A Study of Three Types
of Predicative Possession in Puyuma

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Possession is a universal concept, and we expect every language to have at least one or two conventionalized strategies to express it. A distinction between predicative possession and adnominal possession can be made in terms of whether the possessive relation is expressed in a predicate or a nominal construction. It is predicative possession I am dealing with in this paper. Some of the most common encoding strategies for denoting the possessive relations found in world languages have been discussed by Heine (1997), Stassen (2001), and Clark (1978), among others.

There are three types of predicative possession found in Puyuma, which I call HAVE-Possessive, EXIST-Possessive, and BELONG-Possessive respectively. The examples are given in (1)-(3).

(1)   mi-paisu=ku

      have-money=1S.NOM

      'I have money.'

(2)   ulaya   ku-paisu

      exist   my.NOM-money

      'I have money.' (Lit., 'My money exists.')

(3)   mimi   na   ya-ami

      1P.EXCL   DF.NOM   belong-north

      'We belong to the north.'

The present study will investigate and compare the three types of predicative possession from the following perspectives. First, with regard to the formal structure, I will examine the issues concerning the coding of the possessor and the possessed item, the definiteness of the possessed items, whether or not the possessed item is allowed to take modifiers, and

the manifestation of negation. Second, I will explore the domain of possession in the three different constructions according to the two semantic/cognitive parameters--time stability (Givon 1984) and Control (Hopper and Thompson 1980)--suggested by Stassen (2001). Finally, in addition to possessive relations, the three named constructions are also related to other expressions. For example, the morpheme *mi-* "have, with" in the HAVE-Possession is associated with instrumental expression, and the copula *ulaya* "exist" in the EXIST-Possession is closely related to existential and locative expressions, as pointed out by Zeitoun (1999), Ross and Teng (2005), and Teng (In preparation), and the morpheme *ya-* in the BELONG-Possession also denotes sources. The domain of possession encoded by each construction is strongly affected by how each construction relates possession to other concepts.

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