

# Enindhilyakwa phonology, morphosyntax and genetic position

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This is to certify that:

- (i) the thesis only comprises my original work towards the PhD,
- (ii) due acknowledgement has been made in the text to all other material used,
- (iii) the thesis is less than 100,000 words in length exclusive of tables, maps, bibliographies, examples and appendices,
- (iv) human ethics approval for this research was obtained from the Human Research Ethics Committee of the University of Sydney (Ref No: 05-2008/10821)

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## Abstract

This thesis is a grammatical description of Enindhilyakwa, a non-Pama-Nyungan language spoken by over 1200 people living in the Groote Eylandt archipelago in the Gulf of Carpentaria, Northern Territory, Australia. The language is classified as an isolate in O’Grady et al. (1966), and as “perhaps the most difficult of all Australian languages, with a very complex grammar” (Dixon 1980: 84; Capell 1942: 376). The aim of this thesis is to unravel this complex grammar, morphosyntax and phonology, and to place the language in the context of the neighbouring Arnhem Land languages. I propose that, although highly intricate, Enindhilyakwa morphology is also fairly regular and transparent, and, in fact, patterns much like the Gunwinyguan family of languages to its west.

The areas of grammar covered in this thesis are: phonology (Chapter 2), nouns and adjectives (Chapter 3), verbal prefixes (Chapter 4), verb stem structures (Chapter 5), tense, aspect and mood marking on the verb (Chapter 6), the incorporation of body part and generic nominals into verbs and adjectives (Chapter 7), case marking (Chapter 8), and the genetic affiliation (Chapter 9).

Enindhilyakwa phonology displays some radical departures from the typical Australian pattern, as well as from the typical Gunwinyguan pattern. However, the innovations can be traced back to an original proto-Gunwinyguan stock.

Other grammatical features of this language are: (i) an elaborate noun classification system, involving noun classes, gender and generics incorporated into verbs and adjectives; (ii) an extensive degree of nominal derivation, including inalienable possession, alienable possession and deverbalising prefixes; (iii) four distinct pronominal prefix series on the verb to mark an equal number of moods; (iv) the possibility of most nominal case markers to be used as complementising cases on verbs; and (v) the pervasive use of body parts, which play a major role in naming and classifying inanimate objects.

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<sup>1</sup> This is a Dutch ‘cargo bike’ with two child seats in front. Although very common in the Netherlands, it is not known in Germany (or anywhere else in the world), so we are very conspicuous, and by now also famous.

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## Abbreviations and glossing conventions

- \* 1) ungrammatical example  
2) reconstructed form

### Abbreviations used in glosses

<b>Gloss</b>	<b>Definition</b>	<b>Gloss</b>	<b>Definition</b>
1	first person exclusive	MIST.TH	mistaken thought
12	first person inclusive	NEG	negator
2	second person	NEUT	neuter noun class
3	third person	NP1	atomic non-past
a	augmented	NP2	neutral non-past
ABL	ablative case	NP3	negated non-past
ALL	allative case	NPST	non-past
ALP	alienable possession	NSR	nominaliser
CAUS	causative	O	object (general)
CofR	change of referent marker	P1	atomic past
COLL	collective noun class	P2	neutral past
compl.act	completed action	PI	past imperfective
cont.act	continuing action	pl	plural
DAT	dative case	POL	polite marker
DEM	demonstrative	POSS	possessive case
DENIZ	denizen case	PP	past perfective
du	dual	PRG	pergressive
EMPH	emphatic marker	PRIV	privative case
EXCL	exclamation	PRO	pronoun
FACT	factitive	PROP	proprietary case
f	feminine gender	PST	past
FEM	feminine noun class	PURP	purposive marker
HORT	hortative mood	RDP	reduplication
IMP	imperative mood	REAS	reason marker
INALP	inalienable possession	RECP	reciprocal
INCH	inchoative	REFL	reflexive
INSTR	instrumental case	S	subject (general)
IRR	irrealis mood (realis is unmarked)	sg	singular
KIN	kinship	SF	stem formative
LOC	locative case	tri	trial
m	masculine gender	TRM	termination marker
MASC	masculine noun class	TRVSR	transitiviser
min	minimal (usually unmarked)	VEG	vegetable noun class
		XTD	extended action

### Boundaries

- synchronic morpheme boundary
- + historical morpheme boundary or bound form
- = clitic boundary
- . in glosses: 1) frozen boundary between noun class prefix and noun stem (this boundary is not indicated on the lexeme itself)  
2) separates multiple English words for a single Enindhilyakwa morpheme; in phonetic transcriptions: syllable boundary

### Other glossing conventions:

‘x/y’ in glosses denotes ‘x (subject) acting on y (object)’ for portmanteau pronominal prefixes

‘x-y’ in glosses denotes ‘x (subject) acting on y (object)’ for segmentable pronominal prefixes

For segmentable reverse order combinations subject and object are indicated in the glosses: ‘x.O-y.S’ means ‘y (subject) acting on x (object)’, where y is lower on the person/animacy hierarchy than x and appears in second order

Minimal number is not marked on glosses, so that 2/1 is to be interpreted as ‘second person minimal subject acting upon first person minimal object’, i.e. ‘you(sg) acting upon me’

SMALLCAPS are used to denote items with grammatical, rather than lexical meaning

### In translations:

- Parentheses ‘( )’ are used to denote elided material that is not actually present in the text
- Square brackets ‘[ ]’ are used to denote elided material that is actually present in the text

### Sources

AEH	Alpher, Evans & Harvey (2003)
GED	Groote Eylandt Dictionary (1993)
JH	Jeffrey Heath (n.d.) (unpublished sketch grammar)
JS1	Judith Stokes (1981)
JS2	Judith Stokes (1982)
JW1	Julie Waddy (1987)
JW2	Julie Waddy (1988) (published PhD thesis)
LL	Language Lessons books (Reid, Stokes & Waddy 1983)
VL1	Velma Leeding (1989) (unpublished PhD thesis)
VL2	Velma Leeding (1996)
WD	Waddy Dictionary (unpublished digital file)
Ansec1,2	Anindilyakwa Secondary roots1, 2 (unpublished digital files by Julie Waddy)
‘Awurukwa’ w34	Stories collected by Judith Stokes, Julie Waddy and colleagues at Angurugu Linguistics in the 1960s-80s (name of story in inverted commas, followed by reference letter of story and reference line)
anin1_dl_au_001	Fieldwork recording (fieldwork trip_initials of speaker_type of recording_number of recording)

### Languages mentioned in text

BGW	Bininj Gun-Wok (GN)	Ngal	Ngalakgan (GN)
D	Dalabon (GN)	Ngan	Ngandi (GN)
Dj	Djambarrpuynu (Yolngu)	pGN	proto-Gunwinyguan
Eng	English	PN	Pama-Nyungan
Enin	Enindhilyakwa	pPN	proto-Pama-Nyungan
GN	Gunwinyguan	Rem	Rembarrnga (GN)
GP	Gapapuyngu (Yolngu)	Ri	Ritharrngu (Yolngu)
Mac	Macassan	Wub	Wubuy (aka Nunggubuyu, GN)

