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6

Possession in Nanti

LEV MICHAEL

1 Introduction

This chapter describes possessive constructions in Nanti, an Arawak language of southeastern Peru. Several features of Nanti possessive constructions are noteworthy from a comparative perspective. Of the languages described in this volume, Nanti possession is among the most semantically restrictive, including only part–whole, kinship, and strict ownership relations. At the same time, Nanti has developed 'non-referential' functions of possessive nominal prefixes, allowing the formal satisfaction of required inalienable possession constructions, while effectively omitting reference to definite possessors.

As the most head-marking and polysynthetic language described in this volume, it is perhaps unsurprising to find the marking of possession within the Nanti noun phrase to be relatively unelaborated. However, the language exhibits several interesting verbal constructions in which possession plays an important role. These include: (1) productive noun incorporation of part terms with possessor ascension; (2) a denominal reversative construction in which the subject of the derived verb denotes the whole (i.e. possessor) from which the original nominal element is detached; and (3) a separative applicative construction in which the applied object is interpreted as the (external) possessor of the demoted former object.

2 Sociolinguistic and typological background

Nanti is a member of the Kampan branch of Arawak, a group of closely related languages spoken from the foothills of the southeastern Peruvian Andes to the adjacent areas of the Peruvian-Brazilian border region. The Kampan branch consists of several dialect continua, which have been divided into anywhere from three to eleven distinct languages by different linguists (Michael 2008: 212–19). Nanti forms a dialect chain with three major Matsigenka varieties: Upper Urubamba Matsigenka,

Lower Urubamba Matsigenka, Manú Matsigenka, and Nanti (position in this list corresponds to position in the dialect chain). Mutual intelligibility between Manú Matsigenka and Nanti is relatively high, but is low between Upper Urubamba Matsigenka and Nanti.

Nanti is spoken by approximately 450 individuals living in some ten settlements located in the headwater regions of the Camisea and Timpia Rivers. Nantis lived in this difficult-to-access region with no sustained contact with non-Nantis until the late 1980s, when they made contact with the Matsigenka, the neighbouring Kampan group. Nantis remain monolingual, except for a few young men who have learned Matsigenka; in more recent years, two young men have learned very basic Spanish.

I first visited the Nanti communities in 1993, and carried out monolingual linguistic fieldwork in the Nanti communities between 1997 and 2005. My data consists almost exclusively of transcribed and translated recordings of naturally occurring Nanti discourse.

Nanti is a head-marking language with extensive, mainly suffixal, verb morphology. Nominal morphology is minimal, and other than the possessive markers and classifiers discussed in the chapter, is limited to plural markers and a single locative suffix. Obligatory verbal inflectional categories include aspect and reality status, and most verbs bear cross-referencing markers (CRMs). CRMs are in complementary distribution with contrastively focused referential NPs. Subject CRMs are verbal proclitics, and object CRMs are verbal enclitics, as in (43). Referential NP subjects tend to be pre-verbal, and objects tend to be post-verbal, suggesting a characterization of Nanti as an SVO language. A pre-verbal contrastive focus position and pre- and post-verbal topicalization positions are responsible for other orders. The locative suffix given in (31) is the sole dependent-marking means of adding an argument to a clause; head-marking means include five morphological causatives and five applicative suffixes. The reader is referred to Michael (2008) for further information.

3 Possession in the noun phrase

3.1 *The structure of basic possessive constructions*

Possession within the Nanti noun phrase is expressed by several constructions that are distinguished by the information-structural status of the possessor and by whether the possessee is alienably or inalienably possessed. The most common type of possessive construction in Nanti discourse is exemplified in (1a, b), where the possessor is indicated solely by a possessive prefix on the possessee. The identity of the possessee in such constructions may be fixed by an antecedent referential NP, or, just as commonly, is fixed by pragmatics.

(1) a. i-   banko   b. i-   gemari -te
        3msg- house   3msg- tapir   -ALN.POSS
        his house   his tapir

Possessive prefixes are drawn from the paradigm given in Table 6.1. This paradigm exhibits significant gaps for plural possessors, but speakers can make recourse to free possessive pronouns to clarify the plural status of possessors of the relevant cases. If the possessee belongs to the class of inalienably possessed nouns, the possesee further bears an alienable possession prefix, as in (1b).

Possessors can be realized as referential NPs within the possessive phrase, as in the inalienable (2a), and alienable (2b). The possessee continues to bear a possessive prefix, and if the possessor is not contrastively focused, it follows the possessee, as in (2)–(4). The relative order of possessor and possessee is not affected by whether the possessive NP appears in subject or object position, as evident in (3) and (4).

(2) a. i-   banko Ihonira   b. i-   gemari -te   Esekera
        3msg- house personal.name   3msg- tapir -ALN.POSS personal.name
        Ihonira's house   Esekera's tapir

(3) i=   kent   -ak   -i   =ri   iri-   iri   Santihago
      3msg= pierce -PERV -REAL.I =3mS 3msg- father personal.name
      He shot Santihago's father.

(4) i-   banko Horase   o=   teronk -an   -ak   -i
      3msg- house personal.name   3msg= collapse -ABL -PERV -REAL.I
      Horase's house collapsed.

If the possessor is contrastively focused, it appears before the possessee, as in (5a&b).

(5) a. Ihonira   i-   banko b. Esekera   i-   gemari -te
        personal.name 3msg- house   personal.name 3msg- tapir -ALN.POSS
        Ihonira's house   *Esekera's* tapir

Contrastive possessor focus can also be expressed with a free possessive pronoun, as in (6a, b), where the free possessive pronoun occupies the same position as a focused

TABLE 6.1. **Nanti possessive prefixes**

Possessor	Singular	Plural
1st person	*no-*	*a-* (inclusive)
2nd person	*pi-*	—
3rd person masculine	*i- ~ iri-*	—
3rd person feminine	*o-*	—

referential NP. There are no attested cases of the possessive pronoun following the possessee.

(6) a. irashi   i-   banko   b. irashi   i-   gemari   -te
         3msg.poss   3msg-   house   3msg.poss   3msg-   tapir   -ALN.POSS
         his house   *his* tapir

Possessive pronouns are transparently related to possessive prefixes via the addition of the element *ashi*, which is of uncertain origin. In contrast to the possessive prefix paradigm, the possessive pronoun paradigm exhibits a full set of plural forms, constructed by adding the nominal plural suffix *-hegi* to the corresponding singular forms (Table 6.2).

3.2 *Alienably possessed nouns*

Alienably possessed nouns bear the same possessive prefixes as inalienably possessed ones, but additionally bear one of several alienable possession suffixes. The distribution of the two regular alienable possession suffixes, *-ne* and *-te*, is conditioned solely by the size of the nominal root to which they attach. Disyllabic roots take *-ne*, as in (7), and roots that are trisyllabic or larger take *-te*, as in (8). Alienable nouns are minimally disyllabic, in accord with general disyllabic minimum word requirement in Nanti (Crowhurst and Michael 2005).

(7) i-   biha   -ne
     3msg-   bow   -ALN.POSS
     his bow

(8) o-   shiropitonki   -te
     3fsg-   needle   -ALN.POSS
     her needle

In addition to the regular alienable possession suffixes, a third irregular marker *-re*, is found on a small number of forms, as in (9).

(9) i-   chago   -re
     3msg-   arrow   -ALN.POSS
     his arrow

TABLE 6.2. Nanti free possessive pronouns

Possessor	Singular	Plural
1st person	*nashi*	*hashi* (inclusive) *nashihegi* (exclusive)
2nd person	*pashi*	*pashihegi*
3rd person masculine	*irashi*	*irashihegi*
3rd person feminine	*ashi*	*ashihegi*

The irregular alienable possession suffix *-ma* is found on a single form (cf. *tsitsi* 'firewood'), given in (10).

(10) o-   tsi   -ma
      3fsg-   firewood   -ALN.POSS
      her firewood

3.3 *Root allomorphy in possessed forms*

Possessed nouns in Nanti exhibit a form of root allomorphy in which word-initial voiceless stops in unpossessed forms surface as voiced in possessed forms, as in alienable pair (11a, b) and the inalienable pair (12a, b). The forms (13a, b) demonstrate that the allomorphy in question consists of voicing the initial segment of the possessed root, rather than devoicing of the initial segment of the unpossessed form.

(11) a. kemari   b. i-   gemari   -te
          tapir   3msg-   tapir   -ALN.POSS
          tapir   his tapir

(12) a. panko   -tsi   b. no-   banko
          house   -ALIEN   1sg-   house
          house   my house

(13) a. bayana   b. no-   bayana   -te
          plantain.variety   1sg-   plantain.variety   -ALN.POSS
          bayana (plantain variety)   my *bayana*

Voicing in possessed forms occurs only if the voiced counterpart on the initial voiceless consonant is a contrastive segment in the Nanti phonological inventory. This means that only /p/ and /k/ undergo possessive voicing, as in (11) and (12). Other word-initial consonants, such as /t/, are unaffected, as in (14).

(14) a. tabiri   b. no-   tabiri   -te
          tree.resin   1sg-   tree.resin -ALN.POSS
          tree resin   my tree resin

3.4 *Derivation of alienable nouns*

The Kampan languages exhibit an 'alienator' suffix that derives alienable unpossessed nouns from inalienably possessed ones. The inalienable–alienable pair in (15a, b) illustrate the form and function of this suffix in Nanti. Cognates of this suffix are found in most Arawak languages (Aikhenvald 1999: 82).

(15) a. no-   mare   b. mare   -tsi
          1sg-   limb.band   limb.band   -ALIEN
          my limb band   limb band

In Nanti, the number of pairs like those in (15) is considerably smaller than in other Kampan languages, suggesting that the alienator is no longer productive in the language; there is also evidence that alienators like that in (15b) are becoming lexicalized. With the diminishing productivity of the alienator, other strategies, such as the non-referential use of possessive prefixes, are developing to fill its function.

In Kampan languages such as the closely related Matsigenka, all inalienably possessed nouns may undergo alienation, including part terms, as in (16a, b).

(16) a. no-   gito   b. gito   -tsi
       1sg-   head   head   -ALIEN
       my head   head

In Nanti, however, no human, animal, or plant part terms (all inalienably possessed) may be alienated. Bodily effluvia are similarly immune to alienation, with a single exception, in (17), representing perhaps the most separable and enduring of effluvia.

(17) a. o-   tiga   b. tiga   -tsi
       3fsg-   faeces   faeces -ALIEN
       its faeces   faeces

The small number of nouns that exhibit alienated counterparts include two bodily parasites (*ne-tsi* 'louse', *keni-tsi* 'maggot'), and a small number of personal inalienable possessions (e.g. *maga-tsi* 'traditional garment', *panko-tsi* 'house').

The decrease in the number of inalienable nouns that can take the alienatior *-tsi* suggests a decrease in its morphological productivity. There is also evidence that Nantis no longer recognize *-tsi* as distinct morpheme in the words in which it appears. The relevant evidence involves a pair of recent loans from Matsigenka.

Prior to contact with the Matsigenkas in the late 1980s, Nantis had no canoes, using only rafts (*paroto*). Nantis became familiar with canoes in the early 1990s, and adopted the Matsigenka words, *pito-tsi* (alienated) and *bito* (inalienable). Significantly, there was considerable variation in how Nantis treated these two words, some producing the 'correct' inalienable possessed forms, for example *i-bito* 'his canoe', others producing the 'incorrect' *i-bitotsi-te*, which treated the stem *pito-tsi* as an unanalysable alienable root. Yet others treated *bito* as an *alienable* root: *i-bito-re*. In short, Nantis appeared to have difficulty recognizing the alienator suffix, indicating that it is becoming lexicalized.

With the decline in productivity of the alienator, Nantis have broadened the semantic functions of possessive prefixes to include non-specific or non-referential functions. This broadening allows speakers to satisfy the structural requirement that inalienable roots bear possessive suffixes without necessarily committing to the identifiability of the formally marked possessor.

For inalienable roots with unidentified human possessors, Nantis employ the first person plural inclusive possessive prefix *a-*, as in (18a) and (18b). Both forms can yield either a non-possessed reading or a possessed reading, with the specific meaning determined pragmatically.

(18) a. a-   gito   b. a-   tomi   -hegi
         1pl.incl- head   1pl.incl- son   -PL
         (human) head (*lit.* our head)   children (*lit.* our sons)

For unidentified non-human possessors, Nantis employ third-person possessive prefixes, as exemplified in the brief excerpt from a conversation between the author and Bikotoro, a Nanti friend, given in (19). The final conversational turn of this excerpt demonstrates that the possessive prefix in the second line is functioning non-referentially.

(19) LM: tata   o-   ita?
          what   3fsg-   INTER.COP
          What is it?

      B: o-   shi.
          3fsg-   leaf
          (A) leaf (*lit.* its leaf)

      LM: tata   o-   shi?
          what   3fsg-   leaf
          The leaf of what (plant)?

      B: tera   no=   ogo   -t   -e.
          NEG.REAL   1sg=   know   -EPC   -IRR.I
          I don't know.

3.5 *Heads of possessive phrases*

Possessees constitute the heads of possessive NPs in Nanti, as demonstrated by verbal cross referencing and animacy agreement. Consider (20), where the possessive NP *iriniro Migero* 'Migero's mother' triggers feminine subject cross-reference marking on the verb. The possessee *iniro* 'mother' is feminine, while the possessor *Migero* is masculine, as indicated by the masculine possessive prefix on the possessee. The cross-reference marking on the verb, however, indicates that the possessive NP is treated as feminine, making the feminine possessee its head.

(20) iri-   iniro   Migero   o=   sat   -ak   -i   =ro
      3msg-   mother   personal.name   3fsg=   pierce -PERV   -REAL.I =3fsg
      Migero's mother pierced it.

Animacy agreement, which appears on certain underived adjectives and positive polarity existential verbs (Michael 2008: 294), supports the preceding conclusion. Consider (21) and (22), where the possessors are animate in both cases. The existential verb in (22) exhibits agreement with the inanimate possessee, confirming that it is the head of the possessive NP.

(21) ainyo   Marota   o-   tomi
      EXIST.ANIM   personal.name   3fsg-   son
      Marota has a son.

(22) aityo   Ihonira   i-   bito
      EXIST.INAN   personal.name   3fsg-   canoe
      Ihonira has a canoe.

3.6 *Semantics of possessive constructions*

Nanti possessive constructions express a relatively restricted range of notional relationships between possessors and possessees, compared to the possible range of such relationships attested cross-linguistically (see Chapter 1): part–whole, kinship, and ownership relations.

Part–whole relationships expressed by Nanti possessive constructions include those involving human and animal body parts, plant parts, and subparts of manufactured objects and geographical features. All canonical body parts are inalienably possessed, including relatively easily detachable ones such as hair (*nogishi* 'my hair'), and bodily substances such as blood (*norirana* 'my blood'). Non-canonical body parts, as delimited in Chapter 1, are generally referred to via verbal expressions, as in (23), or nominalizations thereof, as in (24). Perhaps the only non-canonical body part expressed via an inalienable possession construction is *(i-)tsimanki* '(his) shadow'. As discussed in §5, part–whole relations can also be expressed via classifier constructions.

(23) no=   sompo   -t   -ak   -i
      1sg=   have.a.boil   -EPC   -PERV   -REAL.I
      I have a boil. (= my boil)

(24) no=   kahent   -ø   -a   -ra
      1sg=   itch   -IMPERV   -REAL.A   -NOMZ
      where I itch (= my rash)

Part–whole relationships of manufactured objects are expressed through inalienable possession constructions. There are a small number of object part terms that are not based on metaphorical extensions of body part terms, as in (25), but most constructions that express part–whole relations of manufactured objects are transparent extensions of body part constructions, as in (26). A subpart of a geographical entity is given in (27).

(25) o-   tenina   pitotsi
      3msg-   interior.surface   canoe
      interior surface of canoe

(26) o-   tishita   kobiti
      3fsg-   back   pot
      sides of pot

(27) o-   tsapiha   oniroha
      3fsg-   river.bank   main.channel
      bank of main channel

All kin terms are obligatorily possessed, but the morphological realization of kin term possession varies, with an iconic relationship between the closeness of the kin term to ego and the morphological complexity of the appropriate possessive construction. Kin terms fall into three sets in this respect (Table 6.3).

The closest set of kin (Set 1) consists of parents and siblings and their classificatory extensions. The first-person possessive forms for this set are the structurally simplest of possessed forms, being identical to the vocative form, and exhibiting no possessive morphology whatsoever. Thus, for example, *ina* functions as both the vocative 'mother' and the first person possessive referential form, 'my mother'. Members of this class with second- or third-person possessors exhibit standard inalienable possessive constructions, as evident in Table 6.3. Note the suppletive relation between the vocative/first-person and second-/third-person forms, which holds for all kin terms in this set.

The next closest set of kin (Set 2) consists of spouses and all remaining consanguineal kin. Standard inalienable possession constructions are used for all persons of possessors in this set. One quasi-kin-term *(no-)shaninka* '(my) fellow', used to indicate a fellow Nanti, also belongs to this group.

The most distant set of kin (Set 3), consists of affinal kin. Strikingly, possessed forms of this set require an *alienable* possession construction, as evident in (28), despite otherwise behaving as inalienable nouns. Nanti thus manages to structurally express both the close association of affinal kin (by treating them as obligatorily possessed) and the more transient nature of the kinship ties in question (by requiring

TABLE 6.3. **Possessed kin term constructions**

	Person of possessor	
	1st	2nd or 3rd
Set 1	*ina* 'my mother'	*iri-iniro* 'his mother'
Set 2	*no-shinto* 'my daughter'	*iri-ishinto* 'his daughter'
Set 3	*no-shobaniri-te* 'my brother-in-law'	*i-shobaniri-te* 'his brother-in-law'

an alienable possession construction). Note that the 'son-in-law' form is the one exception with regards to the overlap between Set 3 forms and affinal kin terms, as it is formally identical to the term for 'sister's son' (a reflection of the cross-cousin marriage system), which belongs semantically to Set 2.

(28) no- shobaniri -te
      1sg- brother-in-law -ALN.POSS
      my brother in law

The final class of possessable items are those which can be owned. With some exceptions arising from recent cultural contacts (see §6), the only entities that are treated as ownable are those things which are created or acquired by human labour, or directly involved in it (e.g. rocks used as tools). This includes manufactured objects, planted cultigens, gathered items, speech, and songs. The vast majority of owned items are alienably possessed. Most things worn directly against the body, such as clothing, women's limb-bands, necklaces, men's headdresses, and climbing cords are inalienably possessed. All other owned entities are alienably possessed, with the exception of houses, bows, and songs. Interestingly, speech (e.g. *no-niha-ne* 'my speech') is obligatorily possessed (Nanti has no conventionalized expression for 'language' as such), but requires an alienable possession construction, much like affinal kin.

Features of the natural world that exist without human intervention and are not parts of larger geographical entities normally do not surface in possessive constructions (e.g. *niha* 'water', *inkenishiku* 'forest', *kenti* 'sun').

4 Possession in the verb phrase

4.1 *Predicative possession*

Nanti employs four major constructions for expressing predicative possession, which are distinguished in terms of the characteristics of the possessive relationship they express: (1) ownership vs. other possession types; (2) definite vs. indefinite owned items; and (3) positive vs. negative clausal polarity.

Nanti employs the verb *ashint* to express ownership of definite referents, as in (29) (Table 6.4). This verb can only express ownership relationships and cannot be used to express either part–whole or kinship possessive relationships.

(29) iryo ashint -ø -a =ro oka saburi.
      3msg.FOC own -IMPERV -REAL.A =3fsg this machete
      He owns this machete.

TABLE 6.4. Verbs in Nanti possessive expressions

	Ownership		
	Definite possessee	Indefinite possessee	Other types of possession
Positive polarity	*ashint*	*tim*	*ainyo, aityo*
Negative polarity	*tera/ hara ... ashint*	*tera/hara ... tim/ mameri*	*mameri*

Forms of possession other than ownership of definite entities are expressed with existential constructions. Ownership of indefinite entities by human possessors is typically expressed using the intransitive verb *tim*, as in (30).

(30) o= tim -ø -i i- sapiro
      3fsg= EXIST -IMPERV -REAL.I 3msg- clothes
      He has (some) clothes. (*lit.* His clothes exist.)

Note that *tim* also serves to express that an individual lives in a particular location, as in (31).

(31) i= tim -ø -i Montetoni -ku
      3msg= live -IMPERV -REAL.I Montetoni -LOC
      He lives in Montetoni.

The roots *ashint* and *tim* can also be employed to express that a definite or indefinite referent, respectively, is not owned by the subject of the verb, through the use of the clausal negations *tera* or *hara*.

The existential verbs *ainyo* and *aityo*, which are used with animate and inanimate entities respectively, and their negative polarity counterpart *mameri*, are employed to express other possessive relationships. When employed with non-possessed nouns, these existential constructions are typically ambiguous between a simple existential reading and a locative existential reading. When employed with possessed nouns, predicative possession is added to this range of possible meanings, as in (32). Predicative kinship and part–whole possession is exemplified in (32) and (33), respectively.

(32) Ainyo i- koritiri?
      EXIST.ANIM 3msg- spouse
      Does he have a wife?/Is his wife alive?/Is his wife there?

(33) Aityo i- gesi -ne.
      EXIST.INAN 3msg- crest -ALN.POSS
      It has a crest (speaking of an eagle).

The negative existential verb *mameri* is used in the negative counterparts to the preceding possessive constructions, as (34) and (35), which express negative kin and part–whole possession, respectively. It also serves as an 'exhaustive' counterpart to the negative possessive construction formed with *tim*, as in (36).

(34) Mameri   o-   tomi
      NEG.EXIST   3fsg-   son
      She doesn't have a son.

(35) mameri   o-   tsehi
      NEG.EXIST   3fsg-   spur
      It doesn't have a spur.

(36) mameri   i-   sapiro
      NEG.EXIST   3mS-   clothes
      He has no clothes at all.

Nanti does not exhibit a counterpart to 'belong', in the sense of having a dedicated lexical verb that denotes possession, whose subject is the possessee. It does, however, exhibit a copular construction that can be employed to focus the identity of a possessor, in which the possessee surfaces as the subject. The possessee is usually not expressed by a referential NP in this construction, and the focused possessor is usually expressed by a free pronoun, which follows a possessive pronoun, as in (37). The free pronoun can be replaced by a referential NP, as in (38).

(37) o-   nti   nashi   naro
      3fsg-   COP   1sg.POSS   1sg
      It is *mine*.

(38) o-   nti   irashi   Barentin
      3fsg-   COP   3msg.POSS   personal.name
      It is *Barentin's*.

A topicalized referential NP may be added to the clause, clarifying either the identity of the possessor, as in (39), or the possesee, as in (40). The latter example also illustrates the negative form of the construction.

(39) [Reho]ₜₒₚ   o-   nti   irashi   iriro
      personal.name   3fsg-   COP   3msg.POSS   3msg
      It is *his*, Reho's.

(40) [kobiti]ₜₒₚ   iro   -ta   o-   nti   ashi   -hegi   tsinane
      pot   3fsg.FOC -CNGNT   3fsg-   COP   3f.POSS   -PL   woman
      tera   o-   nti   pashi   -hegi   biro
      NEG.REAL   3fsg-   COP   2sg.POSS -PL   2sg
      Pots, *they*, as I was saying, are women's, not yours.

4.2 *Verbal arguments as possessors*

We now consider three constructions in which verbal arguments simultaneously function as possessors of either: (1) nominal elements in the verb stem; or (2) nominal elements external to the verb. The possessive relationships between the verbal arguments and nominal elements is summarized in Table 6.5.

4.2.1 *Noun Incorporation and Possessor Ascension*   Nanti exhibits productive noun incorporation (NI) with possessor ascension, which produces constructions in which a verbal argument, marked by a CRM, is also the possessor of the incorporated noun. In Nanti, only inalienably possessed part terms incorporate, and then only when the possessive NPs of which they form a part correspond, in the counterpart sentences without NI, to either: (1) the subjects of intransitive stative verbs, or (2) the objects of transitive verbs. NI into a stative intransitive verb is exemplified in (41b), where comparison with the counterpart sentence without NI in (41a) shows that the root of the erstwhile subject (and possessee of the possessive NP) incorporates immediately after the verb root, and that the possessor of the possessive NP 'ascends' to become the subject of the verb. The verbal subject in (41b) is thus simultaneously the possessor of the incorporated body part.

(41) a. o=   katsi   -t   -ak   -i   no-   bori
         3fsg=   hurt   -EPC   -PERV   -REAL.I   1sg- leg
         My leg hurts.

      b. no=   katsi   -pori   -t   -ak   -i
         1sg=   hurt   -leg   -EPC   -PERV   -REAL.I
         I leg-hurt.

The intransitive verbs that undergo noun incorporation typically express qualities or attributes, as in (42).

(42) i=   kuta   -panki   -t   -ak   -i
      3msg=   be.white   -feather -EPC   -PERV   -REAL.I
      He is white-feathered.

TABLE 6.5. **Possessive relationships in Nanti verbal constructions**

Construction type	Transitivity	Possessive relation
noun incorporation	intransitive	$[\text{SU}]_{\text{PR}}=\text{V-}[\text{N}]_{\text{PE}}\text{-TAM}$
	transitive	$\text{SU}=\text{V-}[\text{N}]_{\text{PE}}\text{-TAM}=[\text{OBJ}]_{\text{PR}}$
Reversative	intransitive	$[\text{SU}]_{\text{PR}}=[\text{N}]_{\text{PE}}\text{-REV-TAM}$
	transitive	$\text{SU}=\text{CAUS-}[\text{N}]_{\text{PE}}\text{-REV-TAM}=[\text{OBJ}]_{\text{PR}}$
Separative	transitive	$\text{SU}=\text{V-APPLIC-}[\text{OBJ}]_{\text{PR}}\ [\text{DEMOTED.OBJ}]_{\text{PE}}$

Object incorporation into a transitive verb is exemplified in (43a, b), where the possessor of the erstwhile object possessive NP becomes the object of the verb, which is now also the possessor of the incorporated body part.

(43) a. no=   mapa   -t   -ak   -i   =ro   i-   gito
        1sg=   pulverize   -EPC   -PERV -REAL.I =3fsg 3msg-   head
        I pulverized its head (speaking of a smoked fish).

     b. no=   mapa   -gito   -t   -ak   -i   =ri
        1sg=   pulverize -head   -EPC   -PERV -REAL.I =3msg
        I head-pulverized it.

The incorporated inalienable root, it should be noted, exhibits slightly different phonological behaviour in transitive and intransitive verbs. In transitive verbs, as in (44b), incorporated roots exhibit initial-consonant voicing, as they do in possessive constructions generally. When incorporated into intransitive verbs, however, the same roots do not exhibit voicing, as is evident in (42).

(44) a. no=   ag   -ak   -i   =ro   i-   banki
        1sg=   get   -PERV -REAL.I =3fsg 3msg-   feather
        I plucked its feather.

     b. no=   ag   -a   -banki   -t   -ak   -i   =ri
        1sg=   get   -EPV   -feather -EPC   -PERV -REAL.I =3msg
        I defeathered him.

Examples like the preceding illustrate the communicative motivation for noun incorporation in Nanti: the sentences without NI typically locate the action of the verb relative to a subpart of the affected entity, while the counterpart sentences with NI emphasize the effects on the whole of the affected entity.

The pattern of possessor ascension described above for transitive verbs has one important exception: when the subject of the verb and the possessor of the incorporated noun are coreferential, the possessor does not raise to object, but is instead omitted entirely, as in (45b). The resulting verb is thus syntactically intransitive. In such cases, then, the subject of the verb is also the possessor of the incorporated part, as in the stative intransitive cases discussed above. Interestingly, in cases like these, incorporated nouns appear in their *transitive* incorporated form—that is, with initial consonant voicing—as is evident in comparing (46) with (41a, b), so that these verbs retain indications of their transitive origins.

(45) a. i=   pote   -t   -ak   -i   =ro   i-   gito.
        3msg= shake   -EPC   -PERV -REAL.I =3fsg 3msg-   head
        He shook his head.

     b. i=   pote   -gito   -t   -ak   -i.
        3msg= shake   -head   -EPC   -PERV -REAL.I
        He shook his head.

(46) no=   tot   -a   -bori   -t   -ak   -i
     1sg=   cut   -EPV   -leg   -EPC   -PERV -REAL.I
     I cut my leg.

4.2.2 *Possession in reversative denominal derivation*   Another construction that encodes a part–whole relationship between a verbal argument and a nominal element in the verb stem is the reversative denominal derivation. Nanti exhibits a reversative suffix that attaches to verb stems, as in (47), where the derived stem indicates the reversal of the action denoted by the verb root.

(47) no=   ashi   -reh   -an   -ak   -i   =ro
     1sg=   cover   -REV   -ABL   -PERV -REAL.I =3fsg
     I uncovered it.

The reversative can also derive intransitive verb stems from nominal elements such as classifiers and part terms, however, as in (48). When the reversative attaches to a part term, the resulting stem indicates the loss of the part denoted by the nominal root by the possessor of the part, which is expressed as the subject of the derived verb.

(48) o=   ponkiti   -reh   -an   -ak   -i
     3fsg= foot   -REV   -ABL   -PERV -REAL.I
     Its foot came off.

When the denominal reversative derivation acts on a classifier, as in (49), the resulting stem denotes the breaking off of a piece of the shape indicated by the classifier from the whole to which it pertains, which surfaces as the subject of the verb.

(49) o=   kota   -reh   -ak   -i
     3fsg= CL:PLANK -REV   -PERV -REAL.I
     A plank-shaped piece broke off of it (a piece of boiled manioc).

Stems formed with the reversative verbal derivation often undergo causativization with the non-agent causative *o*[+voice]-,[1] as in (50). The whole from which the part is broken off by the causer appears, as expected, as the object of the verb.

(50) i=   o-   gota   -reh   -ak   -i   =ro
     1sg=   CAUS:NAGNT- CL:PLANK -REV   -PERV -REAL.I =3fsg
     He broke a plank-shaped piece off of it (a log, while chopping firewood).

4.2.3 *The separative applicative*   Finally, we consider the separative applicative *-apitsa*, which indicates both that the applied object is the erstwhile possessor of

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[1] The non-agentive causative morpheme consists of the prefixation of the segment indicated and voicing of the following consonant.

the demoted object, and that the verbal subject is involved in depriving the possessor of the demoted object. Comparing (51a) and (51b), for example, we see that the object of (51a), *kotsiro* 'knife', is demoted when the verb undergoes derivation with the separative applicative in (51b), and that the applied object in (51b) is interpreted as the owner of the knife. The construction in (51b) thus exhibits external possession.

(51) a. i=   koshi -t   -ak   -i   =ro   kotsiro
        3msg=   steal -EPC   -PERV -REAL.I =3fsg   knife
        He stole the knife.

     b. i=   koshi -t   -apitsa   -ak -i   =na   kotsiro
        3msg=   steal -EPC   -APPLIC:SEP -PERV -REAL.I =1sg   knife
        He stole the knife from me.

The possessive relationship expressed in the separative applicative construction may be an alienable ownership relation, as in (51b), above, or an inalienable relationship involving either kin, as in (52), or inalienably possessed manufactured objects. Deprivation of a part cannot be expressed by this construction, which can, however, be expressed via the reversative derivation (see §4.2.2).

(52) i=   r-   ag   -apitsa   -t   -∅   -e   =na
     3msg=   IRR- take -APPLIC:SEP -EPC -IMPERV -IRR.I =1sg
     no-   koritiri
     1sg-   spouse
     He will take my wife from me.

5 Possession-like constructions: part–whole classifier constructions

One of the common means for expressing part–whole relationships in Nanti involves a possession-like classifier construction. Nanti has a multiple classifier system where classifiers can appear affixed to alienable nouns, incorporated into verbs and adjectives, and infixed into numerals (Michael 2008: 332–9). In the first morphosyntactic context, they often convey part–whole relationships, as in (53), where the alienable noun can be taken to denote the 'whole' and the shape-based classifier the 'part'. Note that while the entire noun-classifier form can be definite, the whole from which it comes cannot be construed as definite, as evident in the gloss for (53), distinguishing it from the part–whole possessive constructions discussed in §3. Moreover, the classifier part–whole relationship grades into a shape-substance relationship, as in (54), demonstrating its indirect association with possession.

(53) yoga   sega   -shi
     that   sega.palm   -CL:slender.leaf
     that sega palm leaf, *but not*: a/the leaf of that sega palm

(54) kuri   -kii
     peach.palm   -CL:stick
     a stick from a peach palm/a rod of peach palm wood

6 Culture contact and possession

The Nanti possessive system has been affected by recent interactions between Nantis and non-Nantis. Nantis made contact with their Matsigenka neighbours in the late 1980s, and culturally novel concepts and manufactured goods began to filter into the Nanti communities in earnest in the early 1990s (Michael 2008: 28–36).

All introduced items have been treated as alienably possessable, even items such as clothes and machetes, which now number among individuals' most intimate possessions. All associated loanwords have been incorporated seamlessly into the morphosyntax of Nanti alienable possessive constructions, exhibiting both possessive voicing (see §3.3), as in (55a, b) and (56a, b), and alienable possession suffix allomorphy (see §3.2), as evident in comparing (55b) and (56b).

(55) a. kotsiro   (< *cuchillo* 'knife', Sp.)   b. i-   gotsiro   -te
        knife   3msg-   knife   -ALN.POSS
        knife   his knife

(56) a. pira   (< *pila* 'battery', Sp.)   b. pi-   bira   -ne
        flashlight   2sg-   flashlight -ALN.POSS
        flashlight/torch   your flashlight/torch

One aspect of the possessive system that has been affected by contact with outsiders concerns the ownability of land. Nantis previously conceived of ownership as extending solely to manufactured objects, cultigens, and gathered things; land *per se* was not considered ownable, except insofar as someone who had cleared and planted portions of forest had exclusive usufructal rights to it while the cultigens they planted were producing.

Beginning in the mid-1990s however, Nantis began to encounter Western concepts of land ownership through interactions with Matsigenkas, and starting in the early 2000s, with Peruvian government officials. Matsigenkas warned Nantis that unless the government 'gave' the Nantis the land on which they lived, the government could 'take it away' from them, a notion that was clearly both puzzling and worrisome to Nantis. In 2003, officials from the nearby Manu National Park visited the community to explictly forbid them from farming, hunting, and fishing there (despite the fact that the park constituted roughly half of the Nanti hunting range). This interaction was related to me with the *pariki* (park officials) being quoted as saying *oka kipatsi onti nashihegi naro* 'This land is ours'.

As a result of these experiences, Nantis have begun to talk about land being ownable, at least with respect to outside entities such as the government, so that forms such as *no-gipatsi-te* 'my land (alienable)' are now used by Nantis. There is no doubt that Nanti conceptions of ownership are in transition, which is reflected in changes to the possession classes to which formerly unpossessable entities belong.

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7

Possession and association in Galo language and culture

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1 Introduction

This chapter primarily discusses the grammar and semantics of possession and related structures in Galo, a Tibeto-Burman language of the Western Tani subgroup spoken in central Arunachal Pradesh state, North East India.[1] Following this introduction, §2 discusses possession in the noun phrase, while predicative possession is discussed in §3. Sections 4 and 5 adopt a cultural-evolutionary perspective, claiming that the robust grammatical expression of possession in Galo is not mirrored by similarly robust cultural concepts of ownership and privacy. It is therefore suggested that a more general concept of ASSOCIATION is more likely to underlie the linguistic expression of 'possession' than is POSSESSION itself—in Galo and, quite likely, in other languages.

2 Possession in the noun phrase: the Genitive

After an overview of Galo noun phrase structure in §2.1, this section discusses structural aspects of Genitive marking in §2.2, core Genitive functions in §2.3, and extended Genitive functions in §2.4.

2.1 *Preliminary on Galo noun phrase structure*

Galo noun phrase (NP) structure is fairly rigid, and consists of well-defined position classes whose constituents are usually grammatical words. In Figure 7.1, PRHD is a