

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.

1.1.2 Additional environments

◊ Alienable possession:

- (5) *Pielewei wi'gatign*
Piel-ew-ei wi'gatign
Piel-EXT-obj³ book
“(It is) Piel’s book” or “The book belongs to Piel” (McClay 2012: 26)

◊ Bare nouns:

- (6) a. na'gu'set 'sun (an.)'
b. [[[na'gu'set] -ew] -ei] 'clock (inan.)'

◊ Numerals:

- (7) si'st 'three'
- (8) *si'stewa'jewei*
si'st-ew-a'j-ew-ei
three-EXT-person-EXT-obj
'belonging to the third one'

◊ *-ew* cannot appear word-finally⁴; it needs a little *n* suffix

- (9)
-
- ```

graph TD
 Root[√] --- Node1[]
 Node1 --- ew[-ew]
 Node1 --- n[n]
 n --- ei[-ei]
 n --- inu[-inu]
 n --- aj[-a'j]

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1.2 Proposal

I propose that *-ew* be analyzed using Barker’s (1995) notion of Extrinsic Possession

2 Analysis & Data

2.1 Extrinsic Possession (Barker 1995)

◊ a vague relation that encompasses ownership, creation, adjacency, and other relationships that express ‘proximity’ between a possessor and a possessum

<sup>3</sup>Throughout the presentation I will gloss *-ei* as ‘object’ (not to be confused with grammatical object), following Inglis’ 1988 definition of *-ei* as “noun final meaning item or thing”.

<sup>4</sup>I do not claim that [ew] cannot appear word-finally. Rather, I am only referring to the particular functional element *-ew*.

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

(McClay 2012: 16)

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

(13) *'na'gwesnm*  
**'n<sup>t</sup>-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'goweï '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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