The Waramų Language

Tim Foster

Contents

Glossing abbreviations

1 – 1st person

2 – 2nd person

3 – 3rd person

SG – singular

PL - plural

NONFUT – non-future tense

PERF – perfective aspect

HSY – hearsay

TOP – topic

Q – question marker

LOC.COP – locative copula

GNOM – gnomic aspect

CONV – converb

HAB – habitual

For all gender glosses, see page 12

I'll put these in alphabetical order if you pay me

Background – The Warapi People

The Warapi people are a collection of semi-settled farming tribes living on the equatorial Northern shores of a large continent. They live in a heavily forested, mountainous region, and rely on a combination of fishing, hunting and farming. They are skilled seafarers and typically commerce with other groups in the region via the sea, as inland travel across the mountains is typically harder. Some nearby islands have been settled by related groups.

Phonology

Vowels

Waramų has a very simple three-vowel system, consisting of /i/, /a/ and /u/. It also has a distinction between oral and nasal phonation for each of these vowels, yielding a total six vowels. Vowel length is not phonemic.

		Front	Back
Oral	Rounded		u
	Unrounded	i	a
Nasal	Rounded		ũ <ų>
	Unrounded	ĩ <į>	ã <ą>

There are two diphthongs, /ai/ and /au/, which also have nasalised versions.

Tone is realised on vowels, as these are the only permissible syllable nuclei. The permissible surface level tones are low, high and falling. The surface-level vowel tones are the product of the word-level processing of tone melodies belonging to morphemes. Thus tone is inherently at the level of the morpheme, not the vowel, and thus is not considered to be a part of the vowel inventory.

Romanisation

The low oral vowels /i/, /a/ and /u/ are Romanised, as would be expected, as <i>, <a> and <u>,respectively. Tone and nasality are marked on vowels using diacritics. The low tone is unmarked, the high tone is marked with an acute accent (<á, í, ú>) and the falling tone is marked with a grave accent (<à, ì, ù>). Nasal vowels are marked with an ogonek diacritic below the vowel (<ą, į, ų>). Diphthongs /ai/ and /au/ are Romanised as <ay> and <aw>.

Allophony

TODO

Consonants

Waramų has a large consonant inventory with an ejective-plain distinction in stops and affricates and a large number of labialised consonants. There are two coronal places of articulation: dental and retroflex, with stops, affricates, fricatives and laterals subject to regressive retroflex harmony. Retroflex harmony is blocked by the alveolar trill /r/, and the coronal nasal /n/ (both plain and labialised) and any palatal consonant. The coronal nasals and rhotics do not have dental and retroflex forms and are typically realised between the two places of articulation, approximately alveolar-postalveolar. The trill does not have much room for variation due to its mode of production, while the nasal can, in theory vary freely between dental and retroflex places of articulation.

	Bilabial		Dental		Retroflex		Palatal	Velar		Glottal
	Plain	Labialised	Plain	Labialised	Plain	Labialised		Plain	Labialised	Plain
Stop	p	pʷ <pw>	t	tʷ <tw>	ʈ <ṭ>	ʈʷ <ṭw>	c <cy>	k <c>	kʷ <cw>	ʔ <q>
Ejective stop	p'	pʷ' <pw'>	t'	tʷ' <tw'>	ʈ' <ṭ'>	ʈʷ' <ṭw'>	c' <cy'>	k' <c'>	kʷ' <cw'>	
Affricate			ts		ʈʂ <ṭṣ>					
Ejective affricate			ts'		ʈʂ' <ṭṣ'>					
Fricative	ɸ <f>	ɸʷ <fw>	s	sʷ <sw>	ʂ <ṣ>	ʂʷ <ṣ>	ç <xy>	x	xʷ <xw>	h
Nasal	m	mʷ <mw>	n	nʷ <nw>	ɳ <ṇ>		ɲ ~ ŋ <ñ>		ŋʷ <ñw>	
Trill/flap			r	rʷ <rw>						
Approximant			l	lʷ <lw>	ɭ <ḷ>	ɭʷ < ḷw>	ʎ <ly> j <y>		w	

Allophony

/k/, /k'/ and /x/ are realised as [c], [c'] and [ç] before /i/. Vowels before nasal obstruents are allophonically nasalised. Nasal obstruents before oral vowels are allophonically postoralised. This means they lose sonorance, forming a voiced stop sound at the same place of articulation before the vowel starts. For example, /masu/ (sow) is pronounced [mᵇasu]. These postoralised variants cannot participate in nasal harmony, because they have a sonorance contour, ending without sonorance, and thus blocking the progressive spread of nasality.

Tone

Tones in Waramų are typically realisations of morpheme-level "melodies", which developed due to effects of glottal consonants and the loss of a voicing distinction in stops in Waramų's past. These tone melodies are composed from three underlying tonemes: low (L), high (H) and contrast (0). The contrast tone is only ever realised at the end of word, and, as the name suggests, it takes on the quality (low or high) that contrasts with the last L or H toneme preceding it. Any contrast toneme that precedes a low or high toneme is neutralised by the regressive (backward) spread of the low or high tone. The tones are borne by vowels and realised tones include high (H), low (L) and falling (F), with falling tones bearing two elements of a tone melody.

Tone Spread

Tone typically spreads leftwards in Waramų words. This means processes of affixation can cause elements at the end of a word to alter the tone of preceding 0-tone elements. Furthermore, falling tones typically break when not at the beginning of a word, causing the preceding syllable to take high tone, even if that syllable normally bears a true low

tone, while the syllable the carries the falling HL or H0 melody takes low tone. Falling tones with a H0 melody can also be neutralised to a simple H melody if they are followed by a high tone. Here is an example of tone spreading behaviour, H, L and 0 in brackets represent the tone melodies of words and affixes:

nupi crúci tlimipis
nupi(0) crúci(H0) tlimi(0)-pi(0)-is(0)
man curus.tree cut.down-HUM.SG-NONFUT.PERF

“The man cut down the curus tree.”

crúci tlímípáys
crúci(H0) tlimi(0)-pá(H)-is(0)
curus.tree cut.down-1SG-NONFUT.PERF

“I cut down the curus tree.”

The high tone of the 1SG affix “pá” spreads backwards across the 0/contrast tones of “tlimi”, yielding “tlímí”.

Harmony

Nasal Harmony

Nasal harmony is a progressive (forward-spreading) harmony that affects all sonorant sounds - vowels, nasals, glides andliquids. All non-sonorant phonemes (stops, affricates and fricatives) block the progression of nasal harmony Nasal stops also block nasal harmony when they precede an oral vowel, as this causes them to allophonically postoralise, losing sonorance. Nasal harmony can spread from roots onto affixes and from affixes onto roots.

Sonorant consonants under the influence of nasal harmony merge with nasal sonorants (although the distinction is kept in the Romanisation). Sonorant consonant realisations under nasal harmony are as follows:

l > n

r > n

lʷ > nʷ

rʷ > nʷ

ɭ > ɳ

ɭʷ > nʷ

ʎ > ɲ ~ ŋ

j > ɲ ~ ŋ

w > ŋʷ

Coronal Harmony

Coronal harmony, unlike nasal harmony is a regressive (backwards spreading) harmony. It affects all coronal consonants, apart from the coronal nasal /n/ and /n^{w}/ and the coronal trill /r/ and /r^{w}/. These consonants block the spread of coronal harmony. Coronal harmony is also blocked by palatal consonants. Coronal harmony does not spread all the way through a word. It spreads through roots, but not from or to affixes. It can, however, spread from tense/aspect markers onto person markers, but not from mood markers onto tense/aspect markers. Weird ey?

Other Phonological Processes

Another common phonological process in Waramų is the contraction of CV sequences to a palatal or labialised consonant or an affricate when followed by another vowel. These processes are due to historical palatalisation and labialisation processes, but a regular enough to occur during affixation processes. If the CV syllable and the following syllable have different underlying tones, the resulting syllable will have both tone elements in a tone melody. The changes are as follows:

Consonant	+ /i/	+ /u/
p(')	p(')i > tw(')	p(')u > pw(')
m	mi > nw	mu > mw
f	fi > sw	fu > fw
t(')	t(')i > ts(')	t(')u > tw(')
s	si > s	su > sw
n	ni > ñ	nu > m
r	ri > r	ru > rw
l	li > ly	lu > lw
ṭ(')	ṭ(')i > ṭṣ(')	ṭ(')u > ṭw(')
ṣ	ṣi > ṣ	ṣu > ṣw
ṇ	ṇi > ṇ	ṇu > m
ḷ	ḷi > ḷ	ḷ > ḷw
c	ci > cy	cu > cw
x	xi > xy	xu > xw
ñ	ñi > ñ	ñu > ñw
q	qi > y	qu > w
h	hi > xy	hu > fw

Vowel Coalescence

When processes of affixation would join together two of the same vowel, even if they differ in tone, the two will merge. For example, here the HUM.SG agreement marker “pi” meets the NONFUT.PERF marker “is”. The result is “-pis”.

nupi crúci tlimipis
nupi(0) crúci(H0) tlimi(0)-pi(0)-is(0)
man curus.tree cut.down-HUM.SG-NONFUT.PERF

“The man cut down the curus tree.”

Pronouns and Demonstratives

Personal Pronouns

Waramų has a small personal pronoun inventory, distinguishing in most cases only between first and second person and between singular and plural. Each person+number combination has three pronoun forms: a free, or emphatic, form, a bound, or affix, form, which only appears as an agreement marker on verbs and postpositions, and a bound, possessive form, which only appears as a possessed suffix on possessed nouns. The only third person pronoun is the possessive form. Other anaphoric references to third persons are handled by a larger class of demonstratives, with a proximal-distal as well as plural-singular distinction. Note, the third person possessive form alternates between ”i”/”y” (in most cases) and ”li” (if the noun ends in /i/ or /ai/).

	Singular			**Plural**		
	Free form	**General affix**	**Possessive affix**	**Free form**	**General affix**	**Possessive affix**
1st person	pára	pá (H)	pí (H)	túma	tų́ (H)	túmi (H0)
2nd person	su	si (L)	si (L)	ṇáca	ṇá (H)	ṇáy (H)
3rd person			i/y/li (0)			i/y/li (0)

Demonstratives

Waramų has large class of demonstratives, distinguishing proximal and distal, roughly corresponding to close-to-the-speaker and far-from-the-speaker. These demonstratives can be used on their own as pronouns or preceding another noun as a determiner. There are two determiner demonstratives, with no gender, ”u” and ”iqu” and around 40 gendered demonstratives. The genders are explained in more detail in the Nouns section.

	Singular/Collective		**Plural/Singulative**	
Demonstrative type + gender	**Proximal**	**Distal**	**Proximal**	**Distal**
Determiner	u	íqu	u	íqu
HUM	upi	ipi	utwá	itwá
ANI	u	yu	wa	yua
INS	útí	ítí	útsui	ítsui
BUI	war	yar	wara	yara
STI	úplí	íplí	úpíla	ípíla
HAI	úṭą́	íṭą́	úṭáma	íṭáma
DAN	urąw	irąw	urawma	irawma
PLA	uci	ici	ucyá	icyá
EDI	us	yus	uswi	yuswi
FLA	úlá	ílá	úláqa	íláqa
SMA	úhú	íhú	úfwa	ífwa
BIG	utay	itay	utayá	itayá
FLE	wáṣú	yáṣú	wáṣúwi	yáṣúwi

CON	ufi	ifi	uswa	iswa
LIQ	uña	iña		
PAS	wiḷi	iḷi		
POW	úcą́	ícą́		
LAN	wia	ya		
PIE	wi	yui	wia	yuya
MAN	umų	imų		

Indefinite Pronouns

Indefinite pronouns in Waramų are used to form questions and to talk generally about realis, specific referents, known or unknown. I will gloss indefinite pronouns as the corresponding question words, however, it is important to remember that questions are not their only use. The indefinite pronouns are:

Category	Singular	Plural
Person (who/someone)	prá	hápu
Thing (what/something)	ñu	háni
Place (where/somewhere)	ṭa	
Quantity (how much/some amount)	klá	

Examples of their use:

prá másúpá tunipistų
prá mású-pá tuni-pi-is-tų
WHO.SG sow-1SG kill-HUM-NONFUT.PERF-HSY

“Apparently somebody killed my sow”

másúpás prá hį́ utunipis
mású-pá-s prá hį́ u-tuni-pi-is
sow-1SG-TOP WHO.SG Q ANI-kill-HUM-NONFUT.PERF

“Who killed my sow?”

Nouns

Gender and Number

Waramų has a large Bantu-style gender system, with twenty genders. These gender derive from an earlier system of classifiers which originally were used only with numerals, but later became obligatory on the noun, as well as being used as clitics on verbs, leading to the the current agreement system. Every noun has an overt gender suffix, originally derived from these classifiers.The same affixes are used for subject agreement and object marking on verbs.

Gender affixes are always paired with number affixes. In some cases phonological processes have rendered this combination hard to recognise as two separate affixes. Combined with the fact that the two are inseparable (number affixes cannot occur anywhere else), one could analyse the gender and number system as a combined, fusional system of affixes.There are three main groups of genders, which are determined by what number affixes are permitted with each gender:

The majority of genders have a singular-plural distinction, with the unmarked form being the singular, and the plural taking the affix *a in the proto-language, derived from a word *ata meaning ”all”. This “a” element adds a 0/contrast tone element to the end of the word.

The genders INS, EDI and FLE have, instead, a collective-singulative distinction. These genders derive from classifier words with a collective meaning (such as ”swarm”/”hive”, in the case of the gender INS). The unmarked form of the noun is, thus, the collective, while the singulative takes an affix derived from the proto-language word *ui, meaning ”piece”. This element also adds a 0/contrast tone element to the end of the word.

Collective nouns behave like mass nouns, and cannot take numerals. Singulatives can take numerals, which gives them a plural interpretation (see Russian and Arabic for similar systems). The important distinction is between a mass of things (collective), and one or more distinct individuals (singulative).

The third group of genders, which includes LIQ, PAS, POW, LAN and MAN are mass nouns which do not take number marking. It should be noted that abstract nouns in Waramų never take plural or singulative marking, even if they have a gender that allows it.

The gender affixes are listed below, with their tone melodies:

	Singular/Collective/ Mass	**Plural**	**Singulative**
Gender	**Original classifier > gender affix**	**Classifier + a (from proto-language word *ata meaning “all”)**	**Classifier + ui (from proto-language word meaning “piece”)**
Human (comes from proto-language noun meaning “person”) HUM	bi > pi (L)	bia > twá (L0)	
Large animal (typically highly animate animals or those that occur as individuals) (comes from proto-language noun meaning “creature”) ANI	u > u (0)	ua > wa (0)	
Small animal/Insect (typically smaller, less animate animals. Can include small fish, worms etc. but generally things that occur in groups.) (comes from a proto-language word meaning	ti > tí (H)		tiui > tsùi (H0)

“swarm”/”hive”/”crowd (of animals)”) INS			
Places/buildings (from proto-word meaning “house”/”shelter”) BUI	ar > ar (0)	ara > ara (0)	
Long, thin objects (from proto-word meaning “stick”/”rod”/”branch”) STI	pil > plí (H)	pila > píla (H0)	
Hairy/fibrous object/mass (e.g. hair, squirrel tail, brush, eyelashes, certain plants, plant roots, feathers etc.) (from proto-word meaning “hair (as a collective)” HAI	ṭa > ṭą (H)	ṭama > ṭáma (H0)	
Sharp/spiny/dangerous object (from proto-word for a very thorny plant whose thorns stick in the skin, often leading to infected wounds) DAN	rawm > rąw (0)	rawma > rawma (0)	
Plants (from proto-word meaning “tree”) PLA	gi > ci (L)	gia > cyá (L0)	
Edible part of plant (from proto-word meaning “berries/fruits (as collective)” EDI	us > us (0)		usui > uswi (0)
Thin, flat, hard object (from proto-word meaning “plank”) FLA	laq > lá (H)	laqa > láqa (H0)	
Small object/Round, smooth object/Miscellaneous (from proto-word meaning “stone”, which had already become a generic word meaning “thing”/”object” before genders evolved) SMA	hu > hú (H)	hua > fwà (H0)	
Rough object/Large object/Miscellaneous (from proto-word meaning “mound”/”heap”) BIG	day > tay (L)	daia > (tayá)	
Thin, flexible objects (from proto-word meaning “foliage”/”leaves (collective)”) FLE	aṣuq > áṣú (H)		aṣuqui > áṣúwi (H0)
Containers (from proto-word meaning “basket”) CON	fi > fi (0)	fia > swa (0)	
Thin liquids (from proto-word meaning “water”) LIQ	ŋa > ña (0)		
Thick liquids/moist mass (from proto-word meaning “paste”) PAS	iṛi > iḷi		
Powder/collection/bundle (dry)/dry mass (from proto-word meaning “powder”) POW	caŋ > cą́ (H)		
Land type/biome (from proto-word meaning “woods”/”stand of trees”. Initially used to distinguish types of woods/vegetation, and later applied to all types of land) LAN	ia > ya (0)		
Diminutive/Nominalised verb/Partitive/Piece/Part of a whole (from proto-word meaning “part”/”piece”) PIE	ui > wi (0)	uia > wia (0)	

Manner/custom/technique/style (from proto-word meaning “road”/”path”) MAN	mun > mų (0)		

When the exact identity of a subject or object is unknown, or anaphoric reference is made to a non-specific concept or a previous sentence, but requires agreement on the verb, default gender agreement is used. If the referent is known to be human, then HUM agreement is used. If the referent is known to be animate, then ANI agreement is used. If nothing is known about the referent, or it is inanimate/abstract then SMA agreement is used. Verbs are sensitive to transitivity, so any verb with an assumed or unclear argument will use default gender agreement in order to maintain the correct transitivity.

Possession

There are two ways to denote possession in Waramų. Which is used depends on the alienability of the possession. Alienability represents whether it is possible for a possession to be lost or taken away without altering the possessor. In Waramų, body parts and family members are considered inalienable possessions, as well as integral parts of objects, such as the doors of a house, or the branches of a tree. Most other possessions are considered alienable.

Inalienable possession can also be used to denote a quality or type of something. In these constructions, the possessor denotes the quality or type and the possessee is the “head” denoting the general identity of the object, with it’s meaning restricted by its possessor. These constructions can sometimes freely vary with noun compounds which use the same order of TYPE + THING, but dispense with the possessive marking.

Alienable Possession

Alienable possession is encoded uses the postposition “mur” (at/in/on) , which modifies the possessor. The possessor typically comes before the possessee, but this is not a strict rule, and other words can come between the possessor and possessee, as long as the meaning remains clear. For example, “the woman’s drum” would be:

prapi mur wiafi
woman MUR drum

while “the drum belongs to the tall woman” would be:

wiafis prapi maw mur filu
wiafi-s prapi maw mur fi-lu
drum-TOP woman tall MUR CON-LOC.COP.PERF

note – the “fi” in “filu” is subject marking, but in the object marking position. This happens with copulae, but I haven’t had time to include an explanation in this documentation.

Inalienable Possession

Inalienable possession is marked on the possessee, using the possessive affix pronouns (see the pronoun section). The possessor always comes before the possessee, and is unmarked. The only things that can come between are modifiers of the possessor, such as adjectives and relative clauses. For example, “the woman’s head” would be:

prapi prumili
prapi prumi-li
woman head-3

Inalienable Nouns

Some nouns are obligatorily possessed – they cannot appear without a possessive affix. When an obligatorily possessed noun is spoken about without an overt possessor, an indefinite pronoun is used as a dummy possessor. For example, “grandmothers eat curus” would be:

hápu irtawpili cúrus uswipicús
prá irtawpi-li cúrus uswi-pi-cús
WHO.SG grandmother-3 curus eat-HUM-GNOM

Spatial Relations

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Compounds

Compound nouns have the same order as in English. With the first noun denoting the type or source of something, and the second noun denoting the identity (the head). In other words, the order is TYPE + THING. Sometimes compounds can freely vary with possessive phrases, where the second component of the compound (the head) takes possessive marking agreeing with the possessor (which will almost always be 3rd person).

Verbs

Person, gender and number agreement

Finite verbs in Waramų have various slots for markers of voice, subject, object and TAM. Most verbs follow the following system:

Full verb paradigm							
Object marker	Voice affix	Verb stem (infinitive or converb)	Subject agreement	Negation	Tense + aspect	Mood + evidentiality	Relative marker

The voice affix and verb stem form the core of a verb, and are available on any verb form. Verbs that use a converb stem cannot take any of the slots after the verb stem, but can in some circumstances take object marking.

Object marking is not quite the same as object agreement, as it is sensitive to discourse structure and information. It only appears when the object is either the topic of the sentence or is already an established referrent that is not overtly repeated in the clause.

Both the object marker and the subject agreement come in the form of either a pronominal affix (see the pronouns section) or a gender affix, if the referrent is 3rd person.

The next slot is for the negative morpheme “ma”, which negates the predicate of the clause.

Voice, TAM and evidentiality are explained in more detail below:

Voice

As Waramų doesn’t consistently connect subject status with particular semantic roles, it relies heavily on voice to disambiguate the roles played by the various participants in an event. Waramų has two basic transitive constructions, the actor voice and the patient voice, both of which can be used with subjects of varying animacy. The choice of patient or active voice is typically determined by discourse, where topics, if possible, are subjects, and failing this, definiteness/givenness and finally, animacy, are used to select a subject. In addition to these two basic voices, an additional four voices are used to encode other semantic roles. As in the Austronesian symmetrical-voice systems, these voices promote a particular semantic role to subjecthood, generally leaving the role that would typically be the ”object” of the verb unchanged, and requiring the agent/actor to become an oblique argument in some cases, or an adjunct in others.

Voice	Consonant-initial verb	Vowel-initial verb	Roles (transitives)	Roles (intransitives)
Agent	Ø-	s-	Agent, theme or experiencer is subject, patient is direct object	Agent, theme or experiencer is subject
Patient	(l)i-	l-	Patient is subject, agent is direct object	
Benefactive/Locative Note – typically a benefactive reading is assumed with animates and	ta-	t-	Goal, location or beneficiary is subject, patient is direct object, agent is adjunct.	Goal, location or beneficiary is subject. Agent becomes adjunct.

a locative/goal reading is assumed with inanimates.				
Instrumental	rį-	rin-	Instrument (either used object or trigger/cause used/activated by more agentive causer) is subject, patient remains direct object. User of instrument (if there is one) is adjunct	Instrument (either used object or trigger/cause) is subject
Causative	mu-	m-	Causer is subject, patient remains direct object, while causee is second object (indirect)	Causer is subject, causee is direct object
Middle	pu-	uf-	Agent and patient are both the subject OR Unintentional agentive causer is subject. Patient is object.	Unintentional agent/causer or experiencer/theme is subject (some experiencer/theme verbs are only found in the middle form, and denote experiences in which the subject is affected)

TAM

Waramų marks tense and aspect using a system of suffixes recently derived from affixed auxiliary verbs. It is unusual in having a future-non-future distinction, but no present-past distinction. In most complex discourse, the perfect aspects are used to set definite references in time, and then more relative tenses such as the inchoative, cessative, prospective and perfect are used to refer to events before or after this reference point.

Tense and Aspect

Tense and aspect in Waramų are encoded by a set of suffixes which evolved from four different fused auxiliary verbs. These auxiliaries each have three forms: perfective non-future, imperfective non-future and future, which are inherited from proto-Waramų's simpler tense and aspect conjugation system. The following table details the origins and proto-forms of these suffixes, as well as their grammatical values in Waramų:

Proto-Waramų infinitive verb	**Verb form**		
	Imperfective	**Perfective**	**Future**
Equative copula *ti	Non-future continuous ia > ya (0)	Non-future perfective is (0) / ys (in diphthongs)	Future perfective tan > tą(n) (H)
Existential copula *uci	Non-future habitual uca > cá (H)	Gnomic (general truths) cus > cús (H)	Future imperfective can > cą(n) (H)
To stand *mi	Non-future inchoative mia > nwa (0)	Non-future prospective mis > mi (0)	
To leave *gari	Non-future cessative gara > crá (L0)	Non-future perfect garus > crús (L0)	Future negative garay > cráy (L0)

Mood and Evidentiality

Mood and evidentiality in Waramų are marked on the verb in the suffix slot following the tense/aspect suffix. These suffixes were already in existence in proto-Waramų as verb affixes and have survived into Waramų. I will term this suffix the ”mood” suffix, as evidentiality is typically seen as being a part of, or closely related to grammatical mood. The following table shows the various morphological moods in Waramų:

Mood		**Tone**	**Uses**
Optative	ṭá	H	The optative mood shows the wishes or hopes of the speaker. It can also be used to form imperatives or neutral requests.
Potential	álú	H	The potential mood encodes ability, and possibility. It is also used to form polite requests or suggestions.
Inferential	ni	0	The inferential mood shows the deductions and inferences of the speaker. It suggests that the speaker has some evidence that something is true, but has not personally observed what they describe.
Hearsay	tų	L	The hearsay mood denotes statements that are based on second-hand knowledge that the speaker has learnt from others.
Sensed (non-visual)	cisa	L	The sensed mood denotes anything that the speaker has sensed but not seen. Thus one might talk about food that one can smell using the sensed mood, until one sees the food.
Known/Indicative/Seen	-	-	The indiciative mood denotes facts or events that the speaker has first-hand visual experience of.

NB - The indicative mood can only be used with future tense in limited circumstances. These include the consequents (apodoses) of conditional statements, negative statements and subordinate clauses. All other future tense constructions require mood marking.

Copulae and Predication

TODO

Equative Copula

TODO

Locative Copula

TODO

Existential Copula

TODO

Non-finite Verbs

TODO

Infinitives

Infinitive verbs always end with an “i” or a “y” (as part of the diphthong /ai/). They are used in all finite verbs as the verb root. They are the reference form found in dictionaries.

Converbs

Converbs are generally identical or similar to infinitives, except that they end in a “u” or a “w” (as part of the diphthong /au/). They are used to indicate an action that is done by the same subject as the main verb in a clause, and behave like adverbs/adverbial phrases. Typically the action described with a converb occurs just before or at the same time as the action described by the main verb.

For example:

típ'i táqu cilyá rų nísṭípicá
típ'i táqu cilyá rų nísṭí-pi-cá
boy run.CONV forest from exit.towards-HUM-NONFUT.HAB

“The boy used to come running out of the forest”

Relative Verbs and Relative Clauses

TODO

Adjectives

There are just thirty one true adjectives. They come after the noun and do not take person or gender agreement. They are negated in the same way as verbs, with the ma- prefix, and are intensified by reduplication of the first syllable. Negation and intensification cannot co-occur.

Adverbs and Ideophones

TODO

Postpositions

Waramų has a total of five postpositions which are used to denote the roles of noun phrases in a clause. All noun phrases that are not topics, subjects or objects will be marked with postpositions. The postpositions, along with their meanings are descrbed in the table below:

Postposition	**Use**
mur	Denotes **location, belonging** or **type**. English translations would include the prepositions “at”, “on” “in” and “of”, and genitive clitic “-s” denoting **possession** or **membership**.
as	Denotes **goal**, **purpose**, or **beneficiary**. English translations would include the prepositions “to”, “towards” and “for”.
rų	Denotes **source**, **origin**, **material**, **instrument** or **duration**. English translations would include the prepositions “from”, “using”, “for” (in the duration sense), “out of”.
ṇaw	Denotes **co-participation**, **companionship** or **accompaniment**. English translations would include the preposition “with”.
táy	Denotes **calling** or **address**. A vocative postposition without a clear translation in English, although “Oh!”, “Hail!”, “Hey!” or “Oi!” would do.

For discussion of the topic marker -s, see the Syntax and Discourse section.

Syntax and Discourse

Topic and Focus

Waramų word order can be described as TFV – topic, focus, verb. In many cases, the topic is also the subject and the focus is the object, yielding SOV as a common pattern. However, this is not always the case. Objects, and other things can sometimes be topics, and sometimes subjects can be foci.

Often not all three of TF and V are clearly present. Topics typically last for long periods during a discourse, so unless a new topic is introduced with every sentence, most sentences and clauses will remain without a topic. Speakers assume that the established topic is present in the minds of the other speakers, and thus can refer to that topic with agreement markers, or not at all, depending on the specifics of the conversation. Sometimes there appears to be no focus in a sentence. Typically, this is because the verb itself is the focus. No special marking is used in this case, as it is generally clear from context. However, some function words can only appear directly after a focus, in which case the identity of the focus may become clearer.

If the focus is not the verb, or a verb-argument predicate, then the focus must be the pre-verbal element. Nothing may come between the focus and the verb, apart from the previously mentioned post-focus function words.

Topics are marked using the enclitic -s. This can join to a noun phrase, an infinitive or relative verb, or any other permissible topic. Nouns that end in a coda consonant take -si, rather than -s, due to the insertion of an epenthetic /i/ to resyllabify the /s/ as complex codas are not allowed in Waramų.

Subject Selection

Typically, Waramų speakers prefer for the subject of most clauses to be topical. Thus, there is a strong tendency for topics to behave as subjects. However, this may not always be possible. For example, in

másúpás prá hį́ utunipis
mású-pá-s prá hį́ u-tuni-pi-is
sow-1SG-TOP WHO.SG Q ANI-kill-HUM-NONFUT.PERF

“Who killed my sow?”

the subject of the sentence is an unknown, specific referent. Unknown referents cannot be topical, so the topic is “másúpá” – “my sow”. Furthermore, question words (when used as question words, rather than indefinites) must always be in focus position. The subject agreement uses “pi” - a human gender agreement marker, which matches the question word “prá”, asking for a human referent. Notice also, that the verb takes object marking in this case (“u”, which matches the gender of “masu” – sow). Object marking is obligatory when the object is topical.

The question marker “hį́” here provides an example of a post-focal function word, allowed to come between the focus and the verb, if the focus is what is being questioned by the speaker. If the predicate or the verb is the focus of a question, then the question marker will appear at the end of the sentence.

The subject of a relative verb must be the relativised noun phrase, and the subject of a converb must be the same as the subject of the main verb in the clause.

Examples

Sorry this was so long, enjoy translating!