

# A FUNCTIONAL GRAMMAR OF GOONIYANDI

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William McGregor

*A Functional Grammar of Gooniyandi*

A FUNCTIONAL GRAMMAR  
OF  
GOONIYANDI

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## PREFACE

This book is a revision of my University of Sydney PhD thesis (McGregor 1984b). It extends and refines that description in various ways; in a few places analyses have been revised. In a couple of cases the revised analyses have already appeared in print, or are forthcoming (e.g. the description of information (McGregor 1986a) and the account of clause complexes and mood (McGregor 1988a)). These have been included here — in somewhat further revised form, and minus the extensions into matters of the wider theoretical implications — largely for the sake of descriptive completeness: the book is intended to stand on its own as a description of the grammar of Gooniyandi, up to a certain degree of delicacy.

My primary aim here, as it was in my PhD thesis, is to account for meaning: how Gooniyandi speakers mean with their language. I believe that systemic functional grammar provides the linguistic model most suited to this purpose, and the description falls broadly into that tradition. It is most influenced by the variety of systemic functional grammar elaborated in Halliday's *Introduction to functional grammar* (Halliday 1985). Like *Introduction to functional grammar*, this is not a systemic grammar in the usual sense of the term, and there are few system networks. This is not just for the reasons set out in Halliday (1985:x, xxvii), but also because this approach, which is more closely tied to linguistic forms and their contextual meanings, seems to have more to recommend it in terms of the goals of the present work.

However, I have not restricted myself exclusively either to the sorts of questions systemicists normally ask, or to the answers they typically provide. For instance, the description of word morphology and many aspects of the approach to lexical semantics borrow little from systemic functional theory.

Particular emphasis has been placed on argumentation, a consideration which has been consistently ignored in systemic theorising. I have attempted to argue for the analyses presented, rather than merely assert them, even though this has increased the length of the book considerably. In my opinion, the method of argumentation is one of the most interesting aspects of linguistic theorising, and it is only through careful consideration of the methods of

argumentation employed, the types of data considered to be evidence for particular claims, that a theory can be really understood.

Being functional in its theoretical orientation, the present account breaks in a number of respects from the current Australianist tradition, typified by works such as Dixon (1972 and 1977), and the *Handbook of Australian Languages* (Dixon and Blake 1979). Superficially, there are many organisational resemblances with works in this dominant framework. The same introduction (the language and its speakers), phonology, morphology, syntax and semantics organisation is employed in essence, if not in slavish detail. However, there are some marked divergences in the treatment of particular phenomena, and certain issues which have been in the theoretical limelight — for instance, cross-clausal coreference constraints, syntactic ergativity, and so on — have been passed over. I make no apology for these omissions; in any case, the keen reader will be able to test out his or her hypotheses on the numerous examples included in the body of the text, and the example texts in Appendix 1. On the other hand, certain matters which have been largely ignored in Australianist studies have been accorded an important place here: verbless or relational clauses, the structure of the noun phrase, and the semantics of enclitics and particles, for example.

I do not see it as incumbent on myself to explicitly justify each departure from tradition, or to demonstrate that my analyses are superior to the traditional analyses. The onus of proof lies as much on upholders of traditional analyses to justify their accounts, and more particularly, the validity of their accounts with respect to Gooniyandi, as it does on me to justify mine. I have thus generally been content to argue for my analyses by adducing language internal evidence, without making detailed comparisons with other possible analyses.

This book stops short of text analysis, restricting itself to grammatical (in the wide sense of the word) phenomena pure and simple. This is partly because I believe that text studies involve a reorientation to a different semiotic plane to that of grammar, and thus should be dealt with in a separate volume; it is also partly because of practical considerations of space. An investigation of textual organisation is planned for a later publication. On the other hand, at various points in the exposition I refer to textual phenomena and characteristics of the organisation of discourse in Gooniyandi, as they are relevant to the understanding of the grammar — in other words, there is leakage between the semiotic planes, due in part to the fact that the structure of language reflects its functions (Halliday 1985:xiii). Thus, Appendix 1 includes three sample texts not for the purpose of analysis, but for illustration of the grammatical points made

in the body of the book, and as a small corpus for testing my arguments and claims.

This study would not have been possible were it not for the continued support, endurance and friendship of Jack Bohemia (*nyibaddi*) who, during my field trips, worked patiently with me daily for long hours despite his advanced age, telling me stories and answering intricate (and often foolish) questions. It has taken me a long time to understand that his responses were invariably more revealing and insightful than my prompts. I am convinced that this study would have been not only vastly different conceptually, but also incomparably better had I been willing to allow him to take on the role of language teacher instead of linguist's informant.

I also owe a tremendous debt of gratitude to other Gooniyandi and Bunuba men and women who contributed substantially to the project. These include Dave Lamey, Joe Dimay, Bigfoot *jagadda*, David Street, Lanis P. (deceased), Saturday W. (deceased), Banjo Birndayminy, Rainbow, Mick Smith, and George Nayndu. Teaching is a two way process, and I gained much from my involvement with the Yiyili Community School, where Norman Cox, Ivy Cox, Judy Cox, Dorris Cox, Frank Cox, Irene, Jocelin, Penny Madeline, Lyon, and Mervin Street assisted my studies more, perhaps, than I helped them.

Over the past nine years Howard Coate has generously permitted me access to his fieldnotes and recordings in various languages, including Gooniyandi. In addition, he has provided hospitality in what is to me the field, and to him, home, and has proved a rare and abiding friend. It is impossible to adequately express my indebtedness to him.

Barbara Jones and Robin Dickinson, (Fitzroy Crossing Preschool), Keith Ware (United Aborigines Mission), Joyce Hudson and Eirlys Richards (Summer Institute of Linguistics) and many other friends and acquaintances made my 1980 and 1982 stays in Fitzroy Crossing more pleasant and profitable. I am particularly grateful to Robin Dickinson for providing transportation to many out-of-the-way places.

The fieldwork on which this description is based was partly supported by financial assistance from the Australian Institute of Aboriginal Studies. The Linguistics Department of the University of Sydney assisted by providing cassette recorders and tapes. The support of both of these bodies is gratefully acknowledged.

Michael Halliday and Alan Rumsey have been involved with my investigations of Gooniyandi from the start. Michael Halliday introduced me to systemic linguistics, and provided convincing demonstration of its usefulness as

a descriptive model. Alan Rumsey steered me towards Gooniyandi in the first place, and eased my way into the field situation in various ways. He provided continued encouragement through the first five years of the project, and kept me continually aware of the need for a catholic approach to description. Both Michael Halliday and Alan Rumsey provided detailed comments on many preliminary versions of this work. Needless to say, responsibility for any shortcomings in the present work rests entirely with me.

A number of other people provided useful comments and criticisms on various aspects of the analysis, including Barry Blake, Svetlana Byrne, Bob Dixon, Barbara Horvath, Jim Martin, Patrick McConvell, Igor Melcuk, Cate Poynton, Tasaku Tsunoda, Michael Walsh and David Wilkins. Tasaku Tsunoda also permitted me access to his recordings of Gooniyandi, and Bronwyn Stokes has made various unpublished manuscripts available to me.

The entire manuscript was typed onto computer by myself, and later typeset, again by myself, on Macintosh computers in the Department of Linguistics at La Trobe University. The use of these facilities is greatly appreciated; without them, this book could not have been produced at anything like the present standard of quality. During a short period of employment in the University of Melbourne, I also had access to computing facilities to continue the frustrating and sometimes overwhelming task of typesetting. I would also like to thank the Linguistics Department of the Research School of Pacific Studies for permission to use their phonetic font, Phonetic Century Schoolbook.

John Verhaar has always replied promptly and with encouragement to my many editorial queries. Various staff members in the Publishing Department of John Benjamins have also provided useful advice. It has been a pleasure to work with them all.

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## ABBREVIATIONS AND CONVENTIONS

A	Accusative	ERG	Ergative
ABL	Ablative	ETC	Etcetera
ACC	Accusative	F	Female
ADV	Adverbial	F <sub>n</sub>	Formant n
AG	Agent	FACT	Factive mood
ALL	Allative	FUT	Future tense
C	Consonant	GD	Good at
CC	Classifier Complex	GEN	Genitive
CHAR	Characterised by	GL	Goal
CL	Classifier (in the VP)	g-unit	Grammatical unit
COMIT	Comitative	H	Hearer
cps	Cycles per second	IC	Immediate Constituent
CTV	Continuative	INC	Inceptive
DAT	Dative	Incl	Inclusive
DEF	Definite mode	IND	Indefinite
DEP	Deprivative	INF	Infinitive
DESID	Desiderative	IRR	Irrealis
DET	Determiner	IT	Iterative mode
dI	dual inclusive (pronoun)	K	Clause
DIF	Different	K <sub>nf</sub>	Non-finite clause
DISJ	Disjunction	LOC	Locative
du	Dual number enclitic (in the VP)	M	Male
DU	Dual number postposition	MD	Mode
d-unit	Distributional unit	MED	Medium
DW	Dweller of a niche	MNR	Manner
DY	Dyadic kinterm	N	Nominal, Nominative case (in glosses of pronominal prefixes)
EMP	Emphatic	NOM	Nominative
EN	Enclitic	NP	Noun Phrase

nsg	Non-singular	S	Stressed syllable,
O	Other, Oblique case (in glosses of pronominal enclitics)	SEM	Speaker
		SEQ	Semblative
OBL	Oblique	SF	Sequential
ON	Only	sg	Stem formative
P	Postposition		Singular (in pronominal categories)
pa	Paucal number enclitic (in the VP)	SUBJ	Subjunctive mood
PAST	Past tense	tns	tense
PC	Phrase complex	TOO	Also, too
PER	Perlative	u	Unmarked
PF	Prefix	U	Unrestricted, Unstressed syllable
pl	Plural (of pronominal categories)	UNKN	Unknown identity
PL	Plural postposition	V	Verb, Vowel
POT	Potential mode	V <sub>nf</sub>	Non-finite verb
PP	Postpositional Phrase	VP	Verb Phrase
PRES	Present tense	VP <sub>nf</sub>	Non-finite Verb Phrase
PROG	Progressive aspect	WC	Word complex
R	Restricted	1	First person
REP	Repetition	2	Second person
		3	Third person

**Kinterm abbreviations**

B	Brother	S	Son
Ch	Child (either sex)	W	Wife
D	Daughter	Z	Sister
F	Father	+	Older
H	Husband	-	Younger
M	Mother		

**Symbols and conventions**

//	enclose phonological representations and tone units
[ ]	enclose phonetic representations, features, and constituents
{ }	enclose morphophonemic representations
< >	enclose constituents interpolated within other constituents
( )	enclose optional material
→	becomes (in phonological rules); acts on (elsewhere)

/	is conflated with
/ ___	in the environment
~	alternates with
<	derives from, is less than
>	is greater than
^	concatenation: indicates that the connected items occur in strict order
.	syllable boundary, pause within a tone unit
'	primary stress
,	secondary stress
...	constituents in apposition
+	positively specified for the feature, morpheme boundary within the CC
-	negatively specified for the feature, morpheme boundaries of all types except those within the CC
$\left\{ \begin{array}{c} a \\ b \end{array} \right\}$	a or b (in phonological rules)
$\left\{ \begin{array}{c} a \\ b \end{array} \right\}_1$	exactly one of a or b; the same one is chosen on each side of $\rightarrow$
$\rightarrow \left[ \begin{array}{c} a \\ b \end{array} \right]$	feature a or feature b, but not both
$\rightarrow \left\{ \begin{array}{c} -a \\ -b \end{array} \right\}$	feature a and feature b
\$	stem boundary
#	boundary of distributional word
v̇	unstressed vowel

Phonetic transcriptions use IPA symbols as far as possible. The main exception is that a dot under a vowel is used to indicate retroflexion, and a dot under the symbol *l* indicates the retroflex lateral. Elsewhere, Gooniyandi words are represented in a practical orthography, which is described in section 1.8. Words in other languages are written according to the accepted or recommended orthography for that language if there is one, and otherwise according to the spelling in the source.

Verbal classifiers are cited throughout the text in capitals (e.g. +BINDI), and are not usually glossed. Pronominal prefixes to the classifier are glossed as

follows: the person and number information is enclosed in brackets, and is followed by a letter referring to the case form. Thus, (1R)N indicates the nominative form of the first person restricted.

Function labels are given with an initial capital letter.

Example sentences normally consist of three parts: (a) Gooniyandi text; (b) interlinear gloss; and (c) free translation.

(a) The Gooniyandi text is divided into distributional words, bounded by spaces. Morpheme boundaries are not necessarily indicated, except for the morphemes under discussion, or where relevant to the discussion. The first lines of example sentences are not punctuated. However, where relevant, supra-segmental features (e.g. tone units, salience, etc.) are indicated. Bolding indicates that a syllable is salient.

(b) Interlinear glosses are unit by unit, each full unit distinguished in the Gooniyandi line being glossed. Where more than one English word is required for the gloss of a unit, the words are separated by a colon (:). For typographic convenience, 'he' is used in the glosses instead of the more cumbersome 'he, she, or it' (Gooniyandi does not make gender distinctions in its nominals and pronominals).

(c) A free translation is given for each example. This is enclosed in quotes: double quotes for translations provided by the speaker himself/herself, and single quotes otherwise.

## CHAPTER 1

### INTRODUCTION

#### 1.1 Language type

Gooniyandi<sup>1</sup> is an Australian Aboriginal language spoken by about one hundred Aborigines in the southern Kimberley region of Western Australia. It was classified in the lexico-statistical surveys of the 1960s as a member of the Bunuban (Bunaban, in the earlier spelling) language family, a small family consisting of just two languages, Bunuba being the other member (O'Grady, Voegelin and Voegelin 1966:28, 35, Wurm 1972:123). This classification accords with the earlier classification of Capell (1940:244), who grouped Gooniyandi and Bunuba together, on typological grounds, as "prefixing languages without noun classification". To date, genetic relationships have not been definitely established with any other language family in Australia (or elsewhere), Dixon (1980:3) notwithstanding.

The language shows many characteristics which have come to be regarded as typical of Australian languages, but is in a number of other respects atypical. For the initial orientation of the reader, I will mention a selection of these typical and atypical features. It is not suggested that they represent a significant typologising of the language.

Gooniyandi has a phonology which accords with the normal Australian pattern. It shows six distinctive points of articulation for stops and nasals (bilabial, apico-alveolar, apico-postalveolar, lamino-dental, lamino-palatal and dorso-velar), and three for laterals (apico-alveolar, apico-postalveolar, and lamino-palatal). There is a retroflex frictionless continuant, an apical tap, and two semivowels. Three short vowels are distinguished; length is contrastive for

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<sup>1</sup> The language has usually been referred to in the anthropological and linguistic literature as Gunian; in my earlier writings on the language I used the spelling Kuniyanti. (For a full list of the variant spellings, see McGregor 1988e.) However, speakers generally feel the term Gunian to be a shortening (see below page 72), and prefer that the full form Gooniyandi be used in written reference to the language and people (Street and Chestnut 1984).

the low vowel only. There are no sibilants or fricatives, voicing is not distinctive, and stress has a purely delimitative function (Trubetzkoy 1969:27). Words almost always begin with a consonant, very rarely with a consonant cluster; the apical distinction is neutralised word initially. Word medially a fairly large number of two member consonant clusters occur. Non-verbal roots are nearly all disyllabic or longer and typically end in vowels. Verbal roots are phonotactically unusual (cf. Dixon 1980:159): a large number are monosyllabic, and many end in consonants, occasionally consonant clusters.

Lexical words may be divided into three main classes or parts-of-speech, each with a number of subclasses: nominals, verbals, and adverbials. These are open classes, each with a large number of members. Pronominals constitute a distinct closed class and distinguish three persons and two numbers. Instead of the inclusive/exclusive distinction normally found in the first person non-singular in Australian languages, Gooniyandi makes a restricted/unrestricted distinction. In this system, the unrestricted pronominal refers to the speaker, the hearer, and at least one other individual; the restricted pronominal refers either to the speaker and the hearer, or to the speaker and one or more persons other than the hearer. In terms of the traditional categories, the unrestricted pronominal corresponds to first person plural (more than two) inclusive, while the restricted pronominal corresponds to the first person dual (either inclusive or exclusive) or the first person plural exclusive.

Noun classes are not distinguished in Gooniyandi, and nominals do not inflect for number or case. Instead, number and case information is conveyed by means of phrase-level enclitics, which are referred to in this book as postpositions. There are number-marking postpositions distinguishing dual and plural numbers, and case-marking postpositions conveying ergative, dative, ablative, allative, locative, and other local meanings. Gooniyandi nominal phrase marking is not split ergative (Silverstein 1976b, Dixon 1979): any NP regardless of its person or number may be ergatively marked. The ergative postposition is, however, optional for all phrase types in the 'transitive subject' function. Word order in the NP is free in the sense that determiners and adjectives may precede or follow the nominal they modify. However, the NP may be described in terms of a fixed sequence of functions or roles that the constituent words realise.

The verbal complex has properties characteristic of both phrases and words. It is phrase-like in its position on the rank scale (Halliday 1961/1976): it is a clausal constituent whose "granddaughters" are items of morpheme rank; it is word-like in that it is a single distributional unit, the constituents of which

occur in a fixed order. There are two obligatory constituents in the verbal complex: a verbal stem, which always occurs initially, and a 'classifier complex'. This classifier complex consists of, in the following order: a tense marking prefix, bound pronominal prefixes which cross-reference certain actants in the clause, and a 'classifier'. The tense system distinguishes four tenses (past, present, irrealis and future); the pronominal prefixes on the whole inflect on a nominative-accusative pattern, and generally show the same person and number distinctions as do the free pronominals; and the classifiers distinguish twelve classes of processes (based on aspectual type and valence, to put it loosely). In addition the verbal complex may have one or more of a number of optional constituents which provide aspectual and modal qualification, and a further system of bound pronominals referring to other ('oblique') actants. Although these constituents occur in a fixed order, their phonemic shapes, and the boundaries between them, are frequently obscured by morphophonemic processes.

Spatial adverbs, indicating location and direction, are frequent in motion (and other) clauses: compass directions are used in preference to left-right orientation, and temporal sequence is expressed by spatial metaphor. There are also temporal and manner adverbials.

Modality and other forms of speaker evaluation of a proposition are encoded in free particles (marking negation, mistaken belief, retribution, repetition, certainty, uncertainty, and so on) and enclitics (carrying meanings like 'only', 'again', 'else', 'like', 'etcetera', and so on).

Two main types of clause, verbal and verbless, are distinguishable, depending on whether or not there is an inherent (see page 293 below) verbal complex. Verbal clauses show four (not two — cf. Dixon 1980:278ff) distinct 'transitivity' types: intransitive, transitive, middle and reflexive/reciprocal. These are defined by the "case frames" of the inherent nominal phrase constituents. Intransitive clauses take a single unmarked NP; transitive clauses have a phrase which may be ergatively marked and an unmarked phrase; middle clauses have a phrase which may be ergatively marked together with a dative phrase; and reflexive/reciprocal clauses have a single phrase, which is optionally ergatively marked. Verbless clauses are either attributive, identifying, or existential. As in the majority of Australian languages, constituent order is 'free' (Dixon 1980:441), in the sense that changing it does not affect the referential or experiential meaning (Halliday 1974:47) of a clause. Constituent order is, however, significant in respect of the textual organisation of the clause (Halliday 1974:47) — that is, the way in which the clause is organised as a message

bearing unit. In particular, Gooniyandi is a theme-first language.

Clause complexes consist of paratactically or hypotactically related clauses. However, it is impossible to distinguish these two types (or any others) on purely formal criteria. There are no morphological markers signalling the interclausal relationships, no structural differences between constituent clauses of clause complexes and independent clauses, and no necessary cross-clause reference relations (see Matthiessen and Thompson forthcoming, and compare Dixon 1980:461). The clause complex types have linguistic validity as COVERT categories (Whorf 1945/1972:104). There is, however, a close connection between subordination and mood, whereby subordinate clauses always have their verb in a marked, non-indicative mood, either subjunctive or factive.

## 1.2 Territory and surrounding languages

The Gooniyandi people traditionally occupied quite a large tract of land, extending from Fitzroy Crossing in the west to the vicinity of Margaret River Station in the east, a distance of some one hundred and fifty kilometres, west to east. This territory abuts on the Great Sandy Desert in the south, and extends into the King Leopold Ranges in the north. Two large rivers, the Margaret River and Christmas Creek, as well as a number of smaller creeks, water the countryside, which is predominantly river flats intersected by numerous limestone ranges. The approximate extent of the Gooniyandi territory, as well as the territories of the neighbouring peoples, is shown on Map 1 (see also Tindale 1974).

The languages spoken in the vicinity are representatives of five distinct language families, according to O'Grady, Voegelin and Voegelin (1966), and Wurm (1972) — compare Capell (1940) and (1956/1966). Although it has more recently been suggested that all Australian Aboriginal languages (with two or three possible exceptions) belong to a single family (Dixon 1980:3), genetic relations between these five families have not yet been conclusively demonstrated.

Walmajarri, Jaru, and Wangkajunga, traditionally spoken to the south and east of Gooniyandi, are the local representatives of the Pama-Nyungan family, which covers most of the Australian continent (see e.g. map facing page 112 of Wurm 1972). The Jarrakan (Djeragan, in older spelling) family, of which Kija is a member, was located to the north and north-east of Gooniyandi; languages of the Nyulnyulan family, which includes Nyikina, were spoken to the west of Gooniyandi; the Worroran (elsewhere spelled Wororan) languages, including Worrora and Ungarinyin, were spoken to the north and north-west of Bunuba,



Map 1: Gooniyandi territory

Key:

- Towns
- × Communities
- Stations
- Approximate language boundaries

and were not geographically contiguous with Gooniyandi.

A comparison of Gooniyandi with surrounding languages shows the following lexical resemblance rates:

Bunuba:	45%	(see below)
Kija:	38%	(on Hale's 100 item list; Tsunoda 1981:5)
Jaru:	23%	(on Hale's 100 item list; Tsunoda 1981:5)
Ungarinyin:	22%	(on an 138 item list (see above), Rumsey pers.comm.)
Walmajarri:	22%	(based on Hudson's (1978:97-110) wordlist of approximately 400 items — but cf. Tsunoda 1981:5.)
Nyikina:	8%	(on approximately 1500 items of Stokes <i>et al</i> 1980)
Wangkajunga:	3%	(on Hale's 100 item list; my own field notes)

The two members of the Bunuban family, Gooniyandi and Bunuba, are fairly close genetic relatives, and are lexically, grammatically, and typologically quite similar. They are perhaps as similar as Italian and Spanish. There is also quite a high degree of bilingualism in the two languages, especially among the older generation of Gooniyandi and Bunuba people.

The phonological inventories of Gooniyandi and Bunuba are identical except that Bunuba has a phonemically distinct lamino-dental lateral phoneme /lh/ (Alan Rumsey pers.comm.), not found in Gooniyandi. Gooniyandi and Bunuba showed a cognate density of about 45% on a 138 item list, which included the 100 items of Hale's core vocabulary for Australian languages (the words marked by double asterisks in Sutton and Walsh 1979), plus some other starred words from an AIAS word list current as of 22/1/1975 (Rumsey pers.comm.). A count of some of the more frequent and easily segmentable bound morphemes (36 in number) showed a somewhat higher cognate rate of 66%. The verbal constructions in the two languages are quite similar. But whereas in Gooniyandi the verbal complex is a minimal free form in which the verbal stem and the classifier complex (see section 3.9.3.2) are bound to one another, in Bunuba one of the verbal auxiliaries (which are the Bunuba counterparts of Gooniyandi classifiers), namely *-ma*, has the privilege of free occurrence (Rumsey pers.comm.).

The Bunuban family differs in a number of typological respects from the surrounding families. For example, unlike the Worrوران and Jarrakan families, noun classes are not distinguished, and the nominal phrase exhibits ergative marking. Secondly, the lamino-palatal vs. lamino-dental contrast in stops and nasals is found in the Bunuban and Jarrakan languages, but not in the nearby Pama-Nyungan or Nyulnyulan languages, and in only one Worrوران language,

namely Unggumi (which is geographically contiguous with Bunuba).

However, the five families are by no means totally dissimilar, and there are a number of common features shared by two or more families, or pairs of languages from different families. A number of these similarities are fairly certainly the result of areal diffusion; none can be said with certainty to be retentions from putative earlier proto-languages. For example, all of the languages shown on Map 1 have bound pronominals which cross-reference certain actants in the clause. In the non-Pama-Nyungan languages, they are typically prefixed to the verbal auxiliary (or classifier in the case of Gooniyandi), while in the Pama-Nyungan languages they are suffixed to a "catalyst" (Capell 1956/1966:11), or to the first word of a clause. It is also likely that at some stage the preverb-auxiliary construction, as it may be called (following McConvell pers.comm.), typical of most languages in the area, including the Pama-Nyungan ones, was diffused. Such a construction is undoubtedly the historical source of the Gooniyandi verbal complex, in which the two elements, the preverb and the auxiliary, have fused into a single free word. Changes have led to a reanalysis of the verbal complex into root plus classifier.

### 1.3 Geographical variation

A few minor geographical differences were encountered in Gooniyandi speech. These were almost entirely lexical. In boundary regions there is usually a slightly higher percentage of common vocabulary, shared with the neighbouring language. For example, in the speech of the Gooniyandi people of Yiyili, which is near the eastern border of their territory, a couple of words were encountered which are shared with Kija and/or Jaru, but which are not usually heard in the Gooniyandi speech of Fitzroy Crossing and nearby communities. One such word is *gardij-* 'cut', which is shared with Kija. However, the differences are too few to justify the identification of distinct dialects, and none are named (but cf. below).

The speakers themselves are aware of variation in their language, some of which they attribute to regions, some to particular individuals in these regions — but never, in my experience, to socio-linguistic factors such as formality. The main variation perceived is lexical, but speakers are also conscious of some minor grammatical differences,<sup>2</sup> and of a handful of words which have two

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<sup>2</sup> For instance, on one occasion a verb form which I constructed was rejected as proper Gooniyandi, but acknowledged as a form used by some Gooniyandi/Kija speakers in Mulurrja. And some verb forms in the *Gooniyandi word book* produced in the Yiyili School (Yiyili Aboriginal Community School 1983) differ from the

slightly different phonemic representations. However, it seems that speakers are not always strictly correct in their expressed beliefs. My observation of actual usage showed that the variant pronunciation of *ginharndi* 'you know' as *ginyarndi*, for instance, was not geographically determined, despite native speakers' claims. The so called 'light' form, with the lamino-palatal nasal in the second syllable, was found in the community in which it was claimed to be used, but beside the 'heavy' form with the lamino-dental. Moreover, the light form was also found in other, geographically remote, communities. It may be that the choice is governed by other factors such as the age or linguistic provenance of the speaker or the degree of formality of the speech situation, but I was unable to verify any of these possibilities.

Quite often speech differences were labeled *joowarliny* by native speakers of Gooniyandi (although this term was never used to name anything which could be unequivocally identified as a dialect). Interestingly, this term (Juwarliny in Walmajarri orthography) is also the name of a western dialect of Walmajarri (Hudson and Richards 1978:3). Tentatively, it would seem that the Gooniyandi term signifies unusualness, non-standard variety (with reference to the speaker's variety), with connotations of barbarism.

## 1.4 Gooniyandi culture and society

### 1.4.1 Traditional way of life

Traditionally the Gooniyandi were hunters and gatherers. Like all other Australian Aboriginal groups, they were restricted nomads (Maddock 1972/1974:26), who moved in small foraging bands over relatively limited areas within their tribal territory. Being an inland group, of course, the majority of their foodstuffs came from the land; the numerous rivers, creeks and waterholes were, however, also regularly exploited for the rich range of vegetable, reptile, fish and crustacean resources that they provided.

As in other Aboriginal groups there was a quite rigid division of labour according to sex. Men did the majority of the hunting, especially for larger game animals, reptiles, and birds such as kangaroos, crocodiles, echidnas, emus, bustards, etc.. Women did the majority of the gathering of the staples: vegetable foods such as yams, berries, grass seeds, water lily roots, and so on, as well as small animals such as witchetty grubs and frogs, and animal products such as honey. However, the women were also sometimes involved in the larger operations of hunting kangaroos by fire; and smaller game, such as lizards, goannas and fish, were caught by both men and women as opportunity arose.

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forms I gathered in Fitzroy Crossing.

Material culture was relatively simple. Men used a variety of different types of spears and boomerangs for hunting and fighting; women used digging sticks for gathering yams, stone axes for chopping honey from hollows in trees, and coolamons (a type of dish) for carrying water, seeds, berries, babies and so on. In addition, the tool kit included fire drills, fire saws and grinding stones. Permanent dwellings were not made, but rough shelters were constructed from spinifex and branches for occasional protection from the elements.

The Gooniyandi had an intimate and detailed knowledge of their environment, including its geography; the distribution of plant species and their uses; and the seasons, and ripening times of various plant species. For instance, some plants, and parts of plants, were known to have medicinal properties; others were used as poisons (for example, one type of sap was used in small waterholes to poison fish). The men in particular were excellent trackers, who could identify animal species, and individual human beings by their tracks, an ability which was of course crucial to their success as hunters (and later to the success of white occupation — see McGregor 1988b).

Although most everyday social interaction of the Gooniyandi would have been within their group (or "tribe"), there was also significant and important interaction with other nearby groups, principally the Bunuba, Kija, Walmajarri, and Nyikina peoples. This is evidenced by the high degree of multilingualism among the older Gooniyandi; and quite likely inter-tribal marriages were not uncommon. There is also, on Gooniyandi territory, an important waterhole, Jiliyardi, where inter-tribal ceremonies and corroborees were once held. Furthermore, the Gooniyandi participated in — and still participate in, perhaps to an even greater extent today, thanks to modern vehicles — an extensive network of trade and exchange (Akerman 1979, Kolig 1981:126-127), which they call *wirnandi* (*wurnan* in most other nearby languages). This took place in two main streams of exchange. In a direct line through the major Aboriginal communities of the southern Kimberley region, and in a westerly direction, move myths, rituals, and body designs associated with the "Woagaia" (Kolig 1981:126) tradition. From the west Kimberley and Dampier Land, moving in the opposite direction, come mainly material items, including large quantities of shells (especially the highly coveted pearl shell) and shields. Thus many of the songs and sacred myth cycles associated with important initiation ceremonies presently "owned" by the Gooniyandi originated in the east, a fact which they readily acknowledge. Many others have, within living memory, been passed on to the west in exchange for goods.

Writing was unknown in Aboriginal Australia. Inscribed message sticks

were used by the Gooniyandi to convey important information concerning ceremonies and so on, but these attested more to the validity of the messenger and his message than represented any particular text. Sand drawings are occasionally used to illustrate spoken texts, but the system is not as well developed, nor used as extensively as in the Centre (cf. Munn 1973). Various hand signs were employed; these usually involved particular hand shapes, together with movement. However, it seems that the repertoire of signs was small by comparison with the desert peoples'. There were signs for common animals, birds, and reptiles (at least those which were eaten), some basic actions, affirmation and negation, and questions. Hand signs were presumably used when verbal communication was not appropriate (e.g. in hunting), or suitable (e.g. over a great distance). Hand signs are rarely used as adjuncts to spoken texts, and there is no evidence that there was a well developed sign language such as is found in Warlpiri (see Kendon 1978). Direction and location could be indicated non-verbally by lip pointing, which may be concomitant with speech, giving rise to phonetically lip-rounded vowels and consonants.

The Gooniyandi traditionally practised various forms of bodily operations on young males as rites of passage into manhood. These included circumcision around puberty, and a few years later on, subincision; even later, horizontal cicatrices were made across the chest, and a hole was made through the nasal septum. Only the oldest living Gooniyandi men have undergone all of these rites of passage; the majority of young adult and middle aged males have been circumcised only, although some middle aged men do also have a few cicatrices. The operations of circumcision and subincision were accompanied by a series of preparatory and follow-up stages and ceremonies. Prior to the operation of circumcision, the novice was taken on a trip to visit various relevant groups to formally invite them to the ceremony. The operation itself took place during a corroboree involving both men and women; today the main circumcision corroboree is the Waloongaddi (Walungarri in Walmajarri orthography). Following their circumcision, the initiands were secluded in the bush for some months during which time they were permitted to engage in limited contact only with one another and the older men — usually a mother's brother — who looked after them. During this time, they also received ritual instruction; this was followed up later with further instruction, as the man went through later stages of initiation.

There is an extensive mythology relating to events from a time in the distant past referred to in Gooniyandi and nearby languages by the term *ngaddanggarni* (*ngarrangkarni* in Walmajarri and Kija orthographies), and in the

anthropological literature by the term "dreamtime". Aborigines in the region also refer to this period as the dreamtime, although there seems to be no direct connection with dreams. The myths explain the origin and names of geographical formations, origins of animal species and social practices, geographical location and land tenure of language groups, and so on. For instance, Text 2 (see Appendix 1) is a myth about fire, which apparently explains its social value, and also, perhaps, its usefulness (cf. Hodge and McGregor forthcoming).

Most Gooniyandi myths have a strong orientation to place. They typically relate the travels of mythical beings over the countryside, from place to place, and various events that happened along the way at these places, including, for instance, ceremonies, conflicts with other mythical beings, and putting names to the significant places. The more important myths — which are usually also associated with important ceremonies, particularly initiation — refer to paths which extend right across Gooniyandi country, and into neighbouring territories. For instance, one very important kangaroo myth begins in the Napier Ranges, and extends through Bunuba, Gooniyandi and Walmajarri countries, thence into (and possibly through) Wangkajunga territory. Particular individuals have ownership rights to parts of the macro-myth, namely the parts which intersect their own land; and they usually know the outlines of the larger travels, but will not relate them since they lack the rights to do so. Some myths (see e.g. Text 2), however, lack this place orientation; these are invariably of lesser importance, and are never associated with significant ceremonial activities.

Songs are both sacred and secular. They are sung to the accompaniment of clapsticks; although the didgeridoo was known, it was not used in song. As noted above, many songs originated in the east: this includes both sacred songs associated with initiation ceremonies, and secular songs such as love songs (cf. Akerman 1979:249). These usually (though not always) retain the language in which they originated. For instance, the Gooniyandi repertoire includes love songs in Gurindji, and songs from the Waloongaddi (Walungarri) cycle in Wunambal. But there are also songs in the Gooniyandi language, including traditional sacred songs associated with Gooniyandi mythology and land, and secular songs invented — rather, dreamed — by Gooniyandi speakers.

As in other Australian Aboriginal groups, the Gooniyandi observed a taboo on uttering the name of a recently dead person (Nash and Simpson 1981, Dixon 1980:28-29). This taboo extended to lexemes of a similar phonological shape, and today, to varying extents, to a person's *gardiya* (white person) name also. Reference to a recently dead person would usually be indirect — see, for

instance, line (42) of Text 1. Whenever I revisit my Gooniyandi friends at Fitzroy Crossing, one of the first things I am invariably told is who has died since my last visit; this is presumably done in order to avoid the potentially embarrassing situation of my mentioning that person's name. Reference is usually made by uttering the person's *gardiya* name in a low whispering voice. The taboo on the name of the dead person might last for a number of years (cf. Dixon 1980:28), depending on the closeness of the relationship between the speaker and the deceased: close relatives would observe the taboo for a much longer period than others. Close relatives of the dead would observe, in addition to the name taboo, a meat taboo, which could last for a considerable time, and could only be broken by the enactment of a neutralising rite (cf. Hudson and Richards 1978:44-45).

There was a complex series of funerary rites according to which the bodies of adults, both men and women, were disposed of (see McGregor forthcoming-a for further details). The first stage involved putting the dead body on a platform in a tree. Below the body were placed a number of rocks, each representing a person potentially responsible for the death. The body would be left on the platform for some months until it had begun to decompose, at which time an inquest would be held. The rocks under the platform would be examined, and the person responsible for the death identified: the rock representing that person would be marked with the dripping exuviae of the dead body. Once the murderer had been determined, the death could be avenged, either by sorcery or by a specially set up avenging party. If no rock had been marked, the process might be repeated; if (as in one case I was informed of) a number of repetitions still failed to point to the murderer, it might be decided that no one was responsible, and no avenging action taken. After the body had fully decomposed, and bones only remained, it was usually finally disposed of either by burial, or by placement in a small cave. Today, white institutions have control of the rites, and the dead are given a Christian burial.

#### 1.4.2 Social organisation

In Gooniyandi culture as in other Aboriginal cultures, interpersonal and intergroup rights, obligations, duties and behaviour were, and still are, to a large extent determined by "kin" relationships. The 'kindred' is perceived as coterminous with society. And, partly because of this, the kin-relation between a pair of individuals is usually to some extent negotiable, and not as fixed by actual genealogy as it is for Westerners.

Gooniyandi has a sizeable system of kin-terms. There are over twenty

unmarked or simple kin-terms, all of which are used in both reference and address (there are no morphologically distinct vocative forms). These may be suffixed with one of two possessor indicating morphemes *-wa* 'his/her' and *-badi* 'yours' (number of the possessed is not indicated). There are no forms for other possessors, such as first person or third person non-singular; these must be indicated by a possessive pronoun. There is also a suffix *-langi* which forms dyadic terms. When added to the appropriate simple term, it refers to a group of two or more individuals in the designated kin-relation to one another. In addition to the simple kin-terms, there is a small set of 'triangular' terms, which indicate the relation of both the speaker and a distinct propositus, usually the addressee, to the referent. (For a discussion of triangular terms, see McConvell 1982 and Laughren 1982.) The system of triangular terms is restricted to configurations in which at least one of the relationships is affinal. Some of the distinctions made in the simple system are neutralised in this system.

The Gooniyandi kinship system is a variant of the Arrernte (Aranda) type (Radcliffe-Brown 1931), in which four kinds of kin are distinguished in the grand-parental generation (cf. Scheffler 1978: chapter 9). In Aranda systems, two different types of cross-cousin are usually distinguished terminologically: first cross-cousin, and second cross-cousin, the latter being a prescribed spouse of Ego, and designated 'spouse'. In Gooniyandi, however, certain cross-cousins are designated *goorndi* (females) and *goornda* (males), which terms also apply to first cross-cousins (i.e. FZCh and MBCh), and marriage was proscribed. The first choice of spouse is from the same subsection as the actual MMBDCh and FMBSDCh (provided the marriages were all first preference — see below). However, s/he must be distant from Ego: a classificatory and not an actual cross-cousin. Speakers explained this to me in geographical terms: marriage with a classificatory second cross-cousin living in a distant place would be acceptable, whereas marriage with a second cross-cousin residing nearby would be unacceptable. This may perhaps suggest a predilection for local group exogamy. (Compare Elkin 1938/1974:101 and Rumsey 1982a:161-162.) Summing up, genealogy (or imputed genealogy) is not the only factor determining the kin-terms actually used in particular speaker-referent-(propositus) situations. Distance, which is likely to be a more complex factor than mere geographical distance (see Rumsey 1982a:162), is also taken into account.

Genealogy and distance may conflict, and the present evidence indicates that such conflicts need not be definitely resolved one way or the other once and for all. Rather, where there is such a conflict, the choice of kin-term applied (and presumably also the interpersonal behaviour) may depend on context. For

example, in formal elicitation sessions, not surprisingly, genealogy is the main factor determining choice of kin-term and defining appropriate behaviour, while distance plays a subsidiary role. In other contexts, such as speaking of initiation, distance may emerge as the pivotal factor. For instance, in speaking of his own initiation, my main teacher referred to the men of the *jawandi* subsection, who he would normally call *ngaboo* 'father', as *nyaanyi* 'mother's brother, etc.'. This was because they were his mother's countrymen, and thus her brothers, not her spouses. (When questioned about this in a later elicitation session, my teacher denied ever calling a *jawandi* man *nyaanyi*!)

Elkin (1938/1974:103) distinguishes another system, the Alurija (Luritja) system, in which there is a merging of cross-cousins with siblings: in this system the cross-cousin of Ego's M and F are called by the same term as their siblings, MZ, MB and FZ, FB respectively. This is precisely the merging found in the Gooniyandi system, when the distance is small. Moreover, there is occasional merging of cross-cousin and sibling. In one case I encountered, two individuals who should have called one another *goornda*, preferred to use *ngaja* 'younger brother' — their mothers were countrywomen, and hence sisters. (Note that actual MMBD becomes a *ngaddanyi* 'mother', and so her children become siblings: these cross-cousins are always treated as siblings.)

These two factors, genealogy and distance, are by no means the only ones that may be relevant in a particular socio-cultural circumstance. To give one example, the opposition of generation levels — same or alternate vs. adjacent — is important in the context of disposal of the dead. As there is no term for alternate generation sets in Gooniyandi, those of the same generation as the dead are referred to as *marna-wa* (older:brother-his) 'his (older) brother', the others as *joogoo-wa* (child-his) 'his children'.

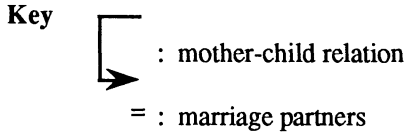
The Gooniyandi social universe — including everyone they have close social interaction with — is divided into eight classes which anthropologists call subsections, the terms for which are shown in Table 1-1.

The subsections are referred to in the local form of Aboriginal English and English based varieties as "skins", and in Gooniyandi as *gooroo*. The subsection system is today found over a large geographical area, including the southern Kimberley and much of the Northern Territory. The terms are strikingly similar, sometimes even identical, over quite large areas (McConvell 1985a:66).

There are distinct terms for the males and females of each subsection, the terms being in most instances transparent cognates. The male terms all have an initial *jV*, while the female terms have initial *nV* or *nyV*, where the vowel *V*, which must be either /a/ or /oo/, is usually identical with the vowel of the

Table 1-1: *The subsections*

	(M) <i>jawalyi</i>	A1 = B1	<i>jagadda</i>	
	(F) <i>nyawajaddi</i>	A1 = B1	<i>nagadda</i>	
	(M) <i>jawangari</i>	A2 = B2	<i>jambiyindi</i>	
	(F) <i>nawangari</i>	A2 = B2	<i>nambiyindi</i>	
	(M) <i>joowooddoo</i>	C1 = D1	<i>jawandi</i>	
	(F) <i>nyawooddoo</i>	C1 = D1	<i>nyawana</i>	
	(M) <i>jangala</i>	C2 = D2	<i>joonggoodda</i>	
	(F) <i>nangala</i>	C2 = D2	<i>nyanyjili</i>	



following syllable. (These features are typical of the subsection terms of the area — see Tsunoda 1981:8, McConvell 1985a:66.) Except in the case of A1 and D2, what follows the initial syllable is identical, or nearly identical, in the corresponding male and female terms. In a number of cases this piece can be identified etymologically. The terms for A1, B1, D1, and possibly C1, are evidently cognate with the corresponding section terms in use over a large area, including the Great Sandy Desert and the Pilbara, *jV*, *nV*, or *nyV* being prefixed to *balyaddi* (A), *garimadda* (B), *banaga* (D), and *boorooongo* (C) respectively. Cognates for A2 and B2 are to be found in the section terms in use in the northern region around the present site of Darwin (see McConvell 1985a:72). In order to derive the Gooniyandi terms, we must postulate a regular lenition rule *b* → *w* / *V*\_\_*V*, and various syllable and consonant deletions and additions for which there is no apparent regularity.

Marriage is arranged according to subsection membership. Table 1-1 shows the ideal or first choice of marriage partner. Second choice is for a partner in the opposite matri-moiety (represented by the columns in Table 1-1), and two

generations distant: that is, from what would be the same section as the first choice, in the four class system. For example, the two choices for an A1 male are B1 and B2 females.

Today, at least, there is a high frequency of 'wrong' marriages, even among the older Gooniyandi (as well as other groups in Fitzroy Crossing — see Kolig 1981:100-101). In all cases of non-ideal marriage, the subsection of the child is determined by the subsection of the mother, irrespective of the father's subsection.<sup>3</sup> I encountered no instances of individuals claiming membership of two subsections, one determined by the mother's subsection, the other by the father's subsection, as has been found in the neighbouring areas to the east (Tsunoda 1981:11, McConvell 1982:90). (However, I did encounter some such instances in the Wangkajunga Community at Christmas Creek.)

Wrong marriages have probably always occurred, no doubt traditionally with a lower frequency (Kolig 1981:101). Interestingly there is a traditional way of legitimating a wrong union. A male may paint himself with ochre from a site somewhere in the desert south of Gooniyandi country, and, when he appears before the woman of his choice, she will immediately (in the words of my collaborator) "fall in love with him", and their union will be legitimate.

Subsection and kin-terms are frequently used in address and reference; personal names are used infrequently. In my observation, which was mainly of the means by which I was addressed, kin-terms were used in more intimate contexts, while use of subsection term apparently signified greater distance and less intimacy. (For a more detailed discussion of these issues in a wider context, see McConvell 1983b.)

### 1.5 Speech styles

As mentioned in the previous section, 'kin'-relations determine the tenor of interpersonal interaction amongst the Gooniyandi, and they are in part reflected in, and constituted by, the style of language employed (Rumsey 1982a:160). Two extremes will be discussed here: joking and avoidance behaviour, and the respective styles of speech. Other interaction types may be placed somewhere between these extremes on a scale of familiarity.

Joking behaviour is institutionalised between individuals in the MM relationship (i.e. *jaja-langi* (mother's:mother-kin:dyad) 'grandmother-grandchild (and classificatory equivalents) pair'), who enjoy free and familiar relations with

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<sup>3</sup> A useful spin-off of this principle is that a part-Aboriginal child's subsection membership may be determined without necessarily placing the white father in a subsection, or even knowing his identity.

one another (see for example Thompson 1935, Stanner 1982). Complete avoidance was observed between a man and his actual WM (*maddiyali*): they would not enter into close physical proximity, or talk to one another. Any interchange between them, whether verbal or a gift, would be effected through an intermediary such as the man's wife. Less strict avoidance was practised between a man and his actual or classificatory WMB, or a man and his classificatory WM. Individuals related in these ways could sit together, or go on trips together, and engage in limited verbal interaction.

The joking relation has both verbal and non-verbal manifestations. The non-verbal behaviour included horseplay such as removing property, and bodily contact. Speech interaction included obscene joking and ritualised insults (cf. Stanner 1982). I use the term 'ritualised insult' since in the data — which consisted almost entirely of reports of how the interaction would proceed, rather than actual joking behaviour — the utterances took the form of short, apparently set phrases and responses. Two favourite topics were joking about taking the other's sister for a wife<sup>4</sup>, and joking about the other's promiscuity.

Joking behaviour is still in evidence amongst Gooniyandi people, and its verbal manifestation is not restricted to the traditional language. I have observed such interactions (involving young children and adults, who later claimed to be in the appropriate kin-relations to the children) conducted in Kriol (Hudson 1983).

Avoidance behaviour, too, has manifestations in speech, in the use of an 'avoidance style', frequently referred to in the Australianist literature as the 'mother-in-law language' (e.g. Dixon 1972 and 1977). The Gooniyandi appear to have had no particular term for this variety. There is, however, a verb *goon*-meaning 'to speak shamefacedly, to avoid speaking directly to', which is clearly cognate with the Bunuba term for the avoidance style, *gun-gunma* (Rumsey 1982a:160). This style was reportedly used in four main contexts: (1) when speaking to a classificatory *maddiyali*; (2) when speaking to the actual (or a close) WMB; (3) in making reference to any *maddiyali*; and (4) in the presence of (within earshot of) a close *maddiyali*.

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<sup>4</sup> This is interesting since a classificatory MM is a possible third choice of spouse in some tribes with subsections, including the neighbouring Jaru (Tsunoda 1981:10) and Walmajarri (Kaberry 1939:46,119). Kolig (1981:100) mentions that 8% of the marriages he recorded in the Fitzroy Crossing region were of this type, and that some individuals insisted on the legality of such unions. This joking insult is, however, the only evidence I have at all suggestive of the acceptability of the *jaja* 'mother's mother' union amongst the Gooniyandi people.

Unlike its counterpart in Dyirbal, Dyalnguy (Dixon 1972:32), the Gooniyandi avoidance style is not a fully distinct and separate language, with its own vocabulary. Nor is it obligatorily and mechanically chosen in response to a fully predetermined interaction type. As Rumsey (1982a:160) has pointed out, the use of the style is "a part of the means for CONSTITUTING the relationship between the interactants as one of 'avoidance' or potential affinehood" (his emphasis). The avoidance style is characterised by a cluster of formal features and strategies of language use which distinguish it from other Gooniyandi styles of speech, and which may be found to varying degrees in actual utterances. Different degrees of avoidance can thus be 'marked' or 'indicated' by varying usage of avoidance features (see below).

In formal terms, the avoidance style differs somewhat in lexicon, but has the same bound morphemes as ordinary Gooniyandi. There are over one hundred distinct avoidance lexemes; these tend to be longer than ordinary words, and to exhibit a higher frequency of heterogeneous consonant clusters than is found in ordinary words. Not every ordinary word has a distinct avoidance counterpart, however. Some gaps, such as the absence of terms for sexual organs and acts are expected; others are not — for example, despite intensive questioning, I was able to find a distinct term for only one animal, the dog. (I have been unable to discern general principles characterising the lexical range of the avoidance vocabulary.)

Avoidance words in Australian languages tend to be more general than their everyday counterparts (Dixon 1972, Haviland 1978, Rumsey 1982a). In Gooniyandi it is primarily the verbal roots of the avoidance style that are more general than their ordinary counterparts. For instance, *gamalg-* 'say, tell, speak, etc.' has a range of meanings that is covered by a number of more specific everyday terms, including *jag-* 'say', *jijag-* 'speak', *miga-* 'tell', etc. Avoidance verb roots typically occur with a larger range of classifiers (see section 3.9.3.2) than do ordinary verbs, and in this way some, though certainly not all, of the lexical ambiguity may be resolved. The avoidance verb root *gamalg-*, for example, occurs with the classifier +MI 'effect' to convey the sense 'tell, say'; with +DI 'catch' to convey the sense 'put a question'; and with +I 'be, go' to convey the sense 'speak, talk'. On the other hand, *jag-* occurs with only the classifier +MI, *jijag-* with only +I, and *miga-* with only +MI and +I. In this respect the Gooniyandi avoidance style contrasts sharply with the Bunuba one, which has a particular auxiliary verb (see page 6 above, and Rumsey 1982a:167) specific to the style. In the Bunuba system, the choice of auxiliary verb is not available to distinguish among the senses of a lexical verb root.

Nominal roots generally have the same meaning as their everyday counterparts. For example, the avoidance nominal *ngarloomali* 'spear' corresponds to the ordinary generic term for spear, *jinali*, including in its range precisely the same subtypes. On those occasions when I requested an avoidance equivalent for a more specific type of spear, I was invariably given the ordinary term. The response was invariably the same when I requested other specific terms, and I could detect no tendency to extend the range of an avoidance nominal beyond the range of its corresponding ordinary term. It thus appears that avoidance nominals have exact, or nearly exact, ordinary equivalents, and can not be used to effect higher order taxonomic groupings than those which are already made in the ordinary language (cf. Dixon 1972:292ff).

A few closed class grammatical items also have distinct avoidance terms. For example, there is a particle *woomoorla* 'no, not, nothing, without', which corresponds to the particle *marlami* 'not, nothing, without' of the everyday style, and perhaps also to *mangaddi* 'no, not' (see page 496 below); there is also a nominal *yawinhingi* 'some, other' corresponding to the everyday terms *yaanya* 'other' and *yaabja* 'some'. At least in the latter instance, a distinction made in the everyday vocabulary is neutralised in the avoidance vocabulary.

It will come as no surprise that in Gooniyandi avoidance speech, as in the Bunuba variety (Rumsey 1982a), not every word in an utterance need be — or even could be — an avoidance word. Often only a single word in an utterance marks it as avoidance speech, whether or not other ordinary words COULD BE replaced by avoidance terms. Indeed, a single feature, such as use of a non-singular free pronoun, pronominal enclitic or prefix with singular reference, may even suffice.

Strategies of language use differ between avoidance speech and everyday speech. There are differences in: (1) modes of address and reference; (2) frequency of propositional modification; and (3) degree of precision of expression.

(1) A man was of course not supposed to address his actual WM; nor could he utter her name, or a close homonym. Reference to her could be oblique (e.g. by using the term *moonga* 'dark'), by use of a marked or triangular kin-term (e.g. *manaroo* '(your) mother', speaking to W or WB), or by use of the third person non-singular pronominal *bidi* 'they'. Other *maddiyali*, with whom speech was permitted, were addressed with the second person non-singular pronominal *gidi*, instead of the singular form *nginyji*. S/he would be referred to by means of the third person plural *bidi* if the relationship was a close one, but otherwise more frequently by the singular *niyi*; and the first person unrestricted *yaadi* 'we three or more inclusive' would be used instead of *ngidi* 'we two, we exclusive' (see

section 3.6) in reference to the speaker-hearer dyad. The bound pronominals within the verbal complex are also skewed in this way. This is familiar as a 'politeness strategy' in Indo-European and many other language families.

(2) In contrast to the situation in ordinary speech, in avoidance speech modal modification — such as by the enclitic *-mi ~ -ma* 'dubitive/indefinite' (see section 6.3.8) — is more frequent in both questions and statements. *winhi* 'just', and *woomoorla* and *marlami* 'no, without' are also more frequent in avoidance speech, presumably with the intended effect of softening the force of the utterance (cf. Stubbs 1983:113).

(3) Avoidance speech is characteristically vaguer in expression than is ordinary speech (Rumsey 1982a:173, McConvell 1982:97), and this vagueness is iconic of the relation of avoidance or lack of intimacy which it encodes. Although an avoidance verb is typically vaguer than an ordinary one, much of the potential ambiguity is resolved once the context is taken into account. For example, in

- (1-1) *malab -mi gooddgoo*  
 make he:effected:it hole  
 'He dug a hole.'

it is quite clear that the intended sense of *malab-* 'make, construct' is 'dig'. It should be noted that potential ambiguities are rarely if ever resolved by paraphrase in actual texts (cf. Dixon 1972:293). And I suspect that this is partly because in real terms the ambiguity of a contextualised utterance is usually relatively small, and far less than the potential ambiguity, and partly because vagueness is an inherent semantic characteristic, and not just a formal feature of the avoidance style.

## 1.6 Contact history

The first major contact between the Gooniyandi people and whites occurred just over one hundred years ago, in the mid- to late eighteen-eighties, when pastoralists established cattle and sheep stations in the Fitzroy Valley. In 1879 the first white men entered Gooniyandi territory, skirting its northern extremities (see map in Hicks 1938/1977:17, and Tindale's 1974 tribal map). They were the surveyor Alexander Forrest and his party, whose route followed an eastward path along the Fitzroy and Margaret Rivers. (Before this, white explorers had travelled through parts of the Kimberley region, without entering Gooniyandi country: in 1837 and 1838 G.Grey began exploration of the northern Kimberley region, travelling south from Hanover Bay; and in 1856 A.C.Gregory and his party

explored the region immediately to the east of the Fitzroy Valley, travelling through Jaru country.)

Forrest's glowing report of the potential of the region for pastoralism and mining rapidly attracted settlers and prospectors. Pastoralists entered the Kimberley in two waves. Cattlemen came from the east, driving their cattle from as far away as Queensland, and even, in one instance, Victoria. The other group came from the south and west, bringing mostly sheep (Kolig 1981:17, Jack Bohemia, pers.comm.). The cattlemen settled mainly in the East Kimberley, the sheep farmers in the West Kimberley; there was, however some overlap, as the two waves intersected just to the east of Fitzroy Crossing. The first cattle station in the Fitzroy Crossing area was Fossil Downs station, established by the MacDonaldis in 1885 (R. McGregor 1985:29); it was located on land which local Aborigines today generally claim to be Gooniyandi-Kija 'mixed'. This was followed shortly afterwards by Old Bohemia station (Jack Bohemia, pers.comm.).

Labour was recruited mainly from the local Aboriginal population, often by coercion. Initially only small numbers of Aborigines lived and worked on the stations at any one time, whilst the majority still lived traditional lives in the bush. However, this situation did not meet with the approval of the pastoralists, who in the 1880s and early 1890s actively lobbied the Government (at first without success) for strong measures to be implemented against the threats — both real and imagined — posed by the presence of "bush blacks" on their properties. (For further discussion, see R. McGregor 1985, especially chapters 2 and 3.) It seems contradictory that, during the wet season (roughly November to March), when their labour was not required, the Aboriginal workers were normally free to return to the bush and lead their traditional lives. Apparently economic considerations over-rode fears of the deleterious effects the "bush blacks" might have on the "civilised" stockworkers. The wet season thus became, and has remained, the time for ceremonial activities, especially male initiation.

Active Aboriginal resistance is well documented, and a number of white men and their cattle were speared or shot. Pigeon, the famous "outlaw of the Leopolds" (Idriess 1952), was a Bunuba man who organised a band of Aborigines who, for some years in the mid-1890s, carried out guerilla style warfare against the white intruders from their base in Tunnel Creek in the Oscar Ranges (Pedersen 1984). The river tribes, including the Gooniyandi, were to bear the brunt of the European response to the Pigeon episode. In 1894 Inspector Lawrence was sent by Police Commissioner Phillips to assume command of the

police operations against the Aborigines (R. McGregor 1985:80). He travelled east from Derby to the Fitzroy Crossing area, where he started a campaign of "dispersal" against those Aborigines not needed for labour on the stations (Pedersen 1980:82, R. McGregor 1985:91). In January 1895 he moved up the Margaret River "dispersing" and killing the Aboriginal population. Shortly thereafter, a party led by special Constable Blythe reported killing two Aborigines on Christmas Creek and four at Gogo (Pedersen 1980:84-85). Presumably Gooniyandi people were amongst those killed in these operations, as is attested to by oral accounts.

But Aboriginal resistance<sup>5</sup> was not completely quelled by the ravages of Lawrence and Pilmer and the killing of Pigeon in 1897. Resistance was, however, as a rule more sporadic, less organised and usually involved single individuals, rather than organised guerilla bands. Cattle and sheep spearing, which was not always motivated by the need for food (Pedersen 1980:18, R. McGregor 1985:52), continued until well into this century as the predominant form of protest. There was also the odd instance of murder or attempted murder of white pastoralists (Jack Bohemia, pers.comm. — see also Lawrence 1979:46).

Such exploits were frequently followed by punitive measures such as massacres, murder, and jailing of prisoners in irons for the term of their sentence (Jack Bohemia, pers.comm.). There is reliable evidence of at least one massacre as late as the 1930s (Kolig 1981:20), and my oral accounts place one at the time of the Second World War. However, not all massacres were motivated solely or even primarily by retaliation; rather, retaliation provided an excuse for implementing stern measures against Aborigines. Contemporary claims to the contrary, the so called retaliatory measures usually bore little relation to the 'crime' (cf. Kolig 1981:20, R. McGregor 1985:50), and could hardly have taught "the blacks [to] ... begin to understand the Mosaic law of a life for a life" as was claimed by a Derby correspondent to *Northern Public Opinion* (a Roebourne newspaper) in 1895 (cited in Gill 1977:18). The aim was to subjugate the

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<sup>5</sup> The term "resistance" is not unproblematical: it raises questions of interpretation and motivation. It cannot be assumed that every act committed by Aborigines against the whites was motivated by a desire to remove whites from their lands, or as a protest to occupation. For instance, in the contact stories related to me by Jack Bohemia, Aboriginal activities against whites were always motivated by SPECIFIC white actions, particularly the appropriation of women. In such circumstances Aboriginal actions would seem to be better described as retaliatory than as acts of resistance.

Aboriginal people, to provide a cheap labour force, and to ensure the personal safety of the white pastoralists and their property (see also R. McGregor 1985:160 and Reynolds 1981, especially chapter 3).

Sometime late last century the desert 'people' of the Great Sandy Desert began to move into the Fitzroy Valley (Kolig 1981:21). This was presumably precipitated by the decimation of the Fitzroy Valley people (Elkin 1932 estimates a decrease of at least fifty percent in the tribes which, like the Gooniyandi, had very close contact with whites). The Walmajarri were the first desert arrivals, who filtered in gradually up to about the beginning of the Second World War. Their influx was partly overlapped by the arrival of the Wangkajunga, Kukatja, and Yulparija peoples, whose traditional country was located some hundreds of miles south of the Fitzroy River, in the Pilbara region (Kolig 1973:38, 1981:18). The last of the Wangkajunga did not leave the desert until the mid-sixties or perhaps later. Some Northern Kimberley people also moved into the Fitzroy Crossing area, although their major population movements were to the towns of Wyndham, Kununurra, and Derby. The groups to the east, including the Jaru, tended to centre around Halls Creek. There are thus today, broadly speaking, two major cultural blocs in the Fitzroy Crossing area: the Kimberley and the desert cultures.

The United Aborigines Mission (UAM) established their Mission in Fitzroy Crossing in 1951 (Kolig 1981:23; cf. Hudson 1983:13), and around it a small Aboriginal community, Junjuwa (named after the hill on which the Mission stands), grew up. Until then, only a few Aborigines lived in Fitzroy Crossing, those who worked for the police and those who worked for the publican (Jack Bohemia, pers.comm.). Unlike the pastoralists, the missionaries DID attempt to modify Aboriginal beliefs, and to stop those traditional practices they deemed heathen (Kolig 1981:23). Shortly after it was established, the Mission opened up the first school in the area, and a hostel for the children from the outlying stations. The speaking of their mother tongues was apparently banned in the hostel (Hudson 1983:13, 174-175). This was probably an important factor in the demise of traditional languages, and the rise of Kriol. The first Government school was established in 1957 at Gogo station; there is no evidence that it fostered any better attitudes to the traditional languages or cultural values than did the Mission.

Until equal wages were introduced in 1969, most of the Aboriginal population lived relatively sedentary lives in small communities on the pastoral properties, and (after 1951) in Fitzroy Crossing, conducting their ceremonies and going on long bush trips during the wet season. With the coming of equal

wages, many were forcibly displaced from these communities, and shifted to Fitzroy Crossing (Kolig 1981:52-55). Recently an outstation movement has become popular, and many Aboriginal groups are returning to their former stations, where they have established, or intend to establish, independent communities on small excisions, usually of one square kilometre in area.

### **1.7 Present language situation**

Today the majority of Gooniyandi speakers live in Homeswest (State Housing) houses in small communities in the Fitzroy Crossing region (most of these communities are shown on Map 1). The largest numbers live in Bayulu village and Mulurrja (Mooloodja) on the Gogo pastoral lease, Yiyili on Louisa Downs, and Junjuwa in Fitzroy Crossing. Smaller numbers reside at Cherrabun, Margaret River, Fossil Downs, Lamboo, and Brooking Springs stations, and in the independent settlement at Ngumban (Pinnacles) on Christmas Creek station; scattered individuals are also to be found on other stations in the Fitzroy Valley. A few speakers live outside of this region, in Halls Creek and Kununurra.

Of the fluent speakers of Gooniyandi, around a half would identify themselves as Gooniyandi people, and 'owners' of the language, Birdsell (1970:118) notwithstanding. The remainder are primarily Bunuba, Kija, Jaru and Walmajarri people who learnt Gooniyandi as a second, or even as an equal first language, but who are not 'owners'. A few Aborigines from the Northern Kimberley groups also speak Gooniyandi fluently. On the other hand, I encountered no Wangkajunga person fluent in Gooniyandi, although a few have some speaking control as a second or third language, or can at least understand it a little.

As is the case for most traditional languages in the Kimberley region, there has been in recent times a strong shift from speaking Gooniyandi to speaking Kriol (Hudson 1983) or some form of Aboriginal English. All fluent speakers of Gooniyandi are over the age of thirty. Some individuals under this age can understand the language when it is spoken to them, but do not normally speak it. Those under thirty are mother tongue speakers of Kriol, and use it as their normal mode of intra-group (Aboriginal to Aboriginal) communication; however, when speaking to whites, they use a variety of Aboriginal English (cf. Hudson 1983:19-20). The older generation all understand some English, and speak an English based variety, sometimes called Pidgin, in the presence of whites. They apparently also use it in most of their conversation with the younger generation, from school age children to young adults (less than thirty years of age). However, in speaking to very young children, members of the

older — usually grandparental — generation frequently use Gooniyandi (or another traditional language). Parents usually speak to their children (of whatever age) in Kriol (cf. McConvell 1986:115-116), albeit with the addition of Gooniyandi words, especially names of bush foods. Thus children do generally have some exposure to Gooniyandi, and generally know some of the more common words.

When conversing among themselves, members of the older generation usually speak a traditional tongue. Most of them are bi- or multi-lingual: the majority of older Gooniyandi people also speak Walmajarri (which for a time was a lingua-franca in the Fitzroy Crossing region), and many speak fluent Bunuba and/or Kija in addition. Speakers frequently switch between their languages, including Pidgin or Kriol, and even mix words from different languages within a single utterance. The choice of language presumably expresses social and cultural meanings; however, it is beyond the scope of this book to investigate this complex issue (for discussions of language choice in multilingual Aboriginal situations, see for example, Elwell 1977 and McConvell 1985b). Gooniyandi is thus still in daily use. The avoidance style (section 1.5), however, seems not to be actively used today between individuals in avoidance relations. Some speakers maintain that it is sometimes used for fun, as a type of joke, but I have not encountered this usage myself.

### **1.8 Education and orthography**

Until very recently, no consideration was given in either the Government or the Church schools in the Kimberley to the different cultural and linguistic backgrounds of their Aboriginal pupils. Their traditional languages were not just ignored, but their use was at times actively discouraged by physical punishment (for example, as mentioned above, at the early UAM hostel in Fitzroy Crossing). But there are encouraging signs of changes in attitudes of teachers and educators, and in the last few years many have started, or are keen to start language programmes in their schools. In 1982, a language and culture programme in the local languages was started in the Fitzroy Crossing State High School, and the involvement of the adults in the local Aboriginal community, Junjuwa, was sought and encouraged. This programme ceased operation in 1983, for reasons unknown to me. It was restarted by the new principal in 1985. Daily classes were conducted in three local languages, Bunuba, Gooniyandi, and Walmajarri, and these classes are attended by both Aboriginal and white pupils. Unfortunately, this programme also lapsed within the year, although there seems to be some interest in reviving it.

A Gooniyandi language programme has been in operation in Gogo School, a primary school with predominantly Gooniyandi pupils, since 1987. It seems to be progressing successfully, and is popular with the children.

Other Government schools in the Kimberley region — of which La Grange School is the most notable example — have recently started language programmes. However, the Western Australian Education Department lacks a policy on bilingual/bicultural education, and these initiatives are at the whim of the school principal. This, together with the consequent unavailability of professional expertise both in matters of linguistic description and in establishing and running language programmes, and lack of funds, has certainly done nothing to improve the chances of success of any language programme. To date, only Catholic Education in the Kimberley has a language policy, and employs linguists to implement it.

In 1982 the Yiyili Community School, independently run by that Community, started operation. At that time it employed one white school teacher, Robyn Dickinson. The community felt that, in addition to educating their children in English and mathematics, education in their own language and culture was equally important. One of the aims of the school (to quote from the School Policy) is "To develop and introduce a Gooniyandi language and literacy programme".

During my 1982 field trip the Yiyili Community requested my assistance as a linguist. I spent a few weeks at Yiyili, during which time I devised a practical orthography for Gooniyandi, and produced some introductory materials for their programme, including a preliminary draft of a collection of Gooniyandi stories, a short dictionary, and a brief description of the principles of writing the language, intended for literate Aborigines and teachers involved in the programme. In 1983 the Yiyili Community employed a Summer Institute of Linguistics (SIL) linguist, Joyce Hudson, on a part-time basis, to initiate the language programme in their school. In the following year, Annette Walker, another SIL linguist, took over this job, but left due to her marriage. From then until 1988 no linguist was employed, and the language programme ceased operation. In 1988 it was begun again, with the assistance of Barbara Jones, a teacher-linguist for the Kimberley Language Resource Centre.

Hudson produced some basic literacy materials, and developed the following orthography, in consultation with two literate native speakers, David Street and Topsy Chestnut (Street and Chestnut 1984:4, Hudson 1984a, 1984b):

**Vowels:** *a*, *ar* (long *a*), *i*, *ii* (long *i*), *oo* (short and long IPA *u*);

**Consonants:** *b, m* (bilabials); *d, n, l* (apico-alveolars); *ɖ, ɳ, ʟ, r* (apico-domals); *th, nh, lh* (lamino-dentals); *j, ny, ly* (lamino-palatals); *g, ng* (dorso-velars); and *w, y* (semi-vowels).

This orthography was designed principally in order to facilitate the transfer of literacy skills from English (although personally I do not feel that it went far enough in this direction). It is not phonemic. The symbol *d*, for example, represents two distinct phonemes: the apico-alveolar stop, and the apico-alveolar tap or trill. Elsewhere the system over differentiates, in distinguishing the long *ii* vowel sound from both the short *i* and the sequence *iyi* (see section 2.1.6.1), and a lamino-dental lateral, which to the best of my knowledge occurs only as a conditioned variant of the lamino-palatal lateral (section 2.1.5.2).

It seems that there is a very positive attitude towards this orthography among both staff and students. However, the fact that it is non-phonemic makes it inappropriate and cumbersome for a work of this nature. And since there is no substantial body of literature written in the Hudson-Street-Chestnut orthography, I have decided not to employ it here. The ideal choice for this book would undoubtedly be the practical phonemic orthography I had suggested in 1982, and which I used in some early publications (McGregor 1985 and 1986a). This orthography was based on the well established Walmajarri orthography (see, for example, Hudson and Richards 1978:72), to which the two digraphs *th* and *nh* had been added, and the long vowel digraphs *ii* and *uu* omitted; it is the same as the Kija orthography recommended by McConvell for use in the Turkey Creek School. However, I have felt that this orthography is unnecessarily different from the native speakers' choice. I have therefore proposed (McGregor 1986b), for academic purposes only, a phonemic orthography which employs letters and digraphs which accord more closely to the speakers' choices. This system will be employed throughout this book, except where a narrow phonetic transcription is necessary, where I will use IPA symbols. The following letters and digraphs are used:

**Vowels:** *a, aa* (long *a*), *i, oo* (IPA *u*);

**Consonants:** *b, m* (bilabials); *d, n, l, dd* (apico-alveolars); *rd, rn, rl, r* (apico-domals); *th, nh* (lamino-dentals); *j, ny, ly* (lamino-palatals); *g, ng* (dorso-velars); and *w, y* (semivowels).

Cluster restrictions prevent ambiguity between digraphs and consonant clusters, except in the cases of *ng* and *ly*. The cluster /n-g/ occurs within morphemes, where it contrasts with both the velar nasal /ŋ/ and the nasal stop

sequence /ng-g/; I follow the Hudson-Street-Chestnut decision to distinguish the first sequence (i.e. the apical *n* followed by the dorso-velar stop *g*) by placing a full stop between the *n* and the *g*, thus: *n.g*. The cluster /l-y/ occurs at certain morpheme boundaries. But because it is entirely predictable morphologically, and contextually unambiguous, there is no need to distinguish the phoneme /ly/ from the phoneme sequence /l-y/ in writing.

In choosing to use an orthography at odds with the one decided on by native speakers of the language, I realise that I leave myself open to criticism from the speakers, as well as certain linguists. However, I assure both groups that I do not mean to question the speakers' decisions, or their rights to make orthographic decisions; nor so I suggest that they should use my orthography. There seems to me to be no reason why the two orthographies cannot coexist, each to be used for its own purposes — mine in academic linguistic descriptions, the Street-Chestnut-Hudson orthography in literacy materials. (It goes without saying that in any case at least two systems of writing the language will be necessary: an adequate dictionary should at least indicate the phonemic representation of each word — and, given the present precarious state of Gooniyandi, perhaps also accurate information on their pronunciation.) Furthermore, this book being addressed to an audience of linguists, I can foresee no likelihood of confusion resulting from my decision. On the other hand, in publications intended principally for use by Gooniyandi people and/or for use in language programmes in schools, I have employed the Street-Chestnut-Hudson orthography (see for example McGregor 1988d and in preparation-b).

### 1.9 Other work on Gooniyandi

Previous to my investigations, very little linguistic work had been done on Gooniyandi, and there are only scattered references to the language in the literature. (See McGregor 1984a (a copy of which has been lodged in the A.I.A.S. library) and 1988e for lists of the major references to the language.)

The first written reference to Gooniyandi appears in Bates (nd), which is a compilation of wordlists in languages from the Kimberley region, collected by various local white residents around the turn of the century. This manuscript contains a wordlist in the Warranarrie (presumably a mis-hearing of Waringaddi 'many people') language compiled by C.J. Annear. The majority of words are clearly Gooniyandi, and on the whole they are reasonably well transcribed.

Capell (1940:416-418) gives a short list of nineteen words, all but two of which are identifiable and reasonably accurately transcribed. He also provides a part of the present tense paradigm of the verb *ward-* 'go' (Capell 1940:416). However, most of the forms given are inaccurate: the plural marker *ge* (= /gi/) given for the first person non-singular forms is found in Bunuba only, and most instances of word final /i/ have been mistranscribed as /a/ (cf. 2.1.6.1 below). To

the best of my knowledge this is the only published data on Gooniyandi (prior to my own work). Capell (1940:244) was the first linguist to correctly identify Bunuba and Gooniyandi as members of a single language group, referring to them as "prefixing languages without noun classification". The linguistic surveys of O'Grady, Voegelin, and Voegelin (1966:78), Oates and Oates (1970), and Wurm (1972) repeat Capell's remarks without adding anything new.

Worms apparently did a little field work on Gooniyandi in the thirties or forties (Worms 1953:960). However, virtually nothing about the language appears in Nekes and Worms' monumental *Australian languages* (Nekes and Worms 1953), and Worms wrongly typologised it as a SUFFIXING northern Kimberley language (Worms 1953:961), despite Capell (1940).

In 1953 the anthropologist Norman Tindale collected a vocabulary of about a hundred or so basic terms in Gooniyandi (Tindale 1952-1954). All but a couple of his terms are readily identified, and most are reasonably accurately transcribed. The main inaccuracy is that he misses many lamino-dental and retroflexed stops and nasals, most of which he transcribes as apico-alveolars.

The next linguist to record Gooniyandi seems to be Father Anthony Piele, who in about 1960 recorded, but did not transcribe, an hour or so of Gooniyandi words.

By far the best and most extensive early work on Gooniyandi is undoubtedly that done by the missionary-linguist Howard Coate in the mid-1960s. Coate worked for a short time with the Fossil Downs "mob"; the Kija bias in the lexicon is evident (see section 1.3). He elicited a number of words, and recorded and transcribed some excellent and valuable texts (totaling about forty minutes in duration), traditional and historical, all told by a very knowledgeable old man (Fossil Pluto), since deceased, who is still remembered as an expert *jalngangooddoo* 'doctor' — i.e. person knowledgeable in traditional Aboriginal law and ritual. Coate has generously made his material available to me, and because of the value of the texts, I have retranscribed them, hopefully more accurately.

Coate's transcription was quite accurate, except that: (1) He did not always distinguish the lamino-dental stop /th/ and nasal /nh/, which he usually wrote as apico-alveolar /d/ and /n/ respectively. This distinction is, in fact, very difficult for the English speaker to hear, and it is quite likely that there are some such mistranscriptions in the present work. And (2) he took the mid vowels [e] and [o], which are allophones of /i/ and /oo/ respectively to be distinct phonemes. Coate undertook some grammatical analysis, but did not publish any of his findings. His analysis is good, as far as it goes, and considering the very short

time he spent on the language. He correctly identified the free pronominal forms — but he sometimes confused *yaadi* 'we unrestricted (=we plural inclusive)' as 'we plural exclusive' — and his verbal paradigms are reasonably accurate, though incomplete. There are just a few unidentified forms in Coate's corpus, some of which may perhaps be Kija: for example, *mangany* 'no, not' (*mangaddi* and *marlami* in Gooniyandi), and *-ningi* 'to him/her/it' (*-nhi* in Gooniyandi).

In the mid- to late nineteen seventies two academic linguists, namely Alan Rumsey and Tasaku Tsunoda, recorded small amounts of Gooniyandi; both have kindly made their recordings available to me. Working with Bunuba bilinguals in Fitzroy Crossing, Rumsey collected a short word list of around a hundred items for the purposes of lexical comparison; Rumsey's list, of course, shows some Bunuba influence. Tsunoda recorded four or five hours of words and sentences at Margaret River station with speakers of the easternmost variety of Gooniyandi (see section 1.3). This is the only material available in this maximally divergent variety.

In the last decade two SIL linguists have been involved in more practical work on the language. In 1978 Carol Morris, in collaboration with a speaker of Gooniyandi who was fully literate in English, David Street, produced a short dictionary of a few hundred entries, on the whole accurately transcribed. Morris recognised the phonemic distinctiveness of the lamino-dentals, but, like Coate, took the mid vowels [e] and [o] to be phonemically contrastive. And, as mentioned in the preceding section, in 1983 Joyce Hudson produced some Gooniyandi literacy materials, and published a few articles on the orthography which she designed in collaboration with Street and Chestnut. Most of the words appearing in these works are accurately written in the Hudson-Street-Chestnut orthography, although there are a few instances of mistranscription of lamino-dentals as apico-alveolars, and some phonetically long, but phonemically short vowels are mistranscribed as long.

A number of anthropological studies have at least touched on the Gooniyandi people, and a couple of them include some Gooniyandi words (for a list of these works, see McGregor 1984a). The most recent study is Kolig (1981), who cites a number of identifiably Gooniyandi words; these are not accurately transcribed. Moreover, Kolig generally does not identify these terms as Gooniyandi, nor does he distinguish them from terms in the other languages of the Fitzroy Crossing region.

### 1.10 Data used in this investigation

This study is based almost entirely on a corpus of material I gathered in the

course of two field trips, totaling about fourteen months, conducted in 1980 and 1982. This corpus includes texts, as well as formally elicited words, phrases and sentences, all of which were recorded on cassette and transcribed in the field into notebooks. (Copies of the cassettes and field notebooks are lodged with the Australian Institute of Aboriginal Studies.) Almost the entire body of text was spoken onto tape at my request, or offered for recording by the narrator. Although Gooniyandi is in daily use, I recorded no spontaneous monologues addressed to an Aboriginal (or primarily Aboriginal) audience, and little free conversation: perhaps an hour in all, and none surreptitiously. A secondary source of data were the observations I entered into my notebooks of freely occurring speech, where circumstances did not permit recording on cassette. The only other primary sources I had access to were the texts Howard Coate had recorded in the mid-1960s (see previous section), Rumsey's short wordlist, and, more recently, Tsunoda's elicitation tapes in the Gooniyandi spoken at Margaret River station.

About twenty Aboriginal people contributed material to the field investigation.

Jack Bohemia (BEM), Nyibaddi, the oldest living speaker of Gooniyandi (aged over eighty), was my main collaborator. A tracker of some thirty two years service to the Western Australian Police Force (see *Aboriginal and Islander Identity*, October 1971, page 15, and Lawrence 1979:46), Jack Bohemia has an incomparable knowledge of the history of the Fitzroy Crossing area since the turn of the century. The account of the history since first contact (section 1.6) is based principally on information he conveyed orally to me. Where possible I checked and extended (especially by providing dates) his account by a study of the written sources. I have found no substantial inconsistencies; Bohemia was always careful to distinguish fact from supposition, and refused to tell me stories of events about which he had no certain knowledge. He loved telling of his experiences as a police tracker and as a stockman. I recorded a substantial body of such texts, which, in accordance with his wishes, are in the process of being prepared for publication. But Jack Bohemia also participated in the traditional law; and he never went completely over to the white ways. He is a fully initiated man knowledgeable in traditional lore and law; he provided me with numerous mythological texts, accounts of traditional customs (including initiation and funerary rites), stories of first contact with whites, and songs. During my periods in the field, Jack Bohemia worked with me for a couple of hours almost every day, despite his age, telling me stories and assisting me in their transcription, providing and checking lexical and verbal forms, and translating

English sentences. His daughter Daisy, herself a fluent speaker of Gooniyandi, also told me a number of stories.

Dave Lamey, a community leader at Bayulu, was another important collaborator. He told me numerous stories, in a variety of genres, including a particular type which he alone gave: expository texts, which assert relations between entities, and attributes of entities, rather than, like narratives, describe situations and events in temporal sequence. (Expository texts are characterised linguistically by a significantly greater than usual frequency of verbless clauses.) A number of lexical items, verbal forms, constructions, and so on elicited from Jack Bohemia were counter-checked with Dave Lamey. In 1982, a middle-aged man, Lamey started to learn to read and write English. At the same time, I worked intensively with him, developing Gooniyandi writing materials, and teaching him the elements of writing Gooniyandi.

Bigfoot *jagadda* (see page 14 above), probably the most knowledgeable living Gooniyandi *jalngangooddoo* or 'lawman', and Joe Dimay, the owner of a *dingaddi* (*tingarri*) tradition (Kolig 1981:38), provided a number of important mythological (and other) texts. Bigfoot, Dave Lamey and Jack Bohemia, were the primary sources for avoidance style speech. Not only did each give me lexical items peculiar to the style, but they also recorded texts, both monologues and planned conversations with one another.

David Street, one of the youngest, and one of the two fully literate speakers, his brother Rainbow, Saturday W. (deceased) and Mick Smith all contributed a number of words and texts. Banjo Birndayminy (Bunuba), George Nayndu (Kija/Bunuba/Ngarinyin) and Lanis P. (Kija/Gooniyandi, deceased) provided invaluable assistance in text transcription.

At the Yiyili Community, Norman Cox, Ivy Cox, Judy Cox, Dorris Cox, Frank Cox, Irene, Jocelin, Penny Madeline, Lyon, and Mervin Street (the youngest fluent speaker of Gooniyandi, and an accomplished artist and story teller) all told me stories and assisted in detailed articulatory-phonetic work (see below), and in the preparation of texts for a school reader.

A corpus consisting of over six thousand sentences plus some thousands of isolated words was assembled as the primary database for the present study. The major part of this corpus was systematically elicited from native speakers of Gooniyandi in response to English prompt words and sentences. Included in the corpus is all formally elicited material, as well as all sentences from half a dozen or more texts. Nearly all of the textual material gathered has been scanned at some time or other, and a selection of the interesting utterances have also been included in the corpus.

Very early in the course of the fieldwork I became aware of problems inherent in the standard field procedure of eliciting responses to decontextualised English sentences. It was frequently the case that speakers would, on different occasions give three or four distinct translation equivalents to a single English prompt. This problem was particularly bothersome in dealing with categories which express the speakers' viewpoint and evaluation of the proposition. For example, a single English verbal category such as future tense, which, as is well known, expresses modal as well as temporal meaning, might emerge as any one of three or four Gooniyandi verbal categories (see section 6.5.1.3). The difficulty is that evaluative meanings such as these are not as readily accessible to the linguist as are the representational or content meanings — that is, experiential meaning in Halliday's (e.g. 1970, 1985) terms. It is as a rule easier to determine whether or not the linguist and the native speaker have matching conceptualisations of the situation described by the English prompt than it is to determine (out of context) whether they coincide in their perceptions of the viewpoints and evaluations expressed.

It was clear that in the majority of cases native speakers did not perceive equivalences, or even unmarked correlations between grammatical categories of English and Gooniyandi. They did not translate prompt sentences category by category; they appeared to regard translation as a semantic procedure, rather than a formal operation on strings of linguistic symbols. I could detect no tendency for speakers to invent calques on English constructions, which, like 'to want' complement clauses, are expressed by means of totally different categories and constructions in Gooniyandi (cf. Heath 1984:582). In seeking a translation for an English prompt,<sup>6</sup> it seemed that the Gooniyandi speaker first imagined some context in which the English sentence might be uttered, and then found a suitable Gooniyandi sentence which would have roughly the same sense in that context. The problem was that I had no access to the imagined context. As a consequence, it was necessary to modify my method of elicitation so as to circumscribe, and gain some control of the contexts. This was done by verbally constructing imaginary and real scenarios, especially ones of which both participants (Gooniyandi speaker and linguist) had some knowledge. I would request utterances appropriate to describing these situations, and utterances which

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<sup>6</sup> This is an oversimplification. In most cases the Gooniyandi speaker did not speak Standard Australian English, and there was no certainty that s/he put the same values to the categories as I did. Nor could misunderstandings be entirely eliminated by my using Kriol or Pidgin (of which I claim little speaking control) as the prompting language.

an interactant in the situation might make. In this way the possible senses of the English prompt are relatively restricted and there is a better chance that the linguist and the native speaker were referring to the same situations, from similar viewpoints.

Formally elicited utterances can never be completely decontextualised, and all sorts of speakers' behaviour indicated that they did not perceive either their own or my utterances as isolated. For instance, frequent switching of topic, elicitation of paradigms, and requests for implausible utterances (such as 'you died') were frequently met with by resistance such as boredom, and, less frequently, refusal to produce the requested form. More interestingly, the entities I established in my English prompts were treated as belonging to the participant-register of the discourse, and where possible, treated as "given" (Halliday 1970:162). Speakers did not like being forced to translate the English NPs verbatim (see also below page 251 and section 5.3.1). It is clear that speakers regarded the elicitation process as text-producing, and their responses were characteristic of genres appropriate to the referential content. Much of the formally elicited data is, then, in a sense controlled, or constructed text, rather than isolated, decontextualised sentences. The primary thrust of elicitation was to develop and construct such contexts as might not frequently arise in conditions where recording was possible.

Because elicitation is text-producing, and because many morphemes and morpheme combinations are unlikely to arise in free texts, I do not even aspire to Heath's (1984:4) ideal of a "corpus-based grammar" (where 'corpus' includes free texts only). Although I am mindful of the many dangers inherent in using elicited materials, I cannot concur with Heath's assessment that he had "... no confidence whatever in such data, since my own early "data" of this type often turned out to be seriously wrong" (Heath 1984:5). As I will discuss later, I feel that this misrepresents the nature of linguistic data, by taking it to be an observable object, independent of the observer.

By far the most problematic aspects of elicitation seem to me to relate to the practices of seeking speakers' judgements of utterance acceptability (see below), and their intuitions and explanations of meaning differences. In the circumstances of my fieldwork these did not prove to be very satisfactory field methods, and I avoided their use as much as possible. As a rule, in those instances in which two distinct forms might conceivably refer to the same referent situation, speakers were unable to pin-point the subtle distinctions in meaning conveyed by the variant modes of expression. I was invariably informed that no meaning difference existed.

In the course of producing material for the Gooniyandi language programme in the Yiyili Community School (see section 1.8), I had opportunity to carefully check my transcriptions of a number of words, and my phonemic analysis. Careful attention was paid to 'problem areas', especially: (1) distinguishing between apico-alveolar, apico-postalveolar and lamino-dental consonants, which I experienced great difficulty in telling apart (since then I have found that the phonetic contrasts in Gooniyandi are not as perceptible to the English ear as are the phonetic contrasts between the corresponding segments

in some other Australian languages); and (2) the question of whether the contrast between apico-alveolars and apico-postalveolars is neutralised word initially (as it is in many Australian languages). Many words were checked with more than one speaker, and over more than one repetition (successively and on different occasions), using both auditory and visual evidence. From this work, I produced a dictionary of about 1000 items, the phonemic representation of which I am relatively confident. This dictionary, which includes all items of Hale's 100 word list, the relevant items of Douglas (1959/1977), as well as all words from the texts chosen for the school book, and a number of 'suspicious' and crucial words, is the primary data base for the statistical analysis of phoneme distributions (section 2.2.5).

The investigation into the textual organisation of the clause (section 5.3), as well as a significant part of the study of the clause complex (section 5.6), is based primarily on textual material. (Initial hypotheses were, however, formulated on the basis of the elicited corpus.) From a large corpus of twenty or more hours of recorded texts, fifteen texts were selected for close scrutiny; three of these appear in Appendix 1. These fifteen texts, which were chosen more or less at random — and not for any reasons of their merit as coherent texts — are monologues encompassing all genres represented in the corpus. There is no reason to believe that they are not typical representatives of their genres. They were narrated by three different individuals, including the youngest and the oldest speakers. The chosen texts vary in length from about a minute and a half to over ten minutes, in all totaling about forty-five minutes. Altogether there are about 800 clauses. The texts had been transcribed word for word in the field with the assistance of the speaker; most had also been worked over on at least one occasion with another native speaker. I studied them again away from the field, attempting to identify and mark in significant suprasegmental features, which I was convinced played an important role in the organisation of the text as a message bearing unit (see section 5.3).

The reader will notice that no sentences are starred as unacceptable or ungrammatical in this grammar. The present description is based entirely on occurring, and ipso facto acceptable, sentences. Problems in eliciting acceptance or rejection of constructed examples are well known, and I will not go into them here — but see for example Bolinger (1968), Christie (1980), Haas (1973), and Quirk and Svartvik (1966). Suffice it to make the following three observations, specific to the context of my research. Firstly, speakers were as a rule unwilling to label utterances I produced as unacceptable — rather than respond to the actual form of my utterance, they almost invariably presumed that I intended to express

some meaning, and attempted to determine and respond appropriately to that. And secondly, on the other hand, in more than one instance in which a speaker had firmly rejected an invented example, he later used the same construction himself. The reasons for the initial rejection always remained unclear to me. Finally, my theoretical purpose is not, and was not, to delimit the class of grammatical sentences (if indeed such a class is well defined — cf. Hockett 1967), but rather to describe and account for the meaning potential of Gooniyandi utterances.

## CHAPTER TWO

### PHONETICS AND PHONOLOGY

#### 2.1 Phonemes and their realisations

##### 2.1.1 Phoneme inventory

Gooniyandi has nineteen consonant phonemes and three vowels, one of which has distinctive length. They are as indicated in Tables 2-1A and 2-1B.

Table 2-1A: *Consonant phonemes*

	Bilabial	Apico-alveolar	Apico-post-alveolar	Lamino-dental	Lamino-palatal	Dorso-velar
Stops	<i>b</i>	<i>d</i>	<i>ɲ</i>	<i>th</i>	<i>j</i>	<i>g</i>
Nasals	<i>m</i>	<i>n</i>	<i>ɲ</i>	<i>nh</i>	<i>ny</i>	<i>ng</i>
Laterals		<i>l</i>	<i>rl</i>		<i>ly</i>	
Tap/Flap		<i>ɾ</i>				
Glides	<i>w</i>		<i>r</i>		<i>y</i>	

Table 2-1B: *Vowel phonemes*

	Front	Back
High	<i>i</i>	<i>oo</i>
Low	<i>a aː</i>	

The glottal stop [ʔ] occurs in a few interjections, such as [nʔn] 'yes', and is occasionally used in elicited speech to mark morpheme boundaries (see section 2.4.2). A voiceless vowel [ʌ̥] also occurs in at least one interjection, namely [ʌ̥ʌ̥] 'OK'. Since they do not distinguish between 'full' words, [ʔ] and [ʌ̥] have

not been included in Table 2-1, and do not figure in the following account of the phonology.

### 2.1.2 Phoneme contrasts

In this section, minimal or near minimal pairs are given in illustration of the phonemic oppositions between 'suspicious pairs' of phones only — that is, only for those pairs which are sufficiently alike phonetically to be potential allophones of a single phoneme. Each consonant contrast is illustrated for each environment in which it is maintained, word initially (where appropriate), intervocally, and syllable finally, in that order. For the vowel contrasts I first give minimal pairs for the word medial position, then minimal pairs for the word final position.

#### [1] Apical contrasts

##### (a) Stops /d, rd/:

/joodoo/ 'straight'	/joordoo/ 'dust'
/wad-/ 'turn around'	/ward-/ 'go, move'

##### (b) Nasals /n, rn/:

/maningga/ night:time	/marningga/ sister-ERG
/ganbadi/ 'centipede'	/gambag/ 'clapsticks'

##### (c) Laterals /l, rl/:

/wila/ 'OK, finish'	/wirla/ 'back'
/bilnga/ 'osprey' (a type bird)	/birlnga/ 'bark of tree'

##### (d) Rhotics /r, dd/:

/jaari/ 'dry roots of grass'	/jaddi/ 'if'
/bar-/ 'climb up'	/bananggadd-/ 'snatch off'

(e) Others /d, dd/:

/yaadi/ 'we all'	/jaddi/ 'if'
/wad-/ 'turn around'	/wadd-/ 'forget, leave'

[2] **Laminal contrasts**

(a) Stops /th, j/

/thila/ 'back part of kangaroo'	/jila/ 'sun'
/thoothooloo/ 'wren'	/boojoo/ 'finish'
/baajathngarna/ [personal name]	/baj-/ 'get up and go'

(b) Nasals /nh, ny/

/nhinnhin-/ 'poke about'	/nyin-/ 'leave, forget'
/winhi/ 'just'	/wanbinyi/ 'eyebrow'
/minhmithi/ 'chicken hawk'	/giyinyama/ 'bat'

[3] **Apico-alveolar vs. lamino-dental contrasts**

(a) Stops /d, th/:

/dili/ 'flame'	/thiligi/ 'frogmouth'
/joodoo/ 'straight'	/thoothooloo/ 'wren'
/badjangga/ 'quickly'	/baajathngarna/ [personal name]

(b) Nasals /n, nh/:

/nid-/ 'stick in'	/nhinnhin-/ 'poke about'
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/yiniga/ 'how'	/winhi/ 'just'
/binybiny/ 'crimson chat'	/binhngoorloo/ 'golden whistler'

#### [4] Vowel contrasts

##### (a) Position /a, i, oo/:

/baj-/ 'get up and go'	/bij-/ 'emerge'	/booj-/ 'finish up'
/goornda/ 'MBS'	/goorndi/ 'MBD'	/ngoorndoo/ 'someone'

##### (b) Length /a, aa/:

/jabi/ 'small'	/jaabi/ 'back of neck'
/thadda/ 'dog'	/maddaa/ 'sandhill country'

### 2.1.3 Phoneme variation within monomorphemic words

Phoneme variation is very occasionally found within monomorphemic words, both across the range of speakers, and within the speech of single individuals.

I have already mentioned the fluctuation between /nh/ and /ny/ in the pronunciation of *ginharndi* 'you know the one' (see page 8). The opposition between /nh/ and /ny/ is perhaps the weakest in the language: it carries quite a low functional load, and is not consistently maintained in speech affected by alcohol. Some fluent speakers — namely those whose first language is Walmajarri — do not make the distinction at all, although most do appear to distinguish the corresponding stops /th/ and /j/. (Neither opposition is phonemic in Walmajarri (Hudson 1978:4).)

The length distinction in the low vowel has a considerably higher functional load than does the /nh/ vs. /ny/ opposition (see section 2.2.5). However, /a/, /aa/ and /awa/ alternate in at least two words, the subsection terms *jawangari* and *nawangari*. The oldest Gooniyandi speaker nearly always used the forms with /awa/ — that is, /jawangari/ and /nawangari/. Occasionally, however, he said /jaangari/ and /naangari/; only on one occasion did I hear him use the form /jangari/, and I never heard him say /nangari/. The latter forms with the

short vowel were more popular with the younger speakers, who also used the long vowel variant, albeit less frequently. The form with four syllables was almost never heard from speakers under the age of fifty.

#### 2.1.4 Feature description

In this section I suggest a possible feature description of Gooniyandi phonology. Two theoretical frameworks inform the description: systemic linguistics and Praguean phonology. For a more detailed discussion of the feature system, see McGregor (forthcoming-b).

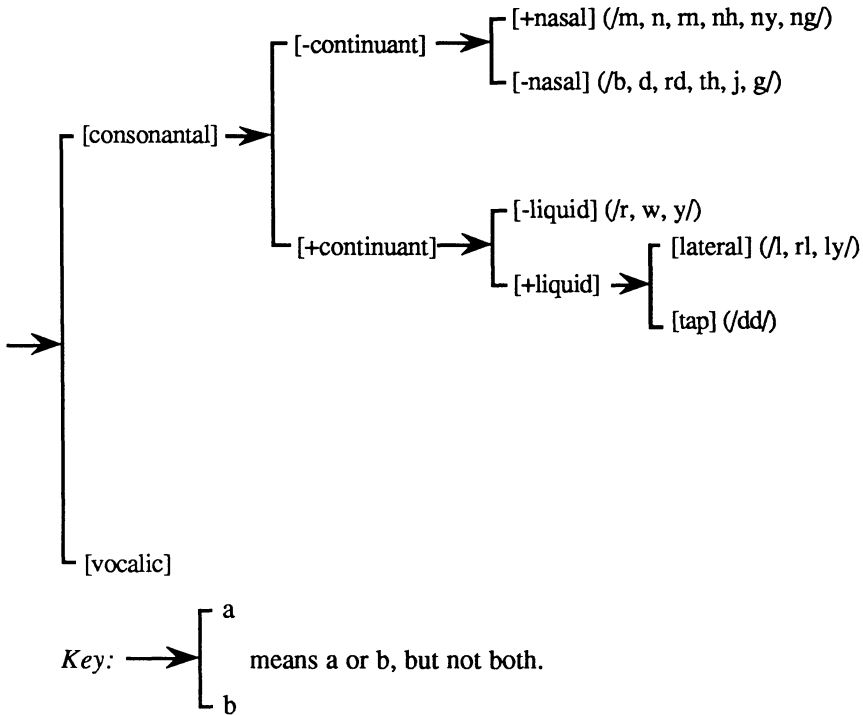
The features, intentionally language specific, are chosen so as to:

- (a) account for allophonic variation in a revealing way;
- (b) enable general statements of phonotactic patterns; and
- (c) permit economical and perspicuous statements of morphophonemic alternations.

Economy of features is not seen as a goal in itself. And it is not claimed that this is the only, or even the best, possible system.

The feature oppositions are all binary and may be classified as either equipollent or privative (Trubetzkoy 1969). No multilateral or gradual oppositions are required for the description of Gooniyandi phonology (cf. Dixon 1980:183). In a number of instances the decision to regard a particular opposition as equipollent or privative is based on less than fully convincing evidence. The principle I have followed is that oppositions are classified as privative whenever there is either evidence of relative markedness of one member of the opposition, or there is morphophonologically conditioned alternation that can be readily captured in rules using + and - values for features.

[1] **Manner system.** The manners of articulation are described in terms of feature oppositions shown in the 'system network' (see e.g. Halliday 1961/1976:54,67, Fawcett 1980:19) of Figure 2-1.

Figure 2-1: *Manner features*

The first contrast is between consonants and vowels, which are distinguished by the opposition of features [consonantal] vs. [vocalic]. I define these features phonotactically, and not in terms of manner of articulation. [consonantal] identifies those segments that must occur in the margins of syllables; [vocalic] identifies segments occurring as syllable nuclei (see section 2.3). (The feature labels 'consonantal' and 'vocalic' have been retained in preference to the more cumbersome though more accurate terms 'syllable margin' and 'syllable nucleus' (respectively) used by Dixon 1980:190.) The glides /r/, /w/, and /y/, which are phonetically very vowel-like are identified as [consonantal] by this definition. Furthermore, their localisation features belong to the [consonantal] system, and not to the [vocalic] system (see page 47 below). The opposition between [consonantal] and [vocalic] has been taken to be equipollent, as there is no evidence of marking of one with respect to the other.

Within the [consonantal] segments a primary division is set up between stops and nasals on the one hand and the remaining consonants on the other.

[±continuant] serves to distinguish these two classes. This feature refers to the continued and/or partially impeded passage of air through the oral cavity. Stops and nasals, which involve complete obstruction in the oral cavity, are distinguished as [-continuant]. Laterals and semivowels have partial obstruction, whilst for the tap/trill obstruction is instantaneous; these segments are thus positively specified as [+continuant]. This opposition is set up for morphophonological reasons: sandhi processes affect a consonant depending on whether it follows a [+continuant] or a [-continuant] (see section 2.4.2.3.1). There is evidence that the opposition is privative (cf. Dixon 1980:183): alternations between [+continuant] and [-continuant] consonants occur at certain morpheme boundaries — for examples see section 2.4.2.3.1. However, various pieces of evidence suggest the relative markedness of each member of the opposition with respect to the other.

[-continuant] consonants are either nasals or stops. There is some evidence that the opposition between these two is privative, with nasals marked with respect to stops. Firstly, stops become nasals when preceding nasals at reduplication boundaries (section 2.4.2.1); and secondly, nasal segments are occasionally (and inconsistently) reduced to stops following stops at enclitic boundaries (section 2.4.2.3.1). It seems reasonable to account for these alternations between stops and nasals with the feature opposition [±nasal]. That stops but not nasals regularly lenite to glides at certain boundaries when following continuants, is further evidence of the unmarkedness of stops vis a vis nasals.

In grammars of Australian languages the approximant /r/ and the tap or trill /dd/ (normally written /rr/) are commonly grouped together as rhotics, and distinguished by their place of articulation, post-alveolar vs. alveolar — see for instance Dixon 1977:32, 1980:144-145, Tsunoda 1981:23, Rumsey 1982b:1, Heath 1984:12, and Stokes 1982:14. This classification is not appropriate to Gooniyandi phonology. The opposition between /r/ and /dd/ is not parallel with the opposition between apico-post-alveolar and apico-alveolar articulation in stops, nasals and laterals. /r/ and /dd/ differ not only in terms of place of articulation, but also in terms of manner. No phonotactic patterns or sandhi processes group these two segments together; nor does this grouping serve in any useful phonological generalisation in Gooniyandi.

Only /r/, and not /dd/, occurs word initially, and only /dd/ occurs syllable finally in root medial syllables. However, this does not constitute evidence that the distinction between these two phonemes is neutralised in these positions, any more than is the fact that /r/ and /ly/ share these identical distributional patterns evidence for the neutralisation of the opposition between them.

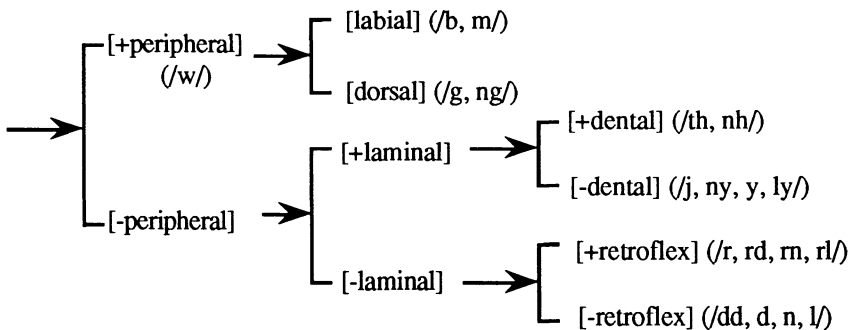
For both phonetic and phonological reasons /r/ belongs with the glides /w/ and /y/. Phonetically, /r/, /w/ and /y/ differ from all other consonants in not involving contact between the two articulators (see next section). Phonotactically, /r/ occurs in ranges of structural positions almost identical with those for /w/ and /y/ (see section 2.2), and differs considerably from the tap /dd/ in terms of these ranges.

Phonotactically /dd/ behaves very much like the laterals, occurring in a very similar range of consonant cluster types (see section 2.2.1). Accordingly they have been grouped together as liquids. In articulatory terms liquids involve partial or instantaneous contact between the articulators, and in this way are distinct from the glides, which involve no contact. Liquids appear to be marked with respect to glides: only the latter alternate with stops. They are distinguished by the opposition [ $\pm$ liquid]. As there are no examples of alternations or neutralisations of the [ $\pm$ liquid] opposition, evidence that it is privative is not particularly compelling.

Within the [+liquid] segments, /dd/ is distinguished from the others by the equipollent opposition [lateral]/[tap]. I use the feature [tap] even though /dd/ has trill allophones, since these may be regarded as sequences of taps. The alternative feature [central], referring to the passage of air across the center of the tongue would be equally appropriate.

[2] **Consonantal localisation system.** It is convenient to describe the six places of articulation of the consonant phonemes in terms of feature oppositions, summarised in the system network of Figure 2-2.

Figure 2-2: *Localisation features*



In Gooniyandi, as in other Australian languages (see Dixon 1980), there are good reasons for grouping the six places of articulation into three pairs: