The Use of Generic Terms in Apalaí Genitive Constructions

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1. INTRODUCTION[1]

In a recent article on genitive classifiers, Carlson and Payne (1989) show that the semantic basis of such classifiers is functional interaction between the possessor and the possessed item rather than physical interaction based on animacy or shape as discussed in detail by Allen (1977). To illustrate this thesis, the authors use, in addition to extensive Oceanic data, examples from Tupi and Cariban languages. Panare (Cariban) uses genitive classifiers to possess alienable nouns.

Several of these genitive classifiers in Panare have cognates in Apalaí[2], another Cariban language. In this paper I describe these cognates as generic lexical items, henceforth called generic terms (GT). The first section of the paper is a summary of Apalaí noun classifications based on the possessive system. The remainder of the paper discusses the genitive generic terms and their use on the sentence level. It is my purpose to provide data which may contribute to the understanding of the origins of Cariban genitive classifier constructions and systems.

2. NOUN DIVISIONS

The two main divisions of noun groupings in Apalaí are proper and common.

2.1 PROPER NOUNS. Proper nouns are not coded with possessive morphology. Nouns in this category are names of people (*Mazaipo*,

Ariko, Poronauru), names of places (*Ona, Maixipurimo*), and names used as vocatives (*aimo* 'boy,' *ohpo* 'girl,' *orymo* 'young girl.'[3]

2.2 COMMON NOUNS. Common nouns are divided into two main categories: those that are obligatorily unpossessed and those that can be possessed.

2.2.1 OBLIGATORILY UNPOSSESSED NOUNS. Common nouns that are obligatorily unpossessed include phenomena of nature such as rain, lightning, certain insects. For example:

> *nuno* 'moon,' *xixi* 'sun,' *taparara* 'grasshopper.'

2.2.2 POSSESSED NOUNS. Common nouns that can be possessed are divided into four subgroups:[4]

1) nouns that can be marked as optionally possessed, commonly referred to as alienably possessed nouns;

2) nouns that are obligatorily possessed, referred to as inalienably possessed nouns;

3) generic terms obligatorily coded with genitive morphology;

4) nouns that may specify these generic terms.

2.2.2.1 ALIENABLE DIRECT POSSESSION. Alienable nouns can be marked with optional direct possession; that is, the possessed noun itself is coded with a suffix, marking genitive, and either a person-marking prefix or free noun for possessor. In the latter, the possessor precedes the possessed which is morphologically marked. The possession marking suffixes are -ny, -ry, -ty, stem change, stem reduction, and 0 (zero or absence of marking). Vowel harmony rules dictate some alomorphic changes such as u substituting y.[5] The person marking prefixes for possessed nouns are fairly complicated and are described in Koehn and Koehn(1986). The

following examples illustrate alienable possession with the
accompanying genitive morphology.

rato	knife	y-rato-ny	1SG-knife-GEN
maraka	dance rattle	a-maraka-ny	2SG-dance rattle-GEN
aruko	ankle rattle	j-aruko-ny	3SG-ankle rattle-GEN[6]
pata	village	i-pata-ry	3SG-village-GEN
pupu	foot	u-pupu-ru	1SG-foot-GEN
otuato	hammock	aimo etue-ty	boy hammock-GEN
		(stem change)	
tupito	field	o-tupi	2GS-field
		(stem reduction)	
oano	heart	j-eano	1SG-heart
		(zero suffix)	

2.2.2.2. INALIENABLE POSSESSION. Inalienable nouns are
obligatorily coded with suffixes marking the noun as possessed and
either a person-/marking prefix indicating the possessor or a free
noun. This group includes most kinship terms, things closely
connected with the body or person, and parts that extend from or
come out of the body or plants.

a. Kinship terms:
u-mūku-ru	1SG-son-GEN
omy	3SG-father
j-epe	1SG-trading.partner/friend
j-eky-ry	3SG-relative-GEN
i-meretamu-ru	3SG-father.in.law-GEN

b. Things closely connected with the body or person:
o-zuze-nu	2SG-spirit/shadow-GEN
ese-ty	3SG-name-GEN
y-mety-ny	1SG-loincloth-GEN

c. Some body parts that extend from or come out of the body or
plants:
j-e-ry	3SG-tooth/plant.shoot-GEN
axikaru ze-ry	sugarcane shoot-GEN
o-emaxipuhtu-ru	2SG-fingernail-GEN

2.2.2.3 GENERIC TERMS. Some generic terms occur only as genitives;
that is, they are obligatorily possessed. Several of these generic
terms occurring as genitives have cognates in Panare which function

as genitive classifiers. A syntactical description of their use
will be discussed in the following section. Below are tables
listing these terms.

j-o-ty	1SG-meat.type.food-GEN
y-napy-ry[7]	12DU-veg/fruit.type.food-GEN
õ-ku-ru	2SG-drink-GEN
ỹ-kyry-ry	1SG-field.produce-GEN
y-kyry-ry	1SG-thing-GEN
eky	3SG-pet/dom.animal-GEN
j-uhme	1SG-nut/corn/seed
i-karimo-ry	3SG-killed.game-GEN
a-wahto-ry	2SG-firewood-GEN
z-u-ru	3SG-manioc.cake/bread-GEN

Table 1. Apalaí generic genitives

GENERAL	iyu	soap, gasoline, hammer, etc.
EDIBLE	yung	food item in paste form: manioc, banana corn, sweet potatoes,etc.
	empa	fruit with pulp
	yo'/are	meat(cooked or raw): fish, chicken, beef
DRINKABLE/ LIQUID	uku	liquid coffee, milk, blood, urine, fruit juice, honey mixed with water to drink
ANIMAL	yikɨ	live animal, including domesticated ones

Table 2. Panare genitive classifiers (partial)

2.2.2.4 NOUNS SPECIFYING GENERIC TERMS. Some nouns which are
grammatically unpossessible are nevertheless possessed
semantically. When possession needs to be expressed, it is
indicated not directly on the noun (which cannot have genitive
morphology), but indirectly through the use of the generic terms
listed above in Table 1.

The generic term expresses the function of the object
being possessed. In the following examples, the possessed item is
first referred to by a possessed generic term, (which is marked as

GT in the gloss), then clarified by a specific term (which is marked by ST) in an appositive construction, which we label "expansion phrase."

(1) **a-napy-ry** pene-ry my-roku-asene, ty-ka-se, **paruru** pene-ry, ty-ka-se.
2SG-fruit/veg-GEN(GT) want-NOM 2SG-suffer-RP, say-COMP banana(ST) want-NOM say-COMP
'You were suffering for want of your food, for bananas,' she said.

(2) euku-ru ẽ-se o-kohma-˜ko, ano ẽ-se.[8]
drink-GEN(GT) drink-PURP 2SGO-call-CONT honey(ST) drink-PURP
'They're calling you to come drink, to come drink honey.'

(3) Piu a j-oh t-uo-po-ko, kuto
young.fellow REL 1SG-meat(GT) 3O-kill-CAU-IMP a frog(ST).
'Get the young fellow to kill my meat, a frog.'

(4) Ĩ-kyry-ry tõkehko ty-e-se, paruru ty-e-se kehko
3SG-field.produce-GEN(GT) etc cook-COMP banana(ST) cook-COMP etc.
'(She) cooked his field produce such as bananas, etc.'

In general, however, the generic term occurs alone and is disambiguated by context or gesture, especially in conversation.[9]

The specific term can occur directly following the genitive in a construction such as:

(5) Sẽ a-napy-ry, paruru
this 2SG-fruit/veg.type.food-GEN, banana.
'Here(is) your vegetable type food, a banana.'

This illustration corresponds to examples of genitive classifiers occuring in noun phrases cited for Macuxi and Panare in Carlson and Payne (1989:17,18). However, on closer observation of the intonation and pause patterns, it is found to be a noun with its expansion rather than part of a noun phrase. It is typical of Apalaí speakers to use ambiguity and subtlety in conveying information. The following illustrations from conversations show the Apalaí speaker's preference for initial ambiguous speech, thus engaging the listener's interest or questions.

(6) ð-ty t-ynomo-se moroto. Onoky? Piarara.
2SG-meat(GT) leave-COMP over there. what piarara(ST)
'I left you some meat over there. What? A piarara fish.'

(7) A-napy-ry(GT) ty-nomo-se nakua-tau. Oty? A-napy-ry rokene, aja
n-ekaro-hpyry, joromo.
2SG-veg-GEN(GT) leave-COMP water-at.edge what 2SG-veg-GEN(GT) only
mother AG-give-PTNOM squash(ST)
'I left your food at the river.' 'What?' 'just your food, the stuff
mother gave you, a squash.'

(8) Onokyro w-o-ne rahkene, kana pisarara
wild.being 1SG-shoot RT INT fish small
'I shot a wild thing, a small fish.'

      From a sociolinguistic explanation, it is understandable

that terms, such as specific fruits, vegetables, meats, animals,

etc., are not really owned by a person. The true possessor of a

Fruit is the plant from which it comes.

Prior to harvest Corn is

Oxinase epery - 'fruit ₂ Corn'

(. One owns an animal through the process of

domestication or hunting. A deer can be *eky* 'his pet,' or *i-karimo-*

ry 'his wild game' (implicit: dead), or *z-o-ty* 'his cooked meat for

eating.'

3. BORROWED WORDS

          The way possession of borrowed words is expressed in

Apalaí gives us an opportunity to see how classifier vocabulary may

have developed. Contact with the Brazilian culture has brought in

many objects used daily in the village. Loan words from Portuguese

are freely used. Some loan words are easily coded for possession:

sandalia	sandal	y-sātaja-ny	1SG-sandal-GEN
mesa	table	i-meza-ny	3SG-table-GEN
motor	motor	o-moto-ny	2SG-motor-GEN
copo	cup	i-kopu-nu	3SG-cup-GEN

For other objects, a generic term is used:

(9) O-kyry-ry aro-ry se ase. Oty? Mate.
2SG-thing-GEN(GT) take-NOM want 1SGS-be what hammer(ST)
'I want to borrow your thing. What? A hammer.'

   The generic term, *i-kyry-ry*, 'thing,' can be used to introduce these foreign items with the specific term occuring either with or without possessive morphology. (Its use, however, is not restricted to foreign objects.)

(10) O-kyry-ry eneh-ko. Oty? Kopu/o-kopu-nu.
2SG-thing-GEN(GT) bring-IMP what cup/2SG-cup-GEN(ST)
'Bring me your thing. What? A cup/your cup.'

   Apalaí who have less contact with spoken Portuguese are tending to classify foreign objects within categories of common, everyday objects. Thus, the genitive form of canoe is used to describe a person's motor boat, car, jeep, bicycle, or airplane.

   The following words have moved up to be generic terms, used especially among the older Apalaí:

y-metyny   'my loincloth/pants'
j-azõ-ty   'my covering/blanket/skirt'
rue   'flute/ radio/tape recorder'
i-pyre   'his arrow/gun'
kanawa   'canoe/boat/car/plane/jeep'

   The progression of objects into the culture could be illustrated by the following table:

Pre-contact:	ymetyny	my loincloth
Older generation:	ymetyny kausa (no affixes).	my loincloth;
....		*viz.* pants
Younger generation:	y-kausa-ny	my pants

Table 3
Stages of progression of foreign objects into the culture

4. CONCLUSION

In Apalaí, generic terms are obligatorily coded with genitive morphology and are used to express possession of such common commodities as food, drink, wild game, and domesticated pets. If the generic term needs to be disambiguated, the specific item for which it stands may be added syntactically in an expansion phrase. This construction differs from cognates in other Cariban languages which act as genitive classifiers occuring in noun phrases as cited by Carlson and Payne (1989). Perhaps these generic terms are at an earlier stage of becoming grammaticized as genitive classifiers.

Notes

[1] Thanks are due to Dr. Robert Dixon for suggestions on outline for the present draft. My colleague, Cheryl Jensen, offered many helpful suggestions. My husband, Ed, is my encourager. The data was taken from text material and personal conversations recorded during various field trips to the Apalaí villages from the years 1962-1990. These trips were possible through a contract with the National Indian Foundation of Brazil and the Summer Institute of Linguistics.

[2] Apalaí Indians number about 400. They live in small extended family groups situated along 200 miles of the upper Parú River in the state of Pará in Northern Brazil. The language is listed in Durbin's subdivision of Cariban as "Wayana-Aparaí," a member of the Eastern Language of the major subdivision of East-West Guiana Carib (1985:358-360). The Apalaí share with the Wayana the same material culture. Many are bilingual in Wayana due to their proximity or due to mixed marriages. The languages are distinct.

[3] Apalaí consonantal phonemes are: p, t, k, ?, m, n, z, s, š, ȑ. Semivowels are: w, y. Vowels are: i, e, a, ɨ, u, o. All vowels have nasal counterparts. These phonemes are represented with the same graphic symbols except for the following: ? --> h, š --> x, ȑ --> r, y --> j, ɨ --> y.

Labels used to describe grammatical functions in the Apalaí illustrations are: AG agent reference, CAU causative, COMP completive aspect, CONT continuative aspect, DU duel, GEN genitive,

GT generic term, IMP imperative mood, NOM nominalizer, NP noun
phrase, O object, PL plural, PTNOM past nominalizer, PURP purpose,
REL relator, RP recent past tense, RT remote past tense, S subject,
SG singular, ST specific term.

[4] Both Carlson and Payne (1989) and Robert Dixon (personal
conversation) suggested that many of the large class of nouns that
are never coded for possession can be viewed as potentially
alienably possessable through the use of generic terms, thus the
divisions used in this paper which are different from an earlier
analysis in Koehn and Koehn (1986).

[5] What Carlson and Payne (1989) attested for Panare possession
suffixes is also true of Apalaí suffixes; namely, at this time in
history, the choice of suffix depends on each lexical item.

[6] There is some ambiguity in the language with 1SG and 3SG person
markings, such as:
j-apo-ny   1SG-bench-GEN   *apo-ny*   3SG-bench-GEN
w-eky-ry   1SG-relative-GEN   *j-eky-ry* 3SG-relative-GEN

[7] Two of the generic genitives seem to be derived from verbal
roots:
j-o-ty   'my meat'   *-ony-*   'to eat meat'
ky-napy-ry 'our veg/fruit'   *-enapy-* 'to eat veg/fruit'

[8] *Eukuru* with its zero 3SG person prefix is used as a general word
for liquids other than water. Whereas *jokuru, ōkuru, aokuru, kuokuru* is
the paradigm showing generic genitive. *Jeukuru, oeukuru eukuru* refers
to the river or body of water on which a person lives. Villages are
named *maxipuri eukuru* 'The water hole of the tapir.'

[9] Barnes (1990:273) notes this use of context or gesture as a
substitute for the referent of Tuyuca classifiers.

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