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Are there possessive definites? Evidence from Kazym Khanty

Stepan (Stiopa) Mikhailov
Laboratory of Formal Models in Linguistics, HSE University
stepanmihajlov@gmail.com

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1. Possessives × definiteness?
2. Uralic determiner-like possessives
3. Introducing Kazym Khanty
4. The Associative Possessive is definite
5. The Proper Possessive is not definite
6. Analysis
7. Revisiting the data
8. Restrictions on R and y?
9. Taking stock



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Possessives

— (short for) adnominal possessive constructions

- English: Sue's team, a newspaper of Mary's, a student of physics

- Italian: *i/alcuni cani di Gianni*
the/some dogs of Gianni

‘Gianni's dogs / some dogs of Gianni's’

- Northern Khanty (< Uralic):

nǎŋ kăt'-en
you.SG cat-POSS.2SG
‘your cat’

ǎŋk-εm an
mother-POSS.1SG cup
‘my mother's cup’



Possessive relation (R)

the relation described by a possessive, 2 basic types (Partee 1983/2011):

(Partee & Borschev 2003, Partee 2006; Vikner & Jensen 2002; Barker 1995, 2000; Karvovskaya 2018)

- **inherent possessives**

- Sue's enemy, Sue's chair
- with R based on the lexical semantics of the head noun
 - different Rs may be derived from the head noun via meaning shifts

- **free possessives:**

- R is a salient relation from the context
- Sue's team, Sue's hurricane [the one that hit her boat]
 - Storto 2005, 2003, 2000



Possessives × definiteness?

In some languages/possessives, **no** (obvious) **interaction**

- Italian: *i/alcuni cani di Gianni*
the/some dogs of Gianni
'Gianni's dogs / some dogs of Gianni's'

- but see Storto 2005, 2003, 2000



Possessives × definiteness?

In some other languages, **parallels with definites**

- e.g., English Saxon genitive with definite Possessors exhibits the “definiteness effect”
 - assuming for expository purposes *his* = *he* + *'s*

- (1) a. There is a man's daughter in the garden.
b. #There is his daughter in the garden. (Barker 2000: 213)

- cf. Hungarian (Dékány 2021: 184)



More on the Saxon genitive

Barker 2000 (his (28)):

- A [Saxon genitive] possessive is definite iff its Possessor is definite.
- A possessive is familiar iff its Possessor is familiar

Motivation:

- the “definiteness effect”
- “the phrase *his daughter* has uniqueness presuppositions” (p. 213)
- etc.



More on the Saxon genitive

Possessives with definite Possessors are definite (Coppock & Beaver 2015) (using the negation test of Löbner 2011):

(2) Negation test, argument position

a. #**Mary's pet rabbit** is in the cage and **Mary's pet rabbit** is outside the cage.

b. Some rabbit is in the cage and some rabbit is outside the cage.

(adapted from Coppock & Beaver 2015: 417)

Cf. #The kids are eating spinach and the kids are not eating spinach. (based on Löbner 2011: 295)



More on the Saxon genitive

Possessives with definite Possessors are definite (Coppock & Beaver 2015)

- **but not in predicate position!!**

(3) Negation test, predicate position

- a. The rabbit in the cage is **Mary's pet** and the rabbit sitting just outside the cage is **Mary's pet**. [POSSESSIVE]
- b. The rabbit in the cage is **a pet Mary owns** and the rabbit sitting just outside the cage is **a pet Mary owns**. [INDEFINITE]
- c. #The rabbit in the cage is **the pet Mary owns** and the rabbit sitting just outside the cage is **the pet Mary owns**. [DEFINITE]

(adapted from Coppock & Beaver 2015: 418)



More on the Saxon genitive

Coppock & Beaver 2015 on the Saxon genitive:

- **Possessives are not marked for definiteness**
- In argument position they usually are *determinate*, i.e.,
 - They shift to type e via the IOTA type-shift (Partee 1986)
 - due to a preference for simpler types (*Entities Rock*, Beaver & Coppock 2016)

Beaver & Coppock 2016:

- “there is no need to postulate any inherent semantic difference between [English-type] determiner-like possessives and [Italian-type] adjective-like possessives: **neither are inherently definite**” (additions and bold-face mine)



Possessive definites elsewhere?

Beaver & Coppock 2016:

- “there is no need to postulate any inherent semantic difference between [English-type] determiner-like possessives and [Italian-type] adjective-like possessives: **neither are inherently definite**” (additions and bold-face mine)
- “Of course, this does not rule out the possibility of cross-linguistic variation: these considerations are compatible with individual languages realizing possessives that have uniqueness requirements...”



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Uralic possessive agreement markers

- Uralic languages typically have “non-possessive” uses of possessives (5)
(Nikolaeva 2003; Fraurud 2001; Simonenko 2017; É. Kiss, Tánčzos 2018; a. o.)

(4) Kazym dialect of Northern Khanty (field data)

năŋ

you.SG

‘Your cat is purring.’

kăť-en

cat-POSS.2SG

moś-λ

purr-NPST[3SG]

(5)

an-en

cup-POSS.2SG

[There’s one cup on the table.] ‘Pass me the cup.’ Not: ‘your cup’

mij-e

give-IMP.SG > SG



Uralic possessives

(6) Obdorsk dialect of Northern Khanty

wanta **tăm** **mašinaj-en** jowra mănəs

see this car-**POSS.2SG** awry went.3SG

‘Look, that car (lit. that your car) went awry’. (Nikolaeva 2003: (15a))

(7) ma iši **taxa:j-e:m-na** il ko:ri-s-ə-m

me same place-**POSS.1SG-LOC** down fall-PAST-EP-1SG

‘I fell down in the same place (lit.: at the same my place)’. (Nikolaeva 1999: 83)

- Nikolaeva 2003: **ASSOCIATIVE USE** of possessives, “the car is “yours” [in (6)] because I am talking to you about it”



Uralic unpossessives

(8) (Standard) Udmurt

a. Ivan-len gurt-**ez** → **Ivan-len-ez**
Ivan-GEN village-**POSS.3SG** Ivan-GEN-POSS.3SG
‘Ivan’s village’ ‘that of Ivan’ (Winkler 2001: 44)

b. pi-os-len gurt-**zy** → **pi-os-len-ez**
boy-PL-GEN village-**POSS.3PL** boy-PL-GEN-POSS.3SG
‘the boys’ village’ ‘that of the boys’ (adapted from É. Kiss & Tánčzos 2018: 736)

- É. Kiss & Tánčzos 2018: **PARTITIVE-NOMINALIZING USE of POSS.3SG grammaticalized from the proper possessive**



Previous accounts of non-possessive uses

- **Monosemic approaches** (Nikolaeva 2003, Fraurud 2001, Körtvély 2010, Gerland 2014, Janda 2015, Simonenko 2017):
 - Non-possessive uses are derived from a common underspecified semantics
 - Possessive-based but not inherently definite!!
 - Uses are (mostly) non-obligatory (esp. Nikolaeva 1999, 2003)
- **Polysemic approaches** (É. Kiss, Tánczos 2018; É. Kiss 2018; Halm 2018; Serdobolskaya et al. 2019; Logvinova 2019):
 - Possessives grammaticalize into determiners, losing possessive meaning
 - (NB: This is a rough approximation)
 - See (Mikhailov 2022, ms.) for many similar cases from Kazym Khanty and extended arguments to treat them as separate markers — **UNPOSSESSIVES**



No possessive definites?

- Two different strands of previous research seem to suggest that there are no possessive definites
 - Research on the English Saxon Genitive (and other IE possessives? Beaver & Coppock 2016)
 - Research on Uralic unpossessives



This talk in a nutshell

- There are possessive definites!
 - **The Kazym Khanty *Associative Possessive* is inherently definite**
 - unlike the English Saxon Genitive
 - and the Kazym Khanty *Proper Possessive*!
 - **and it is still a possessive marker**
 - unlike determiners developed from possessives discussed by É. Kiss & Tánczos, Halm, Serdobolskaya et al., Logvinova, Mikhailov, and others



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Kazym dialect of Northern Khanty

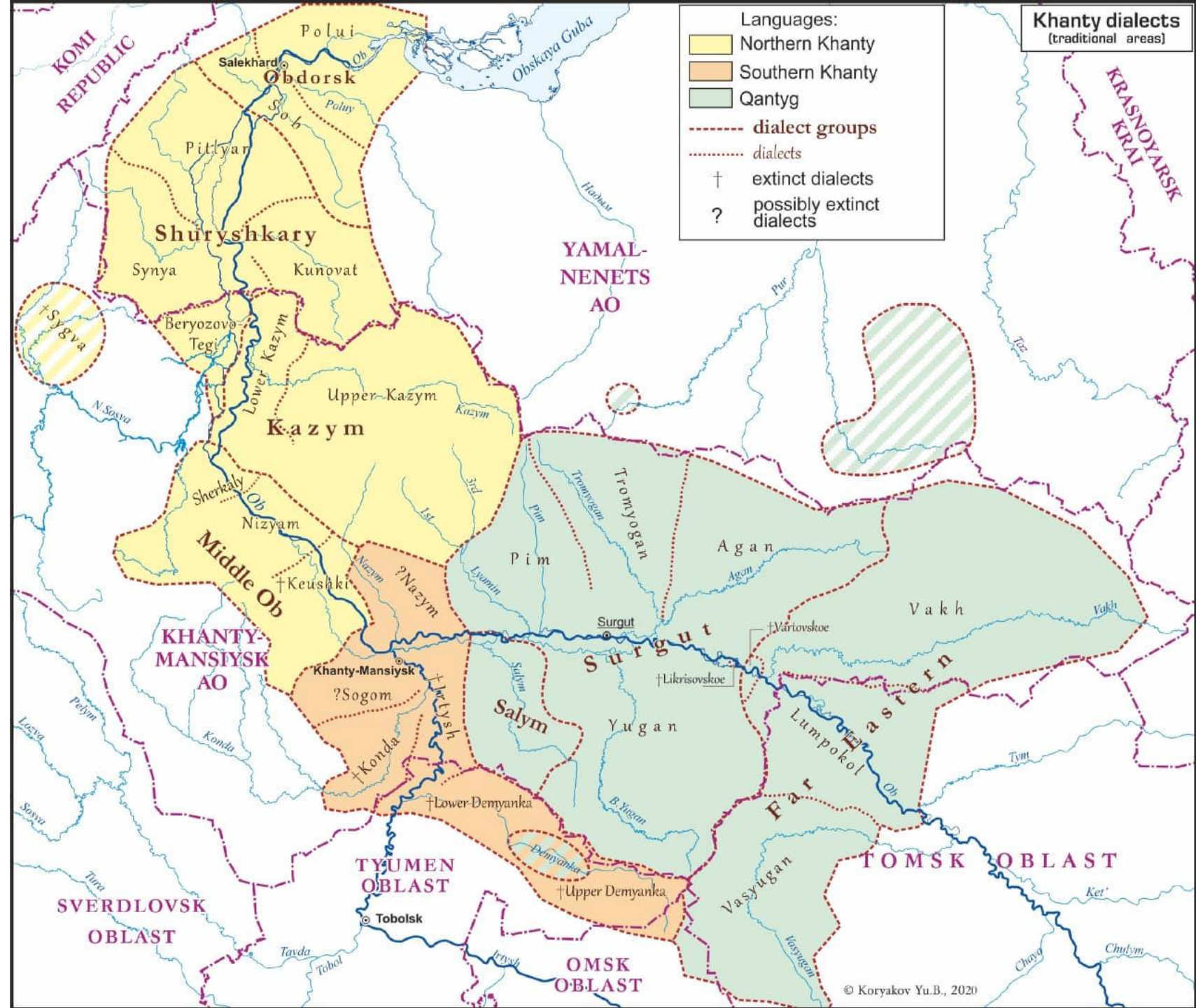
- fieldwork in Kazym (KhMAO-Yugra), 2018-2023, under Svetlana Toldova & Alexey Kozlov
- context-based semantic elicitation (Matthewson 2004)
 - Russian and Northern Khanty (NK) stimuli in contexts
 - Russian as the metalanguage
 - acceptability judgements
 - each judgement taken from 4 to 10 consultants
- Grammar sketches: Kaksin 2010, Sipos 2022
 - (Almost) no data on the semantics of possessives



ARE THERE POSSESSIVE DEFINITES?
EVIDENCE FROM KAZYM KHANTY

Figure 1. Map of Khanty dialects in Russia, Western Siberia, created by Yuri Koryakov, 2020

- Russian census 2010 (Koshkareva 2016): Northern Khanty spoken by 8865 speakers (37% of ethnic Khanty)
 - cf. 1989 census, 61% of ethnic Khanty speak the language
- Approx. 1700 speakers of the Kazym dialect left (Kaksin 2010)
- In Kazym, only speakers born before 1980s speak the language (Aristova 2023)





Kazym Khanty possessives

- unmarked Possessor
 - order of nominal modifiers: {Poss, Dem} > {Num, Att, Adj} > N-mod > N (Pleshak 2019)
- suffixes agreeing in person (1, 2, 3) & number (SG, DU, PL (NSG))
 - only pronominal and proximate lexical Possessors trigger possessive agreement (Muravyev 2022)

(9) **năŋ** **kăť-en** moś-λ
you.SG cat-**POSS.2SG** purr-NPST[3SG]
'Your cat is purring.'



Kazym Khanty possessives: syntactic assumptions

I assume that:

- Possessives are represented as an abstract head $\text{Poss}^0 []_{\langle \text{pers-num} \rangle}$
- with a phi-feature probe $[]_{\langle \text{pers-num} \rangle}$ triggering Agree upon entering the derivation
 - (more precisely, Preminger's (2014) $\text{FIND}(f)$ with Béjar and Rezac (2009) assumptions about cyclicity)

(10) THE STRUCTURE OF POSSP WITH A POSSESSIVE

$[_{\text{PossP}} \text{DP}_{[\varphi]} [_{\text{Poss}'} \text{Poss}^0 []_{\langle \text{pers-num} \rangle} \text{NumP}]]$



Kazym Khanty possessives: syntactic assumptions

(10) THE STRUCTURE OF POSSP WITH A POSSESSIVE

$[_{PossP} DP_{[\varphi]} [_{Poss'} Poss^0_{[]} \langle pers-num \rangle NumP]]$

- I do not commit to any particular syntactic categories for the **Possessor DP** or the **Possessee NumP**
- The only commitment is that the **Possessee phrase** does not bear phi-features when $Poss^0$ is merged, while the **Possessor** does

- $Poss^0_{[\varphi]}$ is exponed to PF based on its phi-features and syntactic context, e.g., (11)
- The **Possessor** may be a $pro_{[\varphi]}$

(11) SPELL-OUT OF $Poss^0$ TO PHONOLOGY

...			
$Poss^0_{[2SG]}$	$\overset{PF}{\Leftrightarrow}$	/an/	[DU/PL]_
$Poss^0_{[2SG]}$	$\overset{PF}{\Leftrightarrow}$	/en/	
$Poss^0_{[3SG]}$	$\overset{PF}{\Leftrightarrow}$	/aλ/	[DU/PL]_
$Poss^0_{[3SG]}$	$\overset{PF}{\Leftrightarrow}$	/əλ/	
$Poss^0_{[]}$	$\overset{PF}{\Leftrightarrow}$	/∅/	
...			



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The Associative Possessive of the Kazym dialect

...is obligatory (Mikhailov 2022)

(12) [A friend is over at the speaker's place. There's one cup on the table.]

- a. **an-en** mij-e
cup-POSS.2SG give-IMP.SG > SG
'Give me the cup.' [THE CUP NEXT TO YOU]
- b. #an mij-a
cup give-IMP[SG]
'#Give me a cup.'



The **Associative Possessive** requires uniqueness

- It is barred with non-unique referents

(13) [A friend is over at the speaker's place. There are several cups on the table.]

an-**(#en)**

mij-e

cup-**POSS.2SG**

give-IMP.SG > SG

‘Give me a cup.’

Consultant's comment to -en: “[the addressee] will then ask «which cup do you mean?»”.



The Associative Possessive requires familiarity

- It is unavailable with novel referents

(14) [We need to make a fire in the forest. I ask my brother.]

tət-#en wɛr-a

fire-**POSS.2SG** make-IMP[SG]

‘Make a fire. {Get the wood and start lighting it up.}’

Consultant’s comment: “[**-en** means that] it’s a fire on a place that we usually make fires at, [bare form means that] it’s a fire at a new place”



The Associative Possessive requires familiarity

- It is obligatory with familiar referents

(15) [We need to make a fire in the forest. The wood is already set. I ask my brother.]

tut-#(en) äλλλ'-e

fire-POSS.2SG make-IMP.SG > SG

‘Light the fire.’

[THE FIRE (the wood) NEXT TO YOU]

(English: #Light your fire.)



The Associative Possessive requires existence

...as a consequence of the familiarity requirement

- Barred with non-existent referents

(16) [Working in the garden.]

mɤw lot-**(#en)** χir-a

earth hole-**POSS.2SG** dig-IMP[SG]

‘Dig a hole.’



The Associative Possessive requires existence

...as a consequence of the familiarity requirement

- Obligatory with existent (familiar and unique)

(17) [Working in the garden.]

mɤw	lot-#(en)	lǎp	χir-e ^A
earth	hole- POSS.2SG	tight	dig-IMP.SG > SG
‘Dig a hole.’		[THE HOLE NEXT TO YOU]	

^ADefiniteness correlates with object agreement. I controlled for this when collecting judgements.



The Associative Possessive marking associated referents

- The **Associative Possessive** is also obligatory with familiar referents in narratives (as expected)

(18) [“I found somebody’s ID in the street. I went to the town administration. Met a friend there and talked to her for some time.”]

nɛm **nɛpek-#(ɛm)** suvet-ən χǎj-s-ɛm
name paper-**POSS.1SG** council-LOC leave-PST-1SG > SG

‘[Then] I left the ID at the administration. {Let them find the owner.}’
[**THE ID THAT I FOUND**]

(English: #...my ID...)



NB

- All of the above applies just in case

(19) THE **RELATION** IS PRESUPPOSED

A felicitous use of the **Associative Possessive** requires that the Common Ground entail the existence of an **associative relation** between the NP referent and the Possessor

- Nikolaeva's (2003) observation
- (for evidence see below)



Interim Summary

- The **Associative Possessive** is definite, as it requires:
 - 1) (informational) uniqueness of the NP referent
 - 2) And (weak) familiarity of the NP referent
 - assuming Craige Roberts' (2003) definition of definite NPs
- Assuming that (1) and (2) are presuppositions,
 - the obligatory use of the **Associative Possessive** above is derivable via *Maximize Presupposition!* (Heim 1991, Coppock & Beaver 2015)
- Cf. European definite articles (Roberts 2003; Heim 2019; Coppock & Beaver 2015; König 2018)



Other definites in the Kazym dialect

- No other proper definiteness markers in Kazym Khanty
 - Demonstratives are the only strictly definite modifiers
 - **No articles!**
 - Some other unpossessives are definite, but they are much narrower and, well, not possessive (Mikhailov 2022, 2021a, b)
 - You can ask me about them
 - See below for some examples



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The Proper Possessive does not require uniqueness

(20) [A child made a mess in the kitchen. Their parents tell them:
“What a mess you made!”]

păsan	oχtij-ən	năŋ	juntut-en	uλ,
table	on-LOC	you.SG	toy-POSS.2SG	lie[PRS.3SG]
kər_λaŋəλ-ən	năŋ	juntut-en	uλ,	
stove-LOC	you.SG	toy-POSS.2SG	lie[PRS.3SG]	
păsan	iλpij-ən	năŋ	juntut-λ-an	kerət´λ´-əλ-ət
table	under-LOC	you.SG	toy-PL-POSS.2SG	lie.around-PRS-3PL

‘There’s a toy of yours on the table, [a toy of yours] on the stove,
under the table your toys are scattered.’ [TOY(S) THAT YOU OWN]



The **Proper Possessive** presupposes existence

(21) năŋ welik änt täj-λ-ən
you bike NEG have-NPST-2SG

‘You don’t have a bike.’

(22) năŋ **welik-en** änt täj-λ-ən
you bike-**POSS.2SG** NEG have-NPST-2SG

‘You don’t have your bike (e.g. it is broken).’

#You don’t have a bike.

- Simonenko 2017: Possessives that cannot scope below negation presuppose existence



muλsər 'some (epistemically nonspecific)'

...is perfectly fine with the **Proper Possessive**

(23) [The speaker is at a friend's place.]

muλsər **an-en** mij-a

some.EN cup-**POSS.2SG** give-IMP[SG]

'Give me any cup of yours.'

[**A CUP THAT YOU OWN**]

- On epistemic nonspecificity see (Farkas & Brasoveanu 2019), the variable introduced by **muλsər** must be unidentified in the context in the sense of (Farkas 2002)



muλsər 'some (epistemically nonspecific)'

...but is incompatible with the **Associative Possessive**.

(24) [A friend is over at the speaker's place. There are several cups on the table.]

muλsər	an-(#en)	mij-a
some.EN	cup- POSS.2SG	give-IMP[SG]

'Give me any cup.'

Intended: [**THE CUP NEXT TO YOU**].



Free Relations are correlated with uniqueness in Kazym Khanty

- **The Associative Possessive** (ASSOC for short)
 - describing **free Rs**
 - **requires uniqueness**
 - does not cooccur with $\mu\lambda s\bar{e}r$
- **The Proper Possessive** (POSS for short)
 - describing **inherent Rs**
 - **does not require uniqueness**
 - cooccurs with $\mu\lambda s\bar{e}r$

These two uses should be treated as separate markers!

(Mikhailov 2022)



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Analysis

$$(25) \quad \llbracket \text{ASSOC}_i \rrbracket = \lambda P \lambda y: \exists! z [P(z) \wedge R_i(z)(y)]. \lambda x [P(x) \wedge R_i(x)(y)]$$

where R_i is an unrestricted variable over relations

$$(26) \quad \llbracket \text{POSS}_i \rrbracket = \lambda P \lambda y \lambda x: \exists z [P(z) \wedge R_i(z)(y)]. P(x) \wedge R_i(x)(y)$$

where R_i is a stereotypical relation based on the intension of the head noun

- based on Lena Karvovskaya's (2018) MaxSpec_i operator



Analysis

$$(25) \quad \llbracket \text{ASSOC}_i \rrbracket = \lambda P \lambda y: \exists! z [P(z) \wedge R_i(z)(y)]. \quad \iota x [P(x) \wedge R_i(x)(y)]$$

where R_i is an unrestricted variable over relations

↑ this is a **definite determiner**, type $\langle \langle e, t \rangle, \langle e, \underline{e} \rangle \rangle$
output type

$$(26) \quad \llbracket \text{POSS}_i \rrbracket = \lambda P \lambda y \lambda x: \exists z [P(z) \wedge R_i(z)(y)]. P(x) \wedge R_i(x)(y)$$

where R_i is a stereotypical relation based on the intension of the head noun

↑ this is a **modifier**, type $\langle \langle e, t \rangle, \langle e, \underline{\langle e, t \rangle} \rangle \rangle$



Analysis: additional assumptions

1. Bare & POSS-marked nominals undergo the EX-shift to compose with the verb
 - $EX \equiv \lambda P \lambda Q. \exists x [P(x) \wedge Q(x)]$ (Coppock & Beaver 2015, Partee 1987)
 - IOTA must not be available (see below)
2. Bare nominals are infelicitous where ASSOC is available is due to (some version of) *Maximize Presupposition!* (MP)
 - I intend to explicitly work out the much-needed details of these assumptions in the near future, any suggestions are very welcome!!



Analysis: additional assumptions

3. Order of nominal dependents: $mu\lambda s\acute{e}r$ [Poss⁰ [NumP]]
 - where *muλsər* is a determiner requiring an $\langle e, t \rangle$ -type argument
 - The jury is out on whether it should receive a quantifier analysis or a choice function analysis or else...
 - What's crucial is that **it contributes an unidentified variable** to the context (cf. Farkas's (2002: 69-73) treatment of *some*)
- I intend to explicitly work out the much-needed details of these assumptions in the near future, any suggestions are very welcome!!



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How the analysis covers the data (in reverse order)

III. Why *muλsər an-en* [some.EN cup-POSS.2SG] can only mean 'any of the cups that you own'?

(27) $\text{Domain}(\llbracket \text{mu}\lambda\text{s}\text{ər} \rrbracket) \subseteq D_{\langle e, t \rangle}$

(28) For $\llbracket \text{PossP}_{\text{POSS}} \rrbracket = \text{POSS}_i(\llbracket \text{cup} \rrbracket)(\llbracket \text{pro}_{[2\text{sg}]} \rrbracket)$,

$\llbracket \text{PossP}_{\text{POSS}} \rrbracket \in D_{\langle e, t \rangle}$ and $\llbracket \text{mu}\lambda\text{s}\text{ər} \rrbracket(\llbracket \text{PossP}_{\text{POSS}} \rrbracket)$ is defined

(29) For $\llbracket \text{PossP}_{\text{ASSOC}} \rrbracket = \text{ASSOC}_i(\llbracket \text{cup} \rrbracket)(\llbracket \text{pro}_{[2\text{sg}]} \rrbracket)$,

$\llbracket \text{PossP}_{\text{ASSOC}} \rrbracket \in D_e$ and $\llbracket \text{mu}\lambda\text{s}\text{ər} \rrbracket(\llbracket \text{PossP}_{\text{ASSOC}} \rrbracket)$ is not defined due to type-clash



How the analysis covers the data

II. Why ASSOC is obligatory where available?

- The Common Ground (CG) entails uniqueness of x and $R_i(x)(a_c)$ in (12)
 - where a_c is the addressee in the context of utterance c
 - that is (i) ASSOC's presuppositions are satisfied
 - while using a bare form implies (ii) that (i) is not the case
 - (ii) contradicts the CG, hence the bare form is bad and ASSOC is obligatory

(12) [A friend is over at the speaker's place. There's one cup on the table.]

an-#(en)

mij-e

cup-POSS.2SG

give-IMP.SG > SG

'Give me the cup.'

[THE CUP NEXT TO YOU]



How the analysis covers the data

I. Why is **POSS** okay in the negation test?

- (20) pāsān oχtij-ən nǎŋ **juntut-en** uλ,
 table on-LOC you.SG toy-**POSS.2SG** lie[PRS.3SG]
 kər_λaŋəλ-ən nǎŋ **juntut-en** uλ,
 stove-LOC you.SG toy-**POSS.2SG** lie[PRS.3SG]
 pāsān iλpij-ən nǎŋ **juntut-λ-an** kerət'λ'-əλ-ət
 table under-LOC you.SG toy-PL-**POSS.2SG** lie.around-PRS-3PL
 ‘There’s a toy of yours on the table, [a toy of yours] on the stove,
 under the table your toys are scattered.’ [TOY(S) THAT YOU OWN]



How the analysis covers the data

I. Why is **POSS** okay in the negation test?

(30) a. $[[n\check{a}ŋ \text{ juntut-en}]] = \lambda x: \exists z[\text{toy}(z) \wedge \text{own}(z)(a_c)]. \text{toy}(x) \wedge \text{own}(x)(a_c)$

b. $\text{EX}((30a)) = \lambda Q. \exists x[\text{toy}(x) \wedge \text{own}(x)(a_c) \wedge Q(x)]$

defined iff $\exists z[\text{toy}(z) \wedge \text{own}(z)(a_c)]$

c. $\exists x[\text{toy}(x) \wedge \text{own}(x)(a_c) \wedge \text{on.the.table}(x)] \wedge \exists y[\text{toy}(y) \wedge \text{own}(x)(a_c) \wedge \text{on.the.stove}(y)]$

defined iff $\exists z[\text{toy}(z) \wedge \text{own}(z)(a_c)]$

- Because it doesn't require uniqueness and composes via EX!
 - This entails that **IOTA is not available in Kazym Khanty!**



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Restrictions on R and y?

$$(25) \quad \llbracket \text{ASSOC}_i \rrbracket = \lambda P \lambda y: \exists! z [P(z) \wedge R_i(z)(y)]. \quad \iota x [P(x) \wedge R_i(x)(y)]$$

- This semantics includes two variables which basically are pronouns
 - R_i which denotes a free possessive relation picked up from the context
 - y which is (usually) fed a silent pronoun $pro_{[\varphi]}$, in effect also receiving its value from the context
- Are R and y restricted in any way?
 - I thank one of the reviewers for this question!



Restriction(s) on R

- Recall Nikolaeva's (2003) observation:

(19) THE **RELATION** IS PRESUPPOSED

A felicitous use of **ASSOC** requires that Common Ground entail the existence of an **associative relation** between the NP referent and the Possessor

- My analysis captures (19) by incorporating R in the uniqueness presupposition
 - $\llbracket \text{ASSOC}_i \rrbracket$ is defined iff there is a unique z that is a P and that stands in the R_i relation to the Possessor



R must be presupposed (preliminary data!)

- If the question under discussion is about the identity of Possessor y in R(x)(y) (with the referent x), R is not presupposed
 - ASSOC is infelicitous
 - R(x)(s_c) is clearly not part of CG

(31) [“Who built that house?”]

ma	śi	χot-en/#-εm	oməs-s-εm
I	DEM	house-POSS.2SG/-POSS.1SG	sit-PST-1SG > SG

‘I built that house.’



R must be presupposed (preliminary data!)

(31) [“Who built that house?”]

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I	DEM	house-POSS.2SG/-POSS.1SG	sit-PST-1SG > SG

‘I built that house.’

As I argue elsewhere (Mikhailov 2022), POSS.2SG is not a possessive here

- but rather the unpossessive “Topic Marker”



R must be presupposed (preliminary data!)

(32) a. [Peter is Masha's husband.]

mašaj-en

petr-əλ

šiwalə-s-λe

M.-POSS.2SG

P.-POSS.3SG

see-PST-3SG>SG

‘Masha saw Peter.’

b. [Masha does not know Peter.]

→ #

- POSS.2SG here is the unpossessive “Proprial Article” (Mikhailov 2022)



Restrictions on y (the Possessor)

- So far the analysis predicts no differences between Possessors of **POSS** and those of **ASSOC**

- But here's a peculiar observation

(33) [A child picked up a dirty ball on the street. His parents say:]

waša, (#nǎŋ) m'ačok-en tiw mij-e

V. you.SG ball-**POSS.2SG** here give-IMP.SG > SG

‘Vasya, give the ball here.’

- **ASSOC** is usually bad with non-*pro* explicit possessors!



Restrictions on y (the Possessor)

(33) [A child picked up a dirty ball on the street. His parents say:]

waśa,	(#năŋ)	m'ačok-en	tiw	mij-e
V.	you.SG	ball-POSS.2SG	here	give-IMP.SG > SG

'Vasya, give the ball here.'

- ASSOC is usually unhappy with non-*pro* explicit possessors!
- My consultants comment that (33) is bad with năŋ: "this won't do for a dirty ball he just picked up, năŋ m'ačoken is for his ball".
- This is likely due to information structure and Khanty being pro-drop
 - You can ask me about this!



Restrictions on y (the Possessor)

- If **ASSOC** prefers pro-Possessor for information-structural reasons
 - Explicit possessors are expected under contrast!

(34) [“Both Petya and I have been attacked by a dog recently.”]

%**ma amp-em** wera pǎłtap wə-s

I dog-**POSS.1SG** very scary be-PST[3SG]

‘My dog was very scary. {But Petya’s dog even turned out to be rabid.}’ (based on Storto 2005)

- But why are some speakers unhappy with (33), just like in English, Italian, Russian, and elsewhere? (cf. Storto 2005)



More research is needed

...on the restrictions on R and y!



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Conclusions

- **Possessive definites exist** in Kazym Khanty!!
 - contra Nikolaeva 2003, Fraurud 2001, Gerland 2014, a.o.
- The **Associative Possessive** is a case in point
 - It requires uniqueness and does not cooccur with $\mu\lambda s\text{ər}$ [some.EN]
 - It is not restricted to inherent Rs
 - It presupposes that R holds between the referent and the Possessor
 - While the **Proper Possessive** differs by all three properties
- The **Proper Possessive** data imply that IOTA is not available in Kazym Khanty



Outstanding issues

1. Evidence for the e type denotation of ASSOC-marked NPs
 - (excluded?) alternative: Coppock-Beaver-style predicative types for everything + IOTA-shift
2. Projective properties of the presuppositions identified above (Tonhauser et al. 2013)
3. NP structure (order of dependents) including the cooccurrence of ASSOC with other determiner-like elements (work in progress)
 - Evidence for the order assumed here needed: $\mu\lambda s\epsilon r$ [Poss⁰ [NumP]]
4. Further restrictions on (free) R and y ?
 - And, maybe, ways to dispense with it?
5. The determinacy properties of bare nominals?



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