

Rachel Nordlinger: *Australian Case Systems: Towards a Constructive Solution*

- Australian languages
 - radically nonconfigurational
 - Make extensive use of case morphology to express syntactic relations
- Case morphology: in standard formal accounts, it only shows information about immediate NP.
- This is not true for Australian languages, where you find:
 - **case stacking** (multiple case marking):
one single nominal is inflected with multiple case markers
 - **case marking tense/aspect/mood**:
information about constituents outside of the containing NP is given, e.g. information on the clause level
 - **complementizing case**:
case markers appearing on members of the subordinate clause to relate aspects of that clause to the main clause.
 - c-complementizing case: subordinate clause is case-marked in agreement with controlling NP from the main clause
 - t-complementizing: subordinate clause is case-marked for temporal or logical relations with the main clause

Constructive Case Model:

- “The basic idea behind the constructive case model is that case morphemes do not simply provide case features to the f-structure of the noun phrase they belong to, but also build the larger syntactic context.”
 - **inside-out function application**
 - **(IO) designator**
- ACC: (↑ CASE) = ACC
(OBJ ↑)
- From this, we get two pieces of information:
1. the f-structure has the attribute CASE whose value is ACC
 2. its own f-structure is the value of an OBJ attribute in a higher f-structure.
- **Principle of Morphological Composition**:
information contributed by the additional morpheme will incorporate the structure that has already been built by the stem.

Examples and analysis of case stacking:

(1) dan-kinaba-*nguni* dangka-naba-*nguni* mirra-*nguni* walbu-*nguni*
This-GEN-INST man- GEN-INST good- INST raft-INST
'with this man's good raft' (Kayardild)

(2) Ngarrka-ngku ka-rlajinta yankirri-*ki* luwa-rni ngapa-ngka-*ku*.
Man-ERG PRES-3SG.DAT emu-DAT shoot-NPST water-LOC-DAT
'The man is shooting at the emu at the waterhole' (Warlpiri)

(19) Ngayu nhawu -lha tharnta-a mirtily-*marta-a* tharta-ngka-*marta-a*.
1SG.NOM saw-PST euro-ACC joey-PROP-ACC pouch-LOC-PROP-ACC
'I saw that euro with a joey in its pouch.' (Martuthunira)

In (19), we have the **lexical entries**:

tharnta: (↑ PRED) = 'euro'
mirtily: (↑ PRED) = 'joey'
tharta: (↑ PRED) = 'pouch'

-a: (↑CASE) = ACC
(OBJ ↑)
-marta: (↑CASE) = PROP
(ADJ ↑)
-ngka: (↑CASE) = LOC
(ADJ ↑)

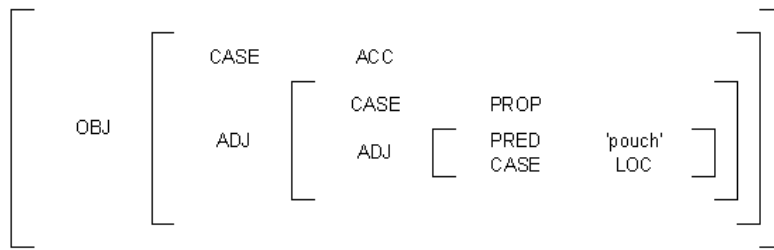
With these lexical entries, we get:

Analysis of 'euro-ACC'

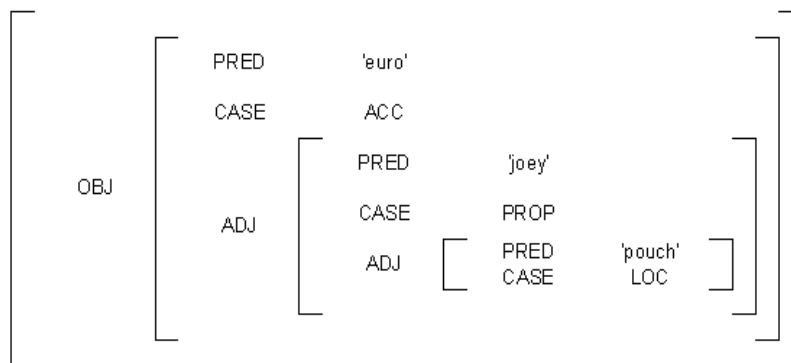


Analysis of 'joey-PROP-ACC'

Analysis of 'pouch-LOC-PROP-ACC'



For the whole object NP we get:



Examples of Case marking tense/aspect/mood

- (5) Ngada yalawu –jarr yakuri-*na* mijil-nguni-*na*.
 I (NOM) catch-PST fish-M.ABL net-INST-M.ABL
 'I caught fish with the net' (Kayardild)
- (6) Ngada yalawu-ju yakuri-*wu* mijil-nguni-*wu*.
 I (NOM) catch-POT fish-M.PROP net-INST-M.PROP
 'I will catch fish with the net.' (Kayardild)
- (7) Ngada kurri-nangku mala-*wu* (balmby-*wu*).
 I (NOM) see-NEG.POT sea-M.PROP morrow-M.PROP
 'I won't be able to see the sea (tomorrow).' (Kayardild)
- (8) Ngada kurri-nangku mala-y (barruntha-y)
 I (NOM) see-NEG.POT sea-M.LOC yesterday-M.LOC
 'I could not see the sea yesterday.' (Kayardild)

Examples of Complementizing Case

c-Complementizing

- (9) Ngatha nyinku mirnu-ma-larta kampa-lanrta-ku ngarri-ngka-ku.
1.SG.NOM 2.SG.ACC know-CAUS-FUT cook-FUT-ACC ashes-LOC-ACC
'I'll show you how to cook in ashes.' (Panyjaima)

t-Complementizing

- (10) Yabu ngiyi gijilulu jiyaji-nka bungmanyi-nka.
have 3.SG.F.A(PRES) money(ACC) give-DAT old.man.DAT
'She had money to give to the old man.' (Wambaya)

c- and t-Complementizing combined:

- (11) Ngaliwa withawitha-ma-rninyji-rru thurlanyarra-a
1.PL.INC covered-CAUS-FUT-NOW poor.fellow-ACC

wantha-lalha-nguru-u-rru ngaliwa-a.
leave-PST-ABL-ACC-NOW 1.PL.INC-ACC

'We'll bury the poor fellow who now has left us.' (Martuthunira)