**Abstract**

This thesis investigates enclitic possessive constructions (EPCs) that are a widespread and frequently used construction among Southern Italian dialects (SIDs). In general, EPCs display the structure N-EP where the N is a (singular) kinship noun and the EP the enclitic possessive directly attached to the kinship noun. However, there is a huge variation among SIDs as well as within the system of a specific dialect. The aim of the present work is twofold. The empirical part contributes new data to this topic as well as a detailed and organized overview of (micro-) variational observations from data of different sources including for example the linguistic maps of the AIS (Atlante Italo-Svizzero). The main aspects of variation are (a) the presence or absence of an obligatory article (D – N-EP vs. N-EP), (b) the possibility of plural kinship noun-EPCs and (c) the compatibility of a specific person-EP with a specific kinship noun within a dialect. Based on the empirical findings, the syntactic part proposes a syntactic analysis for EPCs focusing on the following research questions: 1) In some dialects, singular kinship noun-EPCs display an obligatory article with the 3SG.EP. What is the reason for this article-based person split (1st and 2nd vs. 3rd)? And further, how are both structures, with and without an article, represented in the syntax, i.e. in DP and PossP? 2) In some dialects, plural kinship nouns are allowed to occur in EPCs, and in others, they are disallowed. With respect to this dichotomy, what is the role of NumP? 3) Kinship nouns are relational and express inalienability. How can this property be captured in the syntax? I argue that the article-based person split is due to the deictic properties of the possessor-persons, meaning that 1SG.EPs and 2SG.EPs need to be bound by the speaker's coordinates in the left periphery of the clause, whereas 3SG.EPs do not. As a consequence, 1SG and 2SG EPCs move to the highest position, i.e. to D°, and 3SG EPCs can stay lower in the structure, i.e. in Poss°. Based on this dichotomy, I argue that both D° and Poss° can host EPCs. In order to capture the (im)possibility of plural kinship nouns-EPCs, I argue that NumP, as a parametrised position, can block or allow further movement of the kinship noun to Poss° (and to D°). With respect to the relational nature of kinship nouns I propose that they are base-generated within the complement position of a relator phrase (RP), and EPs in Poss°. In order to derive EPCs, the kinship nouns must move out of their position. The kinship noun lands in NumP, the position where further movement is probably blocked. If further movement is allowed, the kinship noun merges to the left of the EP, resulting in a complete EPC in Poss°. The last leg of the movement to D° depends on the presence of absence of an obligatory article. The phenomenon of EPCs displays a huge variation among SIDs and needs to be investigated from different perspectives and different linguistic areas. The present work contributes to the puzzle of EPCs new data and a syntactic analysis.