Mauwake reference grammar

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belong to these groups, with the exception of adjectives denoting human age, discussed above. In the group of adjectives denoting either physical property or human propensity, some are ambiguous as to their basic category: *anima* is both 'blade' and 'sharp', and *pina* both 'weight, burden' and 'heavy'. Different groups of adjectives, as well as the use of adjectives, are discussed below in Section 3.3.

With the rules given above it is fairly straightforward to distinguish the nouns and adjectives in Mauwake. But a small group remains that seems to have a membership in both classes. Originally they are are nouns that have now been employed as adjectives as well. The claim is based on the fact that the noun category is the more basic and universally recognized, whereas the existence of the adjective category is disputed in some languages; and in Mauwake the noun class is clearly established, large, and more easily definable. Also, there are at least two nouns in Mauwake that currently seem to be in the process of becoming regular adjectives: the meaning of the phrase stays the same with the pre-modifying noun and the post-modifying adjective.

(51x108) **napum(a)** mua
sickness man
'a sick man'

(67) *mua* ***napuma***

man sick
'a sick man', also: 'human (lit: man's) sickness'

(68) ***wadol(a)*** *opora*

lie/false talk
'a lie'

(69) *opor(a)* ***wadola***

talk lie/false
'a lie'

Below is a list of the most common of the words functioning both as nouns and as adjectives:

anima ‘blade, point, edge’ ‘sharp’
afila ‘grease’ ‘greasy, sweet’
foma ‘ashes’ ‘grey’
ikina ‘smell’ ‘smelly’
irauwa ‘hole’ ‘deep’
makena ‘true’ ‘truth, essential nature’
napuma ‘sickness, corpse’ ‘sick’
pina ‘weight, burden, guilt’ ‘heavy’
siisia ‘design, pattern’ ‘spotted, patterned’
tumina ‘dirt’ ‘dirty’
wadola ‘lie’ ‘false, fake’

0.3.2.3 Common vs. proper nouns

There is very little difference between common and proper nouns in Mauwake, and it can be questioned whether the two should be grouped separately as is traditionally often done in language descriptions. Proper nouns are sometimes classified separately because they are said to be unable to have modifiers (**?**: 152), and in practice, they usually occur without any modifiers. This is related to the fact that they normally only have a referent, but no intension. In most of the cases where a proper noun is modified, “it lacks a unique reference and is being used as a common noun” (Van Valin and LaPolla 1997:59):

(52x26) I mean the old and cranky Joe Smith, not the younger one.

The most common type of a proper noun is a name of a PERSON. A proper noun may also become a true common noun, when one or more of the qualities of a person are used to characterise some other being (**?**: 66). For example, the name of a well-known expatriate, Jooren, was borrowed by Mauwake speakers to mean ‘a stingy shopkeeper’ (that is, one who does not sell things on credit and does not give discount to relatives).

In Mauwake proper names can be modified without difficulty, especially by the demonstrative *nain* ‘that’, but also by adjectives. In a culture where there are several namesakes, and surnames are rarely used, modifiers are occasionally needed to distinguish between people (53).

(70) ***Adek panewowa nain*** *ma-i-yem.*

Adek old that1 say-Np-PR.1s

'I am talking about the *old* Adek.'

But even proper names that have a unique reference and do not need to be distinguished from any other referent can be modified:

(71) ***Dabe fain*** *uuw-ow(a) mua=ke.*

Dabe this work-NMZ man=CF

'Dabe here is a hard worker.'

In this case the behaviour of proper names is similar to that of the personal pronouns, which also have unique reference, but can be modified nevertheless. Van Valin and LaPolla (ibid. 59-60) note that languages may vary in how freely they allow proper nouns and pronouns to take modifiers.

Name taboos influence the use of personal names in several ways. A person is given many different names: at least one from each parents' side (as in-laws may not mention each others' names), a baptismal name, and possibly others as well. These names are used by different people. Name taboos may be avoided by calling someone by a teknonym like 'Sarak's father', or by calling a wife by the husband's name when she is with the in-laws and the husband is not around. Nicknames, often referring to physical properties, are also very common: *buburia* 'bald', *mua kuuma* 'lame' (literally 'stick-man'). The term 'namesake' is very common and even used of people who have been named after different names of the same person. Two boys, Yoli and Wangali, were called namesakes of each other, as they were both named after the same ancestor.

Perhaps the most characteristic feature of personal names is DISCOURSE-PRAGMATIC: in a text their token frequency is very low. Especially the main participant, once (s)he has been mentioned by name – if (s)he ever is – (s)he is then usually referred to by other means: a NP, pronoun, or just person marking on the verb.

Besides the names of people, PLACE NAMES form another large group of proper names. In Mauwake, the proper name often modifies a generic noun: *Moro* (*owowa*) 'Moro (village), *Siburten* (*ema*) 'Siburten (mountain/hill)', *Nemuru* (*eka*) 'Nemuru (river)' (SS **??**).

The place name is also used when the inhabitants are referred to. When reference is made to an individual or a select group, the place name is used as a qualifier in the noun phrase:

(72) ***Amiten*** *mua oko ekap-o-k.*

Amiten man other come-PA-3s
'A man from Amiten came.'

When the whole group is referred to, a plural pronoun is added to the place name:

(73) ***I Moro=ke*** *uf-e-mik.*

1p.UNM Moro=CF dance-PA-1/3p
'We Moro people danced.'

(74) ***(Wi) Lasen wia*** *nokar-e-k.*[59]

3p.UNM Lasen 3p.ACC ask-PA-3s
'He asked the Lasen people'

0.3.2.4 Alienable and inalienable possession

The Austronesian languages in Melanesia tend to have very elaborate semantically based possessive systems that indicate the relationship between the "possessor" and the "possession": kin relation, body part, food etc. Inalienable possession is indicated by affixation on the noun, alienable possession by a separate possessive pronoun. Because of this, the simpler inalienable possession marking also evident in many TNG languages could easily be attributed to influence from Austronesian languages. But **?**: 28 claims it is likely that even Proto TNG had inalienable nouns before there was any contact with Austronesian languages.[60] In Mauwake the division into alienably and inalienably possessed nouns is along the lines of kinship terms (see SS **??** for a kinship chart). Most kin terms obligatorily indicate who the "possessor" is:

1s/p 2s/p 3s/p possessor
a. auwa niawi wiawi 'father'
b. aite niena onak 'mother'
c. paapa neepe weepe 'elder sibling'
d. (y)aamun niamun wiamun 'younger sibling'
e. yaaya nie wie 'uncle'
f. paapan noopan woopan 'aunt'

[59] The optional initial pronoun *wi* is part of the object here, not a subject pronoun.
[60] On the time frames of TNG occupation and Austronesian migration, see e.g. **?**: 39-41.

g. kae neke weke ‘grandfather’
h. kome nokome wokome ‘grandmother’
i. eremena neremena weremena ‘nephew, niece’
j. emar, yomar nomar womar ‘(cross-)cousin’
k. yomokowa nomokowa womokowa ‘brother’[61]
l. (y)ekera nekera wekera ‘sister’
m. (y)emi nemi wemi ‘(man’s) brother-in-law’
n. epua nepua wepua ‘(woman’s) brother-in-law[62]
o. yomora nomora womora ‘sister-in-law’
p. yopariw nopariw wopariw ‘husband’s brother’s wife’
q. yamekua namekua wamekua ‘daughter-in-law’[63]
r. yar nar war ‘son-in-law’
s. yookati nookati wookati ‘co-wife’[64]
t. yomawa nomawa womawa ‘namesake’

The possessive prefixes *y-*, *n-* and *w-* in the inalienably possessed nouns developed from the first, second, and third person pronouns. These prefixes are in the process of merging with the root. The terms in (a-j) above are somewhat more lexicalized than the ones in (k-s): the first person prefix is mostly lost, and in some cases there is suppletion in the stem. These are some of the socially most important and frequently used kinship terms. The frequent use probably accounts for the omission of the possession prefix in the first person: these terms are used more as terms of address, whereas the other kinship nouns are only needed as terms of reference. Also, there is a tendency to drop the first person prefix before the front vowel /e/ regardless of the closeness of the kinship relation.

The “possessors” are differentiated as first, second or third person but not as single vs. plural. An unmarked (54) or a genitive (55), (56) pronoun may be used to either make this number distinction or to emphasise the

[61] Among siblings, age is more important than sex: *paapa* and *aamun* are used very frequently and for siblings of either gender. When the gender is in focus, *yomokowa* is used for ‘my brother’ and *ekera* for ‘my sister’ especially by siblings of the opposite sex.

[62] A woman calls her elder sister’s husband *auwa* ‘father’, but the other brothers-in-law are *epua*.

[63] Some in-law relations are non-symmetrical: even though there are special terms for sons- and daughters-in-law, *auwa* ‘(my) father’ and *aite* ‘(my) mother’ are used for ‘(my) mother-in-law’ and ‘(my) father-in-law’.

[64] This term dates back to the time when polygamy was practiced; it was used for the wives of the same man.

kin relationship, when the relationship is used as a term of reference rather than as a term of address.

(75) *Kuuten* ***wiawi*** *iperowa,* ***yo auwa*** *kapa=ke.*

Kuuten 3s/p.father firstborn 1s.UNM 1s/p.father lastborn=CF
'Kuuten's father was the firstborn, my father the lastborn.'[65]

(76) *Aakisa* ***yena auwa*** *kapa fain=ke yia uruf-i-ya.*

now 1s.GEN 1s/p.father lastborn this=CF 1p.ACC see-Np-PR.3s
'Now this lastborn of my "fathers" watches over us.'

(77) *Sa, a* ***nena nie=ke, nena nepua=ke,***

INTJ INTJ 2s.GEN 2s/p.uncle=CF 2s.GEN 2s/p.brother-in-law
niawi=ke.
2s/p.father
'(Don't you understand,) those are *your* uncle(-in-law), *your* brother-in-law and father(-in-law).'

When a neutral, "non-possessed", kinship term is needed, the first person form is used. This is interesting, as the third person singular is typically considered the neutral, or unmarked, form. The terms '(my) mother' and '(my) father' are also used as respectful terms of address for almost any stranger regardless of age, or for anyone whose status in the kinship system is uncertain.[66]

Four alienably possessed nouns, namely those for 'man', 'woman', 'boy' and 'girl', have been taken into the kinship system for terms of some nuclear family members:

mua 'man, husband'
emeria 'woman, wife'
muuka 'boy, child, son'
wiipa 'girl, daughter'

[65] Both of these fathers could be called *auwa* 'my/our father(s)' by the two men.
[66] I have been addressed as "mother" by an old man who temporarily forgot what my status according to their kinship system was - I was actually his granddaughter!

Also the term *nembesir* 'ancestor (beyond grandparents)' or 'descendant (beyond grandchildren)' is an alienably possessed noun, possibly because relatives so far removed in time are considered less relevant. It is used both for males and females. But the term for 'namesake', *yomawa*, is included in the inalienably possessed kinship terms, as a child is named after some relatives, and the namesake relation forms an additional bond between them.

0.3.2.5 Noun compounding

The distinction between compound nouns and noun phrases is a problematic area in many languages, including Mauwake. Both are formed by combining independent elements into larger units, and their form and meaning are largely based on the form and meaning of those elements (Anderson 1985a:40). Phonological, morphological, syntactic as well as semantic criteria have been called upon to differentiate between compounds and phrases.

In many languages, "word accent" (**?**: 204), i.e. stress and/or pitch, helps to distinguish compounds. In Mandarin Chinese, contrastive stress can only fall on the "stress center" of a word, including compounds (Anderson 1985a:41). In Finnish, the primary stress is on the first, and only on the first, syllable of even very long compound words like *kuluttajansuojaasiamiesverkostokysymys* 'the question of consumer ombudsman network', but even in Finnish there are unclear cases like *valveillaolo* vs. *valveilla olo* 'being awake'. In the latter, the varying writing convention reflects the ambiguity.

Linguists differ in their views about the importance of stress placement in interpreting English compounds. **?**: 228 and **?**: 41 consider it criterial, and so do **?**: 1330, although more cautiously. **?**: 120 takes it as one premise for his study of compounds while admitting that the case is not very well substantiated. Others, like **?**: 31, **?** and **?** do not consider a single primary stress essential for compounds. According to **?**: 105, Lyons' (1968:202) criteria for judging "wordness" in English, i.e. positional mobility and uninterruptability (or internal stability) do not distinguish between single- and double-stressed compounds.

Morphology may place constraints on compounding. In English, the genitive is common in phrases but rare in compounds: duck's egg vs. duck-egg (Anderson 1985a:41).[67] In Finnish, the first part of a compound is often

[67] But note also women's lib(eration), a compound.

in the nominative or genitive case, whereas the other cases are infrequent in this position. In German, certain elements may serve as morphological "glue" between the parts of a compound (ibid. 42).

The two criteria for wordness by **?**: 202 mentioned above are syntactic in nature: a word, hence also a compound, is moved as one unit, and cannot be interrupted by other words as a phrase often can. These criteria do not apply to all, and only, compound words, but they are useful in trying to establish the difference between compounds and phrases in a given language. **?**: 232 adds another one: a member of a compound generally cannot serve as a constituent in a syntactic construction. One can say *a very black bird* but not ** a very blackbird*.

The semantic interpretation of phrases is generally quite compositional: the meaning of the whole can be deduced from the meanings of the words. Compounds are more heterogeneous in their interpretation: some are compositional, whereas others involve special interpretive principles not applicable to phrases. Also, compounds as words are subject to changes of meaning, so many compounds may have meanings that are only vaguely or metaphorically related to that which is predicted on the basis of the parts (Anderson 1985a:42). Knowledge of the pragmatics of the situation may be needed for the interpretation of many compound words (Bauer 1983:58). The more fully lexicalized the compounds are, the more the meaning of the whole may deviate from the meaning of the parts. The same compound word may also be fully lexicalized in a certain context, and still be open for other interpretations in other contexts (Andrew Pawley, p. c.).

While there are languages where it is easy to distinguish between compound nouns and noun phrases, in others there is an intermediate area between the two. Thus **?**: 810 doubts that the dividing line is always well-defined, and Quirk et al. (1989:1569) suggest the concept of "partial compounding" to account for the formal and semantic gradience between compounds and phrases in English. Bringing a historical viewpoint to the question, citing developments in English both from phrase to compound and from compound to phrase, **?**: 102 offers a very liberal view: "it is of no consequence whether we reckon [the] doubtful cases as one word or two words, for ... a word group (like a single word) may be either primary or an adjunct or a subjunct".

None of the criteria mentioned above can be easily applied in Mauwake. Semantically there is a continuum between fully compositional noun phrases and fully lexicalized compounds. But Bloomfield (1933:227) warns