Foreword

These papers are the result of international cooperative research conducted under the auspices of the Japan Society for the Promotion of Science (JSPS), thanks to its Grant-in-Aid for Scientific Research awarded to "The Functional Approach to the Typology of Slavic Languages: Research in the Semantic Category of Possessivity" (Motoki Nomachi, 2008-09), as well as its Grant-in-Aid for Scientific Research on Innovative Areas awarded to the research project "Regional Powers: Cross-Disciplinary Studies" (group 6: "Culture" headed by Tetsuo Mochizuki).

There is a tendency to consider the notion of possession as something universal and self-evident, but in fact it is a notoriously difficult concept to define. As is well known, a single possessive form may express multiple relations between possessor and possessum. Even within a given language, it is not unusual to find several possessive forms existing contemporaneously, and while in some cases it may be observed that these forms are used in mutually exclusive situations, in other cases their usages overlap. Depending on language type, patterns of indicating possession are also notably diverse. As such, possessive forms have long been important objects of linguistic research. In recent years, research in linguistic typology focusing on possessivity has been particularly fruitful. It has also attracted attention from cognitive linguists who are interested in how possession is conceptualized and categorized in language, and from historical linguists tracking the evolution of language structures that express the notion of possessivity. Furthermore, possessivity is often discussed within the framework of mainsteam linguistic theories e.g. generative grammar and functional grammar; the results of such research are far too numerous to list here. The same may be said for research carried out on individual languages. In the field of Slavic languages, for example, numerous papers and monographs have been published that provide descriptions and analyses of possessivity in particular languages, or typological studies of languages within a contiguous region or of Slavic languages as a whole.

Amid these developments, this collection is an attempt to focus on the semantics and grammatical structures expressing possessivity in South Slavic languages, which exhibit a remarkable plurality of language structures and

compared to East and West Slavic languages, to thereby discuss their points of unity and diversity from synchronic/diachronic perspectives.

The collection is divided into three parts; each deals with a particular morpho-syntactic possessive structure.

Part 1 "Nominal Possession in Synchrony and Diachrony" examines possessive structures at the noun phrase level. Ranko Matasović (Zagreb) takes as his starting point data from Old Church Slavonic and examines the fraught coexistence of possessive adjectives and the genitive case used as a possessive form in Slavic languages, and in the larger context of Indo-European languages. Based on his analysis, he suggests that the former, functioning as expressions of possessivity, may be traced back to a Proto Indo-European Language, but also points out that the latter is not necessarily the more recent grammatical form of the two.

Sofija Miloradović (Belgrade) analyzes the syntactic and semantic aspects of two types of substitutions occurring in Serbian dialects—the use of preposition *od* plus oblique case (*casus generalis*) instead of standard Serbian possessive adjectives or genitive case, and the use of possessive dative case instead of genitive case—in the context of "analytism," considered to be a form of linguistic Balkanism. Traditionally, dialectological research on Slavic languages has tended to overlook syntactic structures, but this study fills that gap admirably with analyses of synchronic fieldwork data. It also represents a significant contribution to the field of Balkan linguistics, where Serbian dialects have been less frequently analyzed as compared to other main Balkan languages and their dialects.

Part 2 "Predicative Possession and Its Structural Changes" features diachronic and synchronic analyses of possessive expressions at the sentence level. Using a wide range of data from Old Church Slavonic, Old Serbian, Old Russian and Old Czech to modern Slavic languages, Jasmina Grković-Major (Novi Sad) analyzes the canonical structures of predicative possession, drawing special attention to the gradual disappearance of *mihi est*-type possessive sentences inherited from the Proto Indo-European Language, and to the contemporaneous rise of alternative, hitherto peripheral constructions (U + genitive case in East Slavic and *have*-verb in the rest of the Slavic languages) to mainstream usage. Her paper argues convincingly that these phenomena are brought about by both intralingual changes and changes arising from language contact.

Motoki Nomachi (Sapporo) analyzes, as a grammatical structure derived from a possessive construction, an as-yet-unstudied type of passive construction formed by the auxiliation of the possessive verb *dobiti* (to get) in Slovenian. According to his paper, this construction does not originally exist in Slavic but is instead a product of language contact; he suggests that it is possibly a grammatical replication of the *bekommen* passive in German. He proceeds to discuss the degree to which this construction has become grammaticalized from both grammatical and semantic perspectives in comparison with other Slavic languages that have the same or similar constructions in their verbal systems.

Part 3 "External Possession: Its Unity and Diversity" offers descriptions and analyses of possessivity within a language, or comparative analyses across multiple languages. According to Doris Pane and Immanuel Barshi, external possession refers to "constructions in which a semantic possessor-possessum relation is expressed by coding the possessor as a core grammatical relation of the verb and in a constituent separate from that which contains the possessum."[1] Applying this concept to the analysis of Macedonian possessive constructions, Liljana Mitkovska (Skopje) investigates, within a primarily cognitive linguistic context, the semantic/syntactic competition between nominal possessive constructions that employ the preposition *na* or its pronominal equivalent on the one hand (internal possession) and the possessive dative case on the other (external possession). Using a range of stylistically diverse texts, she proves that the former is used far more broadly than the latter, and that the latter is mainly used in paradigmatic instances of possession.

Frančiška Lipovšek (Ljubljana) compares the syntax and semantics of Slovenian dative and locative constructions relating to external possessors. Based on an analysis of numerous example sentences she concludes, contrary to prior research, that the two are not merely syntactic synonyms, nor are they similar in meaning. Specifically, the use of the dative construction implies a change of state, whereas the use of the locative construction indicates only superficial contact.

Looking at sentences without possessive verbs in Macedonian and Polish, Sonja Milenkovska (Skopje) contrasts nouns indicating parts of

1 Doris L. Pane and Immanuel Barshi, "External Possession: What, Where, How and Why," in Doris L. Pane and Immanuel Barshi, eds., *External Possession* (Amsterdam: John Benjamins Publishing Company, 1999).

the body and the grammatical realizations of their owners, and identifies various features shared by these two typologically distant Slavic languages. For example, she discusses the trend in the possessum's case marking when the possessor is realized in the noun phrase, or the range of usages of the reflexive dative noun, or the different patterns in case marking when the possessor has control over the possessum, and so on. This paper is an extremely interesting contribution to typological studies of Slavic languages.

Some of the papers published in this collection bear the results of several discussions conducted in different forms and forums. For instance, Nomachi first presented his paper at the 17th Balkan & South Slavic Conference held in April 2010 at Ohio State University, and has since revised it after exchanging ideas with other researchers. Similarly, Mitkovska, Lipovšek, and Miloradović base their papers on a panel session titled "The Grammar of Possessivity: From Areal to Typological Approaches" held during the ICCEES VIII World Congress at Stockholm in 2010, but they too have revised their work after numerous discussions with participants and commentators. On this matter, I would like to extend my deepest gratitude to Andrej Soboljev (Marburg/Saint Petersburg), a commentator at the Stockholm Congress, for his helpful and constructive criticism, to Irina Sedakova (Moscow), who gave many instructive comments at both Stockholm and the Ohio conference, and to Zuzanna Topolińska (Skopje) for her invaluable advice via a number of personal communications with the editor

In addition, all submissions have been appraised by two anonymous peer reviewers and as a result are much more polished than when first received. Hereby I would like to express my sincere gratitude to our peer reviewers.

Last but not least, I would like to mention Sim Yee Chiang (Tokyo) and Matthew Curtis (Ohio) for their assistance with this publication as native English speakers, as well as Mika Ōsuga, who so kindly endured the endless amendments and checking complicated proofs filled with special fonts. I wish to thank them for their hard work.

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Editor
September 2011