

Inconsistent Distinction of Possessive and Qualitative Nominal Attribution in Indonesian

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1. Possessive and Qualitative Nominal Attribution

Many languages of East and Southeast Asia permit the use of a noun as qualitative attribute (as in English *the table leg*) beside its more universally observable attributive use to express possession (*the table's leg*). I shall refer to the two syntagmatic modes as qualitative and possessive nominal attribute (QNA and PNA) respectively. It should be stressed, that it is the formal grammatical apposition which is meant here. Materially, or on the plane of content, of course, *a table leg* is practically the same as *a table's leg*. From a purely semantic point of view, therefore, a PNA explicitly indicates possession, whereas a QNA expresses either qualitative attribution, or one in which the either qualitative or possessive nature of the relationship is irrelevant or ignored. In some languages, perhaps, there only was one unspecific nominal attribute (UNA) which gradually specialized into a QNA after the emergence of a distinct PNA.

In most languages featuring the two alternative nominal constructions, the possessive can as a rule be distinguished from the qualitative in that the former requires the mediation of a possessive copula (PC) between the PNA and the target of attribution. It is thus typically:

N_1 –PC– N_2 *versus* N_1 – N_2 ,

where N_1 and N_2 are, respectively, the target and attribute nouns in languages with “post-attributing” word order, or vice versa in those with “pre-attributing” order.

Typically, the PC derives etymologically from a third person singular possessive pronoun, or from a noun meaning ‘thing, possession, belonging’. In English, the possessive “suffix” -’s, which one could essentially also treat as an enclitic, derives from *his*. The use of *his* as PC, which apparently developed during the 13th–16th centuries, is believed to have been the result of misinterpretation of the Middle English genitive ending -es, often spelled -is or -ys, and pronounced correspondingly (Baugh & Cable 1978:240). Influence of Low German vernacular, in

which *sein* ‘his’ and *ihr* ‘her’ could serve as PC for the masculine and feminine respectively, might have played a role as a result of trade activities of the Hansa around the North and Baltic Seas.

In some Austronesian languages of insular Southeast Asia, the PC derives from the third person singular possessive pronoun too. It is often a clitic, which I shall indicate with a hyphen before an enclitic, or after a proclitic. Examples of PC in these languages are: Malay *-nya*, Javanese *-ne/-e* (the latter after a word with final consonant). In mainland Southeast Asia, the PC typically derives from a word meaning ‘thing, possession’, e.g. Vietnamese *của* (originally ‘thing, possession’), Thai *khóong* (‘thing’). In some languages of East Indonesia and Melanesia, the etymology points to ‘possession’ as the original meaning, e.g. Moluccan Malay *punya*,¹ Tok Pisin *bilong* (from English *belong*). In Chinese, the PC *-de* appears to derive from *dì* ‘target’ which is written with the same character.

In languages, in which the noun can be used as a qualitative attribute, the PC obtains additional significance as a formal marker distinguishing explicit possessive nominal attribution from the qualitative. In some of the languages, explicit PNA appears to be conditioned by the definiteness of the target or of the possessor, which may be expressed with the help of a preceding classifier² (Cl), sometimes preceded in turn by a deictic (Dct) or a numeral.

(1) Thai:

<i>duang</i>	<i>séeng</i>	<i>khóong</i>	<i>tàwan</i>
Cl	light-ray	PC	sun
‘the light rays of the sun’			

<i>séeng</i>	<i>tàwan</i>
light-ray	sun
‘sunlight, sunbeam’	

(2) Chinese:

<i>zhè</i>	<i>gè</i>	<i>jīaoshī</i>	<i>-de</i>	<i>bàngōngshì</i>
Dct	Cl	teacher	PC	office
‘the office of this teacher’				

yī gè jiàoshī -de bàngōngshì
 one Cl teacher PC office
 'the office of a teacher'

jiàoshī bàngōngshì
 teacher office
 'teachers' [office] room'

Thai is post-attributing, Chinese, pre-attributing. In the latter gloss, the teachers' room in a school is meant, i.e. the room reserved for teachers to meet or rest in during pauses.

The PC becomes redundant when the possessor is expressed by a personal pronoun (or a pronoun substitute), because the latter cannot serve as QNA in these languages. In some such languages, no PC is used at all before a pronoun in possessive mode, in some others, its use is optional. In Vietnamese, for example, the construction with PC seems to be restricted to instances when the target is rendered definite by a preceding classifier (compare also the Thai glosses above):

(3) Vietnamese:

cái nhà của tôi
 Cl house PC me
 'the house that is mine'

nhà tôi
 house me
 'my house'

In the instance of nouns, however, the general rule seems to be that a PC is required, because its absence would automatically imply qualitative attribution, or at least render the attributive relation unspecified.

2. The Development in Indonesian

In Indonesian we have a remarkable exception to the general rule for languages with qualitative nominal attribution, in that the use of a PC in possessive nominal attribution is optional, and under certain stylistic conditions even avoided. Whereas the construction with PC is unambiguously possessive, that without PC may essentially be interpreted as either qualitative or possessive:

- (4) *pintu* *-nya* *rumah*
 door PC house

‘door of the house’

pintu rumah – ‘1. house door, 2. door of a/the house’

- kamar* *-nya* *guru*
 room PC teacher

‘the teacher’s room’

kamar guru – ‘1. teachers room, 2. the teacher’s room’

- calon* *-nya* *direktur*
 candidate PC director

‘the director’s nominee’

calon direktur – ‘1. candidate director, 2. director’s nominee’

In Classical Malay, the PC was usually omitted.³ Consequently, the construction with PC was not provided for in School Malay (see van Ophuijsen 1910:49), the language which was officially prescribed from the first decade of this century for Malay classes in government schools and for Malay publications by the government Commission for Popular Literature till the end of the colonial period. This artificially conserved dialect however did not reflect the actually spoken language. The historical language tradition it reflected was rapidly declining from the fall of Malacca in 1511, dwindling to the status of court language of the since 1824 powerless petty Sultanate of Riau, and apparently all but extinct by the time School Malay was established in the first two decades of this century.

The declining role of literary and courtly High Malay was compensated by the dramatically increased importance and distribution of Low Malay vernaculars. The omnipresence of these latter was already noted in a letter dated November 15, 1697, from the later Malay Bible translator Melchior Leydecker to the Christian Synod of North Holland, in which the author referred to them as *Bahàsa Katsjòkan* or a “mixed or crooked crippled language” (p. 13 in the text of the letter reproduced in Valentyn 1698:9–30). During the period of Dutch rule, a very loosely uniform tradition of Low Malay developed as administrative or “Service Malay” (Dutch *Dienst Maleis[ch]*), in which the Moluccan Malay possessive construction with *punya* as PC was a prominent feature. It is interesting in that it preserves the East-Indonesia typical “pre-attributing” word order, i.e. the attribute precedes the target. The following may serve as example:

- (5) *Lain tidak, **kita punya tabék** sama saudara, dan **kita punya anak pangéranpangéran** kirim tabék sama sudara dan kasih selamat jalan soma saudara.*

‘And all but **our farewell wishes** are with you, and **our sons** the princes send their farewell wishes to you and wish you a pleasant journey.’

Sultan of Madura to Cornets de Groot, Sept. 24, 1830
(Francis 1892:39–40)

The Dutch missionary school at Ambon in the Moluccas played a crucial role in the development of Latin script Malay for language instruction, correspondence, and publication. It is not surprising, that the Moluccan Malay feature gained such wide distribution in the Archipelago. It is already attested in one of the earliest sketches on Malay written in the Moluccas, appended to the Malay Dictionary of Wiltens & Danckaerts (1623:135; transliterated and brought into accordance with modern spelling):

- (6) *béta tahu **dia punya gila***

‘I know of his madness’

The same construction can be found in the Malay Bible translation of Daniel Brouwerius (similarly transliterated and spelling-corrected)

- (7) *Maka dia [a]da berjalan ke hadapan muka Dia dengan **Elias punya Spirito dan kuasa**, pada balikkan **bapak-bapak punya hati** kepada anak-anak-nya, dan orang nakal kepada **orang adil punya budiman**, pada hadirkan rakyat berhadir pada Allah Taala*
(Brouwerius 1668:108 verso)

‘And he shall go before him in the **spirit and power of Elias**, to turn the **hearts of the fathers** to the children, and the disobedient to the **wisdom of the just**; to make ready a people prepared for the Lord’

(Luke 1.17)

The construction was also taken up in 20th century intellectual Bazaar Malay as an emphatic alternative to the more neutral style possessive with *-nya* as PC. As emphatic expression, it has been retained

in Indonesian, where it can be frequently encountered in newspapers and publicist literature since the 1920s, and is already attested in the literary language since the 1940s, as e.g. in the poetry of Chairil Anwar (transliterated):

(8) *Kami sudah beri **kami punya nyawa***

‘We have given already **our lives**’

(Ch. Anwar, ‘Krawang-Bekasi’, 1948)⁴

The original nuclear Malay construction seems to have originally inspired the Moluccan Malay PNA, but along with the, for Malay, normal post-attributing word order⁵ likewise continues to persist in Indonesian, as becomes evident from another poem of Chairil Anwar (transliterated):

(9) *Taman **punya kita** berdua*

tak lebar luas, kecil saja

satu tak kehilangan lain dalam-nya.

‘Our **garden, of us** two alone,

is but small, with not much room to spare

one couldn’t ever lose another there.

(Ch. Anwar, Taman, 1943)⁶

The construction is relatively rarely used, and has in any case not become a standard means of expressing possession. I shall not further discuss it in this paper.

The culturally western-exposed indigenous middle class emerging at the last turn of the century, which was to form the social basis of the independence movement, quite naturally used the living language, Bazaar Malay, rather than the obsolete School Malay. In the former, the neutral style PNA employed the PC *-nya*. The following examples are taken from the 1913 statutes of the Islamic League (*Sarékat Islam*) as published in the weekly *Hindia Serikat*, volume 1, 1913, p. 173 (in modern transliteration with “corrected” spelling).

(10) *memberi pertolongan kepada **lid-lid-nya perhimpunan***

‘to provide assistance for **members of the organization**’

*memajukan kepandaian dan segala sesuatu yang menjadikan selamat dan senang **hidup-nya bumiputera***

‘to promote education and all things which bring welfare and happiness in the **life of the indigenous population**’

Already in Bazaar Malay, however, the use of the PC in a PNA was not consistent, and when the attributive relation to be expressed was either clear from the context or deemed irrelevant, the PC could be left out. The following example is from the same source (similarly transliterated).

(11) *memajukan **nafsu bumi putera** pada hal perdagangan*

‘to promote the **interest of indigenous people** for commerce’

In practice, the strict use of School Malay was only enforced in government schools for the indigenous population and (since 1919) in publications of the Commission for Popular Literature. Schools for the so-called “non-indigenous orientals” successfully resisted its implementation, and Malay courses and textbooks for Europeans ignored it altogether, as also even official government publications did. The following example from a form appended to the 1918 Instructions on the Carrying Out of the Landleasing Reglement for Surakarta and Yogyakarta illustrates the use of the PC *-nya* in the officialese Bazaar Malay of the colonial administration (transliterated and spelling-corrected).⁷

(12) *bahwa jikalau ada perselisihan tentang **batas-nya tanah-tanah** sewaan, ...*

‘that if a dispute should arise over the **borders of the lands** leased, ...’

Up to around 1919, when the editors of the Commission for Popular Literature began more stringently to require conformance of the language with the standards of School Malay laid down by van Ophuijsen, the Bazaar Malay PNA with *-nya* could occasionally slip even into publications of the Commission (transliterated and spelling-corrected).

(13) *Ini perban dibikin menurut **model-nya** tuan Utermohlen, ...*

‘This bandage is made following the **fashion of Mr. Utermohlen**, ...’

(M.Pw. Soeardja, 1915)⁸

*Kalau kita perhatikan perantaraan kedua **macam-nya** benda itu yaitu jarum gangsa dan gading ...*

‘If we consider the mediation of the two **kinds of things**, that is the brass and ivory needle ...’

(Rassat 1918:34)

The development of spoken Indonesian was a continuous gradual “amelioration” of intellectual Bazaar Malay by introducing ever more elements of the more prestigious School Malay, while that of written Indonesian tended to depart from School Malay by incorporating ever more elements of Bazaar. As a result of its Bazaar pedigree, the PNA with PC *-nya* retains a certain colloquial connotation, and there continues to be a tendency to avoid it in formal or bookish style. Nevertheless, already in the 1930s, inspite of the still widely prevailing orthodoxal use of School Malay in serious publications, the PNA with *-nya* began quite resolutely to present itself in this genre too. And a sentence like the following by the prominent writer and grammarian Alisjahbana (1935:365) no longer caused a sensation (transliterated).

(14) *Tuan tiada tahu **arti-nya** hidup*

‘You do not know the **meaning of being alive**’

In absence of the PC, the meaning would have been ‘You do not know the living meaning’.

The PNA with *-nya* has meanwhile become a feature of the literary language as well, to which the following examples from prose and poetry respectively bear testimony (transliterated without spelling correction).

(15) *Kelihatan orang-orang itu bekerja dengan tentram, tak merasa wegah karena **luas-nya tanah** yang mesti digarap, tak merasa sungkan karena **panas-nya hari** yang membakar jangat, ...*

'You could see the people quietly doing their work, not being discouraged by the **expanse of the land** they had to till, not being deterred by the **heat of the sun** that scorched their hides, ...'

(Tjakar, *Mencari*, 1954)⁹

Ia pun lelah

*dan mengerti **arti-nya rumah**.*

'He was tired now

and understood the **meaning of home**.'

(W.S. Rendra, *Ada Tilgram Tiba Senja*, 1957)¹⁰

Personal pronouns, which in Indonesian do not share the paradigm of nouns (see Mahdi 1993:199–200), cannot serve as QNA, so the nature of the attribution is unambiguous even in absence of a PC. The use of *-nya* in Indonesian continues to be stylistically colloquial, and is only employed in literary publications as a means of introducing a colloquial atmosphere or attaching a folksy tag to a character or his or her behavior.

3. The Pragmatics Around the Use of PNA, QNA, and UNA

It was already mentioned, that in consequence of the optionality of the use of the PC in a PNA in Indonesian, a nominal attribute not mediated by a PC could either be a PNA or a QNA. There are, however, a number of circumstances that reveal the actually implied nature of attribution.

In absence of contextual indications of the nature of the attribute, the attribution must be considered either ambiguous, or unspecific. The former may answer more to an analytical theoretical approach, but it is the latter, in my opinion, which more closely characterizes the pragmatics involved. Classical Malay literature in which the use of *-nya* as PC was avoided evolved in the feudal atmosphere of decadent Late Medieval and later Malay courts, for which the escape from profane dictates of mechanical or deterministic preciseness was quite "in character". The use of the effective UNA now as a rule comprises instances in which the distinction between PNA and QNA is considered irrelevant. For example:

- (16) *kaki kursi ini dibuat dari kaki méja*
 foot chair Det be-made from foot table

'This chair leg is made from a table leg'

Frequently, qualitative attribution is implied by circumstantial wisdom in instances which would theoretically seem to be UNA-s, e.g.

- (17) *kamar guru*
 'teachers room' (not 'a teacher's room')

kantor polisi
 'police office' (not 'a policeman's office')

In such cases, explicit means of expression are needed when the alternative possessive attribution is implied (see below). Often, however, transformation to PNA would lead to semantically exotic expressions. This is particularly true when the attribute is a noun denoting some material or substance serving as characterization of the target.

- (18) *rumah batu*
 'stone house' (not 'house belonging to a stone')

mesin uap
 'steam engine' (not 'machine belonging to steam')

tenaga listrik
 'electric energy' (not 'energy of electricity')

Qualitative attribution is also implicit in a large number of fixed expressions.

- (19) *wakil présidén*
 deputy president
 'vice-president'

lemari éś
 cupboard ice
 'refrigerator'

burung unta
 bird camel
 'ostrich'

Here too, explicit means are needed when one wishes to express the alternative possessive attribution (i.e. 'the president's deputy', 'the

camel's bird'). Finally, there is a subclass of nouns in Indonesian, which can only be used as QNA, which I have called "anominal" (Mahdi 1993:191). When they are to be used in positions other than that of QNA, an "empty" target of attribution has to be placed before them, the own lexical meaning of which is redundant (being already expressed by the noun in the forced QNA position). These are names of countries, rivers, mountains, islands, dates, weekdays, months, years, fish, snakes, birds, and trees. The respective empty targets are words meaning 'country', 'river', etc. In absence of such an empty target, the attribute is always a QNA.

(20) *kuda Nil*
horse Nile
'hippopotamus'

pasar Senin
market Monday
'Monday market'

minyak kayuputih
oil cajeput
'cajeput oil'

In possessive attribution, with or without PC, the corresponding "empty" target of qualitative attribution needs to be included, which then in turn serves as the actual PNA.

(21) *arus sungai Nil*
current river Nile
'current of the Nile'

pagi -nya hari Senin
morning PC day Monday
'the morning of Monday'

daun pohon kayuputih
leaf tree cajeput
'leaf of the cajeput tree'

The former and latter of the three last glosses at the same time serve as illustrations of the instance when the relationship between the denotates

of the target and the attribute would be readily perceived by circumstantial wisdom as corresponding to that expressed in possessive attribution. Compare also.

- (22) *potlot guru*
pencil teacher
'the teacher's pencil'

anggota organisasi
member organisation
'member of the organization'

isteri direktur
wife director
'the director's wife'

4. Disambiguating to PNA

The tendency towards greater precision of formulations in consequence of the role of the language as vehicle of cultural renovation in the process of gaining and consolidating national independence also led to the development of various means to overcome the ambiguity in nominal attribution. The problem was of course more acute in the literary language developing out of School Malay, rather than in the spoken language which grew out of Bazaar Malay, the latter already featuring a ready means to specify explicitly possessiveness, the PC *-nya*. The introduction of the same means into the written language of course suggested itself. Its use is now relatively widespread.

- (23) *kamar-nya guru*
'the teacher's room'

kantor-nya polisi
'the policeman's office, office of the police'

Prolonged resistance by a conservative majority among philologists, grammarians, and language teachers, however, quite effectively hindered the introduction of this means into formal style. Consequently, its use remained restricted to colloquial and informal speech for a long time. There is still a certain connotation of informality attached to it even today.

The first alternative means of explicitly specifying possessiveness of the attribution to become widespread in the speech of intellectuals

having knowledge of European languages, was the replacement of the implied PNA by a prepositional phrase introduced by *dari* ‘from’ or *daripada* ‘of’.¹¹ It apparently was a mechanical translation from the European, emerging in the 1920s and 1930s. The following is transliterated and spelling-corrected.

- (24) *Ledenvergadering umum daripada Perhimpunan Indonesia, yang diadakan pada tanggal 14 Oktober 1928 di Amsterdam, Mengambil pengetahuan daripada ...*

‘The **general meeting of the Indonesian Association**, which has been conducted on October 14, 1928, Taking notice of ...’

(a resolution of the Perhimpunan Indonesia, 1928)¹²

meréka kita ambil sebagai prototipe, contoh dari kaum terpelajar, walaupun saya tahu, bahwa di luar golongan sekolah tinggi ada juga orang yang setimbang kepandaian-nya

‘we take them as prototype, as **example of the educated**, although I know, that outside the high school group too there are equally intelligent people’

(Amir 1939:149)

A more subtle means of specifying possessive attribution derives from a particularity in the syntagmatics of the Indonesian noun, on the base of which I have proposed to distinguish between a “nominal” form of the noun and a homonymic “participial” form, the latter only occurring in the functions of QNA and circumstantial complement (Mahdi 1993:183, 187). Rigid constraints exist in the realization of syntactic valencies characteristic of the noun, most of which being actually valencies not of the noun in general, but of its “nominal” form. The realization of one of these valencies in the case of a noun in the “participial” form would immediately transform it into the “nominal” form. As a noun serving as QNA is in the first-mentioned form, and that serving as PNA is in the latter, realization of any of these valencies immediately identifies the attribution as a possessive one.

One of the critical valencies is the combination with a preceding numeral group consisting of a numeral and, optionally, a classifier or a unit of measure. When the nominal attribute is a count noun, inserting a group consisting of the clitic *se-* ‘one’ and a classifier suffices to

immediately establish it as PNA. For inanimates, the word *suatu* ‘a, one’, historically deriving from such a group (< *se-watu*) also does the trick.

- (25) *pintu* *suatu* *rumah*
 door a house
 ‘door of a house’

kamar *se-* *orang* *guru*
 room one Cl teacher
 ‘room of a teacher’

kantor *se-* *orang* *polisi*
 office one Cl police
 ‘office of a policeman’

cinta *se-* *orang* *ibu*
 love one Cl mother
 ‘the love of a mother’

Another critical valency was actually already discussed above, and that is the capability of combining with a preceding preposition, which is likewise impossible for a noun in the “participial” form.

A noun in the “participial” form can also not have a possessive attribute. Therefore, if a QNA is immediately followed by such an attribute, the latter cannot refer to the noun serving as QNA, but only to its target. The opposite interpretation would immediately transform the QNA into a PNA. Compare the following.

- (26) *rumah* *batu* *kami*
 house stone we
 ‘our stone house’

Here, *rumah* is the target of the QNA *batu* as well as of the possessive attribute *kami*. If one assumes *kami* to be aimed at *batu*, this latter would automatically be transformed into the “nominal” form which cannot be a QNA, but must in this context be a PNA of *rumah*. The phrase would then translate as ‘our stone’s house’ which, being unrealistic, is eliminated by circumstantial wisdom. When, however, the latter grammatical interpretation is contextually or circumstantially the preferred or more realistic one, than we have a disambiguation of the (first) attribute as PNA.

(27) *pintu rumah saya*
 door house me
 'the door of my house'

cinta ibu kami
 love mother we
 'our mother's love'

It was already noted above, that Indonesian personal pronouns do not share the same morphological paradigm with nouns. Instead, they form a distinct hyperclass of words together with proper names, and a class of words I have called "relational pro-names", being "pronominalized" kinship and titular terms, obtaining, as a result of this conversion, grammatical properties similar to those of personal pronouns and proper names (Mahdi 1993:199). It is common to all three word classes, that they do not have a "participial" form and thus cannot serve as QNA. An attribute solely consisting of any one word of these three classes is thus necessarily possessive.

(28) *rumah kami*
 house we
 'our house'

rumus Einstein
 formula Einstein
 'Einstein's formula'

kantor tuan
 office <Mister>
 'your office'

This means that any context leading to the identification of an attribute as member of one of these three classes automatically disambiguates the attribution to possessive one. The "relational pro-names" have a full and an abbreviated article form in their paradigm. These forms function like the two personal articles *si-* (neutral or familiar) and *sang* (honorific) in that they identify a following word as proper name or its equivalent. Whenever an attribute is preceded by either an article form or a personal article (both terms will be abbreviated to Art), it can only be a possessive attribute.

(29) *pendapat si- penulis*
 opinion Art writer
 'the writer's opinion'

penaikan Sang Dwiwarna
 the-raising Art Bicolor
 'the hoisting of the Bicolor'¹³

kantor Pak Polisi
 office Art police
 'the policeman's office'

In this, however, we may also see the effect of another, more general rule, and that is that a "participial" form of a noun must immediately follow the noun it is the attribute of, or the verb or adjective for which it serves as circumstantial complement. Thus, any other word inserted between a nominal attribute and the target would have the same effect of disambiguating to possessive attribution.

5. Disambiguating to QNA

It is much more difficult to specify explicitly the nature of a nominal attribute as being qualitative, than to establish its being possessive. The "participial" form of the noun does not have any syntactic valencies, not shared by the "nominal" form. Some rather "artificial" steps therefore have to be taken when one wishes to make the qualitative nature of the attribution explicit.

When an abstract noun serves as attribute, it is by circumstantial wisdom less likely to be a PNA, and thus more likely to be a QNA, than in the instance of a concrete noun. In Indonesian, abstract nouns can be formed by circumfixation of *ke-...-an* to verbs, adjectives, and nouns.

(30) <i>datang</i> 'come'	—	<i>kedatangan</i> 'arrival'
<i>kaya</i> 'rich'	—	<i>kekayaan</i> 'wealth'
<i>ibu</i> 'mother'	—	<i>keibuan</i> 'motherliness, motherhood'
<i>negara</i> 'state'	—	<i>kenegaraan</i> 'statehood, stateliness'
<i>raja</i> 'king'	—	<i>kerajaan</i> 'kingdom, kingship'

Replacement of the basic noun by the respective derived noun has the effect of implicating that the attribute is a QNA. The parallel existence of the two competing expressions has the additional effect of mutually excluding the respective less likely nature of attribution implied. One

always has in the back of one's mind, that if the speaker or writer meant the other nature of attribution, he/she would have used the corresponding other expression. In this way the tendency arises to perceive the basic noun as PNA, and the corresponding derived abstract noun as QNA.

(31) *cinta ibu* 'a mother's love' — *cinta keibuan* 'motherly love'

tamu negara 'guest of the state' — *tamu kenegaraan* 'state guest'

tanda raja 'sign of a king' — *tanda kerajaan* 'royal insignium, sign of royalty'

As the latter example demonstrates, however, the apposition is not absolute, and the respective "less likely" nature of attribution is not totally excluded.

Alternatively one is left to take recourse to a circumscribing relative clause, typically introduced by *yang* and a verb like *bersifat* 'have the quality of' as predicate. This would, however, no longer be a qualitative attribute.

A qualitative attribute as a means to qualify a noun can be retained, of course, in that an adjective is used in place of a QNA. Of course, this solution too no longer belongs quite strictly within the scope delineated by the title of this paper. However, beside offering a ready means of expressing that, which was to be expressed by the QNA, the matter also touches upon an important point in language policy.

Malay does not have an original means of deriving adjectives from nouns. And although several such means borrowed from other languages have meanwhile been taken up in Indonesian, there had been prolonged resistance against their "legalization". Language policy officials and the Commission editors in charge of guarding the purity of School Malay regarded these derivational means as a feature foreign to the very nature of Malay and quite superfluous for the development of this literary language tradition. The question of the significance of distinguishing qualitative from possessive attribution was already touched upon above. The notion that the derivational feature was foreign to the nature of Malay too took no account of the development of Malay in the last centuries prior to colonial rule.

As a result of conversion to Islam, Malay experienced profound influences from Arabic and Persian, and subsequently also from

Hindustani. Already since the beginnings of Classical Malay, a number of words were borrowed in different case forms, i.e. in the nominative and in the genitive. Those borrowed in the genitive exhibited an qualitative attributive grammatical meaning in Malay. These are firstly some geographical names (which, unlike personal proper names, are included among the nouns in Malay).

- | | | |
|---------------------------|---|---|
| (32) <i>Kabul</i> 'Kabul' | — | <i>nasi kebuli</i> 'pilaff (Kabuli rice)' |
| <i>Korasan</i> 'Chorasan' | — | <i>besi korasani</i> 'Chorasan iron' |
| <i>Rum</i> 'Rome' | — | <i>surat rumi</i> 'Latin script' |
| <i>Surat</i> 'Surat' | — | <i>itik surati</i> 'Manila duck (Surat duck)' |

Similar noun/adjective pairs exist for non-geographical words.

- | | | |
|--------------------------|---|--|
| (33) <i>asas</i> 'basis' | — | <i>asasi</i> 'basic' ¹⁴ |
| <i>insan</i> 'man' | — | <i>insani</i> 'human, pertaining to mankind' |
| <i>jisim</i> 'body' | — | <i>jasmani</i> 'physical' |
| <i>roh</i> 'soul' | — | <i>rohani</i> 'spiritual' |
| <i>unsur</i> 'element' | — | <i>unsuri</i> 'elementary' |
| <i>alam</i> 'nature' | — | <i>alamiah</i> 'natural' |
| <i>ilmu</i> 'science' | — | <i>ilmiah</i> 'scientific' |

Since the implementation of Indonesian as official language and thus also as language of education and of technical literature, the use of derived adjectives has increased tremendously. The persistent tradition inherited from School Malay language policy, to regard these derivations as "non-orthodoxal", had the effect that the speaking public coined derived adjectives spontaneously and sometimes quite unsystematically. One further paradigm which already emerged in the first decades of this century, gained increasing popularity in the 1950s and 1960s.

- | | | |
|---------------------------|---|------------------------------|
| (34) <i>dunia</i> 'world' | — | <i>duniawi</i> 'worldly' |
| <i>ilmu</i> 'science' | — | <i>ilmiaawi</i> 'scientific' |
| <i>kimia</i> 'chemistry' | — | <i>kimiawi</i> 'chemical' |
| <i>Roma</i> 'Rome' | — | <i>Romawi</i> 'Roman' |

Note the duplicity with previous examples for 'scientific' and 'Roman'.

An important undertaking in the accommodation of Indonesian to its new role as official language was the coining of technical terms. Many names of scientific disciplines, theretofore borrowed into the language from the European, were replaced by terms felt to be more congruent with

<i>nisbi</i>	—	<i>relatif</i> ‘relative’
<i>temperatur</i>	—	<i>suhu</i> ‘temperature’

Note that in two of the examples, the European loan is the recommended term.

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Abbreviations

Art - Personal article or equivalent	QNA - Qualitative nominal attribute
PNA - Possessive nominal attribute	PC - Possessive copula
Dct - Deictic	UNA - Unspecific nominal attribute

Notes

1. It has been etymologically derived from *empu* ‘master’ + *-nya* ‘his/her/its’ which, however, must be seen as the origin of the word *empunya* ‘owner’. The meaning of the derived verb *berpunya* ‘to be affluent/wealthy/of property’ shows that *punya* must have meant ‘possession’ (in such verbs, the prefix *ber-* expresses the meaning ‘to have’, e.g. *bergigi* ‘to have teeth’, *gigi* ‘tooth/teeth’). A construction, resembling that of a PNA with *punya* as PC, but with the normal “post-attributing” word order, seems to have emerged in some nuclear dialects of Malay (I shall return to this in the main text), and that seems to have inspired the Moluccan Malay PNA with *punya*, which, however, has the reversed, i.e. “pre-attributing” order typical of East Indonesia. Later attested use of *empunya* as PC in the Moluccan possessive construction in “Service Malay” (see e.g. Francis 1892:11–13, 39, 41–42) should probably be seen as back formation or hyper-correction.
2. A.k.a. “generic determinator” (Simon 1953:329, 337), or “qualifier” (Honey 1956:539–40, 543).

3. I believe an example of its use in a Malay manuscript from the library of the Sultan of Palembang was discussed by Roelof Roolvink in an article I have not been able to locate at time of this writing.
4. In Anwar (1949:43–44).
5. It is perhaps the result of Thai influence on Malay. The Thais made several, often successful incursions into Malay territories south of the Kra Isthmus, and at times even held suzerainty over Kedah. I understand that an early instance of the use of the possessive construction with *punya* in a Peninsular Malay dialect was discussed in a publication by Jim Collins, which I have not yet had the opportunity to consult at the time of this writing.
6. In Anwar (1949:15).
7. *Besluit* no. 39 of January 15, 1918, published 1919 as no. 2029 in *Bijblad op het Staats-blad van Nederlandsch-Indië* 54:180–242. The quoted fragment is on p. 224.
8. In BGD (1915:1).
9. In Rosidi (1970:40–58). The quoted fragment is from p.41.
10. In Rendra (1971:32–34), first published in 1957. The quoted fragment is from p. 33.
11. The proposal to use the preposition *oléh* ‘by’ to indicate possession, made by van Ophujsen (1910:50), does not seem to have been followed by indigenous writers.
12. From the text of the resolution published in *Perhimpoean* (1928:327).
13. The Indonesian red-and-white national flag.
14. Now more often replaced by the Hyper-Arabism *azas/azasi*.

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