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Adnominal possession

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0. Introduction: Adnominal possession in a cross-linguistic perspective

- Structural types of possessive NPs across languages
- Polysemantic patterns of possessive NPs: What relations can be rendered by possessive NPs (PNPs) across languages?

1. (Structural) types of "prototypical" possessive NPs

1.1. Criteria for identifying "prototypical" PNPs

Semantics: a possessive construction can be used for referring to legal ownership (*Peter's house, the girl's hat*), or to kinship relations or to body-part relations (*Peter's brother / foot*).

Structure: the possessor and the possessee in adnominal possession together form one NP, a possessive NP, or at least belong to one NP.

Excluded are:

- predicative possession (*Peter has a hat* or *The hat belongs to Peter*), and
- external-possession constructions (Swedish *Jag tittade honom i ögonen* 'I looked in his eye', lit. 'I looked him in the eye').

Three further limitations:

- Only the most common, unmarked, 'standard' means of building possessive construction;
- Only PNPs with non-pronominal possessors;
- Mainly PNPs with specific, referential possessors.

Classifications are created by the researcher for a particular purpose rather than are objectively given:

- classifications can be based on different criteria, and
- they can differ in their granularity (splitting vs. lumping)

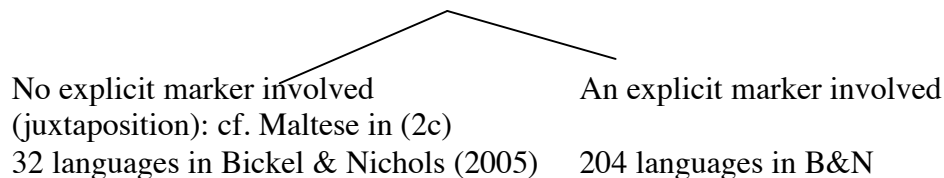
1.2. Word order (Dryer 2005)

	GN	NG	No dominant order	
			Different constructions: G ₁ N & NG ₂	The same construction: GN/NG
Languages	Finnish	Italian	English ('s-gen. vs. of-gen)	Lithuanian
Number	608	415	82	

Table 1: word order types for PNPs in Dryer (2005; a 1105 language sample)

1.3. Structural patterns - marking what and how

- The **broadest possible classification**: is there any explicit marker for expressing the relation between the possessor and the possessee?



- The next level: Bickel & Nichols (2005)**, “Locus of marking in possessive NPs”: whether the marker is associated with the head, dependent, both or none, where the marker is either an affix, or a separate word.

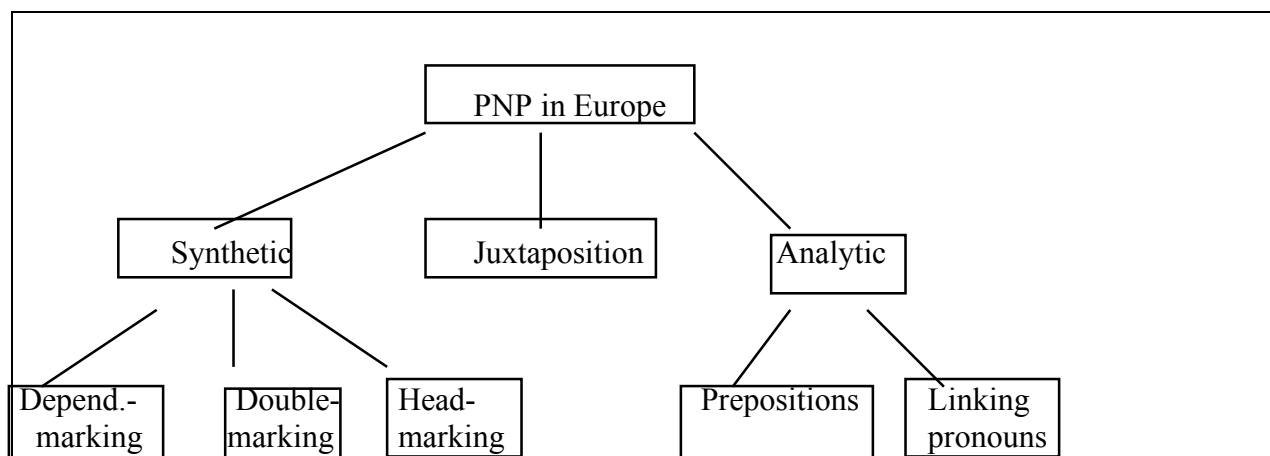
	Head-marking	Dependent-marking	Double-marking	Zero-marking	Other
Total: 235 languages	77	98	22	32	6

Table 2: locus of marking in possessive NPs in Bickel & Nichols (2005)

Note:

- only one (major) pattern for each language
- marking – both synthetic and analytic

- Koptjevskaja-Tamm (2002, 2003)**: major structural types of PNPs in Europe



1.4. Less frequent PNP types

1.4.1. Compounding

(2) Swedish, the dialects of Western Bothnia

papa-bok-a 'Daddy's book'
daddy-book-DEF.F.SG

1.4.2. Agreeing genitives (Suffixaufnahme)

(3) Romani agreeing genitives:

- a. *či lav* [le *kraj-es-k-a* *rakla*]
not take:PRES.1SG the:M.SG.OBL king-OBL.SG-GEN-F.SG.OBL daughter:ACC
'I will not take the king's daughter!' (OL:24)
- b. ...*parno huradi*, *spesial* [biav-es-k-e *gada*] *pe late*
white dressed:F.SG special wedding-OBL.SG-GEN-PL clothes (PL) on her
'dressed in white, a special wedding-dress' (OL:60)

1.4.3. Inflecting prepositions and possessive "articles" (e.g., in Albanian and Rumanian)

(4) Albanian

- a. *libr-i* *i* *nxënës-it*
book_M-DEF.SG.NOM ATTR:M.SG.NOM pupil-DEF.GEN/DAT.SG
'the pupil's book'
- b. *nëpërmjet libr-it* *të* *nxënës-it*
with book_M-DEF.SG.GEN/DAT ATTR:M.SG.GEN/DAT pupil-DEF.GEN/DAT.SG
'(with) the book of the pupil'

1.4.4. Free (or floating) marking

(5) Chamorro (Austronesian; Guam; Topping 1980:223, 200)

- a. *i=lepblo=n* *estudiante*
ART=book=LINK student
'the student's book'
- b. *i=dankalo=n* *taotao* c. *i=kareta=n* *Japanese*
ART=big=LINK man ART=car=LINK Japanese
'the big man' 'Japanese car'

1.5. The distribution of PNPs across the world (WALS)

Table 4: The global distribution of PNP types (Bickel & Nichols 2005)

Dependent-marking: frequent in all parts of Africa, Eurasia, and Australia-New Guinea.	98
Head-marking: frequent in the Americas and the Pacific	77
Zero-marking uncommon: mostly found near to the equator, otherwise no true clusters.	32
Double-marking rare: around the Eurasian periphery, in the Himalayas, and along the Pacific coast of North America.	22
Other types	6
Total:	235

1.6. What determines the choice between different constructions?

Nenets: double-marking is used more rarely and only in the nominative, genitive, and accusative:
 Mari: double-marking is preferred with the possessee nominals in the nominative and accusative, while dependent-marking is preferred otherwise.,

2. Relations expressed within possessive NPs: general

Seiler 1983:4 – 7: Linguistic possession is generally difficult to grasp and at least a partial answer to what counts as possession should be sought in the bio-cultural sphere .

If a construction is identified as a PNP according to the criteria in 1.1., what other relations can be rendered by tokens with the same structure, both within one language and across languages?

Modification: an entity, indicated by the head of a PNP, is characterized via its relation to another entity, indicated by the dependent:

- a. anchoring relations, involving the referents of the head and the dependent in a NP
- b. non-anchoring relations – DURATION , ‘a journey of one month’, MATERIAL, ‘a golden cup’, QUANTITY , ‘a ship of thousand tons’, AGE, ‘a girl of 17 years’, etc.;

Apposition: dependent and the head in PNP are coreferential (*the city of London*);

Partitive and pseudo-partitive relations: *a slice of that cake, a cup of tea*

Table 5.

	English	Lithuanian	Swedish
POSSESSIVE NPs	<i>a house of the teacher</i>	<i>mokytoj-o namas</i> teacher-GEN house	<i>lärarens hus</i> – s-genitives
NON-ANCHORING CONSTRUCTIONS	<i>a ring of gold</i>	<i>auks-o žedas</i> gold-GEN ring	<i>en guld-ring</i> – compounding
PARTITIVES	<i>a slice of that cake</i>	<i>gabalėlis t-o pyrag-o</i> / slice this-GEN cake-GEN / <i>t-o pyrag-o gabalėlis</i> this-GEN cake-GEN slice	<i>en bit av den där kakan</i> – prepositional attributes
PSEUDO-PARTITIVES	<i>a glass of milk</i>	<i>stiklinė pien-o</i> glass milk-GEN	<i>ett glas mjölk</i> – juxtaposition

3. The domain of anchoring relations

3.1. General

English PNPs with animate ‘s-genitives:

LEGAL OWNERSHIP (*Peter’s hat*),

KIN relations (*Peter’s brother*)

BODY-PART vs. person/animal relations (*Peter’s leg*)

DISPOSAL (*Peter’s office*)

AUTHORSHIP (*Peter’s poem*)

CARRIER OF PROPERTIES (*Peter’s braveness*)

SOCIAL RELATIONS (*Peter’s neighbour*) and many others.

Inanimate “possessors”:

TEMPORAL relations (*Monday’s performance*)
 LOCATIVE relations (*Stockholm’s banks*), and others.

The common semantic (or pragmatic) denominator in the majority of PNPs is the function of the possessors as *anchors* (Hawkins 1978, 1991; Fraurud 1990), or *reference point entities* (Langacker, e.g. 1991: 170, 1995; Taylor 1996: 17) for identification of the head’s referents: “in opting to use a possessive expression, the speaker is instructing the hearer on how best to identify the referent that he, the speaker, intends” (Taylor *ibid.*).

The reference point image schema is a cognitive model (image schema) largely present in human experience, which “involves the notion *mental contact*,.... By definition, to establish mental contact with an entity is to single it out for individual conscious awareness. The reference-point model is simply the idea that we commonly invoke the conception of one entity for the purpose of establishing mental contact with another”. Three categories – ownership, kinship and physical part/whole relations – are prototypes, since “each involves a clear and clearly defined reference point relationship” (Langacker 2000:176-177).

3.2. Factors determining possible interpretations of possessive NPs

The ontological class of the dependent: *the dog’s bowl* (LEGAL OWNERSHIP excluded) vs. *my bowl*
Semantics of the head: e.g., relational vs. non-relational nouns. Many more nouns are relational in a weak sense, in that their meaning itself presupposes or invokes specific relations (cf. Pustejovsky’s “qualia structure”).

Context (in conjunction with the two others): *I’d like to have a plate of Katja’s soup* uttered by my husband and referring to the soup I have cooked with a fish that had been caught by our daughter Katja.

3.3. Cross-linguistics differences in the domain of anchoring relations

Ontological class of the dependent: “animacy” splits (normally determined not entirely by animacy, but also by definiteness etc.)

Semantics of the head:

- alienability splits (relational nouns AS A WHOLE CLASS are never opposed to non-relational ones)
- action nominal constructions (nominalizations)
- temporal and locative relations
- lexical idiosyncrasies

Context: differences in the role of context for “claiming” or “reclaiming” possessive relations between entities.

NB: the various roles traditionally ascribed to human dependents in PNPs, such as LEGAL OWNERSHIP, DISPOSAL, AUTHOR or ORIGINATOR, CARRIER OF PROPERTIES, SOCIAL RELATIONS etc. can all be coded in one and the same way – PNPs do normally not distinguish among these relations (which does not preclude the existence of other constructions which are dedicated to some of them).

3.4. A couple of examples.

3.4.1. Action nominalizations: *Peter's singing, Alexander's conquest of Egypt etc.*

How are the arguments of action nominals expressed across languages? Results for a global 169 language-sample: Koptjevskaja-Tamm 2005 (WALS); (also 1993 and 2003)

<u>Sentential</u> : dependent-marking of the finite clause is retained for S, A and P	25 languages
<u>Possessive-Accusative</u> : S/A treated as possessors, P retains sentential marking	28 languages
<u>Ergative-Possessive</u> : S/P treated as possessors, A treated differently	21 languages
<u>Double-Possessive</u> : All major arguments treated as possessors	7 languages
<u>Other</u> : Minor patterns	6 languages
<u>Mixed</u> : Several patterns in the same language	13 languages
<u>Valency-reduced</u> : Not both A and P in the same construction	23 languages
No action nominals	42 languages

(6) a. Komi-Zyryan (Possessive-Accusative)

me təd-a [soš'ed-lən məsk-əs guš'al-əm] jiliš'.

I know-NPST [neighbour-GEN cow-ACC steal-AN] about

'I know about the neighbour's stealing the cow' (Natal'ja Serdobol'skaja p.c.)

b. Finnish: Double-Possessive

[Vanhempien taloudellisen tuen antaminen]

Parent-GEN.PL economic support-GEN.SG give-AN.SG.NOM

on riippuvaista tuloista

is dependent income-PART.PL

'Parents' giving of economic support is dependent on their incomes'

(Hakulinen & Karlsson 1979: 395, (198))

(7) Hungarian (Valency-reduced; FÉrenc Kiefer p.c.)

a. *Péter ujság-olvas-ás-a*

Peter newspaper-read-AN-3SG.POSS

'Peter's reading of newspapers'

b. *Norvégia Németország által történ-ő / történ-t elfoglal-ás-a*

Norway Germany of happen-PRES.PTCP / PST.PTCP occupy-AN-POSS

'Germany's occupation of Norway.'

The reason for the cross-linguistic variation (somewhat simplified): action nominals are intermediate between typical verbs and nouns, and action nominal constructions are intermediate between clauses and noun phrases.

3.4.2. "(Re)claiming possessive relations"

Turkic and Uralic: a possessive construction may optionally be used to indicate some kind of situational relationship between two entities if the speaker chooses to emphasize it. In ex. (8), 'its (i.e., the big dog's) small dog' \approx 'the small dog with which the big dog was walking':

(8) West Ostyak (Nikolaeva 1999: 84.)

man-sə-ŋən kat amp. wul amp parem-əs-li aj amp-əl
 go-part-3du two dog big dog bite-part-3sg small dog-3sg
 'Two dogs were walking. The big dog bit the small dog (lit. 'its small dog').'

However, all the quoted numerous examples of such extended possessive uses (cf. also Schroeder 1999: Ch. 6, Fraurud 2001) involve PNPs without lexical possessors, or, even more specifically, PNPs consisting of a head with a possessive affix or clitic and without any other overt possessor.

4. The domain of non-anchoring relations

4.1. Introduction

Lithuanian: genitives with multiple functions

- (9) Anchoring relations *Petr-o* *namas* / *pirštas* / *brolis*
 Peter-gen house:nom finger:nom brother:nom
 'Peter's house / finger / brother'
- (10) Non-anchoring relations a. *auks-o* *žedas* b. *kav-os* *puodelis*
 gold-gen ring:nom coffee-gen cup:nom
 'a golden ring' 'a coffee cup'

Similarities: adnominal dependents **characterize entities via their relations to other entities.**

Differences:

1. the dependent in (10) is not individualized;
2. the dependent-head combination refers to a subclass of a broader class and often functions as a classificatory label for it, suggesting that the dependent and the head together correspond to one concept;
3. the head cannot be identified via its relation to the dependent.

Table 6: the most frequent non-anchoring relations

<i>No direct correspondence to anchoring relations</i>	<i>Corresponding to anchoring relations</i>	<i>Relation to anchoring relations not clear</i>
MATERIAL	PREDESTINATION (corresponding to LEGAL OWNERSHIP or DISPOSAL)	Various abstract qualifications of entities
PURPOSE	KIN-TERMS	
QUALITY	LOCATION	
AGE	TIME	
DURATION	SPECIES	
MEASURE / QUANTITY	ORIGIN / PRODUCER (AGENT)	

4.2. Formal differences between anchoring and non-anchoring adnominals in languages of the Lithuanian type

1. Non-anchoring adnominals cannot contain any demonstratives, possessives or other explicit markers of definiteness, specificity or referentiality.
2. Consistent cross-linguistic regularities in the position of anchoring vs. non-anchoring adnominals with respect to the nominal head:

if one and the same head combines with both anchoring and non-anchoring adnominals, the non-anchoring always appears closer to the head than the anchoring one.

(11) Lithuanian

- | | | | | | |
|------------------------|----------|----------|----------------------|------------|----------|
| a. motin-os | auks-o | žied-as | b. Petr-o | kav-os | puodelis |
| mother-gen | gold-gen | ring-nom | Peter-gen | coffee-gen | cup |
| POSSESSOR | MATERIAL | HEAD | POSSESSOR | PURPOSE | HEAD |
| ‘Mother’s golden ring’ | | | ‘Peter’s coffee cup’ | | |

3. Even when only one genitive adnominal is present, its position relative to other attributes may vary according to its referentiality (and meaning). Thus, in both Georgian and Finnish, adjectives and adjectival phrases normally follow individualized possessors, but precede non-individualized ones (Boeder & Schroeder 2000: 179, Jokinen 1991, Christen 200: 504, 513):

(12) Finnish (Christen 2001:513)

- | | | | | | |
|--------------------------------------|------------|----------|----------------------------|---------------|----------|
| a. kaapungi-n | aktiiviset | asukkaat | b. aktiiviset | kaupungi-n | asukkaat |
| town-gen | active:pl | people | active:pl | town-gen | people |
| LOC (REF) | ADJECTIVE | HEAD | ADJ | LOC (NON-REF) | HEAD |
| ‘the active people in / of the town’ | | | ‘(the) active town people’ | | |

4. Some words can occasionally distinguish between their “referential genitive” and “non-referential genitive” – the latter involve shorter and/or morphologically less complex markers. **Georgian**: non-referential genitives have an additionally “short allomorph” *-i* in addition to the usual *-is*, e.g. *čipl-is xe-Ø* > *čipl-i xe-Ø* ‘beech-gen tree-nom’ (‘a / the beech tree’, Boeder & Schroeder 2000:168).

5. Non-anchoring genitives may show various symptoms of not being an autonomous noun any longer:

- a. Condensation of the head-genitive construction into a compound (e.g., no attributes to modifiers).
- b. Acquisition of certain adjectival properties, e.g. possible coordination with adjectives:

(13) Non-anchoring adnominals coordinated with adjectives

- | | | | | | | | | |
|--------|---|-------|------------|---|--------------------|---------------|----------|------------------|
| a. Rus | Vse | ix | synov’ja | – | vysok-ogo | rost-a | i | širokoplečie |
| | all:pl | their | son:pl.nom | – | tall-gen.m.sg | height-gen | and | broad.shouldered |
| | ‘All their sons are tall (lit. ‘of tall height’) and have broad shoulders (lit. ‘broad-shouldered’) | | | | | | | |
| b. Lit | rank-u | | ir | | protinis | | darbas | |
| | hand-gen.pl | | and | | intellectual:m.nom | | work:nom | |
| | ‘physical (lit. ‘of hands’) and intellectual work’ (Say 2002) | | | | | | | |

4.5. Thrilling questions for the future

1. Which morphosyntactic strategies are combined in one and the same language and how are these strategies employed for the different relations?

E.g., Lithuanian slightly prefers derived adjectives for reference to MATERIAL (cf. *auks-in-is žiedas* ‘gold-ADJ-NOM.M.SG ring’ instead of *aukso žiedas* ‘gold-GEN ring’), while Hungarian regularly uses derived adjectives for PREDESTINATION (*egy király-i ing* ‘a king-ADJ shirt’, lit. ‘a royal shirt’), SPACE (*egy város-i bank* ‘a city-ADJ bank’, ‘a city bank’) and TIME (*egy tavasz-i reggel* ‘a spring-ADJ morning’, ‘a spring morning’).

2. Where does the border between the typical anchoring and non-anchoring patterns go?

Cf. neutralization of the anchoring vs. non-anchoring distinction with definite heads in Albanian or with indefinite anchoring adnominals in Mordvin

3. The potential use of proper names as non-anchoring adnominals, i.e., as denoting properties associated with a certain individual rather than the individual him/herself (cf. Kolliakou 1999).
Eine Mozartsonate

4. How do constructions expressing non-anchoring relations arise?

5. Pseudo-partitive and partitive nominal constructions

5.0. Definitions

Partitive nominal constructions (PCs) Pseudo-partitive nominal constructions (PPCs)

- | | | | |
|------|---|------|--|
| (14) | (a) a glass of that good wine
(b) a pile of Mary’s books | (15) | (a) a glass of wine
(b) a pile of books |
|------|---|------|--|

Both partitive and pseudo-partitive nominal constructions are noun phrases consisting of two nominals, one of which is a quantifier (<i>cup, pile</i>).	
The same quantifiers may appear in both types of NPs, but their role is different:	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> the Quantified refers to a definite, specific, or in one or another way presupposed set of items (‘Mary’s books’) or to a definite, specific, or presupposed entity (‘that good wine’), and the nominal Quantifier indicates a <i>subset</i> or a <i>subpart</i> which is selected from it. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> In a pseudo-partitive nominal construction the same word merely quantifies over the kind of entity (‘wine’, ‘books’) indicated by the other nominal.

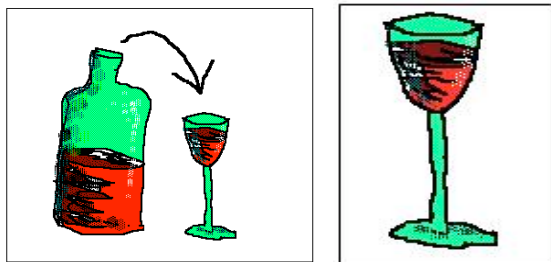


Figure 1: 'A glass of that wine' vs. 'a glass of wine' (pictures from Damberg 2002: 6-7)

5.1. Partitive constructions in the European languages

- PCs in the European languages tend to be formed with an overt marker associated with the Substance, where overt markers are either inflectional (case endings) or analytical (prepositions).
- overt markers in PCs normally originate as markers of 'direction FROM' / 'separation' (Ablative and the like) and/or as possessive markers.

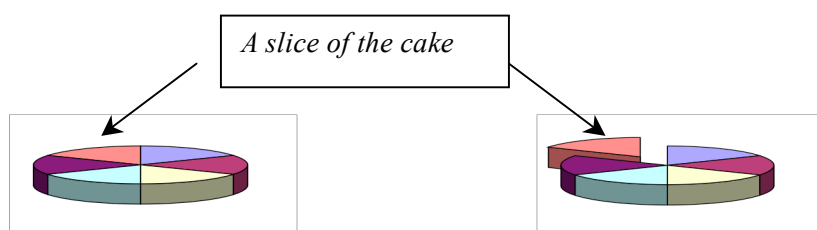


Figure 2: The Separative vs. Possessive grammaticalization sources for 'a slice of the cake'.

(14) Hungarian (Edith Moravcsik p.c.)
egy liter ab-ból a piros lé-ből
 one litre that-ABL the red juice-ABL
 'a litre of that red juice'

(15) Finnish
 a. *pala tätä kakkua*
 bit:NOM this:PART cake:PART
 b. *pala tästä kakusta*
 bit:NOM this:ELAT cake:ELAT
 'a bit of this cake'
 c. *tuotanno-n valta-osa*
 production-GEN dominating-part
 'the bulk of production'

(16) Basque (Alan King p.c.)
 a. *tarta goxo hon-etatik zati bat*
 cake delicious this-ABL piece one
 b. *tarta goxo hon-en zati bat*
 cake delicious this-GEN piece one
 'a piece of this good cake'

5.2. Pseudo-partitive constructions in the languages of Europe

PPCs with overt markers attached to the Substance

Juxtapositional PPCs

Juxtaposition – the dominant strategy:

(17) a. Udmurt (Pirrko Suihkonen p.c.)

kyk s'umyk ts'aj
two cup:NOM tea:NOM
'two cups of tea'

b. Meadow-Mari (Marijskij jazyk dlja vsex 1: 93)

kok kilo šere olma
two kilogram:NOM sweet apple:NOM
'two kilograms of apples'

c. Erzya-Mordvin (Paasonen MW 2033))

kanst't'en'in' [stopka vinin'e]
hand:PAST.3PL I:DAT [glass wine:NOM]
'they handed me a glass of wine'

d. Hungarian

három liter piros lé
three litre red juice:NOM
'three litres of red juice'

Overt markers associated with the substance nominal:

1. More or less identical to those involved in PNPs (Slavic except for Bulgarian and Macedonian; a number of Daghestanian languages; Irish and Scottish Gaelic, marginally, German)

2. Originally separative markers, distinct from possessive markers (Finnic):

(18) Finnish: *säkki perunoita* (sack potato:PART.PL) 'a sack of potatoes'

3. more or less identical to those involved in PNPs, but originally separative ones (Romance, English; marginally German)

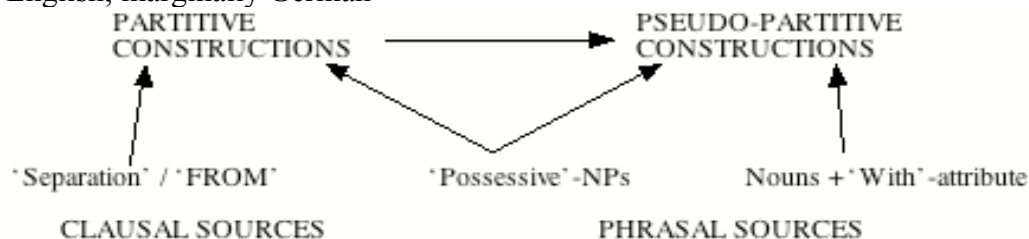


Fig. 3: the rise of PCs and PPCs with overt markers in Europe

Table 8: structural types of pseudo-partitive constructions in the languages of Europe

Language families	PPCs with overt markers		Juxtapositional PPCs
	Inflection	Prepositions	
Indo-European	BALTIC SLAVONIC (except Bulgarian and Macedonian)		SLAVONIC: Bulgarian, Macedonian
	GERMANIC: German Icelandic (mrg.)	GERMANIC: German (mrg.) English Icelandic Faroese Swedish (mrg.) Danish (mrg.) Norwegian (mrg.) CELTIC: Welsh, Irish Scottish Gaelic ROMANCE: (exc. Romansch)	GERMANIC: German, Yiddish Dutch English (mrg.) Icelandic (mrg.) Swedish Danish Norwegian ROMANCE: Romansch OTHER: Greek Albanian Armenian Romani
Language families	PPCs with overt markers		Juxtapositional PPCs
	Inflection	Prepositions	
Finno-Ugric	FENNIC		
	NON-FENNIC: Eastern Sami		NON-FENNIC: N and W Sami Hungarian Mari, Mordvin Komi, Udmurt
NE Caucasian	DAGHESTANIAN: Agul, Akhvakh, Avar, Bezhta, Budukh, Chamalin, Godoberi, Khinalug, Khvarshi, Kryz, Lak, Rutul, Tabassaran, Tzahur		DAGHESTANIAN: Budukh, Kryz; Lezgian
NW Caucasian			Abkhaz
Kartvelian			Georgian, Mengrelian
Basque			Basque
Semitic			Assyrian, Maltese
Turkic			Turkish

Footnote: mrg = marginal use of a particular construction type in the language

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