Kayardild Language Report
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1. Introduction
Kayardild belongs to the Tangkic group and is traditionally spoken on the South Wellesley Islands (Bentinck Island, Sweers Island, several smaller islands and sometimes Allen Island) in Australia. The Kayardild speech community is very homogeneous.

The Kayardild language is being abandoned in favour of English with frightening rapidity, so that within less than forty-five years of substantial European contact there are no fully fluent speakers under fifty (Evans 1995:43)

Kayardild is a dependent-marking, agglutinating, entirely suffixing language with a free order of phrasal constituents and a rich system of case[1] marking, which functions both to relate NPs to the verb, and to relate one NP adnominally to another.

Kayardild's four most unusual features all involve case morphology.
1. **Modal Case**
   A phenomenon unique to the insular Tangkic languages (Evans 1995:3). Modal case suffixes are nominal suffixes (that are formally identical with case markers) which are used to indicate tense, aspect, and mood on non-subject NPs.
2. **Accumulation of Case Suffixes**
   Nominals may accumulate up to four case suffixes
3. **Complementizing Case**
   Case marking which goes on all words of the subordinate clause indicating various types of interclausal relations.
4. **Verbal Case**
   A series of case suffixes which behave semantically and syntactically like ordinary case markers, but which convert their hosts from morphological nouns to morphological verbs.

These features will be discussed in more detail below. The structure of the report is as follows. First, nominals are discussed. Then we look at verbals, followed by a discussion of the construction of simple and more complex clauses in Kayardild. We conclude this report with a description of Kayardild agreement features and values.

This report is based on Evans' Kayardild grammar (1995) and examples cited are taken from this work unless otherwise indicated. For ease of reference, we have kept the original numbering of the examples as used in the Kayardild grammar.

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[1] The definition of case used in Evans (1995) follows Mel´čuk (1986). Mel´čuk takes two characteristics as critical for calling an inflectional category 'case': first it displays agreement, and secondly, it is used to distinguish types of syntactic dependency. All functional domains of Kayardild case fulfil these conditions. (Evans 1995:117)

2. Nominals

The nominal word class includes a number of subclasses:
(a) noun/adjective
(b) pronoun *(closed class)*
(c) locational *(closed class)* – demonstrative
                                       - compass locational
                                       - positional
(d) manner nominal *(closed class)*
(e) predicate nominal *(closed class)*
(f) time nominal *(closed class)*

The structure of the nominal word is as follows:

RANK

1	2	3	4
Stem+ ADNNUM*	+Relational$^{0-2}$	+Modal$^{0-2}$	+Associating/ Complementizing

(Evans 1995:122)

Here ADN is an adnominal case suffix and NUM is a number suffix; the asterisk means that in principle any number of these may occur, from zero up. There may be from zero to two relational, and from zero to two modal cases. Associating and complementizing case suffixes are optional, and they are mutually exclusive. There must be at least one case at adnominal, relational or modal level. (Evans 1995:122)

Adnominal case relates two nominals, relational case links one nominal to the verbal action, complementizing case links two clauses, modal case relates the world of the clause to the world of a speech act, and associating case associates arguments with nominalised, or other types of non-finite verbs. (Evans 1995:411)

Adnominal and relational cases are marked over entire NPs, and complementizing case over all words in a clause, including the verb. The distribution of modal case is basically all NPs except the subject and some NPs linked to it semantically or syntactically; associating case has a slightly larger domain. Basically, all NPs that are not subjects or secondary predicates on the subject.

When modifying a non-nominative head, adnominal suffixes are followed by a further suffix **agreeing** with their head, i.e. case suffixes can be accumulated.

(3-21) *dan-kinaba-nguni*   *dangka-naba-nguni*   *mirra-nguni* *walbu-nguni*
      this-ABL-INSTR   man-ABL-INSTR   good-INSTR raft-INSTR
      '… with this man's good raft'

2.1 Suffixes

2.1.1 Case Suffixes

As we saw above, Kayardild has 5 functional domains in which case operates: adnominal, relational, modal, associating and complementizing. These functional domains of the nominal word are filled by nominal or verbal case suffixes. The following cases are distinguished:

Nominal Cases

Kayardild distinguishes the following nominal cases:

- *Nominative {-Ca}*
- *Locative {-kiya}*
- *Ablative {-kinaba}*
- *Proprietive {-kuru}*
- *Oblique {-inja}*
- *Allative {-kir(ing)-}*
- *Genitive {-karra(n)-}*
- *Associative {-nurru}*
- *Origin {-wa(a)n-}*
- *Privative {-warri}*
- *Consequential {-ngarrba}*
- *Instrumental {-nguni-}*
- *Utilitive {-marra}*

Verbal Cases

In addition to the regular nominal cases, Kayardild has a set of 'verbal cases'. Verbal cases change morphological word class, i.e. the words become morphologically verbal and **agree in tense/mood/polarity** with the main verb (Evans 1995:163). They belong to one of two conjugations: the dental with citation forms in –*tha,* and the palatal with citation forms in –*ja* (Evans 1995:165). The following verbal cases are distinguished:

- *Verbal Allative {-kiiwa-tha}*
- *Verbal Dative {-maru-tha}*
- *Verbal Translative {-marii-ja}*
- *Verbal Ablative {-wula-tha ~ -wula-a-ja}*
- *Verbal Evitative {-waalu-tha ~ -waal-i-ja}*
- *Verbal Donative {-wu-ja}*
- *Verbal Purposive {-jani(i)-ja}*
- *Verbal Denizen*

For example,

 (4-105) *ngada   warra-jarra dathin-kiiwa-tharra   ngilirr-iiwa-tharr*
       1sgNOM   go-PST   that-VALL-PST   cave-VALL-PST
        'I went to that cave.'

(4-106) *ngada   warra-ju   dathin-kiiwa-thu   ngilirr-iiwa-thu*
       1sgNOM   go-POT   that-VALL-POT   cave-VALL-POT
        'I will go to that cave.'

3

(4-107) *ngada   warra-nangku   dathin-kiiwa-nangku   ngilirr-iiwa-nangku*
      1sgNOM go-NEGPOT   that-VALL-NEGPOT   cave-VALL-NEGPOT
      'I will not go to that cave.'

Nominals with verbal case can frequently be paraphrased with normal cases, e.g. (4-106) can be paraphrased with the 'normal' allative:

(4-108) *ngada   warra-ju   dathin-kiring-ku   ngilirr-iring-ku*
      1sgNOM go-POT   that-ALL-MPROP cave-ALL-MPROP
      'I will go to that cave.'

To summarise, verbal cases are neither serial verbs with prefixed objects, nor derived nouns. They resemble normal cases: "they are totally productive, appear on every word of an NP, and code such case-like meanings as beneficiary, direction of motion, purpose and so on." (Evans 1995:89) Main verbs are frequently omitted from clauses containing NPs inflected for verbal case. In such sentences one may treat the verbal case as governing NP arguments in various grammatical functions. Note, main verbs and verbal cases must assign non-conflicting grammatical functions to the core NPs in their clause. (Evans 1995:177) Figure 1 summarises the range of functions discharged by each case suffix and diagrammatically relates their morphological order to the syntactic level at which they operate.
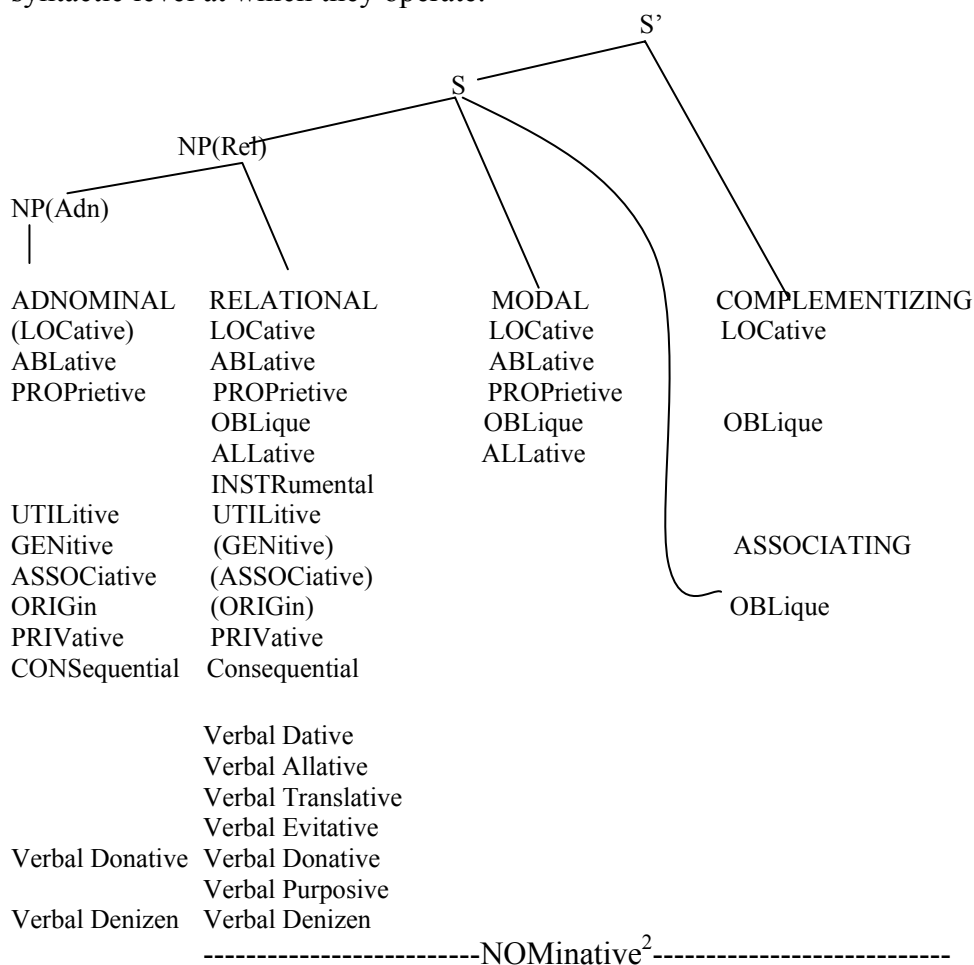

Figure 1. Functional Domains of Kayardild cases (Evans 1995:102)

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[2] The NOMinative is an 'elsewhere case' in equipollent opposition to all other cases: it appears only where no relational, modal, associating or complementizing case is assigned. (Evans 1995:102)

Generally any inflection may follow any other inflection. There are two purely morphological constraints on suffix sequences:
(a) the OBLique cannot be followed by any other inflection.
(b) the LOCative cannot be followed by any inflection but the OBLique. LOCative-OBLique sequences are realized by the portmanteau *{-kurrka}*.
These restrictions are indifferent to the rank of the inflections involved. (Evans 1995:129)

2.1.2 Number Suffixes
Number suffixes are in the same rank as adnominal case inflections. They display concord over the whole NP, except where the LOT suffix co-occurs with the quantity nominal *muthaa* 'many'.
Number marking is optional on Kayardild nouns/adjectives (though obligatory on pronouns) and is only used when the number is being stressed. (Evans 1995:183)
The number suffixes are:
- *Dual {-kiyarrng-}*
- *LOT {-bala(TH)- ~ -wala(TH)-}*
- *EVERY {-walathiJ-}*
- *PLENTY {-wuthin-}*
- *ANOTHER {yarraTH-}*

Nominal reduplication
Some nominals may be reduplicated to indicate plurality: *marngan-da* 'prepubescent girl', *marngan-marngan-da* 'many prepubescent girls'.

2.2 Pronouns
Kayardild has a set of **free form pronouns**, distinguishing **person** (first inclusive, first exclusive, second and third) and **number** (singular, dual, and plural). Pronouns are mainly used with human referents, but also with other animates such as 'dugong' and 'fish', and with places when these are seen as personifications of mythical beings. Elsewhere demonstratives are used. (Evans 1995:201)

Three stem forms occur: nominative, possessive pronoun, and 'subject oblique'.
Their forms are given in the following table:

Person/Number		Nominative	Possessive Pronoun	Subject Oblique
1	**sg**	*ngada*	*ngijin-da*	*ngijuwa*
	du	*nga-rr-a*	*nga-rr(a)-wan-da*	*nga-rr(a)-wa*
	pl	*nga-l-da*	*nga-l(a)-wan-da*	*nga-la-wa*
12	**du**	*nga-ku-rr-a*	*nga-ku-rr-wan-da*	
	pl	*nga-ku-l-da*	*nga-ku-(l)u-wan-da*	
	non-sg		*nga-kin-da*	
2	**sg**	*nyingka*	*ngumban-da*	*ngumbaa*
	du	*ki-rr-a*	*ki-rr-wan-da*	*ki-rr-waa*
	pl	*ki-l-da*	*ki-l(u)-wan-da*	*ki-lu-wa*
3	**sg**	*niya*	*ni-wan-da*	*ni-waa*
	du	*bi-rr-a*	*bi-rr-wan-da*	*bi-rr-waa*
	pl	*bi-l-da*	*bi-l(u)-wan-da*	*bi-lu-wa*

Table 1. Pronoun stems (Evans 1995:202)

3. Verbals

"The morphological class of verbals includes three functional types: verbs proper which function as predicators (e.g. *raaja* 'spear'), adverbals, which only occur together with a main verb (e.g. *bakiija* 'all S do, do to all O'), and verbal cases, which function like cases, attaching to each subconstituent of an NP." (Evans 1995:252)

The structure of the verbal word is as follows (Evans 1995:253):

Stem + (Suf$_{Der}$) + Final Inflection + Complementizing Case/
                          Nominal suffix[3]

Final inflections can be analysed into a 'thematic', signalling conjugation and/or polarity, and a 'termination', signalling tense/mood/aspect. The thematic is either palatal *–j-* or dental *–th-* in positive inflections. A conjugation-neutral variable *–TH-* is used for the thematic in the forms cited below (Evans 1995:253,254):

- *Imperative {-THa / -na}*
- *Actual {-THa / -THarri}*
- *Suppositional {-THi}*
- *Immediate {-THi}*
- *Potential {-THu(ru) / -nangku(ru)}*
- *Past {-THarra}*
- *Almost {-nangarra}*
- *Precondition {-THarrba}*
- *Desiderative {-da}*
- *Hortative {-THinja / -nanginja}*
- *Apprehensive {-NHarra}*
- *Directed {-THiri(ng)}*
- *Nominalisation {-n-}*
- *Resultative nominalisation {-THirri-n-}*

The last two are nominaliser suffixes. They change the morphological class of the word to become morphologically nominal. Nominalised verbs take normal nominal case inflections (i.e. adnominal, relational, modal, associating, and complementizing).

Nominalised verbs may be used independently as predicators showing ongoing uncompleted action, or as a complement of immediate perception predicates in the matrix clause. In the latter function, **they agree in modal case with their antecedent**. (Evans 1995:111) For example,

(3-39) *ngada   kurri-ja dathin-ki   kunawuna-ya   rajurri-n-ki*
       1sgNOM see-ACT that-MLOC child-MLOC   walk.about-N-MLOC
       'I saw that child walking around'

versus

(3-38) *dathin-a   kunawuna   rajurri-n-d*

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[3] Evans has no examples of Complementizing Case and Nominal Suffix occurring together.

that-NOM   child.NOM   walk.about-N-NOM
'That child is walking around.'

4. Syntax of the simple clause

The Noun Phrase

"A noun phrase consists of a head plus, optionally, one or more modifiers. **All words in the NP agree in case**. Modifiers may be nominal words or noun phrases bearing an adnominal case." (Evans 1995:233)

(6-1) *dathin-a   jungarra   dangka-a*
       that-**NOM**   big(**NOM**)   man-**NOM**
       'that big man'

(6-3) *[jatha-a   dangka-a   [natha-wan-da   bartha-wan-da]ORIG] NOM*
       other-**NOM** man-**NOM**   camp-**ORIG**-**NOM** base-**ORIG**-**NOM**
       kamburi-j
       speak-ACT
       'Another man from the base camp spoke'

NPs may also be modified by clauses. Nominalised clauses consisting of a single word precede and **agree in case** with the head. Finite subordinate clauses are adjoined before or after the main clause and **do not agree in case** with the head[4]. (Evans:232)

The subconstituents in the NP are ordered by function as follows:

(MODIFIERS)*   HEAD   (MODIFIER)

(Determiner)(Number)(Qualifier)   Entity
                                  (Generic:Specific)
                                  (Part:Whole)

All modifiers are optional. They all precede the head, except that one modifier may be postposed and the head must be a word in 'entity' function (or a generic/specific or part/whole pair).

Conjunctions
 bana ('and') is restricted to lists, which have a special intonation and require all NPs to be in the nominative, since they are topics.

(9-331)   *riya-thi   nga-rr-a   banga-y   kabathaa-th, bana*
             east-REM   1-du-NOM   turtle-MLOC catch-ACT   AND
             banga-a   bana banga-a   bana bangaa
             turtle-NOM   and   turtle-NOM   and   turtle-NOM
             'Way in the east we two caught turtles and turtles and turtles and
               turtles'

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[4] There is one example of an apprehensive finite subordinate clause agreeing in modal case with the head, i.e. I saw the dog which might bite me. (Nick Evans p.c.)

The Verb Complex

Evans (2002) defines the verb complex as a sequence of serialized verbs consisting of an obligatory main verb plus up to two further verbs, functioning as markers of associated motion, adverbial qualification, and aspect. All verbs in a verb complex take identical inflections for tense, aspect, mood and polarity and if the head verb is nominalized, all verbs nominalize. Verbs in a verb complex have a fixed order, belong to a single intonational grouping and in many cases, the meaning of the complex is non-compositional.

niya	*kuujuu-ja*	*thaa-th*
3SG.NOM	swim-ACT	return-ACT

'He's gone off for a swim.'

nyingka	*kurri-n-da*	*warra-nda*	*wirdi-n-da*
2SG.NOM	see-N-NOM	go-N-NOM	be-N-NOM

'You're going round to see (people) a lot.'
(Evans 2002)

5. Subordinate clauses

The following table gives an overview of the syntactic characteristics of non-finite and finite subordinate clauses (Evans 1995:451):

Non-finite subordinate clauses	Finite subordinate clauses
Special rules for assigning modal, relational and associating case (except motion purpose clauses)	Normal pattern of relationsal and modal case (no associating case)
Pivot must be subordinate subject	Pivot may be subordinate subject, object or instrument (at least)
Obligatory omission of subordinate subject	Zero anaphora of subordinate pivot according to usual discourse rules; non-pivot not usually omitted
Subordinate clause agrees in modal case with antecedent	No case agreement with matrix antecedent. Instead an outer complementizing case tracks marked coreference conditions
Verb is morphologically nominal (except motion purpose clauses)	No restrictions on type of verb
Distributionally equivalent to Noun Phrases	Not distributionally equivalent to NPs; usually adjoined

6. Agreement Features

6.1 Case

Values =   {Nominative, Locative, Ablative, Proprietive, Oblique, Allative, Instrumental, Utilitive, Genitive, Associative, Origin, Privative, Consequential, Verbal Dative, Verbal Allative, Verbal Translative, Verbal Evitative, Verbal Donative, Verbal Purposive, Verbal Denizen}

6.2 TAMP / Nominalisation

Values =   { Imperative {*-THa / -na*}, Actual {*-THa / -THarri*}, Suppositional {*-THi*}, Immediate {*-THi*}, Potential {*-THu(ru) / -nangku(ru)*}, Past {*-THarra*}, Almost {*-nangarra*}, Precondition {*-THarrba*}, Desiderative {*-da*}, Hortative {*-THinja / -nanginja*}, Apprehensive {*-NHarra*}, Directed {*-THiri(ng)*}, Nominalisation {*-n-*}, Resultative nominalisation {*-THirri-n-*}}

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