Possessive constructions in Tongugbe, an Ewe dialect
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PREDICATIVE POSSESSIVE CONSTRUCTIONS IN TƆŊÚGBE

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 Tɔŋúgbe, 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**   **yibɔɛ-á**   **nyé**   **atì-tɔ̀**
    cat   black-ART.DEF   be   Ati-PRO.PD
    'The black cat is Ati's'

2. *ḍàsé álé lèɔ́ sí*
    ḍàsé   **álé**   **lè**   **wó**   **sí**
    witness   ART.INDF   be.at   PRO.3PL   hand
    'They have a witness'   (Flex_Nar: Fam 108.1)

3. **ezìà-tɔ̌-ɔ́**   **vá**   **kpɔ́**   **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)-tɔ́
b.   NP (PD) COP NP (PR)-tɔ̀

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.   *Kofíí nyé lãátɔ́*
     Kofí-é   nyé   lã-á-tɔ́
     Kofi-FOC   be   animal-ART.DEF-PRO.PR
     'It is Kofi who is the owner of the animal'

5.   **elã-á   nyé   Kofí-tɔ̀**
     animal-ART.DEF   be   Kofi-PRO.PD
     'The animal is Kofi's'

The copulas that occur in copular possessive constructions of Tɔŋúgbe 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 tàtɛ́ɛ́ nyá kwɛ́mútɔ́ɔ́*
     wó   tàtɛ́-é   nyé Akwɛ́mú-tɔ́-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 tɔ̀ŋútɔ́ɔ́,*
     wó   vá   zu   tɔ̀ŋú-tɔ́-wó
     PRO.3PL   VENT   become   tɔŋú-PRO.PR-PL
     'Lit.They became Tɔŋú owners'
     (They became Tɔŋús) '   (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.   *avùɔ́ nyé miɛ́ tɔ̀*
     avu-á   **nyé**   **miɛ́-tɔ̀**
     dog-ART.DEF   be   PRO.1PL-PRO.PD
     'The dog is our's'

9.   *avùɔ́ zù miɛ́tɔ̀*
     avù-á   **zù**   **miɛ́-tɔ̀**
     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.   *?avùɔ́ lè miɛ́ tɔ̀ nyɛ̌*
      avu-á   **lè**   **miɛ́-tɔ̀**   **nyé-ḿ**
      dog-ART.DEF   COP   PRO.1PL-PRO.PD   be-PROG
      'The dog is being our's'

11.   *avùɔ́ lè miɛ́tɔ̀ zǔ*
      avù-á   **lè**   **miɛ́-tɔ̀**   **zù-ḿ**
      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 **trɔ́** '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 **trɔ́** 'get back' is inserted into constructions involving **nyé** 'be', the construction is odd *i.e.* permanently possessed items cannot be reappropriated.

12. *avùɔ́ trɔ́ zù miɛ́tɔ̀*
   avù-á   **trɔ́**   **zù**   **miɛ́-tɔ̀**
   dog-ART.DEF   get.back   become   PRO.1PL-PRO.PD
   'The dog is now our's (after we lost it to someone else)'

13. *?avùɔ́ trɔ́ nyé miɛ́ tɔ̀*
   avu-á   **trɔ́**   **nyé**   **miɛ́-tɔ̀**
   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 **tɔ̀** (see chapter 3, sub-section 2.2) or the possessor suffix **tɔ́** (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. *egbɔ́ɔ́ nyé miɛ́tɔ̀*

   egbɔ̀-á   **nyé**   **miɛ́-tɔ̀**

   goat-ART.DEF   be   PRO.1PL-PRO.PD

   'The goat is ours'

15. **é**   **zù**   **wó-tɔ̀**

   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. *tòdzóɔ́ nyé ŋùtsùɔ́ tɔ̀*

   tòdzó-á   **nyé**   **ŋùtsù-á-tɔ̀**

   cat-ART.DEF   be   man-ART.DEF-PRO.PD

   'The cat is the man's'

17. ***abɔ̀/dzí/esrɔ̀-á**   **nyé**   **ŋùtsù-á-tɔ̀**

   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**   **ŋùtsū-á-tɔ̀**

   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. *egbɔɔ́ nyé miɛ́tɔ̀*
    egbɔ-á　　　**nyé**　**miɛ-tɔ̀**
    goat-ART.DEF　be　　PRO.1PL-PRO.PD
    'The goat is ours'　　　　(=14)

20. *egbɔɔ́ nyé miɛ́ɔ́ gbɔ́*
    egbɔ-á　　　**nyé**　**miɛ**　　**wó**　　**gbɔ**
    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. *enūɔ́ kúlá zù tɔ̀*
    enū-á　　　**kúlá**　**zù**　　**é-tɔ̀**
    thing-ART.DEF　all　　become　PRO.3SG-PRO.PD
    'Everything belongs to him'　(Flex_Sto: Azi 1450.1)

22. *enūɔ́ kúlá zù tɔ̀ nyè*
    enū-á　　　**kúlá**　**zù**　　**tɔ̀-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. *nūɖúɖúɔ́ nyé mìà mè vìétɔ̀*
    nūɖúɖú-á   nyé   mì   ame   evè-á
    food-ART.DEF   be   PRO.2PL   person   two-ART.DEF
    -tɔ̀
    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. *egbɔɔ́ɛ́ nyé miɛ́tɔ̀*
    egbɔ-á-ɛ́   nyé   miɛ́-tɔ̀
    goat-ART.DEF-FOC   be   PRO.1PL-PRO.PD
    'It is a goat that is ours'

25. **miɛ́ɛ́ nyé egbɔɔ́tɔ̀*
    miɛ́ -é   nyé   egbɔ-á-tɔ̀
    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. **miɛ́-tɔ̀   -ɛ́   nyé   gbɔ**
    PRO.1PL-PRO.PD   -FOC   be   goat
    'Ours is a goat'

27. **miɛ́-tɔ̀**   **-ɣó**
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. *Kofíí nyé gbɔɔ́tɔ́*
Kofí-é   **nyé**   **gbɔ-á-tɔ́**
Kofi-FOC   be   goat-ART.DEF-PRO.PR
'Kofi is the owner of the goat'

29. *Kofí zù afiɛ́tɔ́*
Kofí   **zù**   **afē-á-tɔ́**
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. *edzìí nyá nyìgbáátɔ́*
edzì-é   **nyé**   **anyìgbá-á-tɔ́**
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. *miɔ́wó nyé zìkpíétɔ́ɔ́*
    miáwó   **nyé**   **zìkpé-á-tɔ́-wó**
    PRO.IND.3PL   be   stool-ART.DEF-PRO.PR-PL
    'It is we that own the stool'

32. *?mí nyé zikpiétɔ́ɔ́*
    mí   **nyé**   **zikpi-á-tɔ́-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 zìkpiétɔ́ɔ́*
    mí   **zù**   **zìkpi-á-tɔ́-wó**
    PRO.SUBJ.1PL   become   stool-ART.DEF-PRO.PR-PL
    'We now own the stool'

34. *miɔ́ɔ́ zù zikpiétɔ́ɔ́*
    miáwó   **zù**   **zìkpi-á-tɔ́-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. Possessees are nominal and are followed by the possessor suffix. Pronominal possessees 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 Tɔŋúgbe construction.

35.   **miáwó-é   nyé   é̱-tɔ́-wó**
      PRO.1PL-FOC   be   PRO.3SG-father-PL
      'We are his/her fathers'

36.   **mí   zù   é̱-tɔ́-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 Tɔŋúgbe, *viz.* **tɔ́**, **nɔ̀** and **sì**. In copular predicative possessive constructions, only the suffix **tɔ́** 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 tɔ́ɔ́?*
      amekà -é   nyé   agbā-á̱-tɔ́-ó
      who   FOC   be   bowl-ART.DEF-PRO.PR-Q
      'Who does the bowl belong to?'

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

The possessor suffix **tɔ́** 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. **Amɛ́ví   zu   agblè-á-tɔ́**
    Amevi   become   farm-ART.DEF-PRO.PR
    'Amevi has assumed ownership of the farm'

40. **<u>Amɛ́ví</u>   <u>wó</u>   <u>agblè</u>   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. *miɔ́wóé nyé amiɛ́tɔ́ɔ́*
    miáwó-é   nyé   ame-<u>á</u>-tɔ́-wó
    PRO.1PL-FOC   be   person-ART.DEF-PRO.PR-PL
    'Lit. We are the person's owner'
    ' (We own the deceased)'

42. *miɔ́wóé nyé ametɔ́ɔ́*
    miáwó-é   nyé   <u>ame</u>-tɔ́-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. *Amɛ́víí nyé agblèátɔ́*
     Amɛ́ví-é   **nyé**   **agblè-á-tɔ́**
     Amevi-FOC   be   farm-ART.DEF-PRO.PR
     'It is Amevi who owns the farm'

44. *agblèátɔ́ɛ́ nyá mɛ́ví*
     agblè-á-tɔ́-é   **nyé**   **amɛ́ví**
     farm-ART.DEF-PRO.PR-FOC   be   Amevi
     'The owner of the farm is Ameví'

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

construction. Secondly, the copular possessive constructions occur with 'mini-attributive constructions' in which not only the dedicated possessee pronoun occurs but also the possessor suffix.

 I have also shown that these two constructions correspond to different points of emphasis: constructions with the dedicated possessee pronoun construe the possessee as the point of emphasis, while constructions in which the possessor suffix occurs construe the possessee as the point of emphasis. Finally, with respect to the syntax of the mini attributive possessive construction that occurs in nominal predicate position, I have argued that they are syntactically constructed *i.e.* they are composed of juxtaposed forms.

2.3.2. Copular possessive construction versus copular constructions with possessor suffix

The fact that the mini-attributive possessive construction in copular possessive constructions is a juxtaposed construction is important to distinguish the copular possessive construction with possessor suffix from another copular construction having the same constituent order and containing also the possessor suffix. Witness the following constructions:

45. **é**   **zù**   **elã-á-tɔ́**   *(possession)*
    PRO.3SG   become   animal-ART.DEF-PRO.PR
    'He/She now owns the animal'

46. **é**   **zù**   **gà-tɔ̆**   *(property attribution)*
    PRO.3SG   become   money-PRO.PR
    'He/She has become a rich person'

In these latter constructions, exemplified by (46) above, the nominal predicate position can be occupied by an adjective, a quantifier or a noun followed by the possessor suffix. In example (47) below, the nominal predicate slot is occupied by the adjective **gã** 'big' and the possessor suffix, while in example (48), the nominal predicate slot is occupied by the noun **Eʋègbè** 'Ewe language' and the possessor suffix, and the plural marker.

47. **gíyiɛ́   vá   zù   <u>gã-tɔ́</u>**
    DEM   VENT   become:PST   big-PRO.PR
    'This place became the bigger one'   (Flex_Sto : Azi 72.1)

48. **wó   zù   <u>eʋègbè-tɔ̆-wó</u>**
    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:

Property attribution   ⟶   SUBJ COP NOM.PRED

Possession   ⟶   SUBJ COP NOM.PRED
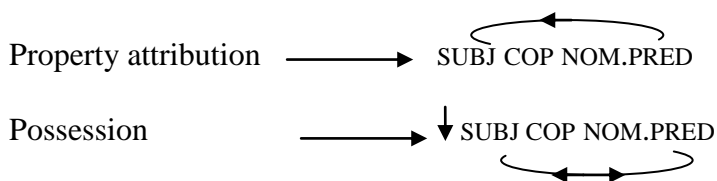
The difference in the relationship expressed in the two constructions can be made explicit through restatements. When the nominal predicate and the subject of property attributing constructions are restated within one noun phrase, they occur in an apposition in which the noun corresponding to the subject 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-tɔ̆**   **gà-tɔ̆!**   **[Kofi   gà-tɔ̆]**
     money-PRO.PR   money-PRO.PR   Kofi   money-PRO.PR
     'Rich person, rich person! Kofi the rich person'

50. **?gà-tɔ̆**   **gà-tɔ̆!**   **[gà-tɔ̆**   **Kofi]**
     money-PRO.PR   money-PRO.PR   money-PRO.PR   Kofi
     'Rich person, rich person! rich person Kofi'

51. **Kofi nyé   gà-tɔ̆**
     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. **aƒē-tɔ́**   **Kofi**
     house-PRO.PR   Kofi
     'Lit. Home-owner Kofi'
     '(Mister Kofi)'

53. **Kofí**   **zù**   **aƒē-tɔ́**
     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   [elã   gấ   má   tɔ́]
    PRO.3SG   become   animal   big   DEM   PRO.PR
    'He/She now owns that big animal'

55. ?é   zù   [gà   gấ   má   -tɔ́]
    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 Tɔŋúgbe). Witness the tones on the possessees in example (56) and (57):

56. *enyà/ayí*   *enyèé nyé nyàátɔ́/ayíétɔ́*
    enyà̱/ayí̱   **enyè-é**   **nyé**   **enyà̱-á-tɔ́/**
    PRO.1SG-FOC   be   issue-ART.DEF- PRO.PR
    ayí̱-á-tɔ́
    bean-ART.DEF-PRO.PR
    'I own the case/beans'

57. *afē /gàsɔ̌   enyèé nyá fīétɔ́ / gàsɔ̌ɔ́tɔ́*
     afē̱ /gàsɔ̱̌   enyè-é   nyé   afē̱-á-tɔ́ /
     PRO.1SG-FOC   be   house-ART.DEF- PRO.PR
     gàsɔ̱̌-ɔ́-tɔ́
     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 **esrɔ̀** '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 exampes (58) and (59).

58. **mè   zù   vī̱-tɔ́**
     PRO.1SG   become   child-PRO.PR
     'I am a parent'

59. **esrɔ̀-tɔ́   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 -ɛ̱́-tɔ́**
     PRO.1SG   become   child-ART.DEF-PRO.PR
     'I am a parent'

61. **ʔesrɔ̀-ɔ́-tɔ́**   **mè**   **nyé**
    spouse-ART.DEF-PRO.PR   PRO.1SG   be
    'I am a married person'

The misaligned distribution of the socio-culturally relational term **esrɔ̀** '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/nɔ̀**. 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 Tɔŋúgbe.

62. *ékiɛ́ mé lé síò*
    é-kiɛ́   **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 **nɔ̀** 'be.at:PST'. The form **lè** 'be.at:PRS' occurs in constructions that associate possession with the feature of present tense; while the form **nɔ̀** 'be.at:PST' occurs in constructions that are non-present. Thus, the non-present variant of example (62) is example (63).

63. *ékiɛ́ mé nɔ̀ síò*

é-kiɛ́	**mé**	**nɔ̀**	**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 **nɔ̀** '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 Tɔŋúgbe). 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 **nɔ̀** 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. | **ɖàsé** | **álé** | **(*là)** | **lè** | **(*á)** | **wó** | **sí** |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| witness | ART.INDF | POT | be.at | HAB | PRO.3PL | hand |

'They have a certain witness'   (=2)

65. | **ɖàsé** | **álé** | **là** | **nɔ̀** | **wó** | **sí** |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| witness | ART.INDF | POT | be.at:PST | PRO.3PL | hand |

'They should have a witness'

66. *ɖàsé álé nɔ́ɔ́ wó sí*

ɖàsé	**álé**	**nɔ̀-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 Tɔŋúgbe). Possessors are prototypically

animate nouns[31]. 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]   káƒé   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. **nyànù   lè   xɔ̀   né   dǒtsɛ́**
    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).

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[31] There are notable exceptions to this statement. For instance, in constructions involving **ŋú** 'skin', inanimate nouns can occur as possessors.

69. *avūɔ́ vá gámá*
     avūá   **vá**   **gámá**
     dog-ART.DEF   come:PST   DEM
     'The dog came there'   (Flex_Ext: Des 8.1)

70. *avūɔ́ lè gámá vá gé*
     avū-á   **lè**   **gámá**   **vá**   **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 nɔ̀ sí*
     nàné   **nɔ̀**   **é**   **sí**
     something   be.at.PST   PRO.3SG   hand
     'She had something'   (Flex_Ext: Viv 3.1)

72. *nàné lé sí nɔ̀ gé*
     nàné   **lè**   **é**   **sí**   **nɔ̀**   **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   sǐ]   káƒé   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 ḍèkǎ kǒ lèé sí*
     evī   **ḍèkǎ**   **ko-é**   **lè**   <u>**é**</u>   <u>**sí**</u>
     child   one   only-FOC   be.at   PRO.3SG   hand
     'She had only one child'   (Flex_Ext: Viv 2.1)

75. **evī**   **lè**   <u>**asī-wò**</u>
     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' **ŋú** 'skin' **gbɔ́** 'vicinity', **dzí** 'upper.surface/top', and **dòmè** 'mid.section'.

76. **evī**   **lè**   **kɔdzó**   <u>**sí**</u>
     child   be.at   Kodzo   hand
     'Kodzo has a child'

77. **egà**   **lè**   **míɛ́**   <u>**ŋú**</u>
     money   be.at   PRO.1PL   skin
     'We have money (on us)'

78. **é**   **lè**   <u>**gbɔ̀**</u>   **wò-à?**
     PRO.3SG   be.at   vicinity   PRO.2SG-Q
     'Do you have it/is it with you?

79. **edɔ̄**   **lè**   <u>**dzī**</u>   **-nyè**
     work   be.at   top   PRO.1SG
     'I have work (to do)'

80. *edzrè lè míɛ́ dòmɛ́*
    edzrè   lè   míɛ́   <u>dòmè</u>-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 <u>así</u>

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

81. *wó lè nyànūvíɛ́ sí*
    wó   lè   nyànūví-á   <u>sí</u>
    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. *nyànūvíɛ́ wá sí*
    nyànūví-á   wó   <u>así</u>
    girl-ART.DEF   POSS   hand
    'The girl's hand'

83. *?wó lè nyànūvíɛ́ wá sí*
    wó   lè   nyànūví-á   <u>wó</u>   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 construction[32]. Witness the following examples:

84. **egà   lè   a̱sī-nyè**
    money   be.at   hand-PRO.1SG
    'I have money'

85. *evī ɖèkă lé sí*
    evī   ɖèkă   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 adposition phrase in the construction is headed by **así** 'hand'. Witness the example below:

86. *kòtokúɔ́ vá ká asì wòà?*
    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 **ɖó** 'reach' (88).

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[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**　**yìɛ́**　**dɪ́**　　　　**mè**　**lè**　<u>**sù**</u>
　　thing　REL　look.for:PROG　PRO.1SG　COP　suffice
　　asī　**nyè**
　　hand　PRO.1SG
　　'I have what I am looking for'

88. *egà ɖō ɖèvīɛ́ sí vɔ̀ tá é tá wɔ̀wí wɔ̀wɔ́*
　　[**egà**　<u>**dó**</u>　**ɖèvī-á**　　**sí**]　**vɔ̀**　**tá**
　　money　reach　child-ART.DEF　hand　finish　so
　　é　　　**tá**　**wɔ̀wí**　　**wɔ̀wɔ́**
　　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 **ŋú** 'skin', **dzí** 'upper.surface/top', **gbɔ́** 'vicinity' and **dòmè** 'mid.section'.

3.1.2. Locative possessive constructions with <u>ŋú</u>
Locative possessive constructions in which **ŋú** '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 ŋú*
     gódóó   dzà   etrè   álé   lè
     by.all.means   unless   deity   ART.INDEF   be.at
     é   ŋú
     PRO.3SG   skin
     'It must have a deity' (Flex_Sto: Azi 1359.1)

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

90. *tòdzó tètè lé ŋtí*
     tòdzó   tètè   lé   é   <u>ŋútí</u>
     cat   draw.close   at   PRO.3SG   skin
     'The cat drew closer to it' (Flex_Ext: Ven 11.1)

91. *tòdzó tètè lé ŋú*
     tòdzó   tètè   lé   é   <u>ŋú</u>
     cat   draw.close   at   PRO.3SG   skin
     'The cat drew closer to it'

However, the tendency is to use the reduced form **ŋú** 'skin' as a postposition whereas only the non-reduced form **ŋūtí** 'skin' is used as a noun. Witness the following examples:

92. **ŋūtí   fiɛ̀-m**
     skin   itch-PRO.1SG
     'My skin tched'

93. ***ŋū   fiɛ̀-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 **ŋú** 'skin' occurs

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

Thus, constructions in which **ŋú** '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 **ŋú** 'skin' express part-whole relations. Nouns that prototypically occur as possessees 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 yiɛ́tá etá mé lè agàlá ŋúò lá*

    enū   **yiɛ́-tá**   <u>**etá**</u>   **mé**   **lè**   **agàlá**
    thing   DEM-head   head   NEG   be.at   crab

    ŋú   **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 **ŋú** '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. <u>**egà**</u>   **lè**   **ŋū-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 **ŋú** '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**   **ŋū-nyè**   **gàkē**   **mé**   **nyé**
     money   be.at   skin-PRO.1SG   but   PRO.3SG.NEG   be
     tɔ̀-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 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 **ŋú** *i.e.* location in the surface area of the dependent of the postpositional phrase.

3.1.3. Locative possessive constructions with <u>dzí</u>
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 Tɔŋúgbe. An example is provided in (97).

97. **ekū**   **lè**   <u>**dzì**</u>   **-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. <u>**edɔ̀**</u>   **lè**   **miɛ́**   **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 kpɔ́** 'so I take care of' provides further information on the task.

99. *evī lè dzìnyè má kpɔ́*
evī	**lè**	**dzì-nyè**	<u>**me-á**</u>	<u>**kpɔ́**</u>
child	be.at	top-PRO.1SG	PRO.1SG-SUBJ	see
    'I have a child to take care of'

The nouns that occur as possessees 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. *bɔ́lùɔ́ lè kplɔ̄ɔ́ dzí*
bɔ́lù-á	**lè**	**kplɔ̄-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 <u>gbɔ́</u>

Constructions in which the postposition **gbɔ́** 'vicinity' occurs as the head of the complement phrase, and which exclusively express possession are not common in Tɔŋúgbe. 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. | **nùɖú** | **alé** | **lè** | <u>**gbɔ̀**</u> | **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 **ŋú** '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 **gbɔ́**. Consequently, constructions involving **gbɔ́** 'vicinity' express possession only in particular pragmatic contexts. For instance,

in Degɔmɛ village, the youth used the construction in (102) to mean 'do you have some food'?

102.　**nàné　　lè　　gbɔ̀　　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 **gbɔ** 'vicinity' to express the idea that 'he/she has a visitor'.

103.　**amè　　lè　　gbɔ　　nyè**
person　be.at　vicinity　PRO.1SG
'Somebody is with me'
' (I have a vistor)'

3.1.5.　Locative possessive constructions with <u>dòme</u>

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 lèɔ dòmé*
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**   **dzì~dzǐ**
      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 Tɔŋúgbe. .

dò 'get out'   ⟶   **dòdòmè**   'epicranial aponeuroses'
dzì 'procreate'   ⟶   **dzìdzìmè** 'generation'
gbɔ̀ 'breath'   ⟶   **gbɔ̀gbɔ̀mè** 'spiritual realm'
dzɔ̀ 'happen'   ⟶   **dzɔ̀dzɔ̀mè** '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 **dòmɛ́**, instead of the expected **dòmè**, in the locative possessive construction.

107. *edzrè lèɔ́ dòmɛ́*
      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 **dòmɛ́** due to the fact that the last vowel of the spatial relational term, [e], merges with an underlying third person

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[33] Note that the rule has a low tone feature

singular pronoun[34], **é**, to occur as **ɛ́**. When the third person singular pronoun that merges with **dòmè** 'mid.section' is eliminated, the construction is odd.

108. *ʔedzrè lèɔ́ 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 **ɖɛ́** 'ALL-PRO.3SG' which can function as a locative adverbial. Example (109) illustrates **ɖɛ́** 'ALL-PRO.3SG' functioning as a locative adverbial. Example (110) illustrates that when **ɖɛ́** '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 fòɔ ahà ɖέ*
      wó   váyì   fò-á   ahà   ɖé-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)

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[34]The 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 lèɔ́ dòmè ɖɛ́*

edzrè	lè	-wó	**dòmè**	**ɖé-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 posssessee 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 dòmɛ́*

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 possessees in this construction type are kinship terms and abstract nouns that are the results of social interaction. The abstract nouns that occur as possessees therefore include terms such as **edzrè** 'fight', **enyà** 'misunderstanding', **edzùgbē´** '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 bɔ̌ lɔ́´ sí kò*

agbèlì	bɔ́	**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.* **sùgbɔ** 'be numerous' and **bɔ́** 'be abundant'. The following constructions illustrate both verbs occurring in these constructions.

113.   **eblì**   <u>**sùgbɔ**</u>   **lé**   **adrú**   **sí**
       maize   be.numerous   at   Adru   hand
       'Adru has a lot of maize'

114.   **ɖè**   <u>**bɔ́**</u>   **lé**   **miɛ**   **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 **ŋú** '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 **gbɔ́** '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 **dòmɛ́**.

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 possession[35]. 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. **eblì   sùgbɔ   lé   adrú   sí**
     maize   be.numerous   at   Adru   hand
     'Adru has a lot of maize'   (=113)

116. **eblì   gbógbó   lè   adrú   sí**
     maize   lot   be.at   Adru   hand
     'Adru 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 Tɔŋúgbe 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).

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[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 bɔ̌ lɔ́ˊ sí kò*
    agbèlì   **bɔ́**   **<u>lé</u>**   **wó**   **<u>sí</u>**   **kò**
    cassava   be.abundant   at   PRO.3PL   hand   INT
    'They have a lot of cassava' (=112)

118. *agbèlì bɔ̌ leɔ́ sí kò*
    agbèlì   **bɔ́**   **<u>le</u>**   **wó**   **<u>sí</u>**   **kò**
    cassava   be.abundant   at   PRO.3PL   hand   INT
    'They have a lot of cassava'

119. **enyì**   **<u>sùgbɔ</u>**   **lé**   **miɛ́**   **sí**
    cow   be.numerous   at   PRO.1PL   hand
    'We have a lot of cattle'

120. **enyì**   **<u>sùgbɔ</u>**   **le**   **miɛ́**   **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. *aɖàŋù le ŋkúmè nɛ́*
    adàŋù   **le**   **ŋkú-mè**   **<u>ná</u>**   **<u>-é</u>**
    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**   **<u>lé</u>**   **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/nɔ̀** '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. **elã   lè   kpɔ̀-mè   né   Dŏtsɛ́**
      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 **kpɔ̀-mè** 'room-inside' for instance.

124. **elã   lè   kpɔ̀   álé   mè   né   Dŏtsɛ́**
      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. **exɔ̀   lè   asī-nyè**
      house   be.at   hand-PRO.1SG
      'I have a house'

126. *exɔ̀ leé*
      exɔ̀   lè   é
      house   be.at   PRO.3SG
      'There are rooms available'

127. **tá-gbɔ́   mé   lè   é   né   mì-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 tsɔ́ lànú lá sì*

é	tsɔ́	lànú	lé	asì
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', **xɔ̀** 'receive' **tsɔ́** 'take', **kɔ́** 'lift', occur in the predicate slot. The following examples demonstrate constructions in which each of these verbs occurs.

129.
mè	lé/tsɔ́/kɔ́	vī	lé	asī
PRO.1SG	catch/take/lift	child	at	hand

'I have a child (in hand)'

130.   *mí xɔ̀ vùɔ́ lá sī*

mí	xɔ̀	ʋù-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 **kpɔ́** 'see' occurs in this possessive construction. Possessive constructions in which **kpɔ́** '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 Tɔŋúgbe). Witness the following examples of constructions in which **kpɔ́** 'see' occurs and which expresses possession.

131.
mí	kpɔ́	nyà
PRO.1PL	see	issue

'We have an issue'
' (We are in trouble)'

132.   **ʔmí   kpɔ́   nyà   lé   asī̄**
       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   tsɔ́   vī̄**
        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 **ŋū̄tí** 'skin' occur.

134.   **mè   tsɔ́   agbà   lé   tá**
        PRO.1SG   take   load   at   head
        'I carried a load on my head'

135.   **mè   lé   hɛ-á   lé   ŋū̄tí**
        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   tsɔ́   vī   lé   <u>asī</u>**
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   tsɔ́   agbà   lé   <u>tá</u>**
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 **así** 'hand', which temporarily hosts the possessee is less grammaticalized than the postposition **así** '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, **así** 'hand' in these constructions can be front-focused, while **así** 'space' in constructions in which possessee occurs in subject position cannot. Example (140) illustrates front-focusing of nouns in prepositional phrases in Tɔŋúgbe. Example (141) illustrates front-focusing of **así** 'hand' in a locative possessive construction involving the allative. Finally, example (142) shows the impossibility of front-focusing **así** 'hand' in predicative possessive constructions involving adpositions.

140. a. **mè   ƒlè   agbàle lé   gɛ̃**
PRO.1SG buy   book   at   Accra
'I bought a book at Accra'

b.　**egɛ̃**　　**mè**　　**ƒlè**　　**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.　*avɔ̀ɔ́ vá ká miɛ́ sí*
　　　avɔ̀-á　　　　**vá**　　**ká**　　**miɛ**　　**sí**
　　　cloth-ART.DEF　VENT　reach　PRO.1PL　hand
　　　'We have received the cloth'
　　　' (We have the cloth)'

b.　***asī**　　**avɔ̀-á**　　**vá**　　**ká**　　**miɛ**
　　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 xɔ̀ vùɔ́ lá sī*
　　　mí　　　**xɔ̀**　　**vù-á**　　　　**lé**　　**asī**
　　　PRO.3PL　receive　vehicle-ART.DEF　at　　hand
　　　'We had the vehicle in our possession'　　(=130)

144. *mí xɔ̀ vùɔ́ lá sī nɛ́*

mí	**xɔ̀**	**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/possessees 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', **ŋú** 'skin' **dzí** 'upper.section/top' **gbɔ́** '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 **ŋú** '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 **gbɔ́** '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:

PD lè PR sí
PD lè PR ŋú
PD lè PR dòmè
PD lè PR dzí
PD lè PR gbɔ́
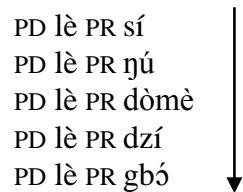
The higher the construction on the scale, the more explicit the possession expressed; the lower the construction, the more dependent possessive meaning is on context/features. Thus, the higher the construction is up the scale, the more difficult it is for the possessive meaning that is expressed to be 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**   **asī-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 **ŋú** '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 vùɔ́ ŋú gàkē mé nyé vùɔ́ táyà yóò*

táyà	**lè**	**vù-á**	**ŋú**	**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**	**ŋū-nyè**	**gàkē**	**mé**	**nyé**
money	be.at	skin-PRO.1SG	but	3SG.NEG	be

nyè	**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 lèɔ́ dòmé gàkē mé nyɔ́ 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 **gbɔ́** 'vicinity' can be negated in all instances. Witness the following examples:

149. **egà   lè   gbɔ̄-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. **edɔ̄   lè   dzī-nyè;   mé   nyé**
work   be.at   top-PRO.1SG   3SG.NEG   be
nyè   dɔ́   yó   hã   káƒé   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 **ŋú** 'skin' and **dòmè** 'mid.section', with a possessee noun conveying body-part feature and kinship/social-interactional features respectively, are also unambiguous possessive constructions. However, constructions involving **dzí** 'upper.section/top' and **gbɔ́** '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 Tɔŋúgbe and has sought to capture the subtle distinctions that characterize the meanings expressed by the constructions.