

Extended Abstract

Standard predicative possession in Balochi

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Introduction

Possession is a semantic relationship between two entities: possessor and possessee (Stassen, 2009: 11). This relationship is semantic and thus must be defined by semantic criteria. Most experts believe the prototypical definition of possession is as follows, based on “Spatial Proximity” and “Control”:

1. The possessor and the possessee are in a relatively enduring locational relationship.
 2. The possessor can control the possessee (and is thus usually human) (Stassen, 2009: 15).
- Possession can be encoded in two ways: Attributive possession and Predicative possession. Attributive possession is usually a noun phrase, such as “Ali's book”. Predicative possession normally manifests as a sentence and is not subject to change over time, like the sentence “Ali has a house”.

In this article, predicative possession has been studied in Balochi. The findings of this study have been compared with those of Mostafavi (2012), Golfam et al. (2022), and Mostafavi (2019).

Materials & methods

The current study is based on primary and secondary data. The primary data has been gathered via a questionnaire from twenty-four native Balochi speakers, selected based on gender, age, and level of education. The questionnaire was comprised of 420 sentences in the form of a fill-in-the-blanks test. The secondary data was gathered from a variety of resources including Jahani (2019) and Axenov (2006). The data was then analyzed using the framework introduced by Stassen (2009). Finally, the findings of this research were compared with those of similar research projects.

Stassen (2009) asserts that there are four major varieties of predicative possession, which are introduced in table 1.

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Predicative Possession	Predicate	Possessor	Possessee	General meaning
Locational	Be	Oblique/adverb	Grammatical subject	Possessee is in the possessor
With-possessive	Be	Grammatical subject	Oblique/adverb	Possessor is with possessee
Topical possessive	Be	Topic	Grammatical subject	Possessor has possessee
Have-possessive	Transitive	Grammatical subject/agent	Direct object/patient	Possessor has a possessee

the Table 1. *The features of the different types of predicative possession*

Results & discussion

Based on our definition of locational possessives, there is some evidence to show that this construction does exist in Balochi. An example can be seen in sentence 1.

1. ?i log-an-i tæh-æ moʃk hæm hæst-ent
 this house-pl-def in-OBL mouse too be-3rd.pl
 “This house has mice.” (literal translation: “There are mice in this house”)

The verb in sentence 1 is a be-verb. It agrees with the noun phrase /log-an-i/, which has the oblique case. For this reason, we can say that the possessee NP, /moʃk/, is the grammatical subject of the sentence. Therefore, locational possessives are used in Balochi. Throughout the corpus, 3830 sentences, almost 38% of all data, belonged to this category, which shows locational possessives are readily available to Balochi speakers.

Sentence 2 demonstrates with-possessives in Balochi.

2. ʃok-in zer-i-j-æt gu baz-in mahig-an
 beautiful-adj sea-INDEF-IC-be.3rd.sg with many-adj fish-pl
 “The sea had many beautiful fishes.” (literal translation: “It was a beautiful sea with many beautiful fishes”).

The verb in sentence 2 is a be-verb. The possessor NP, which is also the grammatical subject, is the noun phrase /ʃok-in zer-i/, as is evident by the rules of agreement in Balochi. So, the possessee NP, the noun phrase /baz-in mahig-an/ is oblique, as is evident by the existence of the preposition /gu/ (“with”). Therefore, sentence 2 can be considered as an instance of with-possessives. At 5847 sentences, with-possessives constitute almost 58% of all data in the corpus, the largest of the three types of predicative possession that exist in Balochi, and the absolute majority.

Only 240 sentences in the corpus, or 2% of it, belonged to the third category, have-possessives. An example can be seen in sentence 3.

3. ɖowldar-in molk-i dar-et
 beautiful-adj country-INDEF have-2nd pl

“You have a beautiful country.”

The verb in sentence 3 is “have”, which is transitive. It agrees with the second person plural, which is the grammatical subject and the possessor NP. The possessee NP is /dowldar-in molk-i/, which is the direct object of the sentence. So, have-possessives do exist in Balochi, and sentence 3 is an example.

Conclusion

Based on the findings, it is possible to recognize the existence of locational possessives, with-possessives, and have-possessives in Balochi. In this sense, Balochi is similar to Shahmirzadi, Rashti Gilaki and Persian. Among the three different types of predicative possession, with-possessives were the most frequently used, followed by locational possessives. It shows a clear preference for intransitive possessive structures. So, there is a difference between Balochi and the other three languages it was compared with. Therefore, it would be more accurate to say that, in terms of encoding predicative possession, Balochi belongs to a separate category than Persian, Rashti Gilaki, and Shahmirzadi.

Keywords: Typology; Possession; Predicative Possession, Balochi

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