miyar
He was getting sick
--- miya-i-Ø-r
--- do.move.be-ACT-SG-RemP.IMPF

20. Nuy kikir miyar
He was sick
nuy-Ø kikiri-Ø miya-i-Ø-r
he-NOM sickness.pain-Ø do.move.be-ACT-SG-RemP.IMPF

Verb Number

Cross-reference suffixes encode information about direct object (accusative) number in specific transitive clauses, and for subject number for active and attainative verbs in intransitive clauses and non-specific transitive clauses (see further Transitivity and Voice). Number in general distinguishes the unmarked singular, and the marked dual and plural. In a few verbs, the plural is a separate, unmarked suppletive verb differing from the singular and dual, while in others, only the inanimate plural is marked, the animate plural being the same in form as the singular. The perfective imperative additionally cross-references subject number marking (singular versus non-singular) by the form of its endings: -r/-Ø singular subject, -w/-ziw/-riw dual-plural subject.

Examples of verb number marking:

Object cross marking
Thubudhun guru pathanu.
The/a friend cut/chopped a stick of sugar cane.
thebudhu-n goeru-Ø
friend-INS sugarcane-ACC
patha-Ø-Ø-nu
cut.chop-ATT-SG-TodP.PF

Subject cross marking
Nuy ngùkin wanima.
He drank all the water.
nuy-Ø nguki-n
he-NOM water-INS
wani-i-Ø-ma.
drink-ACT-SG-ACT.TodP.PF

Palay ngùkin waniwmanu.
They drank all the water.
palay-Ø nguki-n
theyDU-NOM water-INS
wani-i-NGAUMA-nu.
drink-ACT-DU-TodP.PF

Perfective imperative subject-object cross marking
Nidh gabaw pathar.
(You) Cut up a yam.
i-dha gabawa-Ø
you-INS cultivatedyam-ACC
patha-Ø-Ø-r
cut.chop-ATT-SG-SG.S.IMP.PF

Nipel/Nitha gabaw pathaziw~pathaw.
(You) Cut up a yam.
ii-pal-Ø/ni-tha-Ø
you-DU-INS/you-PL-INS
gabawa-Ø
cultivatedyam-ACC
patha-Ø-Ø-ZIU
cut.chop-ATT-SG-NSg.S.IMP.PF
Nidh gabaw pathawmar.
(You) Cut up two yams.
--- patha-Ø-NGAUMA-r
--- cut.chop-ATT-DU-SG.S.IMP.PF

Nipel/Nitha gabaw pathawmoeriw.
(You) Cut up two yams.
--- patha-Ø-NGAUMA-ZIU
--- cut.chop-ATT-DU-NSg.S.IMP.PF

Nidh gabawal pathamir~pathamay.
(You) Cut up yams.
--- gabawa-LAI
--- cultivatedyam-PL
patha-Ø-MAYI-r
cut.chop-ATT-PL-SG.S.IMP.PF

Nipel/Nitha gabawal pathamiziw~pathamiw.
(You) Cut up yams.
--- patha-Ø-MAYI-ZIU
--- cut.chop-ATT-PL-NSg.S.IMP.PF

Ni gabawan paathi!
(You) Cut up all the yams.
ni-Ø  gabawa-n
you-INS  cultivatedyam-INS
patha-i-Ø-Ø
cut.chop-ACT-SG-SG.S.IMP.PF

Nipel gabawan pathewmoeriw.
(You two) Cut up all the yams.
--- patha-i-NGAUMA-ZIU
--- cut.chop-ATT-DU-NSg.S.IMP.PF

Nitha gabawan pathemiziw~pathemay.
(You) Cut up all the yams.
--- patha-i-MAYI-ZIU
--- cut.chop-AC-PL-NSg.S.IMP.PF

Pakùniya zilaami!
Run back! (singular subject)
pa-kùna-ya
TEL-stern-NSpLoc
zilama-i-Ø-Ø
run-ACT-SG-ACT.Sg.S.IMP.PF

Pakùniya zilmewmariw!
Run back! (dual subject)
--- zilama-i-NGAUMA-ZIU
--- run-ACT-DU-NSg.S.IMP.PF

Pakùniya zilmemiziw~zilmemiyi!
Run back! (plural subject)
--- zilama-i-MAYI-ZIU
--- run-ACT-PL-NSg.S.IMP.PF

The underlying form of the dual suffix is NGAUMÁ, and that of the plural suffix is MAYI. However, they have varying surface forms, in that the longer the word, the more likely there is to be reduction of the suffix (and stem). Stems of three or more syllables ending in -ma elide this through haplology when the dual or plural suffix is affixed to the stem, as shown in Table 8.

The allomorphs of the verb dual and plural suffixes:

NGAUMÁ: -ngawma-, -ngauma-, -ngewma-, -ngeuma-, -wma-, -uma-, -ma-

MAYI: -mayi- (-mœyi-), -may- (-mœy-), -mi-

The interplay of stem form, suffix form and in some cases variant stem forms at times gives a variety of alternatives. The verb ma- give, take, be, move, etc. in particular has an almost bewildering array of idiolect and dialect variation.

Class 1 (monosyllabic stem)

ma- give, take, be, move, etc. (attainative: ma-; active: ma-i-)

The variant stem forms are in free variation in some cases, and in others are restricted, as noted below)

attainative singular: ma- (not in the present perfective), mani- (present perfective, also alternatively in the remote future and today past)

active singular: m- (only in the present perfective), me-, mi- (present imperfective, today past perfective, habitual), miyay-, meyay- (recent past, remote past; in the perfective of the recent past and remote past, me-/mi- also)

attainative dual: mangawma-
active dual: mengewma-, miyawma-, meyawma-
attainative plural: mamayi-, mami-
Ngalmun Lagaw Yangukudu: the Language of our homeland

active plural: memayi-, memi-, mimayi-, mimi-, miyamay-, miyami-, meyamay-, meyami-

Class 2a (bisyllabic stem)
muuma- hug, squeeze tight, hush (attainative: muuma-; active: muuma-i-)

attainative singular: muuma- (> muma-)
active singular: mumay- (recent past, remote past), mume- (imperfective present, perfective remote future, today past, habitual), mumi- (perfective present perfective, perfective imperative)
attainative dual: mumawma-
active dual: mumewma-, mumeuma

attainative plural: mumamay-, mumami-
active plural: mumemay-, mumemi-

Class 2b (-ma final trisyllabic stem)
yakama- show, reveal (attainative: yakama-; active: yakama-i-)

attainative singular: yakama-
active singular: yakamay- (recent past, remote past), yakami- (perfective remote future, perfective near future, perfective present, perfective imperative, perfective imperative), yakay- (imperfective present, habitual, today past, imperfective imperative)
attainative dual: yakawma-
active dual: yakamewma, yakameuma
attainative plural: yakamay-, yakami-
active plural: yakamemay-, yakamem-.

Class 2b (-ra/-la internal trisyllabic stem)
ngùrapa- teach, learn, recognise, acknowledge, etc. (attainative: ngùrpa-; active: ngùrpa-i-)
attainative singular: ngùrpa-
active singular: ngùrpay- (recent past, remote past), ngùrapi- (perfective present, imperative [all speakers]; also remote future, near future, perfective present, today past, habitual, imperfective imperative [old fashioned speech]), ngùrpe--ngùrpi- (remote future, near future, perfective present, today past, habitual, imperfective imperative [modern speech])
attainative dual: ngùrpawma, ngùrpauma
active dual: ngùrpewma, ngùrpeuma
attainative plural: ngùrpamay-, ngùrpami-
active plural: ngùrpamemay-, ngùrpamemi-

As in Meriam Mir and neighbouring Papuan languages, a few verbs have suppletive stems (see the list below), one used for the singular and dual, and another for the plural, though in one pair, go 2 below, the division is singular as opposed to dual-plural. In some cases the suppletive verb exists beside the regular form. In three cases, namely go 1, sit and arrive, the suppletive plural differs in that it is attainative, in contrast to the active plural verb.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>singular</th>
<th>dual</th>
<th>plural</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>go</td>
<td>1 uzaray-, uzari-</td>
<td>uzarewma-</td>
<td>ladhu- (attainative)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2 uzaray-, uzari-</td>
<td>uthewma-</td>
<td>uthaymay-/uthemay-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>go, happen, continue</td>
<td>ulay-, ulmaw—itelmay-</td>
<td>yuthaymay-/yuthemay-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>stand (trees, clouds, etc.)</td>
<td>paga-</td>
<td>tadi-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>lay down, lie down,</td>
<td>ii-, iya-, iyay-</td>
<td>sazi-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>lean, slant (imperfective only)</td>
<td>yœwma-</td>
<td>yuwinay-/yœwimay-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>yu-/yœw-, yuwi-/yœwi-</td>
<td>paleyma-/palema-/palima-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Some verbs cannot refer to a single actor or object, and so have no singular form, such as *manawma*- DU, *manamay*- PL join, stick, fasten together, while still others are singular in form but can only refer to plural actors, such as *pamarludha*-i- (all) attend and *garwœydhamay*- gather together, meet.

**Verb Endings**

As stated earlier, the TAM load of verbs is expressed by the endings. There are (a) six tenses: remote future, near future, present, today-past, recent past, remote past, and a developing seventh in Kalaw Lagaw Ya only, the ‘last night’ tense, (b) three aspects: perfective (distinguishes all tenses), imperfective (distinguishes the present and past tenses, and uses the habitual to express the near and remote future) and habitual (does not distinguish tense), and (c) two moods: the declarative and the imperative. Kalaw Lagaw Ya uses the remote future also as a future imperative. For the endings and their functions, see Tables 12 and 13.

Most of the endings are found in all dialects, with the following variants:

- *ka today–near future: KKY -pa
- *-kœruyg/-kuruyg habitual, imperfective future: KulY/MY-KY -kœru/-kurui; KKY -paruy(g/dh)/-paru/-pu
- *-adh/-dh imperfective today past and imperative: KulY/MY-KY/KKY -adh

Even though *l* and *r* are separate phonemes, they are allophonic in the imperfective remote past and the perfective singular subject imperative; *r* becomes *l* when the preceding syllable contains *r* or *l*. The verb *ma*- take, bring, move, be, do, etc. in Kalaw Lagaw Ya is irregular in “doubling” the ending in the singular:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Singular; Animate Plural</th>
<th>Dual</th>
<th>Inanimate Plural</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>stand (imperfective)</strong></td>
<td>si-, siya-, siyay-</td>
<td>siyawma-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>sit, stay, live</strong></td>
<td>ni-, niya-, niyay-</td>
<td>niyawma-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>cry, weep</strong></td>
<td>maayi anga-</td>
<td>maayi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(imperfective)</td>
<td>(maayi tears; anga- bear, use)</td>
<td>angawma-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>throw self down</strong></td>
<td>pathayay-, pathaye-,</td>
<td>pathayemay-,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>pathayi- (pa- TEL, thaya-i- throw ACT)</td>
<td>pathayemi-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>arrive</strong></td>
<td>mangay-, mange-,</td>
<td>mangewma-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**TABLE 12. Declarative endings.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>indicative</th>
<th>perfective</th>
<th>imperfective</th>
<th>habitual</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>remote future after an indefinite while</td>
<td>-ne attainative (Class 1SG -[ni]ne)</td>
<td>-kæruyɡ/-kuruyɡ (KLY only: Class 1SG -ka kæruyɡ/kuruyɡ)</td>
<td>repeated or habitual state/action in the past, present or future</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>near/today future soon</td>
<td>-ka</td>
<td>-ka</td>
<td>incomplete action in the present or shifted present that continues after the present</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>present in the present, or shifted present</td>
<td>-(Class 1SG -ni[n]) (Class 2B PL -nu)</td>
<td>-ka</td>
<td>incomplete action in the present or shifted present that continues after the present</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>present active singular</td>
<td>-(Class 1 -izi[n])</td>
<td>-adh, -dh</td>
<td>incomplete earlier today, and may still be incomplete</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>today past happened earlier today</td>
<td>-nu (ACT SG -ma)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>last night happened last night</td>
<td>-(KLY only) created by adding the clitic -bungil/-bongil/ -bungel (reduced form -bel) to either the present or today past forms</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>recent past happened recently (in the last two to four days or so)</td>
<td>-[dhin]ngùl</td>
<td>-rngùl/-lngùl state/action that started recently and was incomplete, and may still be incomplete</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>remote past happened back in the past</td>
<td>-dhin</td>
<td>-r/-l</td>
<td>state/action that was incomplete in the past, though it logically finished some time later in the past, i.e. no link to the present.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**TABLE 13. Imperative endings.**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>imperative</th>
<th>perfective</th>
<th>imperfective</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>imperative, at times a subjunctive</td>
<td>-ne (Class 1SG -[ni]ne)</td>
<td>-kæruyɡ/-kuruyɡ (KLY only: Class 1 -ka kæruyɡ/kuruyɡ)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>future attainative (KLY only)</td>
<td>-dhe (Class 1SG -dhedhe)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>future active (KLY only)</td>
<td>-r/-l (Class 1SG -rar/-ral)</td>
<td>-adh/-dh</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>attainative singular subject</td>
<td>-i, -Ø (Class 1 -r)</td>
<td>do an incomplete action; be in a state; continue an activity/state that was temporarily halted</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>active singular subject</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>non-singular subject</td>
<td>-w, -zu, -ziw, -riw</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>polite imperative</td>
<td>same as the present indicative</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
According to John Ngailu Whop (pers. comm., 1992), for some speakers both -r and -l are potentially possible with all verbs, but differ in semantics; -r can have a more abstract feel, and -l is more concrete, thus a word such as pala- cause, flick, draw, design, write, etc. has two imperatives, palar and palal. Palar conjures up the idea of pictures and art, while palal has the more concrete semantics of write, cause, flick, etc. Similarly, for thara- call, name, erect, stand up, tharar has more to do with speech, while tharal with erecting or standing upright. In other cases, the contrast is to do with emphasis, thus arar put in, insert feels to be more emphatic than aral.

### NON-DEICTIC PREFIXATION

The non-deictic prefixes add aspectual, modal and locational meaning to verbs, nominals and adjectives. They derive new words which have various degrees of closeness to the base word, from an extension of meaning to a new meaning. Examples of their use are as follows, where the verb forms are in the active present singular perfective -i, the attainative present singular perfective -n and present singular imperfective -ka:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Prefix</th>
<th>Singular</th>
<th>Dual</th>
<th>Plural</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ma- take, bring, move, be, do, etc.</td>
<td>maral, marar</td>
<td>mangawmar</td>
<td>mamayir, mamir</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(other dialects: maar)</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>nuuda- squash with foot</td>
<td>nudar</td>
<td>nudawmar</td>
<td>nudamir</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>wana- put, leave</td>
<td>wanar</td>
<td>wanawmar</td>
<td>wanamir</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>adhamuula- take out, produce</td>
<td>adhamulal</td>
<td>adhamulawmar</td>
<td>adhamulamir</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ara- put in, enter</td>
<td>aral</td>
<td>arawmar</td>
<td>aramir</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

thayan throw, change, push: kidhthayan change into
mûk- (verbs only) just touching, on the surface, mis-, wrongly
boelthayka float: mûkbøelthayka float on the surface
karngeimin hear: mûkkarngeimin mishear

pa- (telic prefix; mainly on verbs only, otherwise on nominals with active semantics) onwards, intensiveness, suddenness, attenuation, completive

verbs:
danaman appear, unload, disembark: padanaman burst, bust, explode
kabûthan put, place: pakabûthan lay down, place down, put down away from referent
nagi look, watch: panagi surprise someone with a look
gasaman catch, grab, get: pagasaman hold, grasp
uzari go: pauzari go on, go ahead

nominals:
kùniya back: pakùniya get back
kadaka upward: pakadaka get on upwards
muluka downward: pamuluka get downwards

Pa! is used as an imperative with various meanings, depending on the underlying verb or nominal, such as pa! stop!, from pawaadhi! stop (yourself)!, pal! keep going!, from pauzariyadh!, pauzariyadh! keep going! and pa! go back!, from pakûniya tiidi! go back!
Ngalmun Lagaw Yangukudu: the Language of our homeland

**gar-** (mainly on verbs only) collective
verbs:
- *pathan* squash, stick in (glue etc.), put/place in something: *garpathan* gather, collect together
- *wœydhan* place, lay on, apply: *garwœydhan* wash ashore; gather, collect
- *yathari* tie, bind, wind self around: *garyathari* twist/tangle/turn together; rip, tear (of wind, waves)

nominals: only in the following
- *baadha* long, flat edge: *garbadh, GY* garbaadha gunwale, side (boat)
- *-sar(a)* small number: *garsar(a) number, population, crowd, group (of people); few, quite a few, many, numerous*
- *kapu* seed, fruit, body part, etc.: *garkap, GY garkaapu* itchiness, irritation

**getha-, geth-** (verbs and nominals) own, personal, private, self, self-, auto-
verbs:
- *papudhi* fall forwards [on face]): *gethapapudhi* humble self
- *ayiman* make, do: *gethayiman* make (up) oneself, tell off the cuff
- *danalpathan* look after, govern: *gethdanalpathan* look after self; be independent, self governing

nominals:
- *panikin* cup: *gethpanikin personal cup, own cup*
- *laaga* place, home, home island: *gethlaaga homeland, hometown, home, ancestral home*
- *yuutha* long house, hall, church: *gethyuutha* home church

**tata-, tat-** (verbs and adjectives) mis-, somewhat, imperfect, partly, not completely, not quite
verbs:
- *puyi* play music: *tatapuyi* stutter, stammer, speak imperfectly/with an impediment
- *ayiman* make, do: *tatayiman misdo, do wrongly, make wrongly*
- *nagi* look, watch: *tatnagi missee, not look clearly*

adjectives:
- *gabu* cold, cool, calm: *tatagabu coolish, coldish*
- *giya* ripe, cooked, ready: *tatagiya partly ripe, partly cooked, underdone, rare (meat)*
- *thawpay* short: *tatathawpay shortish, somewhat short*

The prefixes have either definite or possible relationships with other words. **Pa**- may be related to the demonstrative deictic -pay/-pa ahead or the dative ending -pa, while **kidh[a]-** is a prefix use of the particle kidh/kidha opposite direction, turn, back, on the other hand (also in the reduplicated form kidhakidh(a) back and forth, to and fro, each other, up and own), and the adverbial non-specific locative ending -[k]dh. **Geth(a)** is otherwise found as a reflexive with or without genitive antecedents meaning self, while **tat[a]-** is related to tetaktetak misdone, not well done, shoddy, slipshod, imperfect. **Gar-** exists independently only in the reduplicated adjective gargar selfish, miserly (have something and not want to share it), while **müuka** is a nominal meaning surface that for many speakers is obsolete.

The Locative Prefixes:
- **adha-, adh-** out, outer
verbs:
- *mulan* produce: *adhamulan* pick out, take out, remove; divide
- *wayan* send: *adhawayan* send out
- *mintidan* represent, stand for: *adhamintidan* explain

nominals:
- *baadha* long, flat edge: *adhabadh, GY adhabaadha seawater, salt water, brine; sea; salt*
- *tha* crocodile tail: *adhatha tip of crocodile tail*

**apa-, ap-** lower, below, under, down
verbs:
- *asin* accompany, be with, be: *apaasin be at a*
lower level; be respectful, be humble
nika sit, sit doing, live: apanika sit down
banithan pierce, penetrate, stick (in); spit out
chewed up remains; touch land, come into land, land (boat): apabanithan miss (in throwing, etc.)
nominals:
kuyk, GY kuwiiku head: apakuyk bole; source, origin, progenitor, procreator
pawna skin of palm, foot: apapawna sole (of foot)
bal- cross, across, crossways (cf. balbal crooked; balbalgi straight, OK, allright)
verbs:
ladhan cut, chop: balladhan cut across, chop across
nagi look, watch: balnagi look across, turn and look
pudan open: balpudan stretch out across, open out across (e.g. string, rope, etc.)
nominals:
baadha long, flat edge: balbaadha edge of deep water
geetha hand: balgeetha harm
gùùba wind: balgùùba crosswind
dhadh-, dhadh- mid, middle, centre
verbs:
asin accompany, be with, be: dhadhasin be halfway, be midway, be during
gasaman get, catch, obtain: dhadhagasaman meet halfway
palgan report, inform, tell, offer: dhadhpalgan interrupt
nominals:
bùùtha room, space: dhadhabùùtha gap, unbuilt-up area, countryside, environment
gar, GY gaaru trunk, body, girth: dhadhagar waist, abdomen; inland, central area
geehya day, sun, kubil night: dhadhageeehya midday, noon, dhadhakubil midnight
giima- over, above, upper
verbs:
puydhi, puydhan hang: gimapuydhi, gimapuydhan hang up
thayan throw, toss, push, turn, change: gimathayan throw up, turn up; pass overhead (sun etc.)
thœridhan raise, lift: gimathœridhan lift up, sing up
nominals:
gùdiya mouth, opening NSpLoc: gimagùdiya at the top of one’s voice, loudly, aloud
zazi grass skirt: gimazazi short grass skirt, mini skirt
kad-/kada- upwards, up
verbs:
pudan open: kaday pudan, kadapudan comb (with an Island comb)
sika stand, stand doing: kadaysika, kadasika be standing up
thari, tharan stand, place upright: kaday thari/ kadathari, kaday tharan/kadatharan stand up, place upright, erect, stand up straight
nominals:
dœgam side, part, direction: kadadœgam, kadaydœgam upper side, upper part
kaym-/kaymi- accompanying, along, along with, together, together with, with (verbs only; cf. kaymel together with, kaaymi companion, company (a largely obsolete noun), koëymeg(a friend honorific)
asin accompany, be with, be: kaymiasin accompany, go with, be along with, be together with
ylpan/ilpan lead, guide: kaymiylpan lead (as a companion), guide (as a companion)
lugi-, GY luugi- straight, direct, close up, no deviation (verbs only; the privative of lu hump, mound, rounded back)
thaman move; speed (idiom): lugithaman, luugthaman approach, move closer (without deviating)
tharan stand, place upright: lugitharan, luugtharan stand upright/erect/straight up
uzari go: lugiuuzari, luuguuzari go straight without deviating

**muyi-, muy-** in, inner, inside (< muuyi hollow, depression, hole)

verbs:
pudhi, pudhan drop, fall: muyipudhi, muyipudhan drop in, arrive in, come/go into
thayan throw, toss, push, turn, change: muyithayan throw/push in; invite in; choose
yuthi pull, drag: muyiyuthi pull in, draw in; come on in, enter

nominals:
laaga place: muyilaaga internal place, inner place
rùg, GY rùùga rag, cloth, gear: muyirùg, GY muyirùùga underclothes, gear for inside

**siga-, siig-** in the distance

verbs:
palan cause: siigpalan cause to flash in the distance (lightening etc.)
zilami run, run along: (pœnipan) siigzilami (lightening) flashes in the distance
wayan send: sigawayan, sigawayi send afar; pine away

nominals:
gùd, GY guùda mouth, opening: sigagùd large opening/mouth; width, breadth (of opening)
ngaara leg, geth, GY geetha hand: siga-ngar-geth arms and legs spread wide
yabu, GY yaabu way, path, road: sigayabu, GY sigayaabu way that leads far away

**NON-DECLINING PARTS OF SPEECH**

**WORD AND CLAUSE MODIFYERS**

Word and clause modifiers do not decline, and have the function of modifying the meaning of the segment they govern. They include adjectives, modifying adverbs, demonstrative articles, numbers, particles, clitics, and so on.

Adjectives

Adjectives precede the head noun, which takes the declensional load. There are four types:

(a) **true (underived) adjectives**, e.g. wati bad, kain (kayin) new, young, kasa ordinary, normal, non-important, not special, just, only, mina true, real, very, proper, important, adhi huge, great, mighty (this word is often used as an honorific: Adhi Kuyam Great Kuyam, Adhi Buya Great Light; cf. adhi story, legend; sacred story rock, adhiadh, GY adhiaadhi legendary giant). Relatively few words are exclusively true adjectives and these form a closed class.

(b) **derived adjectives**: aril rainy, arigi rainless, aridh rain-like, arizi resulting from rain (ari rain). Derivation is the major means of adjective creation.

(c) **adjectives derived by reduplication**: kùbikùbi black, dark (kùùbi charcoal, soot), mœrimaari skinny, lean (people; mari ghost), tœtaktœtak misdone, not well done, shoddy, slipshod, imperfect (tata- mis-, somewhat, imperfect, partly, not completely, not quite).

(d) **nouns that have become adjectives** but retain some noun characteristics: mœrimar skinny, bœtœm lean (animals), adhapudhay fine, excellent, wondrous (in origin a verbal noun that literally means out-falling)

Note that reduplication of nominals also exists in the expression of ‘dispersion’, i.e. **wara** one of a group, other, **warawara** one by
one, each one, kaazi child, kazikazi child by child, children here and there in a defined area, etc.: kazikazi siki sagulthareka kids around there individually playing/dancing here and there.

Nouns marked by oblique case forms can also appear in the adjectival slot, such as gimiya wœriza airplane, where gimiya is the non-specific locative of giima- above (weeri fly verbal noun, za thing).

Adjectives do not modify for number, except for those of category (d), which optionally agree as predicates with a plural referent: kaazi mœrimaari the child is skinny, kazil mœrimœril/mœrimaari the children are skinny), being nouns in origin.

When not preceding the noun, adjectives, with few exceptions, must be nominalised, i.e. they become nouns, either by one of the nominalising suffixes -nga/-may- impersonal or -ig(a) personal, thus gabu nguũki cold water > nguũki gabunga the water is cold, or by cooccurring what a ‘dummy’ nominal such as za thing, thus nguũki gabu za the water is cold. Those few adjectives that are not so marked, e.g. mœrimaari, bœtœm, are syntactic nouns.

Iina kapungœdhal kaazi. 
This is a goodlooking girl.
--- kapu+ngœdha-LAI kaazi-Ø.
--- good+appearance-PRP child-NOM

Inaabi kaazi kapungœdhalayg. This girl is a goodlooking person; This girl is goodlooking.
--- kapu+ngœdha-LAI-IGA-Ø.
--- good+appearance-PRP-PNom-NOM

A few abstracts have the same form as the adjective (except for nonemotive vowel lengthening in Gœmulgaw Ya), while others are formed by the nominalising suffixes. Still other adjectives are derived from nouns.

Adjective and abstract have the same form:

gabu cold, cool, cool-headed, etc., gabu, GY gaabu cold, cool, coolheadedness

mapu heavy, pregnant, mapu, GY maapu weight

Nominal derivation:
gübagi windless, breathless, airless, gübaginga windlessness, breathlessness, airlessness

gabu cold, cool, cool-headed, etc., gabunga coldness, coolness, cool-headedness, cool/cold wind, breeze

Adjective derivation:
kikir sickness, pain, kikiril sick, sore

Ngurum wrath, ngurumal wrathful

Neither a morphological comparitive nor a superlative exist. The adjective enters into various syntactic constructions to express these, the core morphology of the constructions being the use of the ablative or non-specific locative or global locative, as these examples adapted from Simpson (1971-1974) show:

a) Ablative

Palamùnungu inuubi thuthu kuykùthalnga Of the two this waddy is longer/longest.
palay-mù-ni-ngu they-DUAL-AUG-AUG-ABL
i-nu-bi thuthu-Ø
this-M-ART waddy-NOM
kœy+kùtha-LAI-nga-Ø
big+end-PRP-ImpNom-NOM
b) Non-specific locative

Inuubi thuuthu laka kuykùthalnga war thuthuya nanga

This waddy is longer than the other one

i-nu-bi thuthu-Ø laka

this-M-ART waddy-NOM again

kœy+kùtha-LAI-nga-Ø wara

big+end-PRP-ImpNom-NOM other

thuthu-ya nanga

waddy-NSpLoc REF

c) Global Locative

Inubnga, thuuthu, nuy kœy kuykùthalnga mùramayab/muramiyab

This one here, the waddy, is longest of all

i-nu-bi-nga-Ø

thuthu-Ø nuy-Ø kœy

waddy-NOM he-NOM big

kœy+kùtha-LAI-nga-Ø

big+end-PRP-ImpNom-NOM

mùra-may-yab

all-ImpNom-GLoc

Adjective Derivation

There are four derivational suffixes that form adjectives from nominals (including verbal nouns), the proprietive, privative, resultative and simulative. The proprietive also forms the nominal nominative-accusative plural, and optionally for human actors, the ergative plural. Not all nominals can take all derivation suffixes; this depends on the semantic properties of the nominal.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Proprietary</th>
<th>Privative</th>
<th>Resultative</th>
<th>Similative</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>LAI</td>
<td>GI</td>
<td>(GEN-)ZI</td>
<td>(GEN-)DHA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ba banana leaf</td>
<td>balay</td>
<td>bagi</td>
<td>banguzi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bey palm frond/leaf</td>
<td>beyhay</td>
<td>beygi</td>
<td>beynguzi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ya speech, word(s)</td>
<td>yaday</td>
<td>yagi</td>
<td>yanguzi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ur water</td>
<td>ulay</td>
<td>urgi</td>
<td>urnguzi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>za, zapu- thing (irregular)</td>
<td>zapul (zapulay-)</td>
<td>zagi, zapugi</td>
<td>zanguzi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>naawu song (irregular)</td>
<td>nawul, nathay</td>
<td>nawugi</td>
<td>nawuzi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>aga axe</td>
<td>agal (agalay-)</td>
<td>agagi</td>
<td>agazi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>imay seeing, finding, trying</td>
<td>imayl (imaylay-)</td>
<td>imaygi</td>
<td>imayzi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>paara snore, snort</td>
<td>parar (pararay-)</td>
<td>paragi</td>
<td>parazi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Baba Dad</td>
<td>babal (babalay-)</td>
<td>babagi</td>
<td>babazi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ama Mum</td>
<td>amal (amalay-)</td>
<td>amagi</td>
<td>amazi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ngœeba you and I</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>n/a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ngay I</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>n/a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ngœba you and I</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>n/a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ni you</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>n/a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>nuy he</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>n/a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>na she</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>n/a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>nga who</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>n/a</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The adjective **kœy** big, great has another modified form, namely **kœyma** big, great, much, many, lots (e.g. **kœyma eso** thanks very much). This -**ma** suffix may also be found in **barama** enormous, most (cf. PSEPA *bada ‘big, most’*).

The proprietive LAI in all dialects except Kalaw Kawaw Ya tends to assimilate to -**r**- in the preceding syllable of the stem, as shown by **paara** snore, snort above. Other examples are:

zaara/zara dry branch and leaves > zaral, zarar having dry branches and leaves
thonar time, period, season > thonaral, thonarar having a time
mûra all, total, totality, wholeness > mûraray, muray all, everybody, the whole group (KLY only; **muray** derives from **mûraray** through haplology)

This rule is almost mandatory in Kaiwalgau Ya, and is the origin of the word Kowrareg – **kauřařaiga** islander: **kauřa island** + LAI proprietive + -**IGA** PerNom, **kaiwalaig** in Kalaw Lagaw Ya/Kùlkalgau Ya/Mualgau Ya-Kaiwalgau Ya and **kawalaig** in Kalaw Kawaw Ya.

The proprietive ‘having/possessing’, privative ‘not having/without’ and similitative ‘like’ have the semantics expressed by the terms. The resultative refers to the period or state after and normally resulting from the nominal (normally in an ergative system). Thus, a nominalisation such as **moetharuzinga** (moethaaru fine weather) refers to the period of windiness or storm after a period of fine weather and for which the fine weather was a precursor and therefore the cause thereof, while **wapiw pûrthayzi kaazi** (fish-GEN eat-VN-RES child-NOM) is a child who has eaten a fish rather than a fish that has eaten a child. However, this is primarily a matter of semantics; it is not normal for a fish to eat a child. **Baydhamaw pûrthayzi kaazi** (shark-GEN eat-VN-RES child-NOM) can mean either a child who has eaten shark, or a child that has been eaten by a shark, or the shark’s eaten young. The resultative suffix -**zi** resembles the ablative ending -**zi**, and the similarity of meaning between the resultative (result of action, after, resulting from, etc.) and the ablative -**zi** (from, away from, because of, etc.) suggests a common origin.

While these suffixes are added to the stem/base, in a few cases, in the Kalaw Lagaw Ya dialect particularly, the resultative is optionally added to the genitive. In the case of **ya speech**, this is always so in all dialects:

gethazinga, gethawzinga handiwork
kabazinga, kabawzinga dancing ground
mayzinga, maynguzinga taken or brought object, object that is present
yanguzi mabayg accuser (ya speech, -ngu GEN, -zi RES, mabayg person)

The similative of the singular pronouns is likewise formed using the genitive form, thus **nanudh like her**, nan-NGU-dha her-GEN-SIM. Kalaw Kawaw Ya has privative forms of the singular pronouns also based on the genitive, generally found in the nominalised forms ngawginga/ngœzuginga without me, etc. The other dialects express this using the privative form of the verbal noun **may** take, give, do, move, be, exist, go (etc.) and the genitive of the personal pronoun, thus **ngaw mayginga** without my presence, etc. For the dual and plural pronouns, this is the structure in all dialects, thus **ngœban mayginga** without you and me.

The Proprietive and the Specific Locative

The proprietive suffix in the Western and Central Language, LAI, is homophonous with the specific locative LAI. They have essentially the same surface variants, as does the nominative-accusative plural, a specialised use of the proprietive.
The similarity to a certain extent is concealed by the declensional difference that exists between nouns of monosyllabic stem and those of two or more syllables. In the latter there are three forms of the specific locative, -nu, -l and -Ø, where -Ø results from elision of -l (retained in archaic or set phrases as well as in a few adverbials). Older forms of -nu were recorded in Kulkalgau Ya and Mualgau Ya-Kaiwalgau Ya particularly from the mid-1800s to after 1900, these being -nul, -nuli, -nule and -nulai – as well as -nu. They seem to have been moribund not too long after WW2. These suggest that in origin -nu is the instrumental (-n, mid1800s form -nu) suffixed by LAI. Monosyllabic stem nouns have only the one specific locative, this being -(l)ay, and are rarely found with -nu.

### Numbers, Demonstrative Articles and other Modifiers

Other head noun modifiers are the demonstrative articles (formed by suffixing the demonstrative article formant suffix to the gender/number forms of i- this/these and se/si- that/those) and genitives. Adjectives, articles and genitives are part of the class of modifiers that always precede their referent, be this a nominal, a verb phrase or a clause. These include:

kobegadh each, every, matha

Examples of archaic, set phrases are:

padal niithu- (niithu- cast, throw; padal nithun SG.PrPF) make fast headway, sail quickly, speed along

gethal giyama-i- (giyama-i- climb up on; padal giyami SG.PrPf) move/climb up over a hill

The Numbers. Counting nowadays is in general done using the English–Broken numbers and system (with pronunciation varying according to familiarity with English or Broken), using the traditional numbers for one and two:

ziro, ùrpùn/wan, ùkasar/kosar/kœsar/tu, thëri, pò, paib, sikis, seben, eyt, nayn, ten, leben, twelop/twœylop, thatin/thœtëin, pòtin, pipit, sikistin, sebentin, eytïn/etin, nayntin

tuwënte/tuwënti/tuwœynte/tuwœynti, thate/thœtëi/thèti, pòte/pòti, pipë/pëti, pipët, sikiste/sikisti, sebente/sebentë, eytë/etë/etë/etë, naynte/naynti

andrad/andrœd/andred, thauzan, miliyan

Before colonisation, as is the case with many Papuan and most Australian languages, there was not a full system of numbers; the Austronesian content of the language did not extend this far. The numbers are based on the following morphemes:
wara, war: one, other, another, one of a group  
-pùn(i), -pon(i): the meaning of this is not known - it may mean only, though Papuan and Australian cognates suggest the meaning of one (see Appendix 1)  
kapu, GY kaapu: one (of something) (< kapu, GY kaapu seed, fruit, body part, prong, etc.)  
ùka:- two  
-sar(a): small number  
mòdhabaig(a)/madhabaig(a)/mødhabaig(a): (the) one left over (Kalaw Kawaw Ya only)  
au: big (Kùlkalgau Ya only – a Meriam Mir loan)  
geth(a): hand (Kùlkalgau Ya only)  

These combine in the following ways:  
KLY, MY-KY  
1 = ùrapùn, ùrpùn, ùrpon (warapùn, wœrapùn, warapon, wœrapon)  
2 = ùkasar, kœsar, kosar, MY-KY kuwásar  
3 = kosar ùrpùn, ùrpùn kosar  
4 = kosar kosar  
5 = kosar kosar ùrpùn, ùrpùn kosar kosar  
5 = aukosar a ùrpùn; geth hand  
6 = geth a ùrpùn  
7 = geth a kosar  
8 = geth a auùrpùn  
9 = geth a aukosar  
10 = kosar geth  
Etc.  
Wara one of a group, other also enters into a compound with kapu, GY kaapu one (of something) to form warakap/wœrakap/ùarakap, GY warakaapu/wœrakaapu/ùrakaapu one of a group, an individual of a group, one, once, once more, one more time. The compound ùkasar has two metathetic forms (kuwásar and kosar), as well as the initial-dropped form kœsar (via ùkœsar). Ùka- is also found in ùkamà- add to, double, increase, augment, while -sar(a) small number is also found in the following:  
kœysar(a), kœysarkœysar(a) double, multiple (kœy big)  
garsar(a) number, population; (a) few, quite a few (gar- collection prefix)  
kœygarsar(a) big number, big population; many (kœy+garsar)  
garsarasi- increase, become more, multiply (asi- go/be with, become, get ATT)  

Counting used to be done in two ways. One was with a tally system, used such as when two people made an agreement to do something after a certain number of days. They both kept a bundle of small sticks with the same number in each, and took out one for every day. The other was to use the fingers and so on, particularly in enumerating (for example in trading). The word for count is gethtíida-i- (gethtdìi present perfective), an intransitive active compound verb made of geetha hand, finger and tiida- bend, originating in the traditional means of counting with the fingers, done by bending the little finger of the left hand to the
palm with the forefinger or forefinger and middle finger of the right hand (one), then the ring finger of the left hand (two), and so on to the thumb of the left hand (five). After this, the forefinger or forefinger and middle finger of the right hand move to the wrist of the left arm, the elbow of the left arm, and so on to ten, on the breast bone. Then the hands change, and the counting is continued with the forefinger, or forefinger and middle finger of the left hand down the other arm and by bending the thumb of the right hand over for 15, and so on to the little finger of the right hand (19). Geethidi also means read, the imagery being that the finger likewise goes back and forth of the writing. Geetha is also used in its non-specific locative form to express just a few: goégøyil matha gethiya just a few days, wiyethal matha gethiya just a few years.

The full system is:

1 = little finger of left hand
2 = ring finger of left hand
3 = middle finger of left hand
4 = forefinger of left hand
5 = thumb of left hand
6 = wrist of left arm
7 = elbow of left arm
8 = upper arm/shoulder of left arm
9 = left breast
10 = breastbone (middle of chest)
11 = right breast
12 = right shoulder/upper arm
13 = elbow of right arm
14 = wrist of right arm
15 = thumb of right hand
16 = forefinger of right hand
17 = middle finger of right hand
18 = ring finger of right hand
19 = little finger of right hand

This system was further developed on Mabuyag in the late 1800s to make the following full number system; most people nowadays do not know it. This was created by abbreviating the words for one and two as well as the names for the appropriate body parts from the above traditional system:

0 = dhadh/dhadha (dhadhariidha breastbone, lit. mid-bone)
1 = pùn (ürapùn) (older form: pon < wœrapon)
2 = sar (ùkasar)
3 = il (ilgeth middlefinger, lit. gall-finger)
4 = lak (kœláknithuygeth forefinger, lit. spear-throwing-finger)
5 = kab (kabageth thumb, lit. paddle-finger)
6 = per (pertha wrist)
7 = kuud (kuudu elbow)
8 = zuug (zuugu upper arm)
9 = suus (suusu breast)

Higher numbers are made by combining the above in a simple decimal system:

10 = pùndhadh/pùndhadha
11 = dhadh(a)-pùn, pùndhadh(a)-pùn, pùn-pùn
15 = dhadh(a)-kab, pùndhadh(a)-kab, pùn-kab
20 = sardhadh/sardhadha
25 = sardhadh(a)-kab, sar-kab
30 = ildhadh/ildhadha
40 = lakdhadh/lakdhadha
50 = kabdhadh/kabdhadha
60 = perdhadh/perdhadha
70 = kuuddhadh/kuuddhadha
100 = pùndhadh(a)dhadh(a)
172 = pùndhadh(a)dhadh(a) kuuddhadh(a)-sar, pùn-kuud-sar

When a number as a total is given, múra all, in total is normally used in conjunction with it, as in mathematics, ūkamayzageth calculation work (ūkamay calculation-VN), and talking about ‘how many’: midh múra, midhakidh múra:
23 + 30 = 53 sardhadh-il a ildhadh, kabdhdadh-il múra

Thusil midh/midhakidh múra setha lawlawnu? Kab múra.

How many books are on the table there? Five.

Ninu wiyethal midh/midhakidh múra? Sardhadh-kab múra/Sardhadha-kab múra
How old are you? Twenty-five.

As modifiers, the numbers are invariable, though ùrapun(i) has the optional variants ùrapùl and ùrapù when preceding a nouns, where the final -l is an example of a rare denasalisation of -n, also found in thalmù-, a colloquial form of thanamù- them oblique stem, as well as in the Kalaw Kawaw Ya proper nominal dative and ablative, where the augment suffix -ni becomes -l, thus KLY Babanika, KKY Babalpa Dad-DAT, KLY Babanungu/Babaningu, KKY Babalngu Dad-ABL.

As nouns, however, numbers can be declined and otherwise modified, such as:

wœrapùninu/ùrapùninu, wœrapùnnu/ùrapùn as one, united, the specific locative of wœrapùn/ùrapùn;

wœrapùnimayn/ùrapùnnayn/ùrapùnmayn in one piece, whole, at once, straight away, immediately - the instrumental of wœrapùninga, the nominalised form of wœrapùn one;

wœrapùndhadh/ùrapùndhadh (dhadh mid, middle) one by one;

úkaùkalayg (úka+úka-LAI-IGA two+two-PRP-PNom) four people, quartet KKY

Modifying Particles

While quite a few nominals such as time and place adjunct adverbs generally have moderate to virtually no declension, they are included in the declined group of nominals because potentially they can be modified, particularly by the genitive. Such represent one part of the continuum that varies from fully declinable nominals to particles that do not vary morphologically and which at times are phonologically bound as clitics to the segment they modify.

Modifying particles vary in status from free-standing words to bound clitics. They are invariable, though in some cases derived, and have no fixed position in the clause as a class, though individual sub-categories can. Some are declined nominals or conjugated verbs or the like which have a special use as adjuncts. These differ from defined nominals such as gumi in secret, secretly, unawares, unknowing (first example below), the Ø-marked specific locative of gumi secret, secrecy, unawareness (the specific locative in -nu, guminu, can also be used with exactly the same meaning), which are found with the same force as prepositional phrases in English; that is to say, are additional adjuncts to the clause.

Gumi rangadh tharanu –
Ngay matha tharema
Yawathurayginga, e, yagar.
Nipen rangadh lak kùniya
Waybenika, e.
A journey happened without me being made aware of it –
I just stood
Without a farewell, eh, dear me.
Your journey back
To Thursday Island, eh.
Boston Bagai, Badu

gumi-LAI rangadha-Ø
secret-SLoc mast.journey-ACC
thara-Ø-Ø-nu
erect-ATT-SG-TodPPf
ngayi-Ø matha
me-Ø-NOM only
thara-i-Ø-ma
erect-ACT-SG-ACT.TodPPf
yawa+thuura-‘i-gi-nga-Ø e
farewell+call-VN-PRV-ImpNom-NOM (song
yaa+gaar
speech+SYM
ni-pel-n rangadha-Ø
you-DU-GEN mast.journey-NOM
Clause modifiers have variable position, in some cases inter-phrasal, i.e. between the subject and verb (post-subject NP pre-VP), such as ngapa approaching deictic, post-phrasal/post-clause, e.g. nge then, pre-phrasal/pre-clause, e.g. matha only, and multiple positioning, i.e. pre-phrasal/pre-clause, inter-phrase and post-phrase/post-clause, such as kay soon after (< kay here NSp), na/nanga referencing relative, if, when and nay if, should. Their order and positioning depend on discourse features, which in turn depend on their relative importance to the subject, object, adjuncts or the verb.

Post-Subject Pre-Verb Phrase Particles:
Certain particles normally come between the subject and the verb phrase: mamuy for a short while, first before a following action, ingaru for ever, always, ngulayg can, know how to, able, karawayg can’t, don’t know how to, unable, minasin finish, already; laka/lak again, more, boey/ngapa movement towards the speaker, come, imayka try, ngaru must, have to, etc.

In this list, minasin, imayka, ngulayg and karawayg are in fossilised uses respectively of the regular verb minasain finish, end (attainative singular present perfective), the dative form of the regular verbal noun imay see, find, try, and the two personalised nominals ngulayg one who knows/is able and karawayg one who doesn’t know/is unable. They are idiomatic uses in a) being invariable adverbs in status, and b), in the case of imayka, the language has the specific verb nuutha- (verbal noun nutháy) try, attempt, while ngulayg and karawayg are otherwise regular nouns with full declensional and derivational properties. Ngapa in the below example illustrates the typical position of such particles.

Sa, wara gœygig nubiya ya mangaydhin Bawungu kedha mabaygal Bawungu ngapa nubeka imayka.
So, one day word came to him from Bau saying that people from Bau were coming to see him. sa, wara gœygig-LAI introducer other day-SLoc nu-bi-ya ya-Ø he-AUG-LOC word-NOM manga-i-Ø-dhin  Bawu-ngu arrive-ACT-SG-RemP.PF Bau-ABL ke-dha mabayga-LAI this-SIM person-PRP Bawu-ngu ngapa Bau-ABL come nu-be-ka iima-‘i-ka he-AUG-DAT see-VN-DAT

Multiple-Position Clause Modifying Particles:
Multiple-position clause-modifying particles can appear in various parts of the clause, and in certain cases can also appear more than once in the clause (as in the below example). The normal positions are post-subject, and/or pre-VP, and/or post-VP: kay soon after (< kay here NSp); naay hypothesis, should, ought, supposed to, should have, if only, etc.; na, nanga clause reference, in reference to, if, when; sikay maybe, perhaps, possibly; yenanob/yananab each, separate, one by one, in turn, in different places, grouped, in groups here and there, here and there, etc.

Nabeka na senaabi zageth na mina kœy ubigi zageth, wati zageth, nadh na nuyn yathapathan na.
She found that work to be really detestable, a bad task, when she shaved him.
na-be-ka na she-AUG-DAT REF se-na-bi zage-the-O na that-F-ART work-NOM REF mina kœy ubi-gi zage-the-O, true big liking-PRV work-NOM wati zage-the-O, bad work-NOM, na-dha na nuy-NA she-INS REF he-ACC yen-anob yana-Ø-Ø-n na yatha+patha-Ø-Ø-n bearded-cut-ATT-SG-PrPF REF

Memoirs of the Queensland Museum • Culture • 8 (1) • 2015 | 421
In this example, the referencing particle na is repeated four times to show both the referencing of the topic (a destable piece of work in her opinion), and the reference of the time frame, i.e. whenever she had to do it.

Post-Referent:

Other particles always follow their referent, and in some cases are postclitics: nge (alt. ngedh) then (sequential); waadha existential/reality emphasis; lawnga non-reality, non-existence, not, or, nor; gaar sympathy/empathy; dhe soft imperative; kay soft imperative; ay/oy vocative; wal both, and (joins two as a pair); kidh(a) reverse, crosswise, stirring, turn, other way, opposite, change; aw yes/no question, confirmation seeking particle; kaykay/kayke/kayne soon after, a bit later, etc.

Kùniya nagaydhin noæ, nuy matha siyar nge thanamùniya wagel. When she looked back, he was just then standing there (left) behind them.


Yes-no questions are marked by the sentence clitic aw (aaw), and sometimes a (aa). The construction contrasts with mi-questions (wh-questions), for which see Interrogative Nominals. In Kalaw Kawaw Ya a is the standard question clitic while aw is used is the confirmation clitic, that is to say, the equivalent to English tag questions of the type He came late, didn’t he? In less polite speech the question clitic can be dropped, with a slight rising intonation showing the question, particularly in somewhat aggressive speech styles. Aw (a) is rarely used with mi-questions.

Declarative:

Baba sizi agungu adhaka nageka.

Baba sizi mika/mizapuka nageka?

Baba-Ø si-zi agu-nga

dad-NOM there-ABL turtlelookout-ABL

adha-ka naga-i-Ø-ka

out-DAT look-ACT-SG-PR.IMPF

aw-question:

Baba sizi agungu adhaka nageka aw?

Wa/Lawng.

Is Dad looking outwards from there on the turtle lookout?

Yes/No

Declarative:

Baba sizi ziyaka nageka.

Baba sizi mika/mizapuka nageka?

ziya-ka cloud-DAT

What is Dad looking at from there.

Conjunctions

Apart from the dual conjunctive clitic wal (Kalaw Kawaw Ya -w/-aw), which is attached to both of the words it joins, conjunctions go between the words or clauses they join:

a/aw and, or – specific~restricting conjunction

ya and others – non-specific conjunction

lawnga~law-lo or (< lawnga~law-lo no, not)

ò or (English loan)

Ama-wal Baba-wal (KKY Amaw-Babaw) (both) Mum and Dad, neither Mum or Dad (as a couple)

Ama a Baba, Ama aw Baba Mum and Dad, Mum or Dad (together but not as a pair)

Ama ya Baba ya kazil ya ngœybath ya Mœgi Baba Mum, Dad, the kids, Aunty, Uncle, and the others/so on

Ama lawngaba, Ama law Baba, Ama lo Baba Mum or Dad

Ama ò Baba Mum or Dad
Lawnga or has a pause before it in careful speech, thus Ama, lawnga Baba, and in or-questions (Mum or Dad?) is used in conjunction with the interrogative clitic: Ama aw, lawnga Baba aw ~ Ama, lawnga Baba aw? Mum or Dad?

The dual conjunction is essentially a conjunction that shows a pair or a couple that go together. When the referents habitually go together, the ‘set’ Ø-conjunction construction is found: apu-thaathi ‘mother and father, parents’; gagay-thayak ‘bow-and-arrow, bow-and-arrows’; alay-iipi ‘husband and wife, married couple’, ap-thath-kaazi (< apu-thaathi-kaazi ‘mother-father-child’) ‘nuclear family’, and so on.

The conjunction ya may be the same morpheme as the clitic -ya, full form -yabi, used in Kalaw Lagaw Ya, but seemingly not in the other dialects, on kin-terms and culturally important common nouns to show that the reference is to the whole group who fit into the category specified by ya, thus Ath - Granddad, Granduncle > Atheyabi, Atheya all my~our Grandfathers.

Ngay lak apasin ngaw Atheyabi a Akayabi kaypaypa kūlay thonarnu. I acknowledge my grandfathers and grandmothers from before. (Alick Tipoti, personal communication)

ngayi-Ø laka-Ø me-NOM again.more-Ø apa+asi-Ø-Ø-n nga-NGU below+bewith-ATT-SG-PrPF me-GEN

Athe-yabi a Aka-yabi Granddad-group and Grandma-group

kay-paypa-Ø kūl-LAI NSp-aheadthere-SLoc first-Sloc thonara-nu time-SLoc

Ngay kayib iinu nge ke-dha Atheya kuthinaw zageth matha angayka. Today I still continue to practice my forefathers’ art. (Alick Tipoti, personal communication)

CLAUSE EXTERNAL WORDS

Words that are external to the clause include: wa yes, lawnga no, la!/law! no!, la-lawnga! oh no!, sii I don’t know, wo/o/o/ greeting call, agreement call, aa/mm hesitation, kūlay! lookout, beware!, pa! go on! stop!, go on back! (etc.), òy! hoiy!, saa right, now, let’s see now, let’s start, etc.; òe! that’s a lie!, etc.

Despite the translation just given, wa and lawnga do not have the same value as yes and no in English. These latter say ‘yes’ or ‘no’ to the underlying truth of the sentence:

Do you speak Kalaw Lagaw Ya?
Yes = Yes, I do speak Kalaw Lagaw Ya.
No = No, I don’t speak Kalaw Lagaw Ya.

Don’t you speak Kalaw Lagaw Ya?
Yes = Yes, I do speak Kalaw Lagaw Ya.
No = No, I don’t speak Kalaw Lagaw Ya.

Wa and lawnga say ‘yes’ or ‘no’ to the words of the sentence; for example wa in answers to negative statements or questions translates as no in English, and lawnga as yes:

Ni Geemulgaw Yangu ngulayg aw?
Wa = Yes, I do speak Kalaw Lagaw Ya.
Lawnga = No, I don’t speak Kalaw Lagaw Ya.

--- karaway-IGA-Ø ---
--- ignorance-PRP-NOM ---
EXCEPTIONS TO NON-MORPHOLOGICAL VARIATION

Word modifiers, clause modifiers and words external to the clause are invariable, except for the following three paradigms:

a) sikay perhaps, maybe: a compound of sii I don’t know and kay however. Through association with se-/si- that, there the word has developed masculine and feminine forms, respectively sinukay and sinakay

Raasa sikay/sinakay lagaka pungáyka.  
Maybe that storm is heading for my home island.
raasa-Ø sii-[na]+kay
storm-NOM don’t.know-[F]+however
laaga-ka puunga-’i-ka.
home-DAT sail-VN-DAT

Gùùba sikay/sinukay lagiya sizarima.  
Maybe the wind came down over my home island
güba-Ø sii-[nu]+kay
wind-NOM don’t.know-[M]+however
laga-ya sizara-i-Ø-ma
home-NSpLoc swoopdown-VN-DAT

b) kame, kake, kole hey! excuse me!: these three words are respectively masculine, feminine and non-singular

c) yawa goodbye, see you, have a safe journey, farewell: this word is used when saying farewell to one person (place, etc.); when addressing two or more people, the non-singular form is yawal.

CLAUSE SYNTAX

All clauses have a verb as the basis, except in identity clauses (X = Y), which are verbless. Other verbless clauses have underlying verbs. Many events or states are expressed by nominal-verb compounds or semi-compounds (collocations) with the nominal forming an essential part of the verbal meaning. In such instances, the whole verb phrase must be regarded as a complex head.

There are no di-transitive verbs as there are in English or Meriam Mir, and there are no valency changing operations except for the active suffix -i. Periphrastic constructions express meanings such as inchoative and causative.

Core Clauses Types

As stated earlier, the language is S-O-V in typology (specific object transitive A-X-O-V, intransitive S-X-V, reflexive S-X(-O)-V, generalised/total object transitive S-X-A(=O)-V). However, as is the case with all highly inflected languages, word order is essentially free.

Nadh gabudhan nungu yatha pathanu.  
She shaved him slowly and carefully (literally She cut his beard slowly and carefully)
naa-dha gabu-dha-n nu-NGU
she-INS cold-SIM-INS he-GEN
yatha-Ø patha-Ø-Ø-nu
beard-ACC cut-VN-DAT

Na adhaka nagema.  
She looked out(wards).  
naa-Ø adha-ka naga-i-Ø-ma
she-NOM out-DAT look.watch-VN-DAT

Na aman kabageth mathayma.  
She hit her thumb with the hammer.  
naa-Ø ama-n
she-NOM hammer-INS
kab+getha-Ø mathama-i-Ø-ma
paddle+hand-ACC hit-VN-DAT

Na therarmaythan wœydhema.  
She boiled (all) the intestines.  
naa-Ø thera-LAI-maytha-n
she-INS bitterness-PRP-belly-INS
wœydha-i-Ø-ma
put.place.boil-VN-DAT

Negative and Emphatic Clauses

Clause negation has two types, (a) the negation of the statement or part thereof, marked by the clause particle lawnga
Ngalmun Lagaw Yangukudu: the Language of our homeland

Lawnga is the opposite of waadha/waadh (Kalaw Kawaw Ya waza [wa:za]), which shows emphasis of the reality or truth of the assertion. Wa yes in origin may be an abbreviation of waadha. The positioning of waadha depends on which part of the clause falls in its scope. As with lawnga, this can be on the whole clause or on a phrase/word.

Senawaadha nabeka mina ubigi zageth.
That really was for her a very hateful task.
se-na-Ø waadha na-be-ka
that-F-NOM emphatic she-AUG-DAT
mina ubi-gi zagetha-Ø
true desire-PRV work-NOM

Sena lawnga nabeka mina ubigi zageth.
Mina ubil zageth waadha!
That is not a task that is very hateful to her. She actually loves it!
se-na-Ø lawnga
that-F-NOM not
na-be-ka mina ubi-gi
she-AUG-DAT true desire-PRV
zagetha-Ø mina ubi-LAI
work-NOM true desire-PRP
zagetha-Ø waadha
word-NOM emphatic

The emphatic versions of the two positive examples given above under (a) statement negation and (b) privative negation are:

Senuubi puuyi kapu puuyi gulka aymayka waadha.
That tree really is a good tree for making a canoe.

Baydhaman waadha ngaara pathadhin.
It really was a/the shark that bit his leg.

Ngay lawnga koemathalzagig.
Ngay koemathalzagig lawnga.
I am not someone who has no money; I am not the~a person who has no money.
ngayi-Ø lawnga
myi-NOM not
koematha-LAI+za-gi-IGA
shine-PRP+thing-PRV-PNom

Lawnga is the opposite of waadha/waadh (Kalaw Kawaw Ya waza [wa:za]), which shows emphasis of the reality or truth of the assertion. Wa yes in origin may be an abbreviation of waadha. The positioning of waadha depends on which part of the clause falls in its scope. As with lawnga, this can be on the whole clause or on a phrase/word.

Senawaadha nabeka mina ubigi zageth.
That really was for her a very hateful task.
se-na-Ø waadha na-be-ka
that-F-NOM emphatic she-AUG-DAT
mina ubi-gi zagetha-Ø
true desire-PRV work-NOM

Sena lawnga nabeka mina ubigi zageth.
Mina ubil zageth waadha!
That is not a task that is very hateful to her. She actually loves it!
se-na-Ø lawnga
that-F-NOM not
na-be-ka mina ubi-gi
she-AUG-DAT true desire-PRV
zagetha-Ø mina ubi-LAI
work-NOM true desire-PRP
zagetha-Ø waadha
word-NOM emphatic

The emphatic versions of the two positive examples given above under (a) statement negation and (b) privative negation are:

Senuubi puuyi kapu puuyi gulka aymayka waadha.
That tree really is a good tree for making a canoe.

Baydhaman waadha ngaara pathadhin.
It really was a/the shark that bit his leg.

Ngay lawnga koemathalzagig.
Ngay koemathalzagig lawnga.
I am not someone who has no money; I am not the~a person who has no money.
ngayi-Ø lawnga
myi-NOM not
koematha-LAI+za-gi-IGA
shine-PRP+thing-PRV-PNom

Lawnga is the opposite of waadha/waadh (Kalaw Kawaw Ya waza [wa:za]), which shows emphasis of the reality or truth of the assertion. Wa yes in origin may be an abbreviation of waadha. The positioning of waadha depends on which part of the clause falls in its scope. As with lawnga, this can be on the whole clause or on a phrase/word.

Senawaadha nabeka mina ubigi zageth.
That really was for her a very hateful task.
se-na-Ø waadha na-be-ka
that-F-NOM emphatic she-AUG-DAT
mina ubi-gi zagetha-Ø
true desire-PRV work-NOM

Sena lawnga nabeka mina ubigi zageth.
Mina ubil zageth waadha!
That is not a task that is very hateful to her. She actually loves it!
se-na-Ø lawnga
that-F-NOM not
na-be-ka mina ubi-gi
she-AUG-DAT true desire-PRV
zagetha-Ø mina ubi-LAI
work-NOM true desire-PRP
zagetha-Ø waadha
word-NOM emphatic

The emphatic versions of the two positive examples given above under (a) statement negation and (b) privative negation are:

Senuubi puuyi kapu puuyi gulka aymayka waadha.
That tree really is a good tree for making a canoe.

Baydhaman waadha ngaara pathadhin.
It really was a/the shark that bit his leg.

Ngay lawnga koemathalzagig.
Ngay koemathalzagig lawnga.
I am not someone who has no money; I am not the~a person who has no money.
ngayi-Ø lawnga
myi-NOM not
koematha-LAI+za-gi-IGA
shine-PRP+thing-PRV-PNom

Lawnga is the opposite of waadha/waadh (Kalaw Kawaw Ya waza [wa:za]), which shows emphasis of the reality or truth of the assertion. Wa yes in origin may be an abbreviation of waadha. The positioning of waadha depends on which part of the clause falls in its scope. As with lawnga, this can be on the whole clause or on a phrase/word.

Senawaadha nabeka mina ubigi zageth.
That really was for her a very hateful task.
se-na-Ø waadha na-be-ka
that-F-NOM emphatic she-AUG-DAT
mina ubi-gi zagetha-Ø
true desire-PRV work-NOM

Sena lawnga nabeka mina ubigi zageth.
Mina ubil zageth waadha!
That is not a task that is very hateful to her. She actually loves it!
se-na-Ø lawnga
that-F-NOM not
na-be-ka mina ubi-gi
she-AUG-DAT true desire-PRV
zagetha-Ø mina ubi-LAI
work-NOM true desire-PRP
zagetha-Ø waadha
word-NOM emphatic

The emphatic versions of the two positive examples given above under (a) statement negation and (b) privative negation are:

Senuubi puuyi kapu puuyi gulka aymayka waadha.
That tree really is a good tree for making a canoe.

Baydhaman waadha ngaara pathadhin.
It really was a/the shark that bit his leg.

Ngay lawnga koemathalzagig.
Ngay koemathalzagig lawnga.
I am not someone who has no money; I am not the~a person who has no money.
ngayi-Ø lawnga
myi-NOM not
koematha-LAI+za-gi-IGA
shine-PRP+thing-PRV-PNom
Lawnga can also negate the verb of a clause, however this is an emphatic focusing on negation, having semantics similar to actually not:

Nuy pùrthema lawnga.
He didn’t actually eat earlier today.
nuy-Ø pùrátha-i-Ø-ma
he+NOM eat-ACT-SG-ACT.Sg.TodP
lawnga not

This contrasts with the ordinary negative, which simply states that the action/state expressed by the verb did/does not exist:

Nungu (kayib) pùrátha-yginga.
He didn’t~doesn’t eat (today);
in.e. his eating did~does not exist (today).
nu-NGU (kayiba-Ø) pùrátha-‘i-gi-nga
him-GEN (today-Ø) eat-VN-PRV-ImpNom

Transitivity and Voice

Transitivity and voice in the language are marked by the interplay between verb and nominal morphology, and are syntactic categories. The interaction of case and verb form operates as displayed in Table 14. There are three categories, specific transitive (subsumes passive), nonspecific transitive (i.e. antipassive; subsumes non-specific passive) and intransitive (subsumes reflexive and stative). Where voice is concerned, the distinction between active and passive depends mainly on word order and the presence or absence of the subject. Example 1 below is an active transitive, 2 is a passive, and 3 is an intransitive

1. Bala wœiwil paraminu.
Brother picked some mangoes. (active syntax)
bala-Ø wœiwi-LAI
brother-NOM mango-PL
para-Ø-MAYI-nu
harvest-ATT-PL-TodP.PF

2. Wœiwil paraminu.
Some mangoes were picked. (passive syntax)
wœiwi-LAI para-Ø-MAYI-nu
mango-PL harvest-ATT-PL-TodP.PF

3. Wœiwil pareminu.
Some mangoes fell/dropped. (active syntax)
wœiwi-LAI para-Ø-MAYI-nu
mango-PL harvest-ATT-PL-TodP.PF

The specific transitive focuses on a specific patient or patients, while the non-specific transitive shows that the action is on a non-specifiable, global, generalised or total patient or patients (marked by the instrumental), or on a non-specifiable one-or-more patient or patients (marked by the non-specific locative). The verb in the specific transitive can be either attainative (4) or active (5), depending on the affect on the object, while the active form of the verb is part of the syntax of the intransitive (6) and the non-specific transitive (7).

4. Umayn maadhu lumadh.
The dog was looking for a/the (specific) piece of meat.
ùmay-n maadhu-Ø
dog-INS meat-ACC
luuma-Ø-Ø-adh
seek-ATT-SG-TodP.IMPF

5. Ngath bòòla palema.
I kicked a/the ball
(there whole ball underwent the action).
nga-tha bòòla-Ø
me-INS ball-ACC
pala-i-Ø-ma
cause-ACT-SG-ACT.TodP.PF

6. Umay madhuya lameyadh.
The dog was looking for (some/any) meat.
ùmay-Ø maadhu-ya
dog-NOM meat-NSpLoc
luuma-i-Ø-adh
seek-ACT-SG-TodP.PF

7. Zagethaw kœzil bùpan pathema.
The workers cut all the grass.
The actor can also be marked by the ablative, which puts emphasis on the actor as an adjunct to the clause (8, 9), or the genitive, which shows habitual action by the actor (10, 11).
Ngalmun Lagaw Yangukudu: the Language of our homeland

8. Nungungu guul zilami
The canoe is run/sped along by HIM.
HE runs the canoe along.
u-NGU-NGU guula-Ø
he-GEN-ABL sailing-canoe-ACC
zilama-i-Ø-IZI
run-ACT-SEG-ACT-SEG-PrPF

9. Malil Babanungu nithun
The iron-tipped spear is cast by DAD.
DAD casts the iron-tipped spear.
maalila-Ø Baba-NI-ngu
metal-ACC Dad-GEN-ABL
niithu-Ø-Ø-n
cast-ATT-SEG-PrPF

10. Nungu Badhuka zagethka patheka
He has the habit of travelling to Badu for work.
u-NGU Badhu-ka zagetha-ka
he-GEN B.-DAT work-DAT
patha-i-Ø-ka
embark-ACT-SEG-SEG-PrPF

11. Baban gaydihi soegul poelaykoeryuug
Dad is in the habit of practicing archery.
Baba-NI gaydh-NGU sagula-Ø
Dad-GEN archery-GEN game-ACC
pala-i-kœeryuug
cause-VN-HAB

TABLE 14. Transitive-intransitive and active-passive structures.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>(perfective singular examples)</th>
<th>Actor</th>
<th>object</th>
<th>verb</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>active intransitive non-reflexive</td>
<td>NOM</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>active</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ùmay zilami. The dog runs.</td>
<td>ùmay-Ø</td>
<td></td>
<td>ziilama-i-Ø-IZI</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>run-ACT-SEG-ACT-SEG-PrPF</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>active intransitive reflexive</td>
<td>NOM</td>
<td>ACC</td>
<td>active</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ùmay kawra thami. The dog moves its ear.</td>
<td>ùmay-Ø</td>
<td>kawra-Ø</td>
<td>thama-i-Ø-IZI</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>move-ACT-SEG-ACT-SEG-PrPF</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>attainative intransitive</td>
<td>NOM</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>attainative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ùmay thaman. The dog speeds away.</td>
<td>ùmay-Ø</td>
<td></td>
<td>thama-Ø-Ø-Ø-n</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>move-ACT-SEG-ACT-SEG-PrPF</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>attainative stative</td>
<td>NOM</td>
<td>n/a</td>
<td>attainative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ùmay ina yuka. The dog is lying here.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>yœw-Ø-Ø-ka</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>lie.lean-ATT-SEG-PrPF</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>active specific transitive</td>
<td>INS</td>
<td>ACC</td>
<td>active</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ùmay katube pali. The dog hits/flicks the frog. Katube pali The frog is hit/flicked.</td>
<td>ùmay-n</td>
<td>katube-Ø</td>
<td>pala-i-Ø-IZI</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>cause.hit-ACT-SEG-ACT-SEG-PrPF</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>attainative specific transitive</td>
<td>INS</td>
<td>ACC</td>
<td>attainative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ùmayn södhya idhan. The dog chews up the shirt. Södhya idhan. The shirt gets chewed up.</td>
<td>ùmay-n</td>
<td>södhya-Ø</td>
<td>idh-a-Ø-Ø-n</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>chewup-ATT-SEG-PrPF</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>active non-specific transitive (global)</td>
<td>NOM</td>
<td>INS</td>
<td>active</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ùmay katuben pali. The dog hits/flicks all the frogs. Katuben pali. All the frogs are hit/flicked.</td>
<td>ùmay-Ø</td>
<td>katube-n</td>
<td>pala-i-Ø-IZI</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>cause.hit-ACT-SEG-ACT-SEG-PrPF</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>active non-specific transitive (indefinite)</td>
<td>NOM</td>
<td>NSpLoc</td>
<td>active</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ùmay uruyya lumi. The dog looks for prey. Uruyya lumi. Prey is looked for.</td>
<td>ùmay-Ø</td>
<td>uruy-ya</td>
<td>luuma-i-Ø-IZI</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>search-ACT-SEG-ACT-SEG-PrPF</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Clause Modality and Aspect

The finite verb is marked only for the positive declarative and imperative moods and the perfective, imperfective and habitual aspects.

a) declarative

Gùban maalu kidhathayanu. (perfective)
The wind stirred up the water earlier today.
gùba-n maalu-Ø
wind-INS sea-ACC
kidha-thaya-Ø-Ø-nu.
back&forth-throw-ATT-SG-TodP.PF

Gùban maalu kidhathayadh. (imperfective)
The wind was stirring up the water earlier today.
--- kidha-thaya-Ø-Ø-adh.
--- back&forth-throw-ATT-SG-TodP.IMPF

Gùban maalu kidhathœyáykuruyg. (habitual)
The wind used to stir/usually stirs/will be stirring up the water.
--- kidha-thaya-’i-kœruig.
--- back&forth-throw-VN-HAB.

b) imperative

Gùùba! Maalu kidhathayar! (perfective)
Wind! Stir up the water!
--- kidha-thaya-Ø-Ø-r!
--- back&forth-throw-VN-ATT-ImpNom.

Gùùba! Maalu kidhathayadh! (imperfective)
Wind! Be stirring up the water!
--- kidha-thaya-Ø-Ø-adh!
--- back&forth-throw-VN-ATT-IMP.F.

Gùùba! Maalu kidhathayane! (perfective)
Wind! Stir up the water later on!
--- kidha-thaya-Ø-Ø-ne!
--- back&forth-throw-VN-ATT-RemF.

Gùùba! Maalu kidhathœyáykuruyg!
( Imperfective–habitual)
Wind! Be stirring up the water later on!
--- kidha-thaya-’i-kœruig.
--- back&forth-throw-VN-HAB

Other moods and aspects are expressed by the cases or derived forms of the verbal noun, such as the clause negative and negative imperative, the resultative-causative, avoidance, the purposive, ‘supposed to’, affective modality, and so on.

a) Clause negative - verbal noun

nominalised privative

Gùbaw maluw kidhathœyáyginga.
The wind doesn’t/didn’t/won’t stir up the water
gùba+NGU maalu+NGU
wind+GEN sea+GEN
kidha-thaya-’i-gi-nga
back&forth-throw-VN-PRV-ImpNom

b) Negative imperative - verbal noun

unmarked privative

Gùùba, maluw kidhathœyáyg!
Wind, do not stir up the water!
gùba+Ø maalu+NGU
wind+NOM sea+GEN
kidha-thaya-’i-gi
back&forth-throw-VN-PRV

c) Resultative/Causative - verbal noun

nominalised resultative

Maalu gùbaw kidhathœyáyzinga.
The sea was/is/has been stirred up by the wind.
maalu+Ø gùba+NGU
sea+NOM wind+GEN
kidha-thaya-’i-zi-nga
back&forth-throw-VN-RES-ImpNom

d) Avoidance – the verbal noun and the core arguments (subject, object) are marked by the ablative

Maydhalgan maaydhah aymadhin, gùbangu malungu kidhathœyáylay.
The magic-man made magic so that the wind would not stir up the sea.
mïdhaha-LAI-IGA-n maïdhaha-Ø
magic-PRP-PNom-INS magic+ACC
ayima-Ø-dhin
make-ATT-SG-RemF.

gùba-ngu malu-nga
wind-ABL sea-ABL
kidha-thaya-’i-lay
back&forth-throw-VN-ABL.

e) Purposive – the verbal noun and the core arguments (subject, object) are marked by the dative
f) ‘supposed to’~’is to’ modality: verbal noun genitive plus a referencing noun

Maalu Kuki-gùbaw kidhathœyáya za, kasa kay kayib moethar ulayka.
The north-west wind is supposed to stir up the sea, but today the sea is calm.

Ngœy maluw bawal imaminu, gùbaw kidhathœyáyn.
We saw the waves of the sea, stirred up by the wind.

Ngœy maluw bawal imaminu, gùbaw kidhathœyáyn.
We saw the waves of the sea, stirred up by the wind.

Verbal Deixis. Two words are used to show approaching movement, bœy (alt. buy) and ngapa. They are synonomous on the whole, the only difference being that bœy is only used in intransitive clauses (coming), while ngapa can be intransitive and transitive (coming, bringing). Bœy and ngapa are part of the non-declining parts of speech.
Subordination, Relative and Interrogative Clause Marking

The marking of subordinate, relative and interrogative clauses is of two main types. Descriptive relative clauses can be both adjectival clauses or the like or clauses marked by a relative clause marker, while subordinate and interrogative clauses are marked by appropriate clause markers. In clauses that have been transformed into complex adjectival phrases, the verb is nominalised, and marked either by the genitive or the proprietary;

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{gimiya wcër} & \text{l} \text{ury} \text{u} \text{r} \text{u} \text{y} \text{ } \text{the} \text{ } \text{bird} \text{ } \text{flew}~\text{flies}~\text{overhead} \\
giima-ya & \text{wari-}'i-LAI \text{uryu}-\Ø \\
& \text{above-NSLoc} \text{fly-VN-PRP} \text{creature-NOM}
\end{align*}
\]

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{madhuw} & \text{ pùr} \text{hay} \text{l} \text{u} \text{r} \text{u} \text{y} \text{ } \text{the} \text{ } \text{animal} \text{ } \text{that} \text{ } \text{eats} \text{ } \text{meat}, \text{ } \text{the} \text{ } \text{meat-eating} \text{ } \text{animal} \\
\text{madhu-NGU} & \text{pùr} \text{ath} \text{a-}'i-NGU \text{uryu}-\Ø \\
& \text{meat-GEN} \text{eat-VN-PRP} \text{creature-NOM}
\end{align*}
\]

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{madhuw} & \text{ pùr} \text{hay} \text{ly} \text{u} \text{r} \text{u} \text{y} \text{ } \text{the} \text{ } \text{animal} \text{ } \text{that} \text{ } \text{eats} \text{ } \text{meat}, \text{ } \text{the} \text{ } \text{animal} \text{ } \text{that} \text{ } \text{is} \text{ } \text{eating} \text{ } \text{meat} \\
\text{madhu-NGU} & \text{pùr} \text{ath} \text{a-}'i-NGU \text{uryu}-\Ø \\
& \text{meat-GEN} \text{eat-VN-GEN} \text{creature-NOM}
\end{align*}
\]

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{zagethaw} & \text{ ayimay} \text{ kaazi} \text{ the} \text{ } \text{child}~\text{youth}~\text{bloke} \text{ who} \text{ does} \text{ the} \text{ work} \\
\text{zagetha-NGU} & \text{ayima-}'i-NGU \text{ kaazi-Ø} \\
& \text{work-GUN} \text{make.do-VN-GEN} \text{child-NOM}
\end{align*}
\]

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{mamiyapaw} & \text{ path} \text{áyzi} \text{ ipika} \text{ the} \text{ } \text{woman} \text{ } \text{who} \text{ (has) cut} \text{ the} \text{ pawpaw} \\
\text{mamiyapa-NGU} & \text{patha-}'i-zi \\
\text{pawpaw-GEN} & \text{cut.chop-VN-RES} \\
\text{ipikazi-Ø} & \text{female.woman-NOM}
\end{align*}
\]

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{mòdhabiw} & \text{ gasamaygi-gasamgi} \text{ zagethaw} \\
\text{garkazil} & \text{ the} \text{ } \text{workmen} \text{ } \text{who} \text{ have} \text{ not} \text{ been} \text{ paid}, \text{ the} \text{ unpaid} \text{ workmen} \\
\text{mòòdhabi-NGU} & \text{gasama-}'i-gi} \\
\text{payment-GEN} & \text{get.catch-VN-PRV} \\
\text{zagetha-NGU} & \text{garakazi-LAI} \\
\text{work-GEN} & \text{male.man-PRP}
\end{align*}
\]

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{pœnipœniw} & \text{ zazamayzinga~zazamzinga} \text{ puuyi} \text{ the} \text{ tree} \text{ that} \text{ was/has} \text{ been} \text{ set} \text{ alight} \text{ by} \text{ the} \text{ lightening} \\
pœnipani-NGU & \text{zazama-}'i-zi \\
\text{lightening-GEN} & \text{kindle-VN-RES} \text{ plant-NOM}
\end{align*}
\]

As with all adjectival clauses, when not part of the noun phrase, they must be nominalised, normally by one of the two nominalising suffixes, or with a dummy nominal such as za thing, often accompanied by the neutral clause marker na/nanga and alternatively an interrogative pronoun, particularly when +human (see further below):

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{uruy} & \text{ gimiya wcër} \text{l} \text{inga} \text{ (na/nanga) the} \text{ bird} \text{ that} \text{ flew}~\text{flies}~\text{overhead} \\
\text{uruy} & \text{ madhuw} \text{ pùr} \text{haylynga} \text{ (na/nanga) the} \text{ animal} \text{ that} \text{ eats} \text{ meat}, \text{ the} \text{ meat-eating} \text{ animal} \\
\text{uruy} & \text{ madhuw} \text{ pùr} \text{hay za} \text{ (na/nanga) the} \text{ animal} \text{ that} \text{ eats} \text{ meat}, \text{ the} \text{ animal} \text{ that} \text{ is} \text{ eating} \text{ meat} \\
\text{kaazi} & \text{ zagethaw ayimay kaazi} \text{ (na/nanga) the} \text{ child}~\text{youth}~\text{bloke} \text{ who} \text{ does} \text{ the} \text{ work} \\
\text{ipika} & \text{ mamiyapaw pathâyzig (na/nanga) the} \text{ woman} \text{ who (has) cut} \text{ the} \text{ pawpaw} \\
\text{zagethaw} & \text{ garkazil mòdhabiw gasamaygigal} \text{ (na/nanga) the} \text{ workmen} \text{ who} \text{ have} \text{ not} \text{ been} \text{ paid}, \text{ the} \text{ unpaid} \text{ workmen} \\
\text{puuyi} & \text{ pœnipœniw zazamayzinga~zazamzinga} \text{ puuyi} \text{ the} \text{ tree} \text{ that} \text{ was/has} \text{ been} \text{ set} \text{ alight} \text{ by} \text{ the} \text{ lightening}
\end{align*}
\]

The core clause markers are kay, na/nanga, nay/naay, midha(kidh) and kedha. These mark five clause types, concessive, neutral~referencing, conditional~hypothetical, interrogative and similitative.

Kay: concessive subordination - but, however, although, etc.

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{Thana} & \text{ matha uga} \text{y, kas} \text{a kay} \text{ gùbaw} \text{ payáyginga.} \text{ They were waiting, however no wind blew.} \\
\text{Thana-Ø} & \text{ matha} \\
\text{they.PL-NOM} & \text{ still} \\
\text{uuga-i-Ø-Ø,} & \text{ wait-ACT-AnimPL-RemP.IMPF} \\
\text{kasa} & \text{ kay} \text{ gùbaw-NGU} \\
\text{female.woman-NOM} & \text{ just however} \\
\text{paya-}'i-gi-nga} & \text{ wind-GEN} \\
\text{pœnipœniw} & \text{ blow-VN-PRV-ImprNom}
\end{align*}
\]
**Na/nanga**: neutral subordination, referencing clauses - with reference to, referring to, as for, with regards to, if, when, etc. This contrasts with the conditional clause marker nay/naay (see below). **Na/nanga** can appear more than once in its clause, and rarely appears first in the clause. The form *nanga* in KLY is relatively rare, and normally comes only at the end of the clause.

_Awgdahaw weenab na, minakoey adhapudhay za ngalpùnika mariwdanalgaka._

**As for/In reference to** God’s blessing, it is an outstanding thing for us and for our spiritual life.

_Awgdha-NGU weenaba-Ø na_, God-GEN blessing-NOM REF, _mina+kœy adha+puudha-’i za-Ø very+big out+fall-VN thing-NOM ngalpù-ni-ka mari-NGU we.INC.PL-AUG-DAT spirit-GEN dana-lai-IGA-ka._ life-PRP-PNom-DAT

_Ni na nubia niatha gimawali na, ni nika, dhangal ugayka … When you climb up on the platform, you sit, waiting for a dugong … ni-Ø na nu-be-ya you-NOM REF he-AUG-LOC niatha-LAI gima+wala-i-Ø-IZI na platform-SLoc above+climb-ACT-SG-ACT.PrP ni-Ø ni-Ø-Ø-ka, you-NOM sit-ATT-SG-PrIMPF dhangala-Ø uuga-’i-ka … dugong-ACC wait-VN-PrIMPF

_Ina waruw maadhu na, mina kapu mithalnga waadha! As for this turtle meat here, it’s really delicious! iï-na waru-NGU maadhu-Ø na, this-F turtle-GEN meat-NOM REF, mina kapu mitha-LAI-nga-Ø waadha! very good taste-PRP-ImprNom-NOM emphatic existential

_Ubar na parema na, kazi kusumka zilayma. When the Torres Strait plum dropped, the kid rang to collect it._

_Ubará-Ø na plum-NOM REF

Para-i-Ø-ma na, harvest-ACT-SG-ACT.Recp.PF REF, kazi-Ø kusuma-’i-ka child-NOM collect-VN-DAT zilama-i-Ø-ma, run-ACT-SG-ACT.Recp.PF

_Ni na kùlay mangi, pasa pudar dhe._ If you arrive first, open the door.

_ni-Ø na kùl-lai you-NOM REF first-SLoc manga-i-Ø-IZI, pasa-Ø arrive-ACT-SG-ACT.PrPF, door-NOM puuda-Ø-Ø-r dhe open-ATT-SG-SG.S.IMP IMP

_Nyu matha kedha paada nabiya midhuy na/nanga._ He is the same height as she is.

_Nuy-Ø matha ke-dha paada-Ø He-NOM only this-INS/SIM top-NOM na-be-ya mi-dhu-ya na(na) she-LOC-LOC what-INS? REF

_Na/nanga_ is also found in main clauses in certain structures with its referencing use:

_Thana kedha mabayg na/nanga._ They are that kind of community.

_thana-Ø ke-dha mabayga-Ø_ they-PL-NOM this-INS/SIM person-NOM

_Thana kedha mabayg na/nanga._ They are that kind of community.

_thana-Ø ke-dha mabayga-Ø_ they-PL-NOM this-INS/SIM person-NOM

_Garwidhamay kuykayimka kay siks aklok na/nanga._ The meeting is going to start at 6.

_gar-wœidha-ma-’i-NGU COL-place-INT-VN-GEN kuyku+ayima-Ø-Ø-ka ka-y head+make-ATT-SG-DAT soon –Sloc siks+aakloka-Ø na(na) six+o’clock-NOM REF

_Nagamu Lagan Yangukudu: the Language of our homeland_
Nay/naay: conditional and hypothetical clauses – *if, if X should, would–should*. As with na/nanga, nay/naay can appear more than once in the clause, and can appear in main clauses as well as.

Lawnga, tukuypaw watharaw tidayginga nay, nubeka kœyzageth watharan muyka zazamka. No, *if my brother didn’t fetch any firewood, it would be impossible for him to kindle the fire.*

Lawnga, tœkuyapa-NGU no samesexsib-GEN wathara-NGU tiida-‘i-gi-nga-Ø nay fetch-VN-PRV-ImprNom-NOM if.should nu-be-ka key+zagetha-Ø him-AUG-DAT big+work-NOM

Both na/nanga and nay/naay enter into collocation with lawnga to express *if not, in the case of no:*

Ngœy ngulaygal kedha ni mina mœbayg. Lawnga nay ninu kedha adhapudhay zagethaw ayimginga.

We know that you are a true and honest person. *If it were not so you would not do such excellent work.*

Ngœyi-Ø ngulayga-LAI wePLEXC-NOM knower-PRP

ke-dha ni-Ø mina here-INS.SIM you-NOM true.real

mabayga-Ø. lawnga nay nin-NGU person-NOM. no if.should you-GEN

ke-dha adha+puudha-‘i here-INS.SIM out-fall-VN

zagetha-NGU work-GEN

ayima-‘i-gi-nga-Ø make.do-VN-PRV-ImprNom-NOM

Nidh seenu ngaw kaazi imanu aw? Lawnga na, ni ngùlayg ngadh imanu aw?

Did you see my son? *If not, do you know who did?*

Ni-dha se-nu nga-NGU you-INS there-M me-GEN.M

kaazi-Ø iima-Ø-Ø-Ø-nu child-ACC see-ATT-SG-TodP.Pf Q

lawnga na ni-Ø ngulayga-Ø no REF you-NOM knower-NOM

nga-dha iima-Ø-Ø-Ø-Ø-Ø-Ø-Ø-Ø aw who-INS see-ATT-SG-TodP.Pf Q

Midha(kidh) how, like what has a widespread use as a general interrogative clause marker, as in the following two examples:

Nidh midha/midhakidh gagay ayiman. *How you make a bow.*

Ni-dha mi-dha[-kidha] you-SG-INS what-INS[(-GLoc]

gagayi-Ø ayima-Ø-n bow-ACC make.do-ATT-SG-PrPF

Na apuuwa kadaytharaydhin adhaka maaba uzarima imáyka, midha mabayg ngapa ulmay.

The mother stood up and walked outside to see if/whether someone was coming.
A related use of **midha(kidh)** is in idioms for suggestions, along the lines of English ‘how about...’, ‘what about...’, and so on. The uses of **midha(kidh)** in sentences such below are abbreviations of clauses such as

**A. Ninu wakaythemam midhakidh**

*How is your thinking*, i.e. *What is your opinion, What do you think*

(Ninu wakaythemam) **Midhikidh?** Ngœeba tika uzareuman, aw?  
**How about** we go to tea?; **What do you think**? We go to tea now?

**(nin+NGU wakay-thama-ma-Ø)**  
**(youSg+GEN voice-move-INT-NOM)**  
**mi-dha**  
**(what-INS.SIM weDuInc-NOM)**

**ti-ka uzará-i-NGAUMA-n aw tea-DAT goSgDu-ACT-DU-PrPF Q**

Other interrogative pronouns are also found as interrogative clause markers, often in conjunction with **na/nanga:**

Mabaygan **ngadha na** kipa lagaka ngapa guruk angan **na**, kunumaymebaygan nuyn dheerdhimaka kay.  
Any person **who** brings alcohol here to the island will be arrested by the police.

**mabayga-n nga-dha na ki-pa**  
**person-INS REF**  
**place-DAT come**  
**ang-a-Ø-Ø-n**  
**bear-ATT-SG-PrPF REF**

**kunuma-‘i-NGU mabayga-n nuy-na**  
*Ngin*  
**tie-VN-GEN person-INS he-ACC**  
**dheerdhima-Ø-Ø-ka**  
**ka-i arrest-ATT-SG+NFut.PF hereNSp-LOC**

**Ngaya** mabaygan kulay dhadhabuth gasaman, thana goyga ugan, wagel kusul ngukin malamin.  
**Whoever** of the people first reach the area, they wait for the sun, then fill the coconut water flasks.  
**Whoever** of the people first reach the area, they wait for the sun, then fill the coconut water flasks.

**nya-ya** mabayga-n kâl-lay  
**who-andothers** **person-INS first-SLoc**

dhadha+bûtha-Ø  
**gasama-Ø-Ø-ñ, mid+room-ACC get-ATT-SG-PrPF**

thanâ-Ø  
**goyga-Ø**

theyPL-NOM  
**day-ACC**

uuga-Ø-Ø-ñ,  
**wage-LAI**

wait-ATT-SG-PrPF  
**behind-SLoc**

kusu-LAI  
**ngûki-n**

cocountwaterflask-PRP **water-INS**

**mala-Ø-MAYI-n fill-ATT-PL- PrPF**

Ni ngûlayg iinnu ngay **nga** ngûkika umika wanika. Íina umalnga lawnga.  
**You know who I am who is telling you to drink. This isn’t poison.**

ni-Ø  
**ngûlayga-Ø i-nu**

you-NOM  
**knower-NOM here-M**

ngayi-Ø  
**ngûki-ka**

me-NOM  
**who-AND-PRP water-drink-DAT**

uuma-i-Ø-ka  
**wani-‘i-ka**

weave-ACT-SG-DAT  
**drink-VN-DAT**

i-na uuma-LAI-nga lawnga  
**here-F death-PRP-ImpNom NEG**

Ngay karawayg mithimith milaga (na) bûpaweerdhazinga (na).  
I don’t know where the painter~tow-rope has been stowed away.

ngayi-Ø  
**karawayga-Ø**

me-NOM  
**lackknowledge-NOM**

mithimithi-Ø  
**mi-laaga-LAI (na)**

painter-NOM  
**what+place-LOC REF**

bûpa-LAI+waradha-‘i-zi-nga-Ø (na) grass-SLoc+stow-VN-RES-ImpNom-Ø (REF)
Kedha thus, in this~that way, like this~that, such, so also has use as a marker of subordinates clauses to verbs of speech, thinking, etc., as in the first example on page 421 and the following:

… nan yapœybarngul kedha nadh ayman senaabi zageth …
… used to ask her to do that task … lit. used to ask her thus she does that task…
na-na ya+pœyba-Ø-r-ngul her-ACC speech+give-ATT-SG-RemP.IMPf
ke-dha na-dha ayima-Ø-Ø-n here-SIM her-INS make.do-ATT-SG-PrPF
se-na-bi zagetha-Ø there-F-ART work-ACC

… nan adhaka wiyadhin – sizi Pulungu, kedha: ‘Ni pa-adhaka! Nidh ngayka wati za aymimu.’
… sent her out – away from Pulu, saying: ‘Go away! You have done a bad thing to me.’
na-na adha-ka wiya-Ø-dhin her-ACC out-DAT send-ATT-SG-RemPrPf
si-zí Pulungu-nga ke-dha there-ABL P.-ABL here-SIM

Sena goeyga nœ gasamdhin kedha thana mangay kazil, a, nuy nabeka mulaydhin … When the day came (thus) for the visitors to arrive, he said to her …
se-na goeygiy-Ø na there-F day-NOM REF
gasama-Ø-dhin ke-dha get.catch-ATT-SG-RemPf here-SIM
thana-Ø manga-‘i-NGU kaazi-LAI theyPL-GEN arrive-VN-GEN person-PRP
a nuy-Ø na-be-ka HES him-REF her-AUG-DAT
muula-i-Ø-dhin produce-ATT-SG-RemPf

Nanu kedha nœ galpis nge miyaydhin kedha nuydh nan lak yapœybadhin nanga … So she got really angry when he asked her again …
nan-NGU ke-dha na galpisa-Ø her-GEN here-SIM REF anger-NOM
nge miya-i-Ø-dhin then move.b.e.do-ATT-SG-RemPPf
ke-dha nuy-dha na-na here-SIM him-INS her-ACC
laka ya+pœyba-Ø-dhin nanga again more speech+give-ATT-SG-RemPf REF

Ni nœ kedha thonara mangi nœ, nidh iman kedha, Kawmayn kay zey dagamunu sika, adhaka kidh nageka nabeka Kœmuthnabnaka. When you arrive there now, you see that Kawmayn is standing on the southern side, looking outwards up there towards Koemuthnab.

LANGUAGE AND SOCIETY: SPEECH STYLES
There are various speech styles, colloquial/informal, formal, rhetoric and the language of public speaking, poetry and song language, ‘baby’ language, differences between communities, families, men, women, young people, old people, children, and so on, as is true for any society. However, there is no ‘in-law’ speech, apart from the need to be polite in speaking to them, which includes not using one’s in-law’s name when speaking to him or her – or even in general about them. The style is formal and respectful, as is the case in all formal contexts, which includes using the appropriate kin term or some such polite reference. Nor is there a style of speech specific for expressing affection or tenderness similar
to the *nasnas mir* of Meriam Mir, apart from the use of the sympathetic clitic *gaar*. Like the language of many sea people, however, there are nautical words and phrases.

**Male versus Female**

The main characteristic of the male-female divide is accent and intonation, women tending to have softer, gentler and more musical intonation, with a tendency to rise at the end of sentences, while men have more “direct” voices, with a tendency to drop at the end of sentences.

**Colloquial Speech, Formal Speech and Public Speaking**

In essence, so-called Gœmulgaw Ya is a more formal level of speech, and so-called Badhulgau Ya is more informal; as such, they are used on both Mabuyag and Badu. Colloquial speech tends to have ‘shortened’ words and more assimilation:

- Formal speech: Thaathi urabaka uzarima, thebudhuka urab paranu.
- Informal speech: Thath urabaka uzurima, thubudhka urab parunu/parnu.

*The father went to the coconut palm and picked a coconut for his friend.*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>father-NOM</th>
<th>coconut-DAT</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>wœraba-ka</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>gùùba</td>
<td>wind</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>gùbaw</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Formal public speaking not only uses more formal language, but also simile, picturesque speech, and “big words” for impression. The most important essence of formal speech is *apaasi* being humble, humbleness, from *apa*-below and the verbal noun *asi* accompanying, going with, being with, being (stem *asi*). This can also relate to physical posture, in that when passing in front of a person one must show respect to, one puts oneself relatively speaking at a physically lower level – in essence a type of bowing.

Over-correction can also occur in endeavouring for a more formal style. One common case is the genitive. As most nouns in the genitive end in *-aw*, e.g. *gùùba* wind, GEN *gùbaw*, and in colloquial speech most nouns are consonant final, thus *gûb-gûb*, this *-aw* is then reanalysed as a genitive ending in its own right. As a result, it is at times added to nouns where the genitive has the same form as the nominative, such as *ùmay* dog, correct speech *ùmay thœra* dog’s back, overcorrected speech *ùmayaw thœra* dog’s back.

**Simplified Language**

There is a simplified, or ‘cut-it-short’, version of the language. It is often used in speaking to people who have a limited command of the language, and as a significant group of foreign men settled and married on Badu in the early colonisation period, the simplified speech gained a certain amount of community validity, though never acceptance as ‘true’ language; in this case it is mistakenly called by some Badhulgaw Ya. In extreme form it is characterised by the use of the verbal noun as a tenseless and numberless verb form, or at most the present perfective and imperfective forms as tenseless/numberless forms, and by oblique noun endings becoming postpositions.

*Na bathaynga mùdhangu yuthaka uzarima.*

(full form)

*She went from the house to the hall this morning.*

na-Ø bathaynga-Ø mùdha- ngu she-NOM morning-SLoc house-ABL yutha-ka uzara-i-Ø-ma hall-DAT go-ACT-SG-TodP.PF

Na bathaynga mùdh ngu yuth ka uzaray/uzari. (simplified form)

*She went from the house to the hall this morning.*
na-Ø bathaynga-Ø mùdh
she-NOM morning-SLoc house
ngu yuth ka uzara-’i/uzara-i
from hall to go-VN/go-ACT.PF

Ama wagel kùnaya mùdhaka uzarika kay. (full form)
Afterwards Mum is going to go back to the house.
Ama-Ø wage-LAI
Mum-NOM behind-SLoc
kùnà-ya mùdhà-ka
back-NSpLoc home-DAT
uzara-ì-Ø-ka ka-i.
go-ACT-SG-NFut hereNSp-LOC

Ama wagel kùnìa mùdh ka uzaray/uzari kay. (simplified form)
Afterwards Mum is going to go back to the house.
Ama-Ø wagel kùnìa mùdh ka
Mum-NOM behind back home to
uzara-’i/uzara-i ka-i.
go-VN /go-ACT.PF hereNSp-LOC

Song/Poetic Language
There is a style of song language reflected in syntax, vocabulary, simile, imagery, versification and rhyme scheme. As in all languages, some words and phrases are more typical of songs, such as:

ngùlaynga the place that one is intimately familiar with, home, home-base; for: laaga place, home
kazi, ngaw za child of mine; for: ngaw kazi my child.
urngu padal baltháyka floating on the crest of the water; for: bawiya baltháyka floating in/on the waves

Changes in the pronunciation of words also mark songs. Even though these are normally retentions of older forms, in the speakers’ perceptions of the process, the spoken forms are changed to be suitable for songs.

The typical phonological variants found in songs are as follows. The different processes can give variant possibilities of pronunciation, in that in actual composition and performance, the ideal song form is not always used. A poetic form will not be used if the general effect needs the normal form of the word, or even a phonetic variant.

1) ò to a
Wòce wra > Waawr/Wawra South-East
thòra > thara ridge, ridge of reef
pòcey, GY pòceya > paay, paaya, paya dust, spray, misty spray, fine mist
ngòey > ngayi we plural exclusive

Words in which ò has become u or i in some lects can still undergo this change, as with wœsul~wusul~usul dirty water, ideal song form wasula, and wœrab~wurub~urab coconut, ideal song form waraba.

2) Vowel Restoration/Insertion: vowels that elide in ordinary speech can be restored in songs.

siik > siika, sika foam
zarzar > zarazara temporary shelter
pùrthan > pùrathan eat
thaaw > thaawu~thawu praise, boasting

Conversely, where music dictates, vowels that are normally pronounced can elide in songs, as in maal’ya dhadh’ya, a song form of maluya dhadhiya through the midst of the deep sea.

Such ‘restoration’ has spread by analogy, in that to break a cluster for metrical purposes a vowel that is a repetition of a preceding or following vowel is inserted; the vowel e is inserted in restricted cases where I is followed by a consonant:

kùlka > kùlùka blood; red, scarlet
pùrthan > pùrùthan eat
malguy > malguy, maleguy shoot, sprout
ngœlmùn > ngalemùn we PL EXC GEN

In ngalmù- us PL EXC, ngalpa we PL INC and ngalbay we DU EXC, the song form ngale- of the first syllable is most likely a retention of an older form; ngal- in all three derive from PP *ñali ‘we INC’.
3) Syllabification of Glides: glides can become full vowels

dhawdhay mainland > dhaudhai, dhaudhay, dhaudhai
puydhan hang > puidhan
yœwthi, yuthi draw, pull > iuthi, iauthi, iauthi
thayan throw, turn > thaian

4) The consonants r, s and z in singing differ somewhat from their ordinary spoken pronunciation. The rhotic is normally pronounced [ɹ] in singing, while s and z are always found as silibants, never as ch or j.

Emotive Language

The term emotive refers to words that carry emotion such as affection, diminutive, politeness, and poetic feeling. Emotive forms of words are very common in songs, for example. Non-emotive words are used when the speaker has neutral feelings towards the referent. There are a few ‘synonyms’ that contrast in being a non-emotive/emotive pair. Some are kin terms, in which case the emotive word is a proper noun (as shown by the use of the capitals in the list below), while the non-emotive member is a common noun; this also occurs in three terms where the emotive is a shortened form of the non-emotive word. In most other words, the emotive form shortens the main vowel of the word (if this is long), and restores the stem-final vowel; both forms are declined as common nouns.

Emotive–non-emotive synonyms:

- waapa harpoon, EMO ara harpoon (poetic/totemic word; a specialised use of the word ara vortex); thaathi, thath father, uncle, EMO Baba Dad, Daddy; kayadh grandmother, EMO Aka Grandma

Abbreviated emotive forms:

- thawiyan brother-in-law, EMO Thawi; awadhe mother’s brother; sister’s child, EMO Awa; natham, KKY nasem namesake, EMO Nath, KKY Nas

Vowel-shortening and/or final-vowel voicing emotive forms:

- maalu sea, deep, EMO malu ‘the deep’; buubu current/stream of water, heat, EMO bubu, bœbu, babu; sar white tern, EMO sara; iipi wife, EMO ipi (dear) wife; kaazi child, kazi kid, kidd

Words such as waapa harpoon, thaathi father and kayadh grandmother belong only in the non-emotive group because of their culturally defined use. Some words can only be emotive, again through culturally defined use, such as the following:

- bùli house fly, ziya cloud, puri baby shark, small shark, iwi mosquito, Kuki north-west wind (a totem), Badhu Badu, gururu peaceful dove

In Kalaw Lagaw Ya, a similar phonological contrast exists in verbs between the perfective active singular imperative and the perfective active singular indicative present. The imperative form is used when the speaker does not feel constrained to use soft or polite language, while the indicative form is used as an emotive, i.e. soft, imperative, where softness and gentleness combine to create a non-threatening command.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>imperative</th>
<th>indicative</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>look, watch</td>
<td>naagi</td>
<td>nagi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>enter, hide (self)</td>
<td>uuthi</td>
<td>uthi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>eat</td>
<td>puráathi, puráthi</td>
<td>puráthi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>hit, strike, kill</td>
<td>matham</td>
<td>mathami</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The phonology of the nominal and verbal characteristics compare as follows:

(1) long stressed vowel + devoiced final vowel or no final vowel: neutral feelings, directness, bluntness

(2) short stressed vowel + voiced final vowel: diminutive, poetic, close (etc.) feelings, gentleness, politeness
This phonological contrast is largely unique to Kalaw Lagaw Ya, and is of relatively recent development. The use of the perfective active singular present as a polite/soft imperative exists in all dialects; however, the form ends in -iz in Kalaw Lagaw Ya: nagiz [naːɡiz], uthiz [uːtiz], pûrathiz, mathamiz, and the imperative ends in i with bisyllabic roots, and Ø when the stem is of three or more syllables, with elision of the final stem syllable, thus nagi [naːɡi], uthi [uːti], pûrath [pûrat] and matham [matam].

**Sea Language**

Sea language for an island people is difficult to distinguish from ‘land-lubber’s’ speech. However, there are a few specifically seaman’s words/phrases which deal with life and work at sea, and which often appear in songs to do with the sea:

**Travel**

seaman’s terms – rangadh puydhan hang the mast, rab puydhan hang the mast, wœrpu puydhan hang in water, puydhan hang

general terms – yawaran travel, yawan uzari go by travel, yawan ulayka be going by travel, yavar manin give/do travel, mizi/mizin move, go

back, stern

seaman’s term – kûn, GY kû́ná

front, bow(s), prow

seaman’s term – buway

general term – paaru

heap up, swell (waves)

seaman’s term – lu gimamanin ‘hump up’

general term – kœyza/kœynga mizi ‘get big’

make tight, taute, tighten (e.g. rope)

seaman’s term – tekotpalan (tekot large puffer fish, palan cause)

general term – mœgimadhpalan (mœgi small, moëdh strap, palan cause)

Some words also differ in meaning depending on whether the reference is to sea-life or general life.

rangadh: seaman’s use mast, upright (the real meaning of the word); general use journey
gamu, GY gaamu: seaman’s use hull; general use body (the core meaning)
waaku: seaman’s use sail; general use mat (the core meaning)

Speakers with little sea experience can also misuse terms to do with the sea, such as Guthath/Guthathbœbu, which for sailors is any upwind current (a difficult current to sail in), while others often use this to refer to the eastwards flowing current. Kulis/Kulisbœbu, down-wind current (a good current to sail in), is likewise understood by the same speakers to refer to the westward flowing current.

‘Baby Language’. One characteristic of the pronunciation used when speaking to babies and toddlers (as well as exaggerated ‘diminutive speech’) is that certain sounds change their pronunciation, such as the following:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Normal Form</th>
<th>‘Baby’ Form</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>s &gt; t</td>
<td>pûusi cat, puss</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>sisi sister,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>female friend, ‘sis’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>z &gt; j</td>
<td>za thing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>zazi grass skirt</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>r &gt; d</td>
<td>ari rain; louse</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>gaar sympathy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>particle/please ‘pretty please’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ng &gt; Ø, w, m</td>
<td>ngapa come,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>apa, mapa</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>ngûrsi mucus, snot</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>ûrti, wûrti, mûrti</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### APPENDIX 1: HOLMAN ET AL. (2008) 40-WORD LIST

CA Common Australian; MM Meriam Mir; PAN Proto Austronesian; PCD Proto Central District Austronesian; PETrF Proto Eastern Trans-Fly; PP PamaNyungan; POC Proto Oceanic; PSEPA Proto South East Papuan Austronesian; PPN Proto-Polynesian

Meriam data from: Lilian Passi, Karen Loban, Brian Bero and Nikki Piper.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>item</th>
<th>origin (where known)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>louse</td>
<td>ari (PETrF *ŋamo)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>MM nem (PETrF *ŋamo)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>two</td>
<td>üka-(in compounds, etc.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>ükasar/kosar two in number (ukå- two + -sar(a) small number)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>MM neis (PETrF *ni-one, two)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>water</td>
<td>uur/wur/weer, archaic KKY woeyr nguki drink, drinking water, etc.)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>MM gur (PETrF *gurV water)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(MM ni ‘fresh water, drink, juice’; PETrF *niya)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ear</td>
<td>kawra (kùrusay- in certain compounds MM laip, girip (unknown origin))</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>PP *gaalu (PETrF *kulu/*kuru hear, listen)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>death</td>
<td>uuma (also unconsciousness) cf. awum(a) keening, wailing, mourning (for a death) MM emi Sg, Baum PL ‘die’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>l</td>
<td>ngay/ngayi (PETrF *ka[nV])</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>MM ka (PETrF *ka[nV])</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>liver</td>
<td>siiba (also centre) MM o (PETrF *owo)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>PP *jiba</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>eye</td>
<td>1. purka MM poni (unknown origin), erkep (PETrF *irV see, *kapu body part)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2. daana (also life; lagoon, pool)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2. PSEPA *dano lake, pool</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>hand</td>
<td>geth, GY geetha (in compounds also finger MM tag ‘hand, arm’ (PETrF *taŋV hand, arm)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>unknown origin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>hear</td>
<td>karnge[mi]-; karnge-MM asor VN (unknown origin)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(PETrF *taŋV hand, arm)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tree</td>
<td>puuy(i) magic; plant, tree (older *puuŋi) MM lu(g) ‘magic; plant, tree’ (PETrF *(w)uli[ ], *lugV tree, wood, cf. PP *lugu tree, wood)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>PSEPA *puli magic, etc</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>fish</td>
<td>waapi MM lar (unknown origin)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>unknown origin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>name</td>
<td>nel (rare Saibai variant: ney) MM nei</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>PETrF *nyily[ao]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>stone</td>
<td>kula MM bakir</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1. PP *gul(g)an</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2. PETrF *kula</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tooth</td>
<td>dhang, GY dhaanga (also edge) MM tirig ‘tooth’ (cf. ereg ‘eat’) MM deg edge</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>PP *jaŋa tooth, edge, etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>PETrF *dana tooth, edge, etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>item</td>
<td>origin (where known)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------------</td>
<td>--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>breasts</td>
<td>1. PP *juju breast, milk</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2. PETrF *su(n)su breast, milk</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3. PSEPA *susu breast, milk</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>path</td>
<td>1. PETrF *gaabo</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2. POC *tyapu</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>you</td>
<td>PP *ŋnin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>fire</td>
<td>unknown origin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>tongue</td>
<td>unknown origin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>skin</td>
<td>PP *ŋ[ ]agurr</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>night</td>
<td>derived?, cf. kùbi charcoal (PSEPA *mponi night)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>leaf</td>
<td>unknown origin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>blood</td>
<td>unknown origin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>horn</td>
<td>n/a</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>person</td>
<td>derived, lit. walker (maaba walk + iga personal nominal)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>knee</td>
<td>PETrF *kolo/kulu knee, elbow, corner</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>cf. PSEPA *turu knee, elbow</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>one</td>
<td>unknown origin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>PETrF *ni+fr]utV one, other</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>PP *ŋupun one</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>PETrF *[yi/dVr]ponV one, other</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>PETrF *ni+ta[tr]V one, one of a group</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>proto-Urradhi-Gudang *nipiyamana one</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>nose</td>
<td>unknown origin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>item</td>
<td>origin (where known)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------</td>
<td>-----------------------</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| **full** | 1. unknown origin, derived?, cf. sakar space, room  
2. derived (giudapœlam (mainly KKY) SLoc, pala-ma- cause-verb formant) |
| ngapa | 1. cf. nga- 1st person, cf. pa- telic prefix, -pa dative, -pa(y) ahead there  
2. cf. pœypay, KKY bœy near-side, this side, front side  
3. Malay (or other) loan? ayo, ayu |
| thithúy, GY thithuuyi, OKY thithúři | PSEPA*pituqon star, *waRi sun  
PCD *pitui, *pitiu, *pitiriu star, *wari sun  
PETrF *mpinto[m], *ware star |
| paada (also top, height, size; cf. bawdhar mountain) | 1. PP *baanda top  
2. PETrF *pantärV, *podo hill, mountain  
3. PSEPA *pantar hill, mountain |
| riidh(a) (also leaf rib) | PETrF *rii[rd]a/*raa[rd]i bone, leaf rib |
| ngœy, stem ngœelmù- (KKY ngœymù-) | 1. PP *ŋali we PL INC  
2. PP *ŋanapula we DU EXC |
| wani- | unknown origin (perhaps derived from the active form wana-i- of wana put |
| iima- | PP *kiima see  
(PETrF *nya-ga-) |
| kayin(a) | PETrF *kari[kari]/*kira[kira] |
| ̀umáy | PETrF *omai |
| gœyga (gœygœyi-) | PP *gari |
APPENDIX 2: THE HIÁMO

Lawrie (1971) recorded the following on the 11th of September, 1971, at Dauan from Sawia Wosomo of Mabudauan, a Kiwai colony opposite Saibai. (Many thanks to Anna Shnukal, personal communication 28 Feb 2004, for finding this entry and passing it on to me. The items in square brackets are my additions):

Daru people stayed at Waiben [Thursday Island], where there is a wharf and where the District Office is today. They moved from there [Daru] because of fighting between them and the people of Kiwai islands. They came to the big reef between Wapa and Tudu which, in their language, they call Tabaiari [WCL Thabay Ari Shoulder Rain]; from Tabaiari they went to Tudu. As they went they sang this song:

Böiaba gud (aiaba)
Kiwaiiza
Ngita ngabepa o ngabepa o
Ina böingapa o o o.

Lit.: Comes passage/People of Kiwai/You (many) for whom you are coming?/Here comes

[Bœy yabugùdayab, a // Kiwai za // Ngitha ngabepa, o, ngabepa, o, // Ina böy ngapa, o, o, o; full translation: Coming spread out all along the passage way, ah/Kiwai thing/Who are you (plural) coming for (alt. Who did you come for)?]

From Tudu they went to Muri [just north of Cape York]. There were no people living at Tudu at that time. From Muri they went to Thursday Island, landing at the place where the Customs House is today. They called it Waiben after the place from which they had come. From Hammond Island, where they stayed for a long time (their home was near the wharf), they came to Mua, to Tutalai; then they went to Adam, then to Kubin. (These people were kadal, umai and samu augadh [crocodile, dog, cassowary totem])

The song refers to the Kiwai colonisation that drove the Hiámu away. Yabugud, GY yabugiùda is a compound of yabu path, way and gud, GY gùuda mouth, opening. The ending -yab gives a totality feeling – there were lots of Kiwai (canoes) filling up the passage way coming to Daru. The last sentence refers to the forced movement of the Kauraraiga to Mua in 1922/1923.

Examples of song lines said by the Daru Kiwai to be in the language of the Hiámo (found in song cycles and so on) include the following; these vary in understandability from close to modern forms to “obscure”:

1st example:
Daudai kibuia Daudai kuruka kuruka mataiba kuruka gamu rupuradara.

Reconstructed form:
Dhaudhai kibuya, dhaudhai kùlùka, kùlùka nathaipa, kùlùka[dh]gam urudha paledha.

Free translation:
Along the western horizon on the mainland is a blood red sunset, the redness spread out in rope-like streams.

Composed after a heavy fight at Masingara in Papua, where ‘the Hiámu were once defeated by the bush-men [East Trans-Fly Papuans], and when paddling back to Daru they associated the red sunset with the blood of their slain friends’ (Landtman,1927: 261). Note that it is not clear if mataiba was either a misprint or mispronunciation of *nataiba.

2nd example:
Adiabuia Sidaiba, eh, Muri taiana
Muri ngaulago Muri taiana.

Reconstructed form:
Adhin yabuya, Sidhan yabuya, e, Muri thayan, a, Muri ngaw laag, o, Muri thayan, a.
Lantdmans informant’s translation:
‘You me go along road belong Adi, road belong Sido, you me go Murilago’ (Landtman, 1927: 337)

Exact meaning:
Along the Great One’s way, along Sidha’s way, eh. Muri is chosen, ah, Muri is my home, oh, Muri is chosen, ah. (Muri, alt. Murilag, is Mt Adolphus, off the tip of Cape York).

Sidha/Sœidha was a ‘god’ figure credited with allowing death to be created, as well as bringing fertility and plants to various places in South-West Papua and Torres Strait (Landtman, 1927: 280-297; Haddon, 1908: 19-23).

3rd example:
Múiere dджúri kádji ngatómi ímaidina múiere ngátomína.
Múiere ngátomína ímadína o-wáwa nga ngátomína.

Reconstructed form:
Múyere, zuguli kazi, ngathu mina imadhina,
Múyere, ngathu mina.
Múyere, ngathu mina imadhina, o, wa, wa,
nga-ngathu mina.

Very uncertain meaning: Múiere and a “boy lucky for everything” are mentioned. (Landtman, 1927: 402).

Free translation:
Muiere, skilled/lucky youth, I truly saw him,
Muiere, I truly did.
Muiere, I truly saw, oh, yes, yes, I, I truly did.

This song contains the archaic forms zuguli (modern dialects zogol, Kalaw Lagaw Ya zugul skilled at hunting) and ngathu I (modern forms ngatha/ngath 1 instrumental); zuguli (as well as zugulai, zugule and zuguli) and ngathu were the forms of the Kauraraigau Ya of the mid-to-late 1800s.

4th example:
Eh, iviri kutáigo, eh, sarádi kutáigo djódji vuráya, eh, djódji kutáigo.
Iviri mawári mógiwúda káworíma sábu sábu saéba.

Oh, altogether my good brother, altogether poor people, he dead.
That time me come, me plenty people; this time comes short, no much people. (Landtman, 1927: 424)

Composed after a heavy fight in Papua. Of the samples given, this is the one the one that has been most affected by its Kiwai singers. The first line appears to be:
E, Iwiri kúthaig, o, e, saradh, i, kúthaig, o, [djódji] wœrai, a, e, [djódji] kúthaig, o.

Oh, Iwiri, younger brother, oh, eh, tern-like, ee, younger brother, oh, [djódji] on the water, ah, eh, [djódji] younger brother, oh.

The second line is much more conjectural:

There is little in the words themselves that suggest the meaning given by Landtman’s informants, apparently after great difficulty. The reference to a battle given by the singers to Landtman is probably correct. Being a song, there will be imagery, simile, and similar devices with extra-textual meanings. Iwiri (small, smooth leafed, small fruited fig) may have been a specific person who was killed then, and likened to a tern that disappeared in sea spray. Spray and mist are common similes for sorrow at departure and loss in Torres Strait poetry.

The untranslated words could be:
mawai: maway (Kauřařaigau Ya mawaři) initiation attendant/instructor; or: mawal (archaic form mawalai) masks, heads – a word with has a strong reference to sorcery, and can also be used to mean sorcerer;
djódji: zaazi grass skirt, or koæzi from here, or seiæzi from there

The Kauřařaiga dialect of the mid-1800s, personal names and cultural characteristics such as clan/moiety structure, funeral ceremonies, material culture, magic culture and so on
show that Kauřařaiga considered themselves Islanders, not Aboriginal, as is evident in the Brierly 1848-1850 records (Moore, 1979). It also shows closer similarities to the Kalaw Kaway Ya dialect of the far north than it does now; the Hiámo records show the same similarity, as do very arcaic songs in Kulkalgal Ya. The traditionally close relationship of the Kauřařaiga to the Kulkalgal is also significant, suggesting a common “tribal” origin (Mitchell, 1995, Introduction: 7-8).

Whether or not there were resident Australians on the Muralag group when the Hiámo arrived, or, as Badu folk history suggests, settlers originally from Badu, is not mentioned in the Hiamo stories; in any case the Kauřařaiga came to dominate while maintaining close relationships with the Gudang and related mainlanders as well as the Central Islanders. The name itself is telling; kauřařaiga means Islander, being Kauřařaigau Ya kauřa island suffixed by the proprietive suffix -lai (> -řai in an assimilation rule common to all dialects except Kalaw Kaway Ya) and the personalising suffix -IGA. The Hiámo would not have referred to themselves as ‘Hiámo’, but rather used a term that was something like kauřařaiga islander. Sawia Wosomo’s account also suggests that the Hiámo name for Daru (Dhaaru in the Western and Central Language) was Waiben (older Waiben), or at least part there-of, the the Western and Central Language name for Thursday Island.

One very important fact about both Brierly’s records (Moore, 1979) and the information given by Painauda of Muralag to Haddon (Haddon, 1904) is that the main marriage partners of the Kauraraiga people were the Italgal (Mua) and the Kulkalgal (Nagi-Waraber), and to a lesser extent the Gudang. Marriages with other Islanders appear to have been rare, while marriages with other mainland people appears to have only occurred through raids, that is to say, stealing women.

**LITERATURE CITED**


BANI, E. 1971. A proposal for a new spelling system for the Western Island Language of Torres Strait. In E. Bani and T.J. Klokeid (eds), Papers on the Western Island language of Torres Strait. Final Report to the Australian Institute of Aboriginal Studies, Canberra.


DAVID, B. MCNIVEN, I.J., RICHARDS, T., CONNAUGHTON, S., LEAVESLEY, M., BARKER, B., ROWE, C. 2011. Lapita sites in the


ELIA (Lifu), 1884. Ina Evangelico Mareko Minarpuil. (F. Cunningham & Co: Sydney); excerpts in Ray and Haddon (1897: 165-171).


GAULAI/PADAN (Jimmy Mobyag), 1917. Gaulai’s notebook, ms. (Fryer Library, University of Queensland: Brisbane).


LAADE, W. 1968. The Torres Strait Islanders’ own traditions about their origin. Ethnos 33: 141-158.


LAWRIE, M. 1970. Myths and legends of Torres Strait. (University of Queensland Press: St. Lucia).

LAWRIE, M. 1971. Margaret Laurie Collection 1791, John Oxley Library, Brisbane.


Memoirs of the Queensland Museum | Culture • 8 (1) • 2015 | 445
Rod Mitchell

Australian National University: Canberra).


SIMPSON, B. 1971-1974. Mabuiag field notes, ms. (in the keeping of Rod Mitchell)


