Chapter 5
Morphology of nominals and adnominals

This chapter presents the subclassification and morphology of the nominal word class and the adnominal word class and their internal structures. As noted in Chapter 3, a nominal is a word that only heads an NP, serving syntactically as an argument, a predicate nominal, or the modifier of an NP in a recursive manner. Adnominals are a very small class. I deal with nominals and adnominals together in this chapter because they are defined in terms of NP structure.

Nominals fall into five subclasses based on their syntactic and semantic features. These are: pronouns, nouns, numerals, interrogatives, indefinites, and non-pronominal (manner and locative) demonstrative nominals. At this stage, one note is necessary about the fact that numerals and certain demonstratives are classified as nominals. They can serve as minimal NPs and demonstrate all of the three syntactic functions of NPs (arguments, predicates, or the modifier of NPs), though the argument function may be rarely attested (specifically, in demonstrative manner words). Even though not criterial for the nominal word class, unlike typical nominals such as nouns, it is not common for these nominals to be modified by another NP or an adnominal (clause).

5.1. Nominals and adnominals: overview

5.1.1. The distribution in terms of NP structure

Both nominals and adnominals occur in NP structure. As was noted in §3.3.1, a nominal is defined as a word that exclusively heads an NP. NP structure is recursive, and so an NP may be the modifier of another NP. Thus, the element filling the modifier slot of an NP in (5–1) is actually an NP itself. This is evidenced in the fact that it also carries the NP extension, i.e. case.

(5–1) *agu=nu* *jaa=n=du* *asuv-tar.*
friend=GEN child=DAT play-PST
'(I) played at (my) friend's house.'

Thus, *agu* in (5–1) is an NP, in the same sense that *agu=nu jaa* in (5–2) below is an NP. The difference is that *agu* in (5–1) is a minimal NP, whereas *agu=nu jaa* in (5–2) is a complex NP.

(5–2) *agu=nu jaa=nu mai=n=du asuv-tar.*
friend=GEN house=GEN front=DAT=FOC play-PST
'(I) played in front of (my) friend's house.'

On the other hand, adnominals, like *unu* in (5–3), only fill the modifier slot of an NP. They cannot be considered minimal NPs, since they do not *head* an NP. They do not carry case, the NP extension.

(5–3) *unu jaa=n=du asuv-tar.*
that house=DAT=FOC play-PST
'(I) played at that house.'

5.1.2. Demonstratives

Demonstrative is a functional category, not a word class, as some demonstratives are nominals and some are adnominals.

Demonstrative roots are bound morphemes from which are derived either pronouns or non-pronominal demonstratives, by attaching derivational affixes such as *-(r)i* (pronominaliser), *-ma* (locative), *-i* (manner), and *-nu* (adnominal). The demonstrative root formally distinguishes between proximate (close to both the speaker and the hearer), medial (close to the hearer), and distal (distant from both).

Table 5–1. Demonstrative root and derived forms

		Proximate	Medial	Distal
Pronoun	Singular	*ku-(r)i*	*u-(r)i*	*ka-(r)i*
	Plural	*ku-nukja/ku-ntja*	*u-nukja/u-ntja*	*ka-nukja/ka-ntja*
Locative		*ku-ma*	*u-ma*	*ka-ma*
Manner		*(ku-i)*	*a-i*	*ka-i*
Adnominal		*ku-nu*	*u-nu*	*ka-nu*

Demonstrative adnominals belong to the adnominal word class, whereas all other demonstratives belong to the nominal word class. Demonstrative pronouns are composed of a demonstrative root (*ku-* for proximate, *u-* for medial, and *ka-* for distal) and a demonstrative pronominaliser which further distinguishes singular and plural (see §5.2.2 for more detail). The parenthesised /r/ is retained when the following /i/ is followed by a vowel, as

in *ku(r)i* ‘this’ + *=a* (topic) > *kuria* [kuɾʲa:], or *ku(r)i* + *=u* (accusative) > *kuri=u* [kuɾʲu:]. Otherwise /r/ is deleted, as in *ku(r)i* > *kui* ‘this’, *ku(r)i* + *=n* (dative) > *kui=n*, especially in fast speech.

In addition to these frequently used demonstratives in which a demonstrative root is followed by a derivational affix to form a nominal or adnominal stem, there is a compounding strategy in which a demonstrative root is directly followed by a nominal root to form a nominal word:

(5–4)	a. *ku+pagi*	b. *u+pagi*	c. *ka+pagi*
	this+bigness	that+bigness	that+bigness
	‘this size’	‘that size’	‘that size’
(5–5)	a. *ku+daki*	b. *u+daki*	c. *ka+daki*
	this+state	that+state	that+state
	‘like this’	‘like that’	‘like that’

Also, there are a few nominals (especially time nouns) which contain one of the three demonstrative roots, as in *kunur* ‘these days’ (which apparently contains the proximate demonstrative root *ku-*) and *un* ‘those days’ (which apparently contains the medial demonstrative root *u-*). However, as these examples show, such forms are not systematically combinable with the full set of demonstrative roots, bur rather are lexicalised.

5.2. Subclassification of nominals

5.2.1. Nouns

A noun functions as an NP of any kind (i.e. argument, predicate, and modifier of a larger NP). A noun may consist of a root alone, as in *jarabi* ‘child’, but may also be morphologically complex with various derivational affixations (as in *jarabi-gama-mmi* ‘child-DIM-PL: little children’) and/or compounding or reduplication (as in *biki+jarabi* ‘male+child: boy’). The derivational morphology of nominals is described in §5.3.

(5–6)	*jarabi=nu=du*	*nak-i+ur-Ø.*
	child=NOM=FOC	cry-THM+PROG-NPST
	‘A child is crying.’ [subject argument NP]	
(5–7)	*jarabi=u=du*	*jurav-tar.*
	child=ACC=FOC	call-PST
	‘(x) called a child’ [direct object argument NP]	
(5–8)	*uri=a*	*jarabi=dara*
	3SG=TOP	child=CRTN