

Remarks on Agreements in Kiswahili Possessive NPs*

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Amidu, Assibi A. (2015). Remarks on Agreements in Kiswahili Possessive NPs. *The Linguistic Association of Korea Journal* 23(4), 1-25. Kiswahili has preposition roots (P-roots), such as {a} 'of', {enye} 'having' and {enye na} 'having with' which, *inter alia*, construct possessives. (a) *M-toto w-a mw-alimu* 'Cl. 1-child Cl. 1-of Cl. 1-teacher, i.e. teacher's child' is a possessive. It has *mtoto* as the possessed NP. Its agreement marker {w} is prefixed on the following preposition (P) *wa* 'of', whose P-root is {a}. P *wa* 'of' is followed by a complement *mw-alimu* 'teacher', the possessor. (b) *M-toto w-a-ke mw-alimu* 'Cl. 1-child of-him/his Cl. 1-teacher, i.e. teacher's child' is called the full pronominal possessive because its P *wake* 'his' has the 3rd person singular possessor pronoun agreement marker {ke}. Thus, to signal the possessive, a noun agrees with a nominal P that takes an object N, \pm agreement in P. We divide possessive NPs into minimal and maximal types. We point out that whereas the minimal type does not take possessor pronoun agreement, the maximal type can do so. We highlight the relationship of the agreements between prepositions and their Ns in possessive NPs, and reveal that the possessive is not an adjective in Kiswahili.

Key Words: possessive, preposition, predicate, agreement, pronoun

1. Introduction

Kiswahili belongs to zone G40 in the Bantu family of languages. Like all

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Bantu languages, it is an agglutinating noun class language. This means that each noun has a class prefix, and its modifying elements, which include verbs, agree with it. Agreement is signalled in the modifier by prefixing its stem with an allomorph of the class prefix, e.g. *m-ti u-le m-refu u-li-anguk-a* 'Cl. 3-tree Cl. 3-that Cl. 3-tall Cl. 3 SM-PAST-fall-MOD, i.e. that tall tree fell.' In our example, the demonstrative *ule* 'that', the adjective *mrefu* 'tall', and the predicate constituent (PC) or verb (V) *ulianguka* 'lit. it fell' agree with the head N *mti* 'tree' in class, person, number and gender. Our datum reveals that minimally two morphemes, namely a prefix and a root or stem, agglutinate to form a word.

2. Definition of some terms

Matthews (2007, pp. 310-311) defines the 'possessive' as follows:

possessive (poss) (Case, preposition, etc.) whose basic use, or one of whose basic uses, is to indicate the relation between someone who possesses something and the thing that they possess. E.g. *'s* marks the **possessive construction** in *Mary's coat*; *my* is a possessive pronoun in *my coat*; *Mary's* and *mine* are likewise independent possessives in *That coat is Mary's*, or *That coat is mine*.

Cf. genitive. Where the terms are distinguished it is usually in one of two ways. In the first, 'genitive' is used of a case etc. marking in general a noun which modifies another noun. 'Possessive' is then used when the semantic relation is specifically one of possession.

Alternatively, 'genitive' may be used specifically of constructions etc. where the '**possessor**' (*Mary's* etc.) is marked, while, in 'possessive' constructions in other languages, the '**possessed**' element (in Latin, *possessum*) is often marked instead.

On page 157 of his dictionary, Matthews (2007) defines the 'genitive' as follows:

genitive (GEN) *Case whose basic role is to mark nouns or noun phrases which are dependents of another noun. Thus, in German, *Vaters*

'father-GEN' in *Vaters Buch* 'father's book'; or *meines* and *Vaters* ('my-GEN', 'father-GEN') in *das Buch meines Vaters* 'my father's book'. Thence of similar constructions marked by other elements. Thus the construction marked by the *clitic *-s* in English (*Daddy's book* or *the man next door's book*) is also described as genitive; and, in older grammars, the construction with *of* (*the top of the page*).

A possessive pronoun, unlike other types of pronoun, is quite simply a variant or sub-type of the personal pronoun (see Crystal, 2003, pp. 361, 376, on pronoun).

3. The nominal preposition root 'A' of relationship in possessives

The P-root {a} of relationship 'of' is the one commonly used to construct possessive constructions in Kiswahili that translate as genitive constructions in Indo-European languages. On the P-root {a}, Sacleux (1909, p. 76) writes as follows:

Le *de* français (*de, du, de la, des*) entre deux substantifs a pour correspondant *-a*, qui se complete pour l'accord par l'addition du préfixe pronominal imposé par l'accord du premier nom.

Our translation is as follows: 'The French 'of' (*de, du, de la, des*) between two nouns has a corresponding *-a*, which is completed through agreement by the addition of the pronominal prefix imposed by the agreement marker of the first noun.' Note how Sacleux (1909) concludes that a noun generates a pronominal prefix into the P-root {a}. Sacleux (1909, p. 115, 1939, pp. 35-37) also refers to P-root {a} as a preposition. Ashton (1947, p. 54) writes about the P-root {a} as a pronominal root.

PRONOMINAL ROOTS

The following roots and stems are brought into concordial relationship with the Noun to which they refer by the Pronominal Concord (P.C.):

(i) Possessive (including the -A of relationship)	-angu , etc.	my, mine, etc. [...]
(vi)-enye	-enye	having, possessing
	-enyewe	itself.

Note how Ashton (1947), too, states that her "roots and stems are brought into concordial relationship with the Noun to which they refer by the Pronominal Concord (P.C)." Sacleux (1909, pp. 115-116) writes about "*Pronoms substantifs au cas génitif. (possessif.)*", i.e. 'the nominal pronouns in the genitive case (possessive)', as follows:

I. Composition, function. — Le génitif (de moi) du pronom substantif est obtenu par préfixation de la préposition variable *-a* «de» aux suffixes de deuxième série, *-ngu*, *-ko*, *-ke*, *-itu*, *-inu*, *-ao* [...] Au pluriel il y a contraction de la voyelle *a* de la préposition, en *e* avec l'*i* initial des deux premières personnes, en *a* avec l'*a* initial de la troisième: [...]

de moi	<i>-angu</i> "	de nous	<i>-etu</i> [...]
de toi	<i>-ako</i>	de vous	<i>-enu</i> [...]
de lui ou elle	<i>-ake</i> [...]	d'eux, d'elles	<i>-ao</i> [...]

L'accord se fait, comme pour la préposition *-a* [...], par l'addition du préfixe pronominal [...] conforme à la classe du possesseur. En d'autres termes, le cas génitif est formé par l'insertion devant une forme du pronom substantif de la préposition *-a* munie du préfixe qui lui convient.

The text translates as follows: 'I. Composition, function. — The genitive (of me) of the nominal pronoun is obtained by the prefixation of the variable preposition *-a* 'of' with the suffixes of the second series of agreement, *-ngu*, *-ko*, *-ke*, *-itu*, *-inu*, *-ao* [...] In the plural, there is contraction of the vowel *a* of the preposition, one is *e* in contact with the initial *i* of the first two (plural) persons, and one is *a* in contact with the initial *a* of the third person (plural) [...]

de moi 'of me'	- <i>āngu</i> "	de nous 'of us'	- <i>etu</i> [...]
de toi 'of you'	- <i>ako</i>	de vous 'of you'	- <i>enu</i> [...]
de lui ou elle 'of him or her'	- <i>ake</i> [...]	d'eux, d'elles 'of them'	- <i>ao</i> [...]

The agreement is formed as for the preposition *-a* [...], by the addition of the pronominal prefix [...] in keeping with the class of the possessor. In other words, the genitive case is formed by the insertion before a form of the substantive/nominal pronoun of the preposition *-a* armed with the prefix that is appropriate to it.'

Ashton (1947, p. 55) writes about the possessive in Kiswahili as follows:

(I) Possessive

The -A of Relationship expresses possessive relationship between its noun antecedent and:

(a) *Another noun.* **-a Hamisi** Hamisi's; **-a wapagazi** porters'.

Kiti cha Hamisi Hamisi's chair. (Chair it-of Hamisi.)

Mizigo ya wapagazi The porters' loads. (Loads they-of porters.)

(b) *A pronominal root or stem.*

-a-ngu of me, my, mine **-etu** of us, our, ours

-a-ko of you, your, yours **-enu** of you, your, yours

-a-ke of him, his-**a-o** of them, their, theirs

Viti **vyangu**. My chairs. (Chairs they-of me.)

Mguu **wake**. His leg. (Leg it-of him.)

(c) *An interrogative.* **-a nani?** of whom, whose?

Kiti **cha** nani? Whose chair? (Chair it-of whom?)

Viti **vya** nani? Whose chairs (Chairs they-of whom?)

These roots and stems may also be used without a preceding noun.

Lete kitabu changu. Bring my book.

Kimepotea. Nilete **changu?** It's lost. Shall I bring mine?

In a footnote on the same page, Ashton (1947) indicates that her pronominal roots or stems *-etu* 'of us, our, ours' and *-enu* 'of you, your, yours' are derived from a rule "< **-a-itu, a-inu**", exactly in the manner suggested by Sacleux (1909).

Polomé (1967, pp. 94-95) divides Kiswahili agreement markers or prefixes

into three types: a) nominal, b) pronominal, and c) verbal, in line with the descriptions of early grammarians. Polomé (1967), too, speaks of a) "possessive pronominal forms" (p. 107), b) "the possessive stems are used as suffixes with a few nouns [...]" (p. 107), c) "the pronominal concord agrees with the preceding noun" (p. 133), and d) "The connective particle {a}" has "a following nominal complement, [...]" (p. 133).

4. The Minimal and Maximal Possessive NPs of Kiswahili

Kiswahili has three endocentric nominal prepositions or predicates, namely the 'A' of relationship or P-root {a} 'of', the relational P-root {enye} 'having, with' and the double or compound P-root {enye na} 'having having, having with, with with.' The P-roots occur in NP frameworks that are used to form possessive and non-possessive constructions. As Matthews (2007) has noted above, constructions like these are possessives only when they imply possession. Firstly, based on the P-roots above, we propose a revision to the classification of possessive NPs. Namely, in terms of agreement marking, Kiswahili has a) a minimal possessive type, and b) a maximal possessive type. Secondly, we suggest that the P-roots in (1)-(13) below take nominal or pronominal agreement markers according to whether the agreement generator is a noun or pronoun. (1)-(3) are examples of the minimal possessive NP:¹⁾

1) An endocentric preposition or nominal predicate (P-n) or nominal copula (COP-n) is one that takes the overt or covert agreement marker of its external or internal syntactic N, or both. An exocentric preposition or adverbial predicate (P-a) or adverbial copula (COP-a) is one that lacks any overt or potential agreement with any external or internal constituent, or both (see Amidu, 2014, for definitions and details). In the glosses, we normally write COP-n or COP-a for the P-roots, according to type, even though P-n or P-a could do just as well. The advantage of COP-n, for example, is that it allows us to specify, on the analogy of verbal forms, whether the P item has an external N subject agreement marker (SM) or not, and whether or not it has an internal N object or complement agreement marker (OM). Thus, when the P-root {a}, or {enye}, or {enye na} has only an external agreement marker or concord, it will be glossed as 'SM-COP-n of', or 'SM-COP-n having', or 'SM-COP-n having with/having.' The P items {a} 'of' and {na} 'with, having' can, optionally, take internal object agreement markers (OMs). The OM each takes will also be glossed: e.g. 'Cl. 1 SM-COP-n of-PossProCl. 1/1 OM' or 'Cl. 1 SM-COP-n having Cl. 1 SM \emptyset -COP-n with-ProCl.

- | | | |
|---|-----------------------|-------------------------------|
| (1) <i>M-pishi</i> | <i>w-a</i> | <i>m-kulima.</i> |
| Cl. 1-cook | Cl. 1 SM-COP-n of | Cl. 1-farmer |
| 'The/a farmer's cook, lit. cook of farmer.' | | |
| (2) <i>M-pishi</i> | <i>mw-enye</i> | <i>n-gamia.</i> |
| Cl. 1-cook | Cl. 1 SM-COP-n having | Cl. 9/1-camel |
| 'The/a cook having/with a camel, i.e. cook possessing a camel.' | | |
| (3) <i>M-pishi</i> | <i>mw-enye</i> | <i>na</i> |
| Cl. 1-cook | Cl. 1 SM-COP-n having | Cl. 1 \emptyset -COP-n with |
| <i>n-gamia.</i> | | |
| Cl. 9/1-camel | | |
| 'The/a cook having/with a camel, i.e. cook possessing a camel.' | | |

The syntax of the minimal possessive NP is of the form [NP1, PP'[P, NP2]], where P is the nucleus of the possessive phrase, and has the internal morpho-syntax agr_{i-P} . (1) has an NP *mpishi* 'cook' as the external N of the nominal preposition or predicate (P-n/COP-n) or P *wa* 'of.' The P-n/COP-n or P *wa* 'of' is followed by an internal object or complement NP *mkulima* 'farmer' that completes its syntax. The NP so formed is called a possessive construction because it implies possession. In (1), the external N *mpishi* 'cook' of the P-n/COP-n or P *wa* 'of' is the possessed entity and the internal N *mkulima* 'farmer' of the same P-n/COP-n or P is the possessor entity. (2)-(3) have the same structure as (1) except that the P-n/COP-n or P of (2) is *mwenye* 'having, with' and the P-n/COP-n or P of (3) is *mwenye na* 'having with.' In addition, the possession relationship is the inverse of that in (1). That is to say, the external N *mpishi* 'cook' in (2)-(3) is the possessor entity of its P-n/COP-n or P and the internal N *ngamia* 'camel' of the same P-n/COP-n or P is the possessed entity. (3) is a variant of (2) in which the P-n/COP-n or P is a double or compound

1/1 OM/Cl. 1 OM', etc. PossProCl. = possessor pronoun class in class 1 or 2, ProCl. = pronoun class in class 1 or 2, and Cl. = class in the noun class system. Personal and possessive pronoun agreements are specified for noun class, person, and number in two ways: a) 1/1, 1/2 or 1/3, where each stands for class 1 MU1 gender and 1st, or 2nd, or 3rd person singular; b) 2/1, 2/2, or 2/3, where each stands for class 2 WA gender and 1st, or 2nd, or 3rd person plural. A P-n/COP-n can take an object that is not a noun, e.g. a verb, hence no OM is assigned to P, as in *-a kutisha* 'of to frighten'. A P-a/COP-a can take an object that is a noun, such as *mijini* 'in town, town', e.g. *mpaka mijini* 'up to town.'

predicate. It consists of the P-n/COP-n root or P-root {enye} followed by another P-n/COP-n root or P-root {na} 'with', hence a P1 + P2 sequence. Observe also that all the nominal Ps agree with their external Ns overtly or implicitly. Thus *wa* 'of' in (1) has the class 1 agreement marker {yu} + P-root {a}. Sound harmony rules produce {yu} + {a} → {*ywa} → *wa* 'of', or simply {yu} → {u} → {w} / {a}. (2) has the class 1 agreement marker {mu} + P-root {enye}. Sound harmony rules produce {mu} + {enye} → *mwenye* 'having, with.' (3) has the class 1 agreement marker {mu} + compound P-root {enye na}. Sound harmony rules produce {mu} + {enye na} → *mwenye na* 'having, lit. having with.' Note that the agreement {mu} is realized as zero in P2 *na* 'with' of the compound.

From (1)-(3), we can state that an endocentric P is transitive.²⁾ It takes the agreement marker of its external N. It also has an obligatory complement or object, which is a noun in (1)-(3). Subject to collocation of meaning in the NP, the external or internal constituent of the P item could be an independent interrogative pronoun, such as *nani?* 'who?', *nini?* 'what?', *wapi?* 'where?', *lini?* 'when?', etc., or, for complement of P, an infinitive verb, e.g. *kutisha* 'to frighten' (see Amidu, 2006, pp. 4-18, pp. 45-65, on types of pronoun). The P-root {enye} does not take an internal agreement of its object/complement. The P-roots {a} and {enye na} could take internal agreements of their objects or complements that are NPs. This implies that without its external NP, the possessive nominal type is a nominal prepositional or predicate phrase (P-nP), which is called a PP in other studies. Recall from footnote 1 that Kiswahili has exocentric adverbial prepositional or predicate phrases (P-aP), e.g. *mpaka dukani* 'Cl. 0 COP-a up to shop-Cl. 17/26 (traditionally classes 16-18), i.e. up to the shop.'

If the P-root is {a}, the external agreement will be generated by a possessed NP. The minimal possessive pattern of P-root {a}, therefore, lacks an internal possessor NP agreement. (1) illustrates the minimal type. (2), with its P-root {enye}, counts as a minimal possessive type. Its P agrees with an external NP, which is a possessor NP. However, the internal possessed NP cannot generate an agreement into its P-root {enye}. (3) has minimal and maximal agreement patterns, like P-root {a}. (3) contains the minimal agreement pattern of P-root {enye na}. It agrees with its external possessor NP, but lacks an internal

2) Kiswahili has no intransitive Ps such as one finds in English *I have seen him before* (see Crystal, 2003, p. 368, Matthews, 2007, pp. 315-316, Amidu, 2014, pp. 33-34).

possessed NP agreement marker.

(4)-(11) illustrate the maximal possessive type based on the P-root {a}.

- (4) *M-pishi* *w-a-ngu*
 Cl. 1-cook Cl. 1 SM-COP-n of-PossProCl. 1/1 OM
mimi.
 ProCl. 1/1-me
 'My cook, lit. cook she-of-me me.'
- (5) *M-pishi* *w-a-ko*
 Cl. 1-cook Cl. 1-SM-COP-n of-PossProCl. 1/2 OM
wewe.
 ProCl. 1/2-you
 'Your cook, lit. cook she-of-you you (sg).'
- (6) *M-pishi_i* *w_i-a-ke_j*
 Cl. 1-cook Cl. 1 SM-COP-n of-PossProCl. 1/3 OM
yeye_j.
 ProCl. 1/3-him
 'His cook, lit. cook_i she_i-of-him_j him_j.'
- (7) *M-pishi_i* *w_i-a-ke_j* *t_j*
 Cl. 1-cook Cl. 1 SM-COP-n of-PossProCl. 1/3 OM
m-kulima_k.
 Cl. 1-farmer
 'The/a farmer's cook, lit. cook_i she_i-of-him_j *t_j* farmer_k.'
- (8) *M-pishi* *w-e-tu*
 Cl. 1-cook Cl. 1 SM-COP-n of-PossProCl. 2/1 OM
sisi.
 ProCl. 2/1-us
 'Our cook, lit. cook she-of-us us.'
- (9) *M-pishi* *w-e-nu*
 Cl. 1-cook Cl. 1 SM-COP-n of-PossProCl. 2/2 OM
nyinyi.
 ProCl. 2/2-you
 'Your cook, lit. cook she-of-you you (pl).'

- (10) *M-pishi_i* *w_i-a-o_j*
 Cl. 1-cook Cl. 1 SM-COP-n of-PossProCl. 2/3 OM
wao_j.
 ProCl. 2/3-them
 'Their cook, lit. cook_i she_i-of-them_j them_j.'
- (11) *M-pishi_i* *w_i-a-o_j* *t_j*
 Cl. 1-cook Cl. 1 SM-COP-n of-PossProCl. 2/3 OM
wa-kulima_k.
 Cl. 2-farmer
 '(The) farmers' cook, lit. cook_i she_i-of-them_j *t_j* farmers_k.'

(4)-(11) have the same syntactic structure as (1)-(3), hence [NP1, PP'[P, NP2]]. The maximal P is the nucleus of the phrase, and has the internal morpho-syntax agr_i-P-agr_j. For example, (6) has an NP *mpishi* 'cook' as the external N of the P-n/COP-n or P *wake* 'of, lit. she-of-him.' The P-n/COP-n or P *wake* is followed by an internal object or complement NP *yeye* 'him', which is the 3rd person singular pronoun, which assigns its OM {ke} to its P *wake* 'lit. she-of-him.' The external N *mpishi* 'cook' of the P-n/COP-n or P *wake* is the possessed entity, and the internal N *yeye* 'him' of the same P-n/COP-n or P is the possessor entity. The NP so formed is called a possessive construction in the genitive case (see Sacleux, 1909, 1939) or the possessive construction in the pronominal possessive form (see Ashton, 1947, Polomé, 1967, Contini-Morava, 2008). (7) is like (6), except that the P-n/COP-n or P *wake* 'of, lit. she-of-him' is followed by an internal NP *mkulima* 'farmer', a noun, which appears to function as the possessor NP. In fact, contrary to traditionalists, although it functions in lieu of the 3rd person singular pronoun *yeye* 'him, his' in (6), it does not generate the agreement marker {ke} in the P-n/COP-n or P because it is not a pronoun. We assign the noun *mkulima* an index *k*, rather than *j*, even though it is an appositional N of the personal pronoun.³⁾ In this way, it cannot, accidentally,

3) Independent interrogative pronouns, such as *nani?* 'who?', *nini?* 'what?', and so on, behave like nouns rather than personal pronouns, because, a) subject to collocational restrictions, they can function in apposition to the latter, e.g. *yeye nani?* 'he, who?' and b) they do not generate personal pronoun agreement markers into predicates (see Amidu, 2006, pp. 4-18, pp. 45-65).

generate a pronoun agreement marker at U- and S-structure levels. If our claim is correct, then the personal pronoun and its appositional noun will co-occur in the same NP framework.

- (12) *M-pishi_i* *w_i-a-ke_j*
 Cl. 1-cook Cl. 1 SM-COP-n of-PossProCl. 1/3 OM
yeye_j *m-kulima_k*
 ProCl. 1/3 Cl. 1-farmer
 'He, the farmer's cook, lit. cook_i she_i-of-him_j him_j farmer_k.'

Thus, in (12), the internal N of P *wake* is an appositional phrase *yeye mkulima* 'him, farmer', which is the possessor entity. The pronoun *yeye* 'he/him, she/her' heads the noun *mkulima* 'farmer' when it is present at S-structure. When the pronoun is omitted, after generating {ke}, the noun appears to function in its place. However, as a noun, it cannot generate the agreement {ke}. In view of this, the trace *t_i* of the pronoun is inserted in (7) to indicate that the appositive N does not generate the pronoun's marker {ke}. In addition, the noun *mkulima* has an index *k*, rather than *j*, as explained above. (10)-(11) are like (6)-(7), except that the P-n/COP-n or P is *wao* 'of, lit. she-of-them', and its object is the 3rd person plural pronoun *wao* 'they, them' in (10), or a plural denoting apposition noun, e.g. *wakulima* 'farmers' in (11), that functions in lieu of its personal pronoun, i.e. *wao* 'them' in (10) (Amidu, 2006, p. 68).

When the P-root is {a}, the external agreement is generated by a possessed NP. Next, an overt or underlying personal pronoun generates the internal agreement of P-root {a}. The personal pronoun that generates the internal agreement is the possessor NP. Recall that an appositional N_k , which is a noun (or an independent interrogative pronoun), may function in lieu of a possessor pronoun, as in (7), or co-occur with it, as in (12) (see Amidu, 2006, pp. 64-79). We indicated above that the position of the pronoun head that does not percolate to S-structure from its U-structure is filled by an indexed trace *t_j*. Thus, although NPs in apposition ought to have a common index, in Kiswahili possessives, a common index also implies a common potential ability to generate the same agreement marker, something the apposition noun cannot do in (4-12) (see § 4.1). The maximal agreement pattern of P-root {enye na} consists of agreement

markers of its external possessor NP and internal possessed NP, as in (13).

- (13) a. *M-pishi* *mw-enye*
 Cl. 1-cook Cl. 1 SM-COP-n having
na-ye *n-gamia*.
 Cl. 1 \emptyset -COP-n with-Cl. 1 OM Cl. 9/1-camel
 'The/a cook having/with a camel, lit. cook she-having with-it camel.'
- b. *M-pishi* *mw-enye*
 Cl. 1-cook Cl. 1 SM-COP-n having
na-ye *yeye*.
 Cl. 1 \emptyset -COP-n with-ProCl. 1/3 OM ProCl. 1/3-it
 'The/a cook having it/with it, lit. cook she-having with-it it.'

Observe, crucially, that the internal N of the P-n/COP-n or P is a noun *ngamia* 'camel' or a pronoun *yeye* 'it.' However, both generate the same form of the agreement marker {ye}. P-root {enye na} can take an appositional internal NP, e.g. *yeye ngamia* 'it, camel' (see also footnote 3, above). In discourse, the presence of an OM in any predicate, whether P or V, allows a (native) speaker to omit its internal NP.

4.1. Why we need a new approach to traditional descriptions of the possessive

The analysis of the possessive pattern based on the adnominal 'A' of relationship in traditional grammar has been done, to this day, with little change in the manner of description (see Contini-Morava, 2008, pp. 129-133, pp. 138-140). The major shortcoming of traditional grammatical descriptions of the possessive is the extent of inconsistency and/or mismatch in the descriptions of the pattern. Firstly, for example, TUKI (2004, p. 12) and Contini-Morava (2008, p. 131) describe the possessive as an adjective guided solely by the translation equivalent in an Indo-European language. In English, *mpishi; wa mkulima*_i = 'the farmer's cook' (1). *Mpishi; wake yeye*_i = 'his cook' (6). (13) has *mpishi; mwenye naye ngamia*_i = 'the cook's camel, lit. cook having camel.' (6) and (13) can drop their

overt objects to become *mpishi_i wake t_j* ‘his cook’ and *mpishi_i mwenye naye t_j* ‘its cook, lit. cook having it.’ However, the latter is never described as having a possessive adjective *mwenye naye* ‘its, lit. she-having with-it’ in the grammar. Thus the adjective description ignores the internal structure of Kiswahili in favour of the syntax of the Indo-European translation, where a possessive pronoun, like *his* in English, functions as an attributive adjective of its head noun *cook*. The ‘adjective’ description is weak for a number of reasons. First of all, adjectives are open class elements, while prepositions are closed class elements (Crystal, 2003, p. 77, pp. 326-327). In the adjective description, however, the maximal closed P items *wake* ‘his’ and *mwenye naye* ‘its, lit she-having with-it’, that have implicit complements signalled by their OMs {ke} and {ye}, would qualify to be adjectives. These P adjectives blur the distinction between closed and open class systems in linguistics. Second of all, the minimal closed P items *wa* ‘she-of’ and *mwenye na* ‘she-having with’ would, paradoxically, not be adjectives, although they modify external Ns, simply because they opt not to take the OMs {ke} and {ye} of their internal Ns, and are, therefore, intransitive Ps. Third of all, adjectives that pre-modify and post-modify two N heads simultaneously have not yet been attested in languages of the world. However, if the maximal possessive P-n/COP-n or P item in Kiswahili is accepted as an adjective, it would modify an implicit or explicit internal object NP_j via its OM as well as an implicit or explicit external subject NP_i via its SM (see (4)-(13) above). This would be a syntactic first for an adjective in linguistics. Once more, the minimal P elements *wa* ‘she-of’ and *mwenye na* ‘she-having with’ would not qualify as adjectives simply because they lack post-modifier OMs, e.g. {ke} and {ye} respectively, to licence them as P adjectives. In our view, the maximal possessive P or its P-nP/PP is not an attributive adjective. This is because, in linguistic theory, attributive adjectives in NP syntax do not simultaneously pre-modify NP_i and post-modify NP_j via agreement.

Secondly, all Kiswahili scholars forget that the possessive construction with P-root {a} is, for example, each of the NPs in (1), (6), (7) and (11). In spite of this, grammarians, like Sacleux (1909, p. 76), do not refer to a datum, such as (1), as a possessive type or its modifying P-nP/PP as an adjective. Ashton (1947), Polomé (1967), and Contini-Morava (2008) put NPs such as (1) under the possessive heading. However, when they relate the two variants, the first two

grammarians call NPs such as (6), (7) and (12) by the name "pronominal possessive form", while a type like (1), which they say has a 'pronominal concord', is not called a pronominal possessive form. The third grammarian, Contini-Morava (2008, pp. 138-140), has no name for the type, and calls it vacuously "the connective particle" on her page 139. Indeed, Ashton (1947, p. 55) illustrates these paradoxes clearly when she writes that,

The -A of Relationship expresses possessive relationship between its noun antecedent and:

- (a) *Another noun.* **-a Hamisi** Hamisi's; **-a wapagazi** porters'.
Kiti cha Hamisi Hamisi's chair. (Chair it-of Hamisi.)

Next, Ashton (1947, p. 56) writes that,

Sometimes the full pronominal possessive form is used as an alternative to P.C. + -A, when referring to persons.

<p>Mtoto wake Hamisi. Mtoto wa Hamisi.</p>	}	Hamisi's child.
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Note how *mtoto wake Hamisi* 'Hamisi's child', which is like (7), is called "the full pronominal possessive form." However, possessive NPs *kiti cha Hamisi* 'Hamisi's chair' and *mtoto wa Hamisi* 'Hamisi's child', which are like (1), are not called pronominal possessive types at all. They are rather called the "P.C. + -A" type, even though her P.C., ironically, means "pronominal concord." Contini-Morava (2008, pp. 138-139) describes data, which are like (6)-(12), as "NP + Pronominal Possessive + NP", but describes data of the type (1) as "NP + "connective particle" -a 'of' + NP." Contini-Morava (2008, p. 139) follows Ashton (1947), and does not call her "NP + "connective particle" -a 'of' + NP" a pronominal possessive. She rather states that "Both the pronominal possessive and the connective particle must be prefixed by a Deictic Marker signaling

properties of the possessed noun." Surely, since nouns are not deictic elements, they could not possibly generate deictic markers at all (see Amidu, 2006). Polomé (1967, p. 132) refers to examples such as (1) as "possession" and reserves the term 'possessive pronominal forms' for NPs that have an internal personal pronoun agreement, such as {ngu} 'my, mine', {ke} 'his, her/s, its', and so on.

Schadeberg (1992, p. 19) says, "There are two possessive constructions: a nominal and a pronominal one. Both are built on the possessive Cd-a [...] The PCd of cl. 1 is **wa** < ***yu-a**." In his study, Cd = 'concord' and PCd = 'possessive concord.' Schadeberg (1992, pp. 19-20) goes on to state that,

The *nominal possessive* indicates possession or any other relation between two nouns. The structural formula of the possessive construction is: *nomen regens Cd-a nomen rectum*, where Cd agrees in class with the *nomen regens*. [...] The *pronominal possessive* indicates possession. The possessive concord (Cd-a) is followed by a pronominal stem of which special forms exist for participants and for cl. 1.

We saw above that Sacleux (1909), Ashton (1947), Polomé (1967), Contini-Morava (2008) all assert that pronominal or deictic agreement markers agree with nouns. Schadeberg's (1992) description is not an exception, even though it distinguishes between "nominal possessive" and "pronominal possessive." All the studies above have a fundamental flaw. Using Schadeberg (1992) to illustrate our point, it does not occur to him, or any Kiswahili grammarian, e.g. Contini-Morava (2008), that, if the dichotomy 'nominal' or 'substantive' versus 'pronominal' or 'pronoun' is valid, then it is not possible for a nominal object/complement or *nomen rectum*, i.e. a common or proper noun, e.g. *mkulima* 'farmer' or *Mariamamu* 'Mariamu', to generate a pronominal agreement marker into any P-root. For example, the P-root {a} or Cd-a cannot take an internal pronominal agreement marker if the N head is a noun. This is because it obligatorily takes only OMs that possessor personal pronouns assign to it. Matthews (2007, p. 323) says 'pronominal' means "Of or belonging to the class of *pronouns (Latin *pronomina*)." He points out that "Both 'pronoun' and the feature [+pronominal] were defined in *Government and Binding Theory as *noun phrases, [...]" Matthews (2007, p. 264) defines 'nominal' as "Of or involving

nouns (Latin *nomina*)." He adds that "*he* and *the party*, seen as noun phrases, are nominal constituents of *He loved the party*." Thus, (7) and (11) are as grammatical as (6) and (10), but their nominal constituents differ in terms of form class. Traditional grammarians, unfortunately, blur form class distinctions with nominal constituents.

Thirdly, a core weakness of the descriptions above is that they refer only to the NP dominated PP, e.g. *-angu mwalimu* 'lit. of-me teacher', with its internal pronoun agreement marker, e.g. *-a-n-gu* 'of me, my, mine', or just *-ngu* 'my, mine', as the pronominal possessive form or stem. Paradoxically, however, the whole NP is the possessive construction, and a possessive NP cannot be partially pronominal, as they suggest. The result of their method is that, the term 'pronominal possessive form or stem' ignores the agreement marker of the external possessed NP in data such as (1)-(12), which they also say is pronominal. Although Schadeberg (1992) and Amidu (2006) refer to the agreement marker assigned by the external N as a nominal class agreement, their solution is misleading because it assumes that only nouns function as external Ns of possessive NPs, whereas this is not so in the grammar (see below).

Amidu (2006, pp. 4-18) argues that where the head of a modifying item is not a pronoun, in the strict sense of the word, the agreement marker ought not to be called a pronominal agreement marker. Unfortunately, he does not always follow his own suggestion (see Amidu, 2006, p. 39, pp. 45-46, for details). In our view, a noun is not a pronoun. As a result, its agreement marker, in any predicate or modifier, is not a pronominal marker simply on the strength of a pronoun used to gloss it in an Indo-European language. Given the fact that Kiswahili distinguishes between noun and pronoun agreement markers, explicitly and implicitly, noun agreement markers should be distinguished from pronoun agreement markers to avoid the false claim that, in theory, nouns are pronouns in Bantu, as has been the fashion to this day.

5. Further Remarks on Internal NP Agreement Marking in P

We have seen in (13) that the compound P-n/COP-n or P {enye na} can take

an internal agreement of its internal NP. Agreement is made possible by P2 *na* 'with, and, by, having' in the compound. Unlike P-root {a}, however, P *na* can take internal agreement markers of personal pronouns, e.g. *nami* 'with-me', as well as animate and inanimate nouns (or their independent interrogative pronouns), e.g. *naye* (13) or *nalo* 'with-it.' The agreement suffixes of personal pronouns for P *na* are: {mi} 'me' for 1st person singular *mimi* 'I, me', {we} 'you' for 2nd person singular *wewe* 'you', {ye} 'him, her, it' for 3rd person singular *yeye* 'he/him, she/her, it', {si} 'us' for 1st person plural *sisi* 'we, us', {nyi} 'you' for 2nd person plural *nyinyi* 'you', and {o} 'them' for 3rd person plural *wao* 'they, them.' Observe that, for P2 *na*, nouns of classes 1/2 MU1/WA, as well as their independent interrogative pronoun *nani?* 'who?', use, according to their number, the same form of agreement marker as the 3rd person pronouns *yeye* 'he/him, she/her, it' and *wao* 'they, them.' For inanimate nouns in other classes, unlike the case in (16)-(17) below, the agreement markers generated by their nouns or their independent interrogative pronouns combine with the 'O' of Reference particle to give 'O' TOP agreement allomorphs that are distinct from personal pronoun agreements. The 'O' particle is required because no predicate, verbal or nominal, can be suffixed with a bare agreement marker. Thus an NP *mwenye nalo koti* 'she having/with a/the coat' glosses as 'Cl. 1 SM-COP-n having Cl. 1 \emptyset -COP-n with-Cl. 5 'O' TOP OM Cl. 5-coat.' P2 *nalo* 'with-it' has the agreement marker {lo} 'it' derived from class 5 JI agreement marker {li} + {o} of reference particle. The generator of {li} is the internal N head *koti* 'coat' from class 5 JI. Next, let us examine (14)-(18).

- (14) *Ma-tawi* *y-a* *m-ti*.
 Cl. 6-branch Cl. 6 SM-COP-n of Cl. 3-tree
 'Branches of the/a tree, tree branches, lit. branches they-of tree.
- (15) *Koti* *li-le* *l-a*
 Cl. 5-coat Cl. 5-that Cl. 5 SM-COP-n of
Mariamuu.
 Cl. 1-Mariamuu
 'That coat of Mariamuu.'

(14)-(15) are minimal possessive types like (1)-(3). Next, consider (16)-(18).

- (16) **Ma-tawi_i* *y_i-a-ke_j* *t_j*
 Cl. 6-branch Cl. 6 SM-COP-n of-PossProCl. 1/3 OM
m-ti_k.
 Cl. 3-tree
 'Branches of the/a tree, tree branches, lit. branches; they_i-of-it_j *t_j*
tree_k.
- (17) *M-ti_k* *na* *ma-tawi_i*
 Cl. 4-tree COP-n and Cl. 6-branch
y_i-a-ke_j *t_j*.
 Cl. 6 SM-COP-n of-PossProCl. 1/3 OM
 'A/the tree and its branches.
- (18) *Koti_i* *li-le*
 Cl. 5-coat Cl. 5-that
li-a-ke_j *t_j* *Mariamuk_k*.
 Cl. 5 SM-COP-n of-PossProCl. 1/3 OM Cl. 1-Mariamuk_k.
 'That coat of Mariamuk, lit. coat_t that it_t-of-her_j *t_j* Mariamuk_k'

(16) is ungrammatical in everyday usage. This means that (14) does not have a maximal possessive type (16). It only has a conjoined maximal pattern (17). (15) has a maximal pattern (18) and a conjoined pattern, too (see below). Let us compare (16) with (17). The reader will notice that the two constructions differ in their word order. In (16)-(17), the possessor object *mti* 'tree' of class 3 MU2 is a singular inanimate denoting noun. In Kiswahili, there are no inanimate personal pronouns. As a result of this, *mti* 'tree' cannot follow its P *yake* 'they-of-it' in (16), because the internal agreement {ke} implies an underlying animate denoting personal pronoun *yeye* 'him, her, it.' It follows that if *yeye* heads *mti*, in (16), *in situ*, it would signal its personification, e.g. *matawi_i yake yeye_j mti_k* 'branches of he/him tree', i.e. 'Cl. 6-branch Cl. 6 SM-COP-n of-PossProCl. 1/3 OM ProCl. 1/3-him Cl. 3-tree' (Amidu, 2006, pp. 65-127). Personification of this sort occurs widely in stories (see Amidu, 2006, pp. 65-127). In (17), we observe that the possessor object in (16) is moved to the left and conjoined with the possessed NP *matawi* 'branches' via the linker *na* 'and.' This alternative (17) is grammatical. The possessor NP *mti* 'tree' is embedded in the possessed NP and is no longer directly in apposition to the underlying

pronoun's trace t_i , as is the case in (16). The grammar, therefore, licences OM {ke} to refer to *mti* 'tree'. (18) is grammatical because the complement *Mariamamu* is an animate denoting noun in apposition to its implicit personal pronoun. The NP *Mariamamu na koti lile lake* 'Mariamamu and that her coat, i.e. Cl. 1-Mariamamu COP-n and Cl. 5-coat Cl. 5-that Cl. 5 SM-COP-n of-PossProCl. 1/3 OM' is also grammatical.

Inanimate plural possessor nouns, e.g. *miti* 'trees' of class 4 MI, as internal Ns of P-root {a}, behave like *mti* 'tree' in (16)-(17). It means that all inanimate denoting nouns as well as their interrogative pronouns, singular and plural, use the 3rd person singular personal pronoun agreement marker {ke} in the manner of (17). Ashton (1947, p. 57) refers to this strategy as follows:

Concerning the use of -ao.

This possessive form can only be used in relation to living beings.

Visahani vyao. Their, i.e. people's saucers.

For inanimate things **-ake** is used, both for singular and plural.

Kikombe na kisahani chake. A cup and its saucer.

Vikombe na visahani vyake. Cups and their saucers.

The outcome above leads to neutralization and phonological identity of singular and plural agreement forms in specific contexts of usage in the grammar. Thus speakers say *mti na matawi yake* 'a tree and its branches' (17) as well as *miti na matawi yake* 'trees and their branches' (see Amidu, 2006, ch. 2). Our analysis reveals that, outside of contexts of personification, data such as (16) are absent in Kiswahili.

6. The Nature of the External N Possessive Agreement Marker

The external agreement markers of P in (19)-(20) are pronominal rather than nominal agreement markers. They do not support a claim that makes them exclusively nominal agreements (see Schadeberg, 1992, pp. 19-20, Amidu, 2006, pp. 39-40).

external pronoun agreement markers of P-root {a} are grammaticalized as {wa} → {w} / {a} for 1st, 2nd and 3rd person plural personal pronouns, in the same way as for animate nouns and their independent interrogative pronoun. Singular and plural inanimate denoting nouns and their independent interrogative pronouns in other noun classes, as external Ns, generate their agreement markers before P-root {a}. Their agreement markers are distinct from personal pronoun agreement markers.

The P-roots {enye} and {enye na} may similarly be headed by external personal pronouns or nouns. This means that animate singular nouns and personal pronouns take agreement marker {mu} → *mw* / {enye} for class 1 MU1, and {mu} → ∅ / {na}. The plural animate items, nouns and personal pronouns, take {wa} as their external agreement, hence {wa} → *w* / {enye} and {wa} → ∅ / {na}. Singular and plural inanimate nouns in other noun classes generate their external agreement markers as appropriate before the P-roots {enye} and {enye na}. Unlike personal pronouns and animate nouns, inanimate nouns in other classes have distinct agreement markers.

The patterns above provide us with additional evidence to the effect that, although personal pronouns and noun agreement markers are generally distinctive, phonological identity in their agreement markers does occur. These patterns of identity have not been discussed before in Kiswahili studies. Patterns of neutralization and identity of markers may prompt a linguist to argue that since "Both 'pronoun' and the feature [+pronominal] were defined in *Government and Binding Theory as *noun phrases, [...]" (Matthews, 2007, p. 323, Crystal, 2003, p. 376), there is no need to distinguish between nominal and pronominal agreement at all. The Chomskian feature [+pronominal] is no doubt good for Indo-European languages. However, when used also for agreement markers in a noun class language, the feature makes it impossible to distinguish between an agreement generated by a noun e.g. *mpishi* 'cook', *mti* 'tree', and one generated by a personal pronoun, e.g. *wewe* 'you (sg.)', *sisi* 'we, us', and so on. The general indiscernibility triggered by the application of the Chomskian feature [+pronominal] to Kiswahili compounds the confusion and contradictions in the description of agreement marking rather than clarifies them. This is because, in Kiswahili, it makes no linguistic sense to say, *in vacuo*, that an agreement marker is nominal or pronominal or [+pronominal]. The tendency to

conflate and neutralize agreement markers in the external positions of P of the possessive more than in internal positions of the same P is compelling evidence that one only knows that an agreement marker of a possessive is nominal or pronominal, if one knows the form class of its generator and governing head.

7. Conclusion

The study proposes that Kiswahili has a minimal possessive type and a maximal possessive type. Firstly, the dichotomy reveals that the grammar allegedly has a maximal possessive P adjective but lacks a minimal possessive P adjective, although both types of P function in the same possessive NP framework. The alleged difference between the Ps is clearly arbitrary. Secondly, the maximal possessive P a) is the only alleged adjective in linguistics that simultaneously pre-modifies its external NP_i and post-modifies its internal NP_j via their agreement markers, i.e. as agr_i-P-agr_j, and, as a P item, belongs in a closed system. These claims lack any foundation within linguistic theory. Our study also reveals how a description of the possessive NP, or any NP in Kiswahili, needs to make a consistent and systematic distinction between nominal and pronominal agreement marking. This is because an agreement assigned by a nominal is not a pronominal agreement, just as one assigned by a pronominal is not a nominal agreement. There are also gaps in the possessive pattern. For example, there is (14) but no (16) in everyday usage. Similarly, there are no minimal counterparts of (4)-(6), (8)-(10) and (12) in Southern Kiswahili from which Standard Kiswahili derives. As linguists, our task is not to repeat the failings and confusions of colonial descriptions and theories, but to write an explanatory adequate grammar of Kiswahili.

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List of some abbreviations

AFX	affix
Cl.	class
Cl. 17/26 NI ₃	locative class, with three allomorphic agreement markers (a) <i>pa-</i> , (b) <i>ku-</i> , (c) <i>mu-</i> ; traditionally classes 16-18 PA-, KU- and MU-
COP-a	adverbial copula (also called P-a)
COP-n	nominal copula (also called P-n)
COP-v	copula verb
MOD	mood marker, modalic marker
N	noun
NP	noun phrase

'O' TOP	'O' topicalized or 'O' marked agreement marker or concord
OM	object marker
PAST	past tense
P-a	adverbial predicate, adverbial preposition (also called COP-a)
P-aP	adverbial predicate phrase, adverbial prepositional phrase (see PP)
P-n	nominal/adnominal predicate, nominal preposition (see COP-n)
P-nP	nominal predicate phrase, nominal prepositional phrase (see PP)
P.C.	pronominal concord (Ashton, 1947, p. 54), also called agreement
PC	predicate constituent, equivalent to verb (see V below)
Prep.	Preposition
Pro or pro	pronoun
ProCl.	personal pronoun class (1/1 = in Cl. 1, 1st person, 1/2 = in Cl. 1, 2nd person, 1/3 = in Cl. 1, 3rd person; 2/1 = in Cl. 2, 1st person, 2/2 = in Cl. 2, 2nd person, 2/3 = in Cl. 2, 3rd person)
PossProCl.	possessive pronoun class (1/1 = in Cl. 1, 1st person, 1/2 = in Cl. 1, 2nd person, 1/3 = in Cl. 1, 3rd person; 2/1 = in Cl. 2, 1st person, 2/2 = in Cl. 2, 2nd person, 2/3 = in Cl. 2, 3rd person)
PP	prepositional phrase (with subtypes P-nP and P-aP)
SM	subject marker
<i>t</i>	trace symbol standing for the unrealized N head of a modifier
V	verb, equivalent to predicate constituent (see PC above)
*	a) used for ungrammatical forms; b) used by Matthews (2007) for an entry in his dictionary.

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