

- 19 Incidentally, this term then allowed us to understand the composition of the term for a detachable harpoon head, *kardakbikbin* (with iterative right reduplication of *-kbi*), which can be seen to be a metaphor based on the way the rope of the detachable harpoon head is wound around the head of the harpoon shaft)
- 20 Pym and Larrimore had listed them as nouns: the part of speech categorization used in their electronic dictionary didn't allow for deverbal nouns, and in any case some of the lexicalized prefixes can throw analysts off the track here. In their sketch grammar of Iwaidja, Pym and Larrimore (1979: 58–9) include a brief discussion of problematic lexemes which take verbal morphology but which 'are used as nouns with their own meaning', such as *rimuni* 'thunder' (lit. 'he hits it') and *wurtiyin manyij* 'sunset' (lit. 'the sun dives into the water'), though they do not extend this discussion to tide terms. However, the ability of such terms to inflect for future tense (5), as well as the full panoply of verbal inflections (subject, object, direction), clearly marks them as verbs.
- 21 It is not currently clear why the second vowel gets harmonized in this word, but it may reflect ongoing conventionalization of the word as a gestalt—which would of course lead to it ultimately becoming a deverbal noun, rather than a verb proper. For the moment its treatment as a verb (albeit with the above irregularity) is warranted by the existence of other prefixed forms (*kudnadbi*, *yadnadbi*, etc.) which behave regularly in terms of their verbal prefixes.
- 22 The fact that the inclusive/exclusive distinction is neutralized in objects of transitive combinations nicely allows an implicit extension from 'found us (exclusive)' i.e. my sister and me, to 'found us (inclusive)', i.e. my sister, me, and on to you in the next generation. Note also that the technique of referring to one member of a subset by a prefix denoting the superset is widely used in kinship expressions—e.g. *awunbani*, lit. 'they two sit (i.e. live together)' can refer either to a pair (husband and wife) or, using the subset reference method, to just one member of the pair, i.e. 'the one such that they two live together'. If anything, it is even more widespread in *kundeybi* expressions, where it achieves an appropriate balance of vagueness and inclusiveness.
- 23 And even there it is heavily disguised, with the combination 3sgFemA>3sgO normally appearing on the surface as *ka-*, underlyingly *K-nga-* where *K* represents the hardening effects of a 3sg object on the following consonant (Evans 1998).
- 24 Well, almost—there is no evidence from any Iwaidjan language of combinations with any of the 3 non-human genders as transitive subject; see Evans (1998) and, for the Mawng paradigms, Capell and Hinch (1970) and Singer (2007).
- 25 A small number of Iwaidja verb stems have initial *ds* that are only found with a limited set of pronominal prefixes (basically comprising an initial subject element plus an object element ending in *K*). The most likely historical scenario is that the *d* is original and has been lost in all but this environment (Evans 2006b).
- 26 For the sake of narrative unity I confined myself in this paper to data arising from the Iwaidja project. But to broaden the argument using examples from other projects, here are some other examples (all verbs) from interdisciplinary work conducted myself or by close colleagues on other Australian languages: (a) Kayardild verbs I only became aware of under the pressures of doing translation or interpreting in legal contexts: these included the difference between two causatives which I had been fruitlessly trying to elicit for years, but which cropped up when speakers pointed out that I used the wrong one (*yulkaanmarutha* rather than *yulkalutha* for 'make permanent, for ever') in the context of a native title handover claim because 'they're only giving us the paper, then we have to trust that', i.e. the purported causation of permanence was mediated rather than direct. Also through interpreting for lawyers, I discovered a relict applicative suffix *-ri-* as attested in the verb *biyarija* 'paddle [a canoe] with [water supplies]', when a lawyer asked me to ask whether people knew enough about the water supplies available on an island to take baler shells of water with them on their canoes when they visited
- (b) another example of specialised vocabulary that only arose from transcriptions of Bininj Gun-wok songs from the Nabarlek song cycle in work with Murray Garde, Allan Marett and Linda Barwick on the Western Arnhem Land Endangered Song Language Project, is the rather gruesome verb *ngalwownme* 'drown out the death cries of someone being killed by making camouflaging noises over the top'
- (c) verbs of specific choreographic movements in Murrinh-patha, like *wintjirdum* 'while dancing drop on one knee with one hand up one hand down and head bowed for a moment after that (most likely with a woomera)', that arose during the investigation of Murrinh-patha song texts by a team comprising linguist Michael Walsh and musicologists Linda Barwick and Allan Marett; Walsh suggests that compressed song texts favour the appearance of such words because of the way their brevity allows 'semantic density', like a small dessert or liqueur, highly specific tastes can be processed (Walsh 2007:132).
- Examples like these, which could readily be multiplied, emphasise that the cases treated in the present paper are just the tip of a very large iceberg.