

Uzbek's suffix expressing possession -li

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Abstract

In Uzbek, *-li* is an adjective-forming suffix. An adjective derived with this suffix expresses possession of the entities expressed by its base noun stem (Kononov 1960: 147, Bodrogligeti 2003: 372, Берматов ва бош. 2008: 583). However, *-li* overlaps functionally with *bor*, which expresses existence as well as possession. I conducted elicitation using these suffixes with two native Uzbek speakers. From the results, I concluded that *-li* and *bor* differ in two ways. The first difference is in “possession cline” (Tsunoda 1995: 567): if N is animate, the border between *bor* and *li-* is on “kin.” Moreover, *-li* is permitted if N is “wife” or “child”; however, *-li* is not permitted if N is “elder brother.” The second difference is in information structure: if N is inanimate, speakers use different expressions. When speakers refer to a previously known event, they use *-li*, but when they refer to a previously unknown event, they use *bor*.

Keywords: Uzbek, possession, possession cline, information structure

In Uzbek, *-li* is an adjective-forming suffix. An adjective derived with this suffix expresses possession of the entities expressed by its base noun stem. However, *-li* overlaps functionally with *bor*, which expresses existence as well as possession, as shown in the following examples (judged for accuracy by informants).

- (1) a. *U odam bola-li-ø.*
that person child-PROP-3SG
- b. *U odam-ning bola-si bor.*
that person-GEN child-3SG.POSS exist
“That person has a child.”

In this paper, I examine whether the Uzbek suffix *-li* exhibits the features described in Kazama (1999). Kazama (1999) examined possession suffixes in several Altaic languages (Mongolian, Turkish, Sakha, and Tungus) in terms of the following three points, (of which points 1 and 2 refer to the possessor's character): 1. “possession cline” (body part > inherent attribute > clothing > kin > pet animal > product > other possessee) (Tsunoda 1995: 576); 2. “character of place” (Teramura: 1968); and 3. information structure.

Literature Review

The usage of -li

The suffix *-li* generates an adjective that expresses possession.

- (2) *Talant-li* (< *talant* + *-li*)
“talented” talent PROP

A word derived using *-li* may be used in two patterns. In the first (3), *-li* is used as a noun; the noun *odam*, meaning “person,” is not present. As may be seen in the example, *-li* accepts noun morphology in this usage. In the second pattern (4), *-li* is used as an adjective; *odam* is present in this case.

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| (3) Noun:
<i>Baxt-li-lar-dan</i>
fortune-PROP-PL-ABL
“from a lucky [person]” | (4) Adjective:
<i>bola-li odam</i>
child-PROP person
“person who has a child” |
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The usage of *bor*

The first pair of examples demonstrates the nominal usage of *bor*. In (5a), *bor* is followed by the possessive suffix *-i*, expressing the 3rd person singular, and the locative case suffix *-da*. As may be seen in the example, *bor* accepts noun morphology in this usage. In (5b), *bor* modifies the noun *joy*, meaning “place.”

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| (5) Nominal usage (Sjoberg 1963: 57, 61): | |
| a. <i>bor-i-da</i>
existent-3SG.POSS-LOC
“during his lifetime”
(lit. during-his-existence) | b. [<i>suv bor</i>] <i>joy</i>
water existent place
“a place with water”
(lit. water-existing place) |

The second pair of examples demonstrates two existential/possessive sentence structures using *bor*. In (6a), the number and person of the possessor are shown by the possession suffix attached to *soat*, meaning “watch.” Boeschoten (1998: 372) claims that alienable possession can also be rendered using the locative, as in (6b).

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| (6) Existential/possessive sentence (Boeschoten 1998: 372): | |
| a. Possessed-Possessive suf.+ <i>bor</i> :
<i>Soat-ing bor=mi?</i>
watch-2PL.POSS existent=Q
“Do you have a watch?” | b. Possessed+Possesser-LOC+ <i>bor</i>
<i>U kitob men-da yoq.</i>
that book 1SG-LOC no
“I do not have that book.” |

How do *bor* and *-li* differ?

As previously mentioned, statements such as “That person has a child” may be rendered using two patterns in Uzbek. (1a) provides an example using *-li*, while (1b) provides an example using *bor*. The following subsection provides two answers to the question of how *bor* and *-li* are different. The first answer, that they differ in possession cline, was introduced by Tsunoda (1995). The second answer is that they differ in information structure: when a speaker regards an event as old information, *-li* is chosen.

Investigation

I have used the conceptual viewpoints of Kazama (1999) in the present investigation. Kazama (1999) examined possession suffixes in a range of Altaic languages (Mongolian, Turkish, Sakha, and Tungus) in terms of the following three points.

Possession suffixes in Altaic languages (Mongolian, Turkish, Sakha, Tungusic)

1. “Possession cline” (Tsunoda 1995: 576)
2. “Character of place” (Teramura: 1968)
3. Information structure

When the possessor is animate, I have considered first point, while when possessor is inanimate, I have considered point 3. I do not discuss point 2 (“Character of place”) in this presentation, as it is not involved in the difference between *-li* and *bor*.

Possession cline

I will first discuss the difference between *bor* and *-li* in terms of Tsunoda’s (1995: 576) “possession cline.” This cline indicates “the degree of closeness/attachedness between possessor and possessee,” body part > inherent attribute > clothing > kin > pet animal > product > other possessee.

Tsunoda (1995: 592) also examines “possessor ascension.” The possessor can ascend in example (7), while in example (8), the possessor cannot ascend. The possession cline provides an explanation for this difference. The possessor (7), “leg,” is high on the hierarchy, permitting (7b); the possessor in (8), “wine bottle,” is low on the hierarchy and does not permit (8b). The possession cline is useful for discussing grammatical phenomenon.

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|-----|---|-----|--|
| (7) | a. <i>I hit his leg.</i>
b. <i>I hit him on the leg.</i> | (8) | a. <i>I hit his wine bottle.</i>
b. <i>*I hit him on the wine bottle.</i> |
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Information structure

Kazama (1999: 95-96), quoting from Lyons (1968), explains that the following sentences differ in term of information structure. In example (9), single-underlined words represent the topic, and double-underlined words represent comment or new information.

- (9) a. I have a book. / I have a book.
b. The book is mine.

As shown in the following investigation, this distinction plays a role in the difference between *bor* and *-li*.

Kazama’s analysis (1999) did not include Uzbek. For this reason, I conducted an investigation of Uzbek using Kazama’s work on the possession cline and information structure. In this investigation, I conducted elicitation sessions with two native speakers of Uzbek. I constructed sentences in Uzbek and had native speakers judge whether or not those sentences were permissible.

Examination

I examined the differences of *bor* and *-li* in terms of possession cline and information structure.

Possession cline

Table 1 displays the results for cases of predicative use. The check marks indicate which properties can be used with *-li* or *bor*. Table 2 displays the results for cases of attributive use.

Table 1: Possession cline in the predicative use of *-li* and *bor*

	Body part/inherent attribute		Clothing	Kin		Pet	Other
	Everyone	Not everyone		Child, wife	Elder brother		
Except below	✓		✓				
N- <i>li</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓			
<i>bor</i>		✓		✓	✓	✓	✓

Table 2: Possession cline in the attributive use of *-li* and *bor*

	Body part/inherent attribute		Clothing	Kin		Pet	Other
	Everyone	Not everyone		Child, wife	Elder brother		
Except below			✓				
N- <i>li</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓			
<i>bor</i>		✓		✓	✓	✓	✓

Table 3 combines the results of Tables 1 and 2. The suffix *-li* is relatively high on the hierarchy, while *bor* is relatively low on the hierarchy.

Table 3: Possession cline in the attributive use of *-li* and *bor*

	Body part/inherent attribute		Clothing	Kin		Pet	Other
	Everyone	Not everyone		Child, wife	Elder brother		
N- <i>li</i>	✓	✓	✓	✓			
<i>bor</i>				✓	✓	✓	✓
ex.	(10)		(11)	(12)	(13)	(14)	

I have provided examples of the possession cline in the following section. The sentences using *-li* are permitted through example (11), but the sentences using *bor* are not permitted.

(10) Body part/inherent attribute

a. *U qiz uzun soch-li-ø.*
that girl long hair-PROP-3SG
“That girl has long hair.”

b. **U qiz-ning uzun soch-si bor.*
that girl-GEN long hair-3SG.POSS existent

(11) Clothing

a. *U odam ko'k ko'ylak-li-ø.*
that person blue shirt-PROP-3SG
“That person wears a blue shirt.”

b. **U odam-ning ko'k ko'ylag-i bor.*
that person-GEN blue shirt-3SG.POSS existent

Interestingly, in case of a child, both sentences are permitted, as shown in (12).

- (12) Kin; child, wife
 a. *U odam bola-li-ø.*
 that person child-PROP-3SG
 “That person has children.”
 b. *U odam-ning bola-si bor.*
 that person-GEN child-3SG.POSS existent

However, in the case of an elder brother, *-li* is not permitted.

- (13) Kin; elder brother
 a. **U odam aka-li-ø.*
 that person elder-PROP-3SG
 b. *U odam-ning aka-si bor.*
 that person-GEN elder-3SG.POSS existent

For a pet animal or other possessee, *-li* is not permitted, while *bor* is permitted.

- (14) Pet animal; other possessee
 a. *U odam-da ruchka bor.*
 that person-LOC pen existent
 “That person has a pen.”
 b. *U odam-ning ruchka-si bor.*
 that person-GEN pen-3SG.POSS existent

Information structure

I will next explain my findings regarding information structure. If a speaker is referring to old information, *-li* is chosen, while *bor* is chosen when referring to new information. I have provided examples in the following section.

If a speaker already knows that “That room has two windows,” the statement is expressed as shown in example (15).

- (15) *U xona ikki deraza-li-ø.*
 that room two window-PROP-3SG

This sentence expresses old information and uses *-li*. Conversely if the speaker is entering the room for the first time, the statement is expressed as shown in example (16).

- (16) *U xona ikki deraza bor.*
 that room two window existence.

This sentence expresses new information, and uses *bor*.

Summary

Finally, I have summarized the properties of *-li*.

1. Possession cline

Body part, inherent attribute, clothing, kin (child, wife)

However, kin (elder brother) is not suitable.

2. Information structure

Old information

Abbreviations

-	suffix border	LOC	locative	PROP	propriative
1, 2, 3	1 st , 2 nd , 3 rd person	PL	plural	Q	question maker
ABL	ablative	POSS	possessive	SG	singular
GEN	genitive				

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