Possessive Prefixes

The presence of prefixes indexing the inalienable possessor of a possessee was investigated. This is a feature of Hunza Burushaski, as shown in (1). These are used with a restricted class of possessee nouns such as kinship terms and body parts, and are not equal to independent possessive pronouns, the latter which can be used in possessive constructions with virtually any noun as a possessee. Some of these nouns would not normally occur as a bare stem, i.e. without a possessive prefix attached to them (indexing for person, animacy and number).

1. Hunza Burushaski [bsk(h)] (isolate)

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| a. | a-mupuʂ |  |  |
|  | 1sg.poss-nose |  |  |
|  | ‘my nose’ (BSKh-40list-SK:025) | | |

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| b. | a-pi |  |  |
|  | 1sg.poss-grandmother |  |  |
|  | ‘my grandmother’ (BSKh-Kin-SK:014) | | |

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| c. | mo-pi-mu-r |  |  |
|  | 3hfsg.poss-grandmother-obl-dat |  |  |
|  | ‘to her grandmother’ (BSKh-Val-SK:037) | | |

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| d. | gu-ɕaːk-aʈ-e |  |  |
|  | 2sg-arm-ins-ess |  |  |
|  | ‘on your arm’ (BSKh-Dem-SK:003a) | | |

This is a feature found only in the two Burushaski varieties in this sample. However, see the feature Possessive Suffixes for similar functions expressed with suffixes instead of prefixes.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Feature value | # of varieties displaying it | % |
| Present | 2 | 3 |
| Absent | 57 | 97 |
| Indeterminate | 0 | 0 |