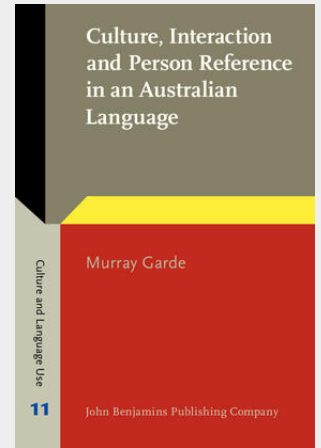


Garde

## Culture, Interaction and Person Reference in an Australian Language

An ethnography of Bininj Gunwok communication

The study of person reference stands at the cross-roads of linguistics, anthropology and psychology. As one aspect of an ethnography of communication, this book deals with a single problem — how one knows who is being talked about in conversation — from a rich and varied ethnographic perspective. Through a combination of grammatical agreement and free pronouns, Bininj Gunwok possesses a pronominal system that, according to current theoretical accounts in linguistics, should facilitate clear cut reference. However, the descriptions of Bininj Gunwok conversation in this volume demonstrate that frequently a vast gulf lies between knowing that, say, an object is '3rd singular', and actually knowing who it refers to. Achieving reference to people in Bininj Gunwok can involve a delicate and refined set of calculations which are part of a deliberate and artful way of speaking. Speakers draw on a diverse set of grammatical and lexical devices all underpinned by shared knowledge about a diverse range of social relationships and cultural practices.



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