The English “Group Genitive” is a Special Clitic, not an Inflection

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Morpho-syntactic categories and the expression of possession
Manchester, 3 April, 2009
(a) [Fred]’s taste in wallpaper is appalling.
(b) [The man in the hall]’s taste in wallpaper is appalling.
(c) [Every man I know]’s taste in wallpaper is appalling.
(d) [That brother-in-law of mine that I was telling you about]’s taste in wallpaper is appalling.
(e) Even [that attractive young man who is trying to flirt with you]’s taste in wallpaper is appalling.
Swedish (etc.) “Group Genitive”

(a) \([\text{Professorn i tyska}]_{DP} \text{fru}]_{DP}\) är berusad
professor.DEP in German.GEN wife is drunk
‘The wife of the professor of German is drunk.’

(b) \([\text{nån som jag tycker om}]_{DP} \text{hem}]_{DP}\)
in someone that I care about.GEN home
‘in the home of someone I like’

(c) \([\text{en vän till mig}]_{DP} \text{företag}]_{DP}\)
a friend of me.GEN company
‘a friend of mine’s company’

and Börjars, Kersti [2003], “Morphological Status and (De)Grammaticalization: The Swedish
Possessive, *NJL* 26.2, and references there, for discussion)
Phrasal Properties

Morphosyntactic features associated with a phrase, but realized on some specific word(s) at designated positions within the phrase (Anderson 1985, 1988).

Typology

- Marked on Head
- Everywhere (by agreement)
- Phrase-initial
- Second position
- Phrase-final
The English “Group Genitive” is a special clitic, not an inflection.

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Morpho-syntactic categories and the expression of possession

Manchester, April, 2009

1. English “Group Genitive” (Allen 1997, among others):

(a) Fred’s taste in wallpaper is appalling.
(b) The man in the hall’s taste in wallpaper is appalling.
(c) Every man I know’s taste in wallpaper is appalling.
(d) That brother-in-law of mine that I was telling you about’s taste in wallpaper is appalling.
(e) Even that attractive young man who is trying to flirt with you’s taste in wallpaper is appalling.

2. (Swedish)

(a) [Professorn i tyska] DP s fru] DP är berusad profesor.
(b) i [nån som jag tycker om] DP s hem] DP is drunk ‘the wife of the professor of German is drunk.’
(c) [en vän till mig] DP s företag] DP a friend of me. company ‘a friend of mine’s company’

morphosyntactic features associated with a phrasal constituent, but realized on some specific word(s) at designated positions in the phrase (e.g., at the left or right periphery of the phrase, or on its head).

4. English possessive (Morphosyntax):

DP → [+Poss]/[DP [__] D X]

5. [DP,DP[+Poss]]

Phrasal Morphology: Adjoin /z/ to the final syllable of a DP bearing the feature [+Poss].
Special Clitics

Phonological modification of the PF form of a phrase (e.g., the introduction of a clitic) as a reflection of the Morphosyntactic properties of that phrase (Anderson 2005). Special clitics are the phrasal analogs of morphology introduced by a Word Formation Rule, and the two theories are parallels at the levels of the word and the phrase.
The Group Genitive as a Special Clitic

Rule: Adjoin /z/ to the final syllable of a DP bearing the feature [+Poss].

```
DP
  |DP, +Poss|
  |
D
  | D' |
   |
NP
  | N |
   | wig |
The king of [o[fræn][s]iz] [σfræns]z [σfræn]sɨz]
```
Phrasal properties are realized as word-level inflection of the Left/Right-most word of the phrase, to which the phrasal property is transmitted (Nevis 1986; Zwicky 1987; Lapointe 1990, 1992; Miller 1991).
The Group Genitive as Edge Inflection

English Possessive:

Type: [EDGE:LAST]
Value: [POSS]

Word-level Morphology:

/X[+POSS] / → /X+z/

```
the king of France's wig
```
Clitics vs. Affixes

(a) Clitics have a low degree of selection with respect to their hosts; affixes a high degree of selection.

(b) Affixed words are more likely to have accidental or paradigmatic gaps than host+clitic combinations.

(c) Affixed words are more likely to have idiosyncratic shapes than host+clitic combinations.

Special Clitics

Second Position in DP

Heiltsuk (Bella Bella; cf. Rath 1981):

(a) p’ála wísm=á=ћi la uxʷχiás=a=ћi
work man-DET₁-DET₂ on roof–DET₁-DET₂
The man worked on the roof

(b) p’ála p’ác’uá=ya=s wísem=ћi la uxʷχiás=a=ћi
work diligent-DET₁-CONN man-DET₂ on roof–DET₁-DET₂
The diligent man worked on the roof

(c) p’ála ’wála=ya=s p’ác’uá=s wísem=ћi la uxʷχiás=a=ћi
work really-DET₁-CONN diligent-CONN man-DET₂ on roof–DET₁-DET₂
The really diligent man worked on the roof
**Edge Inflection**

**Kuuk Thaayorre (Australian) Ergative Marking**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Nominative</th>
<th>Ergative</th>
<th></th>
<th>Nominative</th>
<th>Ergative</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>‘meat’</td>
<td>minh</td>
<td>minh-al</td>
<td>‘good’</td>
<td>min</td>
<td>min-thurr</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>‘dog’</td>
<td>kuta</td>
<td>kuta-ku</td>
<td>‘woman’</td>
<td>paanth</td>
<td>paanth-u</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>‘eye’</td>
<td>meer</td>
<td>meer-e</td>
<td>‘cat’</td>
<td>thok</td>
<td>thok-un</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>‘crocodile’</td>
<td>pinj</td>
<td>pinj-i</td>
<td>‘child’</td>
<td>parr_r</td>
<td>parr-an</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>‘boomerang’</td>
<td>werngr</td>
<td>werng-arr</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Edge Inflection

Kuuk Thaayorre (Australian) Ergative Marking

(a) \([\text{minh} \ \text{kothon-thurr}]_{DP} \ \text{pam} \ \text{nhaanham}\)
\text{MEAT} \ \text{wallaby-ERG} \ \text{man.ACC} \ \text{see.REDUP.NPAST}

The wallaby is looking at the man

(b) \([\text{wa’ar} \ \text{pam.thaawarr-an}]_{DP} \ \text{nhul} \ \text{kar} \ \text{paath-thurr} \ \text{thaathi-rr}\)
\text{jellyfish} \ \text{dangerous-ERG} \ \text{3SG} \ \text{like} \ \text{fire-ERG} \ \text{sting-PST.PFCTV}
\text{nganh} \ \text{yangkar}
\text{ISG.ACC} \ \text{leg.ACC}

The venomous jellyfish stung me like fire on the leg

(c) \([\text{ngan} \ \text{pumun} \ \text{ngathan-thurr}]_{DP} \ \text{kuta} \ \text{theernga-rr}\)
\text{RELATIVE} \ \text{younger.brother} \ \text{my-ERG} \ \text{dog.ACC} \ \text{hit-PST.PFCTV}

My younger brother hit a dog
**Edge Inflection**

Kuuk Thaayorre (Australian) Ergative Marking

(a) pam-al ith nhul may carrots yak-ake-rr
    man-ERG DEM.DIST he.3SG VEG carrots.ACC cut-REDUP-PST.PFCTV
    The man, he cut up the carrots

(b) parr_r paanth-u ith may mular washm
    child female-ERG DEM.DIST VEG yam.ACC wash.VERBALIZE
    rirk ngok-eln
do.NPAST water-LOC
    The girl washes the yam
Constraints:

1. \( ^*D[+\text{Erg}] \): “Nouns and Adjectives, but not Demonstratives or Pronouns, can bear \([+\text{ERG}]\)”

2. \( \text{Align}(DP[+\text{Erg}], R, W[+\text{Erg}], R) \): “The Right edge of a phrase bearing \([+\text{Erg}]\) should be aligned with the Right edge of a Word bearing \([+\text{Erg}]\)”

3. \( ^*W[+\text{Erg}] \): Do not inflect words for the feature \([+\text{Erg}]\)”

Ranking: 1 >> 2 >> 3
## Special Clitics vs. Edge Inflection

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Heiltsuk Determiners</th>
<th>Kuuk Thaayorre Ergative</th>
<th>English Possessive</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Selection:</strong></td>
<td>none</td>
<td>Nouns &amp; Adjectives</td>
<td>none</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Gaps:</strong></td>
<td>none</td>
<td>Demonstratives</td>
<td>none</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>( &amp; Pronouns?)</td>
<td></td>
<td>( &amp; Pronouns?)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Idiosyncratic Shapes:</strong></td>
<td>none</td>
<td>several</td>
<td>pronouns</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The Problem of Pronouns

For the Special Clitic Story:
- my lunch, your lunch, his lunch
- *I/me’s lunch, *you’s lunch, *she/her’s lunch
- That’s mine/yours/his
- That’s *me’s/*you’s/*he’s
- The shape of possessive pronouns is lexically determined.

For Edge Inflection:
- My bad habit
- The woman who loves me’s bad habit
- A bad habit of mine
- A friend of mine’s bad habit

On the Edge Inflection account, all of these are \([me+POSS]\)
The Analysis of Pronouns

- Pronoun: \[[\text{DP} \ [\text{D} \pm \text{ME}, \pm \text{YOU}, \pm \text{PL}, \pm \text{MALE}]\]]
  (following Postal, 1966, and much subsequent work)

- mine: \[[\text{DP} \ [\text{DP}, +\text{Poss} \ [\text{D} + \text{ME}, -\text{YOU}, -\text{PL}]] \ [\text{D'} \ [\text{D} \emptyset] \ [\text{NP} \emptyset]]\]]

- my: \[[\text{DP}, +\text{Poss} \ [\text{D} \ [+ \text{ME}, -\text{YOU}, -\text{PL}]]]\]

- I/me: \[[\text{DP} \ [\text{D} \ [+ \text{ME}, -\text{YOU}, -\text{PL}]]]\]

- These lexicalizations of pronominal DPs are disjunctively related ("Elsewhere" condition)
Other Bare Determiner DPs

Most bare (non-pronoun) determiners can’t be possessive:

(a) *These’s illustrations are more competently drawn than those’s.
(b) *Of the books I lent you, two’s/some’s/many’s covers were soiled when you brought them back.
(c) ... one’s cover was soiled.

But possessive-DP-final bare determiners are OK:

(a) The man who brought you these’s car is still in the driveway.
(b) We look at their records for failing grades, and a student who has two’s/some’s/many’s chances of admission are poor.
Some Phonology

- Possessive /z/ is not added to words already inflected with the regular plural /z/
  
  a. the three boys’ [bojz] caps
  
  b. *the three boys’s [bojz+z] caps
  
  - This is a fact about /+z+z/, not about [+Pl]/+z/
  
  c. The three children’s/women’s/deer’s/mice’s etc. feet.
Possessive /z/ is not added to phrases whose last word is already inflected with /z/ (Zwicky 1987)

a. anyone who likes kids’ (*kids’s) ideas
b. people attacked by cats’ (*cats’s) reactions
c. anyone who hurries (*hurries’s) ideas
d. everyone at Harry’s (*Harry’s’s) ideas
e. a friend of my two kids’ (*kids’s, *kids’s’s) ideas
Some Phonology

Possessive /z/ is added to words that end in a sequence homophonous with the plural ending (including /z/, /s/ and /ɨz/):

(a) the fuzz’s old cars; at Buzz’s
(b) the bus’s doors; at Cass’s
(c) the terrace’s tiling; at Thomas’s
Some Phonology

- “Regular” endings (/z/, d/) are adjoined to the final syllable, not concatenated (Selkirk, 1982)
- my three mousetraps’ (*mousetraps’s) only contents
- /z/ is not adjoined to a syllable that is already affixed.
- the recent stock market collapse’s only consequence


Some Phonology

“POSS is occasionally suppressed in speech (as regularly is in writing, according to at least some style sheets) after proper names ending in /s z/: Jones’, Nevis’, Jeeves’.” (Zwicky 1987, p. 140, fn. 6)

\[ [[\text{ʤ̌ijv}]_\sigma z]_\sigma \text{ vs. } [\text{ʤ̌ijvz}]_\sigma \]

Syllable-affix incorporation: \([[[X]_\sigma C]_\sigma \rightarrow [XC]_\sigma\]

Zwicky: post-lexical.

Carstairs-McCarthy: (optionally?) lexical.
Another Possible Analysis

Possessive as a simple clitic in D?

[DP[DP Fred][D ‘s] [NP hat]]

Mechanical problem of collapsing me’s → my

Not all genitives precede D
“Descriptive” Genitves

- Elk Lake has one children's playground and two beaches
- How many old man's faces can you see? [about an optical illusion illustration]
- It costs close to $100 per person for a family at Disney world, do you honestly think that Disney gives two mouse's asses for 'affordable for families'? 
“Descriptive” Genitives

- Follow, rather than precede, the determiner
- Necessarily non-referential
- Not mutually exclusive with another possessor
- Oxford’s two women’s colleges
- Structure limited to that of NP (not DP)
- \([[[\text{DP Oxford}]]'s \ [D \text{two}] \ [\text{NP[\text{NP women]}'s \ [N \text{colleges}]]]}\)
- \(\text{NP} \rightarrow [+\text{Poss}] / [\text{NP[–] N X}]\)
Both Phrasal Morphology (Special Clitics) and Word-level Edge Inflection exist as the expression of Phrasal properties.

Productive Phrase-level morphology (Special Clitics), like productive Word-level morphology, can be preempted by lexically listed forms.

Functional content (e.g., Case) can be assigned and expressed without hierarchical organization.
Thank you.