

VERBS

Southern dialects

The verb in the Southern dialects is exceedingly simple. The preterite is nearly always formed by the addition of ga; the present participle by adding in, ing to the present tense. A vowel and occasionally a consonant is sometimes interposed at the junction.

(It will be noticed that a complete conjugation of Past and Future tenses of verbs is not given in all the examples furnished, the omission being due to inability to secure consecutive examples of Tenses from the natives, and a desire to have only those forms presented which were intelligibly understood by the natives themselves.)

Original MSS. P. 72

Southwestern dialect,  
Burrong wongi,  
Bunbury

Ye go

Nō'ra yening

They go

bullam yenna, bulla yenna

Preterite or Past Tense

I went (an indefinite time ago)

koorraa' ngan-ya yennaga,  
oi woorr'ba ngan'ya yen'naga

I went (a little while ago)

kar'ram ngan'ya yen'naga

I went (yesterday)

kar'an'ya ngan'ya yen'naga

I went (this morning)

ngan'ya ge'tal-gup yenna

I went again

ngan'ya kor' yenna

Future Tense

I will go (today, now)

ngan'ya burda kor' yennee

I will go (tomorrow)

ngan'ya mai-er-uk-a-yennee

I will go (at daylight)

ngan'ya be'nung kor' yennee

I will go (by and by, a long time hence)

ngan'ya meela yening

I will go (tonight or in the night)

ngan'ya burda gid-al-yuk-a-yennin

Conditional

Perhaps I will go

kub'bain ngan' yennee

Imperative

Go	watto yen'nain, watee yen', moon yenna
Come here	yoo-al' gool
Get up	eerap
Let it alone	win'ja, ween'ja
Go away	wat'gool
Stay, stop	nyin', na'na, na'nup
Go not	yen'nardung
Go quickly	gert gert gool, gert gert yenna
Do not touch that	alling burrong burt
Don't hit the dog	dwerda bo-mar-dung, dwerda bo-mar-duk

Verb "to go"Guildford district (Joobaitch, male)Present tense

I go	ngan'ya koo' ling	We go (husband & wife)	ngun'naitch koolaitch
Thou goest	nyin'nok kooling	We go	ngallee koolaitch
He goes	bal kooling	Ye or you goes	nyin'nagut koolaitch
		They go	balgup koolaitch

Past tense

I went (an indefinite time ago)	kocraa' ngain'ya koolong
I went (a little while ago)	kar'ram ngain-ya koolong
I went (yesterday)	yen-ya ngain'ya koolong
I went (this morning)	ngain'ya be'nung/koolong -an
I went again	ngain'ya ngutta kor' koolong

Future Tense

I will go (today, now)	ye-ya boorda ngain kooling
I will go (tomorrow)	be'nung ngain kooling
I will go (by and by, soon)	be'nung be'nung ngain kooling
I will go (by and by, a long time hence)	boordalan ngainya kooling
I will go (tonight or in the night)	moorda ngain kooling

Go	koola, kooling
Going	kwejjat koolong, koolijen
Gone	kwejjat koolart

Conditional

Perhaps I will go = kubbain ngain'ya kooling-ga

Imperative

Go	watta gool, kwejjat watta barda
Go away	watta gool
Go not	koola burt, nan' nyin'
Go quickly	gert gert gool



ADVERBS

The following is a list of the commonest and most useful adverbs in the Southern dialects :†

Again	kor', korr'
After	woolagut
Behind	wal-ang, woolagut
Before	kwej'jungat, wai-jung-at
Far away	woorarr'
Here	nyee
There	bō'ko-ja
How many	narlin, naal, naa meeng, naman-naman, nga-ga, naa', nya'men
Just now	yē-ya
By and by	burda, meela, boorda-boorda, meela-meela
Low	ngurdee, ngarduk
High	yeera, yaraga, yookin, yardok
Slowly	Dabbukun
Quickly	Gert-gert
Enough	Ken-yuk
Close, near	burdok
Where	winjal, injal, ngoonjal
No	burt, yooat, kai-an (Gingin)
Yes	kaia, kee'a, ko'
Perhaps	gabbain, kubbain
Truly	kurnijel, boondijel, boondal
More	kor'yonga, "again give", wam-min-yong, "other give" garroo, ngutta
Never	yoo-at, yoo-ō-ga, yoo-ad'da, kai-an
Slily	goo-il-goo-il-ja (Norseman)

The adverb is usually placed before the verb, as inna kardinya injee yenne (you yesterday where go?) Vasse.

nyinna winjal kooling (you where go?) Swan

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The negative in several dialects, when attached to a word, is altered from its usual form.

yow is the Dongara term for "no", but kandeena wanjira is the Dongara equivalent for "I do not know".

weerde = no, Carnamah; yanee gootha = no mother

moliya = no, Illimbirree; amma nyeera = no father,  
ag'goo nyin'na (no mother)

baadee = no, Marah;           beebee goodoo = no mother,  
go'a nal'goola (do not know)

yarr'ga = no, Berkshire Valley; meem'bee bee'oo = no mother  
goondha dhittee bee'oo = do not know

maaloo = no, Broome;           nganning gurra = do not know

Yocat = no, Perth;           dwonga burt (do not hear or understand)

PREPOSITIONS

Prepositions are few in number and are generally placed after the substantive or pronoun.

- On il
- In, within, into, inside bwurra, bwarra, boora, bo-ra
- Between karda, eej'weejee
- With yel
- Without burt, durt, broo

Examples

- Go into the hut Maia bwurra gool
- Smear (body) with fat or grease. Boyn yel nab'bain (Perth)
- Smearing (body) with wilgee (red ochre) & grease Wil'gukun' boyn-yel-a-nabbain (Vasse)
- Without a cloak Bwok-a burt
- Without a hut Maia burt
- The meat is on top of the tree Daaja eej'il

By appears to be rendered by affixing al, el, il, ul, to the nominative case of the Substantive or Pronoun.

- I walk by the sea Ngain waddarn-al-kooling
- I walk by the sea-shore or beach Waddarn-al na-ra ngain kooling

CONJUNCTIONS

There are very few conjunctions in the Southern dialects.

And we', gujee, kulla (Dongara).

Or ka, a (Vasse)

If bain-ya (Gingin)

Woolberr and Dool will go presently = Woolberr we' Dool  
goolijee balgup boorda.

Yours and mine noonong gujee nganung

Are you going or am I? nyinna-ka gooling ngain gooling  
nyinna ka ngain keoling

If I had any meat I would bring it and give it to you =  
bain-ya ngai-ja daaja gatagool noona  
yong-a

You and I nyinnee kulla ngai (Dongara)

INTERJECTIONS

The interjections are also few.

Indeed nyaa

Oh! ah! naa'

"Strangers coming," jee'

Expression used when a sneeze is heard = joo'

Ejaculation of surprise or pleasure = kai!

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NUMERALS

The West Australian numeral system is very limited. One, two and three have special names representing them in almost every dialect. Four is sometimes denoted by a repetition of two - koojarra-koojarra = 2 and 2 = 4, but it is doubtful whether this is a purely native term. Besides these numbers the Southern coastal people appear to use the equivalents of "hand" and "foot" for purposes of enumeration, as mara gēn (hand one), meaning five, mara koojal (hands two = ten); mara koojal jenna gēn (hands two foot one = fifteen); mara jenna koojal (hands and feet = twenty). These are not used in the Southern inland districts, and it may be surmised that they have been introduced by the white settlers, but the coastal southern natives use two other terms for five which appear to be distinctly native, mara ballee (lit., "that hand"), meaning "five men"; mara gerrba ("five birds"). The Southern natives also denote a number of fighting men by the term "meera gēn" (lit. "one spearthrower"); meera koojal (two spearthrowers). When asked how many natives were included in the term, they said "just like sheep". As the number of "fighting men" along the southern coast has long since dwindled down to a few scattered remnants, it was impossible to ascertain definitely the particular numbers included in meera gen, etc., but that the terms are essentially native and express a "great number" can be positively stated. Companies of soldiers have been alluded to as "meera gēn", both from their number and the fact of their being in fighting order, from which it might be inferred that the terms were only used to denote the number of men available for fighting purposes. When a native wished to impress his opponents with the number of fighting men he could bring to his assistance in battle he used the term "meera gēn" (I've got that many warriors); his opponent would probably retort, "I've got meera koojal," - twice as many as you," Meebera gen is a term used for a "bundle" (an indefinite number) of boomerangs (kallees) (boomerang is an Eastern - introduced - word).

Boola means any number beyond three.

The southern equivalents for the numerals are :-

1. Gēn (Swan), gaan (Gingin) , ge-yen-ing (Doonan dialect), doom'bart (Murray).
2. Koojal (Swan, Gingin, Williams, Avon), kardocra (Doonan), koojal, kardoola (north of Gingin)
3. Mo, marding, mardain (Vasse, Williams, Avon), war-ang (Swan), mow-ain (Gingin), mow' (Victoria Plains), ngaral (Capel)

Other dialectic equivalents for the numbrals are :-

One

Gen	Esperance
Gain	Bremer Bay
Gen	Mt. Barker
Kain	Denmark
Ken	Kendenup
Gen	Bridgetown, Blackwood
Gen	Korrlup, Katanning
Goonjee	Berkshire Valley
Koonjerree	Dandaaraga
Kooteea	Marah
Koonjee	Carnamah
Kooteea	Dongara, Illimbirree, N.W. of Peak Hill, Meekatharra
Koodeea	N.W. of Nannine
Kaagool	N.E. of Peak Hill
Koodeea	Sanford River
Goodeea	Lake Mibbeean, Murchison
Kooteea	Mullewa, Murrum, Mindoola
Goodeea	Yeedeling, Murchison
Koodeea	Northampton
Koodhoo	Duketon
Kootheea, koothoo	Laverton
Koojorin	Canegrass
Kooteea	Mulline
Koodee	Coolgardie
Geenc-buding	Norseman
Kandoola	Drollinya, Balladonia
Kooteea,	
kooriga	Gascoyne (contributed)
Koonjerree,	
kaiano	Ashburton "
Koonjerree	Roebourne, Wableland district N.W., De Grey R. Pt. Hedland
Warranjarree	Broome
Wan'je'ree	Beagle Bay
Arrinjee	Sunday Island

The equivalent for "two", koojal, kootharra, etc., is with slight variations, almost general throughout the State.

Koojal	Esperance
Koojal,	
koojeen	Bremer Bay
Koojal	Mt. Barker, Denmark, Kendenup, Bridgetown, Blackwood, Katanning, Korrlup
Woolai'a	Berkshire Valley, Dandaaraga
Kootharra,	
koodarree	Marah
Kootharra	Carnamah
Wootharra	Dongara, Illimbirree
Koodharra	N.W. of Peak Hill, Meekatharra, Nannine, N.W. of Nannine

Koodharra	N.E. of Peak Hill, Sanford River, Lake Mibbeean, Murchison district
Koodharra,	Gullewa, Murrum, Mindoola
Koodhaa'ra	Yeedeling, Murchison district
Kootharra	Laverton
koodarra	Duketon
Koodharra	Canegrass, Mulline, Coolgardie, Norseman, Drollinya, Balladonia
Kootarra	Gascoyne
Kootharra	Ashburton
Koodarra	Nullagine
Kootherra	Roebourne
Kootharra	Tableland, De Grey, Port Hedland
Koojarra	Broome
Koojarr'	Beagle Bay
Kooyarra	Sunday Island

### Three

Murdin	Esperance
Mardin, mo'	Bremer Bay
Murding, mo'	Mt. Barker
Murtin,	
murdin,	
daan	Denmark
Murdin	Kendenup
Mow'	Bridgetown, Blackwood
Murding	Korrlup, Katanning
Maa'ow'	Berkshire Valley
Ngarra	Dandaaraga
Kajjeeree	Marah
Karrjerdee	Carnamah
Marg'gooroo	Illimbirree
Wootharra-	
kalla-kooteea	
(two & one)	Dongara
Marn'goor	N.W. of Peak Hill, Meekatharra
Mangoor	N.W. of Nannine
Mungoor	N.E. of Peak Hill
Marn'gooroo	Sanford River
Man'goor	Lake Mibbeean
Marngoor	Gullewa
Mangoor	Mindoola
Karrajiddee	Yeedeling, Murchison
Karrajardee	Northampton
Mangoor, mangool	
	Duketon
Mangoorba	Laverton
Mangoor	Canegrass, Mulline
Manroeroo	Coolgardie
Warrool	Norseman, Drollinya, Balladonia
Mangool,	
mangoolba,	
mungoolba	Gascoyne
Poorkoo	Ashburton
Poorogoo, broogo	- Roebourne
Poorkoo, jerwiddee	= Tableland, De Grey, Port Hedland
Yeera ja warr'	Beagle bay
Ejjarr	Sunday Island

In the Gascoyne district, according to E. Cornally, the natives are stated to have developed a system of counting by "threes". For instance, if a number of thoorabundeas (boomerangs) are to be reckoned for barter, the numbers one (kooteea, or kooreea), two (kootharra), three (mun-gool-ba), are counted; the three thoorabundeas are then placed in a little heap by themselves, three more in another, and so on until the whole bundle is counted, and placed in lots of threes. Then the natives reckon the number of threes (mun'goolba), and exchange will be given for each mungoolba or bundle of three.

In the Broome and Beagle Bay districts a most ingenious system of reckoning the days of the young boys' travels at the commencement of their initiation has been evolved and is certainly entirely native. When the young balgai (boys beginning their initiation) start on their travels to the camps of their relatives and relatives-in-law, the days of their outward journey are ticked off on the joints of the fingers and thumb, beginning with the first or top joint of the little finger, counting downwards on each finger until the thumb is reached, when the outward journey ends with the top joint of the thumb of the left hand. The return journey of the balgai is made on the fingers of the right hand, beginning with the little finger. Should the preparations for the balgai's return not be completed, a messenger is sent on to intercept the boys at whatever camp they may have reached, and they are told to delay their arrival for perhaps the three joints of the little finger, or more or less as the case may be, each joint representing a day. This system is called nil-an, and each joint has its special designation, the tops of the fingers being called nimmera or nimmarda ("forehead"). The first joint of the little finger means "nyamba mil'e'a-inja - this today go" the second joint "ngoeragarring inja" (leave camp early, and continue journey). The ordinary numerals of the Broome district natives are warrinjerre (1), koojarra (2), koordidee (3), manja (any number beyond three.)