

Three types of predicative possessives in Russian

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In this talk I will discuss the three types of predicative possessives in Russian, given in (1):

- (1) ‘*I had a car.*’
- a. U menja byl-a mašin-a.
at I.GEN be.PST-F.SG car.F-NOM.SG
 - b. Ja ime-l mašin-u.
I.NOM have-PST:M.SG car.F-ACC.SG
 - c. U menja ime-l-a-sj mašin-a.
at I.GEN have-PST-F.SG-REFL car.F-NOM.SG

(1a) is the *be*-possessive: the possessor is expressed by a prepositional *u*-phrase, and the possessum – by a Nominative DP, the verb *byt* ‘be’ agrees with the possessum. (1b) illustrates the “transitive” possessive: the possessor is expressed by a Nominative DP and imposes agreement on the verb *imet* ‘have’, the possessum is expressed by an Accusative DP. (1c) is sometimes referred to as the “anti-causative” possessive: the verb *imet’sja* carries the reflexive suffix *-sja* and agrees with the Nominative possessum, whereas the possessor is expressed by an *u*-PP.

The three constructions overlap in their distribution, but there are also differences to be observed. I will address the various lexical and syntactic differences (and commonalities) between the possessive constructions in (1) and search for a principled account of the above, discussing existing analyses of the possessives, such as Chvany (1975), Bailyn (2004), Dyakonova (2007).

References

- Bailyn, J.F. 2004. Generalized inversion. *Natural Language and Linguistic Theory* 22:1–49.
- Chvany, Catherine V. 1975. *On the syntax of BE-sentences in Russian*. Slavica Publishers, Inc.
- Dyakonova, Marina. 2007. Russian double object constructions. *ACLCLC Working Papers* 2:3–30.