

Neil Myler (New York University), Einar Freyr Sigurðsson (University of Pennsylvania) and Jim Wood (Yale University)

Predicative Possession Builds on Top of Attributive Possession: Evidence from Icelandic

In this talk, we argue that the syntactic expression of possession in the clause is directly related to the syntactic expression of possession DP-internally. We defend this claim in light of recent research on DP-internal possession in Icelandic, a language whose rich array of predicative possession constructions make it an ideal empirical domain for investigating this connection between the clausal and nominal realms.

1. DP internally, there are three basic constructions for expressing possession: Construction A involves a bare NP followed by a possessive pronoun; Construction B involves a definite-suffixed noun followed by a possessive pronoun; Construction C involves a definite-suffixed noun followed by a PP expressing the possessor. The table in (1) shows the distribution of concrete, kinship, body part, and abstract possession among these constructions.

(1)	A: NP - POSS. PRON	B: NP-DEF - POSS. PRON	C: NP-DEF - PREP - PRON
Concrete (‘my book’)	# bók mín book my	bók-in mín book-DEF my	* bók-in hjá mér book-DEF at me
Kinship (‘my sister’)	systir mín sister my	* systir-in mín sister-DEF my	* systir-in hjá mér sister-DEF at me
Body part (‘my eyes’)	# augu mín eyes my	% augu-n mín eyes-DEF my	augu-n í mér eyes-DEF in me
Abstract (‘my idea’)	hugmynd mín idea my	* hugmynd-in mín idea-DEF my	hugmynd-in hjá mér idea-DEF at me

For reasons of space, we will set aside a number of complex issues, including speaker variation for body part possession, special interpretations of concrete possession in Construction A, etc. The shaded boxes reflect the “core” cases that we will focus on. **2. For clausal possession**, there are again three basic forms. We will focus here on two: verb *hafa* ‘have₁’ and the verb *eiga* ‘have₂/own’. (We set aside the *vera með* ‘be with’ construction; see Levinson 2011 for recent discussion.) In (2) we show the distribution of *hafa* and *eiga* across the same categories of possession shown in (1). (Note that (2d) with *hafa* is grammatical, *pace* Levinson 2011; see also Irie 1997.)

(2) a. **Concrete**

Peir { *hafa/eiga } stóra bók.
they.NOM { *have₁/have₂ } big book.ACC
‘They have a big book.’

c. **Abstract**

Peir { hafa/*eiga } ekki hugmynd.
they.NOM { have₁/*have₂ } not idea.ACC
‘They have no idea.’

b. **Kinship**

Peir { *hafa/eiga } systur.
they.NOM { *have₁/have₂ } sister.ACC
‘They have a sister.’

d. **Body part**

Peir { hafa/*eiga } augu.
they.NOM { have₁/*have₂ } eyes.ACC
‘They have eyes.’

3. Despite numerous complications in the description and analysis of clausal and DP-internal possession by themselves, let alone the relationship between the two domains, the following generalizations seem to hold:

(3) **Generalization 1:** Clausal possession can be expressed with *eiga* only if DP-internal possession cannot be expressed with a PP.

(4) **Generalization 2:** Clausal possession can be expressed with *hafa* only if DP-internal possession can be expressed with a PP.

We derive these generalizations by assuming that *hafa* and *eiga* have no lexical content of their own (Ritter & Rosen 1997), but are rather light verbs that spell out little *v*; the choice between the two spellouts depends on the properties of the complement of *v* (Folli & Harley 2013), which in this case contains the possessum.

4. We assume, following much work in the literature, that there is more than one way to build possessive structures DP internally. Specifically, we assume that DP-internal possessors may

