

The data for this handout comes from Listuguj¹, a Mi'gmaq community on the border of Québec and New Brunswick. As such, the orthography used in this presentation is also from the Listuguj dialect of Mi'gmaq.

Roadmap

- ◇ What is *-ew*? Where does it occur?
- ◇ Concept of Extrinsic Possession
- ◇ How does *-ew* fit into Extrinsic Possession?
 - focus on *-ew-ei* constructions
- ◇ Remaining questions & Summary

1 Introduction

1.1 What is *-ew* and where does it occur?

1.1.1 Previous Literature (Inglis 1988)

- ◇ “a morphological marker indicating a change in grammatical status” (Inglis 1988: 102)
- ◇ Noun from verb:

- | | | | |
|-----|----|-------------------------|--|
| (1) | a. | engatm | ‘I measure (VTI)’ |
| | b. | eng-emg ² | ‘the act of measuring’ (derived N) |
| | c. | [[[eng-emg] -ew] -ei] | ‘object/tool used for measuring (inan.)’ |
| (2) | a. | matnagget | ‘s/he fights (VAI)’ |
| | b. | [[[matnag-] -ew] -inu] | √ <i>fight</i> VAI + ew + “person” = ‘fighter (an.)’ |

- ◇ Noun from locative:

- | | | | |
|-----|----|---------------------------|--|
| (3) | a. | jipugt-ug | ‘Halifax (inan.)’ |
| | b. | [[[jipugt-ug] -ew] -a’j] | location + ew + “person” = ‘person from Halifax’ |

- ◇ Possessive pronoun from pronoun:

- | | | | |
|-----|----|------------|--------|
| (4) | a. | ni’n | ‘I/me’ |
| | b. | ni’n-ew-ei | ‘mine’ |

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²My suspicion is that *-emg* is a valency reducer. Thanks to Mike Hamilton for this suggestion.

→ Barker (1995) example: John is hosting a dinner party. He made some homemade yogurt but also bought some store-bought in case his did not gel properly. His batch turns out fine and John serves it. In the middle of dinner John utters, “I’m afraid my yogurt tastes a little funny.” What exactly is the relation between John and his yogurt?

- ◇ involves *non*-relational nouns, or nouns that denote sets of things (e.g. book, hat, car) as opposed to **Intrinsic Possession** which involves nouns and constructions that are necessarily relational (e.g. kinship terms, part-whole relations)
- ◇ corresponds to alienable possession, whereas Intrinsic Possession corresponds to inalienable possession

→ **inalienable**: uses possessive person prefixes and affixes

(10) *no'gmaw*
n-o'gmaw
1.POSS-cousin
 ‘my cousin’

(11) a. **g-o'**gmaw ‘your cousin (an.)’
 b. **w-o'**gmaw-l ‘his/her cousin (obv.)’
 c. ***o'**gmaw ‘cousin (intended)’

(12) Paradigm for ‘*ntus* ‘my daughter’:

| Possessor | Singular Possessum | Plural Possessum |
|---------------------------------|--|---|
| 1 sg | 'n-tus "my daughter" | 'n-tus-g "my daughters" |
| 1 pl excl | 'n-tus-inen "our daughter" | 'n-tus-in-aq "our daughters" |
| 1 pl incl (1sg + 2sg) | 'g-tus-inu "the daughter of you and me" | 'g-tus-in-aq "the daughters of you and me" |
| 2 sg | 'g-tus "your daughter" | 'g-tus-g "your daughters" |
| 2 pl | 'g-tus-uow "your daughter" | 'g-tus-u-aq "your daughters" |
| 3 sg | ug-tus-l "his/her daughter" | ug-tus-g "his/her daughters" |
| 3 pl | ug-tus-ua-l "their daughter" | ug-tus-ua "their daughters" |

(McClay 2012: 16)

→ **alienable**: 2 Types—possessive prefix + *-m* and *-ew-ei*

(13) *'na'gwesnm*
'n^t-a'gwesn-**m**

1.POSS-hat-ALIEN.

'my hat (inan.)'

- (14) *ni'newei a'gwesn*
ni'n-ew-ei a'gwesn
1-EXT-obj hat
'my hat'

* Note: possessor receives plural marking when the possessum is plural:

- (15) *ni'neweil a'gwesnn*
ni'n-ew-ei-l a'gwesn-n
1-EXT-obj-PL hat-PL
'my hats'

- ◇ often depends on pragmatic and real-world knowledge, which explains why the notion of "possession" can be used so creatively (Jackendoff 1977)

2.2 The role of *-ew*

→ How does *-ew* fit into the concept of Extrinsic Possession?

2.2.1 vagueness and flexibility of interpretation

- (16) *welaptm Pielewei wi'gatign*
wel-ap-t-m-(an) Piel-ew-ei wi'gatign
good-appearance-TI-TH.SIGN-(1) Piel-EXT-obj book
'I like the looks of Piel's book.'

◇ Context-dependent:

1. the book that belongs to Piel (default)
2. the book that Piel is holding (context: in line at a bookstore)
3. the book that Piel wrote (context: in a bookstore)

- (17) *welaptm Piel ugtwi'gatignm*
wel-ap-t-m-(an) Piel ugt-wi'gatign-m
good-appearance-TI-TH.SIGN-(1) Piel 3.POSS-book-ALIEN.
'I like the looks of Piel's book.'

◇ stronger sense of attachment than *-ew-ei*

1. the book that belongs to Piel (default)
2. the book that Piel wrote (context: Piel is an author)

◇ reference is flexible, (18-b) can refer to a pencil, pen, chalk, crayon

- (18) a. *ewi'gigei* 'I write (VAI)'
b. *ewi'gigemgewei* 'tool for writing (inan.)'

2.2.2 closeness of meaning

- ◇ meaning is not necessarily predictable, but is closely tied to the base noun

- (19) a. na'gu'set 'sun (an.)'
 b. na'gu'setewei 'clock (inan.)'
- (20) a. gesipiet 's/he is itchy (VAI)'
 b. gesipiemgewei 'eczema (inan.)'

2.2.3 impossible to use *-ew* in inalienable possession

- (21) **ni'newei nemis*
 ni'n-ew-ei n-emis
 1sg-EXT-obj 1.POSS-older.sister
 ' *my* big sister' (intended; emphatically)

- (22) (**ni'n*) *nemis*
 (*ni'n) n-emis
 1sg 1.POSS-older.sister
 ' *my* big sister'

(McClay 2012: 30)

3 Summary and Further Research

3.1 The importance of *-ew* & remaining questions

- ◇ What is the difference between grammatical animacy and “real-world” animacy?
 - What kinds of grammatical possessive relations are allowed in Mi'gmaq?
 - Does *-ew-ei* always change grammatical animacy?
- ◇ What is the difference, if any, between specific vs. generic types of possession? (e.g. the car's door vs. the car-door)
 - Tentative data that should be checked with more speakers:

- (23) *Tepaqanei ga'qan stoqonamu'g*
 Tepaqan-ei ga'qan stoqonamu'g
 car-obj door to.be.green
 'The car's door is green.'

- (24) **Tepaqan ugtga'qanm stoqonamu'g*
 Tepaqan ugt-ga'qan-m stoqonamu'g
 car 3.POSS-door-ALIEN. to.be.green
 'The car's door is green.' (intended)

(McClay 2012: 36)

- (25) ?*Tepaqanewei ga'qan stoqonamu'g*
Tepaqan-ew-ei ga'qan stoqonamu'g
car-EXT-of door to.be.green
'The car-door is green.' (generic?)

◇ Does *-ew* have phonological variants?

- (26) a. wapus 'rabbit (an.)'
b. wapusuei 'rabbit meat (inan.)'
- (27) a. egsitpu'g 'morning (VII)'
b. egsitpu'g^{owe}i 'breakfast; event/item pertaining to morning (inan.)'
- (28) *Mijua'ji'juei atla'i waqame'g*
Mijua'ji'j-**u**-ei atla'i waqame'g
baby-**EXT?**-obj shirt to.be.clean
'The baby's shirt is clean.' (specific)
- (29) *Mijua'ji'jueiei atla'i waqame'g*
Mijua'ji'j-**u**-ei-ei atla'i waqame'g
baby-**EXT?**-obj-obj shirt to.be.clean
'The baby-shirt is clean.' (generic/type)

3.2 Conclusion

- ◇ I have shown that the role of *-ew* is to “abstractify” from a given base
- ◇ *-ew*'s flexibility comes from its dependence on context
- ◇ it is impossible to use *-ew* with inalienable possessums, which are inherently relational

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