

Australian Linguistics Society Annual Meeting, Sydney

1. GRAMMATICAL BACKGROUND

A grammatical Warlpiri sentence consists of a sequence of finite clauses. Relative and temporal finite clauses are syntactically “adjoined” rather than embedded, and in fact it can be argued that there are no syntactically (only semantically) dependent finite clauses — all finite clauses are syntactically “main” clauses. Main clauses are either verbal, or non-verbal. Verbal finite clauses must contain a single Auxiliary, described below. Non-verbal clauses may optionally contain the pronominal clitics which make up the final part of the Auxiliary, but cannot contain an Auxiliary base. Thus, a single Auxiliary and a single finite verb are the only obligatory words of a finite verbal clause. <1,2>

As usual with spontaneous speech, the Warlpiri utterances under study do not always strictly conform to our notion of a complete grammatical sentence of Warlpiri. Sometimes apparently extraneous elements are present, sometimes essential elements are missing. These complications have to be addressed as we proceed with the analysis of the narrative into the clausal units. Since the basic analytic unit used in this study, the finite sentence (or clause) contains an Auxiliary and a finite verb, we first confront those sentences in the texts which apparently deviate from this grammatical norm.

The basic facts about the Auxiliary to which reference is made below can be summarised as follows:

1. internally, the Auxiliary has three parts:

AUX = COMP - BASE - PRONOMINALS

2. the pronominal clitics of the Auxiliary register the subject (Ergative else Absolutive argument), the object (Dative else Absolutive, if any), and one or two indirect objects (Dative):

PRONOMINALS = SUBJECT-OBJECT-**rla-jinta**

(There are certain restrictions, such as the impossibility of a non-zero object clitic co-occurring with following **rla**.)

3. in the sentence, the Auxiliary occurs initially, or in “second position” after the first word or first (nominal) constituent, or following a Sentence Particle in such a position. If the Auxiliary’s COMP-BASE part has less than two syllables, then the Auxiliary generally does not occur sentence-initially.

4. over and above factors mentioned in 3., an (non-Auxiliary) expression may be appended to the beginning of a sentence, and set off intonationally from it, which may thus give the appearance of an Auxiliary in “third position”.

In the following examples, the Auxiliary is distinguished by **boldface**.

2. THE MISSING AUXILIARY

First, we examine three types of ellipsis involving the Auxiliary. They are akin to the English rule of Gapping, described by J.R. Ross — the rule by the main verb is omitted in the second clause of “I like pies, and John beans,” and so we extend that descriptive term, but apply it to omission of an Auxiliary rather than a finite verb. The types of Auxiliary gapping are: 1. of pronominal clitics but not the Auxiliary base, 2. of the entire Auxiliary, and 3. of the Auxiliary base, but not the pronominal clitics. The above examples are all of the type where the understood “missing” element is taken to be identical with the last preceding equivalent element. We have not encountered any instances where the understood Auxiliary element is something other than the last preceding equivalent element.

1. An Auxiliary base may be maintained, but the pronominal clitics “gapped”, as in:

- (1) a. Jirangku rdukurdukurla**palunyanu** kujurnu — 'They put fat on their chests
 b. mimingka**lpa** lupu yirrarnu — nguyu. 'put red ochre on the forehead, black ochre.'

Another example, in which the 3rd person plural subject clitic **lu** is omitted in the second and fourth of five consecutive sentences. It is typical of this type to involve the omission of the 3rd person plural subject clitic, treating a plural like a singular. I have no examples with 1st or 2nd person, and example (1) is the only one involving a non-subject clitic: **-lpa-lu-nyanu** 'Imperfect-333s-Reflex'

Note the alternation of number marking, on the Auxiliary base **kala** 'Past Usitative':

- (2) a. Pina-yanurnu **kalalu** - yalikirikirra. [1167]
 b. Kapi yalikarijangka **kala** pinarni-yanu. Kirrikarijangka.
 c. Jarnkujarnku yanu **kalalu**.
 d. Janyungukupurdalku **kala** yanurnu. Karlumparrangurluju - janyunguwangurla.
 e. Janyungukula **kalalu** yangka majumaju ngarnu.

A further example, where the Auxiliary base is changed (from zero to **lpa**), but the 3rd person plural subject clitic **lu** is elided:

- (3) a. Nyurruwarnupatu **ngulalu** pinijjarrija —
 b. kulumardawangu **yilpa** wapaja.

In the following example, the nominal subject **panukari** ‘another lot’ of the second sentence is inherently plural, yet the agreeing subject clitic **lu** is absent from that sentence:

- (4) a. ngulangurlu **kalalu** yangka - pirriyanulku.

b. Jintakari-jintakari jirramakari panukari **kala** pardijarra yali —

Furthermore, the preceding sentence is a relative clause relating to a prior sentence, and its plural subject is, as far as I can tell, probably not identical in reference to that of the second quoted sentence.

Clear examples of the omission of the 3rd person plural subject clitic **lu** are seen in the intermediate sentences below, some of which have a reduplicated main verb giving the sense of plurality:

- (5) a. Ngarrkangkarlalku **kalalu** yanu. Jinta- jintajintajarrinjaku - [1148]
 b. yapa **ngulalu** nyurruwiyi pirriyanu - ngulaku.
 c. Jintajintajarrinjarla — yurlpungkajarrijarra —
 d. yurlpu — nguyu —
 e. rdukurdukurla kujurnurra.
 f. **Kala** jintajintajarrija.
 g. Purlapakungarntilki - **kala** purlapa — [yakarri?] purlapalku luntukangu.
 h. Purlapa pungu::: pungu kirringkarlu tarnnga.
 i. Kirringka **kalalu** nyinaja.

A further example, where reduplicated plural subject noun **purlkapurlka** does not have the plural subject in its own clause, is:

- (6) a. Kurduwarnulkul**parnalu** ngaka walypalikirrajarrija -
 b. kala purlkapurlka nganimpanyanguju muku-lawa-nyinaja. Pujungkajuku.
 c. Ngaril**palu** nyinaja kuyungka nyaninyangurla.

2. Another type of Auxiliary ellipsis omits the entire Auxiliary. This is illustrated twice in the following four consecutive sentences. The 1st person singular subject clitic **rna** is omitted from the second and fourth sentences. (The Auxiliary base is apparently zero in all these sentences, so they might be taken as an example under 1. above.)

- (7) a. Jard**arna** nguna:::
 b. mungalyurru-pardi:::
 c. wirlinyiyijala - yantarilki **karna** nyina kuyuwangulku.
 d. Kuyu yangka ngarni nyampu —
 e. linjilkir**na** kuyu ngarni.

A longer example is the following sequence, in which the Present-1st person exclusive plural subject Tense-clitic combination **ka-rnalu** occurs only in the first sentence, but is understood as the subject of several following sentences.

- (8) a. Panu mal- panu **karnalu** yani —
 b. warru pina warru pakarni:::

- c. warru wakurrumpu-mani kuyu.
- d. Kanyirni yangka yamakurrarlu yangkakurrarluyijala ngapakurrarlu.
- e. Ngapangkalku panungku manyukarrarlu ngarni(yi).
- f. Manyukarrarlu ngarniyi ngurrakurrayijala yarda pakarninjayanirni. Wankawarnulku.
- g. Kanyirni yarda kuyuyijala.

Another example, where the move to direct speech 1st person plural inclusive subject clitic **rlipa** resumes the plural subject of two sentences before, and the intermediate sentence has no overt Auxiliary, though understood Auxiliary **kalalu**.

- (9) a. Yantarlirlilki [1118] **kalalu** ngarnu.
- b. Yantarlilki nyinaja::
- c. "Yantarlir**lipa** nyina! Matalku. Ngakaku (waja).

The following example has a repeated main verb without a repeated Auxiliary:

- (10) a. **kalalurla** wurra nyinaja,
- b. ngapangkaji nyinaja::

It is necessary to distinguish "gapping" of pronominal clitics from the treatment of a non-singular nominal as singular for the purposes of agreement. An example of the latter is the following sentence, with dual object nominal **ngurlu-jarra** 'seed-dual' not registered in the Auxiliary with the 3rd person dual object clitic **-palangu**:

- (11) a. miy**lipa** purdangirli yardirrija —
- b. karlaja — ngurlujarra.

3. An Auxiliary base is "gapped", but pronominal clitics retained, in the following example:

- (12) a. Kalinyanuku **yikarla** wapirdi mardarni —
- b. wapirdir**la** yinyi —
- c. kuyu **karla** nyanungurlu yinyi. Kapi pama jurlarda.

Here the Present Auxiliary base **ka**, which combines with the Non-Past form of the verb (here, **yinyi** 'gives'), is omitted in the intermediate sentence, and that sentence appears with a finite verb and no overt Auxiliary base.

The gapping of an Auxiliary base has been observed in the Lajamanu (Hooker Creek) dialect. The following example sequence was excerpted by Kenneth Hale from his notes (page 144):

- (13) a. Jarntini **kalu** palyangku. 'They trim it with an adze.'

- b. Karaly-karaly-manili. 'They smoothe it.'
- c. Karaly-karaly-manili, 'They smoothe it.'
- d. katinili. 'they press it down.'
- e. Wurdujumanili. 'They make it.'
- f. Ngurrjulkulu nyanyi. 'Then they see (that) its OK.'
- g. Warlungkalu yirrani 'They put it in the fire'
- h. katinili. '(and) they press it down.'
- i. Nyanyili jungarnilki. 'Then they see it's straight.'
- j. Ngulalu walaparrini 'They test it'
- k. wardalykalu kijini. 'they throw it (when it's) cool.'
- l. Ngurrjulu nyanyi. 'They see it's OK.'

In all but the first of the sentences in the above chain, the Present Auxiliary base **ka** is "gapped".

It is worth noting that there is another construction in which a finite verb appears to lack a unique overt Auxiliary with which to combine. This arises through consecutive repetition of a verb, in a manner akin semantically as well as morphologically to reduplication (see Nash (1980:Chap.4)). Two examples:

- (14) a. Yantarli nyinami nyinami::
- b. Purlapa pungu::: pungu kirringkarlu tarnnga.

An Auxiliary, or at least a pronominal clitic, may intervene in the repetition sequence, as in:

- (15) ngulawarnu nyinamili nyinami nyinami. 'After that they sat and sat and sat.'

A mixed example is the following, which shows a gapped Auxiliary base in the context of a sequence of sentences with gapped subject clitic:

- (16) a. Kalkurnulkulpa yurnanjikirrajarrija - kakarrumparrarnulku.
- b. Yarlalinjiki kalkurnulpa wapaja.
- c. Nyinaja, kakarrumparrarnu.
- d. Yalumpu - yinjiriwana ngapakurlanguwanalpa nyinaja. Yirriwiliwili.
- e. Yalumpurlalpa kakarrara yanumpa jingijingi.
- f. Tunkurrwapaja:.

Notes

1. Kenneth Hale generously provided me with his accurate transcription of the texts, and his ancillary notes, and was a constant source of analytic advice. Marilyn Ford inspired and guided the psycholinguistic aspects. Alan Wechsler helped by preparing a concordance to the text. I am also grateful to the M.I.T. Center for Cognitive Science for a supporting grant (Marilyn Ford, Principal Investigator), and

to the National Science Foundation (Grant No. BNS-7913950), Kenneth Hale, Principal Investigator). See Ford (1980) for the context of the psycholinguistic study. Two texts have been investigated: one is a narrative monologue an hour in length, and the other is a series of staged conversations totalling about two hours. The monologue text was narrated by the late Paddy Stuart Jupurrula in the Willowra or Lander dialect of Warlpiri. It was recorded by Kenneth Hale on his tape 2.19, at Alice Springs in late 1966, and corresponds to his manuscript transcription pages 1102-1179. The conversations were staged by the late Mickey Connell Jupurrula and Archie at Yuendumu in 1960, and recorded by Hale on his tapes 7 and 8, and correspond to his manuscript transcription folders X and XI, pages 7.1-246, 8.2-206. I first listened through the tape of the narrative to double-check the transcription, and to include in the transcription some fragmentary words and "speech errors" which had been omitted from the manuscript transcription. The manuscript is in a phonemic orthography, and was typed into a computer file (by Nash for the narrative and part of the conversation, by Lisa Travis for most of conversation) in the current Warlpiri practical orthography, making slight changes to the notation of intonational breaks to allow their representation by typed symbols.

2. For details of Warlpiri grammar see Nash (1980) and the references cited there. In particular, for details of the adjoined finite clauses, see Hale (1976), and of the Auxiliary, see Hale (1973,1981).

References

- Ford, M. (1980) Sentence planning units: Implications for the speakers representation of meaningful relations underlying sentences. MIT Center for Cognitive Science Occasional Paper #2, MIT, Cambridge. Also pp.797-827 in *The mental representation of grammatical relations*, ed. by Joan Bresnan. MIT Press, Cambridge, Massachusetts.
- Hale, K. (1973) Person marking in Walbiri, pp.308-344 in *A Festschrift for Morris Halle*, ed. by Stephen R. Anderson & Paul Kiparsky. New York: Holt, Rinehart & Winston, Inc.
- Hale, K. (1976) The adjoined relative clause in Australia, in *Grammatical categories in Australian languages*, ed. by R.M.W. Dixon. AIAS.
- Hale, K. (1981) On the position of Warlpiri in a Typology of the Base. Indiana University Linguistics Club.
- Hale, K. (1982) Some essential features of Warlpiri verbal clauses. *Work papers of SIL-AAB*. Series A Volume 6, ed. by Stephen Swartz. Berrimah, N.T.
- Nash, David. (1980) Topics in Warlpiri grammar. Doctoral dissertation, MIT.
- Simpson, J. (In Preparation) Control and Predication in Warlpiri. Doctoral dissertation, MIT.