Determiners and Demonstratives in Pilagá (Guaykuruan)

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Guaykuruan languages of the South American Chaco have rich sets of determiner and demonstrative words. Past studies address their semantics, morphology and syntactic distribution (Vidal 2001, Carpio 2012, González 2015, Messineo, et al. 2016), but Guaykuruanists disagree on what counts as a "demonstrative" root, and on the status of certain paradigm of "classifier" (CLF) morphemes that are required in most determiner and demonstrative words, as half of the "classifier" elements indicate posture of the referent (similarly to what are called "classifiers" in many other languages) and the other half have deictic meaning (Vidal 2001).

Drawing on a corpus of about 70 texts plus elicited data, this paper presents work in process on determiner and demonstrative words in Pilagá. The analysis shows that Pilagá has at least four different morphological templates for determiners, i.e. words that co-occur with nouns to further specify them.

The SIMPLE DETERMINER construction contains a "classifier" but no other deictic element. The SIMPLE DEMONSTRATIVE construction contains only a non-classifier demonstrative root, and may be restricted to the morpheme *hoʔ* 'proximal' or perhaps 'unspecified for distance'.

The FIRST COMPLEX DEMONSTRATIVE construction contains a demonstrative root *hoʔ, mʔe* 'medial visible', *tʃʔa* 'distal visible', *maʕa* 'non-visible') preceded by a classifier, as in (1a-b). The SECOND COMPLEX DEMONSTRATIVE contains a unique demonstrative root *naqae* followed by a classifier.

(1) a. **ha-na=mʔe**   owaqae   b. **so=mʔe**   wayaʕa
   FEM-CLF:PROX=DEM:VISIB   peccary   CLF:DISTAL=DEM:VISIB fox
   'these/this (female) peccary/peccaries'   'that fox'

Despite shared structure, demonstrative words vary in discourse distribution depending on the root. Further, contrary to some claims which suggest that the most remote member of a complex demonstrative system is most likely to grammaticalize into other functions (Himmelmann 1996), in Pilagá the 'medial visible' demonstrative root *=mʔe* has become the marker of relative clauses, as in (2). Evidence of grammaticalization includes the fact that as a relativizer, it can no longer carry a "classifier".

(2) *naegaʔ waʔa-ege*   *nqoʔ gaʔ=nadik*   **mʔe**   *yi-lot-ʔa*   *gaʔ=Joel*
   INT   be-LOC:FORWARD when CLF:ABSENT=road   REL   A3-see-OBJ.SG   CLF:ABSENT=Joel
   'Where is the road **that** goes directly to (lit. sees) (the house of) Joel?' (Sentences 03: 1.8)