Adnominal and Predicative Possessive Constructions
in Melanesian Languages

Mai 1983
Herausgeber der Reihe:
Prof. Dr. Hansjakob Seiler
Universalienprojekt
Institut für Sprachwissenschaft
Universität
D-5000 Köln 41

© bei den Autoren
1. INTRODUCTION

According to the present state of research, there seems to be no language which shows possessive classifiers and possessive verbs corresponding to English "to have" at the same time. In classifier languages predicative possession is expressed by verbless clauses, i.e. by existential clauses ("there is my possessed item"), equative clauses ("the possessed item is mine", "that is my possessed item") or by locative expressions ("the possessed item is near me"), in which the classifier in the case of non-inherent possession marks the nature of the relationship. While most Melanesian languages, as for instance Fijian, Lenakel, Pala and Tolai are classifier languages, Nguna, a Melanesian language spoken in Vanuatu, only shows traces of the Melanesian possessive classifier system, but, in contrast to the other Melanesian languages, it has a possessive verb, namely peani "to have". In order to show how the Nguna possessive constructions deviate from the common Melanesian type, we shall start with a brief description of the Melanesian possessive constructions in general, and that of Fijian in particular.

As far as Nguna is concerned, the whole investigation is based on the data provided by the "Nguna Texts" edited by Schütz (1969a), whereas the Fijian examples are taken from Churchward (1941), Hazlewood (1872), Milner (1956) and Schütz & Komaitai (1971). Lenakel examples are quoted from Lynch (1978), and those of Pala are from Peekel (1909).

Whereas Codrington (1885:129), Lévy-Bruhl (1914:99), Milner (1956:64) and several other students of Melanesian languages classify the nouns into alienable and inalienable nouns according to whether they enter alienable or inalienable constructions, Lynch (1973), Mosel (1982) and Pawley (1973) have shown that the Melanesian nouns do not form gender-like noun classes, since many nouns can enter more than one possessive construction (cf. Mosel 1982:23f, 33; Pawley 1973:54f; compare also the Pala examples quoted by Peekel 1909:68f). Therefore, rather the various constructions which express different kinds of
possessive relationships have to be classified.

2. POSSESSIVE CONSTRUCTIONS ON PHRASE LEVEL

The Melanesian possessive constructions on phrase level, hence called "possessive phrases", form two morphosyntactic classes. The characteristic of the first one, the so-called "inalienable possessive phrases", is that pronominal possessors are expressed by suffixed pronouns, whereas in the second type of possessive phrases, the so-called "alienable" ones, the pronominal suffixes are not attached to the possessed noun, but to a possessive classifier, which usually precedes the possessed noun.

Fijian

(1) na ulu = na
   ART head = his
   "his head"
   Ch 33

(2) na no = na vale
   ART CLFR = his house
   "his house"
   Ch 33

Lenakel

(3) ner = k miin
    child = my PL
    "my children"
    L 81

(4) nuw miin nιk = k
    yams PL CLFR = my
    "my yams (to eat)"
    L 80

The inalienable constructions usually refer to such intimate relationships as the relationship between a human being and his bodyparts or his kinsmen, whereby the information of the nature of the relationship is already implicitly contained in the possessed noun. In alienable constructions this information is not inherent in the possessed noun, but is carried by the possessive classifier.

In Tolai inalienable constructions only singular pronouns are immediately attached to the possessed noun, but dual, trial and plural pronouns are linked to it by means of the connector i, e.g.
If in inalienable possessive phrases the possessor is a noun, it either directly follows the possessed noun (Lenakel, Pala) or it is attached by mediation of a connective particle (Fijian, Tolai) or a pronoun (Pala).

Lenakel

(8) nelk pukas
   leg pig
   "the pig's leg"   L 78

Fijian (with proper nouns)

(9) na ulu i Willame
   ART head C William
   "William's head"   Ch 36

(with common nouns)

(10) na yaca ni gone
    ART name C child
    "the name of the child"   Ch 35

(11) na ulu ni gone
    ART head C child
    "the head of the child"

Tolai

(12) a ulu = i ra bul
    ART head = C ART child
    "the head of the child"

Pala (with singular common and proper nouns)

(13) a lima Kamel
    ART hand Kamel
    "Kamel's hand"   P 36

(with plural nouns)

(14) a hi = diet ra nongtamat
    ART hair = their Art old-men
    "the hair of the old men"   P 38
The Tolai and the Fijian constructions differ in that the Tolai 
= i is used both with common and proper nouns and must synchroni-
cally be classified as a connector, whereas the Fijian i only
precedes proper nouns, so that it may also be regarded as a
proper noun article whose use, however, is rather restricted.
Both the Tolai and the Fijian i originate in the Proto-Oceanic
proper noun article i, a reflection of which is also found
with Fijian transitive verbs followed by proper nouns or pro-
nouns, e.g.

Fijian

(15) eratou a raica na vale
they/TRIAL PAST see ART house
"They saw the house."

(16) eratou a raica Viti
they/TRIAL PAST see Fiji
"They saw Fiji."

The Fijian construction of ART N₁ ni N₂ is a compound noun
phrase whose modifying noun N₂ is not referential, but rather
characterizes the concept expressed by the head noun N₁ (note
that N₂ is not determined by the article). In contrast to the
Tolai ART N₁ i ART N₂ construction, it is not only used to de-
ote pose possessive relationships, but also to express the purpose
of the head noun referent, and thus it corresponds to the
Tolai N₁ na N₂ construction (Mosel 1982:27ff), e.g.

Fijian

(17) na vale ni kana
ART house C eat(ing)
"restaurant"

Tolai

(18) a pal na nian
ART house C eating
"restaurant"

Fijian

(19) na vale ni kuro
ART house C pot
"kitchen"

Tolai

(20) a pal na boroi
ART house C pig
"pig sty"
In alienable possessive phrases nominal possessors follow the possessed nouns and are linked to them by a classifier (Lenakel, Pala), a combination of a classifier and a connector (Tolai in general, Fijian in case the possessor is a proper noun) or by a construction in which a classifier plus a suffixed pronoun referring to the possessor are involved (as in Fijian with common possessor nouns and in Pala with plural possessor nouns), e.g.

Lenakel

(21) nīte nīk uus-suaas uk
taro CLFR man -small this
"this boy's taro (for eating)"
L 80

(22) kuri miin taha uus mil aan
dog PL 'CLFR man DUAL that
"those two men's dogs" (acquired property)
L 82

Pala

(23) a mal ta ra hinasik
ART dress CLFR ART girl
"the dress of the girl"
P 36

(24) a lamas ana kareka
ART coconuts CLFR chicken
"the coconuts for the chickens"
P 37

(25) a puah 'ta = diet ra hahin
ART kitchen CLFR = their/PL ART woman
"the kitchen for the woman"
P 38

Tolai

(26) a pal ka = i ra vavina
ART house CLFR = C ART woman
"the house of the woman" (acquired property)

(27) a vudu a = i ra vavina
ART bananas CLFR = C ART woman
"the woman's bananas" (to eat)

Fijian

(28) na vale ne = i Joni
ART house CLFR = C John
"John's house" (acquired property)
Ch 36

(29) na no = na vale na turaga
ART CLFR = his house ART chief
"the house of the chief" (acquired property)
Ch 37

(30) na uvi ke = i Joni
ART yams CLFR = C John
"John's yams" (to eat)
Ch 36
To conclude, the alienable possessive phrases differ from the inalienable ones in that they are more explicit, as the possessive classifiers specify the nature of the possessive relationship, which is implicitly given in the case of the inalienable constructions. If the constructions of pronominal and nominal possessors and those of various nominal possessors (i.e. singular vs. plural, and proper vs. common nouns) are compared, it becomes evident that those possessors which are less individuated require the more explicit constructions (compare Seiler (1981:28-29, 43-45) and the so-called "animacy hierarchy" in Comrie (1981:178ff), which would be better called "hierarchy of egocentricity and individuation").

TABLE I

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Lenakel</th>
<th>Pala</th>
<th>Fijian</th>
<th>Tolai</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>( N_1 = \text{PRON} )</td>
<td>-al</td>
<td>-al</td>
<td>-al</td>
<td>-al</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>( N_1 \ N_2 )</td>
<td>-al</td>
<td>-al</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>( N_1 = \text{C=} \text{PRON} )</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-al</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>( N_1 = \text{PRON} \ N_2 )</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-al</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>( \text{CLFR=} \text{PRON} \ N_1 )</td>
<td>+al</td>
<td>+al</td>
<td>+al</td>
<td>+al</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>( N_1 \ \text{CLFR=} \text{N}_2 )</td>
<td>+al</td>
<td>+al</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>( N_1 \ \text{CLFR=} \text{C} \ N_2 )</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>+al</td>
<td>+al</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>( \text{CLFR=} \text{PRON} \ N_1 \ N_2 )</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>+al</td>
<td>+al</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Thus the degree of inherence of a relationship is not only determined by the nature of the possessive relationship - such as kinship in contrast to acquired property -, but also by the degree of individuation of the possessor.
Two is the smallest number of possessive classifiers found in Melanesian languages (as, for instance, in Tolai). The first one, hence called NA-classifier according to its Proto-Oceanic reconstruction (Pawley 1973:47), indicates that the relationship is controlled and implies some activity on the part of the possessor referent as in the case of acquired property, whereas the second one, called KA-classifier, expresses that the possessum referent directly affects the possessor referent or is closely related to it, though not so intimately as bodyparts or kinsmen. In other words, the relationship marked by the KA-classifier is less inherent than that expressed by inalienable constructions, but more inherent than that denoted by the NA-classifier (cf. Mosel 1982:25-27; 56; Lynch 1973:17).

The most typical relationships expressed by the KA-classifier are:

1. the relationship between a weapon and the one who is to be hurt or killed by it, e.g.

Fijian

(32) na ke = na dali
    ART CLFR = his rope
    "the rope that is to be used on him (for binding him, perhaps, or for strangling him)"

in contrast to

(33) na no = na dali
    ART CLFR = his rope
    "the rope that belongs to him"
    (for Tolai examples cf. Mosel 1982:11-13). Ch 32

2. the relationship between food and the person for whom it is determined, e.g.

Fijian

(34) na ke = na uvi
    ART CLFR = his yams
    "his yams" (to eat)

in contrast to

(35) na no = na uvi
    ART CLFR = his yams
    "the yams that belong to him"
    (for Tolai examples cf. Mosel 1982:11-13)
3. referential relationships, e.g.

Fijian

(36) na ke = na itukutuku  
    ART CL FR = his story
    "the story about him" Ch 32

in contrast to

(37) na no = na itukutuku  
    ART CL FR = his story
    "the story that is told by him" Ch 32

The fact that the KA-possessive constructions are, with regard to inherence, semantically closer to the inalienable constructions than the NA-possessive constructions is also reflected in syntax:

1. In Fijian both the inalienable and the alienable KA-constructions are extended to inanimate pronominal possessors in order to express spatial and part/whole relationships respectively, e.g.

Fijian

(38) na dela= na  
    ART top = its
    "its top" Ch 33

(39) na ke = na lalage  
    ART CL FR = its wall
    "its wall" Ch 34

With nominal possessors, however, the contrast between spatial and part/whole relationships is neutralized:

(40) na dela ni wai  
    ART top C water
    "the top of the water" Ch 35

(41) na lalaga ni vale  
    ART wall C house
    "the wall of the house" Ch 35

Similarly, locational relationships such as "the chief of the village, the chief of Bau, its chief" in which the possessor refers to a place, are expressed by the KA-construction when the possessor is a pronoun or a proper name, and by the N₁ ni N₂- construction when it is a common noun, e.g.

(42) ke = na turaga  
    CL FR = its chief
    "its chief" Ch 33
2. In Tolai a few words denoting garments are inalienably constructed, whereas others enter the KA-construction, e.g.

**Tolai**

(45) a mari = gu
   "my decorations"

(46) a = gu mal
   "my clothes, loincloth"

The same kind of variation is also found interlinguistically. According to Pawley (1973:51) nouns denoting intimate clothing are inalienably constructed in Motu and Mota, but in other languages they enter the KA-construction.

3. While most inherent properties are inalienably possessed in Oceanic languages (Pawley 1973:51), Fijian uses the KA-construction, e.g.

**Fijian**

(47) ke = na levu
   "his size"

A further instance of interlinguistic variation is found with referential relationships; in contrast to Tolai, for instance, where referential relationships are expressed by the inalienable construction (cf. Mosel 1982:22), e.g.

**Tolai**

(48) malalari = gu
   picture = my
   "my picture, i.e. the picture depicting me"

they are denoted by the KA-construction in Fijian, e.g.

**Fijian**

(49) na ke = na itaba
   "his picture (depicting him)"

Pawley 1973:50
A number of Melanesian languages have, besides the NA- and the KA-possessive classifiers, additional classifiers whose use is much more specific. Thus Fijian has a particular classifier to indicate that the possessed noun refers to something that is determined to be drunk by the possessor referent, e.g.

Fijian

\[(50)\] na me = na wai
\[
\text{ART CLFR = his water}
\]
"his water (for drinking)"

but

\[(51)\] a ke = na wai
\[
\text{ART CLFR = his water}
\]
"his or its water that is to do something with, as to wash with" Haz 54

whereas Lenakel has a total number of five classifiers which distinguish whether the possessed item is "to be eaten, drunk or planted, or whether it has to do with one's home, or whether it is conceived of only as a general possession" (Lynch 1978: 80). For further information about Melanesian languages which have more than two classifiers cf. Codrington 1885:271, Ray 1926:92-94.

Leaving the constructions with the specific classifiers such as Fijian me- aside, the Melanesian possessive phrases form a continuum with the most unmarked constructions denoting the most inherent relationships at the one end and the most explicit expressions referring to non-inherent or established relationships at the other. If the terms "alienable" and "in-alienable" are maintained, it is only justified to use them as labels for the two different forms of possessive phrases, i.e. classifier constructions and constructions without classifiers, but not to associate them with the meaning of these constructions, since the KA-constructions do not belong to the same semantic class as the NA-constructions, but form a class of their own which mediates between those without classifiers and the NA-constructions. In order to distinguish between the three types of possessive relationships, we shall speak of inherent, medium and established possession. The figure below shows how in Fijian the various kinds of possessive phrases are arranged
on this continuum; further details of possessive phrases are
given in table 2 accompanied by a list of examples, which also
takes the extension of possessive constructions to constructions
with inanimate possessors into account.

FIGURE 1

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{ART } N_1 &= \text{PRON} \\
\text{ART } N_1 C_1 N_2 &= \text{proper} \\
\text{ART } N_1 C_2 N_2 &= \text{common} \\
\text{ART } \text{CLFR}_1 &= \text{PRON } N_1 \\
\text{ART } N_1 \text{CLFR}_1 &= C_1 N_2 \\
\text{ART } \text{CLFR}_1 &= \text{PRON } N_1 \text{ART } N_2 \\
\text{ART } \text{CLFR}_2 &= \text{PRON } N_1 \\
\text{ART } N_1 \text{CLFR}_2 &= C_1 N_2 \\
\text{ART } \text{CLFR}_2 &= \text{PRON } N_1 \text{ART } N_2
\end{align*}
\]

+ inherent
- established

\[
\begin{align*}
\text{e.g. kinship,} \\
\text{bodypart relationships} \\
\text{less inherent,} \\
\text{but still uncontrolled relationships} \\
\text{controlled relationships, e.g.} \\
\text{acquired property}
\end{align*}
\]
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Table II</th>
<th>Possessive Phrases in Fijian</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>animate possessors</strong></td>
<td><strong>inanimate possessors</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>kinship</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(a)</td>
<td>(b)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N N</td>
<td>N C₁ N</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>bodyparts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N CLFR₁ N</td>
<td>N CLFR₁ C₁ N</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. characteristics whose manifestation does not depend on the person's activity</td>
<td>3. characteristics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N CLFR₂ N</td>
<td>N CLFR₂ C₁ N</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. referential relationships</td>
<td>4. referential relationships</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. food to be eaten by the possessor referent</td>
<td>5. food to be eaten by the possessor referent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N CLFR₂ N</td>
<td>N CLFR₂ C₁ N</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. characteristics whose manifestation depends on the person's activity</td>
<td>6. characteristics whose manifestation depends on the person's activity</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Examples:

1a) na tama = na
   ART father = his
   "his father"

2a) na ulu = na
   ART head= his
   "his head"

   na waka = na
   ART roots = its
   "its roots"

3a) na ke = na levu
   ART CLFR = his size
   "his size"

4a) na ke = na itukutuku
   ART CLFR = his story
   "the story about him"

5a) na ke = na uvi
   ART CLFR = his yams
   "his yams; the yams which is determined to be eaten by him"

6a) na no = na kaukauwa
   ART CLFR = his strength
   "his strength"

7a) na no = na vale
   ART CLFR = his house
   "his house"

   na no = na uvi
   ART CLFR = his yams
   "his yams; the yams he owns"

1b) na tama i Joni
   ART father C John
   "John's father"

2b) na ulu i Wiliame
   ART head C William
   "William's head"

3b) na levu ke = i Wiliame
   ART size CLFR = C William
   "William's size"

4b) na itukutuku ke = i Paula
   ART story CLFR = C Paul
   "the story about Paul"

5b) na uvi ke = i Joni
   ART yams CLFR = C John
   "John's yams"

7b) na vale ne = i Joni
   ART house CLFR = C John
   "John's house"
1c) na tama ni gone
   ART father C child
   "the father of the child"

2c) na ulu ni gone
   ART head C child
   "the head of the child"

3c) na ke = na levu na gone
   ART CLFR = his size ART child
   "the size of the child"

4c) na ke = na itukutuku na gone
   ART CLFR = his story ART child
   "the story about the child"

5c) na ke = na kakana na gone
   ART CLFR = his food ART child
   "the food of the child"

7c) na no = na vale na turaga
   ART CLFR = his house ART chief
   "the chief's house"

2d) na dela = na
   ART top = its
   "its top"

3d) na ke = na levu
   ART CLFR = its size
   "its size"

na ke = na lalaga
   ART CLFR = its wall
   "its wall"

na ke = na turaga
   ART CLFR = its chief
   "its chief (of a place)"

ko ira na turaga ke = i Bau
   ART they/PL ART chief CLFR = C Bau
   "the chiefs of Bau"

na turaga ni koro
   ART chief C village
   "the chief of the village"

4d) na ke = na itukutuku
   ART CLFR = it story
   "the story about it"

2e) na yaca i Viti
   ART name C Fiji
   "the name of Fiji"

3e) na balavu ke = i Kadavu
   ART length CLFR = C Kadavu
   "the length of Kadavu"

4e) na itukutuku ke = i Rotuma
   ART story CLFR = C Rotuma
   "the story about Rotuma"
3. A SHORT OUTLINE OF POSSESSIVE CONSTRUCTIONS ON CLAUSE LEVEL

On clause level, possessive relationships are expressed by existential clauses, equative clauses or clauses whose predicate is a locative expression. Furthermore, if some predicatation is made about the possessed item, this predication becomes the syntactic predicate of the clause. In Fijian, this type of clause is also used when the possessed item is indefinite, since the numeral dua "one" then becomes the syntactic predicate. Examples:

I. Existential clauses:

Tolai

(52) pata matua = i = dir
no uncle = C = their/DUAL
"No uncle of them (exists), they do not have an uncle." (Mosel 1982:43)

II. Equative clauses:

Tolai

(53) ka = na tika = na oaga
CLFR = his one = C canoe
"One/a canoe (is) his, he has a canoe."

(54) ka = na go ra pal
CLFR = his DEM ART house
"This house (is) his; this house belongs to him."

(55) ka = na pal go
CLFR = his house this
"This is his house."

Lenakel

(56) nar uk nik = n
this thing CLFR = his
"This is his (to eat)."
Fijian

(57) ogo na no = gu vale
    this ART CLFR = my house
    "This is my house"

III. Locative expressions

Fijian

(58) e sega tu vei au na ilavo
    predicative not stand near me ART money
    particle
    "I don't have any money."

(59) e tu vai au e dua na ilavo
    predicative stand near me predicative one ART money
    particle particle
    "I have some money."

(All numerals including dua "one" which is often used in the meaning of an indefinite article are preceded by the predicative particle, i.e. a particle that introduces the predicate (Churchward 1941:14, Hazlewood 1872:39), so that e dua na isele "a knife" has to be translated literally by "it is a knife", compare (60) and (62).)

(60) sa tu vei au e dua na isele
    predicative stand near me predicative one ART knife
    particle particle
    "I have a knife."

IV. Other predicates

Tolai

(61) i ngala par ra ngia = i = dir
    it big be-complete ART mouth = C = their/DUAL
    (The mouth of the two was entirely big.)
    "They both had big mouths."

Fijian

(62) e dua na no = na waqa
    predicative one ART CLFR = his canoe
    particle
    "He has a canoe."

(63) e levu na ke = na uvi
    predicative large ART CLFR = his yams
    particle
    "He has a lot of yams."
The Nguna possessive constructions differ from the common Melanesian type in the following points:

1. The three-way contrast between ZERO -, KA and NA - marking for inherent, medium and established possession is only maintained with pronominal possessors, whereas possessive constructions with nominal possessors distinguish between inherent and medium possession on the one hand and established possession on the other.

2. Whereas in typical Melanesian languages the possessive pronouns marking medium and established possession are formed by a possessive classifier and a pronominal suffix, those in Nguna show a different structure. Though the possessive pronouns of medium possession are evidently a reflection of Proto-Oceanic *KA = pronominal suffix, e.g. kaka=gu "my", kaka=na "his", kaka= cannot be synchronically interpreted as a classifier, since it does not contrast with other possessive classifiers. The pronominal possessors of established possession are formed by independent possessive pronouns which are not analysable into possessive classifier + suffixed pronoun, but show a closer relationship to the independent pronouns, though their morphological structure is far from being clear. Schütz (1969b:38) analyses them as being composed of agi= "to belong" plus object pronoun suffix, although it does not seem justified for morphological and syntactic reasons.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>independent pronouns</th>
<th>suffixed pronouns</th>
<th>object pronouns</th>
<th>possessive pronouns</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sg 1</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 kinau</td>
<td>= gu</td>
<td>au</td>
<td>aginau</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 niigo</td>
<td>= ma</td>
<td>ko</td>
<td>aniigo</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 nae</td>
<td>= na</td>
<td>a, e, na, sa</td>
<td>aneana</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pl 1 incl nigita</td>
<td>= gita</td>
<td>gita</td>
<td>anigita</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>exc kinami</td>
<td>= gami</td>
<td>gami</td>
<td>aginami</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2 nimu</td>
<td>= mu</td>
<td>mu</td>
<td>animu</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 naara</td>
<td>= ta</td>
<td>ra</td>
<td>ateata</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
3. In contrast to other Melanesian languages which express possession on clause level by means of verbless clauses, predicative possessive constructions in Nguna are formed by the means of peani "to have", whereby in constructions expressing inherent relationships such as kinship and bodypart relationships the possessed noun is modified by a possessor pronoun and thus distinguished from possessed nouns in non-inherent possessive constructions, e.g.

Nguna

(64) sikai e peani natu = na na=anoai sikai
one she have child = her.male one
"One (woman) had a boy" Sch 163

(65) kinau a peani na=lea maaga mamau=puti
I I have thing PL all
"I have all (these) things." Sch 71

An exception is na=gisa "name", which is inalienably constructed on phrase level, but does not require modification by a suffix pronoun when it is used with peani "to have", e.g.

(66) e peani na=gisa boto
it have name other
"It had another name." Sch 121

Thus the construction of na=gisa seems to represent an instance of a less inherent relationship than the construction of kinship and bodypart terms.

The table below outlines the various types of Nguna possessive phrases similar to those given for Fijian possessive phrases, and is illustrated by a following list of examples.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>animate possessors</th>
<th>inanimate possessors</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>pronominal possessors</strong> (a)</td>
<td><strong>nominal possessor</strong> (b)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N = PRON</td>
<td>N ni N</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1. kinship</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. bodyparts parts of plants &quot;name of ...&quot;</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N kaka=PRON</td>
<td>N ni N</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. the relationship between a person or some people and a group of people</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. referential relationships</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>N POSS.PRON</td>
<td>N ki N</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. foot to be eaten by the possessor referent</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. acquired property</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

TABLE III
Possessive Phrases in Nguna
(compare TABLE II p.12)
Examples:

1a) pila = na
    mother = his
    "his mother"  Sch 3

    natu = ta
    child = their
    "their child"  Sch 3

2a) na = gusu = na
    nose = his
    "his nose"  Sch 15

    na = gisa = na
    name = his
    "his name"  Sch 3

    na = palau = na
    stem = its
    "its stem"  Sch 288

    na = sua = na
    juice = its
    "its juice"  Sch 71

    niniko kaka = gu
    rib = my
    "my rib (said by a coconut)"  Sch 73

4a) sikai kaka = ta
    one = their
    "one of them"  Sch 43

    takalapa kaka = ta
    first-born = their
    "the first-born of them"  Sch 64

5a) na = rogorogo kaka = ma
    news = you
    "news of you"  Sch 32

    na = atuusi = ana kaka = ma
    story = his
    "a story about him"  Sch 109

6a) e gani naati aneana
    she eat = banana = her
    "she ate her banana"  Sch 131

7a) na = suña ateata
    house = their
    "their house"  Sch 11

b) constructions with animate nominal possessors

1b) tama ni koroi kiiki
    father = girl = little
    "the father of the little girl"  Sch 24
tama ni Lakolako
father Lakolako
"the father of Lakolako" Sch 3

2b) na=gusu ni maariki
nose old-man
"the nose of the old man" Sch 16
na=gisa ni na=wota animu
name chief your
"the name of your chief" Sch 44
na=ulu ni na=vao
leaf (a tree)
"leaves of the Navao-tree" Sch 288

5b) na=rogorogo=ana ni koroi kiiki
news girl little
"news of the little girl" Sch 24

6b) na=vinaga warua ki Sagalegaale
food big Sagalegaale
"the main food of the Sagalegaale" Sch 141

7b) na=suña ki maariki waina
house old-man that
"the house of that old man" Sch 46

c) constructions with inanimate pronominal possessors

2c) na=tiga =na
side =its
"its side" Sch 4
na=malo =na
inside =its
"its inside" Sch 24

3c) na=mata kaka =na
entrance =its
"its entrance" Sch 149

4c) na=wota kaka =na
chief =its
"its chief (of Siviri - a place)" Sch 110
na=ataMoli kaka =na
people =its
"its people (of Efate - a place)" Sch 186

5c) na=rogorogo kaka =na
news =its
"the news about it" Sch 23

d) constructions with inanimate nominal possessors

2d) na=masua ni taava
top hill
"the top of the hill" Sch 88
name village second
"the name of this second village" Sch 118

3d) na=mata ni valea
entrance cave
"the entrance of the cave" Sch 149

4d) na=wota ni Siviri
chief Siviri
"the chief of Siviri" Sch 110

5d) na=atuusi=ana ni Vaatu-Pau-ma-sai
story Stone-head-broken-through
"the story about Vaatu-Pau-ma-sai (Broken-head-stone)"
Sch 92

Similar to Fijian, the N₁ ni N₂ - construction is also used
as a means of modifying the concept expressed by the head
noun (N₁) rather than indicating its reference as is done by
proper possessive constructions, e.g.

(67) paapaa e pei ragi ni na=maro=maro=ana
until it is time rest (noun)
"until it was time to rest" Sch 96

(68) toko=ra ni na=maturu=ana aneana
place sleeping his
"his sleeping place" Sch 153

Compare also:

(69) na=saisai=ana ki na=vei=na=wota=ana
meeting chiefs
"the meeting of the chiefs",
Sch 115

where ki indicates that the relationship is controlled by the
possessor referent, and

(70) na=saisai=ana ni na=tamate
meeting chief's day
"the chief's day festivities",
Sch 115

where the meeting is characterized as one being held on the
occasion of the chief's day.

On clause level, possessive and related relationships such
as part/whole relationships are formed by the possessive verb
peani "to have" whose only function is to link the possessor,
which is the subject of the clause, and the possessed noun. As
has already been mentioned, inherent relationships are marked
by a pronominal copy of the subject, i.e. the possessor.

Examples:

1. kinship

   (71) ero peani natu= ta na=goroi sikai  
        they have child= their female one  
        "They (two) had a daughter."  
        (ero is a verbal-pronoun marker preceding the verb. In contrast to pronouns these pronominal markers distinguish between singular, dual and plural (Schütz 1969b:25).)

2. parts of plants

   (72) a peani na=sua= gu  
        I have juice = my  
        "I have juice."(said by a coconut-tree)

3. "name"

   (73) e peani na=gisa pûta  
        it have name other  
        "It had another name."

4. part/whole relationships

   (74) e pei tuusi, e peani na=polaga maaga  
        it be book, it have page PL  
        "It is a book, it has pages."

5. locational relationships

   (75) Farealape e peani varea paati  
        (village name) it have meeting-house four  
        "It has four meeting houses."

   (76) e peani na=ata tapu e toko asa  
        it have person sacred it live in-it  
        (lit.: It (the stone) has a sacred person who lives in it.)  
        "A sacred person lives in it (the stone)."

6. established relationships

   (77) kinau a peani na=leo maaga mamau=puti  
        I have thing PL all  
        "I have all (these) things."

Peani "to have" is even combined with verbal nouns, whereby its subject either refers to the agent or the patient of the action denoted by that verbal noun, e.g.
(78) eu taa moro peani na=kokona=ana
    they/PL not in-turn have feeling-against-him
"They are not against him anymore!"  Sch 107

(79) go au moro peani na=vasei=piseiki=ana
    and we/EXC/PL in-turn have teaching
    pae tea taare maaga
    from one white PL
"Then, too, we have had instruction from the white
    people."  Sch 279

Preceded by the verbal pronoun marker, peani has to be
classified morphosyntactically as a verb; semantically, how-
ever, it differs considerably from full verbs, since the
selectional restrictions which obtain in NP-peani-NP-clauses
are not determined by peani (as in the case of full verbs),
but by the noun phrases, i.e. the possessor and the possessee.
In other words, peani is a kind of relator, or in Seiler's
terminology a "logical predicate" (compare Seiler 1981:7, 98-
102).

That the predicative relationship between possessor and
possessee is mediated by a "logical predicate" in Nguna,
correlates with the fact that in contrast to other Melanesian
languages, the nominals of equative clauses are linked by
the copula pei "to be". Since the preceding investigation
could only be based on the materials presented by Schütz,
it is impossible to make any suggestions of how the auxiliary
verbs peani and pei have been developed.
REFERENCES

Churchward, C. Maxwell 1941, A New Fijian Grammar. Sydney: Australian Medi-
cal Pub. Co.


Blackwell

Hazlewood, D. 1872, A Fijian and English and an English and Fijian Dictionary
... and a grammar of the language. London: Sampson Low, Marston and Co.

Lévy-Bruhl, L. 1914, L'expression de la possession dans les langues mégal-
2. 96ff

Lynch, John 1973, "Verbal Aspects of Possession in Melanesian Languages" in:
Linguistics, University of Hawaii; 1-21

Canberra: The Australian National University.


Mosel, Ulrike 1982, Possessive Constructions in Tolai. Arbeiten des Kölner
Universalien-Projekts No.44. Cologne: Institut für Sprachwissenschaft.

University of Hawaii; 1-72.

Peekel, Gerhard 1909, Grammatik der Neu-Mecklenburgischen Sprache, speziell

Schütz, Albert J. 1969a, Nguna Texts: A collection of traditional and
modern narratives from the Central New Hebrides. Oceanic Linguistics
Special Publications No.4, Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press.

Schütz, Albert J. 1969b, Nguna Grammar. Oceanic Linguistics Special Public-
ations No.5, Honolulu: University of Hawaii Press.

Schütz, Albert J. & Komaitai, Rusiate T. 1971, Spoken Fijian. An intensive
course in Bauan Fijian, with grammatical notes and glossary. P.A.L.

Seiler, Hansjakob 1981, Possession as an Operational Dimension of Language,
Arbeiten des Kölner Universalien-Projekts No. 42. Cologne: Institut für
Sprachwissenschaft.

32. Holenstein, Elmar. 1978. "Von der Hintergebarkeit der Sprache (und der Erlanger Schule)".
33. Ramat, Paolo. 1978. "Y a-t-il une typologie profonde? (quelques considérations théoriques (et pratiques))".
41. Clasen, Berndt. 1981 "Inhärenz und Etablierung."
42. Seiler, Hansjakob. 1981. "POSSESSION as an Operational Dimension of Language."
43. Seiler, Hansjakob. 1982. "Possessivity, Subject and Object."
47. Heine, Bernd/Reh, Mechthild. 1982. "Patterns of grammaticalization in african languages"