Possessive Suffixes

The presence of suffixes indexing the inalienable possessor of a possessee was investigated. This is a feature of Indo-Aryan Alasai Pashai, as shown in (1). These are mainly used with a restricted class of possessee nouns such as kinship terms and body parts, and can be used instead of or in addition to independent possessive pronouns. Some of these nouns wouldn’t normally occur as a bare stem, i.e. without a possessive suffix attached to them (indexing for person, and possibly number). The exact distribution and inventory of such suffixes is still to be fully investigated.

1. Alasai Pashai [psh (ai)] (Indo-Aryan)

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| a. | hast-**eːm** | Cf. | | haːst | |
|  | hand-1sg.poss |  | | hand | |
|  | ‘my hand’ (PSHai-ValQuestKD:059) ‘(a) hand’ (PSHai-40listKD:013) | | | | |
| b. | aːst-əs-**əj** | ʃira | | |  |
|  | hand-obl-2sg.poss | on | | |  |
|  | ‘on your arm’ (PSHai-DemKD:003a) | | | | |
| c. | aːj-s-**aː** | | Cf. | | aːjə |
|  | mother-obl-3sg.poss | |  | | mother |
|  | ‘her mother’ (PSHai-ValQuestKD:013) ‘(a) mother’ (PSHai-KinKD:002) | | | | |

This is a feature found to a varying extent in at least 16 of the languages in the sample, primarily in the western part of the region. See the feature Possessive Prefixes for similar functions expressed with prefixes instead of suffixes.

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| Feature value | # of varieties displaying it | % |
| Present | 16 | 27 |
| Absent | 40 | 68 |
| Indeterminate | 3 | 5 |