

POSSESSION IN BEJA: ADNOMINAL POSSESSION AND NON-ANCHORING RELATIONS

Martine Vanhove – martine.vanhove@cnrs.fr

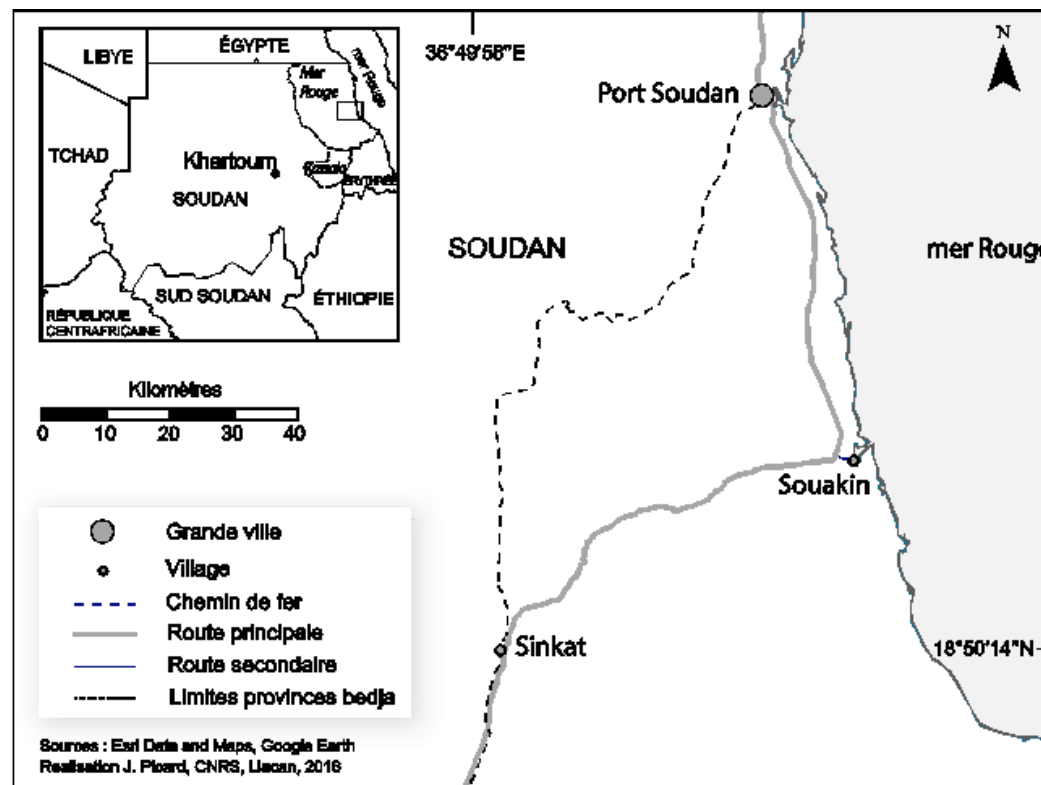
Possession: diversity within and across languages: Leiden, March 1st, 2019



- Introduction
- Morpho-syntax
- Word order
- Semantics
- Conclusion



- North-Cushitic (Afroasiatic)
- Eastern Sudan
- Approx. 2,000,000 speakers





Relevant typological features:

- Strongly SOV and head final
- *biri* 'have' vs *haj*, *faj* & *da* locative and existential 'be there' verbs
- Locative and directional postpositions
- definite (pro-clitic) & indefinite (enclitic) articles (portmanteau)
- 2 genders: M & F
- 2 numbers: SG & PL
- 4 nominal cases: NOM, ACC, GEN, VOC
 - NOM & ACC fused with articles
 - GEN & VOC: suffixes



- GENITIVE suffix *-i* on dependent noun
- Double indexing on the dependent (does not surface in M gender)
 - of F gender of both dependent and head
 - + PL case suffix *-e*: if dependent is plural and head feminine (SG or PL)
- Standard word order:
 - Dependent (possessor) – head (possessee)
 - Dependent hosts all determiners, none on head




1 *lha:we:=t-i=t* *sala*
 vixen=INDF.F-**GEN**=INDF.F grilled_meat
 N.SG.F **N.SG.F**
 'Vixen's grilled meat'

2 *ra:j=t-e:=t* *ʔifa*
 antelope=INDF.F-**GEN.PL**=INDF.F urine
 N.SG.F **N.PL.F**
 'urine of antelope'

3 *dʒi:k-i* *his*
 rooster-**GEN** voice
 N.M N.M
 'a rooster's voice'



- 4 *ti=dangar=t-i* *girma*
 DEF.F=racetrack=INDF.F-GEN head
 N.F N.M
 the beginning of the racetrack
- 5 *i=mba:ba-i=t* *takat*
 DEF.M=father-GEN=INDF.F woman
 N.M N.F
 'the father's wife'
- 6 *i=kilaj-i* *bhali*
 DEF.M=bird-GEN word
 N.M N.PL.M
 'the birds' language'
- 



- With adjectival phrases, GEN suffix position varies
 - On ADJ if it follows dependent N

7	<i>o:n</i>	<i>w=ʔo:r</i>	<i>i=dabalo:-i</i>	<i>bhali</i>
	PROX.SG.M.ACC	DEF.SG.M=child N.M	DEF.M=small- GEN ADJ	word N.PL.M

‘this little boy’s words’

- On N if ADJ precedes dependent N

8	<i>sagi</i>	<i>mhi:n-i</i>	<i>riba</i>
	far	place- GEN ADJ N.M	mountain N.M

‘A mountain of a remote place’



- Non-canonical word order:
 - head (possessee) - dependent (possessor)
 - Dependent still hosts all determiners and number of dependent, but the head also hosts F indefinite article

9 *dirk^wa=t* *si:l-e:=t*
 goatskin=**INDF.F** saliva-**GEN.PL=INDF.F**
N.SG.F **N.PL.M**
 'a bucket of saliva'



10 ʔa:mana:j=t tam-i=t
 mouthful=**INDF.F** gruel-GEN=**INDF.F**
N.F **N.M**
 'a mouthful of gruel'

11 sala=t ʔe:da=t-i=t
 grilled_meat=**INDF.F** smoke=**INDF.F-GEN=INDF.F**
N.F **N.F.DIM**
 'a light smoke of grilled meat'



- With adjectival modifiers, indefinite article of head also on ADJ in non-canonical word order

12

$k^w a d a : d - a = t$ $\int a l b a$ $n i h a : s - i = t$
 round\ADJ-CVB.MNR=INDF.F can copper-GEN=INDF.F
 N.F N.M

'a round can of copper'



- M gender: No article if adnominal phrase (AdP) is indefinite

13 *ko:m-a damm?ara-i*
 heap-PL gold-**GEN**
N.PL.M **N.M**
 'heaps of gold'

- or if AdP is definite and dependent is F

14 *tu:=tiji t=asarama girma-i*
DEF.SG.F.NOM=snake **DEF.F=seven** **head-GEN**
N.F **N.M**
 'the seven headed snake'



- If both terms are M, and AdP in object position, indefinite article is on head if it ends in a vowel and AdP is definite

15 *j=ʔawe:-ji* *ʔawe:=b* *ʃawawi-i*
 DEF.M.PL=stone-GEN stone=INDF.M.ACC collect\INT-IMP.SG.F
 N.M N.M

‘Gather stones from the stones!’

- Rarely GEN also used on ADJ used as dependent

16

e:n

PROX.PL.M.ACC

e:=nda

DEF.PL.M.ACC=men

N.PL.M

i=hadal-a-je:

DEF.PL.M=black-PL-**GEN.PL**

ADJ.PL

'These men pertaining to the blacks'



- Stacking: rare in naturalistic data
- Up to three

17 *ti=takat=t-i* *mi-na:j-i=t*
 DEF.F=woman=INDF.F-**GEN** N.AC-milk-**GEN**=INDF.F
 N.F N.F

ʔa:=t-i *ʃa:hi* *j-he:=he:b*
 milk=INDF.F-**GEN** tea 3.SG.M=give\PFV=OBJ.1SG
 N.F N.M

‘He gave me tea of the milk of the woman’s milking!’

- GEN case used for ownership, kinship and part-whole relations = anchoring relations (Koptjevskaja-Tamm 2004)
- Also used for non-anchoring relations, i.e. “to classify, describe or qualify the class of entities denoted by the head”
 1. The dependent is not individualized
 2. The dependent-head combination refers to a subclass of a broader class
 3. The head cannot be identified via its relation to the dependent



18 *wadzɔɔa-i* *gaw*
appointment-**GEN** house
'a meeting house'

19 *u:=mbʔi* *dʒimʔa=t-i* *bʔe:=ju*
DEF.SG.M.NOM=day Friday=INDF.F-**GEN** day=COP.3SG
'It is on a Friday' (lit. the day is the day of Friday)

20 *lamma=t* *dhaj-i=t* *rh-ani*
crowd=INDF.F people-**GEN**=INDF.F see-IPFV.1SG
'I see a crowd of people'



- GEN used in copular utterances to express an **intrinsic property** on an entity

21 *hadal=t nʔa:j=t=u bo:k-i dʔa:-ji=t=u*
 black=INDF.F goat=INDF.F=COP.3SG he-goat-GEN horn-**GEN**=INDF.F=**COP.3SG**
 'It is a black goat; it is of horns of a he-goat.'

22 *ti=nʔa:j=t=i nhas=t*
 DEF.F=goat=INDF.F=POSS.1SG.NOM clean=INDF.F
ho:j=t-e:=t=u
 belly=INDF.F-**GEN.PL**=INDF.F=**COP.3SG**
N.PL.M
 'my goat is of a clean belly'



- GEN case can also be used as **locative**, without head N, with three verbs

23 *i=girma-i* *a-dʔi*
 DEF.M=head-**GEN** 1SG-**do**\PFV
 'I **shot** in the head'

24 *mi:lal=t* *i=ni:wa-i* *dʔi-ja*
 needle\PL=INDF.F DEF.M=tail-**GEN** **do**-IMP.SG.M
 '**put** needles in its tail!'



- 25 *i=bi:li-i* *da:-s-ja*
 DEF.M=basket-**GEN** **be_there-CAUS**-PFV.3SG.M
 'he **put** it into the basket'
- 26 *wajʔa=t* *i=mʔagi-i* *ti:-fi*
 bell=INDF.F DEF.M=neck-**GEN** 3SG.F-**be_there**\AOR
 'a bell **was** on the neck'

- GEN = **directional** (only with one verb)

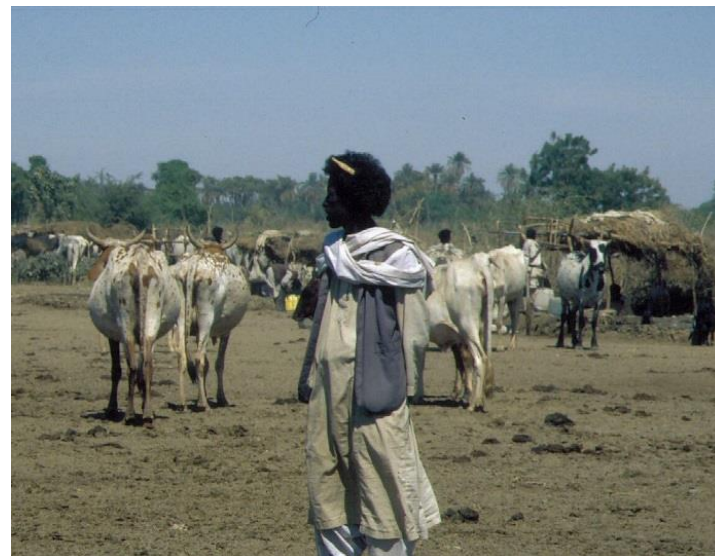
27 *i=sallo:ma:j-i* *ho:g-ta*
DEF.M=Sallomay-**GEN** **go_downstream**-PFV.3SG.F
'she went down to Sallomay'



- In **temporal** expressions (frozen)

- 28 *do:r-i* *da:b-e:* *rh-a:=b=u*
 time-**GEN** run-CVB.SMLT see-CVB.MNR=INDF.M.ACC=COP.1SG
 'I have seen it run once'
- 29 *o:=wja:-i*
 DEF.SG.M.ACC=winter-**GEN**
 'in winter'
- 30 *u:=dhaj* *su:r-i* *ho:j* *g^wiri-am-i:ni*
 DEF.SG.M.NOM=people before-**GEN** ABL.3 pity-MID-IPFV.3SG.M
 'Formerly, the people had complained about him'

- Morphological complexity of genitive constructions depends on
 1. Gender
 2. Number
 3. Word order
 4. Definiteness
 5. Presence of an adjective
- Semantically, genitive expresses anchoring and non-anchoring relations between two entities, remarkably for intrinsic properties
- Grammatical extensions of genitive (without head) are locative, directional, formation of temporal expressions (adverbial or not)



Thank you!



9 *mhaj=t ta:ga halak-a-je:=t*

three=INDF.F bolt cloth-PL-**GEN.PL=INDF.F**

N.PL.F N.PL.M

‘three bolts of cloth’

