

## Remarks on possessives in Tondano

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**0.** Following Sneddon [1975], one can distinguish between three possessive and quasi-possessive constructions in Tondano (here glosses roughly follow Sneddon's description):

**(A)** [PM-pr] – the pronominal construction with a Possesum (PM) followed by a pronominal possessor (PR) suffix:

- |     |                  |                 |                        |
|-----|------------------|-----------------|------------------------|
| (1) | <i>si</i>        | <i>asu-ta</i>   | ‘our dog’              |
|     | CM <sub>SG</sub> | dog-PR.1PL:INCL | [Sneddon 1975, p. 118] |

**(B)** [PM(-pr) POS:pr PR] . the construction with a non-pronominal PR introduced by a possessive relator, whose form depends on number or animacy of the PR (2-4); the possessum (PM) in this construction further optionally agrees with the PR (3):

- |     |                |                                 |                      |                                |
|-----|----------------|---------------------------------|----------------------|--------------------------------|
| (2) | <i>m-bale</i>  | <i>ni</i>                       | <b><i>Mantik</i></b> | ‘Mantik’s house’               |
|     | CM-house       | POS <sub>SG</sub>               | Mantik               | [Ibid.]                        |
| (3) | <i>m-bale</i>  | <i>ne</i>                       | <b><i>tuama</i></b>  | ‘the men’s house / houses’     |
|     | CM-house       | POS <sub>PL</sub>               | man                  | [Ibid.]                        |
| (4) | <i>naʔe-na</i> | <i>n-tamporok</i>               |                      | ‘the foot of (Mount) Tamporok’ |
|     | foot-PR.3SG    | POS <sub>INANIM</sub> -Tamporok |                      | [Ibid.]                        |

**(C)** [PM PR] – a construction with a non-specific PR simply juxtaposed to the PM:

- |     |              |             |                        |
|-----|--------------|-------------|------------------------|
| (5) | <i>kədir</i> | <i>watu</i> | ‘stone wall’           |
|     | wall         | stone       | [Sneddon 1975, p. 119] |

Thus, on the first view, Tondano seems to instantiate all three types of possessives postulated in [Lander, forthcoming], namely the clitic type, the prepositional type, and the juxtaposition type. The 2<sup>nd</sup> construction turns out to be somewhat unusual for this area, however, due to:

- the existence of «agreeing» prepositions, and
- mixing of the prepositional and clitic types.

Although both phenomena do occur cross-linguistically, they look quite unusual for West Indonesia.

In this paper I suggest that the Tondano possessive system can be reinterpreted, so that Tondano will not turn out to be so surprising. At the same time, it will be shown that Tondano still poses some problems for the general typology of possessives.

**1. Splitting the non-pronominal possessive.** First, it can be argued that what Sneddon counted as a single construction (B) actually represents two constructions. With animate PRs, possessive relators (singular *ni* and plural *ne*) are separate words (perhaps, clitics). The presumable inanimate possessive relator (*N-*) is, however, a prefix whose form phonologically depends on the PM. Moreover, according to Sneddon, *N-* turns out to be homonymous to the inanimate class marker; yet apart from emphasizing the possessive construction, there does not

seem to be any reason to distinguish between them. In this case, then the inanimate PR will turn out to be unmarked for its syntactic role, and this will explain the optional appearance of the possessive agreement (3). Summing up, there is a good motivation to split the construction (B) into two constructions:

- the construction with animate PRs: PM Pos PR, and
- the construction with inanimate PRs: PM(-pr) PR (where the PR is marked by a class marker).

**2. The status of possessive relators.** In his description, Sneddon allows for a large amount of homonymy between various grammatical relators. Thus, possessive relators – while being treated on a par with quasi-locative prepositions (6) – turn out to be homonymic to the so-called «subject relators» (which actually in relevant constructions mark actors rather than subjects; cf. (7)).

(6)	<i>ku-kimirim</i>	<i>loʔloʔ</i>	<i>waki / wia</i>	<i>si</i>	<i>kaʔampitəku</i>
	AG.1SG-send:AV	basket	LOC	CM <sub>SG</sub>	friend-PR.1SG

‘I will take the basket to my friend(’s place)’ [Sneddon 1975, p. 107]

(7)	<i>niaku</i>	<i>pinapaupiʔ</i>	<i>ni</i>	<i>tuama</i>	‘The man made me angry’
	1SG	anger: UV	AG <sub>SG</sub>	man	[Sneddon 1975, p. 74]

It can be suggested, then, that as in the case of inanimate *N-*, the homonymy between possessive and subject relators can be eliminated. Further, an obvious similarity of these markers to the animate «class markers» (singular *si* and plural *se*) allows to suggest that these can be paradigmatically opposed formants, the more so that they cannot be combined with each other. Possessive relators can be then reinterpreted as genitive determiners. The advances of this are as follows:

- the non-compatibility of possessive relators and class markers can be explained by that they are of the same syntactic category – determiner (cp. a similar decision proposed in [Donohue 1999] for *Tukang Besi*, also spoken in this area);
- the Tondano case system is directly connected to that of Philippine languages where genitive also can mark certain arguments of verbs;
- the problem of «agreeing prepositions» disappears, since «possessive relators» are simply treated as determiners that simultaneously mark number.

**3. Tondano possessive system challenging typological generalizations.** To conclude, we suggest that Tondano distinguishes between four possessive constructions:

- |     |                     |                            |
|-----|---------------------|----------------------------|
| (8) | a. Pronominal PR:   | PM-pr                      |
|     | b. Animate PR:      | PM [DET <sub>GEN</sub> PR] |
|     | c. Inanimate PR:    | PM(-pr) DET-PR             |
|     | d. Non-specific PR: | PM PR                      |

All these constructions nicely fit into the general picture of possessive marking in the area. Yet the Tondano possessive system still poses certain problems but this time for the general typology of possessives. In particular, the Tondano system is rather unusual in that head-marking possessive agreement operates here «discontinuously» on topicality (empathy) hierarchies affecting pronominal and inanimate PRs but not animate ones. It can be suggested that this

situation is a result of «competition» between head-marking and dependent-marking strategies in Tondano. In particular, it can be hypothesized that the use of genitive articles in Tondano is an innovation (as compared with head-marking) even though for Austronesian languages in general the dependent-marking in possessives cannot be considered an innovation.

#### ABBREVIATIONS

Ag (actor marker), AV («actor voice»), CM (class marker), INANIM (inanimate), INCL (inclusive), LOC (locative preposition), PL (plural), PM (possessum), POS (possessive marker), PR (possessor), pr (possessor index), S (subject), SG (singular) , UV («undergoer voice»). Numbers refer to persons.

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