



Scar tree (bark taken to make a canoe), Currency Creek roadside, near Lake Alexandrina

A Tourist's Guide to the Narinyiri Language

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Spelling

Language names are often spelt slightly differently. As Aboriginal people originally had no writing, how to spell Aboriginal words became a matter of choice, with the result that there is no single necessarily correct spelling. Wherever possible in this guide (i.e. excluding quoted material) the simplest spelling of *Narinyiri* has been used.

Some Aboriginal people, when asked about the origins of Aboriginal people in Australia, assert ‘we were always here’. A more generally accepted view is that people arrived in Australia long ago, probably from New Guinea when it was connected to continental Australia when the seas were lower during an ice age. There might have been a succession of such arrivals. Who knows? There is evidence of Aboriginal inhabitation of the country for 65 000 years.

[<https://www.nma.gov.au/defining-moments/resources/evidence-of-first-peoples>] It is thought that people arrived in the vicinity of Darwin, and from there over time spread all over the country. As Hobart in Tasmania is about 4500 km from Darwin, a group of people travelling one kilometre a year, or three metres a day, would have had time to go there and back nine times during this immense period. One area they travelled to is the south east of South Australia. As the Narinyiri, along with other Aboriginal peoples of southern Victoria and Tasmania, subsequently travelled furthest from the far north of the country, it can be reasonably assumed they arrived in this region earlier than peoples in locations closer to, say, Darwin.

When a group of people first arrived in continental Australia its members would have all spoken the same language. It is conceivable there were multiple such arrivals over time. The population however it arose would have gradually grown, people would have begun moving away as families needed space of their own. The further they got, it stands to reason, the longer would have been the time since they or their forebears left the starting point, and it is also likely that the way they spoke to one another would have slowly evolved. This is what always happens with languages—the greater the distance, and time, of separation, the more languages change. How all this movement and development took place is not known, but by the time of the European upheaval in Australia beginning with the arrival of the First

Fleet in 1788 it is thought that there were around 300 or so language groups on the land mass—and far more dialects—all associated with their own areas of the country. [<https://aiatsis.gov.au/explore/languages-alive>]

So great was the disparity in power between the newcomers and the original inhabitants, however (muskets and cannons against spears and hatchets), and so incessant were the arrivals of shiploads of immigrants at the same time as the numbers of Aboriginal people were declining from new diseases and conflict, that language groups were largely overwhelmed when contact occurred, beginning in Sydney and spreading from there. Of those hundreds of language groups, today only about a dozen in the centre and north of the country remain in the flourishing state of being passed on to children.

Who are the Narinyiri?

The Narinyiri are a South Australian Aboriginal language group occupying the coastal strip on the edge of Encounter Bay, so named because it was where Captain Matthew Flinders ran into the French explorer Nicolas Baudin in 1802, when both were mapping the Australian coast. This ‘encounter’ was a peaceable one although France and Britain were at war at the time.

In the approximate language area map following, which draws on work by Tindale [<https://www.mapworld.com.au/products/aboriginal-australia-tindale-800-x-640mm-map>], Dixon [Dixon, R. M. W. (2002). *Australian Languages*. Cambridge, U.K., Cambridge University Press: p.xxviii] and Horton [<https://aiatsis.gov.au/explore/map-indigenous-australia>], the orange Narinyiri language area is surrounded by a number of other language groups. A well-known tourist location in this area is the Coorong.

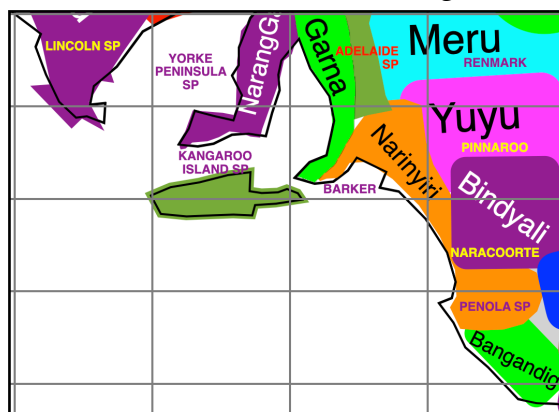


Fig. 1 SE South Australia: the Narinyiri occupy the orange area on this approximate language area map

Where did the Narinyiri come from?

The Rev. Taplin considered this matter at some length in his Folklore book [p.12 ff]. He dismissed facial contour and bodily peculiarities as indicators of race, and language, too, though he said 'where either lexical or grammatical similarity exists it points to a connection between the races at some past time'. 'Organization of society—system of kinship—may be regarded as a proof, but not a perfect proof, of the country from whence a race came.' Warming to this theme he added: 'We are certainly justified, where we find a barbarous people possessing a complicated but peculiar and well-established system of kinship, which is the same as that which is found in a large civilised nation, in regarding it as extremely probable that they are an offshoot from that nation.' And: 'Myth, religion, and sorcery are also guides when we seek the origin of a people.'

Where Taplin's reasoning was headed was this: 'The more we study the Australian aborigines, the deeper becomes our conviction that they consist of two races. In some cases tribes are of one race only, and in other cases they are a mixture of the two. Some of their traditions support this view.' He then noted 'a system of kinship prevalent in southern India, amongst the Tamil and Telugu races, which is peculiar', and went on to say: 'Now, in some Australian tribes, this system is found in its completeness. In other tribes it is not so complete. Where it exists it is an indication that the original country of the Australian aborigines was southern and south-eastern Asia.'

Next: 'As we look at the map of south-eastern Asia, Australasia, Melanesia, and Polynesia we shall mark the peculiar distribution of two great races. To the east we find the peoples of which the Tahitians, Hawaiians, and Tongans are types, scattered most numerous. They have, as a remarkable characteristic, unity of language, and an indisposition to change their language. As we go west we find them more and more thinly scattered, until we have but few traces of them amongst the multitudes of the dark races inhabiting the western groups of islands. These dark races—Papuan, as they have been called—are remarkable for the multitude of their languages.' He went on:

'Now, amongst the Australian aborigines, we have tribes of both types.' And concluded: 'Such facts, which it will be perceived we gather up from outside the Australian continent and apply to its aborigines, certainly go to prove that they did not have their origin here. The weight of evidence is in favor of their identity with the races inhabiting the continents and archipelagoes to the north and east, where we find the same system of kinship, the same customs, the same mental characteristics, and the same kinds of sorcery.'

From this perhaps he meant the Aboriginal people came from New Guinea, and the Pacific islands.

Sources of information

Extensive records of the language were made at an early date by missionaries sent to the area with the aim of converting the Aboriginal people to Christianity.

The first of these was the Rev. H.A.E. Meyer (1813-62) from the Evangelical Lutheran Mission Society in Dresden, Germany. Meyer arrived in South Australia with his wife in August 1840 and



worked among the Ramindjeri people of the Encounter Bay area. By 1843 his 111-page book on the language had been published, comprising a word list, or 'Vocabulary', and a comprehensive grammar dealing with, among other things, nouns and their cases (to, from, of, at etc.), adjectives, pronouns, verbs and their tenses and moods, and adverbs. While his focus was on spiritual work, Meyer started a school and encouraged the people to support themselves through farming. The mission closed in 1848.

[Information from Griffith University 'German missionaries in Australia' website: <http://missionaries.griffith.edu.au/mission/encounter-bay-1840-1848-0>]

The next major source of information on the Narinyiri language came a generation later, through the Rev. George Taplin (1831-79), an English Congregationalist missionary, who arrived in South Australia in 1849, beginning



his work by Lake Alexandrina ten years later and remaining there until his death. His principal works on the language were *The Narrinyeri* (Adelaide, 1874), *Native Tribes of South Australia*, ed J.D. Woods (1879) and

The Folklore, Manners, Customs, and Languages of the South Australian Aborigines (1879).

Taplin dealt at length with the culture and customs of the people. He also dealt with the language, and in doing so acknowledged his predecessor's work, writing: 'The Rev. H.A.E. Meyer ... made a brave attempt to master the grammar of this language in 1843, and with some success; but yet his attempt presents a great number of ludicrous mistakes to one better acquainted with it.' [Folklore, p.5]. Meyer's was, however, the more comprehensive coverage.

According to the Bible preached by these missionaries 'We are all equally made in God's image' (Genesis 1:26-28); 'The rich and poor have this in common: The Lord made them both' (Proverbs 22:2); 'There is neither Jew nor Gentile, neither slave nor free, nor is there male and female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus' (Galatians 3:28). While it might therefore have been assumed that Taplin thought of the Aboriginal people he lived long amongst as the equal of himself and other Europeans, his views reflected attitudes of the time:

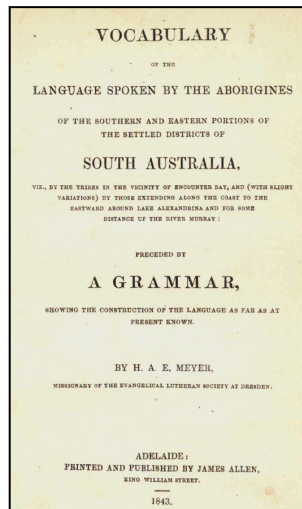
... man most nearly approaches the brute when he exists with the least possible use of implements. [Folklore, p.9]

... The human savage can never descend to the perfect brute state, because before he becomes thus completely degraded he dies. There is no country in the known world where man can live without implement or weapon. ... Man's highest state of health and vigor is only compatible with high civilisation and pure morality. The writer has had proof of this amongst the Narinyiri. There was a little family residing on Lake Alexandrina, the members of which were as nearly brutes as they could be. ... they subsisted on roots and native fruits, and such fish and game as came into their hands by means of the simplest contrivances, the thrown waddy or the

simple noose—and they were regarded by their own people as very low. They would not even make a break-wind, or shelter, but cowered under bushes and in holes; and yet it could not but be evident how far they were above the brute; the man could make twine, the woman a rush basket. The writer knew them for twenty years... [Folklore, p.10]

Meyer was not flattering either, describing Narinyiri as 'a language spoken by a people very generally considered the lowest in the scale of civilization.' [vii]

The reference books

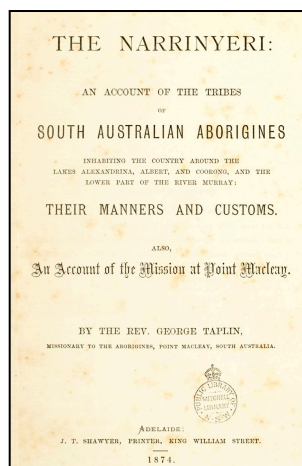


Vocabulary

Meyer, H. A. E. (1843). *Vocabulary of the Language Spoken by the Aborigines of the Southern and Eastern Portions of the Settled Districts of South Australia, viz., by the Tribes in the Vicinity of Encounter Bay, and (with slight variations) by those Extending along the Coast to the Eastward around Lake Alexandrina and for some Distance up the River Murray: Preceded by a*

Grammar, Showing the Construction of the Language as far as at Present Known. Adelaide, James Allen, King William Street.

<https://nla.gov.au/nla.obj-240887698/view?partId=nla.obj-240904123#page/n8/mode/1up>

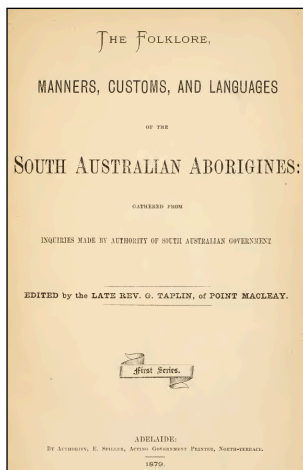


The Narrinyeri

Taplin, G., The Rev. (1874). *The Narrinyeri: An Account of the Tribes of South Australian Aborigines inhabiting the Country around the Lakes Alexandrina, Albert, and Coorong, and the lower part of the River Murray: their Manners and Customs; also, An Account of the Mission at Point Macleay.* Adelaide, J.T. Shawyer, Printer, King

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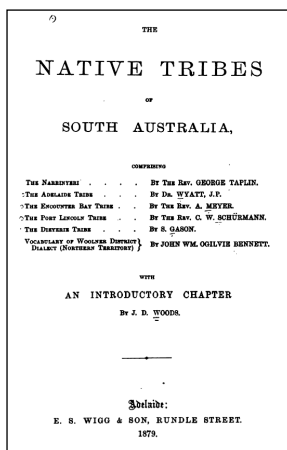
<https://files02.sl.nsw.gov.au/fotoweb/pdf/1626/162665010.pdf>



Folklore, including The Grammar

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<https://archive.org/details/folkloremannersc00taplrich/mode/2up>

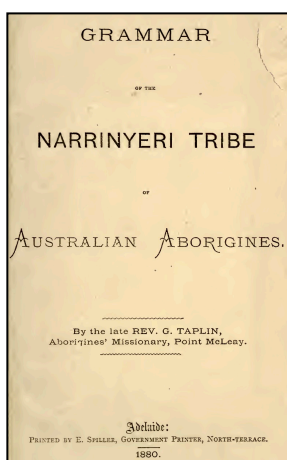


Native Tribes

Woods, J. D., Ed. (1879). *The Native Tribes of South Australia, comprising The Narrinyeri by the Rev. George Taplin, The Adelaide Tribe by Dr. Wyatt, J.P., The Encounter Bay Tribe by the Rev. A. Meyer, The Port Lincoln Tribe by the Rev. C.W. Schürmann, The Dieyerie Tribe by S. Gason, Vocabulary of Woolner District Dialect (Northern Territory) by John Wm. Ogilvie Bennett with an*

Introductory Chapter by J.D. Woods. Adelaide, E.S. Wigg & Son, Rundle Street.

<https://archive.org/details/nativetribessou00taplgoog>



The Grammar

Taplin, G., The Rev. (1880). *Grammar of the Narrinyeri Tribe of Australian Aborigines.* Adelaide, E. Spiller, Government Printer, North-terrace.

<https://nla.gov.au/nla.obj-688657419/view?partId=nla.obj-688727524#page/n0/mode/1up>

own special words or jargon that everyone who works in that area knows, but those outside of it generally do not. So too do grammarians, and it is grammar that is being looked at here.

The major word categories, or parts of speech, in languages are nouns, to do with names of things and ideas (e.g. tree, man, happiness), and verbs, to do with actions (e.g. run, think, throw). Then there are pronouns, which stand in for nouns, and are mainly about people (I, you, us, them etc.); next come adjectives (e.g. big, little, quick, old,) and adverbs (e.g. here, there, quickly, slowly), which add meaning to, or qualify, nouns (big tree) and verbs (run quickly) respectively. Prepositions (at, in, or, by, with, from, to, in, out, under, etc.) are like the oil making a language's constituent parts work. Other parts of speech are articles (a, an, the), demonstratives (this, that, those etc.) and interjections or exclamations (hey!, oh! etc.)

Languages are different in the way they convey meaning, and in the way they are written, if written at all. Australian languages were not written before the time Europeans descended on this land, found out something about the inhabitants and occasionally made records, writing down what they thought they heard, and what they thought it meant. As Australian languages are quite different from English, it is not surprising that often there were misinterpretations, and that the way the Europeans wrote down what they heard was approximate.

English as a language depends on word order, as the sentence dog bites man readily shows. The word that comes first indicates who or what (dog) is doing the action (biting), and a later word indicates the person or thing it is done to (man). In this sentence, the 'do-er', dog, is the subject of the sentence; its function (or case) in this situation is labelled as ergative, sometimes called nominative. Man, the 'done to', is the object of the sentence; its function is labelled accusative.

Speakers of languages generally use around 10 000 words although they may understand or know many more. The same would apply to Australian languages, including Nariniyiri.

General comments on language

The practitioners of various specialist areas of human activity, whether they be doctors, carpenters, butchers and so on, all have their

General features of Australian languages

Australian languages vary in the way sentences are formed and how nouns and verbs are made up. In many languages, a verb stem or root is followed by various particles or *suffixes*, often finishing with a tense marker and then bound pronouns. Such elaborating suffixes provide information that in English would be supplied by separate words. In Australian languages, generally speaking, it is *all* about the suffixes.

In many languages, including Australian languages, while word order is to some extent useful it is not essential, there being other ways to indicate who or what is doing an action. In Australian languages this is achieved by adding an ending, or suffix, to the 'do-er', such a suffix often featuring '-u' (e.g. -*gu*, -*ngu*, -*du*). The word that includes such an ending is likely to be who or what is doing the action, regardless of where it occurs in the sentence. For example, in the sentence *man sees girl*, when the order is jumbled up but -*gu* is added to the 'do-er' (*girl man-gu sees*), we can still tell who is doing the seeing: *gu* indicates the man is doing it. The name of this suffix marking the subject, 'do-er', in a *transitive* sentence (one in which there is also a 'done to', or object) is *ergative*. While English does use suffixes (e.g. govern: governs, governed, governing, governor, government), it does not do so in anything like the way or to the extent that Australian languages do.

In contrast to English and other European languages, Australian languages generally do not have verbs 'to be' and 'to have'. They work around this, often using 'to sit' or 'to stand' for 'to be'. They also use noun suffixes indicating 'having' and 'lacking'. So *dogs have tails* and *people don't have tails* would be expressed as *dog tail-having* and *people tail-lacking*. Other features that differ from English and other European languages include a very limited range of words for numbers and colours.

This does not mean that Australian languages are primitive or deficient, however, just that they are different. At times they can be considerably more sophisticated than European languages. For example, where English and other languages have terms for 'we', 'you' and 'they', Australian languages distinguish between two and more-than-two people, having

words for 'we-two' and 'we-all', 'you-two' and 'you-all' and 'they-two' and 'they-all'. A further sophistication of some languages occurs in such sentences as *we are going*, in which the use of one pronoun would mean we (*but not* you) are going, while use of a different pronoun would indicate that we (*including* you) are going.

Another example of Australian language precision is found in words for human relations: separate terms for 'older sister's husband' and for the son or daughter of a male, for example, make the terms 'aunt', 'nephew', 'grandfather' and 'mother-in-law' used in English look vague.

In other respects, Australian languages tend to keep things simple. They do not have genders, which in some European languages (although not, thankfully, in English) make 'tables' feminine (French) or masculine (Italian) or the 'sea', again, feminine in French and masculine in Italian. German is yet more complicated in having neuter. All nouns in these European languages are either masculine, feminine (or neuter), and all speakers have to learn which is which.

Australian languages frequently do not show plurals. Articles (a, an, the) used in English and other European languages are not found in Australian languages. Nor are prepositions (at, in, by etc.), Australian languages expressing such concepts by using suffixes instead.

There is another instance of the keep-it-simple principle. It was mentioned above that in Australian languages a *gu*-type suffix is added to the 'do-er' in a sentence to show who is doing the action. However, there are some words, often to do with movement, whether there is no other party involved (e.g. horse *gallops*, grasshopper *jumps*). Such verbs are called *intransitive*, and as in these instances no one else other than the horse or grasshopper could be doing the galloping or jumping, generally speaking Australian languages see no need to apply a suffix to them.

Particular features of the Narinyiri language

Taplin wrote: 'The language of the Narrinyeri is lexically very different from the languages of the neighboring tribes' [Grammar, p.6]. And

Meyer: ‘... this language [has a] great difference, not only in the grammatical forms, but also in the radicals of the words, from the language spoken by the natives in the vicinity of Adelaide ...’ [vi]

Two notable characteristics of the Narinyiri language are consonant clusters, and the fact that many words begin with *l*- and *r*-. Consonant ‘clusters’ are occasions when two or more consonants occur together, as in the words ‘*strange*’ and ‘*Shaftsbury Avenue*’ in English. Such consonant clusters at the beginning of words in Narinyiri include *kld*-, *dl*-, *dr*-, *gl*-, *gr*-, *ngl*-, *ngr*-, *yl*-, *yr*-; as well as *-ndr*- (mid-word). Linguist R.M.W. Dixon, on consonants in words in Australian languages writes [using ‘C’ for consonant and ‘V’ for vowel]:

In most languages words begin with a single consonant and end with either a single consonant or a vowel. In a number of languages all words end in a vowel and in some all words end in a consonant. There are languages with initial CC [i.e. two consonants] clusters, achieved by omitting an initial CV and exposing medial CC, or by omitting the vowel between first and second consonants. And some have final CC clusters, which have developed by similar paths. In addition, a number of languages have medial clusters of three consonants, most of which probably developed through omitting an unstressed medial vowel. [Dixon 2002 p.66]

In many Australian languages every word must consist of at least two syllables; each word must begin with a single consonant and can end in a consonant or a vowel. There is just one vowel in each syllable; between any two vowels there must be one, or a sequence of two, consonants. We can summarise this in a formula:

CV(C)CV(C)

where C indicates consonant and V vowel, and parentheses, (...), include an optional element.

[Dixon 1980 p.127]

A few languages, mostly in the southeast, allow words to begin with consonant clusters such as *gl*-, *bl*-, *gr*-, *br*-; it seems that this is also a recent development, involving the loss of an original unstressed vowel ... [Dixon 1980 p.128]

Dixon’s remarks indicate that it is overwhelmingly normal for Aboriginal words to begin with a consonant, then for this to be followed by a vowel, making up a first syllable; then a consonant (sometimes a pair, or even three) consonants, then another vowel—and perhaps another consonant, making up a second syllable; and there could sometimes be other syllables formed in the same way. How Narinyiri differs from this is that many words begin with two consonants—with consonant clusters.

The second significant distinguishing feature of Narinyiri is that many words begin with the consonants *l*- and *r*-. To show how unusual this is, here is a summary of how words begin across Australia as recorded in the Bayala databases:

Database	b-	d-	g-	l-	m-	n-	ng-	r-	w-	y-
Coastal	13625	9184	15211	67	8092	4292	8867	65	4904	6385
Inland	12297	7144	6834	285	7092	7525	4729	58	7022	5350
Interstate	8775	8028	11202	625*	7297	3398	4132	287†	6369	4594
Victoria	3114	2519	2610	335	1907	1246	858	79	2080	1113
Nyungar	4414	3618	6122	4	3686	1804	2035	5	3039	2126
WestAust	540	430	725	10	535	271	200	6	588	287
Tasmania	4484	3870	2266	3897	3348	2396	181	1448	1956	304

Fig. 3 Showing the number of words beginning with particular letters in the databases

*625 (318 *Narinyiri*); †287 (139 *Narinyiri*)

The highlighted columns in the table show that across the nation, apart from in Tasmania, numbers of instances of words beginning with *l*- and *r*- are far fewer (approaching zero in some instances) than words beginning with other consonants. This aversion to *l*- and *r*- initial words is less pronounced in the Bayala Interstate database, however, largely owing to the influence of the Narinyiri examples.

The Bayala databases are a collection of databases developed by the present writer listing Australian language words and sentences mainly from historical records nationwide. Currently including about 250 000 records, they are comprehensive enough to allow such general observations to be made as the frequency of words in Australian languages beginning with *l*- and *r*-.

Dixon, R.M.W. *The Languages of Australia*. Cambridge, U.K.: Cambridge University Press, 1980.
Dixon, R.M.W. *Australian Languages*. Cambridge, U.K.: Cambridge University Press, 2002.

Language name Narinyiri

The names of many Australian languages are based on the word ‘no’ in the language concerned. Aboriginal people evidently were well aware of the fact that each language having its own distinctive word for ‘no’ was a distinguishing feature of languages. So major language groups in New South Wales **Wira**-dhuri and **Gamil**-arayi have names that translate as *no-having*, the word for ‘no’ in those languages being respectively **wira** and **gamil**. Alternatively a language name might be ‘no’ repeated, as in the Murray River languages **Bureba Bureba**, **Wemba Wemba** and quite a few others.

The language name Nar-inyiri also means ‘nar’-having; however, *nar* does not mean ‘no’. Meanings recorded for *nar* include ‘intelligible’, ‘that’ and ‘build’, but it would be simply a guess to opt for one of these as being the meaning of the name for this language.

It is time to look at some examples of the Narinyiri language.



Noun suffixes

While many Australian languages manage without a plural (English adds *-s*), Narinyiri has a suffix, or ending, to denote ‘two of something’ (basically **-engG**), and another for ‘many of them’ (**-ar**).

The following table is largely based on Meyer’s work.

Noun suffixes

		Singular	Dual	Plural
Ergative	transitive	il	ingul	ar
Nominative	intransitive	i	ingG	ar
Possessive	of	awi		
Dative–Allative	to	ungayi / angG	ungingul	ungar
Ablative–Elative	from	nind [person] / anmand [place]	ingulund / iningulund	inind / anand
Locative	at	ald	ingal	an
Loc/All [?]	at	ungayi	ungingul	ungar
Causative	by	anyir [?] / il	ingul	ar
Instrumental	using	ngayi	ungingul	ungar
Purposive	for	ambi / uramb		

Fig. 4 Noun suffixes (largely based on Meyer, and simplified, p.12-15)

Changes in the table above include:

- the addition of terms used in modern linguistics, such as *ergative* for the subject of a *transitive* sentence (one in which someone (the subject) does something to someone (the object))—as in ‘dog bit snake’. An *intransitive* sentence is when someone just does something, affecting no-one else—as in ‘he walks’.
- changes in terminology: *allative* and *elative*—to and from—replace *dative* and *ablative*, the older terms being broader concepts (dative: *to* and *for*; ablative: *by*, *with*, *from*, *at*, *in*, *on*). For ‘at, in, on’ the term *locative*, i.e. related to *location* or *place*, is introduced. (These terms are known as *cases*.)
- All this has necessitated some reassignment of the cases to the suffixes, notably of *ergative* often replacing *causative* in examples used by both Meyer and Taplin for the subject of a transitive sentence.

How the suffixes in the Fig. 4 table are applied to an actual word are shown for ‘child’ in the table below:

Child

		Sing.	Dual	[Engl]	Plural	[Engl]
ERG	transitive	burlil	burlingul	2 chn	burlar	3+ chn
NOM	intransitive	burli	burlingG	2 chn	burlar	3+ chn
POSS	of			of 2 chn		of 3+ chn
ALL	to	burlangG	burlungingun	to 2 chn	burlungar	to 3+ chn
ELA	from	burlinind	burlingulund burliningulund	from 2 chn	burlinind burlanand	from 3+ chn
LOC	at	burlald	burlingal	at 2 chn	burlan	at 3+ chn
CAUS	by			by 2 chn		by 3+ chn
INSTR	using			2 chn using		3+ chn using
?		burlungayi	ungengul		ungar	
PURP	for			for 2 chn		for 3+ chn

Fig. 5 Noun suffixes on **burli**: child (based on Taplin, p.9)

The blanks in the Fig. 5 table are there because Taplin did not provide examples that might be inserted, although the following might be appropriate:

POSS **burlawi**, CAUS **burlanyir**, PURP **burlambi**.

Verb suffixes

Verbs consist of the basic part of a word of action, its stem, to which additional components may be added. In most Australian languages such extras are suffixes, or endings. While additional components are common in Narinyiri, they are not always added onto the verb stem, there seeming to be the possibility of considerable freedom in the arrangement of the components, as shown by Taplin with the sentence:

Nginte el our ityan lak
ngindi il ur idyan lag
thou must spear him
 thou-ERG INTent must him pierce

Normally, i.e. in Australian languages generally, the additional components would be added onto the stem—here, **lag** (pierce)—as suffixes and so such a sentence might have the form:

ngindi lag-il-ur idyan
thou must spear him
 thou-ERG pierce-INTent must him

Additional suffixes include tense markers, terms known as *derivational* suffixes (drv sfx), as well as words added on (e.g. *wal*, *war*, *mind*) affecting meaning:

Suffix (tense markers)	Tense	interpreted in the Bayala databases as:
in	present	now
ani/il	future	will/INTend
ir/ur	past	did
imb	past historic	PH
Suffix (drv sfx)	Function	interpreted in the Bayala databases as:
ung	reciprocal	RECIP
li	continuing (-ing)	CONT
ur/ura	must	must
ild/ildi	could, would	
al	desire	DESire
il	intend	INT
i	no, not, negative	
Suffixing verb	Meaning	interpreted in the Bayala databases as:
-wal-in	be, become	INERT
-war-in	act, make	URG
-mind-in	make	

Fig. 6 Common verb suffixes

Pronouns

In Narinyiri there are pronouns for *I, thou, he, we, you, they*, and for the accusative equivalents *me, thee, him, us, you, them* ('thou' and 'thee' being used here to distinguish 'you-singular' and 'you-dual/plural'). These pronouns often have two forms: one set that stand by themselves, as is always the case in English, called 'free'. Those in the second set are usually shorter; called 'bound' pronouns, they are attached to verbs as suffixes.

Terminology: 'first person' is *I, me, we, us*; 'second person' is *thou, thee, you*; and 'third person' is *he (she, it), him (her, it), they, them*. 'Singular' is *I, thou, he*; 'dual' is *we-two, you-two, they-two*; 'plural' is *we-all, you-all, they-all*.

First, second and third person pronouns, singular, dual and plural

			Singular	[I/me]	Dual	[...-two]	Plural	[...-all]
			Free	bound	Free	bound	Free	bound
1	ERG	I	ngadi	ad/adi	ngil	angil	ngurn	
	NOM	I	ngabi	ab	ngil	angil	ngurn	
	ACC	me	ngan	an	lam	alam	nam	anam
2	ERG	thou	ngindi	ind	ngurl	ung-url	ngun	ungun
	NOM	thou	ngindi	ind/indi	ngurl	ung-url	ngun	ungun
	ACC	thee	ngum	um/m	lum	alum	num	anum
3	ERG	he	gil	il	gingGul	ingGul	gar	ar
	NOM	he	gidyi	idy	gingG	ingG	gar	ar
	ACC	him	gin	in	gingGun	ingGun	gan	an

Fig. 7 Free and bound pronouns. Translations for 'Dual' are **we-two**, **us-two**, and for Plural, **we-all** and **us-all**

Third person pronouns: cases

	Singular	[English]	Dual	[English]	Plural
ERG	gil	he	gingGul	they-two/all	gar
NOM	gidyi	he	gingG	they-two/all	gar
ACC	gin	him	gingGun	them-two/all	gan
POSS	ginawi	of him	gingGunawi	of them-two/all	ganawi
ALL	ginanG	to him	gingGunangG	to them-two/all	ganangG
ELA	ginanyir	from him	gingGunanyir	from them-two/all	gananyir
LOC		at him		at them-two/all	
CAUS		by him		by them-two/all	
INSTR		him-using		them-two/all-using	
PURP	ginambi	for him	gingGunambi	for them-two/all	ganambi

Fig. 8 Additional cases for 'he/him, they/them-two, they/them-all'. 'He' stands also for 'she, it', 'him' also for 'her, hers'

Most frequently occurring Narinyiri suffixes

The following table showing the most frequently occurring suffixes draws on the works of Meyer, Taplin and the records in Curr, E. M. (1886b) *The Australian race: its origin, languages, customs, place of landing in Australia, and the routes by which it spread itself over that continent*. In four volumes. Melbourne, John Ferres, Government Printer.

Item	Significance	Function	Freq.
ab	I	pronoun	4
ag	two		3
alam	us-two	pronoun	2
ald	at		4
amaldi	agent		4
ambi	PURPose: for		5
an	them-all	pronoun	2
an	me	pronoun	4
andayi	times		2
andi	perhaps		2
angang	we-two	pronoun	2
angG	to, at		5
ani	FUTure will	verb	3
anmand	from		3
anyir	from, because		3
ar	TRANSitive	verb	2
ar	they-all	pronoun	3
ar	PLURal		5
awi	[relatives] of	pronoun	3
awi	of		5
awu	justnow		2
awuri	HABitual		2
ayi	QUESTion		2
di	from, by		3
dul	place of [?]/ from [?]		2
dyi	lacking		3
i	no NEGative		2
idyan	him [her, it]	pronoun	3
idyi	he [she, it]	pronoun	3
ig	place [?]		2
il	he [she, it]	pronoun	2
il	exist, do	verb	2

il	DESire / PERMit / might	verb	3
il	INTend	verb	3
il	by [ERG?]		3
il	ing [continuing]	verb	6
im	thee	pronoun	4
imbi	PAST HISToric	verb	2
in	self: RFLX, RECIP	pronoun	3
in	PRESent: now	verb	6
indi	thou	pronoun	4
ing	him [her, it]	pronoun	3
ingG	they-two	pronoun	2
ingG	two		5
ingGun	two-ACC		2
ingGun	them-two	pronoun	3
inyiri	having		4
ir	PAST did	verb	4
mind	make	verb	3
mundund	direction, location [?]		2
n	this		2
nind	from, because		3
ru	more		2
ul	somewhat		2
ulum	ye-two	pronoun	2
und	ACCusative		2
ungayi	at, to; in company with, INSTR		3
ungung	you-all	pronoun	2
ungurl	you-two	pronoun	2
ur	must	verb	3
urmi	INSTR using		3
wadyiri	plenty		3
wal	become	verb	5
wali	him-of	pronoun	3
war	at		2
war	make	verb	4

The frequency number code on the right is:
code # significance

1	1-5 examples	4	51-100 examples
2	6-20 examples	5	101-500 examples
3	21-50 examples	6	500+ examples

The rarer code 1 examples (about 20) have been omitted.

Narinyiri vocabulary

The Narinyiri word as originally recorded is given in the first column followed by a simplified standardised respelling. Next is the original English translation, then finally a corresponding simplified standardised English equivalent. They are drawn from the Bayala databases, which incorporate the words provided in the sources described above.

Australian	respelt	English	simplified
warrin	war-in	to make	act-now
amalde	amaldi	an agent	agent
tamin	dam-in	to point	aim-now
Taminyun	dam-in-yun	to shoot	aim-now-xxx
Tumbewall in	dumbi-wal-in	Alive	alive-become-now
ngruntung ar	ngrund-ungar	of all	all-at-PLUR
Ngrakkuw allin	nragu-wal-in	Angry, to be	anger-become-now
Nyenkulun	nyinG-ul-un	Dissatisfied	anger-ing-now
Konkinyeri	gunG-inyiri	Away, apart [by itself]	apart-having
Tyele	dyili	Arm above elbow	arm upper
Yari	yari	Back	back
laminin	lamin-in	carrying on the back	backcarry-now
wirrangwallin	wirang-wal-in	being bad	bad-be-now
Perle-wall-in	birli-wal-in	being bad	bad-become-now
wirrangwarin	wirang-war-in	doing wrong	bad-make-now
Pulyugge	bulyugGi	Ball	ball
Yorle	yurl	Bark of trees	bark
Menake	minagi	Beard	beard
mempin	mimb-in	striking	beat-now
Tant-urmi	dand-urmi	sleeping thing, a bed	bed [sleep-INSTR]
Mankuri	manGuri	Belly	belly
Grauwe	grawi	Large	big
ngolkir	ngulg-ir	was bitten, i.e., He bit him	bite-did
Kineman	giniman	Black	black
Tonde	dundi	Blind	blind
krewe	griwi	blood	blood
Kruwalde	gruwaldi	Bloody	blood
Winkundun	winG-und-un	Breathing	blow-ing-now
Partpate	bardbadi	Bone	bone
lulun	lul-un	breaking	break-now
morokkun	murug-un	to fetch	bring-now
gelanowe	gil-an-awi	my elder brother	brother-me-of elder
kulkun	gulg-un	burning (transitive)	burn-now

nyrangkin	nyrangG-in	burning (intransitive)	burn-now
Nompulun	numb-ul-un	Planting	bury-ing-now
Ngauandi	ngawandi	Bird's-nest	camp [nest]
porle	burli	a child	child
porlungai	burl-unga	to, with, or on a child	child-at
Porlaldol	burl-ald-ul	Of a little child	child-at-of
porlengulund	burl-ing-ul-und	from two children	child-two-of-from
Wullun	wul-un	Cloudless sky	clear-now
Munkumb ole	munGumbuli	Clever	clever
Murunkun	murunGun	Cool	cold
Tlaltal-in	dladal-in	becoming cold	cold-now
Puntir itye	bund-ir-idyi	He came	come-did he
Puntir engk	bund-ir-ingG	They two came	come-did they two
Puntin	bund-in	Coming	come-now
Kurkude	gurgudi	crooked, bowed, bent	crooked
yuntuwallin	yundu-wal-in	crowding	crowd-be-now
Patyuwarrin	badyu-war-in	Doctoring	cure-make-now
Pornil	burnil	Dead	dead
Piruwallin	biru-wal-in	Breathless (dead)	dead-become-now
Pilepi	bilibi	Dew	dew
pornelin	burn-il-in	dying	die-ing-now
pornun	burn-un	die	die-now
Malde	maldi	Different	different
Pilbiwallin	bilbi-wal-in	Dirty	dirt-become-now
Kiñem-in	gingim-in	dirty	dirty-now
Plombēwarrin	blumbi-war-in	making disobedient	disobedient-make-now
Rig-in	rig-in	holding forth, showing	display-now
Ku-un	guyun	Far off	distant
Ellir	il-ir	Done	do-did
Ellin	il-in	Doing	do-now
Ennani	in-ani	Will do	do-will
mare	mari	down	down
Moru	muru	Below	down
muttun	mud-un	drinking	drink-now
Meralde	miraldi	dead, dry, ...	dry
Tyiwallin	dysi-wal-in	Drying up	dry-become-now
Tyiwaliwallin	dysiwi-wal-in	Parched up	dry-become-now
Punkeri	bunGiri	Widgeon	duck
Pelepe	bilibi	Earth	earth
Yāyin	yay-in	eating	eat-now
Pellatti	biladi	Egg	egg
Maratulde	maraduldi	Empty	empty
Pēkel-in	big-il-in	being empty	empty-ing-now

[Kunyitye]	gun-idyi	[Enough, he has been]	enough he
Yappul-un	yab-ul-un	going into (a house), going down (as the sun)	enter-ing-now
Munmunde	munmundi	Barter (an equivalent)	exchange
pelinend	bili-nind	"eye-First cast the wood out of thine eye"	eye-from
Pitterar	bidir-ar	Eyebrow	eyebrow
Petye	bidyi	Face	face
pingkin ap	bingG -in-ab	I fall	fall-now I
Bailpuli	balbuli	Marrow	fat
nanghai	nanGa-yi	my father	father-me-of
Blukkun	blug-un	Alarm	fear-now
kldeimindi n	gal-di-mind-in	fetching	fetch-make-now
Maltaiar	malday-ar	Few (some)	few-PLUR
yelpulun	yilb-ul-un	lying	fib-ing-now
Ngungkura	ngungGura	first	first
Wurt-un	wurd-un	peeling, skinning	flay-now
yaralin	yaral-in	flows	flow-now
turne	durni	foot	foot-of
Ngurintand	ngurindand	Often	frequent
pempin	bimb-in	give	give-now
ngoppun	ngub-un	walking	go/come-now
Nunkeri	nunGiri	Good	good
nunkowallin	nunGa-wal-in	being good	good-be-now
Nankowall-in	nanGu-wal-in	becoming good	good-become-now
Pankelde	banGildi	Black and white goose	goose
pulkeri	bulgiri	greedy, and	greed
pilgeru wallin	bilgiru-wal-in	Being greedy	greed-be-now
Pele	bili	Greedy	greedy
kunkun	gunG-un	swallowing	gulp-now
Pandappure	bandaburi	Gun	gun
Paldharar	balDar-ar	Hail	hail-PLUR
inyeri	inyiri	belonging to or of	having
kitye	gidyi	he	he
Kurlinyerald	gurli-nyir-ald	of a hat	head-having-of
Batturi	baduri	Bundle	heap
talin	dalin	heavy	heavy
Akhé	agi	Here	here
Alye	alyi	Here	here
Ngai war	ngayi-war	Do come	here-act [come]
Ngaiin ap	ngay-in-ab	I come	here-now I

Ngaiin inda	ngay-in-inda	Thou comest	here-now thou
nampulun	namb-ul-un	hiding	hide-ing-now
kin	gin	him	him
Ityan	idyan	him,	him
kil	gil	by him	him-by
kinambe	gin-ambi	for him	him-for
merkewaty eri	mirgi-wadyiri	full of holes	hole-plenty
Potungai	bud-unga	On a horse	horse-at
Walde	waldi	heat, hot; perspiration	hot
Molbañg-in	mulbangG-in	being warm	hot-now
mengyē	mingyi	by what (how)	how-by
Ringmail	ringmal	Hunger	hunger
Wakk-in	wag-in	hurting	hurt-now
Wiwiri	wiwiri	sickness	ill
Blēwil-amalde	bliwil-amaldi	invalid	ill-agent
Blewilin	bliwil-in	Sick, slightly	ill-now
Wirin	wir-in	Paining	ill-now
ungul	ungul	in front of	in front
Narrinyeri	nar-inyiri	<i>narr</i> , plain, intelligible; <i>inyeri</i> , belonging to: plain speakers	intelligible-having
Kraiyeelin	grayil-in	Jealous	jealous-now
Rumalduwallin	rumalduwal-in	Joking	jest-become-now
Purrangge	burangGi	small, short	little
muralappi	muralabi	small	little
muralappeol	muralabi-yul	very small	little-EMPH
Rauwul	rawul	A long time ago	longago
Kaldowamp	galda-wamb	Always	longtime-PURP
Tanmul-un	danm-ul-un	loosening	loose-ing-now
Tyiwewar	dyyiwar	Loud	loud
plonggewaty eri	blungGi-wadyiri	full of, or possessed by sorcery	magic-plenty
korn	gurn	(a man)	man
Kornarrinyeri	gurna-ri-nyiri	Prob. ... an abbreviation of Kornarrinyeri (belonging to men) ...	man-xxx-having
Yalkund-un	yalg-und-un	melting (active)	melt-ing-now
tunti	dundi	in the middle	middle-at
Tarangk	dar-angG	Between	middle-to
nainkowa	nanGuwa	my mother	mother-me-of
Kunkundi	gunGundi	bald	naked
Merate	miradi	Naked	naked
Tokorauwe	dugur-awi	Narrow	narrow-of

Mungow	mungawu	Near	near
Tarno	darnu	No, not	no
Tauo	dawu	Don't (imperative)	no
Tauo ityan lak ityan	dawu idyan lag idyan	Don't spear him	no him pierce him
Nowaiy	nuwayi	None	none
Karlo	garlu	To-day	now
Yande	yandi	useless, old, worthless, worn out	old
[yant ald]	yand-ald	[of an old man]	old-at
Ranggyam e-wall-in	rangGyami-wal-in	becoming old	old-become-now
ngurukwar	ngurugwar	outside, without	outside
Ukke	ugi	Way	path
[anyura]	anyura	[Ye two may spear him]	perhaps
Lak our inde	lag-ur-indi	Do thou spear	pierce must thou
Laggel el our itye	lag-il-il-ur-idyi	He must spear	pierce-INT him must he
Lakkin el atte ityan	lag-in il-adi-idyan	I will spear him	pierce-will-INT I-him
anmant	anmand	from a place	place-from
tunkuwalli n	dunGu-wal-in	playing	play-be-now
Ngruwar	ngruwar	Abundance	plenty
Kummari	gumari	pregnant	pregnant
Palli	bali	While, by-and-by	presently
Yun	yun	By-and-by	presently
Plaityingyi n	bladyingyi-in	Vain	proud-now
Mirrinmēl	mirinmil	Quickly	quick
Tiwewarri n	diwi-war-in	Speedily	quick-make-now
Tortuwalli n	durdu-wal-in	Quiet	quiet-become-now
Ngunk-un	ngunG-un	being silent, sulky	quiet-now
Parnar	barn-ar	Rain	rain-PLUR
Kurungulu n	gurung-ul-un	Red	red-ing-now
Prakkin	brag-in	Arising	rise-now
Miningkul-un	miningG-ul-un	being decayed, rotten	rotten-ing-now
tuniwatyer i	duni-wadyiri	full of sand	sand-plenty
Wuttul-un	wud-ul-un	shining, warming, burning	scorch-ing-now
Nak our	nag-ur	Do see	see-must
Nāre	nari	shallow, not deep	shallow
Padmuri	badmuri	Sharp	sharp
Padmur-wal-in	badmur-wal-in	becoming sharp	sharp-become-now
kurrengk	guri-ngG	the two shins	shin-two

Yilkul-un	yilg-ul-un	moving away	shoo-ing-now
prewirrenend	briwiri-nind	side	side-from
Lewurmi	liw-urmi	Backside	sit-INSTR [buttocks]
[lewin]	liw-in	I sit	sit-now
Muwityiwallin	muwi-dyi-wal-in	Sleepless	sleep-lacking-become-now
Mant	mand	Slow	slow
Merailde	miraldi	slowly	slow
Mant our	mand-ur	Do slowly	slow-must
Yarne-mind-in	yarni-mind-in	mentioning	speak-make-now
Pilbarre	bilbari	Sponge	sponge
Tokk-un	dug-un	pressing, or pressing together	squash-now
[tangulun]	dang-ul-un	He stands	stand-ing-now
Yerk-in	yirg-in	standing up	stand-now
Murungur	murungur	Steady	steady
pettin	bid-in	steal	steal-now
Paiappul-un	bayab-ul-un	being stiff	stiff-ing-now
Wiitii	widi	Stinging	sting
piltengi	bidingi	strong	strong
piltengwall in	biding-wal-in	being strong	strong-be-now
piltengwar rin	biding-war-in	making strong	strong-make-now
prityin	bridy-in	strong	strong-now
Willawalli n	wila-wal-in	Stubborn	stubborn-become-now
Bailpulun	bayilb-ul-un	Foolish	stupid-ing-now
Tyelyerar	dyilyar-ar	Beams of the sun	sunbeam-PLUR
kinpin	ginb-in	sweet	sweet-now
Wrukk-amalde	wrug-amaldi	swimmer	swim-agent
Wrukk-un	wrug-un	swimming	swim-now
Yenembēl-in	yinimb-il-in	being entangled	tangle-ing-now
naiye	nayi	that	that
kanauwe	gan-awi	their	them-all-of
keng'guna nyir	gingGun-anyir	from them two	them-two-from [by]
wunye	wunyi	then	then
kar	gar	they	they-all
kengk	gingG	they two	they-two
Kutyeri	gudyiri	Slender	thin
Yurruttulu n	yurud-ul-un	Thin	thin-ing-now
hikke	higi	this	this
neppaldar	nibald-ar	three	three-PLUR
Wunmul-un	wunm-ul-un	throwing	throw-ing-now
Luk	lug	So	thus
Ngrekald	ngrigald	To-morrow	tomorrow

Kurrinyere nggal	guri-nyir-ingG-al	of a pair of trousers	trousers-having-two-of
Katye ninggengk	gadyi ningG-ingG	truth two	truth two
maremunt unt	marimundund	beneath	under [down-xxx-xxx?]
loldu	luldu	up	up
loru	luru	up	up
Yond-un	yund-un	wading, fording	wade-now
Parge	bargi	Wallaby	wallaby
nyribbelin	nyrib-il-in	washing	wash-ing-now
Nguk	ngug	water	water
Pultue	bulduwi	Weak	weak
Ngenke-wall-in	nginGi-wal-in	becoming weak	weak-become-now
Muwe watyeri	muwi wadyiri	Sleepy	weary
nguldamm ulimindin	nguldam-uli-mind-in	making tired	weary-ing-make-now
Lammel	lam-il-in	being tired	weary-ing-now
Yanggul-un	yangG-ul-un	weeping bitterly	weep-ing-now
Wurti	wurdi	Wet	wet
wurtuwarr in	wurdu-war-in	saturating with water	wet-make-now
minyĩ	minyĩ	what	what
mekimbe	migi-mbi	for what (what for)	what-PURP [why]
[ungun]	ungun	which mean when — used relatively	WHEN/if
Yaral?	yaral	When? (Interrogative)	WHEN/if
Kiuau	giya	Where (relative)	where
Yangi	yangi	Where? (interrogative)	where
Yangalli	yanga-li	Where is he?	where he
Yarnd	yarnd	Of where ? Whence?	where-of
Balpi	balbi	White	white
balpin	balb-in	white	white-now
nganggĩ	ngangGi	who	who
ngandi	ngan-di	by whom	who-by
nauwe	na-wi	whose or whom	who-of
mindē	mindĩ	what reason, why	why
mimine	mimini	a woman	woman
ngarrari	ngarari	wood	wood
Ronggum mun	rungGum-un	Barking (as a dog)	woof
Watanggrau	wad-angGr-awu	Yesterday	yesterday
Ondu	undu	Over there	yonder

xxx: indicates the analysis is not known

A Narinyiri story

A native myth in the vernacular of the Narinyiri:

“Norar ngertir ulangk, kar morokkir an mamar. Kar tuppri an mamar Tipping. Wanyar muldurar ngungyin namuramb an mamar. Wunyar pulkeri muldurar pettir an mami. Wunyar norar ngrakkuwallir. Wunyar norar muldurar mendir. Kar pingkir muldarar brugungai wunyar Kinemin. Wunyar norar balpewallin lun ellin tukkeri.”

Translation—*“The pelicans fished in the lake and caught some tukkeri fish. They carried the fish to Point Sturt. Then the magpies made a fire to cook the fish with. The greedy magpies then stole the fish. The pelicans were angry with the magpies, and they fought. The magpies were rolled in the ashes, which made them black. Then the pelicans became white like the tukkeri fish, which they had eaten.”* [Taplin, Folklore p.39]

A word for word translation from Narinyiri to English has been attempted below. The arrangement of the lines is as follows:

Original Narinyiri text

the same respelt in modern standardised style

Original English translation

modern word-for-word translation



*Norar ngertir ulangk,
nurar ngirdir ulangG*

*The pelicans fished in the lake
pelican net-did lake-to*

kar morokkir an mamar.

gar murugiran mamar

and caught some tukkeri fish

they-all grasp-did-them-all fish-PLUR

Kar tuppri an mamar Tipping.

gar dabir an mamar dibing

They carried the fish to Point Sturt.

*they-all bring-did them-all fish-PLUR Point Sturt, Lake
Alexandrina*

Wanyar muldurar ngungyin namuramb an mamar.

*wanyar muldurar ngungyin namuramb an
mamar*

*Then the magpies made a fire to cook the fish with
then they-all magpie-PLUR ignite-did-they-all roast-PURP
them-all fish-PLUR*

Wunyar pulkeri muldurar pettir an mami.

wunyar bulgiri muldurar bidir an mami

*The greedy magpies then stole the fish
then they-all greed magpie-PLUR steal-did-them-all fish*

Wunyar norar ngrakkuwallir.

wunyar nurar ngaraguwali

*The pelicans were angry with the magpies,
then they-all pelican-PLUR anger-become-did*

*Wanyar norar muldurar mendir.
wanyar nurar maldurar mindir*

*and they fought
then they-all pelican-PLUR magpie-PLUR quarrel did*

*Kar pingkir muldurar brugungai wunyar Kinemin.
gar bingGir muldurar brugungayi wunyar
ginimin*

*The magpies were rolled in the ashes, which made them
black
they-all fall-did magpie-PLUR fire-at then they-all dirty-now*

*Wunyar norar balpewallin lun ellin tukkeri.
wunyar nurar balbiwalin lun ilin dugiri
Then the pelicans became white like the tukkeri fish, which
they had eaten
then they-all pelican-PLUR white-become-now similar
exist-now fishtype [dugiri]*



Taplin's Folklore book contains contributions about the language from many others, including an undated one by T. Moriarty, police trooper at Goolwa [p.51-2]:

21. They have a stock of mythological legends.

Ngurundere had two wives who caught a large fish and a small one. They gave him the small fish to eat, and baked the large one for themselves. When he ate his, he saw the large one, and became very angry, and said to them

"You shall die for that, and all **Tanganarin** shall die, and there will be fighting, and sickness, and evil spirits until then."

Ngurundere, after creating them, made everything for their use, and taught them to use their implements and weapons in hunting, fishing, and fighting. But after the sentence of death by him for the deception practised by his wives, he deprived **Tanganarins** of knowledge and power, and, in his anger, left them, and ascended to **Wyir** (their heaven). They were then ignorant and powerless, and they lived like the beasts of the field. After a long time there was born of a virgin a good and wise man, who was named **Wyungare**. He returned to them their lost wisdom and power, and taught them sorcery. When this great teacher had regenerated [51] them, he was taken up to **Wyir** by **Ngurundere**, where he is now the second king of that place; and when a **Tanganarin** dies **Wyungare** takes his spirit up to **Wyir**, and gets him a fine place in that country from **Ngurundere**.

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The following is the above legend in native:

— "Ngurundere nak ningkaiengk nape. Kengk ngartin hikke grauwe mami Kurangk muralappe. Kengk pempir kinangk hik muralappe takuramb. Kengk meram-min hikkai grauwe mami Kenggunambe. Ungunuk il takker, kil nakkir grauwe mami. Kil un enggunangk nyenungkun. Kil yarnin Kenggaunangk ngurl hik onduaniratye porna kanangk. Kar Tanganarin hik onduaratye pornani, kanangk wunyil wiwirri, wirrangar, brupar, mendin."



This can be analysed as follows:

*Ngurundere nak ningkaiengk nape.
ngurundiri nag ningGayingG nabi
Ngurundere had two wives
NAME OF SPIRIT see two wife*

*Kengk ngartin hikke grauwe mami Kurangk muralappe.
gingG ngardin high grawi mami gurangG muralabi
who caught a large fish and a small one.
they-two catch-now big fish stream-to little*

*Kengk pempir kinangk hik muralappe takuramb.
gingG bimbir ginangG hig muralabi daguramb
[They gave him the small fish to eat.]
they-two give-did him-to now little eat-PURP*

*Kengk meram-min hikkai grauwe mami Kenggunambe.
gingG miram min higayi grawi mami gingGunambi
[and baked the large one for themselves]
they-two roast-now immediately big fish them-two-for*

*kil nakkir grauwe mami.
gil nagir grawi mami
[he saw the large one]
he see-did big fish*

*Kil un enggunangk nyenungkun.
gil un ingGunangG nyinungGun.
[and became very angry]
he self them-two-to anger-now*

*Kil yarnin Kenggaunangk ngurl hik onduaniratye porna
kanangk.*

*gil yarnin gingGanangG ngurl hig
unduaniradyi [ngrunduniradyi] burna ganangG
[and said to them "You shall die for that"]
he speak-now them-two-to / all [it] die-xxx them-all-to
Kar Tanganarin hik onduaratye pornani, kanangk
wunyil wiwirri, wirrangar, brupar, mendin
gar danganarin hig unduaradyi [ngrundaradyi]
burnani, ganangG wunyil wiwiri, wirrangar,
brubar, mindin*

*and all Tanganarin shall
die, and there will be
fighting, and sickness,
and evil spirits until then
they-all NAME OF CLAN
now all-PLUR-it die-will
them-all-to then-xxx ill
bad-PLUR bad-PLUR
quarrel-now*

