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PREDICATIVE POSSESSIVE CONSTRUCTIONS IN TṶṶÚGBE

1. Introduction

Predicative possessive constructions are constructions that have a clausal syntax, with the possessor and the possessee filling argument slots of the verb (Perniss & Zeshan 2008:3). In TṶṶúgbé, different verbs can fill the predicate slot in a predicative possessive construction. The following examples illustrate three different verbs in predicative possessive constructions:

1. **todzó yibɛ-á nyé ati-tò**
 cat black-ART.DEF be Ati-PRO.PD
 ‘The black cat is Ati’s’

2. *dàsé álé lès sí*
dàsé álé lè wó sí
 witness ART.INDF be.at PRO.3PL hand
 ‘They have a witness’ (Flex_Nar: Fam 108.1)

3. **ezià-tǔ-ó vá kpó gà**
 poverty-PRO.PR-ART.DEF VENT see money
 ‘Lit. The poor person come see money’
 ‘(The poor man became rich)’ (Flex_Sto: Maw 78.1)

In the discussions that follow, I establish a typology of the different predicative possessive constructions and subdivide them into two major categories: copular possessive constructions, which contain a copular verb (section 2), and locative possessive constructions, which contain most often a locative verbal predicate, but are also compatible with other verbs (section 3). I identify the formal and semantic features that characterize each construction, and that which differentiates it from other constructions that bear similarity to it.

2. Copular possessive constructions

In copular predicative possessive constructions, a copular links either the possessor or the possessee to a nominal predicate. Copular predicative possessive constructions occur in two distinct patterns. The two patterns are:

- a. NP (PR) COP NP (PD)-t^ó
 b. NP (PD) COP NP (PR)-t^ò

In the first pattern, the possessor occurs in subject position while the nominal predicate phrase contains the possessee and the possessor suffix which reindexes the possessor, as is illustrated in example (4). In the second pattern, the possessee occurs in subject position while the nominal predicate is composed of the possessor and the dedicated possessee pronoun which reindexes the possessee, as is the case in example (5):

4. *Kofí nyé lāátó*
Kofí-é nyé lā-á-tó
 Kofi-FOC be animal-ART.DEF-PRO.PR
 ‘It is Kofi who is the owner of the animal’
5. *elā-á nyé Kofí-tò*
 animal-ART.DEF be Kofi-PRO.PD
 ‘The animal is Kofi’s’

The copulas that occur in copular possessive constructions of Tɔ̀ngugbe are **nyé** ‘be’ and **zù** ‘become’. The two verbs, outside possessive constructions, are used to link a subject to the nominal predicate. Example (6) illustrates the (non possessive) copular use of the verb **nyé** ‘be’; and example (7) demonstrates the (non possessive) copular use of **zù** ‘become’.

6. *wó tàtée nyá kwémútóó*
wó tàt-é nyé Akwémú-tó-wó
 PRO.3PL father-FOC be Akwamu-PRO.PR-PL
 ‘Lit. Their father was an Akwamu owners’
 ‘(Their father was an Akwamu)’ (Flex_Sto: Azi 229.1)
7. *wó vá zù tɔ̀nú-tóó,*
wó vá zu tɔ̀nú-tó-wó
 PRO.3PL VENT become tɔ̀nú-PRO.PR-PL
 ‘Lit.They became Tɔ̀nú owners’
 (They became Tɔ̀nú)’ (Flex_Sto: Azi 1368.1)

When the copula **nyé** ‘be’ occurs in possessive constructions, the constructions convey the idea of permanent possession *i.e.* the meaning expressed by the construction can be stated as ‘possessee belongs to possessor permanently’. On the other hand, when the copula **zù** ‘become’ occurs in possessive constructions, the meaning that is expressed can be glossed as ‘possessee **now** belongs to possessor’ *i.e.* a sort of inchoative belonginess.

8. *avùó nyé mié tò*
avu-á **nyé** **mié-tò**
 dog-ART.DEF be PRO.1PL-PRO.PD
 ‘The dog is our’s’
9. *avùó zù miétò*
avu-á **zù** **mié-tò**
 dog-ART.DEF become PRO.1PL-PRO.PD
 ‘The dog is now our’s’

Therefore, possession in constructions involving **nyé** ‘be’ can be described as stative, while possession in constructions involving **zù** ‘become’ can be described as dynamic (since inchoativity is associated with dynamic aktionsarten cf. Dowty 1979). Constructions involving **nyé** ‘be’ are therefore incompatible with the progressive aspect (10), contrary to constructions involving **zù** ‘become’ (11).

10. *?avùó lè mié tò nyé*
avu-á **lè** **mié-tò** **nyé-ń**
 dog-ART.DEF COP PRO.1PL-PRO.PD be-PROG
 ‘The dog is being our’s’
11. *avùó lè miétò zù*
avu-á **lè** **mié-tò** **zù-ń**
 dog-ART.DEF COP PRO.1PL-PRO.PD become-PROG
 ‘The dog is gradually becoming our’s’

In addition to expressing inchoative belonginess, constructions involving **zù** ‘become’ are compatible with the idea of ‘prior possession in relation to present possession’ *i.e.* ‘reappropriation’.

Consequently, constructions involving **zù** ‘become’ can co-occur with the verb **tró** ‘get back’, which indicates the ‘the transfer of possessee from past possessor to present possessor’ *i.e.* possessee was possessed by present possessor; present possessor lost it to another possessor; present possessor possesses possessee again. On the contrary, constructions involving **nyé** ‘be’ do not express ‘reappropriation’. Hence, when **tró** ‘get back’ is inserted into constructions involving **nyé** ‘be’, the construction is odd *i.e.* permanently possessed items cannot be reappropriated.

12. *avùó tró zù miétò*

avù-á **tró** **zù** **mié-tò**
 dog-ART.DEF get.back become PRO.1PL-PRO.PD
 ‘The dog is now our’s (after we lost it to someone else)’

13. *?avùó tró nyé mié tò*

avu-á **tró** **nyé** **mié-tò**
 dog-ART.DEF get.back be PRO.1PL-PRO.PD
 ‘The dog is our’s (after we lost it to someone else)’

Concerning the structure of both construction types, as stated above, the nominal predicate that occurs in post-copular position is a ‘mini-attributive possessive construction’ that involves either the dedicated possessee pronoun **tò** (see chapter 3, sub-section 2.2) or the possessor suffix **tó** (see chapter 3, section 3.1). I will successively present constructions that involve the dedicated possessee pronoun (section 2.1) and constructions that involve the possessor suffix (section 2.2).

2.1. Constructions with dedicated possessee pronoun

In copular possessive constructions involving the possessee pronoun, the possessee occurs as the subject of the construction while the possessor is part of the ‘mini-attributive possessive construction’ *i.e.* the nominal predicate. Witness the constituent order in the following constructions in which the dedicated possessee pronoun occurs in the mini-attributive possessive construction:

14. *egbòó nyé miétò*
egbò-á **nyé** **mié-tò**
 goat-ART.DEF be PRO.1PL-PRO.PD
 ‘The goat is ours’

15. **é** **zù** **wó-tò**
 PRO.3SG become PRO.3PL-PRO.PD
 ‘It is now theirs’

Nouns that occur as possessees in subject position of these constructions are non-relational nouns. Hence, when relational nouns such as body-parts, spatial relation terms, kinship terms and socio-culturally relational terms are inserted into the possessee slot, the construction is infelicitous.

16. *tòdzóó nyé ñùtsùò tò*
tòdzó-á **nyé** **ñùtsù-á-tò**
 cat-ART.DEF be man-ART.DEF-PRO.PD
 ‘The cat is the man’s’

17. ***abò/dzì/esrò-á** **nyé** **ñùtsù-á-tò**
 hand/top/spouse-ART.DEF be man-ART.DEF-PRO.PD
 ‘The hand/top/wife is the man’s’

Moreover, the possessee in this construction, typically, is definite. As such, definite markers (articles, demonstratives etc.) occur in the possessee phrase. Therefore, when the definite marker that occurs with the possessee in example (16) above is eliminated, the resultant construction is odd (18).

18. **?tòdzó** **nyé** **ñùtsù-á-tò**
 cat be man-ART.DEF-PRO.PD
 ‘Cat is the man’s’

The possessee in these constructions is reindexed in the ‘mini-attributive possessive construction’ that occurs as the nominal predicate *i.e.* the possessee is expressed twice: overtly as the subject, and reindexed with the pronoun in the noun phrase that occurs post-

copularly to function as the nominal predicate. Evidence in favor of the assertion comes from the fact that, when the possessee is expressed by a noun, the construction can be paraphrased such that in the paraphrased version, the possessee replaces the dedicated possessee pronoun in the mini-attributive possessive construction. Witness below example (19) and its corresponding paraphrase (20):

19. *egbɔ́ nyé mié-tò*
egbɔ́-á **nyé** **mié-tò**
 goat-ART.DEF be PRO.1PL-PRO.PD
 ‘The goat is ours’ (=14)
20. *egbɔ́ nyé miéó gbó*
egbɔ́-á **nyé** **mié** **wó** **gbó**
 goat-ART.DEF be PRO.1PL POSS goat
 ‘The goat is our goat’

Concentrating on the ‘mini attributive possessive construction’ that functions as the nominal predicate, its constituent order is the same as in juxtaposed attributive possessive constructions (see chapter 3, section 2.2. for a detailed discussion on juxtaposed attributive possessive constructions). As such, when the possessor is the first or second person singular pronominal possessor, the possessor follows the dedicated possessee pronoun. In all other instances, the possessor precedes the possessee pronoun. Witness the constituent order in the ‘mini-attributive constructions’ of the following constructions:

21. *enū́ kúlá zù tò*
enū́-á **kúlá** **zù** **é-tò**
 thing-ART.DEF all become PRO.3SG-PRO.PD
 ‘Everything belongs to him’ (Flex_Sto: Azi 1450.1)
22. *enū́ kúlá zù tò nyè*
enū́-á **kúlá** **zù** **tò-nyè**
 thing-ART.DEF all become PRO.PD-PRO.1SG
 ‘Everything belongs to me’

Indeed, the mini attributive construction is a juxtaposed construction. Consequently, a modifier can occur between the two constituents; this

is why I consistently refer to it as a noun phrase. Witness how the first person plural possessor is further modified by the quantifying phrase **ame evè** ‘two people’ and the definite article in the example below.

23. *nūqúqú nyé mià mè viétò*
nūqúqú-á **nyé** **mì** **ame** **evè-á**
 food-ART.DEF be PRO.2PL person two-ART.DEF
-tò
 PRO.PD
 ‘The food is for the two of you’

Finally, the double indexation of the possessee in these constructions has consequences on the meaning that is expressed by the construction: emphasis is placed on the possessee as compared to other constituents. Hence, in these constructions, the possessee can be focused; whereas the possessors cannot, but are backgrounded.

24. *egbɔ́ɔ́ nyé miétò*
egbɔ́-á-é **nyé** **mié-tò**
 goat-ART.DEF-FOC be PRO.1PL-PRO.PD
 ‘It is a goat that is ours’

25. **miéé nyé egbɔ́tò*
mié -é **nyé** **egbɔ́-á-tò**
 PRO.1PL-FOC be goat-ART.DEF-PRO.PD
 ‘It is we that are the goat’s’

It should be noted however, that the ‘mini attributive possessive construction’ as a whole can be focused. When the mini-attributive construction is focused, the copular construction composed of the copula and the nominal predicate can be either conserved (26) or elided (27).

26. **mié-tò** **-é** **nyé** **gbɔ**
 PRO.1PL-PRO.PD -FOC be goat
 ‘Ours is a goat’

27. **mié-t̩** **-yó**
 PRO.1PL-PRO.PD -FOC
 ‘it is ours’

Given the fact that this construction highlights the possessee and that the possessee pronoun of the mini-attributive possessive construction cross-references the possessee, it is no surprise that the mini-attributive possessive construction can be focused, but not the possessor alone.

2.2. Constructions with possessor suffix

In copular possessive constructions involving the possessor suffix, the possessor occurs in subject position while the possessee (which typically occurs with a determiner) occurs in the mini-attributive possessive construction (in which the possessor suffix occurs as well). The examples below illustrate the kind of construction that is under investigation in this section.

28. *Kofí nyé gbóótó*
Kofí-é **nyé** **gbó-á-t̩**
 Kofi-FOC be goat-ART.DEF-PRO.PR
 ‘Kofi is the owner of the goat’
29. *Kofí zù afiétó*
Kofí **zù** **afē-á-t̩**
 Kofi become house-ART.DEF-PRO.PR
 ‘Kofi now owns the house’

Possessors in these constructions can be nominal or pronominal. When the possessor is expressed by a noun and the copular **nyé** ‘be’ occurs in the COP slot, the possessor often occurs with the focus maker, as demonstrated below.

30. *edzi nyá nyìgbáátó*
edzi-é **nyé** **anyìgbá-á-t̩**
 Edzi-FOC be land-ART.DEF-PRO.PR
 ‘Edzi is the owner of the land’

More importantly, when the possessor is a pronominal and the copular is **nyé** ‘be’, although the possessor is in subject position, independent pronouns, instead of subject pronouns, occur as pronominal possessors (see Chapter 1, section 4.1.3. for details on pronouns in Tɔŋúgbe). Witness the following constructions:

31. *miáwó nyé zìkpíétóó*
miáwó **nyé** **zìkpé-á-tó-wó**
 PRO.IND.3PL be stool-ART.DEF-PRO.PR-PL
 ‘It is we that own the stool’
32. *?mí nyé zìkpíétóó*
mí **nyé** **zìkpi-á-tó-wó**
 PRO.SBJ.3PL be stool-ART.DEF-PRO.PR-PL
 ‘we own the stool’

On the other hand, when the possessor is a pronoun and the copula is the verb **zù** ‘become’, both subject and independent pronouns can occur as possessors.

33. *mí zù zìkpíétóó*
mí **zù** **zìkpi-á-tó-wó**
 PRO.SUBJ.1PL become stool-ART.DEF-PRO.PR-PL
 ‘We now own the stool’
34. *miáwó zù zìkpíétóó*
miáwó **zù** **zìkpi-á-tó-wó**
 PRO.IND.1PL become stool-ART.DEF-PRO.PR-PL
 ‘We own the stool now’

Concentrating on the mini-attributive possessive construction that occurs in nominal predicate position, it is composed of the possessee and a possessor suffix. Possesseees are nominal and are followed by the possessor suffix. Pronominal possesseees do not occur in the construction. As such, when a pronoun occurs in the ‘mini-attributive possessive construction’, the construction is interpreted as a construction of other Ewe dialects. Example (35) and (36) below, in which the third person singular pronoun occurs in the mini-attributive

possessive construction, is thus interpreted as a construction of other Ewe dialects and not a Tɔ̀nɔ̀gbe construction.

35. **miáwó-é nyé é-tɔ̀-wó**
 PRO.1PL-FOC be PRO.3SG-father-PL
 ‘We are his/her fathers’

36. **mí zù é-tɔ̀-wó**
 PRO.1PL become PRO.3SG-father-PL
 ‘We are his/her fathers now’

In chapter 3 section 3.1, I demonstrated that there are three possessor suffixes in Tɔ̀nɔ̀gbe, *viz.* **tɔ̀**, **nɔ̀** and **sì**. In copular predicative possessive constructions, only the suffix **tɔ̀** occurs in the mini-attributive possessive construction. Thus, when the other possessor suffixes occur, the constructions express property attribution (see section 2.3.2. below for details). Witness the following examples:

37. *mékàé nyá gbāá tɔ̀ɔ̀?*
amekà -é nyé agbā-á-tɔ̀-ó
 who FOC be bowl-ART.DEF-PRO.PR-Q
 ‘Who does the bowl belong to?’

38. *mékàé nyá yènɔ̀ɔ̀?*
amekà -é nyé ayè-nɔ̀-ó?
 who FOC be trickery-PRO.PR-Q
 ‘Who is a fool?’

The possessor suffix **tɔ̀** in the mini-attributive construction cross-references the possessor. Therefore, when the construction is paraphrased with a focused attributive construction, the possessive suffix is eliminated from the construction, *i.e.* the possessor suffix does not co-occur with the possessor in the paraphrased construction since the suffix is a reindexation of the possessor. Thus, example (39) below, can be paraphrased as (40).

39. **Améví zu agblè-á-tǔ**
 Amevi become farm-ART.DEF-PRO.PR
 ‘Amevi has assumed ownership of the farm’
40. **Améví wó agblè yó**
 Amevi POSS farm FOC
 ‘It’s Amevi’s farm’

Finally, as in the case of constructions involving the dedicated possessee pronoun, the mini-attributive possessive construction in which the possessor suffix occurs, is a (grammaticalized) juxtaposed attributive possessive construction *i.e.* it is a suffixed attributive possessive construction (see chapter 3 section 3.1 for details on suffixed attributive possessive constructions) As such, modifiers and determiners occur between the possessee noun and the possessor suffix. When the definite article, for instance, is eliminated from the mini-attributive possessive construction, the construction is interpreted as a copulative sentence without a proper possessive meaning, as will be shown below in section (2.3.). Witness the following examples:

41. *miǔwóé nyé amiétǔǔ*
miáwó-é nyé ame-á-tǔ-wó
 PRO.1PL-FOC be person-ART.DEF-PRO.PR-PL
 ‘Lit. We are the person’s owner’
 ‘(We own the deceased)’
42. *miǔwóé nyé ametǔǔ*
miáwó-é nyé ame-tǔ-wó
 PRO.1PL-FOC be person-PRO.PR-PL
 ‘We are the chief mourners’

Concerning the meaning expressed by the construction, contrary to constructions with the dedicated possessee pronoun (which highlight the role of the possessee noun), constructions in which the possessor suffix is involved in the mini-attributive possessive constructions foreground the possessor. This is evidenced by the fact that, as

illustrated by example (41) above, in these constructions, the possessor can occur with a focus marker.

It should be noted however that, as is the case in constructions with the dedicated possessee pronoun, in constructions involving the verb **nyé** ‘be’, the mini-attributive possessive construction as a whole can be focused, but not any of its individual constituents. Witness the following constructions:

43. *Améví nyé agblèátó*
Améví-é **nyé** **agblè-á-tó**
 Amevi-FOC be farm-ART.DEF-PRO.PR
 ‘It is Amevi who owns the farm’
44. *agblèátóé nyá méví*
agblè-á-tó-é **nyé** **améví**
 farm-ART.DEF-PRO.PR-FOC be Amevi
 ‘The owner of the farm is Amevi’

2.3. Copular possessive constructions and copular constructions

In this section, I discuss the constructions surveyed up to this point in a larger framework of constructions that involve the same copulars. I first of all situate the constructions surveyed in general Ewe syntax (section 2.3.1); and then continue to isolate copular possessive constructions from other syntactically similar constructions (section 2.3.2)

2.3.1. The variety of copular possessive constructions

Heine (1997: 124) observes that Ewe has one major copular possessive construction *viz.* the construction that occurs with the copular **nyé** ‘be’; and that this construction occurs with the dedicated possessee pronoun. He adds that this major construction expresses the idea of a ‘possessee belonging to a possessor’.

As I have demonstrated in the two preceding sections, copular possessive constructions are more diverse. First, besides the copula **nyé** ‘be’, another copular, **zù** ‘become’ can also occur in this

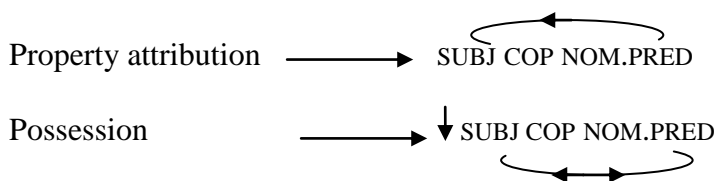
47. **gíyíé vá zù gǎ-tǔ**
 DEM VENT become:PST big-PRO.PR
 ‘This place became the bigger one’ (Flex_Sto : Azi 72.1)

48. **wó zù evègbè-tǔ-wó**
 PRO.3PL become ewe.language-PRO.PR-PL
 ‘They became Ewes’

The discussions that follow deal with the distinction between these latter constructions and copular possessive constructions in which the possessor suffix occurs in the nominal predicate position.

The two constructions have the same constituent order, but express different relations between the subject and the nominal predicate. In the former constructions, the nominal predicate is conceived as a property that is attributed to the subject *i.e.* the nominal predicate gives more descriptive information about the nominal referent that occurs in subject position.

In the copular possessive construction, two referential entities are in a relationship (the fact that the possessee occurs with a determiner is testament to the fact that the possessee is referential. See section 2.2 for further details). Indeed, the difference between the relations expressed in property attributing copular constructions and copular possessive constructions can be represented as follows:



The difference in the relationship expressed in the two constructions can be made explicit through restatements. When the nominal predicate and the subject of property attributing constructions are restated within one noun phrase, they occur in an apposition in which the noun corresponding to the subject occurs as the head while the sequence “noun + possessor suffix” corresponding to the nominal predicate occurs as the appositive.

For instance, in Mepe (the community where I did fieldwork), at traditional gatherings, a couplet is often sung in order to incite people to give for worthy causes. Mostly, it is expected of the rich to give more while the poor give less. In order to coerce the rich to give; a praise song is sung by the master of ceremony. In this praise song, the name of the rich person is mentioned as a head of an apposition (the name of the rich person in the corresponding copular construction occurs in subject position). Example (49) illustrates the praise song, while example (51) illustrates the copular variant of the praise song.

49. **gà-tǔ** **gà-tǔ!** [**Kofi** **gà-tǔ**]
 money-PRO.PR money-PRO.PR Kofi money-PRO.PR
 ‘Rich person, rich person! Kofi the rich person’
50. **?gà-tǔ** **gà-tǔ!** [**gà-tǔ** **Kofi**]
 money-PRO.PR money-PRO.PR money-PRO.PR Kofi
 ‘Rich person, rich person! rich person Kofi’
51. **Kofi nyé** **gà-tǔ**
 Kofi be money-PRO.POSS
 ‘Kofi is rich’

On the contrary, in copular possessive constructions involving the possessor suffix, when the nominal predicate and the subject are restated within one noun phrase, the sequence “noun + possessor suffix” corresponding to the nominal predicate occurs as the head while the noun corresponding to the subject occurs as the appositive. Witness the following examples:

52. **afē-tó** **Kofi**
 house-PRO.PR Kofi
 ‘Lit. Home-owner Kofi’
 ‘(Mister Kofi)’
53. **Kofi** **zù** **afē-tó**
 Kofi become house-PRO.PR
 ‘Kofi now owns a house’

A second distinction between the two constructions is that, in copular possessive constructions involving the possessor suffix, the nominal predicate is a syntactically processed unit *i.e.* it is a noun phrase, while the nominal predicate of property attributing copular constructions can be argued to be constructed in morphology *i.e.* it is a lexical unit. Consequently, while modifiers and determiners can occur in the nominal predicates of the possessive constructions (see section 2.2. above for further details), modifiers and determiners do not occur in the nominal predicate of the property attributing constructions.

Example (54) illustrates a copular possessive construction in which modifiers occur between the possessee and the possessor suffix, while example (55) shows how the property attributing copular construction involving the possessor suffix is incompatible with modifiers relating to the possessee noun contained in the nominal predicate.

54. **é zù [elā gá má tó]**
 PRO.3SG become animal big DEM PRO.PR
 ‘He/She now owns that big animal’
55. **?é zù [gà gá má -tó]**
 PRO.3SG become money many DEM PRO.PR
 ‘He/She has become worthy’

Thus it can be considered that the fact that the mini-attributive possessive construction of copular possessive constructions is a syntactically constructed construction is critical to its possessive meaning.

2.4. Copular possessive constructions and attributive possessive constructions

It has been shown in section 2.3 that in copular possessive constructions, the mini-attributive possessive construction in the nominal predicate slot is syntactically constructed. This is in contrast to property attributing copular constructions containing a possessor suffix in which the nominal predicate slot is occupied by a morphologically constructed unit. It can be tempting thence to consider that copular possessive constructions are clausal

instantiations of juxtaposed attributive possessive constructions (see chapter 3, section 2.2. for a discussion of juxtaposed attributive possessive constructions and the features that characterize them).

In this sub-section, I argue that although juxtaposed attributive possessive constructions and the mini-attributive possessive constructions of copular constructions share many features, they also exhibit differences, and so these two constructions cannot be assimilated to one another. I first present the similarities between both structures, and next their distinctive features.

- *The similarities*

Apart from the syntactic similarity mentioned above, *i.e.* in the mini-attributive possessive construction of copular possessive constructions and juxtaposed attributive possessive constructions, both construction types also have the same tone features. Given that possessees are replaced in constructions involving the dedicated possessee pronoun, and that possessor slots have no tone feature in these constructions, the construction types relevant for the tones that characterize both constructions are constructions in which the possessor suffix occurs.

In the mini attributive possessive construction of copular possessive constructions as well as juxtaposed attributive possessive constructions involving the possessor suffix (see chapter 3, section 3.3. for details on the tone characteristic of attributive possessive constructions involving the possessor suffix), no specific tone characterizes the possessee slot. Therefore, every noun that occurs as possessee has the same tone in the possessive construction as it has when in isolation (see chapter 1, section 2.2. for details on the different tones of Tɔ̀nùgbe). Witness the tones on the possessee in example (56) and (57):

56. *enyà/ayí* *enyèé nyé nyàátó/ayíétó*
enyà/ayí **enyè-é** **nyé** **enyà-á-tó/**
 PRO.1SG-FOC be issue-ART.DEF- PRO.PR
ayí-á-tó
 bean-ART.DEF-PRO.PR
 ‘I own the case/beans’

57. *afē/gàsǔ enyèé nyá fīétó / gàsǔótó*
afē/gàsǔ enyè-é nyé afē-á-tó /
 PRO.1SG-FOC be house-ART.DEF- PRO.PR
gàsǔ-ǔ-tó
 bicycle-ART.DEF-PRO.PR
 ‘I own the house/bicycle’

- *The differences*

Besides the similarity in syntax and tone characteristics, the two constructions have distinctive features, with respect to the type of nouns that occur as possessees in both constructions: non-relational nouns and body-part terms are possible in both constructions, whereas the socio-culturally relational term **esrò** ‘spouse’ and the kinship term **evī** ‘child’ occur only in the attributive possessive construction, but not in the mini-attributive possessive construction of the copular possessive construction. When these nouns occur as possessees in the mini-attributive possessive construction, the construction expresses property attribution, as is illustrated in the examples (58) and (59).

58. **mè zù vī-tó**
 PRO.1SG become child-PRO.PR
 ‘I am a parent’

59. **esrò-tó mè nyé**
 spouse-PRO.PR PRO.1SG be
 ‘I am a married person’

Consequently, as is the case in copular constructions involving possessor suffixes that express property attribution, the examples (60) and (61) do not allow the insertion of modifiers and determiners between the noun and the possessor suffix in the nominal predicate position.

60. **?mè zù vī-é-tó**
 PRO.1SG become child-ART.DEF-PRO.PR
 ‘I am a parent’

61. ?**esrò-ǔ-tó** **mè** **nyé**
 spouse-ART.DEF-PRO.PR PRO.1SG be
 ‘I am a married person’

The misaligned distribution of the socio-culturally relational term **esrò** ‘spouse’ and the kinship term **evī** ‘child’, I suggest, is illustrative of the basic difference between copular possessive constructions and juxtaposed possessive constructions. The socio-culturally relational term and the kinship term do not occur in the copular possessive construction because the copular possessive construction conveys the explicit statement of a possessive relationship between two participants that are construed as independent, *i.e.* body-part terms and non-relational nouns (see chapter 3, section 2.4.2.1 for nouns that are systematically construed as conceptually independent of possessors; and nouns that are occasionally construed as such). In other words, in the copular possessive construction, this relation between possessor and possessee, established by the verbal predicate, is the very object of the assertion, whereas in the attributive possessive construction, the possessive relationship is presupposed (Stassen 2009: 26).

3. Locative possessive constructions

Locative possessive constructions mostly involve the locative predicate **lè/nò**. In these constructions, the possessee occurs in subject position while the possessor headed by an adposition occurs in complement position. Example (62) below illustrates a locative possessive construction in Tə̀nù̀gbe.

62. *ékié mé lé síò*
é-kié **mé** **lè** **é** **sí** **ò**
 PRO.3SG-DEM NEG be.at PRO.3SG hand NEG
 ‘He/she does not have this’ (Flex_Nar: Fam 74.1)

The locative predicate has two forms: **lè** ‘be.at:PRS’ or **nò** ‘be.at:PST’. The form **lè** ‘be.at:PRS’ occurs in constructions that associate possession with the feature of present tense; while the form **nò** ‘be.at:PST’ occurs in constructions that are non-present. Thus, the non-present variant of example (62) is example (63).

63. *ékié mé nò sí*
é-kié **mé** **nò** **é** **sí** **ò**
 PRO.3SG-DEM NEG be.at:PST PRO.3SG hand NEG
 ‘He/she did not have this’

In addition to occurring in constructions that express non-present possession, the form **nò** ‘be.at:PST’ also occurs when some modal and aspectual markers occur in the verb phrase (see chapter 1, section 4.2. for details on aspectual and modal markers in Tɔ̀nɔ̀gbe). The markers concerned are any of the preverbal markers of the obligatory categories of the verb, *i.e.* the potential marker and the subjunctive marker (cf. Ameka 2008:141 for a useful discussion of such categories in Ewe) and post-verb modal-aspectual markers *i.e.* progressive, prospective and habitual markers. When these markers occur in the verb phrase, the form **nò** is used, instead of **lè**. Witness the following constructions in which the potential and habitual marker do not occur with the present form of the locative predicate, but rather with the past form of the locative predicate.

64. **ɔ̀sɛ́** **á**lɛ́ (***là**) **lè** (***á**) **wó** **sí**
 witness ART.INDF POT be.at HAB PRO.3PL hand
 ‘They have a certain witness’ (=2)
65. **ɔ̀sɛ́** **á**lɛ́ **là** **nò** **wó** **sí**
 witness ART.INDF POT be.at:PST PRO.3PL hand
 ‘They should have a witness’
66. *ɔ̀sɛ́ álé nòwó sí*
ɔ̀sɛ́ **á**lɛ́ **nò-á** **wó** **sí**
 witness ART.INDF be.at:PST-HAB PRO.3PL hand
 ‘They always have a witness’

Concerning the complement of the locative predicate, it is composed of the possessor and an adposition (see chapter 1, section 4.3 for details on adpositions in Tɔ̀nɔ̀gbe). Possessors are prototypically

animate nouns³¹. However, in anthropomorphic usage, inanimate nouns can occur as possessors. Thus, where the inanimate noun is construed as an entity with human abilities, the construction is felicitous. In example (67) for instance, which is a common idiom that people that suffer injustices utter, the *egè* ‘beard’ is conceived of as a person who can have his personal experiences, but is unable to talk.

67. [enyà lè gè sǐ] káfé ló
 issue be.at beard hand before PART
 ‘The beard also has experiences’

The nature of the adposition that occurs with the possessor motivates a two-way grouping of locative possessive constructions. The adposition can be a postposition (67) or it can be a preposition, for instance the dative marker in example (68):

68. nyànú lè xò né dǒtsé
 woman be.at room DAT Dotse
 ‘Dotse has a woman in his room’

I will successively present constructions that involve postpositions (section 3.1) and constructions that involve prepositions (section 3.2).

3.1. Locative possessive constructions with postpositions

Locative possessive constructions with postpositions express stative possession. In these constructions, the possessee is construed as located in a space, which is referred to by the postpositional phrase. The postpositional phrase of a locative possessive construction therefore functions just as an adverbial of spatial location. It is known that although locative adverbials generally follow verbs of movement (69), they precede the verb in prospective constructions (70).

³¹ There are notable exceptions to this statement. For instance, in constructions involving *nyú* ‘skin’, inanimate nouns can occur as possessors.

69. *avū́ó v́a gámá*
avū́á **v́a** **gámá**
 dog-ART.DEF come:PST DEM
 ‘The dog came there’ (Flex_Ext: Des 8.1)
70. *avū́ó lè gámá v́a gé*
avū́-á **lè** **gámá** **v́a** **gé**
 dog-ART.DEF COP DEM come PROSP
 ‘The dog will come there’

Similarly, the postpositional phrase of locative possessive constructions follows the locative predicate in example (71) but precedes the locative predicate in ingressive contexts (72).

71. *nàné nò sí*
nàné **nò** **é** **sí**
 something be.at.PST PRO.3SG hand
 ‘She had something’ (Flex_Ext: Viv 3.1)
72. *nàné lé sí nò gé*
nàné **lè** **é** **sí** **nò** **gé**
 something COP PRO.3SG hand be.at:PST PROSP
 ‘She will be having something’

Structurally, in locative possessive constructions with postpositions, the possessor is the dependent of a postpositional phrase that functions as the complement of the verb.

73. *[enyà lè gè sí] káfé ló*
 issue be.at beard hand before PART
 ‘The beard also has its experiences’ (=67)

The possessor mostly precedes the postposition. However, when the possessor is a pronoun, the order of constituents is similar to what occurs in juxtaposed attributive possessive constructions in which pronouns occur as possessors (see chapter 3, section 2.2). As such, when the third person singular and plural pronouns occur as

possessors, the order of constituents is POSSESSOR-ADPOSITION. On the other hand, when the possessor is the first or second person singular, the order of constituents is ADPOSITION-POSSESSOR. Witness the order of constituents of the phrase that occurs in complement position in the following constructions:

74. *evī dèkǎ kǒ lèé sí*
evī **dèkǎ** **ko-é** **lè** **é** **sí**
 child one only-FOC be.at PRO.3SG hand
 ‘She had only one child’ (Flex_Ext: Viv 2.1)
75. **evī** **lè** **asī-wò**
 child be.at hand-PRO.2SG
 ‘You have a child’ (Flex_Sto: Azi 279.1)

Different postpositions occur in the locative possessive construction. The most frequent among these postpositions are **así** ‘hand’ **ɲú** ‘skin’ **gbó** ‘vicinity’, **dzi** ‘upper.surface/top’, and **dòmè** ‘mid.section’.

76. **evī** **lè** **kodzó** **sí**
 child be.at Kodzo hand
 ‘Kodzo has a child’
77. **egà** **lè** **míé** **ɲú**
 money be.at PRO.1PL skin
 ‘We have money (on us)’
78. **é** **lè** **gbò** **wò-à?**
 PRO.3SG be.at vicinity PRO.2SG-Q
 ‘Do you have it/is it with you?’
79. **edɔ** **lè** **dzi** **-nyè**
 work be.at top PRO.1SG
 ‘I have work (to do)’

80. *edzrè lè mié dòmé*
edzrè lè mié dòmè-é
 fight be.at PRO.1PL mid.section-PRO.3SG
 ‘We have a fight (to pick)’

Below, I present the constructions with each of these postpositions. I attempt to describe the features that characterize constructions in which each of these postpositions occur, and also, attempt to capture subtle distinctions in the possessive meanings that they express.

3.1.1. Locative possessive constructions with así

Locative possessive constructions in which así ‘hand’ occurs as the postposition in the complement, are the most common in Tɔ̀nùgbe. An example is provided in (81).

81. *wó lè nyànūvíé sí*
wó lè nyànūví-á sí
 PRO.3SG be.at girl-ART.DEF hand
 ‘The girl has them’ (Flex_Ext: Ven 7.1)

Although the postposition así ‘hand’ grammaticalized from the body-part term ‘hand’, the postposition does not signal the ‘hand area’ but rather ‘a space relative to the possessor’ because the source meaning has largely bleached out. Therefore, the postposition así ‘hand’ of locative possessive constructions, contrary to the body-part term ‘hand’, cannot occur in an attributive possessive construction involving the possessive connective (see chapter 3, section 2.1. for details on connective constructions). Witness the following examples.

82. *nyànūvíé wá sí*
nyànūví-á wó así
 girl-ART.DEF POSS hand
 ‘The girl’s hand’
83. *?wó lè nyànūvíé wá sí*
wó lè nyànūví-á wó así
 PRO.3SG be.at girl-ART.DEF POSS hand
 ‘They are at the hand of the girl’

This semantic erosion in the grammaticalization process from the body-part noun **así** to the adpositional **así**, as it is used in locative possessive constructions, goes along with phonetic erosion. Indeed, apart from instances where the possessor is either the first or the second person possessor, the residue noun prefix, **a**, is generally elided, in the locative possessive construction³². Witness the following examples:

84. **egà** **lè** **así-nyè**
 money be.at hand-PRO.1SG
 ‘I have money’
85. *evī dèkǎ lé sí*
evī **dèkǎ** **lè** **é** **sí**
 child one be.at PRO.3SG hand
 ‘She has one child’

Since the adposition **así** ‘hand’ conveys the feature of possession, other verbs can occur in place of the locative predicative when the adpositional phrase in the construction is headed by **así** ‘hand’. Witness the example below:

86. *kòtokúú vá ká asì wò-à?*
kòtokú-á **vá** **ká** **así** **wò-à?**
 jute bag-ART.DEF VENT contact hand PRO.2SG-Q
 ‘Have you received the jute bag?’
 ‘(Do you have the jute bag?)’

The verbs that are involved are achievement verbs such as **ká** ‘contact’ (86), **sù** ‘suffixe’ (87) and **dó** ‘reach’ (88).

³² The inverse is what is expected. See chapter 1, section 2.3.1 for details on the elision processes that concern residue noun prefixes

87. **enū** **yìé** **dí** **mè** **lè** **sù**
 thing REL look.for:PROG PRO.1SG COP suffice
así **nyè**
 hand PRO.1SG
 ‘I have what I am looking for’
88. *egà dō dèvíé sí vò tá é tá wòwí wòwó*
[egà **dó** **dèví-á** **sí]** **vò** **tá**
 money reach child-ART.DEF hand finish so
é **tá** **wòwí** **wòwó**
 PRO.3SG start pomposity do
 ‘The guy now has money so he is being pompous’

Contrary to what pertains in constructions in which the locative predicate occurs *i.e.* these constructions expresses stative predicative possession, when these other verbs occur in lieu of the locative predicate with the postpositional phrase headed by **así** ‘hand’, possession is construed as being inchoative.

Because the adposition **así** ‘hand’ is a highly grammaticalized marker of possession, it plays the role of default expression of the possessor space in the locative possessive construction. Consequently, in contrast with the adposition **así** ‘hand’, when other adpositions occur in the locative possessive construction, the possessive meaning is either subject to contextual constraints or obtained by pragmatic inference. Thus, when other postpositions occur in the locative possessive construction, the construction is characterized by various constraints; and the meanings expressed are very restricted. Below, I present the features that characterize the locative possessive construction with the adpositions **ɲú** ‘skin’, **dzí** ‘upper.surface/top’, **gbó** ‘vicinity’ and **dòmè** ‘mid.section’.

3.1.2. Locative possessive constructions with **ɲú**

Locative possessive constructions in which **ɲú** ‘skin’ occurs as the head of the postpositional phrase in complement position are less common as compared to constructions with **así** ‘hand’. An example is given in (89).

89. *gódóó dzà etrè álé lé ηύ*
gódóó **dzà** **etrè** **ále** **lè**
 by.all.means unless deity ART.INDEF be.at
é **ηύ**
 PRO.3SG skin
 ‘It must have a deity’ (Flex_Sto: Azi 1359.1)

The postposition **ηύ** ‘skin’ derives from the noun **ηύτί** ‘skin’ by a grammaticalization process, characterized by phonetic erosion and semantic bleaching (Hopper & Traugott 2003). With respect to its phonetic form, **ηύτί** ‘skin’ and **ηύ** ‘skin’ are in free variation in postpositional uses. Witness the following examples:

90. *tòdzó tètè lé ητί*
tòdzó **tètè** **lé** **é** **ητί**
 cat draw.close at PRO.3SG skin
 ‘The cat drew closer to it’ (Flex_Ext: Ven 11.1)
91. *tòdzó tètè lé ηύ*
tòdzó **tètè** **lé** **é** **ηύ**
 cat draw.close at PRO.3SG skin
 ‘The cat drew closer to it’

However, the tendency is to use the reduced form **ηύ** ‘skin’ as a postposition whereas only the non-reduced form **ηύτί** ‘skin’ is used as a noun. Witness the following examples:

92. **ηύτί** **fiè-m**
 skin itch-PRO.1SG
 ‘My skin tched’
93. ***ηύ** **fiè-m**
 skin itch-PRO.1SG
 ‘My skin itched’

As to its meaning, the grammaticalization process involves a transformation of the concrete lexical meaning ‘skin’ into a more abstract grammatical meaning: when the adposition **ηύ** ‘skin’ occurs

in the locative possessive construction, it signals the ‘total surface area’ of the possessor.

Thus, constructions in which **ɲú** ‘skin’ occurs, construe the possessee as being in the surface area of the possessor *i.e.* the possessee is in a part of the possessor. Consequently, locative possessive constructions involving **ɲú** ‘skin’ express part-whole relations. Nouns that prototypically occur as possesseees are therefore body-part terms. In example (94) below, which is the ending of a famous folktale that tries to explain why the crab has no head, the possessee **etá** ‘head’ is in a part-whole relation with the possessor **agàlá** ‘crab’.

94. *enū yiétá etá mé lè agàlá ɲùò lá*
enū **yié-tá** **etá** **mé** **lè** **agàlá**
 thing DEM-head head NEG be.at crab
ɲú **ò** **lá**
 skin NEG PART
 ‘This is the reason why the crab has no head’

Non-relational nouns can also occur in subject position of the locative possessive constructions involving **ɲú** ‘skin’, and their referent is then construed as being in a part of the possessor, which means that the construction induces the possessive meaning. However, it is to be noted that in such instances, the construction is ambiguous between a possessive and locative meaning. Therefore, example (95) below, can mean not only ‘I have money on me’, but also ‘some money is on me’.

95. **egà** **lè** **ɲū-nyè**
 money be.at skin-PRO.1SG
 ‘I have money on me’
 ‘Money is on me’

Because of this ambiguity, the possession that is expressed by constructions involving **ɲú** ‘skin’, and in which a non-relational noun occurs as the possessee, can be negated. For instance, example (95) above can be negated as illustrated in (96) below.

96. **egà** **lè** **ḡū-nyè** **gàkē** **mé** **nyé**
 money be.at skin-PRO.1SG but PRO.3SG.NEG be
tò-nyè **yó** **ò**
 PRO.PD-PRO.1SG FOC NEG
 ‘I have money on me, but it is not mine’

In other words, the construction does not inherently express possession but rather location. The possessive meaning can however be obtained by pragmatic inference (Traugott & Dasher 2002), either from the semantics of the noun in subject position, in the case of body-part terms, expressing a part-whole relation, or from the relationship of physical contiguity expressed by the postposition **ḡú** *i.e.* location in the surface area of the dependent of the postpositional phrase.

3.1.3. Locative possessive constructions with **dzí**

Constructions in which the postposition **dzí** ‘upper.surface/top’ occurs as the head of the adpositional phrase in complement position, and which express possession are also not very common in Tḡḡgbe. An example is provided in (97).

97. **ekū** **lè** **dzì** **-nyè**
 load be.at top -PRO.1SG
 ‘I have a funeral (responsibility)’

When these constructions express possession, they express the idea that the possessor has an obligation to perform a certain responsibility. Indeed, the meaning conveyed by the construction can be termed ‘task possession’. Consequently, the possessee is often an abstract noun evoking the task.

98. **edò** **lè** **mié** **dzí**
 work be.at PRO.1PL top
 ‘We have work (to do)’

However, it is possible that the possessed element is not the noun that occurs in subject position, but rather a task in relation to the noun in question. In this case, there is a further specification of the task by a dependent complementary clause. In example (99) for instance, in

which the noun **evī** ‘child’ occurs in possessee slot, the dependent clause **má kpó** ‘so I take care of’ provides further information on the task.

99. *evī lè dzìnyè má kpó*
evī **lè** **dzì-nyè** **me-á** **kpó**
 child be.at top-PRO.1SG PRO.1SG-SUBJ see
 ‘I have a child to take care of’

The nouns that occur as possessives in locative possessive constructions with **dzí** are abstract nouns and kinship terms. When other noun types occur in the subject position, the construction expresses location, as illustrated in example (100) below.

100. *bólùs lè kplǎ́ dzí*
bólù-á **lè** **kplǎ́-á** **dzí**
 ball-ART.DEF be.at table-ART.DEF top
 ‘The ball is on the table’ (Flex_Loc: Dav 6.1)

3.1.4. Locative possessive constructions with **gbó**

Constructions in which the postposition **gbó** ‘vicinity’ occurs as the head of the complement phrase, and which exclusively express possession are not common in Tɔ̀nùgbe. Even when some form of possession is expressed by such constructions, the meaning of the construction is ambiguous between a possessive and locative meaning. Witness the example below.

101. *nùdú alé lè gbò wò-à?*
nùdú **alé** **lè** **gbò** **wò-à?**
 food ART.INDF be.at vicinity PRO.2SG-Q
 ‘Do you have some food?’
 ‘Is some food at your end?’

Thus, as in the case of constructions involving **ɲú** ‘skin’ in which non-relational terms occur in subject position, the possessive meaning is obtained by pragmatic inference. Possession is thus expressed as a result of the meaning of physical contiguity associated with the adposition **gbó**. Consequently, constructions involving **gbó** ‘vicinity’ express possession only in particular pragmatic contexts. For instance,

in Degome village, the youth used the construction in (102) to mean ‘do you have some food?’

102. **nàné** **lè** **gbò** **wò-à?**
 something be.at vicinity PRO.2SG-Q
 ‘Lit. Is something with you?’
 ‘(Do you have some food?)’

Also, when a visitor stays for long with a host, the host can use the construction in (103), which involves the adposition **gbó** ‘vicinity’ to express the idea that ‘he/she has a visitor’.

103. **amè** **lè** **gbó** **nyè**
 person be.at vicinity PRO.1SG
 ‘Somebody is with me’
 ‘(I have a visitor)’

3.1.5. Locative possessive constructions with **dòmè**

The last postposition that frequently occurs in locative possessive constructions is **dòmè** ‘mid-section’. Example (104) below illustrates a locative possessive construction in which **dòmè** ‘mid.section’ heads the postpositional phrase that occupies the complement position.

104. *edzrè lèó dómé*
edzrè **lè** **-wó** **dòmè** **-é**
 fight be.at -PRO.3PL mid.section -PRO.3SG
 ‘They have a fight between them’

The form **dòmè** ‘mid.section’ has distinct properties from all the other postpositions surveyed up to this point. First of all, it has interesting properties from a morphological point of view. Like **dzí** ‘upper.section/top’, *i.e.* an intrinsically spatial relation term, **dòmè** ‘mid.section’ has a reduplicated form that functions as a locative adverbial. Witness the two forms in the following examples:

105. **é** **lè** **dzi~dzi**
 PRO.3SG be.at RED~top
 ‘It is up’
106. **é** **lè** **dòmè~dòmè**
 PRO.3SG be.at RED~mid.section
 ‘It is in the middle’

Moreover, **dòmè** ‘mid.section’ has a special relationship with a body-part **dòdòmè** ‘epicranial aponeuroses’. The body-part **dòdòmè** ‘epicranial aponeurosis’, with which **dòmè** ‘mid.section’ has morphological relationship, can be argued to have been constructed on the basis of a general morphological rule: **RED + verb + suffix = Noun**³³, which operates in Tɔ̀nɔ̀gbe. .

dò ‘get out’	————→	dòdòmè	‘epicranial aponeuroses’
dzi ‘procreate’	————→	dzìdzìmè	‘generation’
gbò ‘breath’	————→	gbògbòmè	‘spiritual realm’
dzò ‘happen’	————→	dzòdzòmè	‘nature’
tsì ‘grow’	————→	tsìtsìmè	‘old-age’

When the adposition **dòmè** ‘mid.section’ occurs in locative possessive constructions, it is also characterized by idiosyncratic features with respect to phonetic form and meaning. As can be observed from the example (107) below, it generally surfaces as **dòmé**, instead of the expected **dòmè**, in the locative possessive construction.

107. *edzrè lèṣ dómé*
edzrè **lè** **wó** **dòmè** **-é**
 fight be.at PRO.3PL mid.section -PRO.3SG
 ‘They have a fight between them’ (=104)

The term surfaces as **dòmé** due to the fact that the last vowel of the spatial relational term, [e], merges with an underlying third person

³³ Note that the rule has a low tone feature

singular pronoun³⁴, *é*, to occur as *é*. When the third person singular pronoun that merges with **dòmè** ‘mid.section’ is eliminated, the construction is odd.

108. *?edzrè lèʒ dòmè*
edzrè **lè** **-wó** **dòmè**
 fight be.at -PRO.3PL mid.section
 ‘They have a fight between them’

The coalescence has direct consequences for the meaning expressed by constructions involving **dòmè** ‘mid.section’: the possessee is construed as located at an unidentified place, which is expressed by the third person pronoun that occurs after **dòmè** ‘mid.section’. Thus, the dummy third person pronoun that merges with the last vowel of **dòmè** ‘mid.section’ functions as an adverbial locating the possessee.

Evidence for this analysis comes from the fact that the third person dummy pronoun can be replaced by the form **dé** ‘ALL-PRO.3SG’ which can function as a locative adverbial. Example (109) illustrates **dé** ‘ALL-PRO.3SG’ functioning as a locative adverbial. Example (110) illustrates that when **dé** ‘ALL-PRO.3SG’ occurs after the postposition **dòmè** ‘mid.section’ in a locative possessive construction, the third person pronoun does not occur; indicating that the third person pronoun refers equally to the place where the possessee is located for the possessors.

109. *wó váyì fòʒ ahà dé*
wó **váyì** **fò-á** **ahà** **dé-é**
 PRO.3PL ALT beat-HAB drink ALL-PRO.3SG
 ‘Lit. They go and pour drink down’
 ‘(Libation is poured)’ (Flex_Sto: Nar 5.1)

³⁴The underlying third person singular object pronoun synchronically performs no syntactic role and may be qualified as a dummy pronoun. Ameka (2006) offers an extensive characterization of this pronoun in the Ewe language

110. *edzrè lèó dòmè d'è*
edzrè **lè** **-wó** **dòmè** **d'è-é**
 fight be.at -PRO.3PL mid.section ALL-PRO.3SG
 'They have a fight'

Another important semantic feature of the locative possessive construction with **dòmè** 'mid.section' is related to the possessor: since the construction involves the idea that the possessee does not belong to one possessor but is shared, possessors in this construction are always plural. When a singular possessor is inserted in the possessor slot, the construction is infelicitous. Thus, when the plural possessor in example (110) above is replaced with a singular pronoun, the construction is odd.

111. **evī lè nyè dómé*
evī **lè** **-nyè** **dome** **-é**
 child be.at -PRO.1SG mid.section -PRO.3SG
 'I have a child (between them)'

Finally, nouns that occur as possesseees in this construction type are kinship terms and abstract nouns that are the results of social interaction. The abstract nouns that occur as possesseees therefore include terms such as **edzrè** 'fight', **enyà** 'misunderstanding', **edzùgbè** 'foul language', etc.

3.1.6. Locative possessive constructions with allative and postpositions

The final type of locative possessive constructions involving postpositions is a construction in which two adpositions occur post-verbally: the allative marker and one of the postpositions that have been surveyed above. Witness an example of this construction below:

112. *agbèlì b'ó l'ó sí kò*
agbèlì **b'ó** **lé** **wó** **sí** **kò**
 cassava be.abundant at PRO.3PL hand INT
 'They have a lot of cassava'

As in the other locative possessive constructions, the possessee occurs in subject position, whereas the possessor occurs as a dependent of an adpositional phrase. Verbs that occur in these constructions are however different: they convey the meaning of quantification of the subject, *e.g.* **sùgbò** ‘be numerous’ and **bó** ‘be abundant’. The following constructions illustrate both verbs occurring in these constructions.

113. **ebli** **sùgbò** **lé** **adrú** **sí**
 maize be.numerous at Adu hand
 ‘Adu has a lot of maize’
114. **dè** **bó** **lé** **mié** **sí**
 FOC.3SG be.abundant at PRO.1PL hand
 ‘We have a lot of it’

As shown above, this construction has the same order and syntactic configuration of possessee and possessor as the other locative possessive constructions with adposition *i.e.* possessee occurs in subject position, possessor occurs as a dependent of an adpositional phrase.

A second common feature shared by this construction with other locative possessive constructions involving postpositions concerns the conditions under which the various postpositions occur. The most frequent postposition is **así** ‘hand’; when the postposition **ɲú** ‘skin’ occurs, the possessee is a body-part term that is in a part-whole relation with the possessor. When the postposition **dzí** ‘upper.section/top’ occurs, the possessee is an abstract noun, or a concrete noun which has its associated task profiled as possessee; when the postposition **gbó** ‘vicinity’ occurs, the construction is ambiguous between expressing possession and location, and possession is only evoked as a result of spatial contiguity; when the postposition **dòmè** ‘mid.section’ occurs, the form surfaces again as **dòmé**.

A third similarity between constructions involving the allative and postpositions and constructions involving only a postposition is their aspectual meaning. Similar to other locative possessive constructions

involving postpositions, possessive constructions in which both the allative and postpositions participate express the idea that the possessee is located at a space for the possessor *i.e.* they also express stative possession³⁵. The constructions can therefore be paraphrased with constructions involving postpositions. Example (115) can therefore be paraphrased as (116), where a quantifier is added to the possessee noun in subject position.

115. **ebli** **sùgbɔ** **lé** **adrú** **sí**
 maize be.numerous at Adu hand
 ‘Adu has a lot of maize’ (=113)

116. **ebli** **gbógbó** **lè** **adrú** **sí**
 maize lot be.at Adu hand
 ‘Adu has a lot of maize’

It therefore appears that constructions involving the allative and postpositions are quantificational variants of locative possessive constructions involving adpositions. The argument I am putting across then is that, owing to the fact that locative possessive constructions of Tɔ̀ngugbe involve the meaning of location; and that the quantifying verbs that are involved in these constructions are not inherently locational; the allative occurs in order to situate the noun that functions as possessee at the space of the possessor.

Evidence for this assertion is provided by the fact that, instead of the allative, another preposition, the locative **le** can also occur in lieu of the allative in order to take up the task of locating the possessee. Thus, example (118) is understood as expressing the same meaning as example (117). In the same vein, example (119) is understood as expressing the same meaning as example (120).

³⁵ Note that constructions with postpositions only, also express stative possession (see section 3.1.1); and the constructions that are typically used to express stative possession are constructions involving the postposition **así** ‘hand’.

117. *agbèlì bǔ ló' sí kò*
agbèlì **bó** **lé** **wó** **sí** **kò**
 cassava be.abundant at PRO.3PL hand INT
 ‘They have a lot of cassava’ (=112)
118. *agbèlì bǔ leó sí kò*
agbèlì **bó** **le** **wó** **sí** **kò**
 cassava be.abundant at PRO.3PL hand INT
 ‘They have a lot of cassava’
119. *enyì sùgbò lé mié sí*
 cow be.numerous at PRO.1PL hand
 ‘We have a lot of cattle’
120. *enyì sùgbò le mié sí*
 cow be.numerous at PRO.1PL hand
 ‘We have a lot of cattle’

3.2. Locative possessive constructions with prepositions

Locative possessive constructions that involve prepositions have a preposition as head of the prepositional phrase that contains the possessor. The preposition is the dative marker or the allative marker. The following examples illustrate a locative possessive construction involving respectively the dative (121), and the allative (122).

121. *adàṅù le ṅkúmè né*
adàṅù **le** **ṅkú-mè** **ná** **-é**
 creativity be.at eye-inside DAT -PRO.3SG
 ‘Lit. She has creativity in her face’
 ‘(She is very creative)’
122. *é lé lànú lá sì*
é **lé** **lànú** **lé** **asì**
 PRO.3SG catch weapon at hand
 ‘He/she has a weapon’

I first of all present constructions involving the dative (section 3.2.1); and then continue to present constructions that involve the allative (section 3.2.2.).

3.2.1. Locative possessive constructions with dative

Locative possessive constructions involving the dative make use of the locative predicate **lè/nò** ‘be.at’. In these constructions, the possessee occurs in subject position and the possessor occurs as the dependent of the dative. Moreover, the locative predicate is followed by an adverbial complement. Witness the constituent order of the construction below:

123. **elā** **lè** **kpò-mè** **né** **Dǒtsé**
 animal be.at wall-inside DAT Dotse
 ‘Lit. Animal is in pen for Dotse’
 ‘(Dotse has animal)’

The complement that immediately follows the locative predicate in the example above is a postpositional phrase that indicates the location of the possessee. Therefore, modifiers and/or determiners can occur in the form **kpò-mè** ‘room-inside’ for instance.

124. **elā** **lè** **kpò** **álé** **mè** **né** **Dǒtsé**
 animal be.at wall ART.INDF inside DAT Dotse
 ‘Dotse has animal in a certain pen’

A parallel can therefore be drawn between possessive constructions involving postpositions and constructions involving the dative of the type in example (123). As a reminder, in constructions involving postpositions, the postpositional phrase immediately follows the locative predicate, as is shown in the constructional patterns of the two construction types:

PD lè PR POSTP	→	POSTPOSITIONAL PHRASE
PD lè N POSTP DAT PR	→	DATIVE PHRASE

Despite the parallels in the patterns of the two construction types, the possessive construction that involves the dative cannot be taken to be ‘an extension’ *i.e.* the benefactive extension, of the locative possessive

constructions involving only postpositions. This is because while the possessive meaning in constructions involving postpositions is lost when the postpositional phrase is replaced by the third person singular pronoun (*i.e.* the construction is understood as expressing existence), the postpositional phrase of constructions involving the dative can be replaced by the third person singular pronoun without any consequence on the possessive meaning (see chapter 6, section 6 for further discussion of this construction). Witness the following examples:

125. **exò lè asī-nyè**
 house be.at hand-PRO.1SG
 ‘I have a house’
126. *exò leé*
exò lè é
 house be.at PRO.3SG
 ‘There are rooms available’
127. **tá-gbó mé lè é né m̀-à ?**
 head-side NEG be.at PRO.3SG DAT PRO.2PL-Q
 ‘Lit. Do you not have your head-sides?’
 ‘(Are you mad?)’

Hence, although some of the constructions involving the dative can bear structural resemblances to constructions involving postpositions, they are to be considered as being different from each other. Locative possessive constructions involving the dative come up for discussion in chapter 6, section 6.

3.2.2. Locative possessive constructions with allative

Locative possessive constructions in which the allative occurs differ structurally from all the construction types that have been discussed so far. In these constructions, the possessor occurs in subject position, and the possessee occurs as the object of the verb. In addition, the possessee is followed by a prepositional phrase that is composed of the allative marker and a body-part term. Witness the constituent order in the construction below:

128. *é tsó lànú lá sī*
é **tsó** **lànú** **lé** **asī**
 PRO.3SG carry weapon at hand
 ‘He/she has a weapon’

Since the syntactic configuration of possessor and possessee is different, it comes as no surprise that these constructions have a different verbal predicate. The locative predicate does not occur. Instead, accomplishment verbs that evoke “transfer”, such as **lé** ‘catch’, **xò** ‘receive’ **tsó** ‘take’, **kó** ‘lift’, occur in the predicate slot. The following examples demonstrate constructions in which each of these verbs occurs.

129. **mè** **lé/tsó/kó** **vī** **lé** **asī**
 PRO.1SG catch/take/lift child at hand
 ‘I have a child (in hand)’

130. *mí xò vùó lá sī*
mí **xò** **vù-á** **lé** **asī**
 PRO.3PL receive vehicle-ART.DEF at hand
 ‘We had the vehicle in our possession’

An exception is to be noted: the verb **kpó** ‘see’ occurs in this possessive construction. Possessive constructions in which **kpó** ‘see’ occurs have the same order: POSSESSOR – POSSESSEE. However, they do not contain the prepositional phrase (see Ameka 1991:230 for a useful discussion of this construction, since the construction in other dialects is the same as in Tɔ̀ṅúgbe). Witness the following examples of constructions in which **kpó** ‘see’ occurs and which expresses possession.

131. **mí** **kpó** **nyà**
 PRO.1PL see issue
 ‘We have an issue’
 ‘(We are in trouble)’

132. **?mí** **kpó** **nyà** **lé** **así**
 PRO.1PL see issue at hand
 ‘We have an issue’
 ‘(We are in trouble)’

The meanings of the verbs that occur in the possessive constructions that involve the allative evoke possession by pragmatic inference. When the prepositional phrase is eliminated, although possession is not explicit, it can be inferred. For instance, to carry a baby infers that one has the baby, albeit temporarily.

133. **mè** **tsó** **vī**
 PRO.1SG take child
 ‘I am carrying a baby’

Concentrating on the prepositional phrase that functions as a complement, it is composed of the allative marker and the dependent **así** ‘hand’. When other body-part terms occur as dependents of the allative, the constructions do not explicitly express possession but rather location. Witness the meaning expressed by the constructions below in which the body-part terms **etá** ‘head’ and **ñütí** ‘skin’ occur.

134. **mè** **tsó** **agbà** **lé** **tá**
 PRO.1SG take load at head
 ‘I carried a load on my head’
135. **mè** **lé** **hε-á** **lé** **ñütí**
 PRO.1SG catch knife-ART.DEF at skin
 ‘I took the knife along’

As a consequence, while constructions in which **así** ‘hand’ occurs as the allative dependent can be paraphrased with locative possessive constructions involving postpositions, this is not the case when other body-part terms occur as the allative dependent. Example (136) can therefore be paraphrased as (137). On the contrary, example (138) cannot be paraphrased as (139).

136. **mè** **tsó** **vī** **lé** **asī**
 PRO.1SG take child at hand
 ‘I have a child (in hand)’ (=129)
137. **evī** **lé** **asī-nyè**
 child be.at hand-PRO.1SG
 ‘I have a child’
138. **mè** **tsó** **agbà** **lé** **tá**
 PRO.1SG take load at head
 ‘I carried a load on my head’ (= 134)
139. **agbà** **lè** **asī-nyè**
 load be.at hand-PRO.1SG
 ‘I have a load’

The prepositional phrase headed by the allative serves to mark the fact that the possessive relationship is only temporary. They express temporary possession *i.e.* the possessor holds the possessee in his hand for a determined period. The **asī** ‘hand’, which temporarily hosts the possessee is less grammaticalized than the postposition **asī** ‘hand’ in constructions in which possessee occurs in subject position. It is not a ‘space’ relative to possessor, but the body-part ‘hand’.

Consequently, as is the case for other nominal constituents of prepositional phrases, **asī** ‘hand’ in these constructions can be front-focused, while **asī** ‘space’ in constructions in which possessee occurs in subject position cannot. Example (140) illustrates front-focusing of nouns in prepositional phrases in Tɔ̀ṅúgbè. Example (141) illustrates front-focusing of **asī** ‘hand’ in a locative possessive construction involving the allative. Finally, example (142) shows the impossibility of front-focusing **asī** ‘hand’ in predicative possessive constructions involving adpositions.

140. a. **mè** **flè** **agbàle** **lé** **gě**
 PRO.1SG buy book at Accra
 ‘I bought a book at Accra’

- b. **egě** **mè** **flè** **agbàle** **lá**
 Accra PRO.1SG buy book PART
 ‘It was at Accra that I bought a book’
141. a. **mè** **lé** **agbàle** **lé** **asī**
 PRO.1SG hold book at hand
 ‘I am holding a book’
 ‘(I have a book in hand)’
- b. **asī** **mè** **lé** **agbàle** **lá**
 hand PRO.1SG hold book PART
 ‘It is in my hand that I have a book’
142. a. *avòó vá ká mié sí*
avò-á **vá** **ká** **mié** **sí**
 cloth-ART.DEF VENT reach PRO.1PL hand
 ‘We have received the cloth’
 ‘(We have the cloth)’
- b. ***asī** **avò-á** **vá** **ká** **mié**
 hand cloth-ART.DEF VENT reach PRO.1PL
 ‘It was in hand we have cloth’

Thus, in these constructions, it is understood that the possessee is with the possessor for only a limited amount of time; and that the ‘real’ possessor will take back the possessee. Consequently, constructions involving the allative can be restated with constructions in which a dative-oblique specifies the ‘real’ possessor. Witness the following constructions.

143. *mí xò vùó lá sī*
mí **xò** **vù-á** **lé** **asī**
 PRO.3PL receive vehicle-ART.DEF at hand
 ‘We had the vehicle in our possession’ (=130)

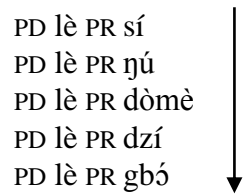
144. *mí xò vùó lá sī né*
mí **xò** **vù-á** **lé** **así**
 PRO.3PL receive vehicle-ART.DEF at hand
ná-é
 DAT-PRO.3SG
 ‘We had the vehicle in our possession’

4. Conclusion

This chapter has dealt with constructions in which possessors/possesseees are arguments of verbal predicates. It has surveyed the different syntactic types of constructions and sought to capture the meanings that the various construction types express. Two major categories of predicative possessive constructions were identified: copular possessive constructions and locative possessive constructions. Copular possessive constructions involve either the possessee pronoun or the possessor suffix. Depending on whichever of these forms occurs in the construction, possession is centered on the possessee and the possessor respectively.

Locative possessive constructions on the other hand involve prepositions and postpositions. The prepositions that are involved are the allative and the dative marker, while the postpositions that are involved are four: **así** ‘hand’, **ɲú** ‘skin’ **dzí** ‘upper.section/top’ **gbó** ‘vicinity’ and **dòmè** ‘mid.section’. Concerning locative possessive constructions involving the postpositions, given that the verbal predicate does not intrinsically express possession, the possessive meaning is either explicitly expressed by the postposition or is pragmatically inferred from various contextual features present in the construction. Constructions involving **así** ‘hand’ express possession explicitly given the possessive meaning invoked by the postposition; constructions involving **ɲú** ‘skin’ explicitly express possession only when the relation encoded between possessee and possessor is a part-whole relation; constructions involving **dzí** ‘upper.section/top’ express a relation that can be termed ‘tasked possession’; constructions involving **gbó** ‘vicinity’ express possession as a result of spatial contiguity; and constructions involving **dòmè** ‘mid.section’ express a sort of shared possession.

The different constructions (involving the locative predicate and adpositions heading the phrase that occurs in complement position) can be put on a scale according to the degree of explicitness of the possessive relationship expressed. This scale can be represented as follows:



The higher the construction on the scale, the more explicit the possession expressed; the lower the construction, the more dependent possessive meaning is on context/features. Thus, the higher the construction is up the scale, the more difficult it is for the possessive meaning that is expressed to be negated. In the example below, when the possession in the construction involving **así** ‘hand’, which is the highest on the scale is negated, the construction is odd.

145. **?egà** **lè** **así-nyè** **gàkē** **mé** **nyé**
 money be.at hand-PRO.1SG but 3SG.NEG be
nyè **gà** **yó** **ò**
 PRO.1SG money FOC NEG
 ‘I have money, but the money is not mine’

For locative possessive constructions involving **ɲú** ‘skin’ in which there is a part-whole relation, when the possession is negated, the negated construction is infelicitous. However, when the relation expressed is not a part-whole relation, possession can be negated without the construction being infelicitous. In example (146), the relation expressed is a part-whole relation. Therefore, when possession is negated, the construction is infelicitous. On the contrary, in example (147), the relation expressed is not a part-whole relation. Therefore, the relation can be negated without the construction being infelicitous.

146. *?táyà lè vùó ñú gàkē mé nyé vùó táyà yóò*
táyà **lè** **vù-á** **ñú** **gàkē**
 tyre be.at vehicle-ART.DEF skin but
mé **nyé** **vù-á** **wó** **táyà**
 3SG.NEG be vehicle-ART.DEF POSS tyre
yó **ò**
 FOC NEG
 ‘The car has tyres, but the tyres are not the car’s’

147. *egà lè ñū-nyè gàkē mé nyé*
 money be.at skin-PRO.1SG but 3SG.NEG be
nyé **gà** **yó** **ò**
 PRO.1SG money FOC NEG
 ‘I have money on me, but it is not my money’

Possession in constructions involving **dòmè** ‘mid.section’ cannot be negated when the possessee is either a kinship term or an abstract noun that is the result of social interaction. The construction below is infelicitous due to the fact that the relation expressed is a kinship relation.

148. **evī lèó dómé gàkē mé nyó ví yóò*
evī **lè** **-wó** **dòmè** **-é**
 child be.at -PRO.3PL mid.section -PRO.3SG
gàkē **mé** **nyé** **wó** **ví** **yó**
 but 3SG.NEG be PRO. 3PL child FOC
ò
 NEG
 ‘They have a child but the child is not their’s’

Finally, possession in constructions involving **dzí** ‘upper.section/top’ and **gbó** ‘vicinity’ can be negated in all instances. Witness the following examples:

149. **egà** **lè** **gb̄-nyè** **gàkē** **mé**
 money be.at vicinity-PRO.1SG but 3SG.NEG
nyé **nyè** **gà** **yó** **ò**
 be PRO.1SG money FOC NEG
 ‘I have money by my side, but the money is not mine’
150. **ed̄** **lè** **dzi-nyè;** **mé** **nyé**
 work be.at top-PRO.1SG 3SG.NEG be
nyè **dó** **yó** **hã** **káfé** **ò** **ló**
 PRO.1SG work FOC also before NEG PART
 ‘I have work to do; it is not even my work’

It can thus be stated that, among the different locative possessive constructions with postpositions, locative possessive constructions involving **así** ‘hand’ are the most grammaticalized constructions for expressing possession. Constructions involving **ɲú** ‘skin’ and **dòmè** ‘mid.section’, with a possessee noun conveying body-part feature and kinship/social-interactive features respectively, are also unambiguous possessive constructions. However, constructions involving **dzi** ‘upper.section/top’ and **gb̄** ‘vicinity’ do not inherently express possession, but only do so given a particular pragmatic context.

The constructions surveyed are not without implications for the understanding of other constructions. In the first place, copular possessive constructions were argued to share similarities with other copular constructions that express property attribution, on the one hand, and with juxtaposed attributive possessive constructions, on the other hand. Secondly, the link between locative possessive constructions and locative and existential constructions has also been incidentally mentioned during the survey, but will be developed in chapter 6. Also, locative possessive constructions involving the dative can also be noted as sharing similarities with not only benefactive/malefactive dative constructions, but also with external possessor constructions.

Also, the constructions surveyed above are not without implications for constructions in other Ewe dialects. Indeed, the first and major

contribution of this work to the various studies on predicative possessive constructions in Ewe (Ameka 1991, Heine 1997) is that, it presents the details of a range of constructions that have hitherto not been analyzed in the available literature (*e.g.* copular possessive constructions with the possessor suffix; copular possessive constructions with the copula **zù** ‘become’). Moreover, even when the constructions have been described (copular constructions involving the verb **nyé** ‘be’ and, locative possessive constructions), the above study has presented them in detail in Tɔ̀nùgbe and has sought to capture the subtle distinctions that characterize the meanings expressed by the constructions.