

CHAPTER 3

OVERVIEW OF MORPHOLOGY

This chapter outlines a number of general issues that arise in the description of Martuthunira morphology. Section 3.1 sets out the part-of-speech classification assumed in this description. Section 3.2 presents definitions of suffix and clitic as opposed to independent free forms and discusses some of the consequences of Martuthunira's highly agglutinative structure. Martuthunira is a language which allows multiple case-marking and §3.3 defines the syntactic levels at which nominal suffixes may operate and the constraints on their occurrence.

3.1 PARTS OF SPEECH

The following parts of speech are defined for Martuthunira:

Nominal	An open class of items inflected for number and case. The superclass nominal includes the closed subclasses pronoun, demonstrative and locational nominal, and a set of special temporal nominals.
Verb	An open class of items inflected for tense/aspect, mood and voice. Verbs are subcategorised by their argument structure.
Particles and Clitics	A closed class of uninflected words and clitics which serve a range of functions. Most modify a proposition by presenting some pragmatic information such as the speaker's state of mind, intentions, or assumptions about the status of the information coded in the proposition.
Interjection	A set of words which may not take suffixes or clitics and which can function as complete utterances.

3.1.1 NOUN AND ADJECTIVE

In many Australian languages it is difficult to make a strict division between the classes noun and adjective. Firstly, there are often no clear formal criteria for a distinction among subclasses, and secondly, it is often difficult to make discrete classifications based on semantic/functional criteria. Dixon (1980) argues that noun and adjective classes in Australian languages are justified on semantic grounds even if it is not possible to distinguish between them on formal grounds. He notes (p.275) that the division often has, in particular languages, certain syntactic (functional) correlates but that these are “of a more/less statistical nature, rather than being either/or properties that could be used as defining criteria”.

However, the a priori recognition of a semantically based division is not without its problems. The fact that a particular nominal may denote an entity in one noun phrase and yet function as a modifier of a head, denoting properties of an entity, in another noun phrase, means that we may not be able to confidently decide whether the particular lexical item is a noun or an adjective. For this reason, a number of descriptions choose not to distinguish nouns and adjectives, instead recognising that nominals may have different functions in different noun phrases. The contrast between entity-denoting nominal and modifying nominal is then handled by positing a system of functional slots within the noun phrase which may be filled by different nominals (Chapter 8 and see Morphy's (1983) description of Djapu and McGregor's (1984) description of Kuniyanti).

Goddard's (1983) description of Yankunytjatjara combines notional definition with a classification based on functional slots. He subcategorises nominals using semantic criteria reinforced by a consideration of the co-occurrence restrictions of particular nominals. He lists five syntactic frames against which nominals are compared:

1. head of a noun phrase
2. in apposition to another nominal (head) in a noun phrase
3. in apposition to another nominal in a simple ascriptive clause
4. with a copula in a simple ascriptive clause
5. as a second predication on a noun phrase in a verbal clause

Nouns are defined as those nominals which can occur as heads (restricted to slot 1). There are two kinds of adjectives: 'Active' adjectives require a copula in simple ascriptive clauses (4) and function as second predications (5); 'Stative' adjectives modify noun phrase heads (2) and require no copula in simple ascriptive clauses (3).

The same syntactic tests can be applied to nominals in Martuthunira but, unlike Yankunytjatjara, the tests do not reveal mutually exclusive sets. Martuthunira nominals are distributed among the following groups (although definitive membership cannot be established for all nominals occurring in the data):

- A. Nominals which almost always appear as heads (1). These are closest, on notional grounds, to *nouns*.
- B. Nominals which typically function as modifiers of noun phrase heads (2), may appear as heads of phrases (1), and which may occur in apposition to another nominal in a simple ascriptive clause (3). Any nominal which can appear in this last frame can also appear with a copula (5) (where the speaker chooses to provide tense/mood information about some state, for example).

The class includes a large number of what might be considered prototypical adjectives. For example:

<i>karlara</i>	hot
<i>jurirri</i>	sharp
<i>pangkira</i>	protruding, lump
<i>ngapala</i>	mud, muddy
<i>winparri</i>	long
<i>mirtali</i>	big
<i>ngarniwurtu</i>	hot-tasting

- C. Nominals which may appear in all five slots. Most items in this group can be recognised as prototypical adjectives and include the following:

<i>jalya</i>	useless, bereaved
<i>panyu</i>	good, well
<i>kur.ta</i>	clever, cleverly
<i>jarruru</i>	slow, slowly
<i>kuyil</i>	bad, badly
<i>piyuwa</i>	finished, completely
<i>pinkarranyu</i>	dry
<i>winya</i>	full

- D. Nominals which may not be apposed to another nominal in a simple ascriptive clause but require a copula (5), and which function almost exclusively as second predications of manner (4). These function very like *manner adverbs*, and are equivalent to ‘active adjective’ in Yankunytjatjara:

<i>nguyirri</i>	asleep
<i>yanarra</i>	flat on back
<i>jirruna</i>	stealthily
<i>karluwirraa</i>	excessively
<i>kartarr</i>	firmly, tightly
<i>minthal</i>	alone
<i>mulurru</i>	straight, directly
<i>puwany</i>	hunting

Table 3.1 shows the range of functions for a selection of nominals:

TABLE 3.1: RANGE OF NOMINAL FUNCTIONS

		1 head	2 modifier	3 simple ascriptive	4 copula ascriptive	5 second predication
<i>wirra</i>	boomerang	*				
<i>tharnta</i>	kangaroo	*				
<i>wartirra</i>	woman	*				
<i>ngapala</i>	mud	*	*	*	*	
<i>karlarra</i>	hot	*	*	*	*	
<i>winya</i>	full	*	*	*	*	*
<i>panyu</i>	good	*	*	*	*	*
<i>jalya</i>	useless	*	*	*	*	*
<i>kur.ta</i>	clever	*	*	*	*	*
<i>pinkarranyu</i>	dry	*	*	*	*	*
<i>kartarr</i>	firmly				*	*
<i>nguyirri</i>	asleep				*	*
<i>puwany</i>	hunting				*	*

The range of functions for two of the more flexible nominals, *pinkarranyu* ‘dry’ (a), and *winya* ‘full’ (b), is illustrated in the following examples:

HEAD OF NOUN PHRASE

- (3.1) a. *Nhuwana-yi pawulu-ngara parrani-Ø yilangu nyina-lu pinkarranyu-la.*
 2PL-VOC child-PL return-IMP here sit-PURPss dry-LOC
 You children come back here and stay in the dry.
- b. *Winya-npa-rra-rru, pintirrijila-rru puni-marri-layi ngurra-arta-rru,*
 full-INCH-CTEMP-NOW scattered-NOW go-COLL-FUT camp-ALL-NOW
pintirrijila wanti-marri-layi-rru ngurra-ngka-rru winya-ngara.
 scattered lie-COLL-FUT-NOW camp-LOC-NOW full-PL
 [We] get full now, and then scatter to [our] camps, each to lie in [our] camps
 then, [we] full ones.
 (No mention of implicit ‘we’ in previous 12 clauses.)

MODIFIER IN NOUN PHRASE

- (3.2) a. *Nhulaa manku-Ø, pinkarranyu kalyaran!*
 near.you grab-IMP dry stick
 Grab that, a dry stick!
- b. *Nhula manyarrkawantha-rryu nganaju-wu-la parrka-ngka,*
 near.you sugar put-IMP 1SG.OBL-GEN-LOC tea-LOC
kayarramirntiri winya.
 two spoon full
 Put that (near you) sugar in my tea, two spoons full.

SIMPLE ASCRIPTIVE

- (3.3) a. *Nhiyuthanuwa pinkarranyu paju nganaju mungka-lwaa.*
 this bread dry REAL 1SG.ACC eat-PURPs=o
 This bread is too dry for me to eat. (trans.)
- b. *Nhiyukayulumarnu winya-rru.*
 this waterbag full-NOW
 This waterbag is full.

COPULA ASCRIPTIVE

- (3.4) *Ngulangu yirralla-la, jalyuru-la-rru, ngunhu-ngarapawulu-ngara*
 there sheet-LOC hole-LOC-NOW that.NOM-PL child-PL
nyina-layi pinkarranyu waruul-wa-rru.
 be-FUT dry still-Ø-NOW
 Under the sheet, those children will stay dry then.

SECOND PREDICATION

- (3.5) a. *Nhulaa wartirra wiru thanuwa-a thurnta-rninyji kayulu-wirriwa-a,*
 near.you woman want damper-ACC knead-FUT water-PRIV-ACC

pinkarranyu-u.

dry-ACC

That woman wants to knead damper (bread) without water, dry.

- b. *Punga-a-rru winya-ma-rninyji puni-waa winya-rru,*
guts-ACC-NOW full-CAUS-FUT go-PURPs=o full-NOW

thuur.ta-a mungka-lalha-nguru.

fruit-ACC eat-PAST-ABL

Then [they] fill their guts so [they] can go full now, having eaten some fruit.

With such wide-ranging patterns of use it is clear that a classification into nominal subclasses is not nearly as neat as that suggested for Yankunytjatjara. There is no set of necessary and/or sufficient conditions which allow the definition of noun versus adjective. They cannot be distinguished by the ability of just one class to function as the head of a noun phrase (that is, unless we argue for radical ellipsis of heads in some noun phrases – see §8.5). This is not to deny the fact that individual nominals have greater or lesser ability to occur in particular frames. However, these possibilities of occurrence cannot be predicted by general syntactic or semantic rule. Such information would need to be stated in the lexical entry for each nominal.

3.1.2 PROPER NOMINALS: THE *-ngu* AND *-nha* SUFFIXES

A special *-ngu* form of the genitive and accusative case suffixes (§4.1.1) occurs on a subset of the class of nominals. Firstly, the form is selected by the second person singular pronoun *kartu*, the indefinite/interrogative pronouns *ngana* ‘who’, and *nganamarnu* ‘anyone’, and the definite demonstrative **ngurnula*. Proper names invariably select the *-ngu* allomorph of the genitive but occasionally select regular allomorphs of the accusative suffix. Other nominals, particularly kin terms and human stage of life terms such as *julyu* ‘old man’, and *jarta* ‘old woman’, may select the *-ngu* genitive or accusative when these are used like proper names. These patterns suggest that the *-ngu* suffix has the dual function of marking case, on the one hand, and status as a proper name, on the other. The functions of the *-ngu* case-marker partially overlap those of a suffix *-nha* which may similarly occur on proper names of persons or places, and on kin terms or human stage of life terms. The suffix occurs only on nominals in nominative case and thus complements the *-ngu* suffix as a marker of proper name status.

The *-nha* suffix is widely reported for Australian languages and appears in different languages with a number of different functions. For example, in the Western Desert languages the cognate *-nya* is often described as an allomorph of absolutive case for proper names and some other nominals, though Glass (1980:39) also notes, for Ngaanyatjarra, that it can be attached to proper names or kin terms when these are called out in greeting, or can be attached to common nominals to mark definiteness. In Thalanyji and Payungu, which have extensive tripartite case-marking patterns (Austin 1981d), *-nha* is the accusative suffix.

While the use of the suffix in the Western Desert and in Thalanyji and Payungu displays a strong grammaticalisation of the morpheme as a marker of particular morphological categories, in Martuthunira (and similarly in Panyjima and Yinyjiparnti) the *-nha* suffix is never automatically selected by any nominal. Nor is there any strong argument for viewing it

as an allomorph of some case (e.g. the unmarked nominative). The suffix must be ascribed a meaning independent of the case system.

It is quite clear that the use of the suffix on common nominals elevates these to the status of proper names just as does the *-ngu* accusative/genitive. However, this does not explain the use of either suffix on nominals which are clearly already proper names:

(3.6) *Yini-i-rru yungku-layi*, “*Pantuwarningka-nha nhiyaa*”.
 name-ACC-NOW give-FUT Pannawonica.Hill-PNM this.NOM
 And then [they] give it a name, “This is Pannawonica”.

(3.7) *Ngayu nhawu-lha ngurnu Tharlural-ngu yini*
 1SG.NOM see-PAST that.ACC Deepdale.Pool-ACC name
wangka-nguli-nyila-a.
 call-PASS-PrREL-ACC
 I saw that place named *Tharlural*.

In these examples the suffix appears to remove the proper name into some metalinguistic context in which proper names are being discussed: the names are ‘mentioned’ rather than ‘used’ (Lyons 1977:5).

3.1.3 CLOSED NOMINAL CLASSES

The nominal class includes the closed subclasses pronoun, demonstrative and locational nominal. These classes can be defined by certain unique categories encoded within the classes (person for pronouns, types of referential status for demonstratives, and special directional categories for locational nominals), and by some irregular case-marking patterns. The morphology of these classes is presented in Chapter 5. In addition, a paradigm of possessive suffixes marking person and kin-relationship are included with the discussion of pronouns in §5.2, and the irregular nominal *puyi* is discussed together with the locational nominals (§5.8).

Martuthunira has a set of nominals which typically function as temporal adverbs. Although many of the forms appear to have quite different patterns of distribution they form a semantically coherent class and have reasonably predictable morphology. Temporal nominals do not have unique morphological categories (although some might be described as inherently locative) and it is not clear to what extent new temporal nominals may be derived. However, for the purposes of this description it is assumed that the class is closed. Examples are presented in §5.9.

3.1.4 NOMINAL AND VERB

The patterns of multiple case-marking described in §3.3 can lead to a sequence of nominal suffixes appended to an inflected verb form. Given the freedom with which arguments of verbs may be omitted, many of these inflected verbs look very like nominals. However, I refrain from describing extensive nominalisation in Martuthunira. While there are a few verbal inflections which may be used to derive new nominal lexemes (in particular the habitual and passive habitual (§6.2.3)), the majority of nominally inflected verbs retain much of their status as verbal predicates: they may retain their tense specification and may take a full range of regularly case-marked arguments, including second predications on these arguments.

3.2 WORD STRUCTURE

3.2.1 SUFFIXES

Martuthunira is a suffixing language with a highly analytic agglutinating structure. The visibility of component morphemes in words is most marked in multiply inflected nominals and is a direct result of the following general features:

1. most suffixes conform to the general constraints on permissible phonological word forms (§2.3),
2. morphemes of two or more syllables bear a lexically assigned stress (and some monosyllabic suffixes are lexically stressed) (§2.6),
3. there are relatively few morphophonemic processes and many suffixes have an invariant form.

That is, many morphemes which are nevertheless described as bound suffixes fulfil all the phonotactic requirements necessary for independent word status. They are described as suffixes because they are typically distributed to all constituents within a phrase. To recognise these suffixes as independent words would be to admit a level of ‘word phrase’ below that of the noun phrase.

Within a nominal word, the order of suffixes is meaningful and is determined by a principle of concentric scoping. That is, items which occur to the right (in a suffixing language) have logical scope over all preceding morphemes. For example:

<i>warrirti-tharra-marta</i>	<i>warrirti-marta-tharra</i>
spear-DU-PROP	spear-PROP-DU
having two spears	two each having a spear
<i>kanyara-ngara-wu</i>	<i>kanyara-wu-ngara</i>
man-PL-GEN	man-GEN-PL
things belonging to the man	belonging to the men

Although there are general patterns whereby some suffixes (such as possessive markers (§5.2)) mostly occur close to the root, while others (such as the propriative (§4.10) or genitive (§4.12) occur at the outer layers of the word, it is not possible to establish classes of suffix based on position of occurrence. How deeply within a multiply inflected word particular suffixes may be found depends partly on their meaning and on their availability for marking syntactic relationships at different levels beyond the word (see §3.3 and Dench & Evans (1988)).

There are two apparent exceptions to this principal of concentric scoping. The suffixes *-thurti* ‘CONJunction’, and *-wuyu* ‘SIDE’, typically precede the accusative case suffix but may, on other occasions, follow it. For example:

- (3.8) *Ngunhaa pawulu puni-layi wangka-lu papu-thurti-i*
 that.NOM child go-FUT speak-PURPss father-CONJ-ACC
pipi-thurti-i.
 mother-CONJ-ACC
 That kid will go and speak to his father and mother.

- (3.9) *Ngarnarna nhawu-layi kupiyaji-i wuntu-ngara-a-thurti*
 1PL.EXC see-FUT little.PL-ACC boy-PL-ACC-CONJ
ngurrinymarta-ngara-a-thurti panyi-rnura-a.
 girl-PL-ACC-CONJ dance-PrREL-ACC
 We'll see the little ones, the boys and the girls, dancing.

The two suffixes *-thurti* and *-wuyu* serve to relate nominals within a noun phrase, while the accusative usually relates noun phrases to predicates at the clausal level. Thus the expected order is for the accusative to follow either of the two suffixes and the order demonstrated in example (3.9) is quite marked. There is no apparent difference in meaning between the two patterns and it may be that the variation in order reflects a historical stage at which *-thurti* and *-wuyu* were independent words following the noun phrases over which they had scope. They may be recently captured satellites in a continuing history of agglutination.

3.2.2 CLITICS

Clitics may occur on any part of speech with the exception of interjections, and follow any nominal or verbal suffixes attached to a word. The definition of a clitic as phonologically dependent is determined by appeal to the phonotactic constraints on word formation. If a form does not fulfil the criteria allowing it to be considered an independent word, and because of its syntactic distribution cannot be described as a nominal or verbal suffix, then it is described as a clitic.

Although formal definition of clitic as opposed to independent word is quite straightforward, in the case of one particular clitic, *-l* 'THEN', and certain case suffixes, the boundary between clitic and suffix is somewhat blurred. As already mentioned, the nominal suffixes *-thurti* 'CONJunction', and *-wuyu* 'SIDE', may very occasionally follow the accusative case suffix. In the other direction, the clitic *-l* is strongly attracted to inner levels of the word to which it is attached, resulting in some variation in ordering with respect to nominal suffixes. However, it must be pointed out that sequences of clitics, unlike sequences of nominal suffixes, have a flat structure. Thus the intrusion of clitics cannot cause any violations of the principle of concentric scoping for nominal suffixes. Variation in the placement of *-l* is illustrated in the following pairs of examples:

- (3.10) a. *Ngayu nguyirriwarla paju, wiruwanti-nguru-l wanti-layi*
 1SG.NOM sleepy.fellow REAL morning-ABL-THEN lie-FUT
yakarrangu-u yirla tharrwa-waa.
 sun-ACC until go.in-PURPs=o
 I'm a proper sleepyhead, lying in through the morning until the sun goes down.
- b. *Mir.ta-rru wanti-nguru wiruwanti-l-nguru, karlwa-ngur*
 not-NOW lie-PRES morning-THEN-ABL get.up-PRES
yakarrangu-wirriwa-la-l.
 sun-PRIV-LOC-THEN
 Now I don't lie in through the morning, I get up when there's no sun.
- (3.11) a. *Kartuwuraal ngamari-i murlimurli-ma-rninyjimirlimirli-la*
 2SG.NOM all.right tobacco-ACC rolled-CAUS-FUT paper-LOC

nganajumarta-a kayarra-a-l?
 1DU.DISHARM-ACC two-ACC-THEN
 Will you roll cigarettes for both of us?

- b. *Nganaju mimi panyu-ma-lalha warrirti-i nganajumarta-wu-u*
 1SG.GEN uncle good-CAUS-PAST spear-ACC 1DU.DISHARM-GEN-ACC
kayarra-l-yu puni-layi puwany-pa-rru.
 two-THEN-ACC go-FUT hunting-Ø-NOW
 My uncle fixed our two spears and we went hunting. (trans.)

In examples (3.10a) and (3.11a) the clitic appears in its expected position, following the ablative and accusative suffixes respectively. In (3.10b) and (3.11b), the clitic precedes these suffixes. Similar variation occurs, not surprisingly, with the *-wuyu* ‘SIDE’ suffix.

There is no evidence that scoping contrasts of any kind are implied by the alternative orders. The improbability of scoping contrasts is revealed in the following set of examples.

- (3.12) *Ngayu thani-lalha ngurnu muyi-i* { *kupuyu-l-yu.*
 1SG.NOM hit-PAST that.ACC dog-ACC { little-THEN-ACC
 { **kupuyu-u-l*
 { little-ACC-THEN }

I hit that dog when it was little. (trans.)

- (3.13) *Nganarna thani-lalha ngurnu-ngara-a muyi-ngara-a* { *kupiyaji-i-l.*
 1PL.EXC hit-PAST that.OBL-PL-ACC dog-PL-ACC { little.PL-ACC-THEN
 { **kupiyaji-l-yu*
 { little.PL-THEN-ACC }

We hit those dogs when they were little. (trans.)

- (3.14) *Ngayu puni-wayara thawun-mulyarra* { *kupuyu-mulyarra-l.*
 1SG.NOM go-HABIT town-ALL { little-ALL-THEN
 { **kupuyu-l-mulyarra*
 { little-THEN-ALL }

I used to go to town when it was a small place. (trans.)

These examples show that the placement of the clitic is affected by the choice of a particular lexical item as well as by the nominal suffix. While the lexical item *kupuyu* ‘little’, requires the clitic to precede accusative case, *kupiyaji* ‘little.PL’, in an identical construction requires the clitic to follow accusative case. Example (3.14) shows that the attraction of the clitic following *kupuyu* is restricted to certain case suffixes and so cannot be explained by setting up a new lexical item *kupuyul*. Example (3.11) shows that other lexical items (in this case *kayarra* ‘two’) allow both orders.

3.3 MULTIPLE CASE-MARKING

Nominal suffixes can be described as predicates which may take as their arguments constituents existing at a number of syntactic levels. Multiple case-marking will occur where individual words are marked by a number of suffixes each of which indicates the role of that word in successively higher constituents. The patterning of multiple case-marking within any particular language depends on a number of factors: (1) what grammatical constituents are

possible arguments of case predicates, (2) the language specific conventions governing how suffixes are to be distributed to words within constituents, and (3) the language specific constraints on certain sequences of morphemes (Dench & Evans 1988).

3.3.1 NOMINAL SUFFIX FUNCTIONS

Martuthunira nominal suffixes may have one or more of the following functions:

1. Relational: the prototypical function of case-marking – the coding of argument roles at the clause level.
2. Adnominal: indicating relationships between noun phrases within the one noun phrase. Inflected words at this level need not be exocentric; as discussed in §8.4, inflected nominals may function as the heads of phrases. In the extreme, adnominal suffixes serve in this way to create new lexemes and so have a derivational function.
3. Referential: nominal adjuncts of various kinds are linked to the arguments of the main predicate in a clause by a system of case copying. In Martuthunira this referential case copying codes second predications and part-whole agreement (§9.9).
4. Complementising: subordinate clause verbs bear a nominal suffix indicating the relationship between the subject of that clause and some argument in the main clause (C-complementising), or some logical relationship between the two clauses (T-complementising) (Chapter 10).

Table 3.2 shows the range of possible functions for some of the more common nominal suffixes.

TABLE 3.2 FUNCTIONS OF NOMINAL SUFFIXES

	Adnominal	Relational	Referential	Complementising C-comp T-comp	
Accusative		*	*	*	
Effector		*	*	*	
Locative	*	*	*	*	*
Ablative	*	*	*	*	*
Associative	*	*			
Propriative	*				
Privative	*				

Table 3.2 shows that the locative and ablative cover all four functions (and both complementising functions). At the other end of the scale, the propriative and privative have only an adnominal use.

3.3.2 MORPHOLOGICAL CODING CONVENTIONS

At the level of the noun phrase Martuthunira exhibits complete concord; all constituents of a noun phrase are marked with the suffix indicating the role of that noun phrase in higher structures. For example:

- (3.15) *Ngayu nhawu-lha ngurnu tharnta-a mirtily-marta-a*
 1SG.NOM see-PAST that.ACC euro-ACC joey-PROP-ACC

thara-ngka-marta-a.

pouch-LOC-PROP-ACC

I saw that euro (hill kangaroo) with a joey in its pouch. (trans.)

The most highly inflected nominal in this sentence *thara* ‘pouch’, bears three nominal suffixes. The adnominal locative relates ‘pouch’ and ‘joey’. The adnominal proprietive links the noun phrase ‘joey in pouch’ to ‘euro’ and here the proprietive is marked on both nominal subconstituents of the noun phrase. Finally, the complex noun phrase ‘euro with joey in pouch’ is marked with relational accusative case as the object of the clause. Again, the accusative case suffix is distributed to all words within the complex noun phrase.

However, complementising case on clauses is not distributed to all subconstituents but is marked only on the head of the clause (the main verb in verbal clauses) (Chapter 10):

- (3.16) *Ngayu wiyaa nhawu-layi tharnta-a wanyjarri-nyila-a jarruru.*
 1SG.NOM maybe see-FUT euro-ACC run-PrREL-ACC slowly
 Maybe I'll see a euro running along slowly.

In (3.16), the subordinate clause includes an unmarked second predicate of manner on the subject (omitted under coreference). The following more complex example illustrates both coding conventions:

- (3.17) *Ngayu nhawu-ngu-layi ngurnu-ngara-lukanyara-ngara-lu*
 1SG.NOM see-PASS-FUT that-PL-EFF man-PL-EFF
wirra-a yinka-lalha-ngara-lu.
 boomerang-ACC chisel-PAST-PL-EFF
 I'll be seen by those men who carved the boomerang. (trans.)

Here the complex noun phrase ‘men who carved the boomerangs’ is marked for number and effector case. The plural and effector suffixes appear on the head of the noun phrase, on the preceding demonstrative, and on the head of the modifying embedded clause. However, the suffixes do not filter down to the accusative marked object of the subordinate clause.

For simple ascriptive non-verbal clauses the head is the predicate noun phrase (§9.1), and embedded ascriptives of this kind have case assigned to all subconstituents of the head noun phrase. Usually the subject of a simple ascriptive is deleted under identity with the controlling matrix noun phrase as in example (3.18). The complex predicate of the ascriptive is underlined.

- (3.18) *Nganangu-rru kana kuliyanpa-layi ngaliwa mijara-marta-a*
 who.ACC-NOW RHET think-FUT 1PL.INC egg-PROP-ACC
panyu-marta-a mungka-nnguntharri-marta-a?
 good-PROP-ACC eat-HABITNOM-PROP-ACC
 Who else [other than the chickens] can we think of that has good eggs that
 can be eaten?

3.3.3 MORPHOLOGICAL SEQUENCE CONSTRAINTS

Martuthunira exercises a general ban on sequences of identical suffixes. The following test examples demonstrate this for the proprietive and privative suffixes:

- (3.19) *Ngunhu wartirra puni-lha ngurnu-marta kanyara-marta*
 that.NOM woman go-PAST that.OBL-PROP man-PROP
 $\left\{ \begin{array}{l} \text{tharnta-wirriwa-marta.} \\ \text{euro-PRIV-PROP} \\ * \text{tharnta-marta-marta.} \\ \text{euro-PROP-PROP} \end{array} \right\}$
 That woman went with the man $\left\{ \begin{array}{l} \text{who is without a euro. (constr.)} \\ * \text{who has the euro.} \end{array} \right\}$
- (3.20) *Ngayu nhawu-lha ngurnu kanyara-a kapun-marnu-wirriwa-a*
 1SG.NOM see-PAST that.ACC man-ACC body-ASSOC-PRIV-ACC
 $\left\{ \begin{array}{l} \text{jirli-marta-wirriwa-a} \\ \text{arm-PROP-PRIV-ACC} \\ * \text{jirli-wirriwa-wirriwa-a} \\ \text{arm-PRIV-PRIV-ACC} \end{array} \right\} \quad \begin{array}{l} \text{Puni-nyila-a.} \\ \text{go-PrREL-ACC} \end{array}$
 I saw that man going along $\left\{ \begin{array}{l} \text{without the shirt with sleeves. (constr.)} \\ * \text{without the shirt without sleeves.} \end{array} \right\}$

The constraint does not apply where one of two adjacent suffixes is part of a derived lexeme. In example (3.21), *mirntirimarta* ‘goanna’ is derived from *mirntiri* ‘claw’. Compare (3.21) with (3.19).

- (3.21) *Ngunhu wartirra puni-lha ngurnu-marta mirntirimarta-marta.*
 that.NOM woman go-PAST that.OBL-PROP goanna-PROP
 That woman went along with a goanna (carrying it).

In reality the possibility of two identical suffixes coming together is very remote. In this respect Martuthunira differs from its Ngayarda relatives Panyjima and Ngarluma. In both these languages complete concord of case-marking extends to complementising case on subordinate clauses. Thus there are many possibilities for an accusative or locative complementising case suffix, for example, to appear on a relational accusative or locative noun phrase in a subordinate clause (see Dench & Evans (1988) for discussion, Dench (1991) for Panyjima examples).