Fijian possessive classifiers as nominal Appl heads. *Ruoan Wang, QMUL*

Aims. Possessive classification is a phenomenon whereby a classifier establishes, and specifies, a relation between possessor and possessum (Lichtenberk 1983). I argue that Fijian possessive classifiers are nominal parallels to Appl (Pylkkänen 2008, c.f. Adger 2013): both introduce additional arguments for heads, and both have different flavors depending on the relationship between argument and head. For alienable possession, I propose that relationality resides in Poss (Barker 1995), which introduces additional arguments and negotiates their semantic relation to the head. This is consistent with exoskeletal approaches to grammar (Borer 2003, amongst others), and differs from previous analyses of this general phenomenon, which propose that classifiers are N heads (Palmer & Brown 2007), verbal elements (Lynch 1973), or pragmatically competitive elements (Karvoskaya 2018).

Background. Fijian possession is highly complex: five distinct possessive strategies are available, and the choice of strategy depends on the nature of both possessum and possessor (Dixon 1986). Possessive classifiers surface with alienably possessed nouns, to establish and specify a relation as one of eating, drinking, or ownership (1). Only alienable relations of nonhumans are encoded without a classifier, and with the *ni* linker instead (2). (Classifiers are absent with inalienably possessed nouns such as body parts and kinship terms, where direct suffixation of a pronoun or *-i* occurs (3a)-(3b).)

(1) a. na   ika **ke**-i   Jone
         DET fish CLS.EAT-LINK John
         'John's fish (to eat)'

     b. na   **me**-mu   supu
         DET CLS.DRINK-2SG soup
         'your soup (to drink)'

     c. na   ika **ne**-i   Jone
         DET fish CLS.OWN-LINK John
         'John's fish (which he owns)'

(2) na   vale <u>ni</u>   koli
     DET house LINK dog
     'the dog's house'

(3) a. na   mata-<u>mu</u>
         DET eye-2SG
         'your eye'

     b. na   tama-<u>i</u>   Jone
         DET father-LINK John
         'John's father'

Classifiers are in fact obligatory for alienable relations: direct suffixation of the possessor without an intervening classifier is ungrammatical (4a). In contrast, they cannot encode inalienable relations: (4b) can only refer to some leg which John owns, but not John's own leg. The distribution of classifiers thus accords with the robust cross-linguistic pattern that alienable possession typically involves more morphological material than inalienable possession does (Seiler 1983; Nichols 1988).

(4) a. na   supu ***(me)**-i   Jone
         DET soup CLS.DRINK-LINK John
         'John's soup (to drink)'

     b. #na yava **ne**-i   Jone
         DET leg   CLS.OWN-LINK John
         Intended: 'John's (own) leg'

In this light, (2) seems exceptional as alienable possession is encoded without a classifier. However, this is due to an independent requirement of classifiers: they select for proper names/pronouns, not common nouns. The nonhuman in (2) is a common noun, so the classifier does not appear; however, when it is referred to with a proper name in (5), the classifier reappears.

(5) a. na   vale **ne**-i   Soto
         DET house CLS.OWN-LINK Soto
         'Soto's house' *(Soto is a pet dog)*

     b. na   sui **ke**-i   Soto
         DET bone CLS.EAT-LINK Soto
         'Soto's bone (to eat)'

Place name possessors provide further evidence for the fact that classifier distribution is sensitive to syntactic category, not animacy. Place names are inanimate; yet a classifier is still obligatory in (6). (*ke*- is used with place name possessors, suggesting an animacy restriction on the *ne*~*no*- classifier.)

(6) a. na   draki ***(ke)**-i   Viti
         DET climate CLS.FOOD-LINK Fiji
         'Fiji's climate'

     b. na   tui ***(ke)**-i   Viti
         DET king CLS.FOOD-LINK Fiji
         'the king of Fiji'

Analysis. I argue alienable relations are mediated by Poss, which is a nominal parallel to Appl in that Poss introduces additional arguments to the noun, and comes in different flavors. Evidence comes from the semantics of possessive classifiers, and word order with pronominal possessors. However, a complete parallel to Appl cannot be maintained, as there is no syntactic or semantic evidence for a distinction between high vs. low Poss. Thus, a Barker-style type difference is still required for inalienable relations, which are mediated by nouns of type ⟨e,et⟩, not "low Poss".

The semantics of possessive classification. First, Fijian classifiers do not reflect a gender system for possession, e.g. N. Ambrym (Franjieh 2012). Fijian classifiers are not lexically predetermined, as the

same noun can be variably classified (compare (1a) with (1c)). Second, they are not sortal classifiers, e.g. Mandarin, as they are not required for counting, and appear only in possessives. Crucially, classifier usage implicates a specific relation between possessor and possessum. For (7) to be felicitous, only the expressed possessor (John) can be in a drinking relation to the possessum (the water). No contextual slack is allowed: John could not have merely poured/purified the water so that someone else drinks it.

(7)   au   a   gunu-va   [na tolu na   bilo wai **me**-i   Jone].
      1SG PST drink-TR.CN DET three DET cup water CLS.DRINK-LINK John
      'I drank <u>John's</u> three cups of water.'

Further evidence for their relationality comes from the following minimal pair. If John has caught fish but intends for his daughter Litea to eat it, not himself, then (8) is infelicitous, and (9) is used instead.

(8)   #na ika **ke**-i   Jone   (9)   na   ika **ke**-i   Litea
      DET fish CLS.FOOD-LINK John   DET fish CLS.FOOD-LINK Lydia
      'John's fish (to eat)'   'Lydia's fish (to eat)'

ne-∼no- is the unspecified flavor of Poss. While it may specify ownership, as in (1c), it is the "elsewhere" classifier, being compatible with the widest range of relations, including ownership. It is used when a relation is not one of eating, drinking, or ownership (10). It is also used in context-dependent possessives like (11), where *niu* 'coconut' does not enter into stereotypical relations of eating/drinking, but one of play. (12) summarizes the flavors of Fijian Poss.

(10)   'my cloud (which I am gazing at)'   (11)   'my coconut (used as a football)'

     a.   na   **no**-qu   oː   a.   na   **no**-qu   niu
           DET CLS.OWN-1SG cloud   DET CLS.OWN-1SG coconut

     b.   *na oː-qu   b.   **na niu-qu

(12)   a.   Poss$_{EAT}$:   Spellout /*ke-*/; semantics $\lambda P\lambda x\lambda y$ [P(y) & R$_{eat}$(x,y)]

       b.   Poss$_{DRINK}$: Spellout /*me-*/; semantics $\lambda P\lambda x\lambda y$ [P(y) & R$_{drink}$(x,y)]

       c.   Poss: Spellout /*ne-∼no-*/; semantics $\lambda P\lambda x\lambda y$ [P(y) & R(x,y)]

Word order evidence. Pronominal possessors are prenominal with alienably possessed nouns (13a), but postnominal with inalienably possessed nouns (13b).

(13)   a.   na   ke-**qu**   <u>niu</u>   b.   na   <u>mata</u>-**qu**
       DET CLS.FOOD-1SG coconut   DET eye-1SG
       'my coconut (to eat)'   'my eye'

This contrast can be explained if we assume that the possessive classifier is a high functional head that introduces the possessor, while inalienable possession is encoded lower in the functional projection. Only alienably possessed nouns of type ⟨e,t⟩ rely on an additional head, Poss, to introduce their arguments. This is illustrated for alienable possession (right) and inalienable possession (left). To derive the word order, a functional head F attracts the noun to an NP-initial position, consistent with the fact that Fijian NPs are head-initial. Local Dislocation (L.D., Embick & Noyer 2001) then applies under adjacency to adjoin the pronoun.
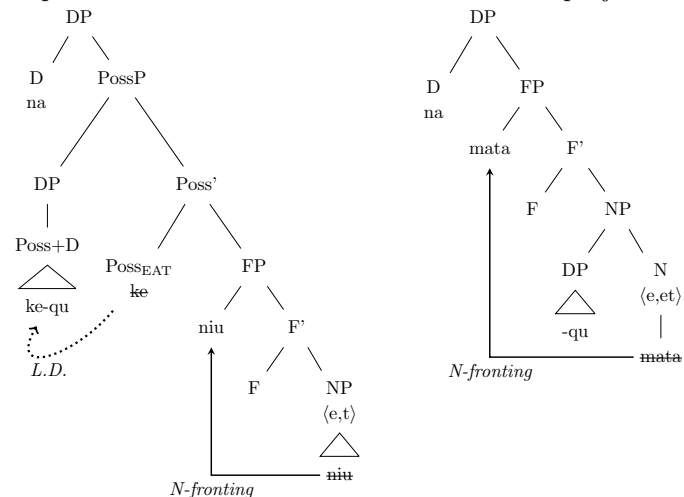
Consequences and conclusion. Alienable possession in Fijian shows that relationality resides in an additional head, Poss, which comes in different flavors depending on the relation encoded—eating, drinking, or otherwise. This constitutes a nominal parallel to Appl, as both Appl and Fijian Poss introduce arguments, and both come in different flavors depending on the relation encoded. However, since Fijian classifiers are strictly restricted to alienable possession, the parallel to Appl cannot be wholly adopted— a Barker-style type difference between nouns is still needed to account for the strong morphological differences between alienable and inalienable possession.