

Gamlaraay Verbs—Transitive and intransitive

Gamlaraay verbs are either transitive or intransitive.

Trans— means ‘across’. With transitive verbs the action (verb) goes across (or transfers) from the Doer.to (noun or pronoun), and is usually Done.to something or someone else (noun or pronoun).

However, transitive verbs do not always have something/someone Done.to, e.g. bawi-li ‘will sing’.

The *in*— in ‘intransitive’ means ‘not’. The action of an intransitive verb does not transfer to anything - it involves the Doer only.

L-class verbs (the future form ends in –li) are usually transitive, and Y-class verbs (the future form ends in –y) are usually intransitive.

Transitive

e.g. **gama-li**

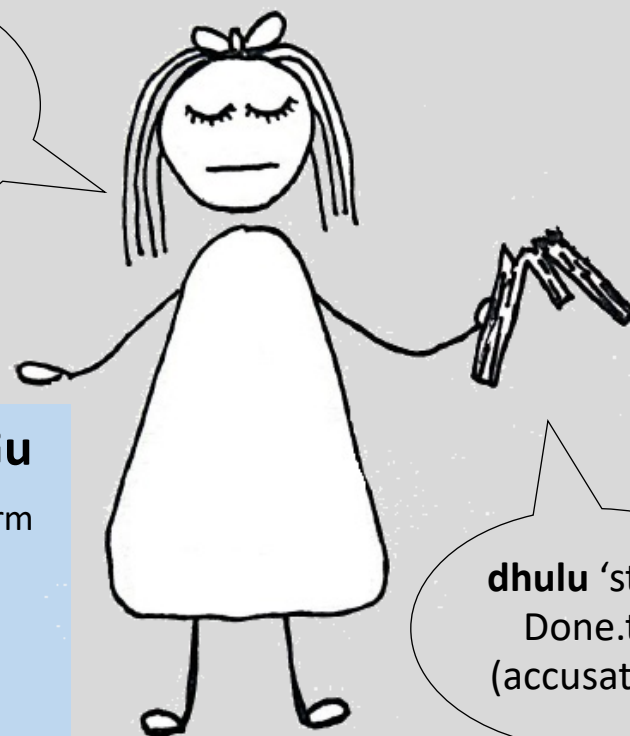
‘will break’

L-class

With a transitive verb the Doer.to pronoun or a noun is ergative case, with the suffix –Gu.

The Done.to noun or pronoun is accusative case.

miyay ‘girl’
Doer.to
(ergative)



dhulu ‘stick’
Done.to
(accusative)

The girl will break the stick.

Miyay-dhu dhulu gama-li.

girl-doe.to stick break-future

She will break the stick.

Dhulu nguru gama-li.

stick she (doer.to) break-future

She will break it.

Gama-li nguru nhama.

break-future she (doer.to) it (done.to)

Ergative suffix -Gu

Word ending	Suffix form
-a, -u	-gu
-l, -y	-dhu
-n	-du
-rr, -l	-u

Intransitive

e.g. **yana-y**

‘will walk, go’

Y-class

With an intransitive verb the Doer noun or pronoun is nominative case.

miyay ‘girl’
Doer
(nominative)



The girl will walk.

Miyay yana-y.

girl walk,go-future

She will walk, go.

Yana-y nhama.

walk-future she (doer)

These Gamlaraay pronouns are usually in second place in the sentence.

Ergative (Doer.to) pronouns

I	ngaya	you (1)	nginda	he she it	nguru
we (2)	ngali	you (2)	ngindaali	they (2)	ngurugaalay
we (3 +)	ngiyani	you (3+)	ngindaay	they (3+)	ganugu

Accusative (Done.to) pronouns

I	nganha	you (1)	nginunha	he she it	nhama
we (2)	ngalinya	you (2)	nginaalinya	they (2)	nhamagaalaynya
we (3 +)	ngiyaniya	you (3+)	nginaaynya	they (3+)	ganuga

Nominative (Doer) pronouns

I	ngaya	you (1)	nginda	he she it	nhama
we (2)	ngali	you (2)	ngindaali	they (2)	nhamagaalay
we (3 +)	ngiyani	you (3+)	ngindaay	they (3+)	ganuga