Nominal Subclasses in Dalabon (South-western Arnhem Land)

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Abstract

This paper describes a distinctive system of nominal subclasses observed in Dalabon, a non-Pama-Nyungan, Gunwinyguan language of south-western Arnhem Land, Australia. These subclasses differ from what is usually called 'noun classes' in Australian languages, and no such system has been described for an Australian language so far.

While most Gunwinyguan languages use noun class prefixes offering an overt categorization of noun classes, Dalabon has no such prefixes. On the other hand, six semantically coherent nominal subclasses can be delineated based on four inter-related criteria—noun incorporation, boundness, obligatory possession and possessor raising. These subclasses are animate-part nouns (incorporable, strictly bound, obligatorily possessed, raising their possessors freely), kin-terms (incorporable, strictly bound, obligatorily possessed, raising their possessor when incorporated), inanimate-part nouns (incorporable, strictly bound, not obligatorily possessed), features of the landscape (incorporable, semi-bound, not obligatorily possessed), natural-kind nouns (non-incorporable) and generic nouns (incorporable free nouns). Some of the subclasses qualify as more or less inalienable.

Along the way, the article discusses various aspects of Dalabon grammar such as word classes, noun incorporation and possessive constructions. The nominal subclass divisions also shed light upon some the distribution and semantics of the ubiquitous *-no* suffix, which remained obscure so far.

Key-words

Dalabon, Gunwinyguan, noun classes, inalienability, noun incorporation, boundness, possessor raising

1. Introduction[1]

1.1 The Dalabon language

Dalabon is a non-Pama-Nyungan language of the Gunwinyguan family, located in Arnhem Land. It is severely endangered (less than ten speakers) and currently being replace by Barunga Kriol, a variety of the Northern Australian creole. Like most other languages in this family, Dalabon is polysynthetic. It

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pushes polysynthesis to a high degree (at least for an Australian language) and is also highly agglutinative. Word order is syntactically free, and pragmatically determined.

Apart from a short sketch grammar by Capell (1962) and a preliminary study of pronouns by Alpher (1982), work on Dalabon started in the mid-1990s. A dictionary of Dalabon was published in 2004 (Evans *et al.* 2004), but there exists no full grammar at this stage. However, a number of works describe various aspects of the language, including the verbal template, tense/aspect/mood categories, person prefixes (Evans *et al.* 2001; Evans & Merlan 2003; Evans 2006), prosody (Evans *et al.* 2008; Ross 2011). Cutfield's study of demonstratives (Cutfield 2011) comprises a detailed discussion of the Dalabon noun phrases (41-113), as well as a discussion of the orthography (23-25). Evans (2007), Ponsonnet (2009; 2010; 2011; 2012; 2013) and Bordluk *et al.* (2013) have explored the semantics (in particular intellection and emotions, body descriptions, and ethnobiology.

In a number of respects, Dalabon resembles Bininj Gun-wok, so far considered its closest relative. Many of the features described by Evans's (2003) grammar of Bininj Gun-wok are also found in Dalabon. However, there are also differences, and these will be in focus in this article.

1.2 Aims of the work

In this work I describe the Dalabon system of nominal subclasses, i.e. morphosyntactically defined subsets of nouns presenting relatively clear semantic unity. While there are indications that some other Australian languages, in particular Gunwinyguan languages, feature comparable nominal organization, , no system of this type has yet been described for an Australian language.

Gender classes encoded by prefixes and sanctioned by gender agreement (Greenberg 1978: 50; Creissels 2006: 199) are very common among Australian languages, including Gunwinyguan languages genetically very close to Dalabon, like Bininj Gun-wok (Evans 2003). The nominal subclasses described here for Dalabon are not gender classes: they are delineated by other means and do not trigger agreement. They also differ from other well-known types of noun classes such as classifier classes (nominal classifiers, e.g. in Amazonian languages, Grinevald & Seifart (2004), Tryon (1970) for Australian languages (Daly family); numeral classifiers, e.g. in Mandarin Chinese (Li 2013); possessive classifiers, e.g. in Mwotlap, Vanuatu, François (2001: 547ff); in Iaai, New Caledonia, Dotte (2013)). Partly rooted in morphosyntatic criteria related to the expression of possession, Dalabon nominal subclasses bear some resemblances with inalienability classes found in many Oceanic languages (Lichtenberk 2009) as well as some Australian languages (see Hale (1981) for Warlpiri). There are also resemblances with languages where noun classes are determined by the availability to enter in possessive constructions and by other morphological constraints on possession, like in Mayan languages (see England (1988: 49ff), or Creissels (2006:157) for k'iche'). Another important morphosyntactic criteria relevant to Dalabon nominal subclasses is noun incorporation. Noun classes defined via incorporation exist in other languages: Woodbury (1975) mentions them for Onondaga (Iroquoian) for instance. Closer to Dalabon, noun incorporation delineates nominal subclasses among

Gunwinyguan languages which also have gender classes. Evans (2003) describes two morphosyntactic nominal subclasses of this type in Bininj Gun-wok (see Van Egmond (2012: 234ff) for a comparable partition in Enindhilyakwa). Harvey (1996) describes an attribute-of-the-person nominal subclass based on behavior in incorporation in Warray. In Nunggubuyu/Wubuy also, Heath (1984: 221ff) identifies a kin-term class independent of gender classes, based on morphological criteria.

Thus, the Dalabon system of nominal subclasses shares some features with various languages in Australia and around the world. Some Australian languages, in particular Gunwinyguan languages genetically close to Dalabon (for instance Kune, a dialect of Bininj Gun-wok, or Rembarrnga) display comparable systems. Yet, none of these systems intersecting several morphosyntactic criteria to form a coherent system, as in Dalabon, has been described as such. Here I discuss the morphosyntactic criteria involved in defining Dalabon nominal subclasses and present the nominal subclasses which result from these criteria. I highlight the semantic consistency of the subclasses and clarify their status with respect to morphosyntactic inalienability and semantic relationality. Along the way, I discuss important features of Dalabon grammar such as word classes and noun incorporation. I adopt a synchronic perspective on the system of nominal subclasses, leaving diachrony aside most of the time.

The description presented below is based on first-hand data collected in the communities of Weemol, Beswick and Barunga between 2007 and 2012. The aspects of Dalabon described in this article are subject to inter- and intra-speaker variations. There are significant discrepancies between acceptability judgments gathered in elicitation, and speakers' actual use. Here I take such intra-speaker discrepancies into account, weighting elicitation against corpus evidence, and conversely. On the other hand, inter-speaker variations have been left aside, as I rely mostly on data collected with one speaker (usually considered the 'master' speaker by linguists and other speakers).

Before describing Dalabon nominal subclasses, in Section 2 I present some basics of Dalabon grammar and briefly discuss Dalabon word classes, so as to delineate the set of nouns prior to defining its subsets. The rest of the article, from Section 3, focuses on nominal subclasses. The four main morphosyntactic criteria delineating these subclasses (incorporability, boundness, obligatory possession and possessor raising) are set out in 3.1. Section 3.2 provides an overview of the subclasses, and sections 4 to 8 describe each subclass one by one (morphosyntax and semantics). A summary is provided in Section 9.

2. Dalabon and its word classes

2.1 The Dalabon verb template

In this section, I briefly present the most salient features of Dalabon verbal morphosyntax, i.e. those needed to follow the rest of the argument. Dalabon is highly polysynthetic and allows for fairly extensive verb complexes. As described by Evans & Merlan (2003), the verb template—which displays

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important similarities with closely neighboring languages such as Bininj Gun-wok and Rembarrnga—numbers more than a dozen prefix slots, and five suffixes and enclitics after the verb root. The template ruling the order of affixation is presented in Table (1).

-11	**-10**	**-9**	-8	-7	-6	-5	-4	-3	-2	-1	**0**	+1	**+2**	+3/4	+5
Object pron.	**Person pref.**	**Status**	Focus	Sequential	Misc. adverbs	Benefactive	Misc. adverbs	Incorporated nom.	Number prefix	Comitative	**ROOT**	Refl./Recip.	**TAM**	Case/Poss. encl.	Diminutive

-11	Obj. pronoun	Independent pronoun or proclitic.
-10	Person prefix	The prefixes in this slot always encode the subject, but may also encode the object (portmanteau prefixes). These prefixes can also indicate mood.
-9	Status	Morphemes indicating the status of the clause: realis (*h-*), irrealis (*ø*) or subordinate (*-ye*).
-8	Focus	Frequent focus adverb *dja-* ('just'), with various aspectual contributions.
-7	Sequential	Frequent sequential adverb *yeleng-*, usually realized as *lng-* ('then'), with various aspectual contributions.
-6, -4	Misc. adv.	e.g. *munku-* 'far away', *bolan-* 'nearly', *warrkah-* 'wrongly', *djih-* 'a little bit'.
-5	Benefactive	Benefactive applicative prefix *marnu-*, sanctioning the presence/addition of an animate participant.
-3	Incorp. nom.	Incorporated nominals, see 3.1.1.
-2	Num.	'Number' prefixes e.g. *mokun-* 'bunch, group'.
-1	Comitative	Comitative applicative prefix *ye-*, sanctioning the presence of an accompanying participant.
0	Root	The verb root (sometimes morphologically complex).
+1	Refl./Recip.	The reflexive or reciprocal marker *-rr*.
+2	TAM	Inflections encoding tense and aspect, and irrealis mood.
+3/4	Case/ Poss. enclitic	Case markers, e.g. TIME *-kuno* (the clause is a subordinate indicating time), GEN *-kun* (the clause is a subordinate indicating reasons for action.) Possessive enclitics also occur after the TAM marker. The order of the slots remains to be determined (one would expect the possessive enclitics in +3 and case marker in +4).
+5	Diminutive	Diminutive enclitic *-wurd*.

Table. 1. The Dalabon verb template and explanation of its slots. Adapted from Evans & Merlan (2003: 271) and Evans, Fletcher & Ross (2008: 95).

In practice, while there exist fifteen slots in the template, it is exceptional (in fact, virtually non-existent in the corpus) to find more than eight affixes for a verb complex. Only the slots in grey boxes are obligatory. Importantly, person prefixes are obligatory, so that core arguments are systematically and obligatorily cross-referenced on the predicate. Many verb complexes only have person prefixes

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plus the realis marker *h-* before the root (1). Most verbs have no more than two or three additional prefixes (2, 3).

20120706b_000_MT 043 [RPF][2]

(1)   *Woy,*   *dja-h-dokka-n*   *ngarra-h-bo-niyan,*
         INTJ.hey   2sg-R-get.up-PR   1pl.incl-R-go-FUT[3]

         wudjirru-ba-n   *barra-h-yin.*
         APPR:1du>2sg-leave-PR   3du-R-say/do:PR

         'Hey, get up, we're going, or we'll leave you here they say.'

20120705b_004_MT 118 [RPF]

(2)   *Bunu*   *ka-h-na-ng,*   *barra-h-dja-lng-kakku-yurd-minj.*[4]
         3du   3sg>3-R-see-PP   3du-R-FOC-SEQ-really-run-PP

         'She looked at them two, they were running fast.'

20120705b_005_MT 131 [RPF]

(3)   *Bulu*   *ka-h-marnu-kangu-wurdah-minj.*
         3pl   3pl>3-R-BEN-belly-suffer-PP

         'She was really sad for them.'

In (2) and (3), the second arguments of transitive verbs are cross-referenced by a pronoun, while their first arguments are cross-referenced by person prefixes attached to the verb complexes. Not all

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[2] The codes before each example are the reference of the ELAN transcript which contains the example, indicating the date, the initials of the speaker, and the annotation number in ELAN. Data collected between 2007 and 2009 are stored in the AIATSIS audio-visual archive (Canberra). Data collected between 2010 and 2012 are stored in ELAR (Endangered Language Archive, London: http://elar.soas.ac.uk/deposit/ponsonnet2012dalabon) and in the AIATSIS audiovisual archive. The codes between square brackets after the recording reference specify the type of data. While the analysis was carried out largely on the basis of spontaneous or semi-spontaneous data, for the sake of clarity I often illustrate the argument with data collected in pure elicitation. Pure elicitation was also used to demonstrate some contrasts and provide negative evidence. The data categories are as follows: [ContEl]: contextualized elicitation; [ConvEl]: conversation in the course of elicitation; [DD]: example from the *Dalabon Dictionary* (Evans *et al.* 2004); [El]: standard elicitation; [Narr]: narratives; [RPF]: comment on the movie *Rabbit-Proof Fence* (Noyce 2002); [SD]: comment on the movie *Samson and Delilah* (Thornton 2009); [Stim]: response to elicitation stimuli; [TC]: comment on the movie *Ten Canoes* (De Heer & Djigirr 2006).

[3] Abreviations used in glosses: ABL: ablative case; APPR: apprehensive mood; BEN: benefactive; COM: comitative; DEM: demonstrative; du: dual; DYAD: dyadic suffix ; EMPH: emphasizer; ERG: ergative case; excl: exclusive; FILL: morphological filler; FOC: focus prefix; FUT: future tense; GEN: genitive case; h: high(er) on scale of animacy; HESIT: expression of hesitation; INCH: inchoative marker; incl: inclusive; INST: instrumental case; INTERR: interrogative; INTJ: interjection; IRR: irrealis mood; LIM: limitative; LOC: locative case; NEG: negation ; PCUST: customary past ; PI: past imperfective; pl: plural; POSS: possessive; PP: past perfective; PR: present tense; PRIV: privative enclitic; R: realis mood ; REDUP: reduplication; RR: reflexive/reciprocal suffix; SEQ: sequential prefix; sg: singular; SUB: subordinate marker; TIME: time case marker; VBLZR: verbalizer.

[4] With many verbs ending in *-minj*, or any other inflection of *-mu* (inflecting as *-minj, -muninj, -miyan, -minji, -mi*), an alternative gloss would distiguish a verbalizer element and a tense element: *-mu* would then be *-m-u* 'VBLZR-PR', *-minj* would be *-m-inj* 'VBLZR-PP', etc. Since the verbalizer is optional in the present, it is an independent morpheme rather than a part of the verb. However, since the semantic input of this verbalizer is close to nil, it is more convenient to gloss only the tense.

transitive verb complexes have object pronouns like *bunu* in (2) and *bulu* in (3). Depending on the persons of the arguments, many verbs have portmanteau prefixes encoding both arguments on a single pronoun. Singular objects are not encoded with a pronoun, but only with a portmanteau. Compare the intransitive prefix *bala-* in (4) and the portmanteau transitive prefix *bula-* in (5), which cross-references the object *wah* 'water', without an independent pronoun.

20120705b_004_MT 016 [RPF]
(4)   *Bala-h-madme-do-nj.*
        3pl-R-hungry-die-PP

        'They were starving.'

20120706b_000_MT 124 [RPF]
(5)   *Bula-h-yaw-kolh-ngu-kolh-ngu-n*   *wah.*
        3pl>3-R-little.one-liquid-eat:REDUP-PR   water

        '[The children] drink some water.'

Now equipped with a basic understanding of the Dalabon language, we move on to the discussion of word classes.

2.2 Dalabon word classes

Throughout this paper I will use the word 'nominal' to refer to properties of nouns—not of nouns and adjectives considered together. Hence by 'nominal subclasses' I mean 'subclasses of nouns'. Before discussing nominal subclasses, it is necessary to establish what I consider a noun. There is not enough space here to describe Dalabon word classes in detail, but this section highlights a few important aspects. In Dalabon, verbs are straightforwardly defined as predicative-only lexical items allowing for a well-identified set of verbal affixes (2.2.1). The distinction between nouns and adjectives, on the other hand, is less clear-cut (2.2.2). Dalabon, like several other Gunwinyguan languages (e.g. Rembarrnga (McKay 1975: 72), Ngandi (Heath 1978: 34), Ngalakgan (Merlan 1983: 32; 35)) offers no strict criterion or unique test departing nouns from adjectives. The straightforward criterion applied by Evans (2003) in Bininj Gun-wok, namely adjective gender-agreement, does not occur in Dalabon. Nevertheless, I argue that it is possible and useful to distinguish between a set of nouns and a set of adjectives. For a number of lexical items, membership may remain somewhat ambiguous—yet, this does not imply that these two sets cannot be distinguished at all, nor that the distinction is not informative.

2.2.1 Verbs

Among words belonging to open classes, verbs can easily be identified as the only items which appear *only* in predicative position, obligatorily preceded by a person prefix, and obligatorily followed by a TAM inflection. The affixes in question appear in bold in (6). Strictly verbal stems do not occur without these affixes. In contrast, nouns and adjectives can take comparable affixes, but these are not

obligatory. In addition, while TAM inflections are added directly to verb stems, with nouns and adjectives, TAM inflections are 'mediated' by further morphology (inchoativizers, verbalizers, causativizers, etc.). Evans *et al.* (2001) discuss Dalabon person prefixes, and Evans & Merlan (2003: 275-276) list verbal TAM inflections for each of the verb conjugations (see also Evans *et al.* (2004)).

20110601_000_MT 078 [Narr]
[About young people asking for money or food.]

(6) **Ngorr**   **bula**-*h*-*na*-**n**   **ngarra**-*h*-*bo*-**n,**   **ngorr**   **bula**-*h*-*djawa*-**n.**
    1pl.incl   3pl>1-R-see-PR   1pl.incl-R-go-PR   1pl.incl   3pl>1-R-ask-PR

'They see us as we go there, they ask us [for money].'

2.2.2 Nouns and adjectives

Nouns and adjectives both differ from verbs in that, while they can act as standard predicates preceded by a person prefix, they are also found in non-predicative functions, where they do not carry a person prefix or a TAM inflection. This is illustrated in (7), where the noun *mey* '(vegetable) food' and the adjective *burrama* 'good, healthy' are respectively a head and modifier of the same NP. No predication is involved. There is no person prefix and no TAM inflection. In (8) on the other hand, the noun *wurdurd* 'child' serves a predicative function, and displays a first person prefix to the left and a past imperfective TAM inflection to the right. Likewise in (9), the adjective *burrama* 'good, healthy' occurs in predicative position, albeit without a TAM inflection (the default reading is then stative and present tense).

30118/2007 – 26' (MT) [ContEl]

(7)   *Mey-burrama*   *bula-h-kinj.*
      food-good   3pl>3-R-cook:PR

'They're cooking nice food (vegetable).'

30044/2007 – 4' (JW) [Narr]

(8)   *Ngey   mah   wurdurd*   *nga-h-wurdurd-ninj,*   *budj   nga-h-dja-ni-nj.*
      1sg   and   child   1sg-R-child-PI   bush   1sg-R-FOC-sit/be-PP

'As for me, when I was a child, I lived in the bush.'

20120713a_000_MT 169 [TC]
[A child collected bush honey for an old man.]

(9)   *Ka-h-burrama*   *nunda*   *nga-h-ngu-yan,*   *ka-h-ngabbu-n.*
      3sg-R-good   DEM   1sg>3-R-eat-FUT   3sg>1-R-give-PR

'It's good [this honey] I'll eat it, he's giving it to me.'

Strictly speaking, noun-like and adjective-like lexemes share the same range of morphosyntactic possibilities. They can all act as the single element of a noun phrase, and they can all modify, or be

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modified by, another noun or adjective; any affix that is acceptable on a noun-like lexeme is acceptable on an adjective-like lexeme, and vice-versa. As mentioned in 1.2, unlike some close Gunwinyguan languages (in particular Bininj Gun-wok), Dalabon does not have a system of noun class prefixes and adjectival gender agreement comparable to the ones that distinguish nouns from adjectives in these languages.

While noun-like and adjective-like lexemes share the same range of morphosyntactic possibilities, frequencies differ. A number of items display noun-like properties: as illustrated in the upper part of Table (2), these words are more often the head of NPs, they often express arguments, they are often modified and less often modifiers, they are not frequent in predicative function. Morphologically, they frequently attract case and possessive markers, as well as items with quantifying functions such as privative and comitative markers or numerals. Members of this set, like *dengu-no*[5] 'foot/toe', *kakkak-no* 'parallel grandkin', etc. will be called nouns. Another set (as illustrated in the lower part of Table (2)) is more often found in modifier positions in NPs and more frequent in predicative functions. These words are often followed by suffixes specifying TAM values and valence. This set will be called 'adjectives'. (See McGregor (2013) for a somewhat comparable analysis in Gooniyandi (Bunuban, Western Australia.)

Table 2. Frequency of functions and morphology for some nouns and adjectives in a Dalabon corpus where speakers commented on movies. The lexemes were chosen arbitrarily among those numbering enough tokens, with at least one noun of each of the nominal subclasses described in the rest of the article. Tokens in each line add up to more than the total of each line because a single token may display several features (e.g. possessive and case enclitics can occur at the same time). The features exemplified here do not exhaust all the morphosyntactic possibilities of nouns and adjectives, but reflect those occurring in the sample.

	ADJECTIVE-LIKE				NOUN-LIKE						
	predicative	+TAM/ valence marker	modifies a head	reduplicated	argument (or part of it)	case marker	possessive marker	modified head of NP	comitative/ privative	numeral	total
NOUN-LIKE											
dengu-no 'foot/toe' (PA)					6 75%	1 12%			1 12%		8
kakkak-no (KIN) 'paral. grandkin'					48 73%	7 11%			2 3%	1 2%	66
kolh-no 'liquid' (PI)	2 7%				23 82%	2 7%	1 4%				28
kunj (NK) 'kangaroo'					21 100%			1 5%			21
mey (GEN) '(veget.) food'					25 93%	4 15%	5 19%		2 7%		27
wadda (GEN)					7	30	23	4			55

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[5] The presence and role of *-no* is explained in the rest of the article.

'home, house'						13%	55%	42%	7%		
wah (NK) 'water'[6]						10 43%	6 26%	2 9%	3 13%	1 4%	23
ADJECTIVE-LIKE											
boyenj 'big'	3 25%	2 17%	7 58%	7 58%	1 8%						12
burrama 'good, healthy'	14 82%	4 24%	2 12%								17
kinikun 'different'	3 11%	3 11%	11 39%	8 29%	9 32%	1 4%					28
murduk 'hard/strong'	7 100%	2 29%									7

There is not enough space to illustrate each of the functions listed in the tables. The examples (7) to (9) above presented some of them: head of NP and modifier (7), predicative function (8, 9), TAM suffixes (9). Other contexts are exemplified below. (Examples (10) and (11): noun expressing an argument; (12): noun with possessive and locative marker; (13): adjective in predicative position with an inchoative suffix carrying tense inflection.)

20120705b_005_MT 014 [RPF]
(10) *Ngol*   *ka-h-lng-borlh-werre-mu*   *kanh,*   *wah-yih.*
       1pl.incl   3sg>1-R-SEQ-track-erase-PR   DEM   water-ERG

       'The water (rain) will erase our footprints.'

20120720_004_LB 25 [SD]
(11) *Yibung* *kunj*   *ka-h-ngu-yan.*
       3sg   kangaroo   3sg>3-R-eat-FUT

       'As for him, he's eating kangaroo.'

20120705b_006_MT 72 [RPF]
(12) *Bala-h-dudj-miyan-kun*   *nah-bulng-kah*   *kakkak-bulng-kah.*[7]
       3pl-R-return-FUT-GEN   mother-3plPOSS-LOC   parallel.grandkin-3plPOSS-LOC

       'In order to return to their mother and grandmother.'

20120713a_002_MT 295 [TC]
(13) *Kardu*   *ka-h-do-niyan, dohkardu*   *ka-h-burrama-m-iniyan.*

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[6] *Wah* is glossed 'water' because it is more often used to refer to this substance while *kolh-no* 'liquid' is sometimes used as a generic meaning 'liquid', then specified by another noun clarifying the nature of the liquid in question. The former belongs to the 'natural kind' class (7) and the latter to the inanimate-part subclass (0). The semantic difference between *wah* and *kolh-no* is thin: *wah* can sometimes be used to refer to liquids other than water, and *kolh-no* often refers to water.
[7] A number of Dalabon morphemes such as case and possessive markers, diminutives, are better described as enclitics based their distributions, and I call them so. However, I do not use the '=' symbol in my transcription, because it renders transcripts less natural to read and further removed from the now standard orthography.

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maybe   3sg-R-die-FUT   or.else   3sg-R-good-INCH-FUT

'He may die, or he may recover.'

In spite of the absence of a clear-cut morphosyntactic distinction yielding unambiguous tests, I choose to distinguish between 'adjective-like' and 'noun-like' lexemes in Dalabon based on frequency, rather than merge these categories. As evident in the table, in spontaneous speech, some lexemes clearly attract a set of suffixes and enclitics as opposed to the other, and this correlates with the most typical functions of the lexeme. For instance, quantifying elements such as the comitative or privative markers, or numerals, are common on lexemes which express arguments more often (hence noun-like lexemes). In contrast, these items are unattested on other lexemes (adjective-like lexemes) in spontaneous occurrences. However, provided adequate conditions (typically, in elicitation, and usually with some effort), these items are accepted and produced by speakers on adjective-like lexemes as well. So far, this ambivalence has proven true of any morphosyntactic ability of either class: provided adequate semantic conditions, behaviors typical of nouns are accepted for adjectives, and vice versa.

Nevertheless, in the view of the clear-cut patterns of frequencies displayed in Table (2), which are typical of noun-like and adjective-like items in Dalabon, it seems to me that we would lose some insight by entirely renouncing a noun/adjective distinction. Naturally, the frequencies of some morphosyntactic functions are unsurprising as they result partly from the semantics of the lexemes. For this reason (among others) some linguists discard frequency-based criteria in grammatical description (for some discussion on the principals of word class distinctions see for instance Rijkhoff & Van Lier (2013), Osada & Evans (2005)). However, here I do not consider simply the bare functions of the items (predicate, argument, modifier), but two sets of features which cluster together, namely syntactic functions and morphological features. In my work on Dalabon in general, I use the labels 'noun' and 'adjective' with the sense 'this lexeme exemplifies the noun/adjective cluster of morphosyntactic features'. To that extent, these labels are informative. Some items do not allow a clear diagnostic, either because not enough examples are available, or because a few lexemes do not pattern clearly in one way or another. However, the fact that some items do not fall clearly into categories should not prevent us from using these categories where they are useful and informative.

So defined, the class of nouns divides neatly into six semantically coherent morphosyntactic nominal subclasses. This system, in which nominal subclasses are defined by their morphosyntactic behavior based on four main criteria (incorporability, free vs bound nouns, obligatory possession and possessor-raising abilities), is described in detail in the following sections.[8]

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[8] Dalabon adjectives also divide into subclasses, which could be the topic of another paper. Some of the adjectival subclasses partly overlap with nominal subclasses, so that it should in principle be possible to organize Dalabon nouns and adjectives into a larger system of subclasses. However, such a system would lose the morphosyntactic and semantic coherence of the nominal subclasses described in the following sections.

3. Nominal subclasses

Many Australian languages, including languages of the Gunwinyguan family, display a noun class system whereby different nouns attract different noun class prefixes (Bininj Gun-wok has masculine, feminine, vegetable/neutral, and a residual class, see Evans (2003: 184ff); for Gunwinyguan languages with slightly different noun class divisions, see Van Egmond (2012: 92ff) for Enindhilyakwa, Merlan & Jacq (2005) for Jawoyn, Merlan (1983: 35-37) for Ngalakgan, Heath (1984: 159ff)) for Nunggubuyu/Wubuy, Heath (1978: 35) for Ngandi, Harvey (1996: 113) for Warray). These trigger agreement, and are thus well-described as gender classes. Most classes display some semantic consistency, with some lexemes in each class departing from the semantic core.

Two Dalabon prefixes are formally similar to noun class prefixes found in other Gunwinyguan languages. The prefixes *na-* an *ngal-*, cognate with Bininj Gun-wok noun class markers (respectively classes I masculine and II feminine in Bininj Gun-wok, Evans (2003:189-191)) are used to mark biological gender on proper names of persons (e.g. *ngal-June* for a women called June), and on any other lexeme referring to persons. *Na-* is used for masculine referents and *ngal-* with feminine referents, matching the distribution of the cognate prefixes in Bininj Gun-wok. These prefixes are frequent with clan names (e.g. *na-Marrku* to talk about men of the Marrku clan), nouns referring to stages of life (e.g. *na-komdudj* 'uninitiated young men'), and also relatively common on some kin-terms, with additional, opaque prefixes (e.g. *ngal-binj-murlah* or *ngal-kun-murlah*, 'mother's sister', where *murlah-no* can be used alone). A few nouns cannot occur without a prefix (e.g. *na/ngal-binjkohbeng* 'husband'/'wife', *na/ngal-kohbanj* 'old man/woman'). *Na-* and *ngal-* may occur on nouns denoting animals when these are personified (e.g. *ngal-djirrbiyuk* 'the whistle-duck', in a traditional story where one of the main protagonists is a female human-like whistle-duck ancestor). *Na-* and *ngal-* occur very occasionally on adjective-like lexemes when these refer to persons, for instance *na-kird*, to refer to a sick old man, where *kird-no* means 'crippled'. Note that bound nouns (see 3.1.2) and bound adjectives that normally take *-no* when used in isolation lose their suffix when preceded by the masculine/feminine prefixes *na-* or *ngal-* (e.g. *ngal-binj-murlah* 'mother's sister' or *murlah-no*, *na-kird* 'the crippled one' or *kird-no*).[9]

The Dalabon prefixes *na-* and *ngal-* are usually optional and do not trigger agreement. Thus, they are not gender prefixes. Rather, they may be analyzed in synchrony as flagging/forcing reference to specific individuals, and possibly as marks of respect. Apart from these prefixes *na-* and *ngal-*, traces of the system of noun class prefixes are not to be found in Dalabon.

Dalabon is not the only Gunwinyguan language without a full-fledged gender system. In the Eastern Bininj Gun-wok dialect Kune, which displays close proximity with Dalabon, the nominal subclass system shows signs of erosion: Evans (2003:1995-200) states that the system of gender agreement between nouns and adjectives has been lost. On the other hand, Kune has expanded the use of the

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[9] The condition of affixation for bound adjectives are more complicated than with nouns (as described in 3.1.2). The presence of material to the left of the adjective, typically person prefixes, licences the omission of the prefix for some adjectives.

third singular person suffix *-no*, which now has the function of a noun class marker for 'part nouns', dropping the standard noun class prefixes (class III and IV, see Evans (2003: 17)). A similar process seems to have taken place in Dalabon. Rembarrnga, which is geographically adjacent and genetically very close to Dalabon, has no noun class prefixes either, but a suffix *-na*. McKay's (1975: 72-73) and Saulwick's (2003) descriptions of this suffix are too brief to explore the details of its functions, but suggest that it may compare with the Dalabon suffix *-no*. Existing descriptions of Kune and Rembarrnga do not expand on nominal subclasses defined by morphosyntactic behavior, but based on existing descriptions it seems possible that a system closer to the one I describe below for Dalabon is at play.

Subclasses resembling the 'part noun' class mentioned by Evans for Kune exist in Dalabon. Based on a small number of morphosyntactic criteria, it is possible to divide the class of nouns into six semantically consistent subclasses. As in Kune, the suffix *-no*, homophonous with the third singular possessive enclitic, plays an important role in the overt marking of these classes. Section 3.1. below presents the basic features underlying the nominal subclass divisions. These features branch into further criteria, which will be spelt out as the subclasses are described one by one (sections 4 to 8). Note that while this morphosyntactically defined system of subclasses seems to have 'replaced' the prefix-based noun class system in Dalabon, in other cases the two systems may co-exist, because they are systems of different nature, based on different kinds of criteria.

3.1 Criteria

Four inter-related morphosyntactic features play a major and structuring part in defining Dalabon nominal subclasses: incorporability, boundness, obligatory possession and possessor raising. Bound nouns are a subset of incorporable nouns and could also be described as 'obligatorily incorporated', whether in a verb complex or in a noun phrase, i.e. obligatorily followed by some modifying material. Obligatorily possessed nouns are a subset of bound nouns; possessor raising applies to obligatorily possessed nouns in various ways, and is sensitive to noun incorporation. Thus these four crucial features are inter-related. Together with a few other criteria, they define a coherent and semantically significant system of subclasses. For the sake of clarity, it will be useful to present these main criteria first, before describing further subcriteria and each subclass in detail. Sections 3.1.1 to 3.1.3 offer an overview of these four core features.

3.1.1 Incorporability

Noun incorporation is a common phenomenon among polysynthetic languages. As Mithun (1984: 847) put it, it is 'perhaps the most nearly syntactic of all morphological processes', and may be defined as 'the phenomenon in which a nominal that would otherwise bear a grammatical relation to the verb (such as direct object) is expressed not as an independent noun phrase, but rather as a morphological root that is integrated to the verb to form a kind of composite form' (Baker *et al.* 2005: 138). Noun incorporation often presents stable properties across languages: 'for instance, in virtually all languages [featuring noun incorporation] the direct object of a transitive verb can incorporate, but the

subject cannot' (Baker *et al.* 2005: 139). Such properties and their variations have been extensively discussed in the literature. Referring to Sapir's (1911) historical definition, Mithun provides an overview (1984) and some initial discussion (1986). Baker (1988) offers what is probably the most comprehensive and canonical account, then completed or debated by various authors such as Rosen (1989), Spencer (1995) and many more.

Noun incorporation (and particularly body-part noun incorporation) is common in the Gunwinyguan family, as reported for Bininj Gun-wok (1996; 2003: 323-335; 450-485), Enindhilyakwa (Van Egmond 2012: 234-274), Ngalakgan (Merlan 1983: 143-146; Baker & Nordlinger 2008), Nunggubuyu/Wubuy (Baker & Nordlinger 2008), Rembarrnga (Saulwick 2003: 327-502), and Warray (Harvey 1996). Dalabon also makes broad use of noun incorporation. Noun incorporation in Gunwinyguan languages broadly matches cross-linguistic characterizations of the phenomenon.

Evans's (2003) description of noun incorporation in Bininj Gun-wok remains a good framework to introduce the principles of the phenomenon in Dalabon. While Baker (1988) defines noun incorporation as a strictly syntactic process, Evans follows Mithun's (1984: 848) terminology, and includes lexicalized [noun+verb] compounds within the scope of what he calls noun incorporation, broadly defined. On the other hand, he distinguishes such lexical compounds from the compounds resulting from '*syntactic* noun incorporation'.[10] This account is adequate for Dalabon, in which syntactically analyzable [noun+verb] complexes where the noun represents the absolutive argument coexist with lexicalized compounds where the noun may correspond to a broader range of roles. Syntactic noun incorporation is a syntactic construction, following strict syntactic rules.[11] The availability of Dalabon nouns to participate in this type of construction is one of the criterion for subclass membership.

The main constraint on noun incorporation in Dalabon (apart from the fact that not all nouns can incorporate) is that the incorporated noun must encode the absolutive argument (or part of it), i.e. the only argument of an intransitive predicate (thereafter called S) as in (14) or the second argument of a transitive predicate (thereafter called O) as in (15). As mentioned above, this is a major feature of noun incorporation cross-linguistically and among Gunwinyguan languages.

20110521a_002_MT 030 [El]
(14)   *Nga-h-dengu-berderde-mu.*
        1sg-R-foot-ache-PR

        'My foot aches.'

20111206a_003_MT 107 [ContEl]
(15)   *Dja-h-bim-m-iyan.*

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[10] Evans calls it lexico-syntactic, but 'syntactic' is more concise and not inaccurate.
[11] Syntactic incorporation applies to verbs or deadjectival/denominal predicates. Incorporation into predicates made of simple adjectives follows different rules (yet to be precisely described) and is not included here under the label 'noun incorporation'.

1sg>2sg-R-picture-get-FUT

'I'll take a photo of you.'

Noun incorporation patterns in Dalabon do resemble those found in Bininj Gun-wok, albeit with important differences. The range of incorporable nouns and the range of predicates to which they incorporate are broader than reported for Bininj Gun-wok. The role of incorporation with respect to possessor raising is more complex, as will be shown when discussing animate-part nouns (4.1) and kin-terms (4.2). With respect to noun incorporation, Dalabon resembles its eastern neighbor Rembarrnga, as described by Saulwick (2003), as much as it resembles Bininj Gun-wok.[12] For instance, Rembarrnga kin-terms can incorporate (Saulwick 2003: 404)—like Dalabon kin-terms (4.2), but unlike Bininj Gun-wok kin-terms. Rembarrnga and Dalabon also concur with respect to the order of incorporation (Saulwick 2003: 360) (8.1). A systematic comparison of the aforementioned features in these languages is beyond the scope of this paper.

3.1.2 Boundness and obligatory possession

Boundness and obligatory possession are described in the same section for the sake of clarity. Boundness is a morphological principle discussed by Baker (2008: 133ff) for Ngalakgan. A subset of Dalabon incorporable nouns cannot occur alone: they are bound. Bound nouns could also be described as 'obligatorily incorporated'—so that in fact, boundness is a subcriterion branching from incorporability. Boundness is used in a blanket fashion to describe nouns which must be incorporated within a compound where some material occurs to the right of the noun. As demonstrated below, boundness encompasses two different processes: simple, or formal boundness, and obligatory possession. What is common to all bound nouns is that they must occur either in verb complexes or noun phrases with some material to their right, or, by default, in compounds formed by the bound noun and some filling material to their right. Bound nouns must occur in one of the contexts listed below (from 1 to 3).

1) Within a verb complex, in a noun incorporation construction:

20110530_002_MT 080 [Stim]
(16) *Kardu dja-h-**dengu**-yidjnja-rru-n*   *kardu*   *dja-h-**dengu**-ngarrk-mu.*
      maybe 2sg-R-foot/toe-have-RR-PR   maybe   2sg-R-foot/toe-ache-PR

'Like you're holding your foot, maybe your foot hurts.'

2) Within a noun phrase with some material following immediately to the right, that is, followed by an adjective as in (17), another noun, a numeral as in (18), a comitative or privative enclitic, or for most bound nouns, a case marker:

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[12] This may be true of the system of nominal subclasses as well, but no analysis has been published for this aspect of the Rembarrnga language.

20100726_003_MK_QB 36 (MK) [Stim]
(17) *Nunda*   *langu-barmiyi.*
      DEM   hand/finger-white

      'This is a white hand.'

20100717a_002_MT 275 [Stim]
(18) *Ngurrurdu,*   *dengu-worrbbamh*   *bula-h-yidjnja-n.*
      emu   foot/toe-three   3pl>3-R-have-PR

      'Emus have three feet/claws.'

3) When neither of the conditions above applies, bound nouns are followed either by a 'filling element'. Depending on the status of the filling element, boundness can be semantically loaded and result in morphosyntactic obligatory possession, or be semantically empty (formal boundness). Some subclasses of bound nouns use a possessive enclitic, others a filler suffix *-no*, homophonous with the third singular possessive enclitic.

When a possessive enclitic is used, if a possessor is identifiable (which is often the case since the subclasses in question are 'relational', i.e. they tend to relate semantically to a whole, see 6.1), the enclitic agrees with the person of the possessor. This possessive marker is added even if this addition is semantically redundant (19). Even if the possessor is totally backgrounded and/or hardly identifiable, a possessive enclitic is used—by default, the third person singular *-no* (20). These nouns, attracting an obligatory possessive enclitic agreeing with the possessor are by default expressed as possessed: they are obligatorily possessed, morphosyntactically.

20120721_001_LB 07 [RPF]
[A tracker is chasing fugitive children.]
(19) *Bulu*   *ka-h-bolh-yawa-n,*   *bolh-bulng.*
      3pl   3sg>3-R-track-look.for-PR   track-3plPOSS

      'He is looking for their tracks [he's track-searching them, their tracks].'

20110518b_002_LB_ND 139 (LB) [ConvEl]
[When a kangaroo is killed; the speaker enumerates the parts being shared around.]
(20) *Kodj-no,*   *woley-no*   *bula-h-ngabbungabbu-n.*
      head-3sgPOSS   side-3sgPOSS   3pl>3-R-give:REDUP-PR

      'The head, the rib sides, people give them away.'

With some other bound nouns, there is usually no identifiable animate possessor. In order to fulfill boundness requirements, an invariable *-no* suffix, identical to the third person singular possessive enclitic (and derived from it, see 6.3), is used as a filler (21). The choice of the third singular person as a default is cross-linguistically common, matching the unmarkedness of this person (Koch 1995).

20110523a_000_MT 224 [El]

(21) *Dulum-no   ka-h-karlh-mu.*
      hill-FILL   3sg-R-climb-PR

      'She's climbing the hill.'

Suffixes with this form, *-no*, are extremely ubiquitous in Dalabon. They were first investigated by Evans & Merlan (2001) (recapitulated by Cutfield (2011: 82)), but as I will argue in 6.3, my analysis differs from theirs on some points. While understanding the Dalabon system of nominal subclasses does shed some light upon some of the distribution of *-no*, and in particular upon constructions where two possessive enclitics appear to follow each other (see below), the complete analysis of the suffix is a matter for further research.

The filler suffix in (21) cannot inflect to agree with the person of an animate possessor. As a result, with these nouns, it is necessary to add a possessive enclitic *after* the filler suffix to encode possession, as in (22). This results in constructions identified by Evans & Merlan (2001) as 'double possession'.[13] I prefer the expression 'double suffix', because the construction is, in general, better analyzed as FILL-POSS, than POSS-POSS (but see 8.2 for some exceptions).[14] With nouns which receive a filler suffix and therefore attract double-suffix constructions, boundness does not amount to obligatorily possession. This type of boundness is not semantically loaded, but remains strictly formal. In addition, there are variations among formally bound nouns[15] as to which modifiers (in condition (2) above) waive the filler suffix. This nuance delineates two subtly different subclasses among formally bound nouns (see Section 5).

20120705a_001_MT 123 [El]

(22) *labbarl-no-ngu*
      waterhole-FILL-2gsPOSS

      'your waterhole (billabong)'

      **labbarl-ngu*

Earlier in the study of Dalabon, Evans & Merlan (2001) presented a preliminary analysis of the functions of the *-no* suffix, and established that the citation form of Dalabon bound nouns should include *-no* (cf. Evans *et al.* 2004). I follow this decision here. In glosses, *-no* is rendered as -FILL (for 'morphological filler'). While glossing the *-no* element contributes to make the current argument clearer in the context of this particular analysis, in general it is not indispensable. The contexts in

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[13] 'Doubling' of the third possessive suffix is documented in at least one other language, as reported by Koontz-Garboden & Francez (2010) in Ulwa. As discussed in note 21, the resemblance between the behavior of the third possessive suffix *-ka* in Ulwa and *-no* in Dalabon is only superficial.

[14] On the other hand this label is inaccurate since the second marker, which encodes possession, is not a suffix, but this is a formal, and thus less significant inaccuracy in my view.

[15] 'Formally' will be used here in the sense of 'semantically empty'.

which -*no* occurs or is dropped are entirely predictable based on morphological rules, and its direct semantic contribution is nil.

3.1.3 *Possessor raising*

In addition, the behavior of nouns with respect to what I will call here possessor raising, with or without incorporation, divides bound nouns into further subclasses. In this section I define the notion of possessor raising as I use it throughout the article.

The label 'possessor raising' refers to a type of construction, found in many languages across the world, where the possessor of a noun (typically a body-part, a kin-term or another inalienable possession), is 'raised' so that it is treated as an argument of the verb rather than as a simple possessor (Bally 1926; Baker 1988; Chappell & McGregor 1996). That is, the possessor of the noun is treated as an argument on a verb that describes an event involving the part, as illustrated by the French '*elle m'a tiré les cheveux*' ('she pulled me the hair'/'she pulled the hair to me'), rather than *'*elle a tiré mes cheveux*' ('she pulled my hair'). Possessor raising applies to nouns in a tighter relation to their possessors, and is usually a defining criterion of morphosyntactic 'inalienability' (see Section 6).

Some Dalabon bound nouns can encode their possessor as S or O indifferently (i.e. either absolutive function), and do so most frequently and independently of any additional morphology in the clause. Nouns which raise their possessor 'freely' in this way are also those which are obligatorily possessed. With some of these nouns, possessor raising is the most natural construction when the possessed noun is the absolutive argument (whether with transitive verbs—possessor encoded as O (23)—or with intransitive verbs—possessor encoded as S (24)). In these examples, the possessor is cross-referenced on the verb by person prefixes which encode it as an absolutive argument. In (23), *djila-* encodes the action of a first plural participant over a second singular participant, the possessor, 'you'. Had the body-part, the face, been cross-referenced as the absolutive argument, the pronoun would have been *yila-*, first plural exclusive acting upon third singular. In (24) the subject of *ngarrk(mu)* 'ache' is first person, not third person (*ka-*), as it would be if 'breast' was encoded as the syntactic subject. The encoding patterns (23) and (24) will be called 'free possessor raising'.

20110530_002_MT 021 [Stim]

(23) *Mak mah*   *dje-ngu*   *djila-na-n*   *kahke.*
      NEG and   nose/face-2sgPOSS   1pl.excl>2sg-see-PR   NEG

'And we can't see your face either.'

250909_85OK 488 (LB) [ContEl]
[Discussing sensations triggered by empathy with suffering relatives, here a woman's children.]

(24) *Nunda*   *ke*   *bibbi-ngan*   *nga-h-ngarrk-mu.*
      DEM   EMPH   breast-1sgPOSS   1sg-R-ache-PR

'This is when my breast hurts.'

Examples (23) and (24) above can be contrasted with clauses where the possessor of a possessed noun standing as the absolutive argument is not raised. In (25) below, the possessor remains a possessor and is not encoded as an argument. *Bula-* encodes a third plural participant acting over a third person participant—here, someone's house. The possessor of the house is second singular (*wadda-ngu*, 'your house'); it is not encoded on the verb. Had the possessor of the house been encoded on the verb, the verb prefix would have been *djila-* instead of *bula-*, indexing a second person absolutive argument, as in (23).

20120705a_001_MT 081 [El]
(25) *Bula-h-rorrh-minj   wadda-ngu.*
      3pl>3-R-clean-PP   home-2sgPOSS

      'They cleaned your house.'

Some Dalabon nouns (some bound, some incorporable but free, some non-incorporable) cannot raise their possessor 'freely' as illustrated in (23) and (24). Their possessor, when they have one, is often encoded as an argument, but there are further syntactic and morphological constraints to this treatment. Example (26) shows that the possessor can be encoded as an argument in constructions of a different kind. In this example, the possessor (of the house) is crossed-referenced on the verb (*djila-*, encoding the action of third plural over second singular), and thus treated morphologically as argument. Such constructions differ from 'free' possessor raising (23 and 24) in a number of ways. First, with the nouns which do not raise their possessors freely, possessor raising is only possible when the possessum is the second argument of the verb, so that the possessor is never raised as S. Crucially, with nouns which do not raise their possessor freely, it is necessary to add the benefactive applicative marker *marnu-* in order to raise the possessor (26). The omission of *marnu-* is ungrammatical (27).

20120705a_001_MT 089 [El]
(26) *Djila-h-marnu-rorrh-minj   [wadda-ngu].*
      3pl>2sg-R-BEN-clean-PP   home-2sgPOSS

      'They cleaned [your house] for you.'

20120705a_001_MT 087 [El]
(27) **Djila-h-rorrh-minj   wadda-ngu.*

In contrast, *marnu-* was absent in (23) and (24) above with *dje-ngu* 'your nose/face' and *bibbi-ngan* 'my breast', where 'free' possessor raising requires no morphological addition. Also, the role of *marnu-* is, more generally, to promote animates to the role of core participants. Benefactive arguments need not be possessors—they may have other semantic roles. Thus benefactive constructions do not result in possessor raising in principle. However, if the benefactive argument is a possessor—which is often the case—benefactive constructions effectively result in encoding the possessor as an argument. In

constructions with *marnu-*, the possessor is raised to the function of benefactive argument rather than O—but it is nonetheless cross-referenced on the verb in the same way as O. At any rate, benefactive possessor raising constructions are very different from 'free' possessor raising constructions illustrated above for animate-parts.

Arguably, my use of the expression 'possessor raising' differs from the most common use of the expression. Most authors use this expression to refer to a modification of the syntactic structure of the clause whereby the possessor is not only promoted to a core syntactic function, but also demoted from its possessor function. Based on this definition, the Dalabon constructions presented above may not be described as 'possessor raising', because the possessor remains a possessor at the same time as it is cross-referenced on the verb (hence the possessive enclitics on *dje-ngu* 'your nose' and *bibbi-ngan* 'my breast' in (23) and (24)). Evans (1996) discusses very similar constructions in Bininj Gun-wok, and chooses not to call them 'possessor raising' constructions (see also Evans (2003: 456), and Van Egmond (2012:266ff) for Enindhilyakwa). This is because the two elements of the absolutive argument, namely the whole and the part, are in apposition, forming a single NP (as is common across Australian languages, see Cutfield (2011: 45ff) for Dalabon). As a result, the possessor is not raised, but is simply part of a noun phrase that expresses the argument. Either the possessor or the part can be cross-referenced on the verb. In this analysis, the fact that the possessor is cross-referenced on the verb does not make a syntactic difference.

Here, I use a slightly different notion of 'possessor raising', one which makes no assumption about syntactic structures, nor about underlying syntactic movements. I use 'possessor raising' to refer to a pattern of morphological encoding of the possessor, which can be contrasted with another pattern of encoding also found in the language. Obvious contrasts can be identified among the five examples above. In (23) and (24), the possessor is cross-referenced on the verb, while in (25), it is not. It (23) and (24), this is grammatical without the addition of any valency-change prefix, while in (26) and (27), the presence of the benefactive applicative prefix *marnu-* is required. In the view of the most common use of the expression 'possessor raising', and of previous analyses of the phenomenon in Gunwinyguan languages (Evans 1996, 2003; Van Egmond 2012), the constructions in (23) and (24) may be better described with a slightly different label, for instance 'morphological possessor raising', because there may be no difference in syntactic structures as compared to the constructions in the other examples. For the sake of conciseness, I will simply use 'possessor raising' throughout the article, given that this expression refers to a morphological contrast of the type exemplified here. Note that the contrast between 'standard' constructions and 'possessor raising' constructions does not primarily refer to a constrast between two constructions that apply alternatively for the same noun. Rather, some nouns (typically body-parts, as in the examples above) raise their possessors freely most of the time; while other nouns cannot raise their possessir freely at all (like *wadda* 'house' in the above examples). Hence the term 'raising' does not refer to an operation that could be applied or not to a given body-part noun for instance, but to an operation that applies most of the time to some

nouns, and never to others.[16] It makes sense to take these contrasts into account when analyzing the morphosyntactic behavior of Dalabon nouns.

The first three criteria discussed above, incorporability (3.1.1), boundness and obligatory possession (3.1.2), are inherently linked. By definition, a noun which is not incorporable cannot be bound, so that the set of bound nouns is logically a subset of the set of incorporable nouns. Likewise, a noun which is not bound cannot be obligatorily possessed. Free possessor raising, on the other hand, patterns with obligatory possession: all obligatory possessed nouns can raise their possessor, but there are variations among them as to when they raise their possessor.

3.2 Overview

The above criteria contribute to define four subsets of nouns: non-incorporable nouns, free incorporable nouns, obligatorily possessed bound nouns and formally bound nouns. Non-incorporable nouns and free incorporable nouns form nominal subclasses of themselves. In addition, each set of bound nouns further divides into two nominal subclasses. Obligatory possessed bound nouns divide based on behavior in possessor raising; formally bound nouns divide on the basis of strict vs semi-boundness, which is defined in 5.2.2. These distinctions yield a total of six nominal subclasses, based on morphosyntactic criteria, as presented in Diagram (1) below. The details of these criteria, and of the semantics of each class, are discussed in the rest of this section. I start in Section 4 with the description of the two subclasses of obligatorily possessed bound nouns, which require longer discussions than other subclasses. Section 5 then presents formally bound nouns. In Section 6 I discuss the status of bound nouns with respect to morphosyntactic inalienability and semantic relatedness. Natural-kind nouns and generic nouns are described in sections 7 and 8 respectively.

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[16] The absence of contrast between two distinct constructions for body-part nouns is Evans's (1996) main argument for disqualifying the use of 'possessor raising' for similar constructions in Bininj Gun-wok. My argument is different here, because I consider a contrast between the nominal subclasses that raise their possessors, and the ones that don't.
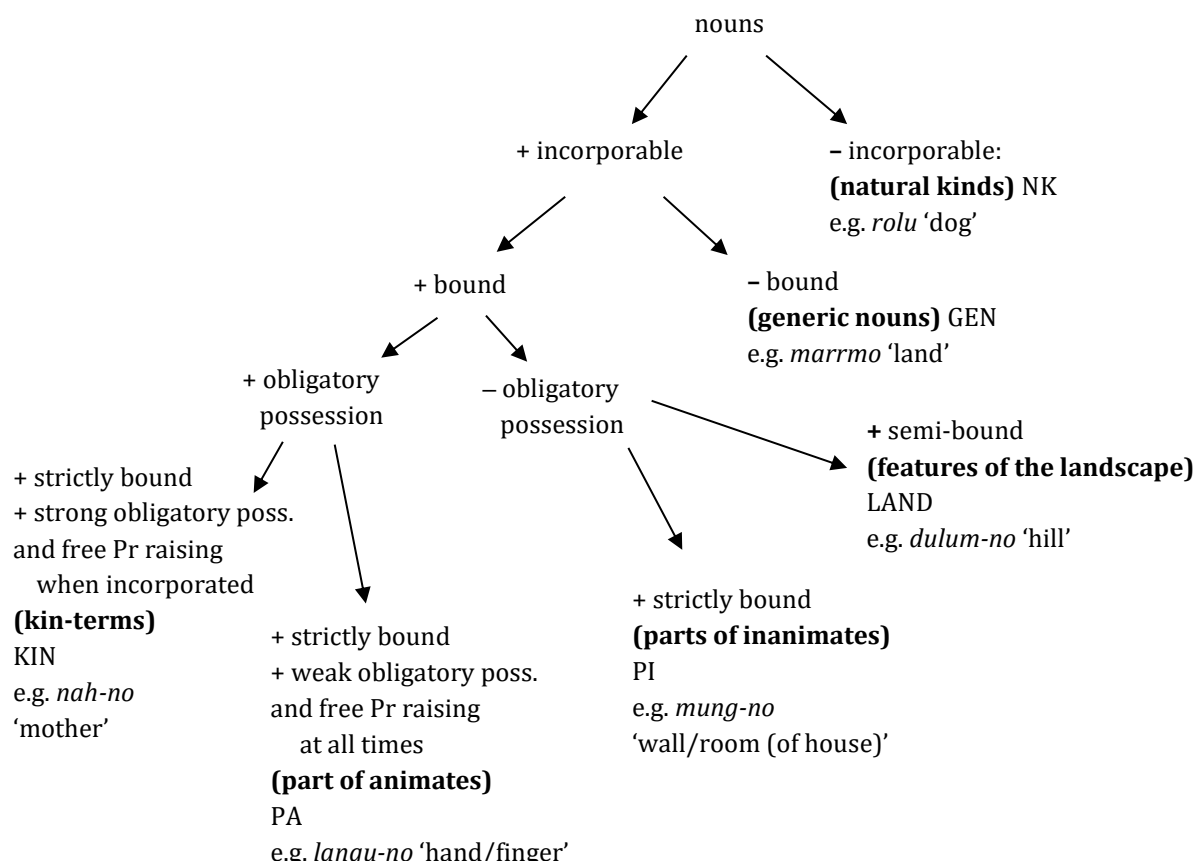
nouns

+ incorporable

− incorporable:
(natural kinds) NK
e.g. *rolu* 'dog'

+ bound

− bound
(generic nouns) GEN
e.g. *marrmo* 'land'

+ obligatory
possession

− obligatory
possession

+ semi-bound
(features of the landscape)
LAND
e.g. *dulum-no* 'hill'

+ strictly bound
+ strong obligatory poss.
and free Pr raising
　when incorporated
(kin-terms)
KIN
e.g. *nah-no*
'mother'

+ strictly bound
+ weak obligatory poss.
and free Pr raising
　at all times
(part of animates)
PA
e.g. *lanau-no* 'hand/finger'

+ strictly bound
(parts of inanimates)
PI
e.g. *mung-no*
'wall/room (of house)'

Diagram 1. Dalabon nominal subclasses: overview.

4. Obligatorily possessed bound nouns

Obligatorily possessed nouns are the subset of bound nouns taking a possessive enclitic which agrees with the possessor as their filler element. Obligatorily possessed subclasses include animate-part nouns (4.1) and kin-terms (4.2). Subclasses of formally bound nouns are dealt with in Section 5.

4.1 Animate-part nouns

The subclass labeled 'animate-part nouns' is the subset of nouns that:
- incorporate frequently;
- are bound;
- display ambiguous obligatory possession;
- and allow (even favor) free possessor raising whether the noun is incorporated or not.

As will be shown in Section 6, the morphosyntactic properties of animate-part nouns justify their qualification as 'inalienable'. They attract a specific treatment with respect to possession: they are

obligatorily possessed and favor freely raised possessors in any construction, in contrast with other nouns. The demonstration will be clearer when we have an idea of the semantics of the subclass, which I will present now. The morphosyntactic criteria defining the subclass are spelt out in the following sections.

This open, semantically well-identified subclass includes all parts and attributes of animate wholes (humans, animals or supernatural beings). The part may be a concrete entity, a systemic part, an abstract property, including:
- Body-parts, organs, systemic body-parts: *kodj-no* 'crown of head/head', *langu-no* 'hand/finger', *karru-no* 'leg', *kangu-no* 'belly', *ngurl-no* 'heart', *kurlah-no* 'skin', *ngerh-no* 'heart/breath'…

250909_89OK 0356 (LB) [ContEl]
[The *namorrorddo* is a supernatural being who steals children's hearts at night.]
(28) *Nunda namorrorddo   bulu   kungu-ngerh-ma-ng.*
      DEM   supernatural.being   3pl   APPR:3sg>3-heart-get-PR

      'The *namorrorddo* might take their hearts.'

- Detachable parts of the body, remains: *marru-no* 'hair', *nunj-no* 'saliva', *mo-no* 'bones'…
- Traces, representations and indexes of the person: *yeminj-no* 'body smell', *ngey-no* 'name', *borlh-no* 'track'…
- Abstract attributes of the person: *ngudj-no* 'energy', *yolh-no* 'feelings', *men-no* 'ideas', *koh-no* 'eyes/gaze' …

30057/2007 – 5' (MT) [ContEl]
(29) *Men-ngan   nga-h-yin   kardu derrh-no   ka-h-dudj-miyan, dohkardu dubmi.*
      ideas-1sgPOSS   1sg-R-say/do:PR   maybe tomorrow   3sg-R-return-FUT or.else   now

      'I reckon in my view [my view I reckon] he might come back tomorrow, or maybe today.'

Many Australian languages have a noun class displaying this semantic profile (see Hale (1981) for Warlpiri, Evans (1996) for Bininj Gun-wok, McGregor (1996) for Nyulnyul). This is a sizeable class (see the Appendix for a sample): I have numbered about 170 animate-part nouns, most of them body-parts (detachable or not) and organs—including relatively specific terms such as *murdumurduh-no* 'sternum', some compounds like *dengu-mey-no* 'foot'+'food'+*no* 'sole of the foot'… There are probably many more. Representations of the person and abstract attributes of the person probably number a small dozen nouns in total.

4.1.1 Animate-part nouns and obligatory possession
The morphological constraint of obligatorily possessed bound nouns is fulfilled by a possessive enclitic that normally inflects to agree with the person of the possessor. As a result, animate-part possession is more commonly expressed by a simple possessive enclitic (30) than by a double-suffix construction (which applies to formally bound nouns, see 3.1.2). However, this status should be

qualified for animate-part nouns, because it is not exceptional to find double-suffix constructions on such nouns, as exemplified in (31) above.[17]

20100719a_004_MT 65 [ConvEl]
(30) *Nidjarra*   *da-h-buyhwo-n*   *ngarrinj-ngu.*
       here   2sg>3-R-show-PR   hand/finger-2sgPOSS

       'Here, show her your hand.'

20100719a_004_MT 67 [ConvEl]
(31) *Ngarrinj-no-ngu*   *da-h-buyhwo -n.*
       hand/finger-FILL-2sgPOSS   2sg>3-R-show-PR

       'Your hand, show it to her.'

When a speaker says *ngarrinj-no-ngu*, the first *-no* suffix is treated as a morphological filler that cannot inflect. Hence it seems that the obligatory suffix occurring on animate-part nouns can be treated either as a morphological filler or as a possessive enclitic. Thus, animate-part nouns are not full-fledged obligatorily possessed nouns—in contrast with kin-terms, with which obligatory possession is more systematic, as stated in 4.2.1.

This status of animate parts may correlate with the fact that in some contexts, *-no* occurs on these nouns while possession is very backgrounded semantically, so that the suffix may not attract a possessive reading. For instance, when talking about the edible parts of a game to be shared around (20) (repeated), the referent could be the game, but it is semantically backgrounded. Here *-no* translates adequately as a definite article ('they give the head and the legs [of the game]'). It is not uncommon for possessive markers to evolve towards definite markers (see Greenberg (1978:65-66), Fraurud (2001), Rijkhoff (2009); the Indonesian clitic =*nya*, Arka (2011); the Mauritian Creole *so* (<Fr. 'son'), Guillemin (2007)). However, in Dalabon, this value of *-no* as indicating definiteness remains contextual and has not clearly grammaticalized.

(20) *Kodj-no,*   *woley-no*   *bula-h-ngabbungabbu-n.*
       head-3sgPOSS   side-3sgPOSS   3pl>3-R-give:REDUP-PR

       'The head, the rib sides, they give them away.'

4.1.2 *Animate-part nouns and free possessor raising*

Animate-part nouns are the only nouns that can raise their possessor freely, with no restrictions, and do so most of the time. This is a distinctive feature of this subclass. It differentiates animate-part nouns from subclasses of nouns that are not obligatorily possessed (i.e. most classes) and can only

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[17] Other examples show that the presence of the *-no* suffix has nothing to do with the position of the NP in the clause, as these two examples could suggest.

raise their possessor with the addition of the benefactive prefix *marnu-*. Possessor raising also differentiates animate-part nouns from other obligatorily possessed nouns, namely kin terms. These can raise their possessor irrespective of the presence of *marnu-*, but only when they are incorporated, which is rare (see 4.2.3).

The definition and examples of 'free' possessor raising in 3.1.3 relied mostly on animate-part nouns (namely body-parts, in examples (23) and (24), repeated below). With animate-part nouns, body-parts and others, possessor raising requires no morphological mediation. In addition, these constructions are very frequent—in fact nearly systematic, with transitive verbs (23, 29) as well as with intransitive verbs (24, 28).

20110530_002_MT 021 [Stim]
(23) *Mak   mah   dje-ngu   djila-na-n   kahke.*
      NEG   and   nose/face-2sgPOSS   1pl>2sg-see-PR   NEG

      'And we can't see your face either.'

250909_85OK 488 (LB) [ContEl]
[Discussing sensations triggered by empathy with suffering relatives, here a woman's children.]
(24) *Nunda   ke   bibbi-ngan   nga-h-ngarrk-mu.*
      DEM   EMPH   breast-1sgPOSS   1sg-R-ache-PR

      'This is when my breast hurts.'

The same pattern is allowed, and just as systematic, with more abstract attributes of the person. In (32), the possessor of an abstract attribute is cross-referenced as the subject (first person singular) of an intransitive verb.

30029/2008 – 6'50" (MT) [ContEl]
(32) *Yolh-ngan   wunga-yolh-dukka-rru-n.*
      feelings-1sgPOSS   APPR:1sg-feelings-entangle-RR-PR

      'My spirits, I might get depressed [my feelings might get entangled].'

Free possessor raising also occurs when animate-part nouns (body-parts (33, 34) or abstract attributes (32)) are incorporated, either with intransitive verbs (33) or with transitive verbs (34).

20111210_003_MT 02 [El]
(33) *Nga-h-karru-ngarrk-mu.*
      1sg-R-leg-ache-PR

      'My leg hurts.'

20110530_002 042 [Stim]
[Describing a photo.]

(34) *Nidjarra-be   mahkih   mak   djila-karru-n-ey.*
      here-ABL   as.well   NEG   1pl.excl>2sg-leg-see-IRR

      'And here we couldn't see your leg either.'

Hence animate-part nouns can, and most often do, raise their possessor freely, without any morphological mediation, whether they are expressed externally or incorporated. This is a defining feature of the animate-part nominal subclass.

4.1.3 Possessor raising and noun incorporation

Note that although possessor raising is utterly frequent with animate-part nouns, strictly speaking its absence is not ungrammatical if the noun is not incorporated. In (35) for instance, the possessor of a body-part, a first singular, is indexed uniquely as a possessor, not as an argument. The person prefix on the verb encodes a third singular, cross-referencing the body-part itself, the heart. However, such constructions, where the possessor is only a possessor and the part is encoded as an absolutive argument, are vanishingly rare: only a handful of occurrences,[18] among hundreds of clauses where the possessor is morphologically raised. They are so rare that I haven't been able to identify their semantic effect.[19]

20110613_003_LB 102 [ConvEl]
(35) *Ngerh-ngan   ka-ye-yenjyenjdju-ng   yirrhwalung ngey-kah.*
      heart-1sgPOSS   3sg-SUB-talk:REDUP-PR   inside   1sg-LOC

      'My heart, which beats [talks] inside me.'

The possessor may remain encoded only as a possessor when an animate-part noun is expressed externally to the verb, but when the noun is incorporated, on the other hand, possessor raising is systematic. Constructions where the possessor is not raised although the part is incorporated never obtained in elicitation (36). Thus, noun incorporation does not trigger possessor raising with animate-part nouns, since these nouns can raise their possessor regardless of incorporation, but it renders possessor raising obligatory.

(36) ?(*Karru-ngan)   ka-h-karru-ngarrk-mu.*
       leg-1sgPOSS   3sg-R-leg-ache-PR

      (?My leg hurts.)

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[18] With verbs expressing affectedness, most of these examples occurred in contexts where the speaker was confused (e.g. in elicitation, or for other reasons).

[19] Evans (2003:462-464) indicates that in Bininj Gun-wok the absence of possessor raising expresses separation of the body-part from the whole.

4.2 Kin-terms

The subclass labeled 'kin-terms' is the subset of bound nouns that:
- are incorporable, but rarely incorporate;
- are bound;
- although they may occur with no material to their right in the vocative;
- are obligatorily possessed;
- cannot raise their possessor freely when they are expressed externally to the verb;
- raise their possessor freely when they are incorporated to the verb, which is rare.

The semantics of this nominal subclass is straightforward: it includes only kin-terms, i.e. terms allowing a speaker to refer to other individuals based on a number of genealogical and other criteria (see the Appendix for a sample of this relatively small set). Dalabon people, like other Australian groups, make extensive use of classificatory kinship. They put strong emphasis on kin relationships, so that the kinship system plays a prominent role in this social structure. There are probably about two dozen kin-terms. Among the most frequent in my corpus are *nah-no* 'mother', *bulu-no* 'father', *wurd-no* 'woman's son/man's sister's son', *yabok-no* 'sister', *djongok-no* 'aunt' (brother's sister), *mamam-no* 'cross-grandkin, i.e. mother's father or male's daughter's child, father's mother or female's son's child'... These labels form a system that has not yet been described systematically for Dalabon, as it has for a number of Gunwinyguan languages (Merlan (1983: 67) for Ngalakgan, Heath (1984: 223) for Nunggubuyu/Wubuy, Evans (2003) for Bininj Gun-wok, Saulwick (2003: 39) for Rembarrnga...).

4.2.1 Kin-terms are obligatorily possessed bound nouns

Except in the vocative form (37) (a cross-linguistically common exception), kin-terms are obligatorily followed by a possessive enclitic, and thus considered bound nouns. The enclitic agrees with the person of the possessor (or propositus) when this person is identified, as in (38) where the kin-terms are followed by the first person singular possessive enclitic *-ngan*.

20120713a_001_MT 159 [TC]

(37)   *Mamam*   *bula-h-marnu-yin-inj*   *kardu,*
       mother's.father   3pl>3-R-BEN-say/do-PP   maybe

       djerrngu   *yila-h-na-ng*   *biyi.*
       new   1pl.excl>3-R-see-PP   man

       'Grandpa, they must have said to him, we saw a stranger [a new man].'

20110519b_002_ND 194 [ConvEl]

(38)   *Mak*   *nga-bobo-ni*   *wulkun-ngan-kah,*
       NEG   1sg-go:REDUP-IRR   brother-1sgPOSS-LOC

       nah-ngan-kah   *bulu-ngan-kah*   *nga-h-ni-nj.*
       mother-1sgPOSS-LOC   father-1sgPOSS-LOC   1sg-R-sit/be-PP

       Nga,   *yabok-ngan-kah*   *nga-h-wa-ninji...*   *Murlah-ngan-kah...*

yeah sister-1sgPOSS-LOC 1sg>3-R-follow-PCUST mother's.sister-1sgPOSS-LOC

'I didn't go with my brother, I staid with my mother and father. Yeah, I went along with my sister… With my aunt…'

When the possessor/propositus is not identified—which is exceptional—, the possessive enclitic defaults to -*no*, the third person singular form. This is apparent in (39), where the person in question is the grandmother of three children in a movie, which should trigger the use of a plural enclitic -*bulng*. However, the speaker is not aware of this at the time and uses the default third person, so that *kakkak-no* translates better as 'the grandmother'.

20120705b_002_MT 113 [RPF]

(39) *Wo,* *kakkak-no*   *ka-h-kodj-badjdjibadjdji-rru-n-kun* *bad-yih.*
   yeah parallel.grandkin-3sgPOSS 3sg-R-head-hit:REDUP-RR-PR-GEN stone-INST

'Yeah, the grandmother is hitting herself on the head with a stone [in despair].'

Kin-terms are strictly obligatorily possessed. Unlike animate-part nouns which are somewhat versatile in allowing occasional double-suffix constructions, kin-terms are only found with standard possessive constructions.[20]

20120708a_000_MT 173 [El]

(40) *djongok-ngan*
   father's.sister-1sgPOSS

'my aunt'

*djongok-no-ngan

Thus, with these nouns, the -*no* that follows kin-terms is never interpreted as a morphological filler. Such an interpretation would be plausible based on an example like (39), where the possessor (propositus) is not identified, so that -*no* expresses definiteness, like it does on animate-parts in examples like (20) (3.1.2). However, this does not apparently lead to treat the -*no* suffix of kin-terms as a morphological filler, maybe because such a situation is exceptional. Indeed, in real Dalabon life, the propositus of a kin relation is hardly ever backgrounded or left unidentified, for cultural reasons. In social contexts where Dalabon is/was spoken, kinship is constantly foregrounded as a crucial aspect of personal and social life. Knowing how people are related to each other is one of the most basic social skills, that children learn at a very young age. In principle, at any time, any individual should be able to track the kin connections of anyone around them—and showing that one can do so is socially important.

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[20] I have in fact found one single example of double-suffix construction on a kin-term throughout all corpora—compared to dozens of examples on body-part nouns. Since kin-terms are very frequent in the corpus, and since double-suffix constructions on kin-terms were rejected in elicitation, I have decided to leave this example aside in the current analysis.

4.2.2 Kin-term incorporation

The other defining characteristic of kin-terms is that they do not raise their possessor when they occur externally, but they do so when they are incorporated. That is, incorporation of kin-terms licenses possessor raising.

The incorporation of kin-terms is less common across the Gunwinyguan family than incorporation of body-parts and generic nouns. Bininj Gun-wok (Evans 2003) and Enindhilyakwa (Van Egmond (2012) for instance have both body-part and generic incorporation, but kin-term incorporation is not reported for these languages. Saulwick (2003), however, does mention kin-term incorporation in Rembarrnga, and his examples suggest similarities with Dalabon.

Syntactic noun incorporation of kin-terms is unusual in Dalabon.[21] In my whole corpus, there is only one spontaneous occurrence, with the intransitive verb *don* 'die'. The rest of the evidence was elicited. This contrasts with the very frequent use of incorporation of parts of wholes (animate and inanimate), generic nouns (see Section 7 below), and to some extent feature-of-the-landscape nouns. Kin-term incorporation may be falling out of use, or may belong to a higher register for instance. Yet, it is worth considering, especially as it differs from the typical incorporation patterns described in several Gunwinyguan languages (but Rembarrnga allows for similar constructions as the Dalabon ones, cf. Saulwick (2003: 404)). The data presented below was elicited with the most reliable speaker of Dalabon. Her responses were spontaneous and extremely consistent across contexts and sessions, and remained identical several months apart.

Incorporation of kin-terms with intransitive verbs seems limited to a few verbs expressing strong affectedness (die, the only spontaneous occurrence, or be sick, readily accepted in elicitation). These restrictions match Saulwick's (2003: 404) examples of similar phenomena in Rembarrnga. With transitive verbs, kin incorporation did not occur spontaneously, but was readily accepted in elicitation, apparently without restrictions on the semantics of the verb. Examples are provided in the following sections.

4.2.3 Kin-term incorporation and possessor raising

In most clauses including a kin-term as an absolutive argument, the kin-term is expressed externally and the possessor is not raised. Example (41) illustrates this pattern with an intransitive verb expressing affectedness; (42) with a transitive verb. In both (41) and (42), the absolutive argument (S and O respectively) is third singular (the kin), while the possessor (propositus) is second singular, hence the propositus is not raised to an argument function.

20120714a_003_MT 160 [ContEl]

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[21] Dalabon kin-terms commonly occur in a verb complex that has lexicalized with an empty slot: *KIN-ngandung* 'call someone KIN', i.e. 'call this person cousin', 'call this person uncle' etc. But the range of noun that can precede *ngandung* is limited, i.e. lexically determined: *KIN-ngandung* is lexicalized. This is not, therefore, an example of productive, syntactic noun incorporation.

(41) *Kanh murlah-ngu*   *ka-ye-do-nj-kuno,*   *dja-h-kangu-muk-minj.*
      DEM   mother's.sister-2sgPOSS   3sg-SUB-die-PP-TIME   2sg-R-belly-covered-PP

      'When your aunt died, you felt terrible.'

(42) *Kardu*   *nga-h-n-iyan*   *nah-ngu.*
      maybe   1sg>3-R-see-FUT   mother-2sgPOSS

      'I might see your mother.'

When a kin-term is incorporated, the possessor must be raised. Example (43) is the only entirely spontaneous occurrence of kin noun incorporation, with an intransitive verb expressing affectedness. That the possessor is raised is suggested by the sense of the sentence, but not evidenced by the person prefixes on the verb, because in this case, the kin (the mothers) and the propositus (the children) are encoded as the same person category (third plural), so that it is impossible to know which one is cross-referenced on the verb.

(43) *Kenbo bala-h-lng-dudj-minj,*   *bala-h-nah-dodo-ninj.*
      then   3pl-R-SEQ-return-PP   3pl-R-mother-die:REDUP-PP

      'Then they came back, their mothers had passed away/they had lost their mothers.'

Example (44) (elicited) confirms that the possessor can be freely raised when the kin-term is incorporated. The person prefix *nga-* encodes a first singular, i.e. the speaker (not the deceased which would be third singular *ka-*), so that the sentence reads 'I aunt-died', or somewhat more naturally 'my aunt died on me'. Here possessor raising is 'free': it occurs without the intervention of a benefactive applicative prefix (*marnu-*). This is not a favored option, but it is readily accepted. In (45), in contrast, the kin-term is not incorporated, and the possessor is not raised: the person prefix encodes the deceased person (here third singular *ka-*, as opposed to first singular *nga-*). This is the most natural and common construction. The speaker commented that the noun incorporation construction in (44) was '*shotwei*' (<Eng. 'short way'), i.e. an alternative, quicker formula. Raised-possessor encoding without the benefactive *marnu-* and without incorporation is impossible (46). Thus, kin-terms do not normally trigger free possessor raising, but kin-term incorporation does license it.

(44) *Nga-h-murlah-do-nj.*
      1sg-R-mother's.sister-die-PP

      'My aunt died (on me).'

(45) *Murlah-ngan*   *ka-h-lng-do-nj.*
      mother's.sister-1sgPOSS   3sg-R-SEQ-die-PP

'Then my aunt died.'

20120706a_000_MT 158 [El]
(46)   *Murlah-ngan   nga-h-donj.
        mother's.sister-1sgPOSS   1sg-R-die-PP

(*My aunt died.)

Example (46) highlights the morphosyntactic contrast between kin-terms and animate-part nouns. It shows that kin-terms cannot raise their possessors when they are not incorporated. In contrast, animate-part noun commonly do so, as illustrated in (24) (repeated from 3.1.3). Animate-part nouns license possessor raising at any time, and their incorporation makes possessor raising obligatory. Kin-terms do not license possessor raising, but kin-term incorporation does license it.

250909_85OK 488 (LB) [ContEl]
[Discussing sensations triggered by empathy with suffering relatives, here a woman's children.]
(24)   Nunda   ke   bibbi-ngan   nga-h-ngarrk-mu.
        DEM   EMPH   breast-1sgPOSS   1sg-R-ache-PR

'This is when my breast hurts.'

The interplay between noun incorporation and possessor raising was demonstrated above with intransitive verbs expressing affectedness. The patterns remain the same with transitive verbs. In the most standard construction, the kin-term is expressed externally and the possessor is not raised: in (47), the subject is first person (nga-), not the possessor's second person (dja-). Kin-terms can incorporate with seemingly all transitive verbs, and this triggers possessor raising: in (48), the possessor is encoded as an object on the verb by dja-, which expresses action upon second person. This alternative, incorporation construction seems more natural with transitive verbs expressing affectedness (49). Another very natural construction with transitive verbs expressing affectedness leaves the kin-term outside of the verb complex, and raises the possessor with the intervention of a benefactive prefix (marnu-), as in (50). Possessor raising without incorporation and without a benefactive is impossible. Here again, free possessor raising is licensed by noun incorporation.

20120712b_000_MT 047 [El]
(47)   Mawah-ngu   nga-h-kurlhka-nj.
        father's.father-2sgPOSS   1sg>3-R-visit-PP

'I visited your grandfather.'

20120712b_000_MT 048 [El]
(48)   Dja-h-mawah-kurlka-nj.
        1sg>2sg-R-father's.father-visit-PP

'I visited your grandfather.'

20120705a_001_MT 048 [ContEl]

(49)   *Djila-h-nah-bo-ng.*
       3pl>2sg-R-mother-hit-PP

       'They killed your mother.'

(50)   *Yibung-karn-wali*   *ka-h-dedjkun-dudj-miyan*   *nah-no*   *buka-h-marnu-bu-yan.*
       3sg-EMPH-in.turn   3sg-R-?in.revenge?-return-FUT   mother-3sgPOSS   3sg>3sg.h-R-BEN-hit-FUT

       'Him in turn, he'll get back for revenge, he'll hit his (enemy's) mother.'

5. Formally bound nouns

As defined in 3.1.2, formally bound nouns are nouns which are bound but not obligatorily possessed. That is, they are simply bound nouns. They do not attract possessive enclitics as their filling material, but an invariable morphological filler *-no* which does not inflect to encode possession. This is reflected in the fact that with these nouns, possession must be encoded by a double-suffix construction (3.1.2). This subset of bound nouns include inanimate-part nouns (5.1) and feature-of-the-landscape nouns (5.2). The distinction between the two is subtle, both semantically and morphosyntactically. Feature-of-the-landscape nouns waive their morphological filler under slightly different conditions, and are thus called 'semi-bound'.

5.1 Inanimate-part nouns

The subclass labeled 'inanimate-part nouns' is the subset nouns that:
   - are incorporable and incorporate frequently;
   - are bound;
   - but not obligatorily possessed;
   - and for which free possessor raising cannot be established, in incorporation or otherwise.

Inanimate-part nouns form a relatively small open set (a couple of dozens nouns, see the Appendix); some of these nouns are fairly rare. The set is somewhat less consistent semantically than some other subclasses (e.g. animate-part nouns, features of the landscape, kin-terms). The subclass contains a lot of nouns denoting parts of inanimate things that can reasonably easily be defined as parts of wholes, plus some other nouns. Also, the subclass tends to merge semantically with features of the landscape (5.2), with which the morphosyntactic distinction is subtle. The following list describes inanimate-part nouns, highlighting the semantic coherence of the subclass.
   - Well-identifiable parts of inanimate wholes: *ko-no* 'flower', *mo-no* 'stone of a fruit' (lit. 'bone'), *mumu-no* 'seed of a vegetable' (lit. 'eye'), *dulh-no* 'branch of a tree', *mung-no* 'wall/room of a house'…

20110601_000_MT 049 [ContEl]

(51) *Munu   kowk   kanh   bula-h-mung-marnbu-ninj.*
      LIM   house DEM   3pl>3-R-wall/room-make-PI

'They just built the walls of the shelters [they didn't paint them].'

- These parts can be invisible or less concrete: *burnuh-no* 'taste of something juicy', *rinj-no* 'perfume of something'…
- Systemic parts of inanimate: *kolh-no* 'humidity, liquid of something'…
- A few nouns denoting less-identifiable parts of inanimate wholes: for instance *mirrh-no* 'sharp thing, sharp part'. These merge with properties ('be sharp'), however, *mirrh-no* for instance behaves like a noun rather than an adjective.[22]

5.1.1 Inanimate-part nouns, possession and possessor raising

Inanimate-part nouns are not obligatorily possessed. Their obligatory *-no* suffix is an invariable filler suffix which cannot agree with the person of the possessor. Instead, possession is encoded by double-suffix constructions, as in (52).

20120707a_001_MT 141 [El]
(52) *Rinj-no-ngan*   *bula-h-wudjka-ng.*
      perfume-FILL-1sgPOSS   3pl>3-R-finish-PP

'They finished off my perfume [the bottle I had].'

*Rinj-ngan.

These nouns are not very often possessed, but elicited examples show that animate-part nouns cannot raise an animate possessor without the mediation of a benefactive prefix, whether the noun is external or incorporated to the verbal complex. In this respect, animate-part nouns (like other formally bound nouns) behave like free nouns, i.e. like natural-kind nouns (Section 7) and generic nouns (Section 8), which are not bound: they cannot raise their possessor automatically, but only do

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[22] The use of third singular possessive markers on lexemes denoting properties is cross-linguistically common. Koontz-Garboden & Francez (2010) discuss the role of the third singular possessive suffix *-ka* in Ulwa (Misumalpan, Nicaragua), which is also found on words predicating properties—a cross-linguistically common syncretism (see pp. 203-204 of this article for references to other languages of very different genetic stock where a comparable syncretism is observed). The authors argue that possession and attribution of a property are semantically related, precisely via attribution, and that the possession/property syncretism is thus semantically motivated. As pointed out by an anonymous reviewer, Koontz *et al.*'s analysis of the Ulwa suffix *-ka* differs from my analysis of the Dalabon suffix *-no*, in that the authors see the pairing of possession and properties as semantically motivated, while I analyse the distribution of *-no* and its synchronic roles as essentially morphologically motivated (see 6.2). In my view, in spite of a superficial resemblance, Koontz *et al.*'s analysis has little bearing on my current argument about *-no* in Dalabon. This is because the syncretisms at stake, respectively displayed by Ulwa *-ka* and Dalabon *-no*, are in fact very different. On the one hand, Ulwa *-ka* displays a simple pairing of possession and attribution of property; on the other hand, Dalabon *-no* conflates a wider range of functions, among which possession is prominent, but the attribution of properties is only marginal. As developed in a longer version of this article, the distribution of the Dalabon *-no* is better explained by morphological rather than semantic principles (which does not rule out the possibility that some contexts of occurrence may be 're-semanticized', see 6.3).

so via the mediation of a benefactive applicative prefix *marnu-*, i.e. possessor raising is not free, but constrained.

(53) **Dja-h-ko-do-nj.*
       3sg>2sg-R-flowers-die-PP

      (*Your flowers died (on you).)

20120707b_004_MT 13 [El]
(54) *Biyi-ngu*   *dja-h-marnu-ka-ninj*   *ko-no-ngu.*   *Dja-h-ngabbo-ng.*
       man-2sgPOSS   3sg>2sg-R-BEN-take-PI   flowers-FILL-2sgPOSS 3sg>2sg-R-give-PP

      'Your husband brought you (your) flowers. As a present to you.'

5.1.2 Inanimate-part nouns and their wholes

The question of possession of inanimate-part nouns by animate possessors must be distinguished from the question of the possible relation of these parts to their wholes. As discussed at the beginning of this section, many of these nouns may be semantically construed as parts of inanimate wholes. It is possible to hypothesize that the whole may be encoded as an argument, resulting in possessor (or whole) raising patterns. However, the semantics of animate-part nouns, combined to some rules of Dalabon grammar, render the patterns of argument encoding opaque with respect to potential possessor raising, for the following reasons.

In Dalabon, plural is not obligatorily marked on nouns: any noun can be interpreted as singular or plural depending on the context. Person prefixes, on the other hand, distinguish singular and plural. However, inanimates cannot be treated as plural in this respect, i.e. they cannot be cross-referenced by plural person prefixes on a verb. They are always represented by the third singular.[23] As a result, inanimate wholes are always encoded by third singular prefixes, and parts of inanimate wholes are also encoded by third singular prefixes. Since the whole and its parts are always encoded with the same person, it is impossible to determine whether these nouns raise their possessor (understood as the hypothetical whole they would be part of) or not. This is illustrated in (55) with *rinj-no* 'smell, perfume', encoded as third singular, like the flowers (*ko-no*). The ambiguity persists whether these nouns are incorporated or expressed externally.

20111209_003_MT 17 [El]
(55) *Ko-no*   *nga-h-nomu*   *ka-h-rinj-bobob-mu.*
       flowers-FILL   1sg>3-R-(exp)smell:PR   3sg-R-perfume-(stim)smell:REDUP-PR

      'I smell the flowers, the perfume smells.'
      Or: 'I smell the flowers, their perfume smells [they perfume-smell].'

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[23] In contrast, animals can be treated as plural, although this is optional.

Ultimately, since the behavior of these nouns with respect to possessor raising cannot be established, it is not entirely clear that their morphosyntactic behavior differs from that of animate-part nouns in this respect. However, the fact that an aspect of their behavior remains opaque does constitute a difference.

5.2 Features of the landscape

The subclass labeled 'features of the landscape' is a set of nouns that:
- are incorporable and incorporate frequently;
- are 'semi-bound' nouns, i.e. nouns that call for a morphological 'filler' in a more limited range of contexts, as described in the following paragraphs.
- are not obligatorily possessed;
- do not raise their possessor freely;

Semantically, this subclass includes nouns denoting features of the landscape, like *labbarl-no* 'waterhole, billabong' in (56).

[DD]

(56)   *Djakih   labbarl-no   ka-h-worhdi-kah   ngarre-bobo-n.*
        there   waterhole-FILL   3sg-R-stand:PR-LOC   1pl.incl:SUB-go:REDUP-PR

       'There where he's standing at the billabong is where we go.'

The distinction between this subclass and the inanimate-part subclass is subtle, both morphosyntactically and semantically. For some items, it may be difficult to assess class membership, as it may vary with context. Feature-of-the-landscape nouns behave like inanimate-part nouns with respect to possession and possessor raising: they are not obligatorily possessed, but simple formally bound. The difference between the two subclasses is that they waive their filler suffix under slightly different conditions.

5.2.1 Features of the landscape, possession and possessor raising

The *-no* suffix that follows feature-of-the-landscape nouns is not a possessive enclitic but a filler suffix. Therefore, in order to encode possession, a possessive enclitic must be added after the filler, yielding double-suffix constructions (57).

20120705a_001_MT 123 [El]

(57)   *labbarl-no-ngu*
        waterhole-FILL-2gsPOSS

       'your waterhole (billabong)'

       *labbarl-ngu

With respect to possessor raising, feature-of-the-landscape nouns behave like inanimate-part nouns (5.1) (and nouns that are not bound). The possession of features of the landscape is rarely overtly expressed (possession applies to nouns referring to estates, rather than features of the landscape), and the following examples were elicited.

20120706a_000_MT 036 [El]
(58) *Dja-h-marnu-labbarl-n-iyan.*
    1sg>2sg-R-BEN-waterhole-see-FUT

    'I will see your waterhole (billabong).'

20120706a_000_MT 035 [El]
(59) **Dja-h-labbarl-n-iyan.*

5.2.2 Semi-boundness

Section 3.1.2 defined boundness as a property of nouns that must occur in a compound with some material to the right of the noun. By default, when the semantics of a clause does not require that the noun in question be followed by anything, a possessive enclitic, or 'filler' suffix -*no* is added to 'fulfill' the morphological constraints of the bound noun, ensuring that it is followed by some material. Bound nouns display slight variations as to which types of elements fulfill their morphological constraints, and thus 'waive' the filler element. In other words, the addition of filling material occurs under different conditions for the nouns I call 'strictly bound' than for the nouns I call 'semi-bound'.

A significant proportion of bound nouns only waive the filler element if and only if the noun forms a compound with a verb, another noun, an adjective, a comitative or privative enclitic, a numeral or a diminutive (3.1.2). Importantly, these 'strictly bound' nouns do not waive the filler when followed by a case marker like the locative marker (60 to 65).

20111207a _002_MT 64 [El]
(60) Mey   boyenjboyenj   nga-h-yidjnja-n   kangu-ngan-kah,
    food   big:REDUP   1sg>3-R-have-PR   belly-1sgPOSS-LOC

    nga-h-kangu-kurduh-mu.
    1sg-R-belly-blocked-PR

    'I've got a lot of food in my belly, my belly is blocked.'

20111207a _002_MT 64 [El]
(61) **Mey boyenjboyenj nga-h-yidjnja-n kangu-kah.*

20111208_001_MT 058 [El]
(62) *Dja-h-dudj-mu*   *kakkak-ngu-kah.*
    2sg-R-return-PR   parallel.grandkin-2sgPOSS-LOC

    'Go back to your grandmother.'

20111208_001_MT 059 [El]
[Rejected where the intended sense was 'to your grandmother'.][24]
(63)   *Dja-h-dudj-mu kakkak-kah.

20120708a_000_MT 167 [El]
[About bees eating pollens from flowers.]

(64)   *Ko-no-kah*   *ke*   *ka-h-ma-ng*   *kardu.*
         flower-FILL-LOC   EMPH   3sg>3-R-get-PR   maybe

         'They take it on flowers indeed.'

20120708a_000_MT 165 [El]
(65)   *Ko-kah ka-h-ma-ng.*

Feature-of-the-landscape nouns obey comparable boundness conditions, also waiving their filler under mostly similar conditions (this is illustrated with a verbal compounds in (66), and with a noun phrase in (67)). In addition, and in contrast with strictly bound nouns, these nouns do (optionally, but frequently) waive their filler suffix when followed by a case marker, as in (68) where *-no* is omitted before the locative enclitic *-kah*. Such [noun+case marker] compounds, without a filler, were rejected for strictly bound nouns. This is what defines features of the landscape as a class of 'semi-bound' nouns. Examples (60) and (62), compared to (68), encapsulate this contrast. In (68), with *kabo-no* 'river' (landscape, semi-bound), the case marker waives the suffix; in (60), (62) and (64), respectively with *kangu-no* 'belly' (animate-part, obligatorily possessed and strictly bound, 4.1), *kakkak-no* 'parallel grandkin' (kin-term, obligatorily possessed and strictly bound, 4.2), and *ko-no* 'flower' (inanimate-part noun, formally but strictly bound, 5.1), the filler is required.

240909_80OK 0953 (LB) [ContEl]
(66)   *Kahke ka-h-bruk-no*   *ka-h-bo-do-ninj.*
         NEG   3sg-R-dry-FILL   3sg-R-river-die-PP

         'Nothing left, it's dry, the river has dried out.'

20120712a_002_MT 39 [El]
(67)   *Bala-h-kalhkal-minj*   *dulum-dolku-no-kah.*
         3pl-R-climb:REDUP-PP   hill-back-3sgPOSS-LOC

         'They climbed at the back of the hill.'
         MT's Kriol trans.: 'Dei bin klaimapbat biyain langa dat hil.'

20100722b_009_MT 034 [Narr]
(68)   *Nidjarra*   *kabo-kah*   *nunh*   *yibung-karn*   *Warlukkarrh.*
         here   river-LOC   DEM   3sg-EMPH   patricouple

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[24] *Dja-h-dudj-mu kakkak-kah* would presumably be acceptable with the sense 'go back to grandma' (i.e. in the vocative, see 4.2), but when translating 'to your grandmother' the speaker did not accept *kakkak-kah*.

‘But there at the river, this is one Warlukarrh country.’

This subtle difference applies to a semantically homogenous set of nouns, denoting features of the landscape: *dulum-no* ‘hill’, *kabo-no* ‘river’, *labbarl-no* ‘waterhole, billabong’, *baddun-no* ‘cave’, etc. The class is small, probably numbering less than thirty items in total (see the Appendix for a sample).

6. Bound nouns and inalienability

The descriptions above suggest that some subclasses of Dalabon bound nouns display distinctive morphosyntactic behaviors with respect to possession, and may thus be described as ‘inalienable’ nouns, in contrast with other ‘standard’ or ‘alienable’ nouns (Nichols 1988).

Following Creissels (2006: 154) I use the term ‘inalienability’ to refer to morphosyntactic behavior, i.e. entering in particular ‘inalienable’ possessive constructions. ‘Relationality’, on the other hand, refers to the semantic property of being always or frequently associated with a possessor or whole: semantically ‘relational’ nouns implicitly denote a relation between their referent and another entity (Goddard 2011: 55). Partonyms, body-part nouns and kin-terms are typically relational. In many languages (see Hale (1981) for Warlpiri, François (2002) for Vanuatu languages, Lichtenberk (2009) for other Oceanic languages), such nouns attract distinctive morphosyntactic treatment with respect to possession, i.e. are ‘inalienable’. As mentioned above, there is no strict correspondence between relationality and inalienability. In some languages, some relational nouns may show no trace of morphosyntactic inalienability.

In Dalabon the morphosyntax of possession offers two interrelated inalienability features, namely obligatory possession (see 3.1.2) and free possessor raising (see 3.1.3). These two features pattern together (i.e. all the nouns that have one have the other), with some nuances. The nouns displaying these morphosyntactic criteria are animate-part nouns (4.1) and kin-terms (4.2), which are also canonically relational. However, as discussed in 6.1, these two subclasses pattern slightly differently with respect to each of these two features.

Apart from these clearly inalienable subclasses, the status of other bound nouns—inanimate parts and features of the landscape—with respect to inalienability and relatedness may be questioned. The *-no* suffix which fulfills their boundness constraint has previously been analyzed as a marker of parthood (Evans & Merlan (2001), and this suggests a relational dimension. I argue that animate-part nouns do display some relational semantics, but no clear morphosyntactic features, while feature-of-the-landscape nouns, on the other hand, are neither relational nor inalienable (6.2). Expanding upon this discussion, 6.3 considers the status if the *-no* filler suffix.

6.1 Inalienable nouns

Matching cross-linguistic scales of inalienability (Nichols 1988:572), in Dalabon both animate-part nouns and kin-terms are inalienable, i.e. display distinctive morphosyntactic behavior with respect to possession. This is unsurprising, since animate parts and kin-terms are typically relational semantically. These nouns are most of the time described as a 'possessum' of their linguistic 'possessor'. This is evident from 'obligatory possession', i.e. the compulsory addition of a possessive enclitic agreeing with the possessor in a number of contexts. In addition, the relation to the possessor is also reflected by possessor raising, where the possessor is encoded as an argument instead of the possessum in some other contexts, which results in the possessum being described linguistically as a part of the possessor. Raised-possessor constructions are typical of inalienable nouns cross-linguistically.

However, each of these subclasses displays each of the inalienability features to a different degree. It was shown in 4.1.1 that while animate parts are obligatorily possessed, this morphosyntactic treatment allows some exceptions with this nominal subclass. Indeed, animate-part nouns sometimes attract double-suffix construction, which indicates that their *-no* suffix may sometimes be interpreted as a morphological filler. Kin-terms, on the other hand, are strictly obligatorily possessed, and do not attract double-suffix constructions (4.2.1). From this point of view, kin-terms are more canonically inalienable than animate-part nouns. On the other hand, the reverse hierarchy applies when we consider the other inalienability feature, possessor raising. Animate parts raise their possessor freely whether incorporated or not, and do so most frequently. With kin-terms, in contrast, free possessor raising is marginal. It is licensed by noun incorporation, and since kin-term incorporation is exceptional, possessor raising with kin-terms is a morphosyntactic possibility rather than a linguistic reality. Thus, with respect to this construction, animate-part nouns are more canonically inalienable than kin-terms.

In other words, animate-part nouns and kin-terms are both clearly inalienable, albeit with respect to different features. These patterns of inalienability are consistent with Nichols's (1988: 572) cross-linguistic implicational hierarchy.

6.2 Inalienability and relatedness of other bound nouns

The inalienability of animate-part nouns and kin-terms relates to obligatory possession, which derives from a particular type of boundness. Since other Dalabon bound nouns attract a *-no* suffix, formally identical to a third singular possessive enclitic, it is tempting to hypothesize that all Dalabon bound nouns are in some sense obligatorily possessed, i.e. morphosyntactically inalienable, and thus semantically relational (implying a reference to a possessor, or whole). With inanimate parts (5.1) and features of the landscape (5.2), possession by an animate possessor must be encoded by a double-suffix construction, adding a possessive enclitic after the *-no* filler. Thus, obligatory possession by an inanimate possessor does not apply. But since the *-no* suffix never varies, and is homophonous with a third singular possessive suffix, it may encode a hypothetical inanimate whole: various inanimate

wholes for parts of inanimates; the land, or particular locations, for features of the landscape. Indeed, Evans & Merlan's (2001) analysis of -no (in line with Evans's (2003:195-200) description of a cognate playing a comparable role in Kune and some other Bininj Gun-wok dialects) matches this interpretation. They analyze -no as a marker of parthood—a common semantic extension for possessive suffixes (see Heine & Kutevav (2002: 241)), which implies relatedness.

While the hypothesis that feature-of-the-landscape nouns relate to a whole cannot be ruled out entirely, it cannot be validated either, which makes the claim vacuous. There is no context in which the land surfaces as a possible whole, of which features of the landscape would be construed as parts. Such a whole is never mentioned in any construction or sentence. Constructions of the type [place name-feature], like *Kliklimarra kabo-no*, 'the river of the place called Kliklimarra' obtained in elicitation, but they did not occur spontaneously. Feature-of-the-landscape nouns are bound, but neither inalienable, nor relational.

This contrasts with inanimate-part nouns, where wholes are often mentioned. For instance, compounds of the type [whole-part] are common (69 to 71), and their intonation sometimes suggests compounding (no pause between the nouns, main stress on the first syllable of the phrase, with only a very discreet stress on the first syllable of the second lexeme). Hence inanimate-part nouns do display some degree of relationality, i.e. they implicitly denote their wholes, at least sometimes and for some of them.

20100724_009a_MT 08 [Stim]

(69) | *Meren* | *ka-h-kinj-iyan* | *nidjarra* | *mimal* | *wol-no-kah.* |
| goanna | 3sg>3-R-cook-FUT | here | fire | flames-FILL-LOC |

'She's roasting the goanna in the 'fire flames'.'

20120709a_000_MT 056 [ContEl]

(70) | *Bad* | *lirridjdji-no* | *bula-h-yu-nginj* | *kenbo* | *kahnunh* | *mak* | *ka-lng-roka-n* | *kahke.* |
| stone | gravel-FILL | 3pl>3-R-put-PP | then | DEM | NEG | 3sg-SEQ-move-PR | NEG |

'They put 'stone gravels' [in the washing machine], and now it doesn't run at all.'

20120712a_000_MT 053 [El]

(71) | *Dabarng* | *manjh* | *kanj-no* | *nga-h-ngu-njinj,* | *weh-no,* | *nga-h-wurr-berderde-minj.* |
| yesterday | animal | flesh-FILL | 1sg>3-R-eat-PI | bad-FILL | 1sg-R-intestines-ache-PP |

'Yesterday I ate 'animal's meat', it was off, I got a belly-ache.'

Therefore, it could possibly be argued that the -no suffix that regularly follows animate-part nouns refers to a whole. On the other hand, since the grammatical person and number of the whole never varies (see 5.1.2), the reference to the whole is impossible to demonstrate (there is no informative agreement). Thus, the -no suffixed to animate-part nouns may as well be entirely de-semanticized, as with features of the landscape. Likewise, it was shown in 5.1.2 that the behavior of these nouns with respect to possessor raising is also opaque. As a result, while animate-part nouns display some degree

of semantic relationality, their status with respect to morphosyntactic inalienability cannot be assessed. This amounts to saying that they display no contrast with standard nouns which would justify setting them apart as morphosyntactically inalienable.

Thus, inanimate-part nouns are only marginally relational, with no clear-cut 'inalienable' morphosyntactic features. Features of the landscape, on the other hand, can hardly be considered inalienable at all in synchrony. While it remains an abstract possibility that feature-of-the-landscape nouns 'silently' refer to hypothetical wholes, this relationality hypothesis cannot be proved or discarded, and is therefore idle in synchrony.

6.3 Status of the morphological filler -no

While not all bound nouns are inalienable or relational, it is not insignificant that the morphological 'filler' fulfilling the morphological requirements of bound nouns is homophonous with the third person singular possessive enclitic. There are reasons to think that the origin of boundness in Dalabon has to do with the fact that the referents of some nouns were once construed as relational. In synchrony, however, the semantic connection with a possessor or whole is no longer active. Possessive constructions are notoriously versatile semantically and lead to many semantic extensions and gramaticalization (see for instance McGregor (2009), Baron, Herslund & Sørensen (2001)); the -ka suffix in Ulwa (Misumalpan, Nicaragua, Koontz-Garboden & Francez (2010); the Indonesian clitic =nya (Arka 2011); so in Mauritian Creole (Guillemin 2007)). It is not uncommon to see possessive markers grammaticalize entirely so as to become class markers devoid of semantic content (Greenberg 1991: 308 for Algic and Salish). In Dalabon, the suffix -no has followed such a process, and occurs on some nouns where its semantic contribution is nil. Contra Evans & Merlan (2001), I thus favor a morphological, rather than semantic, analysis of the -no filler suffix on feature-of-the-landscape nouns and on inanimate-part nouns.[25]

However, since the filler -no occurs systematically on certain nominal subclasses, and since these subclasses are semantically consistent, the morphological filler -no may in principle (re)gain semantic content on this basis. This is further supported by the fact that the filler -no is not limited to its use on the nominal subclasses described above. As discussed by Evans & Merlan (2001), it is in fact relatively pervasive, also occurring on some adjectives and some adverbs where, in some places, it may have started to re-semanticize. However, its re-semanticization seems relatively limited in synchrony. Indeed, the contexts in which the suffix is found can often be explained by its morphological role as a filler rather than by its historical semantic association with possession and parthood.[26]

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[25] Such 'eroded' inalienability is reported in other languages, for instance Cavineña (Tacanan, Bolivia, Guillaume (2008:430)).

[26] A longer version of this article discussed the contexts of occurrence of -no in further details, demonstrating how the morphological role of the filler -no remains the best explanation for most of its distribution. A few contexts are better explained semantically. Some of these contexts relate to the etymology of the lexeme, i.e. to possession/relationality. In other cases, where -no expresses contrast and emphasis, the 're-semanticization' in question is better explained by the morphological function rather than the etymology of -no. Indeed, the filler -no is often obligatory when lexemes are expressed externally to the verb, and the autonomy of lexemes tends to correlate with the expression of contrast and

7. Natural-kind nouns

The natural-kind subclass defines as the set of nouns which:
- cannot incorporate;
- as a result, are not bound (since bound nouns are a subset of incorporable nouns);
- and therefore are not obligatorily possessed and do not raise their possessor freely (since these features apply to a subset of bound nouns).

It is a large open class. It includes all nouns denoting species, whether the species in question pertain to the ordinary domestic realm (72) or to the ethnobiological domain—animal (74, 76), vegetable (78), etc. Examples (73), (75) and (81) present evidence of non-incorporability. Such suggestions of natural-kind noun incorporation were usually rejected vehemently, sometimes with laughter.

20110519b_000_LB_ND 165 [ConvEl]
[Removing a piece of meat from the fire and bringing it to the table.]
(72) *Yelek   rolu   bulu-ngu-n.*
      slowly   dog   APPR:3pl>3-eat-PR

      'Wait the dogs might eat it.'

20110530_003 099 [El]
(73) **Da-h-rolu-bubu-yan.*
        2sg>3-R-dog-hit:REDUP-FUT

      *('You'll hit the dog.')

20120707a_001_MT 130 [El]
(74) *Kurridjardu   kahnidja   ka-h-yu   dulh-kah.*
       python   there   3sg-R-lie:PR   tree-LOC

      'There is a python there in the tree.'

20120707a_001_MT 131 [El]
(75) **Ka-h-kurridjardu-yu   kanidjah   dulh-kah*.

20100724_011_MT 13 [Stim]
(76) *Dadbarrangkul   yila-h-ngu-ninji,   koro-no.*
       king.brown   1pl.excl>3-R-eat-PCUST   elongated.body-3sgPOSS

      'We used to eat king-brown snake, the body.'

20120706a_000_MT 121 [El]

emphasis. These traces of re-semanticization of *-no* do not bear upon nominal subclass partitions nor on the semantics of *-no* when occurring on the members of these subclasses.

(77) *Nayunghyungkih   bula-h-dadbarrangul-ngu-ninj.
      ancestral.people   3pl>3-R-king.brown-eat-PI

      *('Our ancestors used to eat king-brown snake.')

20111206b _001_MT 016 [El]
(78) Djalamardawh   ka-h-larrh-miyan.
      bush.passionfruit   3sg-R-be.cracked-FUT

      'This bush passionfruit will crack [from being ripe].'

There are pairs of morphologically unrelated nouns for female and male members of a species (when dimorphism is noticeable, e.g. *labud*, 'male agile wallaby'; *djorlbedj*, 'female agile wallaby') and sometimes several nouns for various stages of growth of an animal (e.g. *namarnkol* 'barramundi (big)', *karndinj* 'young (smaller) barramundi'). All these nouns are non-incorporable nouns, and thus belong to the natural-kind subclass. Likewise, nouns referring to human beings by groups of gender and/or age all belong to this subclass (*kirdikird* 'woman' in (79) and *wurdurd* 'child' in (80)).

20120720_003_LB 295 [SD]
(79) Nunh kirdikird   buka-h-marnu-madj-wodna-ng.
      DEM   woman   3sg>3sg.h-R-BEN-belongings-throw-PP

      'The woman threw his mattress and blankets [over the fence].'

30037/2007 – 14' (LB) [Narr]
(80) Da-h-yidjnja-n   wurdurd,   ka-h-yin.
      2sg>3-R-have-PR   child   3sg-R-say/do:PR

      'You have (are awaiting) a child, she says.'

Also included in this class are nouns denoting natural elements like water (*wah*) in (81), or particular types of stone serving as pigments (*bim* 'white ochre', *marnarr* 'red ochre' in (82)); as well as astronomical entities (*kurrnga* 'moon', *mudda* 'sun' in (83)).

20100721b_011_MT 099 [El]
(81) Wah   ka-h-kolh-ngu-nj,   buka-h-kom-bakka-ng.
      water 3sg>3-R-liquid-eat-PP   3sg>3sg.h-R-neck-break-PP

      'He drank water, and he choked [it (the water) broke his neck].'

[DD]
(82) Keninjhbi   barndja   ken   bim   marangmarangh
      whatsit   white.paint HESIT white.ochre red.ochre

      ken   marnarr   bala-h-barhdu-rru-n.
      HESIT   red.ochre   3pl-R-rub-RR-PR

'They paint themselves with white paint, white ochre, oops, *bim*, red ochre, oops, *marnarr*.'

20100718b_006 264 [ContEl]
(83) *Mudda*   *ka-h-kurlah-kinj.*
      sun   3sg>1-R-skin-cook-PR

'The sun is burning my skin.'

This very large class is not entirely uniform semantically (see the Appendix for a sample of these nouns, and Bordluk *et al.* (2013)). Most members are closer to species, a few are closer to genera (*kunj* 'kangaroo', a natural-kind noun, vs species of kangaroos, also natural-kind nouns). Yet, this class is close enough to what is sometimes called 'natural kinds' (Kripke 1980; Putnam 1999), i.e. sets defined by supposedly natural criteria: species, natural subgroups based on age and gender, natural elements that Western science defines chemically, unique astronomical entities. While Dalabon identification criteria differ significantly from the criteria used in Western science, the type of entities grouped in this morphosyntactic subclass bear significant resemblances with 'natural kinds', hence my choice of this label.

As expected for non-incorporable, free nouns, natural-kind nouns display no specific treatment with respect to possession. They are not obligatorily possessed, i.e. they never attract double-suffix constructions. And they cannot raise their possessor freely, but do so via the mediation of a benefactive applicative prefix *marnu-* (i.e. possessor raising is not free, but constrained):

30036/2008 – 19' (MT) [ContEl]
(84) *Dja-h-marnu-kolh-ngu-nj*   *wah-ngu.*   *Mungu.*
      1sg>2sg-R-BEN-liquid-eat-PP   water-2sgPOSS   unintentionally

'I drank your water. By mistake.'

20110526b_001_MT 021 [ContEl]
(85) *Men-mungu*   *kanh* *beka*   *buka-h-marnu-m-e.*
      ideas-unintentionally   DEM   tobacco   3sg>3sg.h-R-BEN-get-PP

'He took her tobacco by mistake.'

8. Generic nouns

I label 'generic' (an unsatisfying label, see below) the set of nouns which are:
- incorporable;
- free (not bound);
- and thus not obligatorily possessed and unable to raise their possessor freely.

This subclass is a relatively small set (see the Appendix) which requires further investigation. It is not as homogenous semantically as other subclasses. It looks like a residual subclass, to the extent that it is tempting to describe it negatively. It contains items which are neither parts of inanimate wholes (4.1), nor kin-terms (4.2), nor part of inanimate wholes (5.1), nor features of the landscape (5.2), nor natural kinds (Section 7). To formulate a positive semantic description, one could say that this subclass contains:

- A few generic nouns: *dulh* 'tree (any species)', *mey* '(vegetable) food', *manjh* 'animal/game'. But note that some natural-kind nouns (e.g. *kunj* 'kangaroo') would qualify as generic nouns as well.

- A number of nouns referring to items of daily domestic life, whether artifacts (i.e. wholes, and not parts of wholes, but not natural kinds) such as *kowk* 'house', *borndok* 'woomera', *madj* 'personal belongings'…

- Abstract concepts relating to land units such as *marrmo* 'land', *wadda* 'home, camp, house' (also connected to domestic life)…

- Other 'cultural' items related to language, like *yang* 'language', 'speech', 'speech content', *dawo* 'story'…

Some generic nouns, like *mey* '(vegetable) food', are both generic and belong to the daily/domestic realm. A few nouns in this subclass can function as classifiers, further specified by other nouns, often natural kinds as in (86), but also by inanimate-part noun.

20110526b_001_MT 008 [ContEl]

(86)   *Kardu keninjhbi*   *bala-h-yamarrk-dulubu-rru-ninji*   *dulh*   *mululuk* *wirrimah*   *karnbaldji.*
       maybe whatsit   3pl-R-tooth-spear-RR-PCUST   tree   tree.sp   or   spear.grass

       'For instance they whatyoucallit, they used to scratch their teeth with *mululuk* tree or *karnbaldji* (spear grass).'

A number of Dalabon generic nouns are cognates with some Bininj Gun-wok nouns classified by Evans (2003) as generic nouns, and this partly explains my choice of this label (see 8.1 for a comparison). On the other hand, many of the nouns listed by Evans (2003:333) as generic nouns have their Dalabon cognates assigned to other subclasses: *mudda* 'sun' (Bininj Gun-wok/MM *mudda*) belongs to the natural-kind subclass, *ko-no* 'flower' (MM *go(no)*) is an inanimate-part noun, so is *dulu-no* 'words, lyrics' (Bininj Gun-wok/I,E *gun-dule* 'song').

Like bound nouns, generic nouns can incorporate, but unlike bound nouns, they may stand alone, outside verbal or nominal complexes. In other words, they are incorporable but not obligatorily incorporated, as shown for *marrmo* 'land' in (87) (incorporated) and (88) (external).

20110525b _000_MT_JJA (MT) 121 [El]

(87)   *Mak*   *da-marrmo-bengka-n.*
       NEG   2sg>3-land-know-PR

       bah kanh   *dja-h-dja-bo-niyan*   *kardu*   *da-h-lng-marrmo-ku-hm-iyan.*

but	DEM	2sg-R-FOC-go-FUT	maybe	2sg>3-R-SEQ-land-be.stunned-VBLZR-FUT

'You don't know this land, but you'll go, and like you'll stare in awe at this new place.'

(88) *Ka-h-lng-nahna-n*   *kanh*   *marrmo,*   *njel*   *ka-h-album-hm-u.*
3sg>3-R-SEQ-see:REDUP-PR   DEM   land   1pl.excl   3sg>3-R-help-VBLZR-PR

'He looks after this land, he helps us.'

8.1 Possessor raising and some comparisons with Bininj Gun-wok

Dalabon generic nouns are not systematically possessed and do not raise their possessors freely. In (25), the prefix on the verb encodes the action of third plural over third singular (the house), not second singular ('you' for the possessor of 'your house'). If the possessor were raised, the prefix would be *djila-*, which was discarded in (26). Possessor raising is common with these nouns but requires the mediation of a benefactive applicative prefix *marnu-*, as in (27), where *djila-* is licensed by the presence of the benefactive. Thus with generic nouns, possessor raising is constrained, not free.

(25) *Bula-h-rorrh-minj*   *wadda-ngu.*
3pl>3-R-clean-PP   home-2sgPOSS

'They cleaned your house.'

(26) **Djila-h-rorrh-minj*   *wadda-ngu.*
3pl>2sg-R-clean-PP home-2sgPOSS

*'They cleaned [your house].'

(27) *Djila-h-marnu-rorrh-minj*   *[wadda-ngu].*
3pl>2sg-R-BEN-clean-PP   home-2sgPOSS

'They cleaned [your house] (for you).'

As a result of this behavior with respect to possessor raising, Dalabon generic nouns usually incorporate following the same rules as the set of Bininj Gun-wok nouns labeled 'generic' by Evans (2003). Evans (2003: 454ff) distinguishes two types of noun incorporation for Bininj Gun-wok. 'Generic incorporation' applies to a closed set of 'generic nouns', and 'body-part noun incorporation' to an open set of nouns (semantically, attributes of the person). Evans's main criterion to distinguish generic from body-part noun incorporation (and thus to distinguish the corresponding nominal subclasses) is that incorporated body-parts express a *part* of the absolute argument of their clause, while incorporated generic nouns express the *whole* incorporated argument of their clause (2003:330).

In Dalabon, when a generic noun possessed by an animate entity is incorporated, the possessor is most often raised, albeit with the mediation of the benefactive *marnu-* (27). In these cases, the incorporated generic noun may be interpreted as a part of the second argument of the verb (a benefactive object), the whole argument being the possessor of the incorporated generic noun. But while animate-part nouns and kin-terms are obligatorily possessed, generic nouns are often 'not possessed'—or the possession is linguistically backgrounded, which is not possible with animate-part nouns and kin-terms. When a generic noun that does not have a possessor is incorporated, the noun represents the whole absolutive argument of its clause, not a part of the absolutive argument as usually occurs when there is a possessor as in (89).

20111208_007_MT 18 [El]
(89) *Da-h-mey-ngu-n*   *kahnunh*   *bakabaka.*
      2sg>3-R-food-eat-PR   DEM   many:REDUP

      'You eat a lot of food.'

Evans's (2003) criterion to identify generic noun incorporation vs body-part noun incorporation is 'translated' here in terms of obligatory possession and possessor raising. A comparable distinction holds in Dalabon as in Bininj Gun-wok, but would be better formulated as follows:
-   animate-part noun incorporation: there is always a possessor, and it is always raised when the nouns is incorporated, so that the incorporated noun is a part of the absolutive argument;
-   generic noun incorporation: there is often no possessor and therefore the incorporated noun is the absolutive argument itself as in (89).

Evans (2003) identifies another criterion to distinguish Bininj Gun-wok generic nouns incorporation from body-part noun incorporation, namely the fact that the two subclasses incorporate in different slots. Bininj Gun-wok generic nouns incorporate in the first incorporation slot, and body-parts in the next slot (i.e. if there is a double incorporation, with both a generic and a body-part, the generic will precede the body-part). No order of incorporation seems to apply in Dalabon. In fact, since a given verb has only one absolutive argument, the only situation when two nouns can be incorporated is if they form a nominal compound and incorporate as such. This is not frequent, but it does occur:

20110525b_005_MT 099 [Stim]
[Commenting on the picture of a kangaroo.]
(90) *Nunda*   *wurdurd-no* *kanh* *ka-h-yaw-kodj-darrh-mu.*
      DEM   child-3sgPOSS DEM   3sg-R-little.one-head-protrude-PR

      'Its joey, its head sticks out.'

20110521b_002 006 [ContEl]
(91) *Nga-h-kangu-yirru-burlh-mu.*
      1sg-R-belly-conflict/anger-come.out-PR

'I'm getting angry [the anger of my belly comes out].'

In (90), *yaw-* 'little one' is a part of inanimate whole noun, corresponding to a generic Bininj Gun-wok noun. This noun incorporates before the body-part, *kodj-no* 'head', following the same order as observed in Bininj Gun-wok. In (91), *kangu-no* 'belly' is a part of animate whole, and *yirru* is a generic noun meaning 'conflict, anger'. The order of incorporation matches the order of the corresponding semantically and prosodically integrated nominal compound (*kangu-yirru-no*, 'the anger in (of) my belly'), and does not match the Bininj Gun-wok order. In fact, in (90), *yaw-kodj-no* would be literally 'the little one's head', so that the order of incorporation also matches the order of a plausible independent compound. As suggested by Saulwick (2003:360) for Rembarrnga, the order of incorporation in Dalabon seems to reflect the order of external nominal compounds. Here again, as with kin-term incorporation (4.2.2), it seems that Dalabon resembles this language more closely than Bininj Gun-wok with respect to noun incorporation. This is consistent with Evans & Merlan's (2003: 270) mention of convergence between Dalabon and Rembarrnga.

8.2 Generic nouns and possession

At first sight, there is no reason to expect double-suffix constructions on bound nouns. Since generic nouns are unbound, they do not require a filler suffix. And since double-suffix constructions result from the addition of a possessive enclitic to a morphological filler, there should be no reason to find a double-suffix construction on these nouns.

However, among the nouns with the highest rates of double suffixation are a few generic nouns related to land and estates, in particular *marrmo* 'land', *djarng* 'birth place (on one's own land)', *wadda* 'home, camp'. Unrelated to land, *yang* 'language, speech, message' also receives double-suffix constructions. In this case, the construction should not be interpreted as -FILL-POSS but as -POSS-POSS: it is indeed a double-possession construction. Here the double-suffix construction is 're-semanticized', yielding emphasis on the expression of possession. This account is based on two observations.

First, three out of these four nouns listed above denote places or patches of land. These are not features of the landscape, but nouns denoting land in terms of geography, estate and habitat. However, since feature-of-the-landscape nouns require double-suffix constructions when possessed, it is possible that speakers elaborate upon a conceptual association between landscape nouns and the particular set of generic nouns referring to the land.

Second, all these generic nouns, including *yang* 'language', refer to important cultural items which are often described as possessed.[27] Yet, they are not treated as inalienable by the Dalabon morphosyntax, because they are neither obligatorily possessed nor bound: they belong to the generic subclass. One of the speakers clearly used this double construction more frequently on these nouns in contexts where

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[27] Language is regarded as cultural property among Australian Aboriginal groups.

ownership was emphasized. In discourses about land ownership for instance, especially when this speaker asserted her claim for ownership against rival claims, *marrmo-no-njelng* 'our land' (or with other relevant persons and numbers), was used frequently and emphatically, as in (92).

20100722b_008_MT 086 [ConvEl]

(92)   *Bala-lng-dudj-mu*   *marrmo-bulng-kah,* *nundabah*   *Dalabon marrmo-no-njelng.*
        3pl-SEQ-return-PR   land-3plPOSS-LOC   DEM   Dalabon land-3sgPOSS-1plPOSS

        […]   *Yabok-ngan*   *olot*   *kanh* *bale-karra-do-nj*   *wulkun-ngan,*
                sister-1sgPOSS   all   DEM   3pl:SUB-all-die-PP   brother-1sgPOSS

        nunda *marrmo-no-njelng*   *bulu-njelng*   *marrmo-no.*
        DEM   land-3sgPOSS-1plPOSS   father-1plPOSS   land-3sgPOSS

        'They'll go back to their land, here it's our land, of us Dalabon. My sisters and brothers who have all passed away, this is our own land, the land of our father.'

Hence some speakers, possibly extrapolating on the basis of feature-of-the-landscape nouns obligatory double-suffix constructions, re-semanticize double suffixing to convey emphasis when discussing possession of important cultural items which are not otherwise treated as inalienable in Dalabon. Such *-no*-POSS endings occurring on generic nouns are thus well described as 'double-possession constructions', i.e. -POSS-POSS rather than -FILL-POSS.

The nouns that allow double possession may thus qualify as 'less alienable' than other alienable nouns. Hence the morphosyntactic rules of Dalabon define a lesser degree of inalienability (after part of animate wholes and kin-terms), attributed to important cultural possessions. This is, again, consistent with Nichols's (1988: 572) cross-linguistic implicational hierarchy.

9. Recapitulations

The morphosyntactic features delineating nominal subclasses in Dalabon ramify around the following criteria:
- whether a noun can incorporate or not;
- if incorporable, whether it is bound or free—i.e. whether it *must* incorporate to a compound (verb complex or noun phrase);
- if bound, whether it is obligatorily possessed or just formally bound;
- if obligatorily possessed, whether possessor raising is sensitive to incorporation or not;
- if formally bound, whether it is strictly bound or semi-bound.
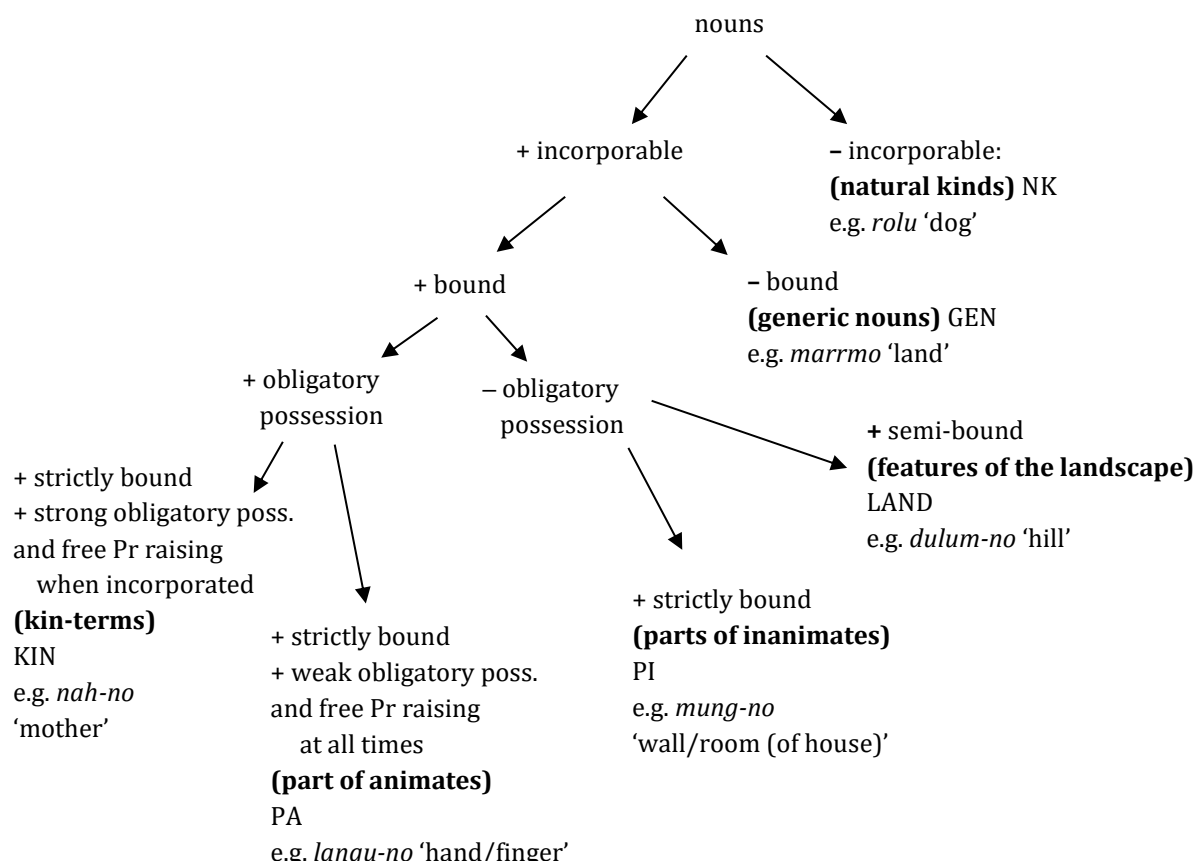
Diagram 1 (repeated). Dalabon nominal subclasses: overview.

Based on these criteria, six nominal subclasses were identified, branching as shown in Diagram (1) (repeated here for convenience). The tree-like shape of the diagram reflects the fact that the distribution of the features forms a semi-regular implicational hierarchy: all nouns that raise their possessor freely are obligatorily possessed, all obligatorily possessed nouns are bound nouns, all bound nouns are incorporable, etc. I now recapitulate the main features characterizing each of the six subclasses.

Animate-part nouns are incorporable, obligatorily possessed bound nouns which can (and usually do) raise their possessor freely, whether incorporated or expressed externally. This large, semantically consistent subclass encompasses body-parts, detachable and systemic body-parts, representations and indexes of the person as well as abstract attributes of the person (or of animates in general). These nouns are inalienable.

Kin-terms constitute a relatively small, semantically well-identified subclass. They are incorporable, obligatorily possessed bound nouns. They cannot raise their possessor freely when expressed externally, but do so when incorporated—which is rare. Kin-terms are inalienable.

Inanimate-part nouns are incorporable, formally bound nouns. They describe parts of things, sometimes properties of things, and are regularly associated linguistically with these wholes. However, the whole in question is never clearly encoded as such morphosyntactically. When inanimate-part nouns are possessed by an animate possessor, the possessor cannot be raised freely. Some of the members of this class may merge semantically with features of the landscape.

Feature-of-the-landscape nouns are incorporable, formally bound nouns which waive their morphological filler under slightly more flexible conditions (semi-bound). This subclass is small and semantically consistent, grouping together features of the landscape (rivers, hills, caves…). Animate possessors cannot be freely raised with these nouns. In contrast with obligatorily possessed bound nouns, and with inanimate-part nouns to some extent, there is no solid ground to construe features of the landscape as relational nouns systematically associated with a whole. They display no morphosyntactic characteristic of inalienability and the hypothetical whole in question hardly ever surfaces in speech.

Natural-kind nouns cannot incorporate (therefore, they cannot be bound). Consequently, they are not obligatorily possessed and do not raise their possessors freely. This very large subclass is relatively consistent semantically, grouping together natural species, nouns referring to gender and age distinctions among human beings, and natural kinds such as water, fire, and astronomical elements.

Generic nouns incorporate, but not obligatorily, i.e. they are not bound but free. Consequently, they are not obligatorily possessed and do not raise their possessors freely. This subclass does not display strong semantic coherence. It groups together nouns that are 'generic' in the sense of referring to a set of species, and nouns of artifacts or concepts related to domestic/daily life and cultural life.

Interestingly, but maybe unsurprisingly, these divisions reflect culturally important domains. Comparable subclasses have been identified in Warray (Harvey 1996), Bininj Gun-wok (Evans 1996; 2003) and Nunggubuyu/Wubuy (Heath 1984). Wilkins (2011) arrived at comparable semantic groupings in Warlpiri (Pama-Nyungan, Central Australia) via a radically different route. Closer to Dalabon, comparable distinctions may apply in Rembarrnga: according to McKay (1975: 72-73), the suffix *-na* (cognate with Dalabon *-no*) occurs on 'body-part terms, parts of wholes generally and kin-terms, as well as a number of seemingly 'adjectival' words'. An important aspect of this system of subclasses is that it allows us to establish the relative degree of inalienability of each subclass.

10. Conclusions

In the first part of this work, I discussed major word class distinctions in Dalabon, so as to identify the class of nouns (Section 2). Sections 3 to 9 then described the system of nominal subclasses. Six subclasses can be identified based on their morphosyntactic behavior, according to four main inter-

related criteria: incorporability, boundness, obligatory possession and possessor raising (interacting with incorporability). The six subclasses display some semantic coherence, corresponding to parts of animate wholes, kin-terms, parts of inanimate wholes, features of the landscape, natural kinds and generic nouns.

The morphosyntactic features used to define these subclasses allow us to qualify some of them in terms of inalienability. Animate-part nouns and kin-terms display the most inalienable-like features, albeit with different patterns. Inanimate-part nouns may also be construed as relational, although this does not surface in terms of morphosyntactic behavior strictly speaking. Features of the landscape, on the other hand, may have been relational historically, displaying a relation to places or to the land as 'wholes'. Yet, in synchrony, they no longer qualify for inalienability or relatedness. Natural kinds show no trace of inalienability, whether in synchrony or in diachrony. Based on the morphosyntactic features considered below, generic nouns are not inalienable either. However, some generic nouns denoting culturally significant properties such as land or language attract double-suffix possessive constructions, which in this case imply emphasis on possession.

In the process of defining word classes, I have also shed light on a number of aspects of Dalabon grammar, namely word classes, the boundness principle, obligatory possession and the status of the *-no* suffix (in some of its occurrences, in particular in double constructions with possessive enclitics), as well as noun incorporation and its interaction with argument structure (possessor raising). Among important observations, the description of noun incorporation shows that the rules of incorporation in Dalabon differ subtly from what has been described for Bininj Gun-wok (Evans 2003), for instance in allowing (marginal) kin-term incorporation, like in Rembarrnga.

Appendix: Samples of nouns for each subclass

The tables below present a sample of nouns for each of the Dalabon nominal subclasses defined above. While none of the lists are exhaustive, the number of items in each table proportionally reflects the size of each subclass. While this is relatively rare, some forms may occur in two different sets, in cases of polysemies: for instance *bim* 'white ochre' and *bim-no* 'picture'.

SOME ANIMATE-PART NOUNS	
balkenjkenj-no	pulse
bard-no	knee
bernel-no	underarm
berru-no	chest
bibbi-no	breast
birninj-no	finger nail
birrkbirrk-no	ribs
boy-no	body
bukkarn-no	navel
dalu-no	mouth

darru-no	leg
dedj-no	tail, arse
dengu-no	foot
dengu-mey-no	sole of foot (foot+food)
djangarak-no	throat
djawurrk-no	jaw
dje-dun-mud-no	nose hair
dje-dun-no	nostril
dje-mud-no	moustache, whiskers
djen-no	tongue
dje-no	nose, nostril, face
djikka-no	breast
djorl-no	kangaroo's pouch
djud-no	neck, back of neck
dolku-no	back
dorrung-no	body
dowk-no	biceps
drebard-no	kidney
kalbam-no	calf of leg
kangu-no	belly
kanum-no	ear
karlang-no	shoulder
karru-no	leg
kerng-no	jaw
kodj-no	crown of head, head
kom-no	neck, back of neck
koro-no	elongated body (e.g. snake)
ku-no	stomach, guts
kurlba-no	blood
kurrmarra-no	dead body
lanbak-no	groin
langu-no	hand/finger
madda-no	tongue
mad-no	heel
malanj-no	nails
mangu-no	throat
marlk-no	liver
marru-no	hair
medmo-no	side of face
melk-no	voice
men-no	ideas, mind, consciousness, judgement
milh-no	forehead
mirni-no	shoulder
molo-no	tail; penis
mo-no	bones
mud-no	body hair
mumu-no	eyes
murdumurduh-no	sternum

ney-no	elbow
ngardmo-no	hip
ngarlbak-no	chin and jaw
ngarrinj-no	hand; finger
ngerh-no	heart, pulse
ngey-no	name
ngorrk-no	waist
ngudj-no	gait
ngurl-no	heart
njam-no	guts
njerrh-no	potentially dead body
nunj-no	saliva
rakmo-no	hip
redj-no	someone's side (location)
wanj-no	armpit
waral-no	shadow, spirit, image
warnu-no	arm
wel-no	wing
werrh-no	skin of reptile, scales of fish
wey-no	urine
wobu-no	lungs
wulk-no	fat
wurr-no	stomach, guts
yamarrk-no	teeth
yeminj-no	(body) smell
yil-no	tendon, vein
yolh-no	pep, feelings

SOME KIN-TERMS

bedjan-no	man's daughter, woman's niece
be-no	man's son, woman's nephew
birrwoyin-no	cross-cousin
bulu-no	father
djongok-no	brother's sister (aunt)
duway-no	husband
kakkak-no	parallel grandparent or grandchild
kanjwoh-no	cross-cousin
kardak-no	mother's brother (uncle)
karrung-no	wife
mamam-no	cross-grandparent or cross-grandchild
mawah-no	grandfather (father's father) or grandson (son's son)
mimi-no	cross-grandparent or cross-grandchild
murdi-no	parallel grandfather or grandson
murlah-no	mother's sister
nah-no	mother
wawurd-no	older brother

winjkundjan-no	granddaughter (daughter's daughter)
winjkun-no	grandson (daughter's son)
wulkun-no	younger brother
wurd-no	female's child, male's nephew
yabok-no	sister

SOME INANIMATE-PART NOUNS

ben-no	handle, strap
bim-no	picture
burnuh-no	juice (e.g. of a fruit)
dah-no	wood, firewood, piece of wood
djarna-no	suds, bubbles; (beer)
djulng-no	dust
dolng-no	smoke
dulh-no	stick; branch
dulu-no	word, lyrics
kalh-no	root
kanj-no	meat
kemirn-no	woomera hook, tip
kolh-no	liquid, water
ko-no	flower
lirridj-no	gravel, pebbles
malaworr-no	leaf
mirrh-no	sharp tip
modjdjanj-no	the lyrics or story of a song; (type of song)
mo-no	stone of a fruit
mumu-no	seed
mung-no	room, wall
ngol-no	cloud
relh-no	slice (of a yam)
rinj-no	smell, perfume
wol-no	flames

SOME FEATURE-OF-THE-LANDSCAPE NOUNS

dulum-no	hill
baddun-no	cave
barn-no	gap, rift
barrarn-no	gorge
berrhkombuk-no	open dry plain
bo-no	river
djilngurr-no	spring
djulu-no	shade
durn-no	hole, cave
karnda-no	channel, canal, dam
labbarl-no	pond, billabong
langka-no	waterhole, billabong
njilk-no	rain

ruwurr-no	plains country,flat country
rorrbo-no	open place, plain
kabo-no	river

SOME GENERIC NOUNS

bad	stone; money
birnday	grass
bod	fly (insect)
borndok	spear-thrower (woomera)
dawo	story, word, news
djarng	birth place
djenj	fish
dulh	tree
madj	belongings
manjh	meat
marrmo	land
mey	vegetable foof, fruit, vegetable
wadda	home, camp, house
yang	language
yirru	conflict, fight, anger, aggression

SOME NATURAL-KIND NOUNS

badjdju	small bush potatoe
baladj	leech
bamurru	magpie goose
barddu	mosquito
bark	grass, water grass
barndja	white ochre
barrakbarrak	diver duck, male darter
barrk	male black wallaroo
beka	tobacco
benuk	bush turkey, bustard
berrebberrep	plover
berrerdberrerd	rainbow bee-eater
bilbbarrh	water lily
bim	white ochre
birnbirndo	small bird
biyi	man, person
bodbarng	green ants
budbud	tree species (used to make string)
bunbarr	grass (eaten with roasted kangaroo)
buya	spirit
dadbarrangkul	king-brown snake
dadbu	king-brown snake, dangerous snake
dayarr	pandanus
djalamardawh	passion fruit
djarnhba	banyan tree

djidjirdowk	water filled paperbark tree
djimdjim	fresh water pandanus
djorla	cocky apple
djorlbedj	female agile wallaby
djubbi	black current
djurn	black-headed python
djuwe	bower bird
dubbal	Leichhardt tree
kaddenj	cypress pine
karnamarr	black cockatoo
karndayh	female antilopine kangaroo
karndinj	barramundi, adult barramundi
karndukun	dingo
karrak	red-tail black cockatoo
karrkanj	eagle hawk
kilirri	yellow ochre
kinga	salt water crocodile
kinhkinh	stars
kirdidjdjirrh	iron tree
kirdikird	woman
kirribuy	red apple
komdudj	boy before initiation
kunj	kangaroo
kurndalh	black plum tree
kurridjardu	olive python
kurrnga	moon
kurruk	mussel
labud	male agile wallaby
lakkayen	young man after initiation
manbal	cycad tree
marangmarangh	red ochre
marnarr	red ochre, red paint
marranguy	stringy bark
mibbarr	eagle
mimal	fire
mobbarn	billy goat plum
mokko	salt water crocodile
moloborndok	soft-spined gecko, house gecko
moyi	green plum
mudda	sun
namarnkol	big barramundi
nganabbarru	buffalo
ngarrala	echnida
ngolomorro	northern nailtailed wallaby
ngurrurdu	emu
wah	water (sometimes other liquids)
wamarra	long neck turtle
wurdurd	child, children

wurrhwurrungu	old person
yakngarra	pandanus
yawkyawk	young women, young girl
yawurral	king-brown snake

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