ЛИНГВИСТИЧЕСКИЕ ИССЛЕДОВАНИЯ

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PROPRIETIVE AFFIXES IN THE LANGUAGES OF NORTHEASTERN EURASIA: AN OVERVIEW

In Northeastern Eurasia, there are languages that do not have a possession verb 'have', and instead use affixation to express the possessive relation. This overview article provides an introduction to the following papers on the proprietive affixes of five languages of Northern Eurasia. The proprietives of the five languages under discussion share some semantic characteristics. They often denote not only simple possession or ownership, but also possession with a special connotation such as specialty or plenty of the possessee or 'possession at that very moment.' The proprietives of the five languages have morphosyntactic idiosyncrasy that ordinal derivational suffixes do not. Though the proprietives are basically derivational affixes, the base nouns may still have their autonomy. The five languages have also the abessive forms. Although the abessives are semantically contrastive to the proprietives, morphosyntactically they are not always symmetrical to the proprietives.

Key words: *Possession, proprietive, cohesive possession, abessive.*

1. Introduction

The following five papers focus on the proprietive affixes of some languages spoken in Northeastern Eurasia, particularly from the viewpoint of their semantics, morphology, and sentence structure. The five individual papers describe the proprietive affixes of Kolyma Yukaghir (isolate), Alutor (Chukchi-Kamchatkan), Ewen (Tungusic), Khalkha Mongolian (Mongolic), and Sakha (Turkic).

These languages lack a verb of possession verb like English *have* or German *haben*. Instead, possessive relation is expressed by affixation to the possessee noun. This affixation is schematically illustrated as N-PROP ('having N' / 'with N', where N signifies the possessee noun and prop is short for proprietive)[1]. N-PROP is typically used predicatively or adnominally, but in some languages it can also be used as a nominal or an adverbial phrase. All proprietive affixes in all five languages are highly productive, in that they can be attached to various types of stems.

Proprietive affixes have been described as "adjective-deriving affixes" in previous studies of the individual languages. It is true that N-PROP is adjective-like, in that the central use of N-PROP is predicative and adnominal. However, this description is not wholly appropriate. First, "adjective" is not a self-evident category in the languages under discussion[2]. Second, proprietive affixes often show special morphosyntactic characteristics that normal derivational affixes do not have. On the other hand, these proprietive affixes share common semantic features across these five genetically unrelated languages. The following papers attempt to describe in detail the morphosyntactic and semantic similarities in the proprietives of the five languages.

The papers are based on the research published in the special issue of *Northern Language Studies*, vol. 2[3]. Section 2 of this overview article provides an introduction for the individual papers, and Section 3 gives a review.

2. Introduction to the individual papers

The proprietive affixes in the five languages often show parallel semantic and structural characteristics. In this section, some preliminary explanation will be given.

2.1. Semantic parallel

Tsunoda (2009: 158) argues that inalienable possession is divided into two sub-types, "everyone"-type possession and "not everyone"-type possession. For instance, 'head', 'eye', 'personality', etc. are "everyone"-type, and 'beard', 'talent', etc. are "not everyone"-type. This distinction often influences the semantics of the proprietive affixes used. In particular, when N is an "everyone-type" possessee, N-PROP often denotes 'special N' or 'plenty of N', rather than simple possession or ownership.

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[1] Cross-linguistic studies such as Heine (1997) distinguish attributive possession from predicative possession. The proprietive affixes in question are forms for predicative possession, and they are classified into "with-possessive" type in the typological classification of Stassen (2009). The five languages also have possessive affixes, which indicate the person/number of the possessor.

[2] In Kolyma Yukaghir, an intransitive verb is formed by attaching prop ("adjectives" are included in intransitive verbs). In the other four languages, prop is considered to be an adjective-deriving affix but there are very few formal criteria that distinguish nouns from adjectives.

[3] This special issue is based on the workshop entitled "Semantics and syntax of proprietive affixes of the languages in Northeastern Eurasia" held at the 142nd meeting of the Linguistic Society of Japan (June 2011).

When the possessee is alienable, the proprietive affixes sometimes denote not simple possession but cohesive possession. This cohesiveness or togetherness between the possessor and the possessee is also referred to as possession at that very moment. Cohesive possession includes two meanings: accompanying other person, and to have things with oneself (accompanying people or things on or around oneself). In the latter case, the possession may have the further implication that the possessee is put on, in use, or ridden on, as illustrated in Table 1 below[4].

Table 1

Possessee type and semantic characteristics

Possessee type		Semantic characteristics
inalienable	"everyone"-type	'special N' or 'plenty of N'
	"not everyone"-type	simple possession
Alienable		simple possession cohesive possession (accompaniment, 'put on', 'in use', 'ridden on')

In Kolyma Yukaghir and Sakha, proprietives have a wider usage than possession proper since it is used for coordinating two NPs.

2.2. Structural parallel

Although proprietive affixes function primarily as derivational affixes, they are beneficial to be dealt at the clause-structure level. An accompaniment construction occurs when the proprietive is attached to a human noun. An existential construction occurs when the N-PROP is in the predicative position and denotes existence rather than possession.

Proprietive affixes are often used to denote accompaniment when attached to a human noun. Except for Mongolian, the languages considered here have a comitative affix, likewise used to denote accompaniment[5]. In such languages, it is necessary to examine the difference between the proprietive and the comitative construction.

When the possessor is a human noun or a location noun, prop often denotes the existence rather than the possession of N. Each of these five languages has a proper existential construction[6]. Therefore, the semantic difference between the proprietive construction and the existential construction becomes a problem. Kazama (1999) has considered this problem in Khalkha Mongolian, Turkish, Sakha, and some Tungusic languages, and concluded that the proper existential construction, not one with prop, is used when the whole sentence constitutes new information.

2.3. Semantic autonomy and lexical integrity

Morphologically N-PROP is a derivative single stem. Some cases of N-PROP are semantically opaque because the meaning of the derivative is not the sum of the components, N and prop. On the other hand, sometimes the N in N-PROP is semantically isolable. In such cases, the N-PROP is problematic in light of the 'lexical integrity hypothesis'[7], because N is morphologically cohesive but semantically autonomous (see also Section 3.6).

2.4. Abessive

All five languages have the abessive form, which is semantically opposite to the proprietive. The abessive is formed from nominal stems like the case of the proprietive, but its morphosyntactic behavior does not parallel to that of the proprietive (see also Section 3.7).

3. Review of the individual papers

In this section, the author summarizes the characteristics of the proprietives and abessives of the five languages, based on the discussion in the individual papers that follow.

3.1. Semantics of the proprietive

The proprietives of the five languages have common semantic characteristics.

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[4] Kazama (1999), a pioneering study on prop of Mongolic, Turkic, and Tungusic languages, has already pointed out that prop often implicates persistent cohesive possession or possession at that very moment.

[5] In Khalkha Mongolian, the proprietive suffix and the comitative suffix take the same form. However, there may be a question as to whether the two forms constitute the same morpheme. See Umetani (this issue).

[6] The existential construction can be schematized as X-LOC Y (NOM) 'Y is at X.'

[7] This hypothesis refers to the property of words whereby "no syntactic process is allowed to refer to parts of a word" (Lapointe, 1985: 8). See also Di Sciullo and Williams (1987: 49) and Spencer (1991: 49).

(a) N is an inalienable "everyone"-type possessee

When N has no modifiers, simple possession is very unnatural. Instead, one of the two types of special connotation is needed. One type is 'plenty of N': Yukaghir and Alutor 'hairy' (hair-PROP), Sakha 'rich' (money-PROP), and the like. The other type is 'special N': Sakha 'with a beautiful voice' (voice-PROP), Alutor 'having big eyes' (eye-PROP), Mongolian 'clever' (head-PROP) and the like.

When N has a modifier, simple possession is possible: Ewen 'ill-natured' (bad mentality-PROP) and Yukaghir 'having an eye' (one eye-PROP). It can be pointed out that "everyone"-type possessees with a modifier are treated like "not everyone"-type possessees. Umetani (this issue) points out that some contexts allow simple possession in Mongolian even when N has no modifiers.

(b) N is an inalienable "not everyone"-type possessee

Simple possession is possible: Yukaghir 'having a beard' (beard-PROP) and Alutor 'having an antler' (antler-PROP).

(c) N is an alienable possessee Besides simple possession, cohesive possession is often implied. Examples of simple possession are as follows: Yukaghir 'having a book' (book-PROP), Alutor 'having a husband' (husband-PROP), Sakha 'having a child' (child-PROP) and the like. Cohesive possession means either accompaniment, 'put on', 'in use', 'ridden on', or simply carrying with oneself. An example of accompaniment is Sakha 'with Keskil' (Keskil-PROP)[8]. An example of 'put on' is Ewen 'with a hood on' (hood-PROP). An example of 'in use' is Sakha 'with a ball' (ball-PROP). An example of 'ridden on' is Alutor 'one who is riding on a kayak' (kayak-PROP). An example of 'carrying with oneself' is Yukaghir 'having a fishwier with oneself' (fishwier-PROP).

3.2. Stability of possession

Kazama (1999: 121) points out that the proprietives in Mongolic, Turkic, and Tungusic languages are used for permanent possession. In fact, the proprietives of the five languages under discussion are used for both permanent possession and temporary possession. Alutor 'spotted seal' (spot-PROP) and Mongolian 'competent' (ability-PROP) are examples of permanent possession[9]. In contrast, Sakha 'playing the guitar' (guitar-PROP) and Yukaghir 'to breathe' (breath-PROP) are examples of temporary possession. Nominals tend to take permanent possession, whereas action verbs tend to take temporary. Table 2 summarizes the use of the proprietives in terms of the stability of possession. Nominal use is considered the most stable, and action verb use the most temporary. No given language covers all types of use, but every language has a persistent property use and temporary property use. It is clear from Table 2 that proprietives are not always used for permanent possession.

Table 2

Proprietives and stability of possession

Languages	Stable <————————————————————————> Temporary				
	Nominal	Permanent property	Temporary property	Adverbial	Action
Yukaghir	×	○	○	○	○
Ewen	×	○	○	○	×
Mongolian	○	○	○	○	×
Sakha	○	○	○	○	×
Alutor L-PROP	○	○	○	×	×
Alutor G-PROP	×	○	○	×	×

3.3. Use expansion

The meaning of proprietives sometimes goes beyond possession proper. There are several types of possession in relationships between the possessor and the possessee. In possession proper, the possessor is the head both semantically and structurally. For example, in Sakha *massuuna-laax kihi* 'a person who has a car' (car-PROP person), *kihi* 'person' is the semantic and structural head[10]. In expanded use, however, the possessor and the possessee may be semantically equal, or rather the possessee can be considered the semantic head.

(a) Equal relation

N-PROP can be used for the relation between container and content: Ewen 'two dishes of meat' (two dish-PROP meat) or Mongolian and Sakha 'a bottle with alcohol' (alcohol-PROP bottle). In these examples, the possessor and the possessee are in an equal relation in that the container and the content are exchangeable.

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[8] 'Keskil' is a person name.

[9] Note that there are some exceptions. For example, Alutor 'one who is riding on a kayak' (kayak-PROP) is an example of nominal use, but the possession may be temporary.

[10] Note that the possessor is not necessarily the structural head when N-PROP is predicative or adverbial.

The proprietive can be used to form a coordinative phrase: Yukaghir 'a knife and an axe' (knife axe-PROP) and Sakha 'Valya and Kostya' (Valya-PROP Kostya). In these cases also, the possessor and the possessee are semantically equal.

(b) Possessee head

In nominal use, the possessor is not expressed: Mongolian 'things with a button' (button-PL-PROP), one's location or hometown, like Alutor 'one who is in the shore' (shore-PROP), and the approximant plural of Sakha 'Bahylay and others' (Bahylay-PROP)[11]. In these examples, N-PROP (i.e., the possessee) is the semantic and structural head.

3.4. Difference from the existential construction

When N-PROP is the predicate, the sentence meaning is existential rather than possessive. Consequently, the proprietive construction is compatible with the existential construction. The difference between the two constructions is explained by the two following points.

(a) Difference in alienability

Inalienable possessees are not suitable for the subject of an existential sentence: 'N is with smb' (see also Kazama (1999)). As for alienable possessees, when the possessor is animate, both the proprietive and existential constructions are possible. When the possessor is inanimate, the proprietive construction is possible only when the possession is cohesive, that is, the possessor and the possessee are not easily set apart. Although both the proprietive construction 'this room is television-PROP.' and the existential construction 'television is in this room.' are possible, the former tends to be used when the television is installed permanently. The choice of the construction and alienability is summarized in Table 3 below.

Table 3

Proprietive construction and existential construction

Construction	Alienable N	Inalienable N
Proprietive	○	○*
Existential	×	○

* When the possessor is inanimate, cohesive possession must be implied.

(b) Information structure

Nagasaki (this issue) illustrates that the proprietive construction can be used only when the possessor (including the location nominal) is topical. Kazama (1999) points out a similar constraint in Mongolic, Turkic, and Tungusic languages. Thus, proprietives in different languages have a common informational structure.

3.5. Difference from the comitative construction

The proprietive construction can be compatible with the comitative construction when N is a human noun and N-PROP functions adnominally or adverbially. There is little difference between the two constructions, and they are exchangeable in some cases. The following differences are clarified in the individual papers. Kaji (this issue) demonstrates that in Ewen, the N-PROP of the adverbial use, unlike the case of the comitative, must be interpreted as a relative of the subject when N is a kinship noun. Umetani (this issue) confirms that, in Mongolian, the N-PROP of the adnominal use, unlike the case of the comitative, does not take a reflexive suffix. Ebata (this issue) shows that, in Sakha, N-PROP can function as an adnominal phrase whereas a comitative NP cannot.

3.6. Lexical integrity and autonomy of N

Some N-PROPS are semantically opaque in that the meaning of N-PROP is far from N plus the proprietive affix: for example, Alutor 'spotted seal' (spot-PROP). In such cases, the whole N-PROP functions as a derivative and N itself (in this case 'spot') does not have autonomy. On the other hand, some cases of N can be semantically or morphologically isolable from the whole N-PROP. Cross-linguistically, syntactic operations to a part of a word are considered to be forbidden (the "Lexical integrity hypothesis") However, modification to N and anaphora to N are possible. In addition, N can take a plural suffix (N-PL-PROP). In respect of the lexical integrity and autonomy of N, the proprietive is dissimilar to usual derivational processes.

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[11] 'Bahylay' is a person name.

(a) Modification to N

Modification to N, but not to the whole N-PROP, is possible in Yukaghir, Ewen, Mongolian and Sakha. In Mongolian and Sakha, a clause (headed by a verbal noun) also modifies N. In Alutor, N is modifiable by compounding.

(b) Target of anaphora

In Yukaghir, N is semantically isolable as the target of anaphora.

(c) Plural marking

In Mongolian and Sakha, N can take a plural suffix and after that it may take prop. In this morpheme order, a derivational affix (PROP) is attached outside an inflectional affix (plural).

3.7. Abessive

The abessive is also formed from a nominal stem and is semantically symmetrical to the proprietive. However, the abessive shows the following morphosyntactic asymmetries to the proprietive.

(a) The form of the abessive

The proprietives of the five languages are monomorphemic, except for the Alutor G-proprietive. On the other hand, the abessives of the five languages are formed by more than one morpheme, except for Mongolian abessive *-güj*. In Mongolian, PROP shows vowel harmony to the stem but the abessive *-güj* does not. Hence, whether *-güj* is a suffix or a clitic needs to be examined.

(b) The hosts of the abessive

In Sakha, personal pronouns and demonstratives do not take the proprietive but they have the abessive form. Conversely, the proprietive is attached to person names but the abessive is never formed from them.

(c) The use of the abessive

In Ewen, N-PROP can be used as an adverbial phrase but the abessive cannot be used as an adverbial phrase without an instrumental suffix. In Sakha, when N is an abstract noun, N-PROP is never used for an adverbial phrase but the abessive can function adverbially.

4. Conclusion

This paper has given an overview of the proprietive affixes of five languages spoken in Northeastern Eurasia. The languages lack a possession verb 'have', instead, they use affixation to express the possessive relation. The proprietives share some common characteristics, particularly semantic ones. They denote not only simple possession or ownership, but also imply possession of 'special N' or 'plenty of N', or cohesive possession. The proprietives are basically considered to be derivational affixes, but they often show morphosyntactic idiosyncrasy which ordinal derivational affixes do not. N of N-PROP is sometimes semantically isolable in that it can be modified or be the target of anaphora. The usage of the proprietives may range beyond possession. N-PROP has existential and accompaniment uses. All five languages have the abessive, which is always semantically symmetrical but not always morphosyntactically symmetrical to the proprietive.

Other languages have a similar affix to the above-mentioned proprietives. In North America, for example, Yupik Eskimo has a suffix *-ŋqx* and Sliammon Salish has an infix *-hV-* (Miyaoka, 1996: 353, Watanabe, 2003: 495–499). According to Dixon (1976; 2002: 140–141), most Australian native languages have a similar suffix. Georgian too has several similar suffixes, such as *-ian* (Boeder, 2005: 42). In Samoyedic languages (Uralic family), Khanty instructive *-aat* and Selkup -SÏMA have similar functions (Abondolo, 1998: 378, 572). A Tibeto-Burman language Dumi has the ornative *-mi*, which seems also to have a similar function (van Driem, 1993: 76). Contrastive study with these languages from other regions us the next task in this regard.

Abbreviations

PL   plural
PROP   proprietive

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АФФИКСЫ ПРОПРИЕТИВА В ЯЗЫКАХ СЕВЕРО-ВОСТОЧНОЙ ЕВРАЗИИ: ОБЗОР

В северо-восточной Евразии распространены языки, в которых отсутствует глагол обладания со значением «иметь», а вместо него для выражения посессивных отношений используется аффиксация. Данная статья представляет обзор работ, посвященных проприетивным аффиксам в пяти языках. Проприетивные аффиксы в данных пяти языках имеют общие семантические свойства. Часто они обозначают не только собственно обладание, а также посессивность с определенными коннотациями, например особые свойства обладаемого или временное обладание в определенный момент. Проприетивным аффиксам в данных пяти языках свойственна морфосинтаксическая идиосинкретичность, которой не обладают обычные деривационные суффиксы. Несмотря на то что проприетивные аффиксы являются деривационными аффиксами, существительные-основы все же сохраняют свою автономность. В данных пяти языках также имеются абессивные формы, которые, являясь противоположными по значению проприетивным формам, морфосинтаксически не всегда симметричны проприетивным формам.

Ключевые слова: *посессивность, проприетивные формы, абессив.*

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