

## Chapter 6 Possession

### 6.1 Overview of possession

Kokota expresses the possessive relationship by marking the possessum in a way that indexes the possessor. And as with many Oceanic languages, Kokota distinguishes between alienable and inalienable possession. Inalienable possession is marked by possessor indexing enclitics which attach to the nominal core of the possessum NP. Alienable possession involves a pre-head possessive base indexed to the possessor. Two possessive bases occur. One, *ge-*, marks possession of anything which is consumable by mouth, including food, drink, tobacco and so on. The other, *no-*, expresses a general category including all alienably possessed entities other than those qualifying for inclusion in the consumable category. With either inalienable or alienable possessor marked NPs the possessor may be realised by a zero if the context precludes ambiguity.

In addition to this system of possessor indexing, the possessive relationship may also be expressed by realising the possessor as a pseudo-locative prepositional phrase. In addition, within highly restricted parameters a possessor may be expressed without indexing on the possessum and without a prepositional head.

### 6.2 Possessor indexing forms

The system of possessor indexing recognises the same person and number categories as the pronominal system described in 4.1.2. The forms realising these categories are identical for both the inalienable possessor enclitics, and the suffixes attaching to either of the alienable possessor bases, with the exception of second person singular. The second singular inalienable enclitic is *-mu*, while the suffix *-u* occurs with alienable bases.

The status of inalienable possessor indexing forms as enclitics is discussed in 4.3.1.3.2. The paradigm of inalienable possessor indexing forms is presented in Table 6.1.

Table 6.1: Inalienable possessor indexing enclitics.

	SG	PL
1EXC	<i>-ḡu</i>	<i>-mai</i>
1INC	-	<i>-da</i>
2	<i>-mu</i>	<i>-mi</i>
3	<i>-na</i>	<i>-di</i>

In constructions coding an alienable possessive relationship the possessor is indexed by a suffix attached to a possessive base preceding the possessum. Two possessive bases occur distinguishing between possessed objects which are consumable by mouth and a general class of alienably possessable entities other than those consumable by mouth.

Table 6.2: Indexed alienable general possessive base.

	SG	PL
1EXC	<i>no-ḡu</i>	<i>no-mai</i>
1INC	-	<i>no-da</i>
2	<i>no-u</i>	<i>no-mi</i>
3	<i>no-na</i>	<i>no-di</i>

Table 6.3: Indexed alienable consumable possessive base.

	SG	PL
1EXC	<i>ge-ḡu</i>	<i>ge-mai</i>
1INC	-	<i>ge-da</i>
2	<i>ge-u</i>	<i>ge-mi</i>
3	<i>ge-na</i>	<i>ge-di</i>

### 6.3 Inalienable possession

#### 6.3.1 Inalienably possessed entities

A number of types of entities are typically treated as being in an inalienably possessed relationship with their possessor. Unlike in many Oceanic languages, almost all inalienably possessed nouns may be realised in isolation, without possessor indexing, the exceptions being the contextualising and associative nouns discussed in 5.6 and 5.7.

Possessive relationships typically treated as inalienable include certain kin relationships; part-whole relationships (including body parts, bodily matter, bodily states, and inanimate part-whole relationships); the impression of parts; non-physical parts; divisions of time; intrinsic characteristics; possession by a location (including local nouns and location names); contextual and associative relationships, and the possession of events. In addition, a class of adjectives expressing notions of gender, existential status, and status as new or first are treated as being in an inalienable relationship with the noun they modify (this is discussed in 4.2.3.2).

##### 6.3.1.1 Inalienable kin

In Kokota some kin terms are treated as inalienably possessed while others are treated as alienable. The distinction is based primarily on age: kin who are younger than the possessor are inalienably possessed. With the exception of members of certain culturally highly salient relationships, older kin are alienably possessed.

The younger kin category includes *tu-* 'child' and *tamo-* 'younger sibling, grandchild':

- (6.1) a. *ara n-a fakae-ni tamo-mu-na ago*  
 I RL-1.SBJ see-3SGO younger.sibling-2SGP-thatN youSG  
 I saw your younger brother.
- b. *tu-mai ana gai*  
 child-1EXCP thatN weEXC  
 that child of ours

The category of highly salient relationships consists of spouses, a tabu mutual in-law relationship between parent-in-law and son or daughter-in-law, and the relationship between a man and his sister's sons. This latter relationship is the primary relationship of authority and discipline someone has with a member of a previous generation. These categories of relationships are treated as inalienably possessed regardless of age. They include:

- (6.2) a. *nafe* 'spouse'  
 b. *nanho* 'parent-in-law/child's spouse'  
 c. *mageha* 'maternal uncle'  
 d. *ḡlegu* 'sororal nephew'

While *nafe* 'spouse' is inalienably possessed, *nakrupe* 'wife' may be inalienably or alienably possessed. There is no specific term for husband. The term *kue* 'grandfather' may also be inalienably or alienably possessed.

### 6.3.1.2 Physical part-whole relationships

#### 6.3.1.2.1 Body parts and bodily matter

The category of inalienably possessed entities contains a number of types of objects, typically reflecting a part-whole relationship. Body parts fall within this category and are inalienably possessed.

- (6.3) a. *ara n-a marhi-nau nene-g̃u-ine*  
 I RL-1.SBJ be.in.pain-1SGO leg-1SGP-thisR  
 This leg of mine hurts.
- b. *ka t-au-ana g̃-e aḡe tob-i-ri ka poto-di-ro*  
 LOC SB-exist-thatN NT-3.SBJ go kick-TR-3PLO LOC arse-3PLP-thoseNV  
 At that he went and kicked their arses.
- c. *n-e la piri-ni-u ka-ia kolu-seku-na-o manei*  
 RL-3.SBJ go bind-3SGO-PRG LOC-theSG snake-tail-3SGP-thatNV he  
 He tied him up with his snake's tail.

Internal body matter and organs participate in this inalienable part-whole relationship:

- (6.4) a. *n-e dou lao n-e-u nanafa-g̃u-ine ara*  
 RL-3.SBJ be.big go RL-3.SBJ-be.thus heart-1SGP-thisR I  
 It is big in my heart. [ie. I am thinking about it a lot.]
- b. *numha-mai-de gai*  
 bone-1EXCP-theseR weEXC  
 our bones
- c. *dadara-na-ro naitu ta-au-o toke goinode*  
 blood-3SGP-thoseNV devil SB-exist-thatNV arrive todayRL  
 That devil's blood is still there today.

This category also includes matter which may be separated from the body, such as hair, fingernails and teeth:

- (6.5) *kala-g̃u-de ara*  
 hair/leaf-1SGP-theseR I  
 my hair

Matter emanating from the body is treated the same way:

- (6.6) a. *bi-mu-de ago* b. *soso-na-re manei*  
 fart-2SGP-theseR youSG piss-3SGP-thoseN he  
 these farts of yours his piss
- c. *kekredi-di kokorako*  
 egg-3PLP chicken  
 chicken's eggs

### 6.3.1.2.2 Bodily states

Body states, even temporary ones, are inalienably possessed. For example the compound noun *dia-tini* 'fever' (literally 'bad body'), is inalienably possessed by the sufferer:

- (6.7)      *ara n-a            mphoto-u      gu-na-na            dia-tini-g̃u*  
I    RL-1.SBJ    sweat-PRG    CNTX-3SGP-thatN    be.bad-body-1SGP  
I am sweating because of my fever.

### 6.3.1.2.3 Inanimate part-whole relationships

Part-whole relationships with inanimate objects are also treated as inalienable possession:

- (6.8)    a. *ia    hobo-na      g̃azu*                      b. *ia      wili-na      tarake*  
the branch-3PLP wood                      theSG wheel-3SGP truck  
the branch of the tree                      the wheel of the truck
- c. *ago    n-o            tiki            kikilova-na      sug̃a-o*  
youSG RL-2.SBJ construct ridge.cap-3SGP house-thatNV  
You are making the ridge cap of the house.
- d. *...ta    g̃-e            ku-knusu-o      papari-na      to-toi-ne*  
SB NT-3.SBJ RD-break-thatNV wood.stack-3SGP RD-cook-thisR  
...that broke the fire's wood stack.
- e. *n-e-ge            lehe    ia-hi      kolodadara    ka    pau-na      kumai-na*  
RL-3.SBJ-PRS die that-EMPH PNLOC LOC head-3SGP water-thatN  
That is dead now at Kolodadara at the head of that river.
- f. *ta moita      la    raisi    ana      zikra      koko-ni      bakru-na-na*  
SB be.cooked CND rice thatN pour.out leave-3SGO liquid-3SGP-thatN  
If the rice is cooked, pour out its liquid.

The example in (6.8)b. illustrates the productivity of inalienable possession in Kokota.

Just as inalienable possession with animates extends to separable bodily matter, the possession of the emanations of inanimate objects is treated as inalienable possession:

- (6.9)      *ia    komhu-na    koilo*  
theSG fruit-3SGP coconut  
the fruit of the coconut tree

### 6.3.1.3 Impressions of parts

Impressions such as footprints and other imprints are inalienably possessed by the entity that made the impression:

- (6.10)    *mala-na-re            au    ka      g̃ahipa    sare-lau      lego*  
footprint-3SGP-thoseN exist LOC stone thereN-SPC PNLOC  
Those footprints of his are in the stone there at Lego.

### 6.3.1.4 Possession of non-physical 'parts'

Certain non-physical entities are treated as parts of a whole and thus are inalienably possessed, including, shadows, spiritual elements, sounds caused by the possessor, and names:

- (6.11) a. *naño-ḡu ara*  
 shadow-1SGP I  
 my shadow
- b. *e-ke fa heta legu-gita-u manei ira huḡru matirihi-da*  
 3.SBJ-PRF CS be.strong follow-1INCO-PRG he thePL every spirit-1INCP  
 He will make us strong in all our spirits.
- c. *fahega ira nanafa-mai gai ta mala tihī koko-di ira nhave-mai*  
 be.happy thePL heart-1EXCP weEXC SB PURP wash leave-3PLOthePL sin-1EXCP  
 Our hearts are happy to wash out our sins.
- d. *ara ne nomh-i ia oḡla-na ḡita*  
 I RL hear-TR theSG sound-3SGP guitar  
 I hear the sound of the guitar.
- e. *...ḡilai fa lehe-ri lao fa kave-i ia nanha-na rurubonī*  
 until CS die-3PLO go CS descend-3SGO theSG name-3SGP PN  
 ...until [they] killed them and put down the name of Rurubongi.

This is not limited to personal names, as in (6.11)e., but includes the relationship between any noun and its referent:

- (6.12) *ḡuanha e-ni bla nanha-na-na ḡazu t-au-ao*  
*ḡuanha* 3.SBJ-3SGO LMT name-3SGP-thatN wood SB-exist-thisT  
*G•uanha* is the name of that tree.

Significant roles within groups or organisations are treated as participating in a part-whole relationship and are inalienably possessed:

- (6.13) a. *zemesi velepuhi-na sikolu*  
 James teacher-3SGP school  
 James is the teacher at the school.
- b. *tehi-na mane-o ba*  
 many-3SGP man-thatNV ALT  
 Many of the people
- n-e aḡe rhuku ḡ-e-u maneri e-u*  
 RL-3.SBJ go landward NT-3.SBJ-be.thus they 3.SBJ-be.thus  
 went on the land side [ie in the bush]
- t-au-na pau-na solomoni tikilave*  
 SB-exist-thatN head-3SGP PN PN  
 That [group] had as its leader Solomon Tikilave.

### 6.3.1.5 Divisions of time and stages in temporal frames

Units of time are in a part-whole relationship with larger units and are treated as inalienably possessed:

- (6.14) *hage ka saigona-na sarere ana...*  
 ascend LOC evening-3SGP Saturday that  
 [They would] go up in the evening of that Saturday...

Equally, stages in processes or periods of time are inalienably possessed, including beginnings and ends:

- (6.15) a. *fufunu-na-na e-u ade n-e-u*  
 begin-3SGP-thatN 3.SBJ-be.thus here RL-3.SBJ-be.thus  
 That start of it [the story] will be like this here, he says.
- b. *gai a boka n̄ha-di gudu...*  
 weEXC 1.SBJ be.able eat-3PLO EXHST  
 We could eat them all
- ka-ia fufunu-na ia kastom ka gai*  
 LOC-theSG begin-3SGP theSG custom LOC weEXC  
 at the beginning of our custom.
- c. *goinode ka nhigo-na nare*  
 todayRL LOC be.finished-3SGP day  
 Now it's the end of the day.

### 6.3.1.6 Intrinsic characteristics

A wide range of relationships are treated as the inalienable possession of an intrinsic characteristic. This typically applies where there is a perceived inseparable and unique relationship between the possessor and the possessum.

Membership of a class of objects is treated as an intrinsic characteristic. *Kokolo* means 'class of', or 'category of', and 'clan' when applied to humans:

- (6.16) a. *kaike-u kokolo-na namhari ka solomon*  
 one-CRD class-3SGP fish LOC Solomons  
 (It is) one kind of fish from the Solomons.
- b. *boboe kokolo-ḡu-ne ara*  
 dugong class-1SGP-thisR I  
 'Dugong' is my clan.

Several nouns capture notions of intrinsic character. These 'ways' refer to the characteristic behaviour of an entity, or behaviour perceived to be inherently associated with an entity. These 'ways' are therefore treated as inalienably possessed by the relevant entity. The nouns are *hana*, *puhi*, and *zazaho*.

- (6.17) a. *e-u bla za-zaho-di-re palu naitu*  
 3.SBJ-be.thus LMT RD-go-3PLP-thoseN two devil  
 So they're the ways of the two devils.
- b. *padagi-ne ka gai e keha za-zaho-na-na bo*  
 shrine-thisR LOC weEXC 3.SBJ NSP RD-go-3SGP-thatN CNT  
 Our shrine has a different way of it.
- c. *ḡ-e aḡe e-u-gu ira puhi-di fa ku-kumai mereseni*  
 NT-3.SBJ go 3.SBJ-be.thus-PRG thePL way-3PLP CS RD-drink medicine  
 So that's how it goes, the way of drinking medicine.
- d. *tana nogoi nhigo n-e-u ia ḡrui*  
 then VOC be.finished RL-3.SBJ-be.thus theSG garden  
 Then, man!, they're finished, the garden,

*ira toka legu-kava-di-nā, hana-di-re-nā*  
 thePL chop follow-ground-3PLP-IMM way-3PLP-thoseN-IMM  
 their [the trees'] chopping to the ground, those ways of them.

In (6.17)a. the characteristic behaviour is the behaviour of the possessor entity itself, while in the remaining examples it is behaviour which is characteristically associated with it: respectively the customary procedures for making sacrifices at a shrine, for preparing certain custom medicines, and for clearing ground to make a garden.

The form *zazaho* is a reduplicated version of the verb *zaho* 'go'. Kokota reduplication has a general derivational function, with two subregularities being the derivation of intransitive verbs from transitive roots, and nouns from verb roots. Two lexemes are derived by reduplication from *zaho*. One, *zazaho* 'walk', is the idiosyncratic derivation of a specific (or perhaps prototypical) way of going. The other, *zazaho* 'way', derives a noun from the verb root, with a general sense of 'way of going'. The precise semantic distinction between *zazaho*, the widely used *puhi* 'way', and the rarely used *hana* 'way' is not clear at this stage.

Other such intrinsic characteristics treated as inalienably possessed include personal characteristics such as a person's years of age or handwriting:

- (6.18) a. *nihau komhu-mu-na ago*  
 how.many year-2SGP-thatN youSG  
 How old are you?
- b. *ara n-a mhemhe izu-ri ririso-mu-re ago*  
 I RL-1.SBJ be.difficult read-3PLO writing-2SGP-thoseN youSG  
 I find it hard to read your writing.

Certain nouns expressing quantities may be realised in a possessive relationship with the nominal they are quantifying. These include *tehi* 'a large number of quantity' and *kata-* 'a modicum'.

- (6.19) a. *tehi-di mane-re n-e kaike isi hage ka ġuku ana*  
 many-3PLP man-thoseN RL-3.SBJ one flee ascend LOC path thatN  
 Many of those men ran away together up the road.
- b. *fa loga mai kata-na karoseni nā bo*  
 CS pour come modicum-3SGP kerosene IMM CNT  
 Pour a little bit more kerosene.

*Tehi* has three syntactically distinct but semantically related functions. Its primary function is as an adnominal quantifier (discussed in 4.2.2.3). In addition it has the nominal function exemplified above, and also a verb function with the meaning 'be many'. It is not clear whether *kata* also occurs independently, and with other functions.

Forms characterising the place of an entity in a sequence are inalienably possessed. These include ordinal numbers (discussed in detail in 4.2.2.2.1.3), and the adjective/local noun *kenu* 'front':

- (6.20) a. *ġ-e lao nā fa palu-na ġāzu-na e-u*  
 NT-3.SBJ go IMM ORD two-3SGP wood-thatN 3.SBJ-be.thus  
 Go for the second of that tree.
- b. *ide-hi bla kenu-di botolo-re*  
 theseR-EMPH LMT front-3PLP bottle-thoseN  
 These are the first bottles

Ordinals are not obligatorily possessor indexed, occurring frequently as adnominal modifiers with no possessor indexing:

- (6.21) *ara fa palu mane n-a-ke ooe-na*  
 I ORD two man RL-1.SBJ-PRF talk-thatN  
 I was the second person who spoke.

### 6.3.1.7 Possession of adjectives

A small number of adjectives exist in Kokota. A subclass of these are formally underived and do not occur with possessor indexing (see 4.2.3.1). A further subclass are derived by the addition of inalienable possessor indexing. These include forms assigning gender, existential status, newness, and the notion 'first'. These possessor indexed adjectival forms are discussed in 4.2.3.2, however one example is repeated here:

- (6.22) *ḡazu are e ḡazu le-lehe-di*  
 wood thoseN 3.SBJ wood RD-be.dead-3PLP  
 These trees are dead trees.

### 6.3.1.8 Possession of local nouns

Local nouns function to identify a location in relation to an entity which is either specified or understood. Locations of this kind are treated as parts of the entity to which they relate, and are thus inalienably possessed. In effect, spaces adjacent to (including enclosed by) entities are treated as a part of the entity.

- (6.23) a. *n-e au ka mairi-ḡu ara*  
 RL-3.SBJ exist LOC left-1SGP I  
 It's at my left. [must be immediately to hand]
- b. *manei n-e au ka kota-na suḡa-na*  
 he RL-3.SBJ exist LOC outside-3SGP house-thatN  
 He is outside that house.

Local nouns in Kokota are not bound nominals, and may occur without possessor indexing, when the entity to which the location relates is understood:

- (6.24) *ka mai rum-i-na ia suḡa dou...*  
 LOC come enter-TR-thatN theSG house be.big  
 When they entered the big house...
- ḡ-e aḡe ruma-n̄a ḡ-e lao-n̄a sare ḡilu n-e-ke-u*  
 NT-3.SBJ go enter-IMM NT-3.SBJ go-IMM thereP inside RL-3.SBJ-PRF-be.thus  
 they went and entered, they went there inside.

Local nouns are discussed in detail in 5.4.

### 6.3.1.9 Possession of contextualising and associative nouns

Three nominals exist which function to introduce an oblique argument. The nominals themselves serve to identify the relationship the oblique argument has with the clause event. One, *tareme-* is associative, indicating that the possessor is in some way associated with the event, while two others, *gu-* and *nafu* indicate that the possessor is the context of the main clause event. All three are inalienably possessed.

The associative is discussed in detail in 5.7. It is obligatorily possessed:

- (6.25) *ago ginai aḡe ka rarata-o tareme-ḡu ara*  
 youSG FUT go LOC sand-thatNV ASSOC-1SGP I  
 You will go to the beach with me.

The contextualising nouns indicate that the possessor is the cause of an event, the topic of a speech event, or one on whose behalf the event takes place. One, *gu-* is obligatorily possessed:

- (6.26) *manei n-e turi tufa-di maneri gu-g̃u ara*  
 he RL-3.SBJ tell affect-3PLO they about-1SGP I  
 He told them about me.

The other, *nafu*, is obligatorily possessed when it occurs as a contextualising noun. However the form occurs as an ordinary nominal meaning 'base'. As such it is also inalienably possessed, being in a part-whole relationship. However as with other ordinary inalienably possessed nominals, it may occur without possessor indexing.

- (6.27) *n-e-ge au-gu ka nafu g̃azu ine*  
 LR-3.SBJ-PRS exist-PRG LOC base wood thisR  
 He stayed at this tree base.

The associative noun may only be possessed by an NP or other nominal constituent. The contextualising nouns, however, may also be possessed by a clause expressing an event with an appropriate oblique function:

- (6.28) a. *ara n-a lao, gu-na zemesi n-e-ke tore-nau ara*  
 I RL-1.SBJ go CNTX-3SGP PN RL-3.SBJ-PRF ask-1SGO I  
 I went because James asked me to.

Contextualising nouns are discussed in more detail in 5.6, and the associative noun in 5.7.

#### 6.3.1.10 Possession by location names

The relationship between an entity and a location with which the entity is characteristically associated may be expressed by a location name occurring as a adnominal core modifier (see 4.3.1.2.3). However, this relationship may also be expressed as a possessive relationship in which an entity is inalienably possessed by a location.

- (6.29) *ago kaike mane-na ostrelia*  
 youSG one man-3SGP PNLOC  
 You are a man from Australia.

Just as significant roles within groups or organisations are inalienably possessed (see 6.3.1.4), so are significant roles associated with locations:

- (6.30) a. *bili g̃edi spika-na isabel*  
 PN PN Speaker-3SGP PNLOC  
 Billy Gedi is the Speaker of (the Provincial Assembly of Santa) Isabel.<sup>1</sup>
- b. *manei man-datau-na-na goveo*  
 he man-chief-3SGP-thatN PNLOC  
 He is that chief of Goveo.

#### 6.3.1.11 Possession of events

Events that an entity is an undergoer of may be inalienably possessed by that entity. This passive possession applies to entities which are the undergoers of a transitive event. In (6.31)a. the trees which are being chopped to the ground inalienably possess that event, while in (6.31)b. the child that is baptised inalienably possesses its baptism.

<sup>1</sup> It is worth noting here that loan words may be inalienably possessed (see also (6.48)).

- (6.31) a. *tana nogoi nhigo n-e-u ia ġru*  
 then VOC be.finished RL-3.SBJ-be.thus theSG garden  
 Then, man!, they're finished, the garden,  
*ira toka legu kava-di-nā, hana-di-re-nā*  
 thePL chop follow ground-3PLP-IMM way-3PLP-thoseN-IMM  
 their [the trees'] chopping to the ground, those ways of them.
- b. ...*ġilai toke ia nare mala sugitabu-na suli-ana e-u*  
 until arrive theSG day PURP baptism-3SGP child-thatN 3.SBJ-be.thus  
 ...until the day for the baptism of that child arrives.

The inalienable possession of events also applies to the relationship between an entity and an unaccusative intransitive event (arguably also passive possession):

- (6.32) a. *n-e-ke kaike au nakoni-di-nā ka lehe-na-na naitu ta-au-ne*  
 RL-3.SBJ-PRF one exist person-3PLP-IMM LOC die-3SGP-thatN devil SB-exist-thisR  
 People continued to live, due to that death of this devil.
- b. *ka la au fufunu foġra-na manei ta-ke fufunu-na ara*  
 LOC go exist begin be.sick-3SGP he SB-PRF begin-thatN I  
 [It is] at that starting to get sick of his that I will start [the story].

However, the sole argument of an unergative intransitive event may also inalienably possess the event:

- (6.33) a. *ka mhoko aġe-na-na ġobilologu nogoi ġ-e aġe sugu ia to-toi...*  
 LOC sit go-3SGP-thatN PN VOC NT-3.SBJ go hiss theSG RD-cook  
 At that sitting of Gobilologu, man!, the fire hissed.
- b. *ka mai-ġu-o ara ginai, ara fahega*  
 LOC come-1SGP-thatNV I FUT I be.happy  
 At that coming of mine [again] I will be happy.

Possession of an unergative event is clearly not passive possession. However, since the treatment of the possession of an event is identical regardless of whether the possessor is a transitive undergoer or an unergative actor, there is no language internal basis for separating the two phenomena. However, it appears that the agent of a transitive event cannot be treated as that event's possessor. Since only a transitive undergoer and the sole core argument of an intransitive event can be treated as the possessor of the event, the phenomenon in Kokota can be most accurately regarded as absolute possession.

Clauses functioning as arguments are discussed in detail in 11.2.4.

### 6.3.2 Optional nature of inalienable possessor indexing

Unlike many Oceanic languages, inalienable possessive marking in Kokota is not obligatory. Almost any noun which typically occurs with inalienable possessor indexing may occur without it in certain circumstances. This is apparent in citation forms, which are always given without possessor indexing. In many Oceanic languages, in the absence of any clear possessor inalienably possessed forms are given with third person singular possessor marking. This is not the case in Kokota, even for nouns which have an apparently inseparably close relationship with their possessor, such as body parts or intrinsic characteristics, if the specific possessor is not apparent or is not relevant. In (6.34) the speaker is discussing the custom medicine treatment for headaches, and has no particular individual's head in mind.

- (6.34) *e au ka pau ine marha-pau ana*  
 3.SBJ exist LOC head thisR pain-head thatN  
 That headache is in the head.

Intrinsic characteristics such as class membership and characteristic ways (discussed in 6.3.1.6) may occur without possessor indexing:

- (6.35) a. *teo ġ-e au-gu kokolo ga-gato t-au-are*  
 be.not NT-3.SBJ exist-PRG class RD-think SB-exist-thoseN  
 Those kinds of thoughts won't happen. [lit. Those thought types won't be.]
- b. *n-e-ke mai-u puhi keli-ro ka tilo mane-re*  
 RL-3.SBJ-PRF come-PRG way be.good-thoseNV LOC three man-thoseN  
 Those good ways came with those three men.

A small number of exceptions exist which cannot occur without inalienable possessor indexing. However none are ordinary nouns. They include possessor indexed adjectives (see 4.2.3.2), the kin terms *tu-* 'offspring' and *tamo-* 'younger sibling', the contextualising noun *gu-* (see 4.5.4) and the associative noun *tareme-* (4.5.5). These morphosyntactic form categories require possessor indexing, and none may occur without an overt mention of the entity being indexed. In the case of the adjectives this entity occurs as the nominal head which the adjective modifies, in the case of the contextualising and associative nouns it is the noun's own complement. Any lexical noun may occur without possessor indexing.

## 6.4 Alienable possession

Alienable possession involves a possessive base, indexed with a suffix. The forms of these indexed bases are given in Tables 6.2 and 6.3. The possessor indexed base occurs as the initial element in a NP core (see 4.3.1). Two classes of alienable possession are recognised: consumable possession, and non-consumable possession.

### 6.4.1 Possession of consumable entities

The possession of any consumable matter taken by mouth is treated as alienable possession and is expressed using the consumable possessive base *ge-*. Anything which is being thought of in terms of consumption by mouth is treated in this way. This includes food, drink and tobacco:

- (6.36) a. *ġ-e la fa-mane-mane-ri ira ge-mai teġe*  
 NT-3.SBJ go CS-RD-man-3PLO thePL CP-1EXCP turtle  
 We are happy about our turtles
- ta mala n̄hau ia mavitu*  
 SB PURP eat theSG community  
 for the community to eat.
- b. *fa mai-ri ge-ġu bia are*  
 CS come-3PLO CP-1SGP beer thoseN  
 Bring me those beers of mine.
- c. *ge-na viri havi*  
 CP-3SGP tobacco PN  
 Havi's tobacco

Other entities may be possessed using the consumable base if they are a consumable form of something which may in other contexts not be consumable by mouth. Thus medicine, which may be consumed in a number of ways, is possessed using *ge-* if it is medicine to be taken orally:

- (6.37) *mereseni ine ge-ḡu mereseni ara*  
 medicine thisR CP-1SGP medicine I  
 This medicine is my medicine.

Other items which are typically not thought of as consumable by mouth, or indeed consumable in any way, are possessed using *ge-* if for some reason they are being thought of as consumable. Thus *pepa* 'paper' is not normally thought of as consumable, but when used for rolling cigarettes it is possessed using *ge-*:

- (6.38) *ge-ḡu pepa*  
 CP-1SGP paper  
 my paper (for rolling cigarettes)

## 6.4.2 Non-consumable alienable possession

### 6.4.2.1 Alienably possessed kin

As indicated in 6.3.1.1, some kinship terms are treated as inalienably possessed. However, others are normally treated as participants in an alienable possessive relationship. With the exception of the culturally salient relationships discussed in 6.3.1.1, kin terms referring to older relatives are treated as alienably possessed. This includes those occupying positions in previous generations (parents, grandparents); and older siblings. In-laws other than those in the culturally salient relationships discussed above are also alienably possessed, as is *ḡorotati* 'family'. Alienable kin terms include:

- (6.39) a. *ido* 'mother'  
 b. *mama* 'father'  
 c. *kaka* 'grandparent'  
 d. *vave* 'in-law'  
 e. *ḡorotati* 'family'

Possession of these kin terms can only be realised by means of the general alienable possession base, and cannot take direct, inalienable, suffixing.

- (6.40) a. *n-e la lehe mariñi ka mane-aro si-ba no-ḡu kaka*  
 RL-3.SBJ go die PNLOC LOC man-theseT FOC-ALT GP-1SGP grandparent  
 He is dead from Maringe, from those men, my grandfather.
- b. *naḡu-na no-ḡu mama*  
 base-3SGP GP-1SGP father  
 Because of my father.
- c. *no-na ḡorotati zemesi*  
 GP-3SGP family PN  
 James' family

### 6.4.2.2 Other alienably possessed entities

The general possessive base *no-* is used to mark the possession of any nominal other than those which are inalienably possessed or consumable by mouth. Physical objects may be marked in this way:

- (6.41) a. *ara a fa-kraño-ri fea no-ḡu pohe ide*  
 I 1.SBJ CS-be.dry-3PLO INIT GP-1SGP clothing theseR  
 I will dry my clothes first.

- b. *a friñhe ara ka no-ḡu tesenine*  
 1.SBJ work I LOC GP-1SGP plantation  
 I will work in my plantation.

This applies equally to non-physical possessed entities:

- (6.42) a. *tana n-e-ke toke ira no-na naitu manei*  
 then RL-3.SBJ-PRF arrive thePL GP-3SGP devil he  
 Then this man's devil arrived.

The general possessive base is used with any other possessed entity including intangible entities which are not actually owned:

- (6.43) a. *hae bo palu wiki e toke-i*  
 where CNT two week 3.SBJ arrive-3SGO  
 I think that we return two weeks before
- ia no-mai nare mala friñhe tañano*  
 theSG GP-1EXCP day PURP work food  
 the day for making food.

## 6.5 Semantic bases of possessive categories

### 6.5.1 Variability in possessor indexing choice

Nouns which are normally treated as being in an alienable relationship with a possessor may be marked with inalienable possessor indexing. This is seen in (6.29) and (6.30) above, where nouns like *mane* 'man' and *mandatau* 'chief' may be inalienably possessed by a location. Entities such as these may only be considered to be in an inalienable possessive relationship with their place of origin or the place to which their function relates, but may consequently be treated as inalienably possessed in that context. This suggests that while these nouns would typically be alienably possessed, they do not belong to a syntactic class of nominals which must be alienably possessed. The corollary is equally true: nouns which typically occur with inalienable possessor indexing may occur with alienable possessor indexing in an appropriate context.

As an example, *nene* 'leg', being a body part, typically occurs in an inalienable possessive relationship with its possessor:

- (6.44) *nene-ḡu-ine*  
 leg-1SGP-thisR  
 my leg

However, if the leg under discussion is a chicken leg which the speaker intends to eat, it would be alienably possessed with the consumable base *ge-*. Alternatively, if a table has been dismantled and several people will take the legs to use for timber, a speaker may refer to the leg they will take with the general alienable base *no-*:

- (6.45) a. *ge-ḡu nene ine*                      b. *no-ḡu nene ine*  
 CP-1SGP leg thisR                      GP-1SGP leg thisR  
 my leg    my leg

This variation in possessor indexing suggests that in Kokota the three formal possessive constructions do not involve syntactic classes of nouns that are associated with one of three syntactic categories of possession. Instead it appears that the three formal possessive constructions represent kinds of relationships. Some nouns, because of their semantics, are normally regarded as being in an inalienable relationship with a possessor, and consequently typically occur in the inalienable possessive construction. Other nouns, by virtue of their meaning, are normally regarded as being in a consumable or non-

consumable alienable possessive relationship and so typically occur with consumable or non-consumable alienable possessor indexing. However nouns with each semantically motivated tendency may occur with any of the other indexing types in the appropriate context. The possessive types in Kokota can therefore be regarded as not involving *syntactic* classes of nouns. Instead the determining criteria are semantic.

### 6.5.2 Systematic variation between possessor indexing strategies

The semantics of some nouns mean that they occur systematically and commonly in more than one of the possessor indexing constructions.

#### 6.5.2.1 Consumable and general alienable possessive variation

Objects that are normally regarded both as a possession like any other, and as being edible or drinkable, occur commonly with either of the alienable possessor bases. For example potentially consumable possessions such as *zora* 'pig' (both the live animal and its meat) and *koilo* 'coconut' (both the tree and its fruit) are treated as in a consumable or general alienable possessive relationship, depending on how the speaker is regarding them.

- (6.46) a. *no-ḡu zora-na ara*      b. *ge-ḡu zora-na ara*  
 GP-1SGP pig-thatN I      GP-1SGP pig-thatN I  
 my pig      my pork
- c. *no-mi koilo are*      b. *ge-mi koilo are*  
 GP-2PLP coconut thoseN      GP-2PLP coconut thoseN  
 those coconuts of yours      those coconuts of yours [which you will eat/drink]

#### 6.5.2.2 Inalienable and alienable possessive variation

##### 6.5.2.2.1 Intrinsic characteristics possessable by others

Some entities may be regarded as being an intrinsic characteristic of one entity, while at the same time may be in an alienable possessive relationship with a different entity. Such entities may be possessed inalienably and alienably, depending on which possessor is being referred to. This includes physical objects such as pictures and photographs. Possession by the subject of the picture is treated as inalienable possession, regardless of who owns the picture, as in (6.47)a., because the picture is the image of the subject and therefore treated as an intrinsic characteristic. On the other hand an individual who is the owner of the picture as a physical object, but who is not necessarily the subject, as in (6.47)b. is realised as an alienable possessor. The same is true of books, where the book is treated as an intrinsic characteristic of the entity whose story is told in the book, but is alienably possessed by the owner of the physical object ((6.47)c. and d.).

- (6.47) a. *totogale-ḡu ara ine*  
 picture-1SGP I thisR  
 this photo of me (which I may or may not own)
- b. *no-ḡu totogale ara ine*  
 GP-1SGP picture I thisR  
 this photo of mine (which I own but may or may not be of me)
- c. *buka-na ḡobilologu an-lau ginai frin̄he-di bla manei*  
 book-3SGP PN thatN-SPC FUT work-3PLO LMT he  
 'Book of Gobilologu', that's what he'll make.

- d. *ide-hi n-e-ke no-ḡu buka ara*  
 theseR-EMPH RL-3.SBJ-PRF GP-1SGP book I  
 These used to be my books

Entities which are not physical objects but are the intrinsic characteristic of the possessor, and are possessable by other individuals, demonstrate the same variability. These include *histori* 'history', *fakasai* 'history', and *tuturi* 'story':

- (6.48) a. *ginai aḡe ḡonu ia histori-na nau-ne*  
 FUT go not.know theSG history-3SGP place-thisR  
 The history of this place will be forgotten.
- b. *a-hi-la no-ḡu histori-na*  
 thisT-EMPH-SPC GP-1SGP history-thatN  
 This is my history.

Both examples refer to the history of a place. In (6.48)a. the possessor is the location, of which the possessum is an intrinsic characteristic, and the relationship is inalienable. In (6.48)b. the possessor is not the subject matter, but a person claiming custom ownership of the history.<sup>2</sup> This possessor is therefore treated as being in an alienable relationship. (Note that the variability of possessor indexing occurring with the loans *histori* and *buka* indicates the productivity of the phenomenon.)

Similarly an illness possesses inalienably the spirit which causes it, and the medicine which can treat it, as these are inalienable characteristics of the illness. However both spirits and medicines may be treated as possessions by individuals, in an alienable relationship.

- (6.49) a. *ḡ-e-la are e-u bla naitu-dī foḡra*  
 NT-3.SBJ-go thoseN 3.SBJ-be.thus LMT devil-3PLP sick  
 That's all about sickness devils.
- b. *tana n-e-ke toke ira no-na naitu manei*  
 then RL-3.SBJ-PRF reach thePL GP-3SGP devil he  
 Then his devils came.
- c. *tahe la-ri bl-ago keha foḡra aro*  
 say go-3PLO LMT-youSG NSP sick theseT  
 Just tell some sicknesses
- mereseni ḡazu he-ba mereseni-dī-re*  
 medicine wood who-ALT medicine-3PLP-thoseN  
 and whatever medicine trees are their medicines.
- d. *teo ḡ-e-ge surai gato-ri bla gai*  
 be.not NT-3.SBJ-PRG ?? think-3PLO LMT weEXC  
 So we don't much think about
- ira no-mai mereseni kastom gai*  
 thePL GP-1EXCP medicine custom weEXC  
 our custom medicines.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>2</sup> Among the Kokota and other peoples of Santa Isabel histories and stories demonstrate knowledge of a place, and therefore constitutes evidence of ownership of that land.

<sup>3</sup> The meaning of *surai* is unclear.

#### 6.5.2.2.2 Intrinsic ways and temporary plans

*Puhi* 'way' typically refers to the characteristic behaviour of, or associated with, an entity (as discussed in 6.3.1.6), and so is marked with inalienable possessor indexing.

- (6.50)     *puhi-na-na*       *kastom-na*     *ka*   *gai*     *tifaro*  
          way-3SGP-thatN   custom-thatN   LOC weINC   before  
          The way of our custom before.

However, if the 'way' is a means of doing something which applies to a particular situation and is one of a number of possible ways, it may be treated as alienably possessed. In (6.51) there has been a dispute about how a game should be played. One participant in the dispute then concedes.

- (6.51)     *ehe keli*   *bo*   *ka-ira*     *no-u*     *puhi*   *ago*     *vave*  
          yes good CNT   LOC-thePL GP-2SGP way   youSG   in.law  
          Yes, alright, in your way, in-law.

It is not clear whether this also applies to the other 'way' terms *zazaho* and *hana* (see 6.3.1.8).

#### 6.5.2.2.3 Possession of children

The term *tu-* 'child' means 'child of-' in the sense of actual offspring, and appears to always be treated as inalienably possessed by the parent(s). The term *suli*, however, refers to children in general, and may be treated as alienably or inalienably possessed. The alienable relationship exists with someone other than the child's parents, as in (6.52)a., where the speaker is a teacher. However, if *suli* is used where the significance of the children is that they are the offspring of the possessor, then the relationship is treated as inalienable, as in (6.52)b.

- (6.52) a. *are*   *no-ḡu*   *suli*   *ara*  
          thoseN   GP-1SGP child I  
          Those are my children [ie. students].
- b. *mala*   *e*   *au*   *histori*   *are-lau*   *ka*   *sikolu-ne*   *ka*   *suli-da*   *gita*  
          PURP 3.SBJ exist history thoseN-SPC LOC school-thisR LOC child-IINCP weINC  
          So those histories can stay in the school for our children.

In (6.52)b. the speaker and the addressee are members of the same village community, and the inclusive 'we' refers to the whole village community, rather than the speaker and addressee specifically. Consequently although *suli* here refers to the children of the village, rather than any specific children, it nonetheless focuses on them as offspring.

#### 6.5.2.2.4 Multiple possessor indexing

The potential for certain nominals to be possessed alienably or inalienably, depending on the nature of the possessive relationship, creates the potential for dual possessor indexing, with both the owner of an object and the entity for which the object represents an intrinsic characteristic to be expressed simultaneously:

- (6.53)     *gu*     *tu-turi-na*   *ka*   *ara*   *noḡu*   *mereseni-na*   *mheke*  
          be.thus RD-tell-thatNLOC I   GP-1SGP medicine-3SGP dog  
          So, my story is my medicine for dogs.

#### 6.5.3 Indexing variation without apparent contextual variation

Some nouns are commonly treated either as alienably or inalienably possessed, with no apparent contextual difference. The basis for the choice is not known at this stage.

### 6.5.3.1 Variable possession in human relationships

A number of human relationships appear to be regarded as potentially alienable or inalienable. One such term is *nakrupe* 'wife'. This term is distinct from *nafe* 'spouse', which is treated as inalienably possessed. Both alienable and inalienable possessive constructions occur involving *nakrupe* in apparent free variation:

- (6.54) a. *ia nakrupe-ḡu ara n-e mai*  
 theSG wife-1SGP I RL-3.SBJ come  
 My wife is coming.
- b. *nakodou ana no-gu nakrupe ara*  
 woman thatN GP-1SGP wife I  
 That woman is my wife.

Although both possessive constructions are possible, the form is typically treated as inalienably possessed and only rarely as alienably possessed.

A term with similar variability is *datau*, which translates primarily as 'chief', but also means 'husband', and is used for 'boss' and other male authority figures. As with *nakrupe* the inalienable construction is statistically more common, however both occur:

- (6.55) a. *abrose variḡutu datau-na goveo*  
 PN PN chief-3SGP PNLOC  
 Ambrose Varigutu is the chief of Goveo.
- b. *no-mi datau gau*  
 GP-2PLP chief youPL  
 your chief

### 6.5.3.2 Non-intrinsic characteristics

A number of nominals occurring in both alienable and inalienable constructions have a particularly close relationship with their possessor, to the extent where they may be regarded as characteristics of the possessor. However, these characteristics are temporary or non-intrinsic in some other way. These nominals are treated as either alienably or inalienably possessed, with, to varying extents, a statistical tendency towards inalienable indexing.

Among these non-intrinsic characteristics are *gagato* 'thought', *foḡra* 'sickness', *nau* 'place', *suḡa* 'house', *vetula* 'law, rule', *velepuhi* 'religion', and *kastom* 'custom'.

- (6.56) a. *...ga-gato-mu-na ago n-e-ge nhigo tarai baiu n-e-u*  
 RD-think-2SGP-thatN youSG RL-3.SBJ-PRS finish pray PSBL RL-3.SBJ-be.thus  
 ...that thought of yours was that prayer is finished, like that?
- b. *ka no-ḡu ga-gato ara ge n-e-ke friñhe-i-nā an-lau*  
 LOC GP-1SGP RD-think I SEQ RL-3.SBJ-PRG work-3SGO-IMM that-SPC  
 I thought to do that.
- c. *ka la au fufunu foḡra-na manei ta-ke fufunu-na ara*  
 LOC go exist begin sick-3SGP he SB-PRF begin-thatN I  
 When he got sick, that's where I'll start.
- d. *no-ḡu foḡra ara n-e-ke-ge keli*  
 GP-1SGP sick I RL-3.SBJ-PRF-PRS be.good  
 My sickness has got better.

- e. *ara n-a hod-i kaike letasi fufunu mai-na ka nau-gū*  
 I RL-1.SBJ take-TR one letter begin come-thatN LOC place-1SGP  
 I have received a letter from my home.
- f. *ara-nā no-gū nau-ro si-aro*  
 I-IMM GP-1SGP place-thoseNV FOC-theseT  
 That's my home.
- g. *ka ta la mai-o ia vetula-na-na ia gāvana...*  
 LOC SB go come-thatNV theSG law-3SGP-thatN theSG government  
 When the law of the Government came...
- h. *nā ho-hogo-na blau g̃-e-u ira no-na vetula gāvana*  
 but RD-be.true-thatN LMT NT-3.SBJ-be.thus thePL GP-3SGP law government  
 But the laws of the Government are true.

There is no apparent systematicity to the distribution of alienable versus inalienable possession with these nominals. This is clear from the variation between (6.56)g. and h. These two clauses were produced by the same speaker and occurred only a few clauses apart in a single text. It should be noted that while these nominals are treated as inalienably possessed far more commonly than alienably, they in fact typically do not occur in possessive relationships, especially *foḡra* 'sickness' and *nau* 'place'.

## 6.6 Pseudo-locative possession

In 6.3 and 6.4 inalienable and alienable possessor indexing is discussed. However, these strategies of indexing the possessum to the possessor are not the only way of expressing possession. The possessive relationship may also be expressed by realising the possessor as an adnominal locative adjunct, with no indexing on the possessum. This follows adverbial locative adjuncts in distinguishing formally between prepositional phrases and location names.

### 6.6.1 Pseudo-locative possession by prepositional phrase

Prepositional phrases using the general locative preposition *ka* occur widely as obliques and adnominal modifiers, expressing a wide range of semantic relationships. The use of a PP embedded within an NP modifies the NP in a number of ways (discussed in 4.3.2.2.3.1). An additional function is to realise a relationship of possession. This is not strictly a possessive construction, but a locative construction in which the possessor is presented as a kind of metaphorical location of the possessum.

- (6.57) a. *ara n-a n̄ha-ni g̃ausa ka maneri*  
 I RL-1.SBJ eat-3SGO betel.nut LOC they  
 I ate their betel nut.
- b. *manei n-e-ke reregi-ni-na zuta-pamu k-ara*  
 he RL-3.SBJ-PRF look.after-3SGO-thatN lamp-pump LOC-I  
 He took care of my tilly lamp.

In alienable or inalienable possessive constructions the possessor is realised as an NP which is the complement of the possessor enclitic or suffixed base. With prepositional pseudo-locative possession the possessor is realised as an adjunct to the NP, as with any other non-subcategorised PP.

Prepositional pseudo-locative possession typically expresses possessive relationships that are regarded as alienable. This is evident in the alienable interpretation typically placed on relationships expressed in this way. Thus a term such as *totogale* 'picture' may be alienably or inalienably possessed. As discussed above in 6.5.2.2.1, when *totogale* is possessed inalienably the possessor is the subject of the picture (ie. the image is an intrinsic characteristic of the possessor). When it is possessed alienably, the possessor is the owner of the physical object, and may or may not be the subject of the image. If the possessor is expressed as a PP, however, the only possible reading is that the possessor is the owner of the physical object. A prepositional

possessor cannot also be the subject of the picture. This is true of all the nouns discussed in 6.5.2.2.1. Thus possession of a medicine may be expressed prepositionally but only if the possessor is the individual who owns the medicine, not the illness the medicine treats:

- (6.58) *ḡ-e-la ta aḡe no-mai koko-di n-a-u-gu*  
 NT-3.SBJ-go SB go GP-1EXCP leave-3PLO RL-1.SBJ-be.thus-PRG  
 That's how we've gone and left them behind,  
  
*ira mereseni ka tagi-mai gai nakoni zuzufra.*  
 thePL medicine LOC RFL-1EXCP weEXC person black  
 the medicines of our own, we black people.

In keeping with this alienability criterion, nominals with referents which are typically inalienably possessed, body parts, do not normally occur with prepositional possessors, while objects which are typically treated as alienable occur commonly in that construction, as (6.57) illustrates. This is true of all types of typically alienably possessed entities, including alienable kin:

- (6.59) *ia ḡorotati ka zemesi*  
 theSG family LOC PN  
 James' family

However, the apparent free variation with many nominals, as described in 6.5.3, means that potentially inalienably possessed nominals occur with prepositional possessors. This includes some human relationships:

- (6.60) a. *mai fea nakrupe-o k-ara ge ḡ-e la zuke kakau-nā gau*  
 come INIT wife-thatNV LOC-I SEQ NT-3.SBJ go seek crab-IMM youPL  
 First my wife will come before you all go and look for crabs.  
  
 b. *suli-re ka dorisi ide-hi*  
 child-thoseN LOC PN theseR-EMPH  
 Doris's children are these ones

It also occurs commonly expressing the possession of non-intrinsic characteristics such as those discussed in 6.5.3.2.

- (6.61) a. *puhi-na-na kastom-na ka gai tifarō*  
 way-3SGP-thatN custom-thatN LOC weINC before  
 The way of that custom of ours before.  
  
 b. *ga-gato are ka nakoni are*  
 RD-think thoseN LOC person thoseN  
 those thoughts of those people

While prepositional pseudo-locative possession normally gives an alienable reading, nominalised verbs may occur with prepositional pseudo-locative possession, despite their normally inalienable treatment (compare, for example, (6.62)b. with (6.32)a.):

- (6.62) a. *ara manahagi turi tufa-nigo ago ka gu-na ia au ka gai*  
 I want tell affect -2SGO youSG LOC CNTX-3SGP theSG exist LOC weINC  
 I want to tell you a story about our living

*ka-ia fufunu mai-na ia velepuhi*  
 LOC-theSG begin come-3SGP theSG right.way  
 at the first coming of Christianity.

- b. *ara n-a dia-nanafa gu-na ia lehe ka manei*  
 I RL-1.SBJ be.bad-heart CNTX-3SGP theSG die LOC he  
 I am sad because of his death.

### 6.6.2 Pseudo-locative possession by location name

Place names are inherently locations. When a common noun occurs as a peripheral locative argument it must occur within a prepositional phrase. Location names, however, function as such without the preposition. This is paralleled in pseudo-locative possession. While all other nominal types may occur as a possessor in the form of a prepositional adjunct, as discussed above, location names do so without a preposition.

- (6.63) a. *e-u mane ide kokota n-e-ke kulu tarai*  
 3.SBJ-be.thus mane theseR PNLOC RL-3.SBJ-PRF be.first pray  
 So these Kokota people were the first to start prayer.

### 6.7 Zero marked possession within prepositional phrases

In limited circumstances possession is expressed in a way which not only does not involve possessor indexing on the possessum, but in which the possessor is not expressed as a prepositional pseudo-locative. This only occurs when the possessor is a pronoun or a personal name, and the possessum is itself a complement of the preposition *ka*. The relationship may involve a location (other than a location name) with which the possessor is closely associated:

- (6.64) a. *ara mai ka suḡa ine ago ba, ago mai ka suḡa-o ara*  
 I come LOC house thisR you ALT you come LOC house-thatNV I  
 Will I come to your house, or will you come to my house?
- b. *lao ka suḡa zemesi*  
 go LOC house James  
 Go to James' house.
- c. *...ka-ia puhi bonihehe ka gizuna a-hi gai*  
 LOC-theSG way heathen LOC island thisT-EMPH weINC  
 ...in the heathen time on this island of ours.
- d. *...ia vetula-na gavana ka-ia giluna nau gai*  
 theSG law-3SGP government LOC-theSG in-3SGP place weEXC  
 ...the Government's law inside our village.

Alternatively the possessum may be an intrinsic characteristic of the possessor:

- (6.65) a. *ka-ia kastom gai tana goi momoru e-ni e-u*  
 LOC-theSG custom weINC then VOC turtle.net 3.SBJ-3SGO 3.SBJ-be.thus  
 In our custom, then, man!, *momoru* we call it.
- b. *ta friñhe-ri manei n̄hau-blahi-de ginai ka tu-turi aro gita*  
 SB work-3PLO he eat-be.sacred-theseR FUT LOC RD-tell thoseN weINC  
 He will make Holy Communion from these stories of ours.

## 6.8 Structure of possessive NPs

### 6.8.1 Possessum as head

In NPs marked for either alienable or inalienable (as opposed to pseudo-locative) possession the head is the element of the phrase which carries possessor indexing. As discussed in 4.3.1.3.2, inalienable possession involves an enclitic attaching to the nominal core, the head of which is the nominal expressing the possessed entity. In a phrase like that in (6.66)a. the possessor indexing attaches to the phrasal head *nan̄ha* 'name'. In (6.66)b., where a post-head core modifier *dou* 'be big' occurs, the enclitic attaches to the modifier, but itself modifies the core head *tomoko* 'war canoe':

- (6.66) a. *nan̄ha-na nau-ne*                      b. *tilo tomoko dou-di wistin*  
 name-3SGP place-thisR                      three war.canoe be.big-3PLP western  
 the name of this village                      three big war canoes of the westerners [repeating (4.100)b.]

Nominal core structure is discussed in 4.3.1.4.

With alienable possession it is the possessive base that functions as the head, the actual nominal functioning as a specifier of the exact nature of the consumable or general alienably possessable object. Thus in (6.67) the phrasal head is the general possessive base *no-*.

- (6.67) *no-ḡu suḡa ara*  
 GP-1SGP house I  
 my house

Possessive bases typically occur with a specifying nominal like *suḡa* in (6.67). However, this is not obligatory. An indexed possessive base may occur without a specifying nominal where the reference is to possessed objects the actual nature or identity of which is not important:

- (6.68) a. *ta mai au la gai ade, a-ke mai siko ginai*  
 SB come exist CND weINC here 1.SBJ-PRF come steal FUT  
 If we come and live here, we would come and steal
- ka-ira ge-di no-di e-u mane*  
 LOC-thePL CP-3PLP GP-3PLP 3.SBJ-be.thus man  
 from the food and things of the people
- n-e-ke kusu au-de ade*  
 RL-3.SBJ-PRF be.first exist-theseR here  
 who already [first] live here.
- b. *n-e n̄ha-di manei ge-ḡu-ro*  
 3.SBJ-RL eat-3PLO he CP-1SGP-thoseNV  
 He ate my food.

### 6.8.2 Possessor as complement

While the possessum is the head of the NP itself, the possessor indexing has its own argument structure, subcategorising for a possessor argument. The embedded possessor NP is therefore the complement of the possessor indexing. However, if the discourse precludes ambiguity the possessor need not be overtly realised. This may occur where the possessor is prominent in the discourse due to a recent overt mention, as in (6.69)a., or where it is unambiguously understood from the discourse context, as in (6.69)b.:

- (6.69) a. ...*aḡē-nā ḡobilologu nogoi n-e aḡē*  
 go-IMM PN VOC RL-3.SBJ go  
 ...Gobilologu went, man! He went
- n-e la-ni ka keha hobo-ḡazu-o keha lholhoguai-na-o*  
 RL-3.SBJ go-3SGO LOC NSP branch-wood-thatNV NSP coil-3SGP-thatNV  
 and he put on a branch a coil of his,
- ke la ade bo ke la nai keha lholhoguai-na-o ade...*  
 PRF go here CNT PRF go put NSP coil-3SGP-thatNV here  
 [he] went here, [he] went and put a coil of his here...
- b. *ara n-a hod-i kaike letasi fufunu mai-na ka nau-ḡū*  
 I RL-1.SBJ take-TR one letter begin come-PRG LOC place-1SGP  
 I have received a letter from my home.

The effect of the latter is that speaker and addressee possessors rarely have an overt pronominal mention.

### 6.8.3 Recursion

Where a possessor is realised by a nominal which itself is possessed, a nested structure of recursive possessive phrases occurs. Possessor complements occur as an NP embedded in the main NP. This complement may in turn have a possessor expressed as an embedded NP. There are no restrictions on the kind of possessive construction that may be involved, including prepositional pseudo-locative possession:

- (6.70) a. *pamu-na-o zuta-pamu-ana ka ago*  
 pump-3SGP-thatNV lamp-pump-thatN LOC youSG  
 the pump of that tilly lamp of yours
- b. *ia suḡā ka no-ḡū ido*  
 theSG house LOC GP-1SGP mother  
 your mother's house
- c. *ia no-na suḡā tamo-mu*  
 theSG GP-3SGP house younger.sibling-2SGP  
 your brother's house

## 6.9 Predicative possession

Possession may be expressed predicatively in two ways: by a nonverbal clause with the possessum as subject, or by a verb of possession, with the possessor as subject.

### 6.9.1 Nonverbal predicative possession

The ownership of an entity may be assigned to it in a special possessive predicative construction by a nonverbal predicate consisting of the appropriate possessive base indexed to the possessor. The possessor itself is realised within the predicate:

- (6.71) a. *keha pile-di-re no-na bla tagi-na*  
 NSP side-3PLP-thoseN GP-3SGP LMT RFL-3SGP  
 Some parts simply belong to him himself.
- b. *mala-n̄hau are ge-ḡū ara*  
 PURP-eat thoseN CP-1SGP I  
 That food is mine.

Only alienable possession is expressible in this way. Verbless clauses are discussed in detail in 9.1.

### 6.9.2 Verbs of possession

The possession of an entity may be assigned to the possessor in a verbal construction involving verbs of possession. One verb, *kuru* 'possess' has only this function. Two further verbs express possession as one of their functions. These are the positive and negative existential verbs *au* and *teo*.

- (6.72) a. *n-a kuru ga-gato-g̃u ara*  
 RL-1.SBJ possess RD-think-1SGP I  
 I have my ideas.
- b. *manei n-e au puhi ta dia*  
 he RL-3.SBJ exist way SB be.bad  
 He has bad ways.
- c. *manei n-e teo nehu dou*  
 he RL-3.SBJ not.be nose be.big  
 He does not have a big nose.

These verbs of possession distinguish alienable and inalienable possessive relationships. The examples in (6.72) all express inalienable relationships. Alienable relationships are expressed in the same way except that the verb occurs with an object enclitic coreferentially indexing the possessor subject:

- (6.73) a. *a kuru-g̃ai gai la bla kokolo-di foḡra t-au-are*  
 1.SBJ possess-1EXCO weEXC ?? LMT class-3PLP sick SB-exist-thoseN  
 We have all those kinds of sicknesses.
- b. *ara n-a au-nau kaike zuta-pamu*  
 I RL-1.SBJ exist-1SGO one lamp-pump  
 I have one tilly lamp.
- c. *gita da teo-gita faiba*  
 weINC 1INC.SBJ not.be-1INCO boat  
 We haven't got a boat.

This middle voice construction is discussed in 7.1.3.2.

### 6.10 Possessive marking in the verb complex

The indexed general possessive base occurs inside the verb complex with adverbial functions. It may occur preverbally as a desiderative:

- (6.74) *mane-aro n-e no-di faroho-g̃ai gai*  
 man-thoseN RL-3.SBJ GP-3PLP smite-1INCO weINC  
 Those men want to hit us.

Only the general possessive base is permissible in this construction, even where the action involves consumption by mouth:

- (6.75) *ara n-a papara gu-na n-a no-g̃u n̄hau*  
 I RL-1.SBJ suffer CNTX-3SGP RL-1.SBJ GP-1SGP eat  
 I'm suffering because I want to eat.

The indexed possessive base also occurs postverbally giving a sense of immediacy to the predication. In this construction both the general and consumable bases occur:

- (6.76) a. *n-e-ge*            *kusu*    *la*    *toga*    ***no-di-u***            *bagovu*  
RL-3.SBJ-PRS    be.first    go    arrive    GP-3PLP-PRG    PNLOC  
They were the first to arrive at Bagovu.
- b. *manei*    *n-e*            *n̄hau*    ***ge-na***  
he        RL-3.SBJ    eat        CP-3SGP  
He is eating.

Adverbial modification by possessive base is discussed in more detail in 8.5.4.3 and 8.6.1.