

The Grammar of Inalienability

A Typological Perspective on Body Part Terms
and the Part-Whole Relation

edited by

Hilary Chappell

William McGregor

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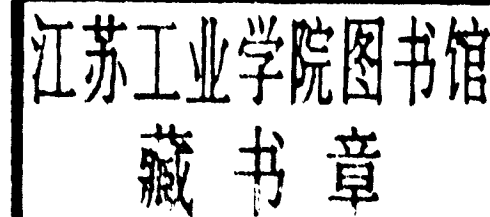
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Dedication

We dedicate this book to the late Steve Johnson. His energetic sup-
port, wholehearted backing and assistance in setting up the 'Body Parts
in Grammar' workshop and general enthusiasm for the proposal con-
tributed greatly to its success at the annual conference of the Australian
Linguistic Society held in his department at the University of New Eng-
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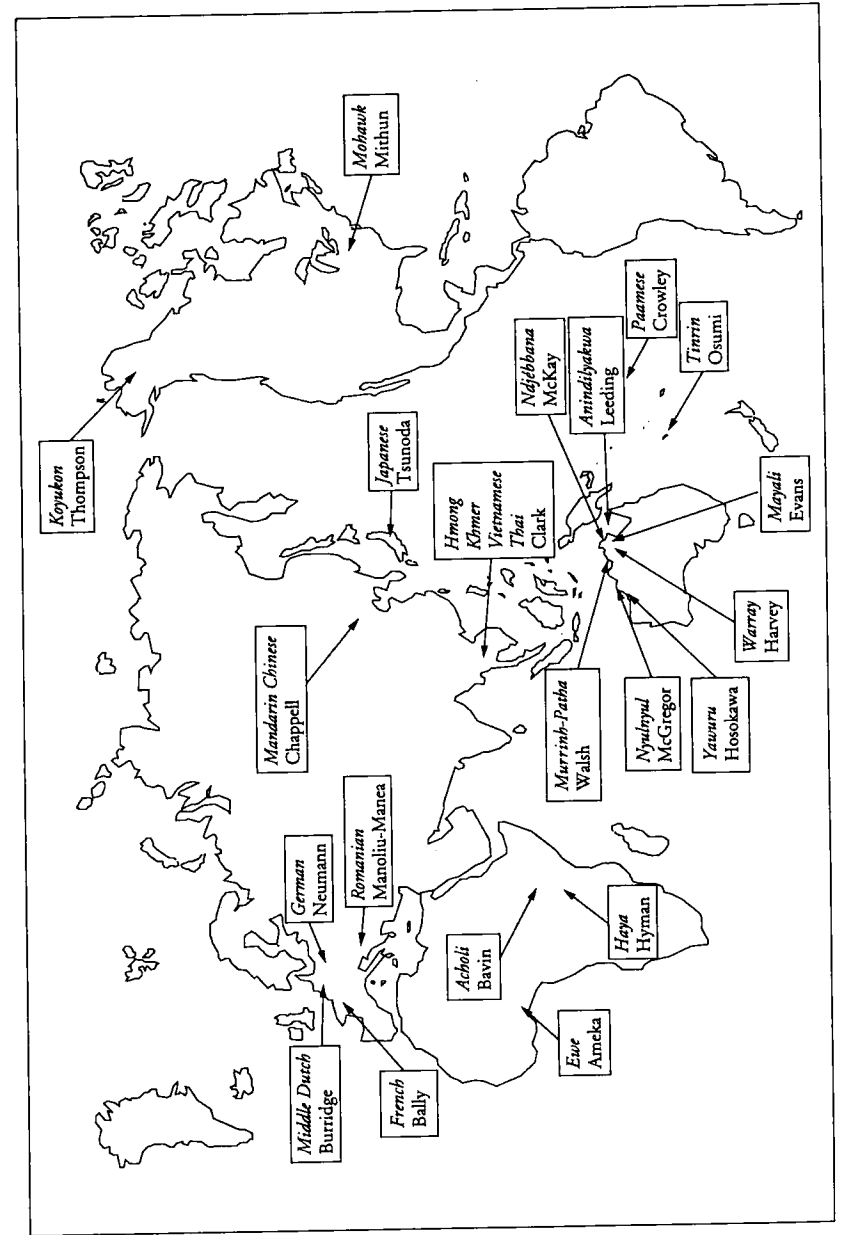
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Preface

The present volume grew out of a Workshop on the theme 'Body parts in grammar', which was held during the Australian Linguistic Society Annual Conference at the University of New England in August 1988. Due to the success of the workshop, we decided to ask the presenters to write up their papers for publication. To broaden the scope of languages represented, we also invited several other linguists to contribute to the project. The papers cover a number of topics under the headings of inalienability and the personal domain, and draw on data from widely distributed and, in some instances, previously undescribed languages. There is a particular focus on the Pacific region, with contributions on Oceanic, Australian, Asian, and American languages.

We are grateful to Verlag Sauerländer (Aarau, Switzerland) for permission to publish Christine Béal and Hilary Chappell's translation of Charles Bally's 1926 article.

Melbourne
September 1994



Main languages discussed in this volume

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Part I

Introduction

Prolegomena to a theory of inalienability

Hilary Chappell and William McGregor

For most linguists, the term “inalienability” evokes the complementary term “alienability” and brings to mind the existence of different ways of expressing possession in many “exotic” languages of Australia, the Pacific, Africa and America. The contrasting semantics of these two main coding possibilities for possession was remarked upon early this century by Lévy-Bruhl who noted (1914: 97-98) that in Melanesian languages there were typically two classes of nouns, distinguished by the method used to mark possession. One class comprised suffix-taking nouns designating parts of the body, kin, spatial relations, objects closely associated with a person such as weapons and fishing nets and also inanimate parts, with the suffix indicating the person and number of the possessor. The second class comprised all other nouns; for these nouns, possession was represented by a free possessive morpheme to which the same set of pronominal suffixes was attached. Remarkably, this dichotomy represents a basic semantic pattern that recurs across many languages, regardless of genetic affiliation or grammatical type.

The two classes of nouns so defined are not, however, necessarily disjoint. In a number of languages, both possession constructions may be possible for certain nouns, with a concomitant change of meaning. This is shown by example (1) – from the Melanesian language Patpatar (Pala dialect), spoken in New Ireland (Peckel 1909: 18, cited in Lévy-Bruhl 1914: 99)¹ – where the same noun stem *kat-* ‘liver’ may refer either to the possessor’s own body part or to a separated body part, as of an animal, viewed as an item of food rather than as part of a living being.²

(1) *a katigu* ‘my liver’ (inalienable possession)

versus

agu kat ‘my liver that I am going to eat’ (alienable possession)

From Lévy-Bruhl's description of this basic division for Melanesian nouns, it is already apparent that the first type of possession – inalienable possession – groups together items which are closely connected with the person either because the relationship is inherent, as with spatial relations such as 'front', 'top' or 'side'; or because it is integral to the person, as with body parts (the same applies for parts of inanimate wholes); or because there is a close biological or social bond between two people, as in the case of kin. The fourth type Lévy-Bruhl mentions, inalienably possessed material objects, is restricted to just those items which are essential for one's livelihood – again, closely connected to a person's survival. All four types of inalienable possessions comprise then either inextricable, essential or unchangeable relations between "possessor" and "possessed" – that is, relations over which possessors exercise little choice or control: every person is born into a kin network, their very existence implying a biological mother and father; and every person has a body made up of parts that in the normal course of events remain indivisible from the whole and which can be viewed in terms of unchanging (non-deictic) spatial dimensions regardless of a person's position or speaker's reference point. Standing on our heads or lying down, *back*, *sides* and *front* all refer to the same places on the body. (They do not shift as do the spatial deictics *in front of X* and *behind X* which depend on the speaker's position relative to an object, if not to some other chosen spatial point of reference.)

Whereas inalienability denotes an indissoluble connection between two entities – a permanent and inherent association between the possessor and the possessed – the complementary notion of alienability refers to a variety of rather freely made associations between two referents, that is, relationships of a less permanent and inherent type (cf. Chappell – McGregor 1989: 25), including transient possession and right to use or control an object. In Melanesian languages – in fact, in Oceanic languages generally – alienable possession is further subdivided into several types depending on the purpose of the possession: for example, whether it is for eating, drinking, planting, a means of livelihood, or for use as a weapon. The alienable category can thus be viewed as the general category of possession, even though it is typically the one which receives overt morphological marking (cf. Chappell – McGregor 1989: 25).

As Haiman (1985: 130) points out, the conceptual distance between an inalienable possession and its possessor is less than that between an alienable possession and its possessor, and this is iconically reflected in many languages (see also Croft 1991: 174-176). Thus, inalienable posses-

sion is realised by juxtaposition of the nominals referring to the possessor and the possessed, in that order, as in Djaru (Tsunoda 1981: 179), Yidiny (Dixon 1977: 360), Mandarin Chinese (Chappell – Thompson 1992) and Ewe (Ameka 1995). Another commonly found inalienable construction involves affixation of a pronominal cross-referencing the possessor on the possessed nominal; this is found in Manam (Lichtenberk 1983), Paamese (Crowley 1995), Tinrin (Osumi 1995), Nyulnyul (McGregor 1995), and Ndjébbana (McKay 1995). In most languages, alienable possession is morphologically marked by genitive markers (see further Chappell – McGregor 1989, Haiman 1985: 131); linker morphemes, which may be either separate words, or bound to either or both of the phrase constituents, as in Ewe (Ameka 1995), Mandarin (Chappell 1995; Chappell – Thompson 1992) and Acholi (Bavin 1995); possessive classifiers, as in Paamese (Crowley 1995) and Tinrin (Osumi 1995); and possessive pronominal linkers, as in Nyulnyul (McGregor in preparation).

Lévy-Bruhl's perceptive interpretation of data collated from several grammars of Melanesian languages available at the time provided the inspiration for Bally's famous 1926 article on the expression of the personal domain in Indo-European languages. Lévy-Bruhl doubted that the semantic distinction holding for possession in Melanesian languages could be conveyed in European languages, or at best, could only be conveyed in an implicit manner. Bally (1926 [1995]) challenged Lévy-Bruhl on this point, and showed that an almost identical distinction, which he termed "sphère personnelle" or personal domain, was coded by many Indo-European languages, not at the noun phrase level, but rather at clause level, typically by *dative of involvement* constructions ("le datif de participation"). Thus, argued Bally, dative constructions in many European languages code the indivisibility of a person and an associated body part or possession by indicating the affectedness of the owner as the outcome of an event involving the part. Such dative constructions are exhibited by the three Indo-European languages discussed in Part VI of this book: Romanian, German and Middle Dutch.

It follows from Bally's arguments that inalienability cannot be narrowly circumscribed to just word or phrase level possessive constructions but should be broadened to the clause level to include, first of all, the dative of involvement constructions (see also Fillmore 1968: 61ff on deep structure assignment of the dative for possession). The collection of language-specific studies in this book shows clearly, however, that languages employ various other clause-level constructions for the expression of inalienability or the personal domain in addition to the

dative of involvement. These include the *double subject constructions* of Chinese, Japanese and Yawuru which give identical semantic or grammatical case roles to nouns coding the person and their "part", and the *body part locative constructions* of languages such as Romanian and German in which the "part" noun is represented by a locative prepositional phrase while the possessor is retained in a core grammatical role. A fourth phenomenon is the verb phrase level construction of *noun incorporation* (Mithun 1984, Baker 1987), in which a nominal is incorporated into a verbal complex. In a number of languages examined in this book – Koyukon Athabaskan, Mayali, Mohawk, Murrinh-Patha, Warray and several Southeast Asian languages such as Hmong, Thai, Khmer and Vietnamese – an inalienable part or associated aspect of an argument NP, typically a transitive object or an intransitive subject, may be incorporated into the verb. Several of the papers, including those on Japanese, Koyukon Athabaskan and German (also for Indo-European languages in Bally (1926 [1995])) discuss, in addition, *verbs of possession* while others, discuss *propriative markers* ("having" affixes) in Anindilyakwa, Warungu and Djaru (Tsunoda 1995). These languages show differences in choice of verb of possession and/or use of propriative marker according to whether the possession is alienable or inalienable. Further cross-linguistic study of a larger sample of languages of the world would be likely to reveal many more clausal constructions for the expression of inalienability than mentioned in the brief discussion above. (See, for example, Hale 1981 and McGregor 1985 for analysis of what they refer to as the "favourite construction", which embraces a set of double subject, double object, double locative, double dative, etc. constructions in the Australian languages Warlpiri and Gooniyandi respectively.)

It is widely believed that constructions representing inalienability, such as the four main types described above, derive by a syntactic process of *possessor ascension* from underlying structures (initial strata in relational grammar parlance) in which the part occurs in a possessive phrase and fulfils an argument role in the clause. Thus, the English body part locative construction of (2) is often regarded as deriving from the underlying structure represented by (3) (e.g. Frantz 1981: 30; Fox 1981: 323). The possessor NP appears to have "ascended" or to have been "raised" from its original position as a constituent of the object NP to take on the object role itself:

- (2) *The dog bit Cliff on the ankle.*
- (3) *The dog bit Cliff's ankle.*

The major problem with the possessor ascension analysis is, as Blake (1990: 102) points out, that it is based on an assumption that the two constructions have the same meaning. This is clearly false. The "possessor ascension" construction in (2) represents the bite as more intimately affecting Cliff than does (3), which represents the part, Cliff's ankle, as though it were disembodied from the person, that is, as though it were a separate entity (see also Wierzbicka 1979). In the first, the action is viewed as being directed at the person, who is clearly the patient, but taking effect through a body part, whereas, in the second, the action is viewed as being directed at the part to the exclusion of the person. In other words, (2) represents a type of inalienability in contrast to the conceptual separateness expressed by (3): the part is treated as a part of Cliff's personal domain in (2), but not in (3).

Given their different semantics, the two construction types must be regarded as equally "basic", a point made again and again by many of the contributors to this volume. A number of them, however, retain the term "possessor ascension" – or a synonymous term such as "possessor promotion" or "possessor raising" – as a convenient descriptive label, without necessarily implying that one of the contrasting structures is more basic.

Possessor ascension conveniently groups together a number of formally quite different construction types which share some semantic similarities: they often represent inalienability in contrast to the alienability of the non-ascension construction, in which the possessed noun occurs in a genitive NP with the possessor. The interpretive association is, however, sometimes reversed, as, for example, in Ewe (Ameka 1995) where the "possessor ascension" construction increases in acceptability the more alienable the possessed noun becomes. The label can thus be misleading to the uninitiated. Furthermore, it is important to note that there are two quite different types of possessor ascension (see e.g. Blake 1984: 438). In one, the ascending possessor assumes the former role of the possessed noun, which then becomes a "chômeur" – as in Haya and English. In the other, the possessor takes on status as an indirect object or oblique, the possessed noun apparently remaining in the same grammatical role, as in the dative constructions of many Indo-European languages (see also Fox 1981; Seiler 1983: 39–45), and a similar construction in Ewe (Ameka 1995).³

From the semantic perspective, one can take Bally's analysis (1926 [1995]) as a starting point since it transcends the problems discussed below inherent in attempting to set up a universal hierarchy of inalien-

able categories. Bally proposed the concept of the personal domain as an analytical tool and defined it to include anything associated in "an habitual, intimate or organic way" with the person, viewing it primarily as a socio-cultural construct. Crucially, the extent of this domain was not to be understood as a pre-given fact of the world such as one that could be limited to description in terms of a person-body part relationship. Bally observed that it varies not only from language to language, but even within a single language, according to the way in which a particular real-world phenomenon is construed from among the possible alternatives.

In the more recent literature on inalienability, however, a different approach can be discerned. Many empirically-based studies attempt to ascertain which semantic category (or categories) represents prototypical inalienable possession, and following from this, attempt to construct an alienability scale or hierarchy. It has been proposed, for example, that intuitively speaking the prototypical inalienable category should comprise body parts (Haiman 1985: 130). On the basis of cross-linguistic evidence, however, Haiman (1985: 136) modifies this assumption to disjunctively place body parts and kin together as prototypical inalienables, as do Nichols (1988: 572 and 1992: 160) and Chappell – McGregor (1989: 26). By contrast, Seiler (1983: 13) suggests that the ranking might be of the order of kinship followed by body parts, although he remains in basic agreement with Bally's concept of the *sphère personnelle*. Nichols specifically proposes the following hierarchy, on the basis of a large and comprehensive sample of nominal inalienable constructions in North American languages combined with a smaller number of languages from other regions and language families:

1. kin terms and/or body parts
2. part-whole and/or spatial relations
3. culturally basic possessed items (e.g. arrows, domestic animals)

Unfortunately, in some languages spatial orientation terms appear alone at the top of the hierarchy as the most inalienable category, as in Ewe (Ameka 1995) and Mandarin (Chappell – Thompson 1992). At the very least terms for spatial relations would need to be placed in disjunctive inclusion with both body parts and kin in an implicational hierarchy. Hence, it appears that differences between languages as to which categories they treat as inalienable may not be reconciled in terms of a universal hierarchy.

We are forced to this conclusion also by virtue of the fact that in some languages all three categories of kin, body part and spatial relation terms may be formally treated as inalienables (as in Paamese (Crowley 1995) and Tinrin (Osumi 1995)); in others, body parts but not kin are inalienable (as in many Australian languages (Dixon 1980: 293)); in other languages, kin and spatial terms but not body parts are treated as inalienable (e.g. Ewe (Ameka 1995)); and in yet other languages just kin and body parts are treated as inalienable, (as in most Athabaskan languages – Thompson (1995)). This remains problematic even if we permit certain steps in the hierarchy to be "skipped", following Nichols (1988: 573), and the hierarchy to be "further elaborated" without certain of these core or prototypical categories such as kin and body part terms, depending on the particular language. Nichols admittedly views inalienability as a lexical property of nouns (1988: 574) for which, at best, only generalisations in the form of the implicational hierarchy she devises can be made.

Therefore it does not seem useful to set up a universal hierarchy to account for these cross-linguistic differences in the classes of inalienable nouns, since if body parts, kin terms and spatial terms are placed in the same relative position on the hierarchy, this results, first of all, in loss of predictive power (see also Haiman 1985: 135-136). Secondly, it glosses over the further complication that it is frequently only subsets of kin terms, body part and spatial terms that are selectively represented as inalienable in a given language. Thirdly, the treatment of categories such as personal representations, bodily fluids, exuviae and personal attributes varies from language to language, in ways which appear to be quite independent of the treatment of other semantic categories.

In contradistinction to Nichols, however, who states:

No account of the semantics of possession types will accurately predict the membership of the "inalienable" set of nouns, either within one language or cross-linguistically. (1988: 568)

we believe that predictions for each language can be made on the basis of cultural and pragmatic knowledge, as Bally (1926 [1995]) suggests, and that this works in with the semantic component of a grammar to precisely characterise the personal domain, or inalienability, as the language-specific descriptions of inalienability in this volume amply demonstrate.

The contributions to this volume provide detailed descriptions of inalienable constructions and related phenomena in some twenty four genetically and typologically diverse languages of Africa, Asia, Australia, Europe, North America and the Pacific (see map on page ix), with partic-

ular focus on the Australian, Asian and Pacific region. They attempt not just to identify and characterise the range of construction types found in the languages, but also provide careful investigations of their semantics, highlighting – and attempting to explain – the ranges of entities which may be inalienably possessed in the various constructions.

Before summarising the contributions, we comment on two important methodological attributes shared by the papers in this volume. First, each author develops language internal arguments for the analyses they propose, rather than assumes a universalist position. Second, each paper is concerned with adducing meaning differences associated with observed formal grammatical differences, and uncovering (if possible), motivations for these associations; they do not provide mere structural descriptions of grammatical constructions in particular languages. Unsurprisingly, then, a recurrent methodological tool is agnation: the elucidation of minimal or near minimal grammatical pairs, coupled with attempts to specify the meaning differences thereby encoded.

It should not be supposed, however, that because the contributions are staunchly empirical in orientation, the authors take atheoretical stances, or are not interested in the implications of their findings to linguistic theories. Quite the contrary, in fact. Various differing theoretical orientations are exhibited by the authors, including natural semantic metalanguage advocated by Wierzbicka (1972, 1981); Diverian (1964) and cognitive linguistics approaches (Langacker 1987); systemic functional grammar (Halliday 1985); and cognitive discourse analysis (Chafe 1987). In most cases the authors employ various blends of these theoretical approaches, as required by descriptive needs.

The bulk of this book is divided into six parts, according to the geographical provenance of the language. Part II contains seven papers on Australian Aboriginal languages. Through no particular design of the editors, the languages represented all belong to the rather poorly known northern prefixing or non-Pama-Nyungan families (Capell 1940, Wurm 1972, Dixon 1980: 21); just two members of the better-known southern suffixing Pama-Nyungan family are briefly discussed in Tsunoda's contribution (Part IV). The seven non-Pama-Nyungan languages represented belong to five distinct families, according to the classification of O'Grady – Voegelin – Voegelin 1966 (also adopted in Wurm 1972 and Yallop 1982: 45-47): Mayali and Warray belong to the Gunwinjguan family of Arnhem Land (Northern Territory); Nyulnyul and Yawuru to the Nyulnyulan family of Dampier Land (Kimberley, Western Australia); the other three Northern Territory languages, Anindilyakwa,

Ndjébbana and Murrinh-Patha, constitute the single members of their families.

Evans discusses in detail the syntax and semantics of body part noun incorporation into *Mayali* verbs. He argues that incorporation of body part nouns, contra Baker 1987: 4, is as regular as other types of syntactic incorporation, and is governed by the same accessibility hierarchy for thematic role: basically, incorporation in Mayali primarily involves parts whose whole functions as intransitive subject or transitive object (see Mithun 1984, 1986). For other roles, a different construction is required involving the body part represented in an external, case-marked nominal. A number of nouns other than body part nouns incorporate in the same construction, including terms for personal representation such as 'spirit', 'speech' and 'name', products and inanimate parts of wholes but not kin terms or 'country'. According to Evans, the entire class may be characterised as those entities which imply the existence of some other entity, the "whole" to which they belong, or with which they are associated. None of these nouns is, however, necessarily incorporated, and Evans argues that discourse factors condition their incorporation: they normally incorporate unless there is special focus on the part, indicating its status as an independent discourse participant. Evans points to various grammatical parallels between body part incorporation and another type of syntactic incorporation in Mayali, namely generic incorporation, which he relates to morpho-syntactic similarities in the encoding of part-whole, generic-specific and secondary predicate constructions in Australian languages: all involve apposition of the part and the whole nominal. Evans further suggests that this formal similarity is semantically motivated: different aspects of the same entity are juxtaposed. No change occurs in argument structure of the clause, and thus Evans argues against a "possessor raising" analysis for body part incorporation.

Harvey examines inalienability in relation to three morpho-syntactic phenomena in *Warray*: noun classes, nominal compounding and noun incorporation. He argues that noun class marking distinguishes alienably from inalienably possessed body parts and products, the alienable class including terms for exuviae and regenerative (or replaceable) "parts" including hair and parts of inanimate wholes such as leaves. Several apparent anomalies in the class marking of body part and related terms can, he argues, be accounted for if a notion of "person" rather than "body" is taken to be the prototypical "whole" in relation to human beings. Harvey next describes the process of synecdoche through which names for plant and animal species, as well as traditional nicknames, are formed

through a type of nominal compounding, productive only for inalienably possessed parts, in which a condition of the part is represented as an enduring quality of the whole. The main part of Harvey's contribution analyses noun incorporation, which is restricted to the personal domain for animates, that is, body part nouns and personal attributes. Absolutive nouns of these types may be incorporated, in which case they indicate the extent or locus of an event. Only the whole noun, and not the part, is cross-referenced by means of a pronominal prefix on the verb; the incorporated part noun thus has no argument status, and functions as a "range" (Halliday 1985). Discourse factors such as lack of individuation or low discourse status of the "part" noun motivate use of an incorporated rather than external nominal. Harvey also points out the difficulties of analysing this Warray construction in terms of "possessor ascension", it not being possible in all cases to derive incorporated from unincorporated structures. Moreover, Harvey views the clause with the incorporated "part" term as being the unmarked one both in terms of construction type and discourse status.

Hosokawa sets up a typology of body part syntax in *Yawuru*, contrasting an array of four non-basic syntactic constructions: the double subject transitive, the double subject intransitive, the double object and the quasi-passive. All four constructions code a whole-part relation between a person and part of their body; cross-referencing in the verb is restricted to the "whole" noun. By extension, other entities which are regarded in *Yawuru* culture as inalienably possessed – primarily personal representation such as names, shadows, footprints, personal dreamings, etc. – are also coded in the same way. Accordingly, Hosokawa characterises these four constructions as "identity-sensitive". Nouns from these semantic domains are, however, not necessarily incorporated into clauses by means of the "identity-sensitive" constructions: they may also be represented by one of the three basic clause types. Hosokawa goes on to argue that the two possibilities contrast semantically: in the identity sensitive constructions the referents are treated as inalienable parts of the person's whole existence; otherwise, they are represented as alienable, and thus as not essential to a person's identity. Further, Hosokawa shows that each of the "identity-sensitive" clause types contrasts semantically as well: both double-subject constructions foreground the part and defocus the whole; the double-object construction backgrounds the part; and the quasi-passive indicates non-volitionality and inadvertency of the event with the focus being on a typically inanimate agent.

Three phenomena relating to the morphosyntax of body part expressions in *Anindilyakwa* (Groote Eylandt) are discussed in depth in Leeding's contribution: noun classes, possession types and noun incorporation. Leeding argues that noun classes are semantically based, and may be characterised by the features [\pm personified], [\pm singular], [\pm feminine human], [\pm masculine human] (the binary opposition for the two genders being humans versus nonhuman animates and inanimates with supernatural powers), [\pm visible] and [\pm lustrous]. Most body parts fall into the non-personified classes according to their appearance as lustrous or not, while some belong to the non-human masculine class when associated with the spirit world (e.g. through association with ceremony or sickness and death). Leeding next distinguishes four morphologically distinct types of nominal possession and shows how they may be ranged along a continuum from inalienable to semi-alienable to alienable; with kin relations forming a fourth and special category of their own. In the final part of the analysis, three types of noun incorporation are identified and investigated. Syntactic incorporation is restricted to body parts that are either grammatical objects of transitive action verbs or subjects of reflexive ones. Interestingly, incorporation of body part nouns into transitive verbs is in complementary distribution with pronominal cross-referencing of the whole, suggesting that the two are functionally akin. Leeding thus suggests that incorporation represents argument status of the body part noun, and hence that noun incorporation, unlike other noun incorporating languages discussed in this book, represents alienability, rather than inalienability. This type is productive, and usually has a non-metaphorical interpretation. In lexical compounding, by contrast, a body part noun may be incorporated into either an intransitive verb to which it holds a subject role, or an adjective or noun root. Although nonproductive, this type frequently engenders metaphorical meaning extensions. The third type involves incorporation of body part nouns into shape adjective roots to form species names through the coding of salient physical features. This is similar in function to nominal compounding in Warray (see above).

McGregor's contribution describes inalienable possession in *Nyulnyul*. This language employs a system of obligatory pronominal prefixes coding person and number of the possessor, which are attached to a small set of around forty nominal roots and stems referring to body parts, personal representation (such as names, images and footprints), and protective coverings. Prefixing is shown to be restricted to just those body part and attribute nouns which are regarded as essential to the normal

functioning of a human being as reflected in Nyulnyul culture, where the term "human being" is interpreted in this particular linguistic context as a generalised, non-sex-specific person without any of the salient characterising features of the individual. A semantic principle is thus shown to account for the pattern of prefixing in a regular and inclusive manner; prefixing is not arbitrarily restricted to vowel initial nouns, as suggested by Capell (1972). Comparison is made of prefixing nouns in neighbouring Nyulnyulan and Worroran languages, showing that these largely coincide. McGregor also suggests a potential diachronic source for nominal prefixing in Nyulnyul, proposing that it is the outcome of morphologisation of the double object construction in which possessor and part nouns are identically case marked as absolutive. Support for this proposal is found in evidence that prefixing nouns in Nyulnyul correspond by and large to nouns which are frequently found in the double object construction in the genetically unrelated language Gooniyandi (McGregor 1985).

The Arnhem Land language *Njébbana* shows four basically disjoint possession classes defined according to the means of marking the possessor. These are structurally and semantically characterised as follows: (A) a free cardinal pronoun in juxtaposition with the possessed noun, the latter being drawn from an open class of nouns referring to objects viewed as independent items, including bodily products, internal organs, bones, kin, as well as artefacts, locations and loan words; (B) a pronominal subject prefix attached to a form of the verb *réndjeyi* 'stand, be' preceded by the possessed noun which codes mainly external body parts; (C) a possessive pronoun suffixed to the possessed noun coding a closed set of body parts; and (D) a pronominal prefix to the possessed noun which belongs to a closed class of nouns indicating body parts, types of people and attributes (qualities). McKay argues for a semantic motivation in determining the choice of possession marking, based on the degree of inalienability from most alienable (separate pronoun) to the least alienable (pronominal affixes to the noun). The degree of morphological "closeness" is an iconic reflection of inalienability (cf. Haiman 1985; Croft 1991: 174-176): at the inalienable end of this continuum, for classes C and D, affixation codes the conceptual identity of possessor and possessed; at the alienable end, the separate word status reflects the cognitive status of the referents as separate entities. McKay suggests that the more alienable possession class B with the positional verb *réndjeyi* 'stand, be' is a somewhat anomalous intermediate type, coding mainly external and visible parts of the body. The use of such an existential

verb of posture supports, however, Lyons (1967) proposed universal link between possessive, locational and existential constructions.

Walsh describes the metaphorical extension of body part terms in noun incorporation in *Murrinh-Patha* (Wadeye (Port Keats)), which, argues Walsh, plays a central role in Murrinh-Patha grammar. Approximately thirty five body part roots may be incorporated into verbs, nouns and adjectives, coding a continuum of senses from the literal to the metaphorical. Walsh first describes adjectival roots with incorporated body part nouns which may be suffixed by bound pronouns cross-referencing the possessor in a similar manner to Njébbana possession class C (see previous paragraph), thereby identifying the person with a certain quality. Next, in the main part of the analysis, he outlines a large number of metaphorical themes associated with noun incorporation, thus displaying the richness of this linguistic device in Murrinh-Patha. These metaphors include spatial orientation, emotions, shape, attitudes and knowledge; for example, *-rdarri-* 'back' metaphorically extends to 'behindness', 'anteriority', 'plenty' and 'solidarity'. Thirdly, he further suggests that analysis of the processes of metaphor may prove relevant for other parts of the lexico-grammar: they may suggest analysis as complex nominal stems forms which might otherwise appear to be simple noun roots.

Part III contains two contributions which deal with a pair of distantly related Oceanic languages of the Austronesian family, a language family which is scattered across the Pacific region. One is Paamese, a southern Melanesian language spoken on the island of Paama in the Republic of Vanuatu (formerly the condominium of the New Hebrides). The other is Tinrin, a language spoken in New Caledonia.

In the first paper by Crowley, a comprehensive treatment is provided of the two main strategies used for marking nominal possession in *Paamese*. Inalienable possession is coded by pronominal possessive suffixes on the possessed noun, whereas alienable possession is marked by a set of free form possessive constituents to which the same set of pronominal suffixes cross-referencing the possessor is attached. Crowley undertakes a detailed investigation of a number of apparent exceptions to this semantically-based alternation, arguing that it is ultimately possible to account for the possession type associated with almost all nouns, although this requires a reformulation of the notions of alienability and inalienability in Paamese on the basis of culture-specific knowledge. The categories of consanguineal kin, inseparable body parts including internal organs essential to life, personal representation, body products which are exuded through normal bodily functions or are permanently associated

with a person, as well as some nouns for part-whole relations, imprints, spatial orientation and "best food" are expressed by means of the inalienable strategy. For many of these, suggests Crowley, the referent of the possessed noun does not exist independently of the possessor. By contrast, internal body parts which are not seen as central to emotions or life, and temporary manifestations of the body such as swellings and infections associated with abnormal activity are normally alienably marked, these existing independently of the possessor – internal organs, for example, are normally encountered in the context of butchery. In addition, vocatives for kin and many affinal kin terms, also loan words from the English-lexifier pidgin, Bislama, in which most Paamese speakers are bilingual, are treated as alienables. Crowley concludes his analysis by showing that it is possible to treat inalienably marked nouns as unpossessed, that is, as unrelated to any possessor, when, for example, a body part noun is dissociated from its possessor; used generically; viewed as a source of food or forms part of a metaphor. For this purpose, some suffixing nouns show a derived unsuffixed free form; but most use a "dummy" third person singular suffix.

In the second paper, Osumi discusses the semantics of morpho-syntactic strategies for the expression of possession, similar to those in Paamese, and distinguishes several different types of inalienable and alienable possession in *Tinrin* showing how these can be ranged along a continuum. Inalienable possession is expressed by means of possessed-possessor word order: the possessed noun belongs to a restricted set of bound nominals while the possessor noun may be coded either by a pronominal suffix or a full noun. Bound nouns represent inherent relations such as kin, body parts and products, personal representations, and also certain inanimate parts. This same nominal construction may also be used with bound location nouns referring to a spatial attribute of an entity (e.g. beside, inside, etc.), or to one of seven possessive classifiers (whose primary function is, however, to form an alienable construction). Alienable possession falls into two types: (a) a construction employing one of seven possessive classifiers procliticised to the possessor noun or suffixed by a pronominal and indicating the type of possession – as fruit, meat, starch food, objects for chewing, drinks, plants or belongings in conjunction with a specific possessed NP that may precede or follow this unit;⁴ (b) a construction in which one of three possessive prepositions – associated with temporary possession, essential means of livelihood, or fire – is placed invariably after the possessed noun and precedes the possessor. Osumi also identifies a third type of possessive construc-

tion coded by a link morpheme *-nrâ-*. This, she argues, is intermediate between inalienable and alienable possession, and typically includes possessed nouns referring to affinal and more distant kin, transient personal attributes, internal organs and bodily exuviae.

Part IV consists of three contributions dealing with a number of languages of Asia from several unrelated families. The first, Mandarin Chinese belongs to the Sinitic subgrouping within Sino-Tibetan, while the genetic affiliation for the second, Japanese, remains a subject of debate, some linguists arguing for its inclusion in Altaic, others for a remote connection to Austronesian. Tsunoda's analysis of Japanese makes comparisons of different construction types in that language with their correlates in two Australian languages – Djaru and Warrungu – and also with English. In the third paper by Clark, a large range of unrelated languages spoken in the mainland Southeast Asian countries of Thailand, Laos, Cambodia and Vietnam is represented, namely, Austroasiatic languages such as Vietnamese (Viet-Muong) and Khmer, Chrau and Rengao (all part of the Mon-Khmer branch); White Hmong of Laos (Hmong-Mien); also Thai and Nung (Tai). In languages of the Asian region, alienable-inalienable distinctions are not generally morphologically marked on nouns. Instead, reflexes of this semantic phenomenon are typically found at the clause-level, and it is these which are examined in each of the three papers in part IV.

Chappell presents a discourse-based semantic study of double subject constructions with intransitive predicates in *Mandarin Chinese*, using data from both spoken and literary narratives. After briefly reviewing the nominal syntax of genitive and appositional noun phrases as a potential strategy for the expression of inalienability, she distinguishes three types of topic-comment constructions showing that one in particular – the double subject construction – expresses the relation of inalienability and the personal domain in Mandarin. In this construction there are two utterance-initial NPs, the first representing the whole and the second, the part or relational noun; the NPs are simply juxtaposed, without any morphological marking. The semantic function of this construction is to characterise a person (the whole) in terms of a predicate that can refer to either physical and psychological states or conditions of a part, (but not intense transient emotions); to a kin relation; or to the social self as embodied in collectives such as nation, workplace or institute of study (viewed as a community of people the individual may identify with). Analysis of the intonational properties of the double subject construction shows that if the possessor is referred to by a lexical NP, it is usually

set off in its own intonation unit from the remainder of the utterance. If it is coded by a pronominal, however, there is usually no intonation break between possessor and possessed. The possessor NP may of course be ellipsed, if given. Chappell refers to this construction as a “reduced form of the double subject construction”. Thus, there is an overall tendency not to mention the possessor in the same intonation unit unless in pronominal form which tallies well with Chafe’s “one new concept at a time” constraint (1987: 32). A second topic concerns the function of complex genitive noun phrases in Mandarin which are shown to individuate and focus upon – as opposed to relate – aspects of the personal domain to their possessors.

Clark examines the semantics and syntax of a construction involving stative verbs and predicative body part expressions in a number of South-east Asian languages, specifically, *Vietnamese*, *Khmer*, *Chrau*, *Rengao*, *White Hmong*, *Thai* and *Nung*. In this construction, the term referring to the person is subject and precedes the verb, while the body part term is predicative, generally following the verb. This structure codes a physical state undergone by the subject possessor but which is located in a body part, and can metaphorically extend to emotions which are considered to be located in various organs, depending on the language. This contrasts semantically with a construction in which the part and whole together form a NP, the subject of the clause and in combination with the stative predicate, simply indicates a state of the body part. Clark suggests that the predicative construction may involve some form of noun incorporation, consequent upon possessor raising of the “whole” NP to subject role. However, if it is in fact noun incorporation, then the noun is not as tightly bound as in languages such as Mohawk and Mayali. This notwithstanding, it is true that the body part noun and the stative verb function as a single grammatical unit, the body part noun having foregone its argument status to be coded as a single unmodified noun within the predicate – although classifier modification is permitted in some languages. Clark emphasises that it is this predicative construction with an incorporated body part noun which is the preferred strategy as it permits focus upon the subject possessor undergoing the state.

Tsunoda argues that inalienability must be analysed in the form of a possession cline for *Japanese* representing the degree of closeness of possessor and possessed nouns. Two common strategies for coding nominal and verbal possession in Japanese are first identified and contrasted with English and two Pama-Nyungan languages of Australia, Djaru and Warrungu. The main part of Tsunoda’s analysis concerns, however, honorifics

in Japanese, for which it is well-known that politeness or respect may be expressed vis-à-vis either the addressee or some other third person referent typically coded as a subject or object argument of the clause. In addition to these two categories of performative and propositional honorifics, Tsunoda shows that the possessor of either a subject or object argument may be accorded a respect honorific. This phenomenon he designates “possessor respect”, arguing that the acceptability of possessor respect correlates with a cline relating to the semantic domain of the possessed item in the following way: body part > inherent attribute > clothing > (kin) > pets > products > other possessions.⁵ The higher on the cline the possessed item is, the correspondingly more acceptable is possessor respect. Moreover, this interacts with the syntactic role of the possessed item in Japanese: possessor respect can only be coded when the possessed noun is direct object or indirect object of a transitive verb, or subject of an intransitive verb, but not, when it is subject of a transitive verb. Tsunoda shows that this cline is also applicable to other phenomena in Japanese, such as the double subject construction, the five different possessive verbs taking different case frames, and the genitive construction, at the same time, observing correlations with the acceptability of possessor ascension constructions in other languages. He argues further that it accounts for the choice between inalienable and alienable possession constructions in Djaru and Warrungu, where inalienable possession, expressed by juxtaposition, is limited to body parts and attributes; lower down the cline, possession is indicated by the genitive. In a final section, he discusses the cline with respect to attributive constructions in Warrungu and Djaru with the ‘having’ suffix and compares these with the counterpart English constructions.

Part V contains contributions describing inalienability in two unrelated polysynthetic Amerindian languages of North America, both of which show alienable versus inalienable contrasts in nominal possession constructions, and noun incorporation for inalienables. These are Mohawk, an Iroquoian language spoken in the northeastern part of North America and Koyukon, a NaDene language belonging to the Athabaskan family whose speakers live in the interior regions of Alaska.

In the first paper, Mithun distinguishes two classes of nouns in *Mohawk* on formal and semantic grounds. The first class, which take agentive pronominal prefixes indicating the possessor, together with a locative suffix on the possessed noun, contains mainly nouns for attached, controllable and visible body parts of humans and animates. Most other nouns including material possessions, internal organs, separated body