Grammatical Categories in Australian Languages

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References

Topic A:
The derivational affix ‘having’
In the first sentence, *mi:lagude* is an adjective and subject which can perhaps best be glossed 'spear-having-one'. In the other sentence, *mi:langane* is a declined noun (instrumental case) and adverb which can conveniently be glossed 'with a spear'.

4. In some instances there is also a semantic overlap or interference between the 'having' affix -gude and another derivative affix, viz. -gari. The latter one has a wide and varied semantic scope and occurs both in the nominal and the verbal spheres very frequently. Inter alia, it derives adjectives and/or nouns from noun stems and the derivatives can best, however clumsily, be glossed 'pertaining to'. Connected or supplied with'—therefore 'having'. One of the above examples, *yirgalgari* 'policeman' can again be referred to here (from *yirgal* 'rope/chain' plus *gari* 'supplied with/having'; the word is clearly a grim memento of the past with policemen chaining up arrested Aboriginals). Further examples:

- *dinhigari* 'stingray' < *duni* 'stingray's spike'
- *djandigari* 'waddy/club' < *djani* 'finger-grooves on a handle'
- *garjgari* 'fierce warrior/vicious person' < *garji* 'spite malevolence'
- *madhirgari* 'tearful/crying' < *madji* 'tear'
- *njamaqgari* 'centipede' < *njamji* 'insect's foot'

Despite a slight semantic interference, however, morphological and syntactic rules keep the two derivative affixes clearly apart. See the following examples:

(i) *djandigari djanigude*  
'waddy finger-groove-having'  
'A waddy has finger-grooves [on the handle].'

(ii) *biiri djanigudagi*  
'He has a waddy/He is armed with a waddy.'

In some cases, however, one of the above affixes is regarded by native speakers as inapplicable whereas the other is said to be perfectly grammatical. Thus, *garjgari* 'vicious person' from *garji* 'malevolence, spite' is accepted but *garihgarde* is not.

5. It may perhaps be of interest to mention in passing that quite a few (or perhaps most or all?) Finno-Ugrian and Uralo-Altaic languages show up one or more derivative affixes, phonologically absolutely different from the above (and often from each other, too) but strikingly reminiscent of, or, simply identical with, the syntactic and semantic functions of -gude in Wunambal. This holds good for a Hungarian -S, Finnish -V:A, Zyyran -A/S, Vogel -P:A and a number of others. The translation of a Wunambal form with -gude into English (or other Indo-European languages) may be, and often is, troublesome and clumsy whereas exact structural/semantic equivalents can be found in Finno-Ugrian or Uralo-Altaic. A few examples from Hungarian:

(i) *dárda* 'spear' + S > *dárdaS* 'spear-having'  
(cf. Wunambal *mi:lagude* 'idem')

(ii) *kutya* 'dog' + S > *kutys* 'dog-having'  
(cf. Wunambal *le:qa:wagude* 'idem')

(iii) *haj* 'hair of the head' + S > *hajás* 'hairy'  
(cf. Wunambal *dyagugude* 'idem')

27. Ritharrngu

Another point of interest is that Finno-Ugrian and Uralo-Altaic languages also show a contrast, and sometimes an interference, between a derivative 'having' affix and a clearly different instrumental-comitative case suffix (and some of these languages have more than one derivative affix which can roughly be glossed 'having' while others have, in addition to this, developed distinctly different case suffixes for the instrumental and comitative, respectively). Compare the following data:

(i) Hungarian

- *kutya* 'dog' + S > *kutys* 'dog-having, doggy'
- *kutya* + *FA:* Instr/Comit > *kutys:al* 'dog-with'
- *kutya* + *STUL* AffixAccomp > *kutys:al* 'dog-together'

(ii) Zyyran

- *pon* 'dog' + S > *pons* 'dog-having'
- *pon* + *EN* Instr > *ponsen* 'dog-with'
- *pon* + *KED* Comit > *ponken* 'dog-together'

Examination of a sizeable corpus of the various 'having' affixes in Aboriginal Australia compared with other language groups and families might perhaps result in valuable typological conclusions.

27. Ritharrngu

Jeffrey Heath

A.1. Ritharrngu is a Yuinngu language of north-eastern Arnheim Land. The regular 'having' suffix is *-mi*, which undergoes allomorphic variation. The privative element *-mig*, which sometimes becomes *-mur*, by low-level assimilation, and the dual element *-bulal* can occur in similar constructions. More research would almost certainly show that *barny*p*ur* 'many', perhaps in the shortened form *-baru*, can also occur in this type of construction.

The reflexive-reciprocal suffix added to verbs is *-mi*, which becomes *-mi-na* or *-mi-ri* in the past and *-mi-ri* in both present and potential. An example: *bu-ga-mi* 'to hit self or each other' from root *bu*. Note the increment between root and *-mi*; this increment takes the form *-Na* or *-N*, where *N* is a coronal nasal (*n, g, or h*), depending on the verb class. This increment is usually identical to either the present or past tense suffix of the verb class in question. More interestingly, the increment is also used before nominal case suffixes such as ablative *-per*, and here we can only take the increment as a nominalising suffix: *bu-ga-peru* 'from the fighting'. Although the synchronic situation is a little messy due to assorted irregularities, it seems reasonable to guess that forms like *bu-ga-mi* are etymologically nominalised verbs plus a suffix *-mi*. If we take present-potential *-mi-ri* as the most archaic paradigmatic form, and past tense *-mi-na/-mi-ba* and so forth as secondary, there is no reason for not correlating this *-mi-ri* with 'having' *-mirt*. That is, 'having fighting' could be used as a predicate nominal, and 'They (are) having fighting' could mean 'They are engaged in fighting', with subsequent specialisation as a reflexive-reciprocal form.

Also of historical interest is the inchoative verbaliser *-ji*, added mostly to nominal (including most *adjecitive*) stems: *makuji* 'dead body, devil'.
rather than -N-, while reflexive-reciprocal -mi(r) takes either -Na- or -N- depending on the verb class, it is quite possible that the two originally reflect a single 'having' construction built on verb stems, and that the -mi(r) and -mirw forms have since undergone semantic and morphological developments which tend to disguise their original structural identity.

The suffix -miri also shows up in a few more or less frozen constructions. It is presumably present in the now unsegmentable ripurumiri 'afternoon, yesterday'. It also occurs in expressions meaning 'X times' along with an initial element mak- and a quantifying stem: mak-batu-miri 'many times'.

Notes
1. I seem to recall hearing an example of this type, but I cannot find it in my notes at present.
2. We should also mention that -bata-, in the form -bata-yu with a basically adjectival ending, is found in an occasional compound in a sense not far removed from that of 'having'. The best example I have is dîn^n- and bata-yu 'husband'. This contains the root dîn^n- 'woman, wife'. The expression dîn^n- and bata-yu is used in the sense of the true or proper husband, and is opposed to words denoting the usurper or stealer of the wife. The sense is distinct from that of *dîn^n-miri 'having a wife', if the latter form exists at all.

28. Murinjpata

Muranjpata is a multiple-classifying, prefixing language, spoken mainly at Port Keats in the north-west of the Northern Territory.

A-1. Nominal Affix

A-1a. Form

The form has one allomorph: /-ma/. 

A-1b. Grammatical function

/-ma/ is suffixed to noun-classifiers (NC):

- palytun ma-kaju-nga
- woman NEG-NC: person 'having'
- woman not having man (i.e. spinster)

and to nouns:

- palytun ma-nanga wakal-nga
- woman NEG-NC: 'thing' child 'having'
- 'childless/barren woman'

'Having' forms take the full range of nominal inflections (viz. ergative, instrumental, nominative and dative).
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Michael Walsh

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‘Having’ forms take the full range of nominal inflections (viz. ergative, instrumental, nominative and dative).