

- (8) Ngarli-ni irri-ng-a ngurra abajabajami.  
*talk-LOC 3.PL-1O-NF 1.PL.INC. make.crazy.NF*  
 ACC  
 ‘They make us confused (when they’re) talking.’
- (9) Ngaj-bi ng-a gaj-barda.  
*see-NF 1.SG-PST eat-INF*  
 ‘I saw him eating.’

Switch reference is not encoded in purposive clauses (marked with the dative case, or with the infinitive, as in (1)), nor in relative past tense clauses (marked with the ablative case).

Equational, identificational, and attributive clauses are generally headed by nominals, with no copula verb. In these clauses, the nominal predicate and its subject typically agree in number, gender, and case (i.e., nominative). Such nominal clauses cannot contain an auxiliary.

- (10) Naniyaga guji-nya ngarri-rna.  
*that.SG.II.NOM mother-II.NOM my-II.NOM*  
 ‘That’s my mother.’

See also: Australia: Language Situation; Case; Configurationality; Endangered Languages; Ergativity; Gender, Grammatical; Switch Reference.

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## Wang Li (1900–1986)

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Wang Li (Wang Liaoyi) was one of the three most prominent linguists in China in the 20th century. He was born August 10, 1900, in what is now Bobai County of the Guangxi Zhuang Autonomous Area. His family could not afford any more than a primary

school education, but after studying on his own he was able to pass the entrance exam for the postgraduate program at Tsing Hua University in 1926, where he studied with Wang Guowei, Liang Qichao, Chen Yinke, and Chao Yuen Ren (see **Chao Yuen Ren (1892–1982)**). After Wang completed his thesis on Old Chinese grammar in 1927, Chao Yuen Ren encouraged him to go to the University of Paris to study. In Paris his focus changed from grammar to experimental phonetics, with his 1931 dissertation

being an analysis of the Bobai dialect of Chinese. Returning to China in 1932, he took up a position at Tsing Hua University. After the Japanese invasion in 1937, he followed the university to Changsha and then Kunming, but took a sabbatical in Vietnam from 1939 to 1940, studying Vietnamese and Sino-Vietnamese loanwords. In 1946 he went to Zhongshan University, where he founded the Linguistics Department, and moved to Lingnan University two years later. During the restructuring of universities in 1952, Wang moved back to Zhongshan University to be head of the Linguistics Department; in 1954 this department was merged with the Chinese Department of Beijing University, where he remained until his death in 1986.

After 1949, Wang was active politically, as a representative to the National People's Congress and the Beijing and National Political Consultative Congresses. He was also Deputy Chairman of the Chinese Language Reform Committee, an advisor to the National Language Work Committee, member of the Academy of Sciences, and Honorary President of the Chinese Linguistics Association and the Chinese Phonology Association.

Wang was a prolific writer; even during the war years he continued publishing. He wrote 40 books and over 200 academic articles, plus poetry, short literary pieces, and dozens of translations from French and other languages into Chinese. His linguistic work covers all aspects of linguistics: experimental phonetics, which he applied to the study of traditional Chinese philology and reconstruction; the grammar of Old Chinese and Modern Chinese and the changes in between; language standardization and education; and the structure of poetry. He was one of the first to systematically study Chinese grammar on its own terms, arguing that concepts from English grammar should not be blindly applied to the Chinese language. In Chinese traditional phonology and the historical reconstruction of Old Chinese, he found that one of the rhyme categories needed to be split to account for the rhyming patterns of the old texts, and argued, *contra* Bernard Karlgren, that each

rhyming category should only have one main vowel and there should be some open syllables. He also argued that there should be only two tones in Old Chinese, with long and short syllables in the two tones giving rise to the later four-tone system.

*See also:* Chao Yuen Ren (1892–1982); Chinese.

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## Wang, NianSun (1744–1832)

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Wang NianSun (1744–1832; also known as Wang Huaizu) is regarded as one of the greatest Chinese philologists of the Qing dynasty (1644–1911). He

received his early education from Dai Zhen (1725–1777), who gave him a solid background in the field. Like his predecessors, Wang was a Confucian scholar intent on understanding the ancient texts, and this led to his interest in Chinese historical phonology and philology. He produced numerous annotations and emendations on classical texts. His masterpiece,