

## The fate of the Manchu Genitive case

In Written Manchu, the case suffix *-i* is widely used. This suffix has a broad range of meanings and functions, mostly those of Genitive and Instrumental. In the currently spoken oral varieties of Manchu (Spoken Manchu and Spoken Sibe), however, this suffix is either marginal or absent. Several markers and constructions are used to express meanings for which the *-i* suffix is used in Written Manchu. One of these, a ‘headmarked’ possessive construction, is limited to Spoken Sibe. The latter variety is deemed to have been exposed to a stronger Mongolic influence than other Manchu varieties, and, moreover, it has been in contact with Turkic languages. I suggest, as possible contact scenario, that the Sibe possessive clitic, which evolved in contact with Mongolic, was employed in a pattern typical for Turkic languages as the result of the influence of the Turkic-speaking environment on Sibe.

### Uighur

(1) *moma-ning*                      *öy-i*  
grandmother-GEN      house-3POSS                      ‘grandmother’s house’

### Sibe:

(2) *mame*                      *bo=ni*  
grandmother      house=3POSS                      ‘grandmother’s house’

However, other plausible scenarios for the origin of the Sibe ‘headmarked’ possessive construction can be suggested as well.