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“Post-genitive variation in British and American English:
the case of the double genitive and the *of*-genitive
constructions”

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To my family.

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List of abbreviations

BNC	British National Corpus
COCA	Corpus of Contemporary American English
POSS 's	possessive morpheme 's
PP	Prepositional Phrase

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1. Introduction

“*A friend of John’s or a friend of John?*” (Abel 2002: 20) - that is the main question of this thesis when it comes to a choice between the double genitive and the *of*-genitive constructions. Presumably, the majority of people just use one or the other construction not even thinking about why a certain construction was chosen in a given context. However, this is not the case for passionate linguists, people who investigate language, its use, structure and who, most importantly, want to understand language. In linguistics, the choice between the above-mentioned constructions, or what is also referred to in this thesis as the post-genitive variation, raises a fundamental debate about the syntactic, semantic and discursive properties of each construction. The aim of the current thesis is to contribute to this debate. Using a multifactor approach, the current study attempts to answer the question of what determines the choice between the double genitive (*a friend of John’s*) and the *of*-genitive (*a friend of John*) constructions.

The *of*-genitive construction has the following grammatical structure: “(Det.) + N₁ + of + N₂/personal pronoun”. The double genitive construction, on the other hand, has the structure “(Det.) + N₁ + of + N₂’s/possessive pronoun”. The terms “possessee” and “possessor” will be used throughout the current thesis to refer to N₁, which is also the head of the construction, and N₂ respectively. Thus, the two post-genitive constructions being analysed have similar syntactic structure that is in both constructions the possessee (N₁) precedes the possessor (N₂) and the range of determiners preceding the possessee in a given construction may either vary (e.g. definite article, indefinite article, demonstrative, quantifier, numeral, possessive determiners) or be absent altogether (see Table 1). On the basis of the use of determiners in front of the possessee, Abel (2006: 1) differentiates between “the indefinite double genitive (*a book of John’s*), the definite double genitive (*the book of John’s that you read last night*) and the demonstrative construction (*that book of John’s*)”. As a result, Abel’s (2006) analysis misses the constructions which are preceded by possessive determiners, numerals, quantifiers and the ones which do not have a determiner preceding the possessee.

Table 1. Examples of the double genitive and the *of*-genitive constructions with different determiners preceding the possessee (taken from BNC and COCA corpora).

The determiner preceding the possessee	Examples of the double genitive constructions	Examples of the <i>of</i>-genitive constructions
definite article <i>the</i>	<i>The suitcase of my grandfather's that I found in the attic</i>	<i>the son of David</i>
indefinite article <i>a/an</i>	<i>a friend of Sherry's</i>	<i>a son of David</i>
demonstrative	<i>that friend of Lotto's</i>	<i>this photograph of her son</i>
quantifier	<i>some things of your father's</i>	<i>every citizen of this country</i>
numeral	<i>two rings of my mother's</i>	<i>two members of Congress</i>
possessive determiner	<i>my favourite lines of my dad's</i>	<i>her portrait of her mother</i>
null determiner	<i>friend of my son's</i>	<i>son of David</i>

Besides a number of similarities, the two post-genitive constructions also differ in some respects. The double genitive differs from the *of*-genitive construction in that the former may take the possessive pronoun instead of “N₂'s” (e.g. *a friend of mine*) whereas the latter may take the personal pronoun instead of “N₂” (e.g. *a picture of me*). Examples of possible possessive pronouns occurring with the double genitives are *mine, ours, yours, hers, his, theirs*. Examples of possible personal pronouns occurring with the *of*-genitives are *my, us, you, him, her, it, them*. The two post-genitive constructions differ to a large extent in many other factors; most of all, in how each construction expresses its possessive relation. For example, the *of*-genitive construction expresses its possessive relation through the preposition *of* or what Rosenbach (2002: 7) refers to as the “relational marker” *of*. In the double genitive construction, on the other hand, the possessive relation is “doubly marked” (Taylor 1996: 327). In other words, the double genitive appears to have two relational markers, namely the preposition *of* and the possessive morpheme 's (henceforth POSS 's) attached to the possessor.

Traditionally, POSS 's has been found in the prenominal possessive (e.g. *John's friend*) and has been frequently called the “Saxon genitive bound morpheme” (Storto 2000: 2) or an “inflectional ending” (Jespersen 1949: 281; Quirk 1985; Biber 1999: 292). Taylor (1996: 122), for example, suggests that POSS 's may be treated as a clitic or, alternatively, it may have the status of an affix. From the diachronic perspective, Rosenbach's (2002: 13) analysis show a

transition of POSS 's “from a fully-fledged inflectional ending in Old English to a more clitic-like element in Modern English”. For a detailed account on the categorization of the POSS 's as a clitic or an affix, see Borjars et al. (2012). Like POSS 's, the preposition *of*, in both post-genitive constructions, also appears to be the subject of debate in linguistics. Barker (1998: 681), for example, claims that there are two different *of*'s, namely the genitive *of* and the partitive *of*. The former, according to the author, is used in *a friend of John's* whereas the latter is used in *a friend of John's friends*. Consequently, Barker (1998) argues that the double genitive is a type of partitive constructions. However, for reasons explained in the chapters below, this view is not supported in the current thesis.

The term “double genitive” is also known in the literature as “post-genitive” (Kruisinga 1911: 42; Quirk et al. 1985: 330), “oblique genitive” (Huddleston & Pullum 2002: 468, Payne 2012), “postposed (attributive) genitive” (Stockwell, Schachter & Partee 1973: 677), “pleonastic genitive” (Poutsma 1914: 77), “postnominal genitive” (Keizer 2007: 307), “postposed genitive” (Lyons 1986), or “postnominal possessive” (Taylor 1996: 327). Similarly, the term “*of*-genitive” can be also referred to as “post-nominal possessive” (Keizer 2007: 307), “*of*-phrase” (Huddleston & Pullum 2002: 477), or “*of*-oblique” (Payne 2012: 177). The terms double genitive and *of*-genitive will be used throughout this thesis to refer to the abovementioned post-genitive constructions.

Apart from the double genitive and the *of*-genitive constructions, however, there is a plethora of other possibilities to express possession in English. Huddleston and Pullum (2002: 467), for example, identify six types of genitive constructions which are illustrated below in (i-vi). In addition, Keizer (2007: 307) observes that possession in English can be also expressed by relative clauses (e.g. *the car owned by my sister*).

- i) Subject-determiner (*Kim's father has arrived*)
- ii) Subject of gerund-participial (*No one objected to Kim's joining the party*)
- iii) Fused subject-determiner-head (*Max's attempt wasn't as good as Kim's*)
- iv) Oblique genitive (*She's a friend of Kim's*)
- v) Predicative genitive (*All this is Kim's*)
- vi) Attributive genitive (*He lives in an old people's home*) (taken from Huddleston and Pullum (2002: 467)).

However, the current thesis focuses only on the two post-genitive constructions, namely the double genitive and the *of*-genitive. It examines the nature of the grammatical and semantic relation between the possessor and the possessee in the post-genitive variation regarding both

British English and American English. Therefore, all examples for the analysis are derived from the British National Corpus (henceforth BNC) and the Corpus of Contemporary American English (henceforth COCA). Following Keizer (2007), the analysis in this thesis are based on the multifactor approach. In particular, I will look at the following five factors while analysing the double genitive and the *of*-genitive constructions in corpora: animacy, number, complexity, semantic relations and definiteness of the possessor and the possessee of each construction. In addition to the corpus analysis of the post-genitive variation, I will report on an experimental study where both British and American native speakers had to choose a certain construction in each relatively short text. This may help to find out which construction in a given context is preferred by the subjects when both the double genitive and the *of*-genitive constructions are, in fact, possible. As a result, this thesis sheds light on the speaker's use of the two post-genitive constructions regarding a number of factors which determine the preference of one construction over the other.

This thesis is organized as follows. Chapter 2 explains the notion of the post-genitive variation. It gives a brief overview of the previous literature on the double genitive and the *of*-genitive constructions. Section 2.1 mentions the determining factors in the post-genitive variation whereas Section 2.2 considers the main objectives of the current thesis. Chapter 3 describes data and methodology of the empirical part of the current thesis. Since the empirical part of this thesis consists of two sub-parts, namely the corpus-based analysis and the experimental study, the former is described in Chapter 4 whereas the latter is presented in Chapter 5. Finally, a brief discussion and some conclusions are drawn in Chapters 6 and 7 respectively.

2. What is the post-genitive variation?

There is a growing body of literature on the choice between the prenominal genitive construction or what is commonly referred to as the *s*-genitive (e.g. *John's friend*) and the postnominal genitive construction or what is called throughout this thesis as the *of*-genitive (e.g. *a friend of John*); for example, Rosenbach 2002, Keizer 2007, Hawkins 1980, Hinrichs and Szmercsanyi 2007, Wolk et al. 2013, Grafmiller 2014, etc. All these studies investigate the determining factors which cause the variation between the two genitive constructions. Such variation is traditionally known as “genitive variation” (Rosenbach 2014: 215; Feist 2012). The term “post-genitive variation”, on the other hand, refers in this thesis to the variation between the two post-genitive constructions, namely the double genitive (e.g. *a friend of John's*) and the *of*-genitive (e.g. *a friend of John*) constructions. The current thesis, however, is one of the

first which focuses specifically on the variation of these two post-genitive constructions rather than on the constructions individually. Only a few studies have been published so far on the analysis of the double genitive constructions in English (e.g. Lyons 1986; Kiel 1997; Barker 1998; Storto 2000; Abel 2006; Payne 2012) and only one study (e.g. Payne & Berlage 2014), which I am aware of, describes the genitive variation between the three genitive constructions, namely the double genitive, the *of*-genitive and the *s*-genitive. The analysis of the prenominal genitive construction falls outside of the scope of this thesis. Since the variation being analysed is restricted to the two post-genitive constructions, it is referred to in this thesis as the post-genitive variation.

Another term which must be clarified in this thesis before preceding to the following chapters is the notion of variation itself. Rosenbach (2002: 75), for example, distinguishes between “system-level variation” and “usage-level variation”. The former, according to the author, deals with variants which the language system provides whereas the latter deals with the individual distribution of these variants. Feist (2012), on the other hand, does not make such distinction. In his words, “variation includes both how the language community as a whole selects each variant under grammatical constraint, and how individual users vary the selection according to circumstances where there are grammatically acceptable alternatives” (Feist 2012: 261). The notion of variation in the current thesis supports Feist’s (2012) interpretation of the term. Thus, both language community’s selection and individual user’s selection of one or the other construction are regarded here as variation. Factors which determine the speaker’s preference of one construction over the other are described in the following sub-section.

2.1. Post-genitive variation and its determining factors

It has been argued by Rosenbach (2002: 94) that the two grammatically acceptable constructions in the post-genitive variation tend to be functionally distinct rather than synonymous because each construction serves its own set of communicative and cognitive needs. The author further suggests that meaning, context and communicative intentions are three factors that determine the conditions under which an individual uses one construction over the other (Rosenbach 2002: 94). Similarly, Keizer (2007) has shown that the linguistic behavior of the speaker can be explained by a mixture of pragmatic, semantic, syntactic and cognitive factors in linguistics. For her analysis of English genitive variation, Keizer (2007) applies a multivariate approach and says that the speaker’s choice between the *s*-genitive and

the *of*-genitive is largely influenced by a number of interrelated and, to some extent, competing factors which the author summarizes in the following way:

- i. topicality versus saliency of the possessor/possessee
- ii. activatedness of the relation between possessor and possessee
- iii. intrinsicness of the relation between possessor and possessee
- iv. “referent point” versus specifying function of the possessor
- v. complexity of the possessor
- vi. the gender/animacy of the possessor/possessee
- vii. number of the possessor
- viii. scope ambiguities
- ix. presence of certain types of pre- or postmodifier of the head noun
- X. stylistic considerations (Keizer 2007: 353)

Hinrichs and Szmercsanyi (2007) also use the multivariate analysis methods in their study. Furthermore, they suggest that univariate analysis methods are “inappropriately reductionist and simplistic” when it comes to linguistic variation (Hinrichs & Szmercsanyi 2007: 470). Therefore, the authors compare British and American usage of the genitive variation in press texts according to a wide range of factors which they divide into four sets: “(i) semantic and pragmatic factors; (ii) phonological factors; (iii) factors related to processing and parsing; and, (iv) economy-related factors”. Hinrichs and Szmercsanyi (2007) analyse the impact of these factors on the present-day English genitive variation in journalistic language in the Brown family of corpora. The authors conclude that in press texts of present-day English, the *s*-genitive construction has become more frequent than it was before. Moreover, this spread occurs particularly more intensively in American English than in British English (Hinrichs & Szmercsanyi 2007: 468). However, due to the considerable amount of literature on the traditional genitive variation, it can be argued that the frequency of each genitive construction changes since the beginning of their usage.

Initially, the traditional genitive variation, namely a variation between the *s*-genitive and the *of*-genitive dates back to the 10th cent. The complete overview of the literature on the English genitive variation is provided in Rosenbach (2014). Rosenbach (2014) observes that the methodology of research on the topic in question has changed since its beginning. She explains the change in the following way:

[There are] two important shifts in the study of English genitive variation: (1) the shift from focusing on older stages of English to more recent English(es), and (2) the shift from simply counting or listing variants to elaborate statistical techniques. The former is connected to the fact that the most dramatic changes in the distribution of the two genitives took place in the transition from Old English to Middle English, when the inflectional genitive was rather drastically replaced by the periphrastic *of*-genitive; see the studies by Stahl (1927), Thomas (1931) and Timmer (1939). (Rosenbach 2014: 216).

Rosenbach’s (2002: 177) chapter on the historical development of the genitive variation provides a comprehensive description of the distribution of the two genitive constructions from

Old English to early Modern English. According to the author, it was clear that the construction expressed two main semantic relations, namely the partitive relation (e.g. *some of the saints*) and the source relation (e.g. *he had a church of wood built*) both of which emerged from the meaning of the preposition *of* – “out of” (Rosenbach (2002: 177). Rosenbach (2002) shows that the *of*-genitive construction was not frequently used in 10th cent. However, in the course of Middle English the frequency of the postnominal genitive drastically increased and the postnominal genitive came to be preferred over the *s*-genitive (Rosenbach 2002: 179; Wolk et al. 2013: 384). Rosenbach (2002) describes this change within the diagram, which is reproduced below, see Figure 1.

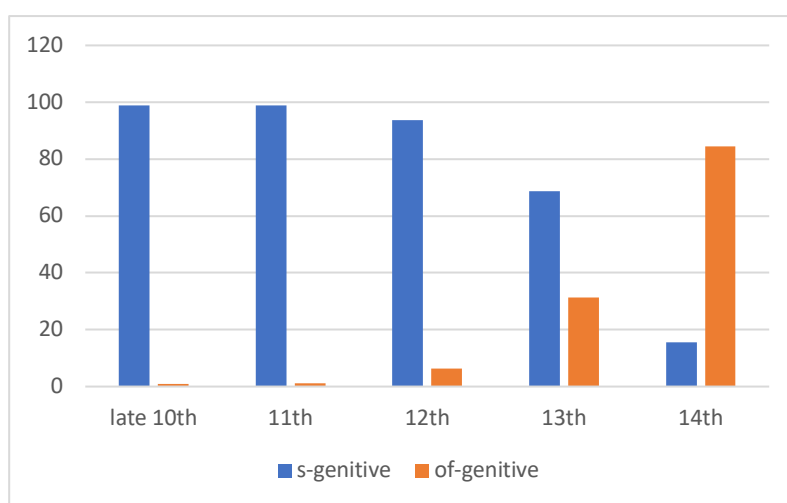


Figure 1. Distribution of the *s*-genitive and the *of*-genitive from 10th to 14th centuries (taken from Rosenbach 2002: 179).

Rosenbach (2002: 180) suggests that this shift in the two genitive constructions is due to the two main factors, namely animacy and topicality. In other words, it is as early as the Middle English period that *s*-genitives became restricted to highly animate possessors (e.g. proper names or personal-nouns). Moreover, Rosenbach (2002: 180) draws a distinction between certain functions of each genitive construction in Middle English, which is described as follows:

It has been noted that the *s*-genitive becomes more and more restricted to certain genitive functions, i.e. the possessive and the subjective function [...] The *of*-genitive, on the other hand, seems to have gained ground first in partitive functions, and it is somehow striking that in the course of Middle English it is in this function - apart from the descriptive function - that the *of*-genitive eventually becomes the sole genitive construction. (Rosenbach 2002: 180-181).

Thus, it has been argued that the original function of the *of*-genitive is that of partitivity which dates back to as early as Old English and maintains in Middle English (Rosenbach 2002: 181).

Furthermore, its frequency increases in Middle English. Consequently, the Middle English period, in Rosenbach's (2002: 181) words, is "the "dramatic" period in the history of the genitive variation".

In order to understand the genitive variation in English in 17th cent., Altenberg (1982) discusses a number of factors which might influence the variation. Furthermore, he studies them individually. These factors include: animacy, syntactic modifications, genre and semantic relations. Rosenbach (2002), on the other hand, analyses British and American usage of the two genitive constructions according to only three factors: animacy, topicality and possessive relation. However, unlike Altenberg (1982), Rosenbach (2002) observes these three factors simultaneously rather than individually. She conducted an experimental study or the so-called "forced-choice task" where both American and British subjects were supposed to choose one out of the two genitive constructions. The main advantage of such experimental study, as pointed out by Rosenbach (2002: 109), is that it avoids messy data and allows the researcher to focus on the specific factors by compiling his or her own list of items for the study. However, Rosenbach (2002: 109) also admits that unlike corpus analyses, the experimental study may prevent the researcher from noticing new phenomena. Thus in order to obtain informative results the current thesis includes both a corpus analysis and an experimental study.

Unlike the current thesis which focuses on the two post-genitive constructions, Payne and Berlage (2014) investigate the genitive variation between three genitive constructions, namely the double genitive, the *s*-genitive, and the *of*-genitive. In their study, Payne and Berlage (2014) take into account five factors: animacy, complexity, semantic relations, the choice of the determiner and the choice of the possessor (noun-headed vs pronoun). However, instead of the term "double genitive" Payne and Berlage (2014) as well as Payne (2012) refer to the construction as the "oblique genitive". In Payne's (2012: 177) words, the term double genitive "seems inappropriate since there is only one marking of genitive case", namely the relational marker POSS 's attached to the possessor. Analysing the three genitive constructions according to the five factors mentioned above, Payne and Berlage (2014) suggest that the most prototypical double genitive construction can be described in the following way:

[...] the dependent in the oblique genitive is almost exclusively human, [...] it is mainly represented by pronouns and [...], if it is noun-headed, the dependent overwhelmingly consists of one word only. The most frequent determiner associated with the oblique genitive is indefinite and the core semantic relation that holds between head and dependent is the interpersonal one. (Payne & Berlage 2014: 344).

Comparing the double genitive with the *of*-genitive constructions, Payne and Berlage (2014) conclude that pronoun possessors constitute 80.7 % of all examples in the dataset of the double

genitives in the BNC corpus. In the dataset of the *of*-genitive constructions, on the other hand, Payne and Berlage (2014: 346) report that pronoun possessors do not occur so often. In terms of the animacy of the possessor, Payne and Berlage's (2014: 347) investigations show that almost 100 % of all cases of double genitives include human possessors whereas in the dataset of the *of*-genitive constructions it is only 69.6 % of all examples. Payne and Berlage (2014: 348) also point out that there is a contrast between the double genitive and the *of*-genitive construction comparing the length of the possessor in each construction. The authors suggest that the *of*-genitive commonly allows for the relatively long possessors (1-5 words – 3.85 words on average) whereas the double genitive prefers short possessors (1 word – 71 % of all cases) (Payne & Berlage 2014: 348). Moreover, as suggested by Payne and Berlage (2014: 348), long possessors in the double genitives (2 words or more) are very difficult to be interpreted.

Talking about semantic relations of all three genitive constructions, the authors observe that there are 18 core relations which can occur in all three constructions, namely the double genitive, the *of*-genitive and the *s*-genitive, but the most frequent ones are: *ownership*, *interpersonal relation*, *body part* and *kinship*. Furthermore, Payne and Berlage (2014) show that the additional six semantic relations are permitted in the *of*-genitive and the *s*-genitive but not in the double genitive constructions. The *s*-genitive, however, as argued by the authors, may express a lot of other semantic relations which are not permitted neither with the double genitive nor with the *of*-genitive. Payne and Berlage's (2014) tables of semantic relations permitted by the double genitive and the *of*-genitive are reproduced in Tables 2 and 3 respectively. For more information on the hierarchy of semantic relations see Payne and Berlage (2014: 349-350).

Table 2. 18 semantic relations permitted by the double genitive based on the BNC corpus (reproduced from Payne & Berlage 2014: 343-344).

Type	Read as	Example
interpersonal	d is interpersonal relation of h	a friend of mine
creator	d is creator of h	an early book of his
kinship	d has kin relation h	no son of yours
ownership	d is controller of h	that account of yours
human-property	d has human property h	that rare talent of Clark's
performer	d is performer of h	that mild, concerned approach of Hannah's
body part	d has body part h	that leg of his
concern	d has interest h	any concern of yours
evaluation	d has favourite h	a favourite spot of mine
physical attribute	d has physical attribute h	that innocent beguiling look of hers
experiencer	d is experiencer of h	this dream of yours
location	d has location h	that vile city of yours
time	d has time h	every year f his
history	d has history h	this history of yours
inherent-part	d is inherent-part of h	this great nation of ours
member	d has member h	this great nation of ours
depiction	d has depiction h	a picture of ours
V-ing	d is V-er of h	no doing of mine

Table 3. Semantic relations permitted in the *of*-genitive but not in the double genitive, based on the BNC corpus (derived from Payne & Berlage 2014: 350).

Type	Read as	Example
subset	h is subset of d	a waste-paper basket of these
content	h has content d	questions of law or fact
kind	h has kind d	brewery of its kind
image	h is image of d	pictures of a storm on Saturn
size	h has size d	farms of 100000 acres
value	h has value d	species of greater commercial value
theme	h has theme d	analysis of previous authorities
cause	h has cause d	tears of laughter
composition	h has composition d	panels of sturdy plywood
age	h has age d	children of an age to be working
timespan	h is timespan of d	period of mass unemployment
container	h is container of d	bottles of ale or whisky
duration	h has duration d	pregnancy of 105 days
rank	h has rank d	officers of much more senior rank
amount	h is amount of d	proportion of lime
collection	h is collection of d	group of two figures
type	h is type d	version of deus venerunt

Contrary to Payne and Berlage's (2014) study, where the authors define semantic relations of all three genitive constructions which include both pronominal and non-pronominal possessors, Payne (2012) focuses on the corpus analysis of the semantic relations of only one genitive construction, namely the double genitive construction which, in its turn, was restricted to the

string *N + of mine* (Payne 2012). As a result, Payne (2012) identifies 13 semantic relations where, the most frequent relations are interpersonal, kinship, creator, ownership and human property. Notice that the frequency of most common semantic relations expressed by the string *N + of mine*, as shown by Payne (2012), is different than the ones expressed by the double genitives which are not restricted to pronoun possessors and which are in variation with the *s*-genitive and the *of*-genitive, as shown by Payne and Berlage (2014). The frequency of semantic relations investigated by Payne (2012) is shown in Table 4.

Table 4. Overall frequency of semantic relations in the string *N + of mine* based on the BNC corpus (derived from Payne 2012: 187)

Semantic relation between the possessor and the possessee	Example	Absolute number of examples
interpersonal	a friend of mine	545
kinship	a son of mine	80
creator	a short book of mine	67
ownership	an old T-shirt of mine	35
human-property	any fault of mine	26
evaluation	a favourite of mine	21
concern	no business of mine	21
performer	another hobby of mine	18
body part	this wretched hair of mine	14
place	[a] local school of mine	6
experience	A recent experience of mine	5
verbal noun	no doing of mine	2
membership	this team of mine	2

Besides looking at the semantic relations in the double genitive constructions, Payne (2012) also draws attention to the definiteness of the construction as a whole. The overview of the frequencies of determiners in his analysis is illustrated in Table 5. He concludes that the majority of the examples being analysed are preceded by either indefinite or demonstrative determiners (Payne 2012: 188). Although the definite article rarely precedes the double genitive construction its presence has received much attention in the literature. It has been argued that the double genitive constructions are usually post-modified if they are preceded by the definite article *the* (e.g. *the book of John's that you borrowed*). Unlike the double genitive, the *s*-genitive, according to the author, seems to be unnatural when it is modified by a relative clause (e.g. **John's book that you borrowed*) (Payne 2012: 178-179). Therefore, Payne (2012: 178) suggests that the double genitive and the *s*-genitive constructions are in a “rough” complementary distribution.

Table 5. Frequency of determiners in the string *N + of mine* based on the BNC corpus (taken from Payne 2013: 188)

Indefinite		Definite	
a	555	this/these	66
null	65	that/those	32
no	42	the	8
some	20		
any	22		
numeral	16		
another	9		
a few	2		
every	2		
certain	1		
what?	1		

In addition, Payne (2012: 180) claims that there is a number of semantic relations which are usually used with the *s*-genitive construction but are not permitted in the double genitive construction. Some of these relations are “patient of event nominal” (e.g. *the city’s destruction*/**another destruction of the city’s*), “proper part” (e.g. *the ship’s funnel*/**that funnel of the ship’s*), “time” (e.g. *this summer’s weather*/**this weather of the summer’s*), and “theme” (e.g. *my photograph*/**that photograph of mine*) (Payne 2012: 180). However, Payne (2012) also mentions that there are semantic relations which are commonly used with both the double genitive and the *s*-genitive constructions. As an example, he provides four main semantic relations, namely “true possession” (e.g. *that dog of yours/your dog*), “interpersonal” relation (e.g. *that son of theirs/their son*), “authorship” (e.g. *that new book of his/his new book*), and “attribution” (*no fault of mine/my fault*) (Payne 2012: 180). This is obviously not the full list of them but rather the most frequent relations which are shared by the two constructions. For a more detailed list, see Huddleston and Pullum (2002: 474-478).

In the light of the variation between the double genitive, the *of*-genitive and the *s*-genitive, Payne and Berlage (2014) identify two contexts in which these three genitive constructions are grammatically acceptable and, in fact, may compete with each other. These are context in which all three constructions “function as the predicative complement of the clause” and context in which the determiner *the* precedes all three constructions (Payne & Berlage 2014: 351). Functioning as the predicative complement of the clause, according to the authors, the clause must have the following structure “X be Y” where X is the subject of the clause and Y is the predicative complement, namely one of the three constructions (Payne & Berlage 2014: 351). Furthermore, the authors suggest that functioning as the predicative complement the *s*-genitive construction has somewhat weakened definiteness and, therefore, can “be interpreted

in the same way as the indefinite noun phrases” (e.g. *He is a friend of John’s/He is John’s friend/He is a friend of John*) (Payne & Berlage 2014: 351). The second context, on the other hand, deals with definiteness of the three genitive constructions.

According to the authors there are 56 double genitive constructions in the BNC corpus which are preceded by the determiner *the* (Payne & Berlage 2014: 353). These constructions, as suggested by Payne and Berlage (2014: 353), express 7 most frequent semantic relations such as *interpersonal*, *creator*, *kinship*, *ownership*, *human-property*, *performer*, *body part* and 11 other less frequent semantic relations which, according to the authors, constitute one category, namely “other” (see Table 6 below). In addition, Payne and Berlage (2014) compare two data sets, namely the data set where the double genitive constructions are introduced by the definite article *the* (56 constructions in total) and the data set where all double genitive constructions are included (2859 constructions in total). These comparisons are reproduced in Table 6 below.

Table 6. Frequency of semantic relations in all double genitive constructions in comparison to those which are preceded by the definite article *the* only, based on the BNC corpus (derived from Payne & Berlage 2014: 353)

Semantic relation	Percentages and absolute frequencies for determiner <i>the</i> examples	Percentages and absolute frequencies for all double genitive constructions
interpersonal	17.9% (10/56)	44.6% (1274/2859)
creator	39.3% (22/56)	12.8% (365/2859)
kinship	10.7% (6/56)	9.2% (264/2859)
ownership	8.9 % (5/56)	8.3% (237/2859)
human-property	8.9 % (5/56)	5.8% (166/2859)
performer	3.6 % (2/56)	4.4% (127/2859)
body part	1.8 % (1/56)	4.3% (123/2859)
other	8.9 % (5/56)	10.6% (303/2859)

As shown, the creator relation appears to be the most frequent relation with the double genitive constructions which follow the definite article *the*. In Payne and Berlage’s (2014: 353) view, which is also supported by the current thesis, the creator relation is permitted by all three genitive constructions and, therefore, further research is needed to find out why this relation allows for variation between these three genitive constructions. However, consider, for example, the three constructions in (1), (2) and (3) which have the same head noun *story*. In (1), the double genitive construction *a story of Thieu’s* expresses the creator relation. It is clear from the context that Thieu is a poet and one of his stories is *called “To the Stars”*. The *of*-genitive construction *the story of Kate* in (2), on the other hand, expresses the depiction relation rather than the creator relation. Example in (2) indicates that *Kate* is *26-year-old, underpaid, school teacher* who is depicted in the story. The relation in (3) is somewhat ambiguous in that it can be either depiction or creator relation. Even though the creator relation expressed by the

double genitive, as argued by Payne and Berlage (2014: 353), “allows for variation with the *s*-genitive and the *of*-genitive”, this relation does not always allow for such variation including the same head noun. These examples show that the semantic relation may change due to the speaker’s choice of the construction.

- (1) Along the way, we heard the voice of Vietnam’s younger generation in the form of Nguyen Quang Thieu, a 32-year-old poet who travelled with us as our interpreter. **A story of Thieu’s** called “To the Stars” begins with the death of a young man who had aspired to be a poet. (COCA; FIC; 1991)
- (2) He repeatedly tells **the story of Kate**, his 26-year-old daughter, and her struggles as an underpaid schoolteacher. He tells the story of his mother, Loreen, whose care and finances Gephardt took over in her last years (COCA; NEWS; 2003)
- (3) Experts say **Lee’s story** isn’t unique. (COCA; NEWS; 2017)

Furthermore, Poutsma (1914: 81) claims that the double genitive construction with the head noun *portrait* as its possessee can never express a thematic relation. This view is supported by Peters and Westerstahl (2013: 718) who argue that the POSS ’s attached to the possessor in the double genitive construction is an indication of possession rather than depiction. Therefore, as pointed out by Peters and Westerstahl (2013: 718), the double genitive construction *a portrait of Picasso’s/his* is considered to be possessive. On the contrary, the *of*-genitive construction *a portrait of Picasso/him*, according to the authors, is not (Peters & Westerstahl 2013: 718). The distinction between the possessive and thematic relations is also conveyed in the following example: *there are many living students of Aristotle but no living students of Aristotle’s* (Peters & Westerstahl 2013: 718). As argued by Peters and Westerstahl (2013:718), the *of*-genitive *many living students of Aristotle* indicates that *Aristotle* is the theme or topic of students’ studies whereas the double genitive *no living students of Aristotle’s* indicates that Aristotle had some students but neither Aristotle nor his students do not live anymore. Thus it can be argued that the two post-genitive constructions, namely the double genitive and the *of*-genitive may be used with the same head nouns which, depending on each construction, may sometimes express different semantic relations. The issue of semantic relations and how they may change according to each construction will be discussed in more details in Chapter 4.

Apart from the exhaustive list of different semantic relations that may be expressed by each construction, Partee (2004) distinguishes between two types of genitive relations, namely free relation (henceforth free R) and inherent relation (henceforth inherent R). The free R, according to Partee (2004: 183), is determined contextually whereas the inherent R is determined lexically. For example, the expressions *John’s team*, *a team of John’s* have free R and depending on the context may have one of the following readings: “*plays for*”, “*owns*”, “*has*

bet on”, or “*writes about for the local newspaper*” (Partee 2004: 183). The expressions such as *John’s brother*, *a brother of John’s*, on the other hand, include an inherently relational possessee, namely *brother* and, therefore, convey inherent R (Partee 2004: 183). Lyons (1986), however, observes that there are three rather than two genitive relations. In addition to the free R and the inherent R types, he proposes the “picture” type where both free and inherent readings are possible although with different meanings (Lyons 1986: 129-130). For example, in the inherent reading of the construction *John’s portrait*, the possessor *John* is understood as “an argument of the head noun”, namely the object being portrayed and may have the form of the *of*-genitive – *a portrait of John* (Lyons 1986: 130). In the free reading of the construction *John’s portrait*, on the contrary, the possessor *John* is interpreted as the agent or the owner and, therefore, may have the form of the double genitive – *a portrait of John’s* (Lyons 1986: 130). Nevertheless, whether Lyon’s (1986) “picture” type has the free reading or the inherent reading is determined lexically, contextually and structurally, namely by the use of the appropriate construction.

Kiel (1997), for example, suggests that the usage, meaning and pragmatic functions of the double genitive constructions are most effectively investigated through a text analysis of written and spoken discourse in English. He claims that the double genitive construction is one of the several phenomena of English grammar which are “neither adequately nor practically addressed in either “advanced” textbooks or in formal linguistic research” (Kiel 1997: 1). Therefore, text analysis, as suggested by the author, is the only effective tool in order to demonstrate the essential characteristics of the construction in question. Analysing a number of texts Kiel (1997: 3) identifies four main semantic relationships between the possessor and the possessee: “true” possession (e.g. *a chair of Bill’s*), interpersonal relationship (e.g. *a friend of mine*), the relation of authorship (e.g. *a play of Shakespear’s*) and the relation of attribution (e.g. *a saying of my grandmother’s*). All these relations except of the relation of authorship were frequently found in Kiel’s (1997) analysis. The use of the double genitive expressing the relation of authorship, the author says, is marginal and the example *a play of Shakespear’s* he provides from incidental speech.

Another characteristic demonstrated by Kiel (1997) concerns the notion of animacy and personification. In the double genitive constructions, as pointed out by Quirk and Greenbaum (1973: 99), the possessors “must be both definite and personal”. Kiel (1997: 2) supports this view. In addition, however, he notices that a non-human possessor can be “personified through pronominalization” in the double genitive constructions (Kiel 1997: 3). He provides a few

examples of such personification in the following way: “*What a beautiful horse. **That mane of hers** is really gorgeous*” or, “***That rusty old rudder of hers** needs to be replaced*” where *hers* in the context refers to a ship (Kiel 1997: 3). Kiel (1997: 3) adds that traditionally personified nouns are *tractor, ship, river, car* etc. Similarly, Rosenbach (2002: 249-250) defines a category of personified inanimate nouns which includes means of locomotion or what she calls “words belonging to nautical language” (e.g. *plain, train*). As a result, it can be argued that non-human possessors in the double genitive constructions are grammatically acceptable if, as suggested by Kiel (1997), they are personified through pronominalization.

Furthermore, Kiel (1997) emphasizes the role of the determiner which precedes the construction. He claims that the indefinite article in front of the double genitive expresses “distance, obscurity or a partitive sense” between the possessor and the possessee. Kiel’s (1997: 4) example of the indefinite double genitive where the relationship between the possessor and the possessee is somewhat distant and partitive is reproduced in (4). Kiel (1997: 4-5) suggests that in the following example *a peer of Terry’s* indicates that Terry has more than one friend and that the relationship between *Terry* and *a peer* is obscure or removed. On the other hand, familiarity or strong emotional relationship between the possessor and the possessee, as argued by Kiel (1997: 6), may be expressed in the double genitive construction through the use of a demonstrative determiner in front of the possessee. Kiel’s (1997) example of the demonstrative double genitive is reproduced in (5). In Kiel’s (1997: 6) words, the use of *that* + double genitive shows “fiddler’s anger and frustration with his fiddle”.

- (4) He looks to be in his late twenties – not exactly a “boy” – but he probably is, it strikes me, **a peer of Terry’s** in the sense that he and Terry compete in the same labor market, working non-union, high turnover restaurant jobs for the same sort of pay. (reproduced from Kiel 1997: 4)
- (5) Fiddler (passionately, flinging the fiddle down): Hell’s delight! Excuse me, Mr. Webster, but the very devil’s got into **that fiddle of mine**. (reproduced from Kiel 1997: 6)

Although Kiel (1997) admits that the sense of partitivity may be expressed through the indefinite double genitive, he does not support the view that English double genitives are partitives, as argued by Barker (1998), for example. According to Barker (1998) the double genitive construction is a type of the standard partitive construction in English because both constructions exhibit the effect which he refers to as “anti-uniqueness”. The crucial point of anti-uniqueness effects, as suggested by the author, is that the partitive as well as the double genitive “cannot be combined with the definite determiner, [...], unless the partitive first receives additional modification” (Barker 1998: 679). Barker’s examples are shown in (6) and

(7) below. As pointed out by the author, a partitive construction in (6a) and a double genitive construction in (7a) are both grammatically unacceptable because they are not modified by a relative clause as it is shown in (6b) and (7b) respectively.

(6) a. *I met the [one of John's friends].

b. I met the [[one of John's friends] that you pointed out last night].

(7) a. *I met the [friend of John's].

b. I met the [[friend of John's] that you pointed out last night]. (Barker 1998: 679)

In order to support his claim further, Barker (1998) applies the Partitive Hypothesis to the double genitive constructions. In his words, the Partitive Hypothesis is “the general notion that double genitives are in fact partitives” (Barker 1998: 680). Consequently, he gives a new name to the construction in question, namely the “possessive partitive”. The main evidence of partitivity in the double genitive or what Barker (1998: 683-684) calls the possessive partitive, is the relational marker *of*, which, as pointed out by the author, “is not the genitive *of*” but rather partitive in nature. As a result, both expressions *a friend of John's* and *one of John's friends*, according to the author, are the two types of the partitive construction in English.

However, Payne (2012), for example, suggests that the double genitive in English is neither a type of the partitive construction nor a variant of the *s*-genitive or the *of*-genitive but rather an independent construction. The preposition *of*, according to the author, is neither a genitive marker nor a partitive one. It is “rather merely the head of an oblique (i.e. prepositional) complement” (Payne 2012: 177). There is even more evidence in the literature (e.g. Storto 2000; Janda 1980; Abel 2006) that Barker's (1998) explanation on the double genitive's partitivity is insufficient. Storto (2000), for example, claims that there is a semantic asymmetry between the two constructions. Storto's (2000: 1) example of such asymmetry is illustrated in (8) with the partitive construction in (8a) and the double genitive construction in (8b). Following Storto (2000: 1), the semantic distinction between (8a) and (8b) is that the partitive in (8a) expresses the meaning of “a subset of the group of dogs which attacked John” whereas the double genitive in (8b) denotes “a subset of the dogs owned by John”.

(8) Yesterday John and Paul were attacked by (different) groups of dogs;

a. ...unfortunately some of John's dogs were pitbulls.

b. # ...unfortunately some dogs of John's were pitbulls. (reproduced from Storto 2000: 1)

Similarly, for Janda (1980), the phrase *Jack is one of John's friends* clearly indicates that John has a group of friends and Jack is one among those friends. The phrase *Jack is a friend of John's*, on the other hand, does not imply such meaning because it does not say anything about

a group of John's friends (Janda 1980). In other words, although John may have more than one friend the double genitive construction does not indicate that. This assumption is also supported by Kiel (1997) and Poutsma (1914). In Poutsma's (1914: 80) words, the expression "*two friends of my brother's*" does not necessarily imply that the number of friends is larger than two" as well as "it does not limit the number of friends to two" as is done by the expressions *two of my brother's friends* and *my brother's two friends* respectively. Kiel (1997) notes, however, that the reason why many authors regard the double genitive construction as having the inherent partitive nature is because this construction is often preceded by the indefinite article. As Kiel (1997: 4) puts it, "the presence of an indefinite article at the head of the genitive phrase suggests that the object of the genitive is part of the larger group". As a result, Kiel (1997: 4) agrees with Janda (1980) in that "*a friend of John's*" is a (singular, indefinite) friend (who is) *John's friend*". However, neither Kiel (1997) nor Janda (1980) agree with Barker's (1998) Partitive Hypothesis.

Moreover, Abel (2006: 3) shows that demonstrative double genitives can occur with unique entities and, therefore, cannot be interpreted as partitives. As suggested by Abel (2006: 3), the standard partitives in English seem to be infelicitous or "of questionable acceptability" if they are preceded by a demonstrative. Abel's (2006: 3-4) examples are shown in (9) below.

(9) a. This one book of John's

??This one of John's books

b. These two books of John's

??These two of John's books (reproduced from Abel 2006: 3-4)

Instead of the Partitive Hypothesis, Abel (2006) presents the so-called Focus Hypothesis. He suggests that "all varieties of the double genitive are, in fact, focus constructions, and that the effect of using a double genitive is to place the possessum¹ in a focus position – in short, to bring it to the hearer's attention" (Abel 2006: 7). By saying "all varieties of the double genitive" Abel (2006: 7) refers to the three types of the construction which she defines as the demonstrative double genitive, the definite double genitive and the indefinite double genitive constructions. Abel's (2006) approach seems to be acceptable but not fully convincing. Following the Focus Hypothesis, the possessee in each of the above-mentioned type of double genitives is always in a focus position. Furthermore, Abel (2006: 4) emphasizes that the demonstrative double genitive constructions strongly favour primary stress on the head noun of the construction, namely the possessee. This assumption, however, seems to be too strong

¹ Abel (2006) uses the term possessum referring to what is called in this thesis the possessee

in that the possessee may be frequently but not always placed in a focus position. Consider, for example, a double genitive construction in (10) where the focus is clearly placed on the possessor rather than the possessee.

(10) "...He was **the son of the country's, not of mine**," said his mother, Bhagwani. (COCA; NEWS; 1999)

Similarly, Kiel (1997: 8) suggests that the demonstrative double genitives may express the function of the "textual reminder". In this case the possessor is focused and the possessee is topical or given (Kiel 1997: 7-8). In other words, such construction reminds the hearer or the reader of the object of the double genitive, which is the possessee, and, in the same time, focuses on the possessor. Kiel's (1997: 8) example of the "textual reminder" function is illustrated in (11). In (11), the expression *this grief of hers*, as argued by Kiel (1997: 8), "is used to remind the reader of the grief and to emphasize the fact that it is being experienced by Reiko".

(11) The agony before Reiko's eyes burned as strong as the summer sun, utterly remote from the grief which seemed to be tearing herself apart within... But now, while her husband's existence in pain was a vivid reality, Reiko could find in **this grief of hers** no certain proof at all of her own existence (reproduced from Kiel 1997: 8).

Apart from Kiel's (1997) "textual reminder" function, one of the basic meanings of demonstratives is that they refer to the location of the referent. For example, "*Shall we take these seats or those ones?*" (Maclaran 1982: 68). In addition, Maclaran (1982: 68) shows that demonstratives may also refer to discourse distance (e.g. "*Just wait till you hear this bit of news*"), temporal distance (e.g. "*Do you want to go to a movie this evening?*") or emotional distance (e.g. "*That Idi Amin was a real tyrant*"). Furthermore, as Maclaran (1982: 82) puts it, "*this/these*, but not *that/those*, can be used to refer to something which has not been previously mentioned and is not quite yet in the context". Therefore, according to the author, the demonstrative *those* in (12) is inappropriate (Maclaran 1982: 82).

(12) I've got a real surprise for you. I wonder if you can guess who **these/*those** photos are of (reproduced from Maclaran 1982: 82).

Another use of demonstratives discussed in the literature is the recognitional use (Diessel 1999). According to Diessel (1999: 105) there are two distinct characteristics of the recognitional use of English demonstratives: i) they are used adnominally; and ii) they do not refer to the preceding information in the discourse but rather to the shared knowledge between the speaker and the hearer. The latter characteristic, as pointed out by Diessel (1999: 105-106) shows that a noun phrase is used for the first time in the discourse. However, it is due to the

previous shared knowledge or experience that the information expressed by this noun phrase is familiar for both the speaker and the hearer (Diessel 1999: 105-106). Such information is called unactivated or what Diessel (1999: 106) refers to as “*discourse new* and *hearer old*”. In other words, as Diessel (1999: 106) points out, “the hearer might know something although it was previously not mentioned”. In addition to the discourse new and the hearer old information, Diessel (1999: 106) identifies also “private” information. Private information, in Diessel’s (1999: 106) words, is the “information that speaker and hearer share due to common experience in the past”. Furthermore, it is also argued that recognitional demonstratives are used when “speaker and hearer share the same view” or when “they sympathize with one another” (Diessel 1999: 106). Diessel’s (1999) example of the recognitional demonstrative marking discourse new, speaker old and “private” information is reproduced in (13). In Diessel’s (1999: 105) words, the distal demonstrative *those* in (13), “indicates that the following noun expresses information that is familiar to the hearer due to shared experience”.

(13) ...it was filmed in California, **those dusty kind of hills** that they have out here in Stockton and all, ...so...
(reproduced from Diessel 1999: 106)

To sum up, this chapter provided an overview of the features of the two post-genitive constructions according to different interrelated factors. The speaker’s choice of one construction over the other may depend on many interrelated factors such as semantic, syntactic, discursive factors, context, communicative intentions and etc. One of the important factors analysed in the post-genitive variation is animacy. It is a well-known fact that the possessors in the double genitive constructions must be animate or, as suggested by Kiel (1997), personified through pronominalization. However, the current thesis provides some exceptions. Subsection 4.1 elaborates on the factor of animacy in the post-genitive constructions. Another common factor in the post-genitive variation deals with semantic relations. As argued by Payne and Berlage (2014), the most frequent relations expressed by both post-genitive constructions are ownership, interpersonal, body part and kinship. Whereas the *of*-genitive constructions are preferred with more complex or “heavy” possessors the double genitives are more favoured when the possessors are less complex. In addition, based on the previous literature, the majority of double genitive constructions occur with the indefinite determiner. If the construction is preceded by definite article *the*, it is usually post-modified. These are some basic conditions under which one construction is preferred over the other. There are, of course, a few exceptions which are discussed in more details in Chapter 4. The following subsection 2.2 explains the objectives of the current thesis.

2.2. Objectives of the current thesis

The experimental set up of the current thesis bears a close resemblance to the ones proposed by Payne and Berlage (2014), Payne (2012) and Rosenbach (2002). Following Keizer (2007), this thesis takes a multi-factor approach. In the analogy to Payne (2012) and Payne and Berlage (2014), the corpus analysis in Chapter 4 of the current thesis compares two post-genitive constructions according to different semantic syntactic and discursive factors. Specifically, in the corpus analysis of the post-genitive variation, the current study investigates the double genitive and the *of*-genitive constructions, which are derived from both BNC and COCA corpora, according to the following five conditioning factors: animacy, number, complexity, semantic relations and definiteness of the possessor and the possessee in the post-genitive constructions. Similar to Rosenbach (2002), an experimental study was conducted among British and American subjects, findings of which are represented in Chapter 5 of the current thesis. The research questions of the current thesis are as follows:

- I. To what extent do the five factors (animacy, number, complexity, semantic relations and definiteness of the possessor and the possessee in the post-genitive constructions) influence the choice between the double genitive and the *of*-genitive in both British and American English?
- II. Regarding only the context where the two post-genitive constructions are grammatically acceptable, which construction is preferred by British subjects and which one is preferred by American subjects in an experimental study?

Before we proceed to the findings of the corpus analysis and the results of the experimental study, Chapter 3 will discuss the data and methodology in more detail.

3. Data and methodology

As already mentioned in the introduction, the current thesis provides quantitative and qualitative analysis of the post-genitive variation, namely the variation between the double genitive and the *of*-genitive, comparing British and American English. The qualitative part of the analysis consists of corpus-based analysis of the two constructions in the Corpus of Contemporary American English (COCA) and the British National Corpus (BNC). The software application used to analyse and code the data obtained from the two corpora was MaxQDA. The quantitative part, on the other hand, is derived from an experimental study with 10 native speakers of British English and 10 native speakers of American English. In this experimental study the subjects were supposed to choose one of the two constructions (either

a double genitive or an *of*-genitive) which, according to them, would be the best choice in a given text. The subjects were provided with 20 relatively short texts in total. Each text offers a choice between the two constructions which are grammatically acceptable and, therefore, in variation. However, it was also decided to include a few texts where only one construction is grammatically possible. The reason for this was to ensure that the subjects are indeed reading the texts and are not choosing a construction randomly.

For the purpose of this study, both empirical parts of the current thesis are largely restricted to non-pronominal constructions such as *a friend of John's* and *a friend of John*. Constructions with pronominal possessors such as *a picture of mine* and *a picture of me* are excluded in this analysis for reasons of space. There are a number of further restrictions on the corpus analysis as well as on the experimental study. They, however, will be described in Chapters 4 and 5 respectively.

4. Findings: corpus analysis

The current corpus-based analysis include data on the double genitive and the *of*-genitive from both the BNC (Davies 2004) and COCA (Davies 2008). The BNC corpus contains 100 million words while the COCA corpus consists of 560 million words of text as of 2019. As few as 133 examples of the double genitive constructions were found in the BNC corpus. This amount constitutes 0,000133 % of the whole corpus. In the COCA corpus, 803 examples of the double genitive constructions were found. This amounts to 0,000143 % of the whole data. As we can see, the percentage of the double genitives found in both corpora is more or less the same. Due to its relatively larger amount of data, the COCA corpus provides more examples of the double genitive constructions than the BNC corpus. For the purpose of variation between the double genitive and the *of*-genitive constructions, the same number of the *of*-genitive constructions were randomly chosen for the current analysis from both corpora respectively. To sum up, this chapter provides analysis of 133 authentic examples of each post-genitive construction taken from the BNC corpus and 803 authentic examples of each post-genitive construction derived from the COCA corpus. Each subsection in this chapter looks at one of the five conditioning factors which determine the choice in the post-genitive variation. Before we precede to the analysis of each factor individually, I would like to mention examples which were excluded from the analysis of the post-genitive variation in this thesis:

- i) Examples in which the possessor is marked with the genitive *s* which may, in fact, indicate the plural form of the possessor instead of its genitive case. As illustrated in (14) below, the

final 's attached to the possessor in the expression “*a few million other children of GI's*” indicates the plural form of the possessor “*GI*” rather than the POSS 's. Otherwise, it would be impossible for a single person to have a few million children.

- (14) When they were kids, they saw the medal in this box at home in the den. But, like **a few million other children of GI's**, Susan, Rick and Mick Bush are only now learning to appreciate how much of their father's behavior towards them was formed by the war experiences he kept to himself. (COCA; SPOK; 1999)

ii) Any construction in which the possessor is the name of the store as in (15), the restaurant or other similar locations as in (16) and (17), or the university or college as in (18). Such names become conventionalized in most cases. For example, the expression *Belk's department store* may also refer to *Belk's* as it is illustrated in (15). The local greengrocery store may be conventionalized to *the local greengrocer's* as it is shown in (16). The famous restaurant chain *Domino's Pizza* is often simply called *Domino's* as in (17). Similarly, in (18), such places as *King's college* and *St. John's college* are often simplified to *King's* and *St. John's* respectively.

- (15) The following Sunday I was baptized in the Seneca River wearing a dreamy blue dress Mama bought me at Belk's department store for the ceremony. When we walked into **the girl's department of Belk's** the dress was on a manikin and Mama had sighed. (COCA; FIC; 2004)

- (16) I strolled down Chelsea Terrace to find the sign in **the window of the local greengrocer's**. I must have walked past it for days without noticing: “For sale. Apply John D. Wood, 6 Mount Street, London W1.” (BNC; FICT_PROSE; 1985-1994)

- (17) When she's gone, you can smell the pre-sliced pepperoni and the once-frozen crust: Ah, **the wonderful aroma of Domino's**. Ask Nathan: “Think she's safe, delivering pizzas?” “Pizzas don't kill people” (COCA; FIC; 1997)

- (18) Cambridge is only 4 miles away with a wealth of beautiful architecture; amongst other treasures, the excellent Fitzwilliam Museum and the University Botanic Garden. **The choirs of King's and St John's** are renowned for the beauty of their singing. (BNC; MISC; 1985-1994)

iii) Post-nominal *of*-phrases occurring without a genitive counterpart. Some of them are shown in (19).

- (19) a. her nitwit of a husband (binominal construction) (Aarts 1998: 118)
 b. one of John's friends (standard partitive construction) (Barker 1998: 679)
 c. a number of people (quantifier-noun construction) (Keizer 2007: 109)
 d. a sort of artist photographer (qualifying type of SKT-constructions) (Keizer 2007: 154)

iv) Conventionalized expressions such as *Secretary of State* as illustrated in (20).

(20) **Secretary of State** John Gale said in a statement Thursday that he would release the information as long as its release complies with state law. (COCA; NEWS; 2017)

4.1. Animacy

Animacy is considered to be one of the most influential factors in the traditional genitive variation. Dahl and Fraurud (1996) argue that animacy is especially influential in grammars of those languages which give its speakers a choice between at least two different types of genitive constructions. As we have already seen, English is one of such languages. A large number of studies have analysed genitive constructions looking at the possessor's degree of animacy (e.g. Rosenbach 2002; Keizer 2007; Hawkins 1981; Hinrichs & Szmercsanyi 2007). According to Rosenbach (2002: 42), the notion of animacy is a set of innate characteristics which separate living concepts from non-living ones. However, as suggested by the author, there is no clear-cut distinction between these two categories. In other words, the notion of animacy in grammar is like a continuum. Quirk et al. (1985), for example, propose a "gender scale" which exhibits a cline from the most animate to the least animate nouns. This gender scale is reproduced in Figure 1. In addition, Kreyer (2003: 175) provides a more extended hierarchy of animacy called the personality scale adding four subcategories of inanimate words, namely inanimate semi-collective nouns (e.g. *China, country*), inanimate personified nouns (e.g. *sun, computer, boat*), inanimate nouns of time and measure (e.g. *day, week*) and inanimate non-personal nouns (e.g. *bomb, chair*). What makes the distinction between living and non-living things even more complicated is the human's conceptualization of some things being more animate than others (Rosenbach 2002: 43). Furthermore, the animacy scale, Rosenbach (2002: 43) notes, may differ considerably across different languages and, she adds, may influence a language's grammar. How it differs cross-linguistically and to what extent the animacy scale affects grammar of a language, see Rosenbach (2002: 43).

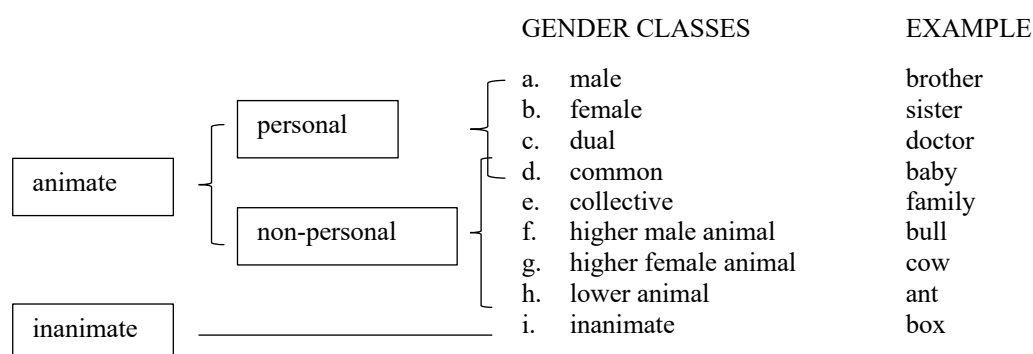


Figure 2. Gender classes (taken from Quirk et al. 1985: 314)

There is evidence in the literature that the *of*-genitive construction is more preferred with inanimate possessors (Rosenbach 2002; Quirk et al. 1985; Kreyer 2003; Hawkins 1981; Hinrichs & Szmercsanyi 2007). The double genitive construction, on the other hand, is commonly used with animate possessors (Payne 2012; Payne & Berlage 2014; Quirk & Greenbaum 1973). For the post-genitive variation, Biber et al. (1999: 310) argue that the double genitive can be used interchangeably with the *of*-genitive construction if the possessor and the possessee express social or personal relationship, as illustrated in (21) and (22). If, according to Biber et al. (1999: 310), “the head noun does not denote a human relation, double genitives cannot normally be replaced by ordinary postmodifying *of*-constructions”. In other words, according to the authors, when the possessor is animate and the possessee is not, the double genitive construction is the only choice. Therefore, Biber et al. (1999: 310) suggest that the double genitive construction *a hat of Dickie’s* is grammatically correct whereas the *of*-genitive **a hat of Dickie* is not grammatically acceptable. This argument is too strong, for non-human possesseees do occur with human possessors in the *of*-genitive constructions. The current data provides 60 examples of the *of*-genitive constructions with inanimate possesseees and animate possessors from the BNC corpus and 458 such examples from the COCA corpus. As illustrated in (23-25), possesseees *door*, *election* and *words* are all inanimate nouns whereas the possessors such as *son*, *Ron Siler Jr.*, *Donald Trump* and *John Adams* are animate. These constructions express different semantic relations. Section 4.4 elaborates on the semantic relations of the post-genitive constructions.

(21) I’m staying with **a friend of Mary’s**. (BNC; MISC; 1975-1984)

(22) As **a real friend of Bill**, what do you think is the most important thing folks who may be skeptical need to know about? (COCA; SPOK; 1993)

(23) Impatient, Siler Sr. navigated the steps and knocked on **the door of his son, Ron Siler Jr.**, and asked him to come upstairs to watch a boxing tape with him. (COCA; NEWS; 2004)

(24) For proof, we need look no further than **the election of Donald Trump**. (COCA; MAG; 2017)

(25) It is good to keep in mind **the words of John Adams**: “Our Constitution was made only for a moral and religious people. It is wholly inadequate to the government of any other.” (COCA; NEWS; 2017).

The degree of animacy in language is fuzzy. Dahl and Fraurud (1996: 62) suggest that there are cases when non-human beings may be treated in discourse as human-beings and vice versa. They propose a list of extended types of animacy which includes metaphorical extensions, metonymical extensions, collective nouns, “non-personal agents” (e.g. institutions, different associations, companies), animals and mythological beings (Dahl & Fraurud 1996: 62-63). Although the double genitive constructions usually take personal noun possessors the current

data set, for example, provides one example of the double genitive construction with the possessor referring to animals such as *dog* as in (26), and one construction with the possessor referring to a character in a novel such as *Chrysom* as represented in (27). In (26), the double genitive construction is preceded by the demonstrative *this*. As argued by Maclaran (1982: 82), *this/these* refers to the information which is “not quite yet in the context”. However, demonstrative *this* in (26) clearly refers to the information provided in the previous sentence.

(26) Then he trots out to the woods, but not after the live deer; only to excavate the forest floor after an inferior maxillary or a slightly decayed metatarsus, packed with dirt. He tosses these skeletons around the yard and eventually stows them under the woodpile, where the spiders inhabit them. I’m bothered by **this habit of my dog’s** for two reasons. (COCA; FIC; 1999)

(27) The stone mantel above the fireplace was littered with **thousand-year-old oddments of Chrysom’s** that had somehow survived accidents, misplacements, pilfering and spring cleaning. (COCA; FIC; 1993)

As has been already argued, the most prototypical double genitive construction is the one with the most animate possessor (Biber et al. 1999: 310). According to Quirk’s et al. (1985) gender scale, which is exemplified in Figure 2 above, proper nouns have the highest degree of animacy. The double genitive constructions with the non-human possessors are not usually used. Actually, it has been claimed that the possessors must be personal (Quirk & Greenbaum 1973: 99). However, the current data set includes a few examples of genitive constructions with the inanimate possessors. For example, the possessor *Aftermath’s* in (28) refers to the title of the Rolling Stones album. Furthermore, it is unmodified and preceded by a definite article *the*, another factor which occurs rarely with the double genitive constructions.

(28) To coincide with **the American release of Aftermath’s**, we held a press conference at New York’s West Seventy-ninth Street Marina, on the Hudson River, on the SS Sea Panther, which Klein had rented. (COCA; MAG; 1990)

Another two categories of inanimate possessors are names of buildings or institutions as illustrated in (29) and (30), and words denoting collective communities such as *city*, *country*, *planet*, *school*, etc., as in (31-34). In (29), for example, the possessor *The Telegraph’s* in the double genitive construction refers to the name of the company and the whole construction *a sister of The Telegraph’s* metaphorically expresses a kinship relation referring to the company’s branch. Similarly, the possessor *Congress* in the *of*-genitive construction in (30), refers to the legislative body of the U.S. In (31-32), both the double genitive in (31) and the *of*-genitive in (32) are used with the inanimate possessor *city*. The two constructions differ in that the double genitive is used with the animate possessee *director* expressing an interpersonal relation whereas the *of*-genitive is used with the inanimate plural possessee *streets* and

expresses ownership relation, namely that “the streets, which belong to this city, were paved with gold”. Another example of inanimate possessors is illustrated in (33) and (34). Both constructions are used with the possessor *school*. Whereas the double genitive in (33) takes the singular noun *school* the *of*-genitive in (34) takes the plural form, namely *schools*.

(29) Pete Herschberger is leaving his post as advertising director of the Macon Telegraph to become vice president of advertising for Contra Costa Newspapers, **a sister of The Telegraph’s** in the Knight Ridder chain. (COCA; NEWS; 1998)

(30) **Each member of Congress** had to determine how to keep his or her office functional during the shutdown (COCA; FIC; 2017).

(31) We’re looking to strengthen awareness of shop-local and buy-local movements inside city hall, said, **director of the city’s**. (COCA; NEWS; 2010)

(32) **The streets of this city** were paved with gold, and the architecture resembled the buildings of ancient Rome. (COCA; FIC; 2011)

(33) For a variety of reasons, none of which were **the fault of the school’s or hers**, she had missed every opportunity to receive free glasses. (COCA; ACAD; 2014)

(34) She observed that **characteristics of effective middle schools** were also necessary characteristics for successful programs for gifted students. (COCA; ACAD; 1998)

Words denoting collective communities, however, may also refer to human beings. For example, the noun *family*. Poutsma (1914: 81) suggests that the double genitive construction is not permitted with collective possessors. According to Poutsma (1914) the expression *a relation of the family* can be used only with the *of*-genitives. This assumption, however, is not supported by the findings of my own study. In the current data, collective possessors were found in both post-genitive constructions. Examples of post-genitive constructions with the collective possessor *family* are represented in (35) and (36).

(35) **A friend of the family’s** said a hamster cage had fallen on her. (COCA; SPOK; 1997)

(36) **One member of my family** had already yelled at her. (COCA; FIC; 1991)

Animacy is also described in the literature as a determinant of certain rules in English grammar which deals with syntactic function such as word order and marking (Dahl and Fraurud 1996: 48). Dahl and Fraurud (1996: 58) suggest that animacy is an ontological category which is closely related to topicality. Consequently, the authors conclude that animate nouns often occur in discourse as topics (Dahl and Fraurud 1996: 60). Furthermore, nouns are likely to be topical or to be in focus when they are preceded by demonstratives. This is explained in more details in Section 4.5 which deals with definiteness of the post-genitive constructions. The overview of animacy in the post-genitive variation which has been described in this section is illustrated

in Table 7 below. Table 7 is followed by the next section which elaborates on the factor of number in the post-genitive variation.

Table 7. The factor of animacy in the post-genitive variation based on BNC and COCA.

animacy	double genitives		of-genitives	
	BNC	COCA	BNC	COCA
animate possessee	63.1% (84/133)	71.6% (575/803)	54.9% (73/133)	42% (337/803)
inanimate possessee	36.8% (49/133)	28.4% (228/803)	45.1 % (60/133)	58% (466/803)
animate possessor	100% (133/133)	99% (795/803)	98.5% (131/133)	92.4% (742/803)
inanimate possessor	0% (0/133)	1% (8/803)	1.5% (2/133)	7.6% (61/803)

4.2. Number

Little attention has been drawn in the literature so far to the factor of number of the possessor and the possessee in the post-genitive constructions. Considering the traditional genitive variation, however, Altenberg (1982: 58-59) notes that the *of*-genitive constructions take possessors with the regular plural nouns whereas the *s*-genitive constructions – with the irregular ones. This distribution of irregular and regular possessors in the genitive variation is explained by Rosenbach (2002: 34) in the following way:

[...] maybe it is the phonological property of the regular plural ending -s, i.e. a final sibilant, which is absent in irregular plurals (e.g. *children, men*) that triggers the use of the zero-genitive or the *of*-genitive to avoid awkward sibilant clusters [...] (Rosenbach 2002: 34).

The findings of the current analysis of the post-genitive constructions seem to be similar to this explanation. Following the dataset on the double genitive constructions from the BNC and the COCA corpora, no examples were found with regular plural possessors. There is, however, one double genitive construction with the irregular plural possessor. This example is illustrated in (37). As shown in (37), the whole construction is indefinite expressing interpersonal relation and the possessor *children* refers to human beings. The *of*-genitive constructions, on the other hand, may be used with both regular and irregular plural possessors. The current data provides 5 *of*-genitive constructions with the regular plural possessors in the BNC corpus, 67 constructions with the regular plural possessors in the COCA corpus and 7 constructions with the irregular plural possessors in the BNC corpus. In total, there are 72 *of*-genitive constructions with the regular plural possessors and 7 constructions with the irregular plural possessors (see Table 8). An example of the *of*-genitive construction with the irregular plural possessor is

shown in (38). The *of*-genitive constructions with the regular plural possessors are exemplified in (39) and (40). The *of*-genitive construction *the son of Russian Jewish immigrants* in (39) has possessor consisting of three words, follows definite article *the* and is not post-modified. These factors, as will be shown in the next subsections, seem to decrease the preference for the double genitive construction.

(37) And in exchange for his kindness, they shared a little-known secret about the rogue elephant. It turns out this monster of the deep was, in fact, **an old friend of the children's**. (COCA; SPOK; 2005)

(38) Nicky approached her with the assumption that men are naturally right and it is **the role of women** to follow their lead. (BNC; FIC_PROSE; 1985-1994)

(39) Abraham Goldstein was **the son of Russian Jewish immigrants**. (COCA; SPOK; 2002)

(40) **The parents of these students** provided valuable information regarding musical activities outside the school and were able to assess and explain their child's musical abilities. (COCA; ACAD; 2000)

Apart from the use of plural possessors, both post-genitive constructions can be used with plural possesseees, as illustrated in the following examples below. Constructions with plural possesseees may express different semantic relations such as human relations as in (42) and (44) or non-human as in (41) and (43). In addition, notice that the possessors in the *of*-genitive constructions consist of more than one word or, in other words, they are “heavy”. This is another factor that may determine the choice between the two post-genitive constructions. This factor, namely complexity is described in the next subsection.

(41) Fading up we HEAR **the words of John Cooper Clarke**. (COCA; FIC; 1998)

(42) Pauline Pitt's grandchildren, Baker and Vivian, **the children of her daughter Dr. Samantha Boardman Rosen**, call her Poopsie. (COCA; MAG; 2010)

(43) **These expectations of Jillian's** came as a surprise to Stephen once they were married. (COCA; FIC; 2004).

(44) Then I came north and I've been in Kelso for a few days with **some distant cousins of my mother's**. (COCA; FIC; 1990).

Table 8. The factor of number in the post-genitive variation based on BNC and COCA

	double genitives		<i>of</i> -genitives	
	BNC	COCA	BNC	COCA
irregular plural possessor	0% (0/133)	0.1% (1/803)	5.3% (7/133)	0% (0/803)
regular plural possessor	0% (0/133)	0% (0/803)	3.7% (5/133)	8.3% (67/803)
plural possessee	3.7% (5/133)	8.7% (70/803)	13.5% (18/133)	24.6% (198/803)

4.3. Complexity

Another conditioning factor discussed in this thesis is complexity of the possessor and the possessee of the genitive constructions. According to the principle of “end-weight” less complex linguistic units precede more complex ones (Hinrichs & Szendrői 2007: 453). Thus, it has been argued that in the traditional genitive variation more complex possessors tend to occur with the *of*-genitive constructions whereas less complex possessors are likely to occur with the *s*-genitive constructions (Hinrichs & Szendrői 2007: 453; Huddleston & Pullum 2002: 478). In the post-genitive variation, as shown by the findings of this analysis, “heavier” possessors are more likely to be used with the *of*-genitive constructions but “heavier” possessee with the double genitive constructions (Huddleston & Pullum 2002: 478). Huddleston and Pullum (2002: 478) suggest that complexity in the post-genitive variation leads to competition between the double genitive and the *of*-genitive constructions. However, as pointed out by the authors, the expression “*those green eyes of Mary’s*” sounds more natural than “*those green eyes of Mary*”, whereas the expression “*those green eyes of the girl who lives next door*” is more likely to be used rather than the expression “*those green eyes of the girl who lives next door’s*”. This assumption is also supported by Biber et al. (1999: 310) who claim that in the post-genitive variation the use of short possessors is preferred with the double genitive constructions while the use of longer possessors – with the *of*-genitive constructions.


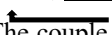
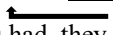

The current analysis shows that in the constructions in which the possessor is a proper name, the “heaviness” of this proper name impacts the speaker’s choice between the two post-genitive constructions. For example, the data being analysed show that proper name possessors consisting of one word, as in (45) and (46), can be used with both post-genitive constructions whereas proper name possessors consisting of two words, as in (47), or more than two words, as in (49) and (50), occur only with the *of*-genitive constructions. From both corpora, the data provides 243 double genitive constructions with proper name possessors consisting of one word, 2 of which include a title in front of the proper name as illustrated in (48). In the *of*-genitive constructions, on the other hand, the proper name possessors tend to be more complex. In the whole data set of the *of*-genitive constructions, there are 79 *of*-genitive constructions with proper name possessors consisting of one word, 154 constructions with proper name possessors consisting of two words, 50 constructions with proper name possessors consisting of three words and three constructions in which the possessor consists of four words.

(45) This is how Jesus becomes **a son of David**. (COCA; MAG; 2013)

(46) **A friend of Benno’s** would like to give you a message, Signor Kauffman. (COCA; FIC; 1991)

- (47) It's not because she is **a close personal friend of Bill Clinton**. (COCA; NEWS; 1993)
- (48) His father, he told us, was American-born, **a friend of General Cape's** from when they were little boys. (COCA; FIC; 1996)
- (49) John Milburn Leacock, the first resident of Madeira to own a motor car and **son of Thomas Slapp Leacock**, continued to export fine madeiras and win gold medals. (BNC; MISC; 1985-1994)
- (50) Miss Joynson-Hicks is **the great-grand daughter of Sir William Joynson "Jix" Hicks**, a puritan Home Secretary who regarded Roman Catholicism with horror. (BNC; NEWSP; 1985-1994)

It has been shown above that the proper name possessors in the *of*-genitive constructions may consist of more words than the proper name possessors in the double genitive constructions. However, it is not the only factor which differentiates the two post-genitive constructions. Apart from the complexity of the proper name possessors, the possessors in the *of*-genitive constructions may be post-modified by a relative clause, which is not observed in the double genitive constructions, for example. This makes the possessor in the *of*-genitive even more complex. For example, in (51), the possessor *her mother* is post-modified by a relative clause *who had taken him in after he'd lost his parents*. The arrow below indicates that it was *mother* rather than *a distant relative* who had taken him in. Similarly, in (52), the arrow indicates that the relative clause *who had held the same post in the late 1850s* post-modifies the possessor *his father Louis*. In (53), again, it is clear from the context that the relative clause post-modification refers to the possessor (*the driver who stood nearby*) rather than to the possessee (**a colleague who stood nearby*). In total, there are 40 examples of the *of*-genitive constructions in which the possessor is post-modified by a relative clause and 24 *of*-genitive constructions in which the possessor is followed by other post-modifiers such as PP as in (54), for example. Table 9 provides the overview of the frequency of these constructions in the data set of each corpus. Possessor's post-modification, however, was not found in the data set of the double genitive constructions.

- (51) He's an orphan, **a distant relative of her mother**, who had taken him in after he'd lost his parents. (COCA; FIC; 2005)

- (52) In 1891, he was president of the American Pomological Society, following in **the footsteps of his father Louis**, who had held the same post in the late 1850s. (COCA; ACAD; 2012)

- (53) The couple smiled with gratitude, but **a colleague of the driver** who stood nearby admonished him, "Why didn't you show them these places this time around? If you had, they wouldn't be leaving now!" Associated Press Writer Misha Dzhindzhikhashvili contributed to this report from Tbilisi, Georgia. (COCA; NEWS; 2012)

- (54) What utter and unbelievable nonsense it is for the Labour Group to claim that the Conservative Group have sought to exploit **the needs of people** with disabilities in order to gain political advantage. (BNC; SPOK; 1985-1994)


Of particular interest are constructions in which the possessor is post-modified by another *of*-genitive construction as in (55) or, as Poutsma (1914: 81) points out, “when the head-word is accompanied by an apposition”. According to Poutsma (1914: 81), the structure of the sentence such as *He was a friend of his Royal Highness, the Duke of Kent* makes the double genitive impossible. This view is supported by the findings of my own study. This structure is grammatically complicated and seems to be excluded from the double genitive constructions. As shown in (55a), the possessor *the Preacher* is post-modified by the *of*-genitive *the son of David*. In (55b), the *of*-genitive construction highlighted in bold includes two complex possessors, namely *Augustus Tilden* and *his wife Ann*, both of which are post-modified by the *of*-genitive constructions such as *a clerk of the Bank of England* and *daughter of Henry Balls of Cambridge* respectively. The same is observed in (55c). The first possessor *Richard Witt* is post-modified by its appositive component *salter* and the second possessor *his wife Ann* is post-modified by another *of*-genitive construction *daughter of John Dickenson*, the possessor of which, again, post-modified by the noun *butcher*. The feature of post-modification referring to the possessor of the construction was found only in the data set of the *of*-genitive constructions.

(55) **The words of the preacher, the son of David**, king in Jerusalem. (COCA; ACAD; 2000)

(56) Sir William Augustus (1842-1926), chemist, was born 15 August 1842 in Regent’s Park, London, **the elder son (there were no daughters) of Augustus Tilden, a clerk of the Bank of England, and his wife Anne, daughter of Henry Balls of Cambridge**. (BNC; BIOGRAPHY; 1985-1994)

(57) Richard (1568-1624), mathematical practitioner, was baptized 27 March 1568 in St Clement, Eastcheap, London, **the only child of Richard Witt, salter, and his wife Anne, daughter of John Dickenson**, butcher. (BNC; BIOGRAPHY; 1985-1994)

However, post-modification may occur in both the *of*-genitive and the double genitive if the scope of the post-modifier is the whole construction. Post-modification of the double genitive and the *of*-genitive constructions is exemplified in (58-63). According to the data set, both post-genitive constructions may have different types of post-modification. As shown in (58) and (59), the post-genitive constructions are post-modified by relative clauses. In (58), the relative clause *that he might want* post-modifies the double genitive construction *some stuff of mom’s*, whereas in (59), the *of*-genitive *a studio portrait of a beautiful young woman* is post-modified by the relative clause *that Bernice Madigan posted to her Facebook page on November 14*. As shown in (60) and (61), the post-genitive constructions are post-modified by participle clauses. Thus the double genitive in (60), namely *the other work of Nerval’s* is followed by the participle clause *reviewed by Leiris in Clart* and the *of*-genitive, *a photo of my dad*, in (61), is followed by the participle clause *taken more than 60 years ago*. Furthermore, the participle clause in

(61) also serves as a post-head supplement followed by PP modifier *with his favorite ride of all time* which refers to the possessor *my dad*. Finally, the post-genitive constructions in (62) and (63) are post-modified by PPs referring to places such as *at Yale* and *at the London Institute* respectively.

(58) Tell him that I have **some stuff of mom's** that he might want. (COCA; FIC; 2002)

(59) "Here I am about 100 years ago," reads the caption to the sepia photograph, **a studio portrait of a beautiful young woman**, that Bernice Madigan posted to her Facebook page on November 14. (COCA; MAG; 2014)

(60) Leiris and Nerval, the most secret of writers. Secret sharers. Sharers in secrecy. Salt Smugglers. **The other work of Nerval's** reviewed by Leiris in Clart was his 1850 serial novel, *Les Faux-Saulniers*, whose title refers to those smugglers who, in violation of the brutal gabelle tax of the Ancien Rgime, engaged in the contraband commerce of salt. (COCA; ACAD; 2005)

(61) Here's **a photo of my dad**, taken more than 60 years ago, with his favorite ride of all time: the Ford Woodie wagon. (COCA; MAG; 2011)

(62) Tufte has coined several terms that have come to define his style, such as "data-ink ratio," the proportion of graphical detail that does not represent statistical information, and "chartjunk," ornamental and often saccharine design flourishes that impede understanding. Jonathan Corum, **a former graduate student of Tufte's** at Yale who is now the science graphics editor at the New York Times, said that using Tufte's principles is a way of respecting the reader's intelligence. (COCA; MAG; 2011)

(63) R F Dearden, **a colleague of Peters** at the London Institute, took a similar stance. (BNC; POLIT; 1985-1994)

Another quite common characteristic of the two post-genitive constructions according to the current data is that each of the post-genitive constructions may function as a component part in an appositive construction. Both the double genitive and the *of*-genitive constructions may refer to the information which follows the construction, as exemplified in (64) and (65) as well as to the information which precedes the construction, as illustrated in (66) and (67). Thus in (64), *an college of Willimon's* is called *Richard B. Hayes*, *a member of that family* in (65) is called *Miss Annie Jane Dresser*, *a high school friend of Winter's* in (66) is called *Billy Lyons* and the name of the person who is *a law school friend of Bill Clinton*, as in (67), is *Eugene A. Ludwig*. In addition, the current data suggest that both post-genitive constructions refer more frequently to the information which precedes the construction than to the information which follows it. The data provides 160 appositive double genitive constructions and 98 appositive *of*-genitive constructions referring to the preceding information and only 28 appositive double genitives and 14 appositive *of*-genitives referring to the information which follows the construction. This is probably due to the principle of "end weight" which claims that less complex linguistic units usually precede more complex ones. As shown in (64-67), the post-genitive constructions highlighted in bold are more complex than the structure of the underlined information to which they refer.

- (64) New Testament scholars are divided on this matter, but the leading exponent of the “faith of Jesus Christ” interpretation is **a colleague of Willimon’s** at Duke University Divinity School, Richard B. Hayes (COCA; MAG; 2004)
- (65) When John Fenwick Latimer started, he worked alone from an office above Dresser's printing and stationery shop and went on to marry **a member of that family**, Miss Annie Jane Dresser. (BNC; NEWSP; 1985-1994)
- (66) The land was owned by Billy Lyons, **a high school friend of Winter’s** (COCA; FIC; 2008)
- (67) And the firm's political ties run deep, thanks to its founder and chief executive, Eugene A. Ludwig, a former top banking regulator and **a law school friend of Bill Clinton**. (COCA; NEWS; 2015)

The next point I would like to mention in this section is pre-modification of the post-genitive constructions. In the two post-genitive constructions, both the possessor and the possessee can be pre-modified. According to the data, the possessee in the post-genitive constructions are usually pre-modified by one or two adjectives. However, the possessee’s pre-modification may be of different length. For example, the possessee *friend* in the double genitive construction *an old hunting and fishing friend of his father’s* in (68) is pre-modified by three adjectives, namely *old*, *hunting* and *fishing*. In (69), the possessee *shirt* in the double genitive *an old white oxford cloth shirt of their father’s* is pre-modified by *old white oxford cloth*. In the *of*-genitive constructions *the bumping, moaning, increasingly urgent bed-squeaking sound of my mother and father* and *the softer, warmer, moister hand of his mother* in (70) and (71) respectively, pre-modification of the possessee is somewhat more complex. Nevertheless, the data show that possessee’s pre-modification occurs more often in the double genitive constructions than in the *of*-genitive constructions (see Table 9). 350 pre-modified possesseees were found in the data set of the double genitive constructions whereas only 197 pre-modified possesseees were found in the data set of the *of*-genitive constructions.

- (68) One Saturday night, after finishing his work upstairs, the boy went into the dentist's private office, put his feet up on the desk, and called Carl Sutherland, an **old hunting and fishing friend of his father’s**. (COCA; FIC; 1999).
- (69) Her blond hair was uncombed and she was wearing an **old white oxford cloth shirt of their father’s**, a relic perhaps of this very closet, what she now called her milk-truck shirt. (COCA; FIC; 2010)
- (70) But then, all at once, it does: **the bumping, moaning, increasingly urgent bed-squeaking sound of my mother and father** on the other side of the bedroom wall. (COCA; FIC; 2005)
- (71) At first, eyes firmly shut, all I was conscious of was Frank’s muscular handclasp and **the softer, warmer, moister hand of his mother**. (COCA; FIC; 1992)

However, according to the current data the frequency of the pre-modified possessors is much higher in the data set of the *of*-genitive constructions than it is in the data set of the double genitive constructions. The data provides 170 *of*-genitive constructions and only 21 double genitive constructions with possessor’s pre-modification. Whereas in the data set of the double

genitive constructions the possessor's pre-modification is highly restricted to only one-word adjective, in the data set of the *of*-genitive constructions the number of the adjectives preceding the possessor is likely to be higher than two. For example, in the double genitive *a friend of my youngest son's* in (72), the possessor *son's* is pre-modified by the adjective *youngest*. Similarly, in (73) the double genitive *a cousin of the old lady's* the possessor *lady's* is pre-modified by one adjective, namely *old*. In contrast, in the *of*-genitive *the attitudes of plain straightforward young people* in (74), the possessor *people* is pre-modified by three adjectives, namely *plain*, *straightforward* and *young*. Although proper names are usually not pre-modified, the current data provides a few exceptions. As shown in (75), the proper name possessor *Aidan's* is pre-modified by the adjective *slender*. Similarly, in (76), the proper name *Joanna Vincent* is pre-modified by two adjectives, *sweet* and *little*. As illustrated in (72-76), the possessors in the *of*-genitive constructions are more complex than the possessors in the double genitive constructions. Therefore, according to the current data, it can be concluded that complex possessors, either pre-modified or post-modified are preferred with the *of*-genitives rather than the double genitives.

(72) **A friend of my youngest son's** approached me one day, sandwich in hand, to tell me how his father, a highly promising pitcher the Reds had made a big trade for only a few seasons back, had suffered such a serious arm injury in his second year with the team that he had had to abandon his pitching career. (COCA; FIC; 1994).

(73) That afternoon when I arrived at Miss Havisham's house, it wasn't Estella who opened the gate, but **a cousin of the old lady's**. (BNC; FICT_PROSE; 1985-1994).

(74) this raises the part played by drugs, not merely in the emergence of a forceful counter-culture, but in **the attitudes of plain straightforward young people** to whom any kind of illicit substance a couple of years earlier would have been a complete mystery. (BNC; BIOGRAPHY; 1985-1994)

(75) **Any shirt of slender Aidan's** would have hardly covered her decently, would have left her shivering and cold. (COCA; FIC; 1992)

(76) You want to sell **the story of sweet little Joanna Vincent** to the highest bidder, right? (COCA; FIC; 1996)

Apart from the possessor's pre- and post-modification, the construction's complexity may be conveyed in that one possessee may refer to more than one linguistic unit. For example, in (77), the possessee in the double genitive construction *A mentor, friend and colleague of Diebenkorn's* refers to *a mentor, friend and colleague*. Similarly, in the *of*-genitive construction *a longtime friend, mentor and colleague of Roberts* in (78), the possessee refers to *a longtime friend, mentor and colleague*. Both constructions are indefinite and express interpersonal relation. However, unlike in the double genitive construction in (77), the possessor in the *of*-genitive construction in (78) ends with a final sibilant -s, which may actually trigger the use of the *of*-genitive rather than the double genitive construction. However, there

are, of course, examples in the data set of the *of*-genitive constructions in which the possessor does not have a final sibilant -s, as in (79), for example. The *of*-genitive construction *a neighbor and second cousin of Loeb* in (79) expresses both interpersonal (*neighbor*) and kinship (*second cousin*) relation. In the data set of the double genitive constructions, on the other hand, if the possessee refers to more than one noun the construction as a whole still expresses one relation, namely interpersonal relation as in (77). Furthermore, constructions as in (80), where the possessee refers to two inanimate nouns, are not found in the data set of the double genitive constructions.

(77) **A mentor, friend and colleague of Diebenkorn's** at the California School of Fine Arts, Park set the direction of Bay Area Figuration, destroying nearly all his early abstract work. (COCA; NEWS; 2008)

(78) Harvard law professor Charles Ogletree, **a longtime friend, mentor and colleague of Roberts**, believes self-assurance is the primary reason she will thrive in “an all-boys club.” (COCA; NEWS; 2014)

(79) Indeed, Franks was **a neighbor and second cousin of Loeb**, so it was easy to offer the unsuspecting boy a ride home from school on that May afternoon. (COCA; MAG; 2012)

(80) The late Richard Thesiger in 1982 donated to the Collection a fascinating collection of material relating to **the life and career of his uncle**, the actor Ernest Thesiger. (BNC; MISC; 1985-1994)

Another factor which is common for the *of*-genitives but not for the double genitives is the use of two possessors in one construction. As shown in (81), the *of*-genitive construction consists of two possessors, namely *Mr. Udall and Mr. Bennet*. Similarly, in (82), the *of*-genitive construction has two possessors such as *mother and father*. The data set of the *of*-genitive constructions includes 57 constructions occurring with more than one possessor, as exemplified in (81) and (82). The data set of the double genitive constructions, on the contrary, does not include such constructions. However, there is a few constructions which are followed by genitives without a head noun or the so-called elliptical genitives, as illustrated in (83). Hence, the head noun of the elliptical genitive *Henry's* in (83) can be inferred from the preceding double genitive construction such as *a friend of Clover's as well as Henry's* [friend]. In (84), the double genitive *a schoolmate of my sister's* is followed by the possessive pronoun *mine*. This possessive pronoun *mine* is not part of the preceding double genitive construction but rather stands on its own. As it is known, similar to elliptical genitives, possessive pronouns can be used in situations “where the head noun is recoverable from the preceding context” (Biber et al. 1999: 340). Hence, the possessive pronoun *mine* in (83) can be interpreted as *my schoolmate*. Another phrase a head noun of which can be inferred from the preceding context is a combination of a possessive determiner + *own*, as illustrated in (85). It has been argued in the literature that “possessive determiners, not possessive pronouns, precede *own*, even when

there is no head noun”. As a result, the double genitive *some reason of her mother’s* in (85) precedes the phrase *his own* and indicates the meaning of *his own* [reason].

(81) Turns out the biggest proponent of this was a Republican congressman who is now a senator and **a colleague of Mr. Udall and Mr. Bennet**. (COCA; SPOK; 2009)

(82) Ruth had never seen such peace, certainly not in **the house of her mother and father**. (COCA; FIC; 2001)

(83) Clover’s name appears nowhere in education, though there is a passing mention of Elizabeth Cameron, the beautiful, lively and much younger wife of an alcoholic Pennsylvania senator who had been **a friend of Clover’s** as well as Henry’s. (COCA; MAG; 2006)

(84) **A schoolmate of my sister’s** and mine developed type 1 diabetes. (COCA; MAG; 2008)

(85) He hadn’t kidnapped her for **some reason of her mother’s** and his own, he’d done it with the cooperation, maybe even on the orders, of the Church leadership. (COCA; FIC; 2007)

Table 9. Complexity in the post-genitive variation based on BNC and COCA

	double genitive		<i>of</i> -genitive	
	BNC (133 constructions in total)	COCA (803 constructions in total)	BNC (133 constructions in total)	COCA (803 constructions in total)
proper name possessor consisting of				
• 1 word	26 (19.5%)	217 (27%)	3 (2.2%)	76 (9.5%)
• 2 words	-	-	32 (24%)	122 (15.2%)
• 3 words	-	-	10 (7.5%)	40 (5%)
• 4 words	-	-	2 (1.5%)	1 (0.1%)
possessor’s post- modification by				
• relative clause	-	-	8 (6%)	32 (4%)
• apposition	-	-	31 (23.3%)	100 (12.5%)
• other	-	-	4 (3%)	20 (2.5%)
post-modification of the whole construction	13 (9.8%)	168 (21%)	5 (3.8%)	20(2.5%)
post-genitive as a component part in the appositive construction				
• referring to the preceding information	-	160 (20%)	29 (21.8%)	69 (8.6%)
• referring to the following information	-	28 (3.5%)	2 (1.5%)	12 (1.5%)
possessee’s pre- modification	38 (28.6%)	312 (38.9%)	29 (21.8%)	168 (21%)
possessor’s pre- modification	7 (5.3%)	14 (1.7%)	17 (12.8%)	153 (19 %)

possessee referring to more than one linguistic unit	-	10 (1.2%)	2 (1.5%)	22 (2.7%)
more than one possessor	-	-	14 (10.5%)	43 (5.4%)

4.4. Semantic relations

This section sheds light on another determining factor in the post-genitive variation, namely the factor of semantic relations expressed by each post-genitive construction. Semantic relations between the possessor and the possessee in the current qualitative analysis are coded on the basis of Payne's (2012: 184-187) and Payne and Berlage's (2014) list of semantic relations which were discussed in Chapter 2. Both Payne's (2012) and Payne and Berlage's (2014) studies are restricted to the BNC corpus. The current analysis, as it is already mentioned in this thesis, includes data from both BNC and COCA. As argued in the previous literature on the double genitive and the *of*-genitive constructions, the set of semantic relations where a direct comparison between the two post-genitive constructions is possible, are interpersonal (e.g. *a friend of Nana's/a lifelong friend of Bill Clinton*), kinship (e.g. *a cousin of mom's/the son of Sam Hensley*) and ownership relation (e.g. *no shirt of Aidan's/the house of her mother*). In total, however, all double genitive constructions from the current data were divided into constructions which express 11 different types of semantic relations. The data set of the *of*-genitive constructions, however, provides constructions which express 12 different types of semantic relations. The frequency of the double genitive and the *of*-genitive constructions which express these semantic relations is provided in Tables 10 and 11 for each post-genitive construction respectively.

As shown in Table 10, interpersonal relation is expressed by the majority of all double genitive constructions. It constitutes 66.9% of the whole data set of the double genitive constructions derived from COCA and 54.9% of double genitive constructions derived from BNC. These constructions include different head nouns such as *friend*, *colleague*, *pal*, *fan*, *acquaintance*, *associate*, etc. Comparing the interpersonal relation expressed by two post-genitive constructions, it can be concluded that the most frequent head noun used in both the double genitive and the *of*-genitive is the noun *friend*. The data provides 414 double genitives and 86 *of*-genitives with the head noun *friend*. Furthermore, the majority of these post-genitive constructions are indefinite as illustrated in (86) and (87). As a result, it can be concluded that

the two post-genitive constructions have similar linguistic properties and are used with similar head nouns when they express the interpersonal relation.

(86) He's **a friend of mummy's**. (COCA; FIC; 2006)

(87) His mother, Bea, was **a good friend of my mother**. (COCA; FIC; 2014)

Other types of semantic relation which indicate the variation between the double genitive and the *of*-genitive are evaluation relation and agent relation. However, the frequency of the constructions expressing these relations is not so high as the frequency of interpersonal relation, for example. The data provides only 21 double genitive constructions and 2 *of*-genitive constructions expressing evaluation relation. In all these post-genitive constructions, the possessee includes the noun *favorite*, as illustrated in (88) and (89). Both constructions in (88) and (89) are indefinite and express evaluation relation. The constructions in (90) and (91), on the other hand, express the agent relation and have different determiners. For example, the double genitive *a habit of mother's* in (90) is indefinite whereas the *of*-genitive *the habits of a decent man* in (91) is definite. Nevertheless, the agent relation in both post-genitive constructions is expressed through the use of the same possessee, namely *habit*.

(88) I gave some money to the Institute of Fine Arts, **a favorite of my father's**, for a series of Marxian lectures ("The Walter Benjamin Lectures") on the history of art. (COCA; ACAD; 1991)

(89) He was **a favorite of my mom**. (COCA; SPOK; 2014)

(90) This was **a habit of mother's**, something she'd do absentmindedly while she was talking to one of us. (COCA; FIC; 1999)

(91) This is the rationale of the movement from "a decent man" to "**the habits of a decent man**". (BNC; HUMANITIES_ARTS; 1975-1984)

There are, however, cases when the double genitive and the *of*-genitive express the same semantic relation using different head nouns. For example, head nouns of the *of*-genitive constructions expressing the experience relation differ from those of the double genitive constructions expressing the experience relation. The double genitive constructions take such head nouns as *dismissal*, *feelings*, *path* or *experience*, as illustrated in (92). In the *of*-genitive constructions, on the other hand, the head nouns are *assassination*, *murder*, *birth*, *marriage* or *death*, as shown in (93). Nevertheless, in both constructions the experience relation is something what "has been done or happened to" the possessor.

(92) **This experience of your son's** in the vestry of St Matthew's, did he talk to you about it? (BNC; FICT_PROSE; 1985-1994)

(93) On **the death of his father** in 1945 Lord Cranley became the 6th Earl of Onslow. (BNC; NEWSP; 1985-1994)

Further distinctions are made comparing verbal noun possessors in the two post-genitive constructions. In Payne's (2012) analysis, the double genitive constructions with verbal head nouns are assigned to the type of semantic relations such as "verbal nouns". In the current data set of the double genitive constructions, only two double genitive constructions are found with verbal head nouns, one of which is exemplified in (94), and both of which are assigned in the current analysis to the category of agent relation. As shown in (94), the possessor *selection* refers to something what the possessor has done, namely "selected the bird motif of the conservatory". In (95), the *of*-genitive *the election of Donald Trump* also includes the verbal head noun *election*, but the semantic relation expressed by this construction is the theme relation, namely that Donald Trump is the theme of *election*. The theme relation, according to Payne and Berlage's (2014: 350) list of semantic relations, is normally excluded from the double genitive constructions. However, one example of the double genitive expressing theme relation was found in the data and is reproduced in (96). As shown in (96), the theme of the American release is *Aftermath*.

(94) The bird motif of the conservatory, **another selection of her predecessor's**, Elizabeth did not dare touch.
(COCA; FIC; 2008)

(95) Gold tumbles into the red for the day after **the election of Donald Trump** (COCA; MAG; 2016)

(96) To coincide with **the American release of Aftermath's**, we held a press conference at New York's West Seventy-ninth Street Marina, on the Hudson River, on the SS Sea Panther, which Klein had rented. (COCA; MAG; 1990)

Another semantic relation which is not normally permitted by the double genitive constructions is the relation of depiction. Usually, if some possessors which refer to the depiction relation in the *of*-genitive constructions are used with the double genitive constructions, the semantic relation, in fact, changes. For example, in (97) the possessor *story* in the *of*-genitive construction *the story of his father* expresses the depiction relation, namely that *the story* depicts *his father*. Furthermore, the possessor *his father* is post-modified by its appositive component *another president*. Thus depiction relation together with the possessor's post-modification, as argued in the previous section, are two factors which determine the speaker's choice for the *of*-genitive construction rather than the double genitive. In (98), on the other hand, the same possessor *story* in the double genitive construction *a story of his father's* expresses the authorship relation, namely that *his father* is the author or the teller of this story. Notice that the factor of semantic relations in these two constructions is highly related to the factor of definiteness. As argued in Chapter 2, the *of*-genitive construction prefers the definite

determiner whereas the double genitive construction prefers the indefinite determiner. This is also observed in examples (97) and (98) below.

(97) Never before has a president told **the story of his father**, another president, through his own eyes and in his own words, “the Crown news release crowed, noting that W.’s “Decision Points” was the best-selling presidential memoir ever and promising that 43’s portrait of 41 will be heartfelt, intimate and illuminating.” (COCA; NEWS; 2014)

(98) He recalled **a story of his father’s** about a peasant sentenced to be hanged for poaching. (COCA; FIC; 2015)

Like in (97) and (98), the post-genitive constructions in (99) and (100) also exhibit the shift of semantic relations. In (99), the double genitive construction *those damned embroidered pictures of her sister’s* clearly expresses ownership relation, namely that *her sister* is the owner of the pictures. What is depicted on those pictures is recoverable from the following context. Thus the pictures depict *the happy smiling girl on one side and a weepy, sad-eyed girl on the other*. In (100), on the other hand, the *of*-genitive construction *pictures of aunt Bess* expresses the depiction relation, namely that aunt Bess is depicted on the pictures. The possessor’s modification *sitting on the lap of a trombone player in Morocco* enhances the meaning of depiction.

(99) Slowly her tears begin to subside, and as they do she finds herself laughing half-heartedly as she remembers **those damned embroidered pictures of her sister’s**. The ones with the happy smiling girl on one side and a weepy, sad-eyed girl on the other that daily admonished Celeste – “Laugh and the world laughs with you – Cry and you cry alone.” (COCA; FIC; 1993)

(100) In the same way, she turns over the anecdotes of my mother’s career, over and over, to make them by this constant handling into events that could have happened to her, and I sometimes wonder if there is not another album in this small apartment, on the edge of this bucolic college campus, another album that features **pictures of aunt Bess** sitting on the lap of a trombone player in Morocco. (COCA; FIC; 1990)

The last point I would like to mention in this section is the metaphorical use of some post-genitive constructions. The data provides some metaphorically used semantic relations expressed by both the double genitive and the *of*-genitive constructions. A few of them are shown below. In (101), for example, the *of*-genitive construction *the footsteps of his father Louis* expresses the ownership relation although no one can own his or her own footsteps. Similarly, in (102) the two *of*-genitive constructions express body part relation which is owned by someone as genetic inheritance rather than a physical thing. The possessor *circle* in (103) refers to a group of people, *lifelong dream* in (104) refers to the possessor’s physical activity, *vague path* in (105) to *his father’s* experience, and *the blood of his brother’s* in (106) refers to

“not being guilty” rather than having the real blood *on his hands*. Thus it can be concluded that the post-genitive constructions in (101-106) are used metaphorically.

(101) In 1891, he was president of the American Pomological Society, following in **the footsteps of his father Louis**, who had held the same post in the late 1850s. (COCA; ACAD; 2015)

(102) The counselor took notes as the geneticists measured and discussed the baby. “Note the oblique palpebral fissure and micrognathia,” one called out. “Yes,” answered Vronique in perfect time to the conversation, “he has **the nose of my Uncle Herv** and **the ears of aunt Mathilde**.” (COCA; ACAD; 2007)

(103) **That inner circle of Trump’s** that is engaging in these parlour games against Romney is doing him no favour. (COCA; SPOK; 2016)

(104) “This was **a lifelong dream of my husband’s**, and the chances of it happening were just so remote,” she says. (COCA; MAG; 2011)

(105) All along, Ron knew that he was following **some vague path of his father’s**. (COCA; NEWS; 1997)

(106) I don’t think there’s any question this country will be better off embracing the values that David Kaczynski brought to this matter and by sparing the life of his brother and allowing David to live his life without having **the blood of his brother’s** on his hands. (COCA; SPOK; 1996)

Table 10. Semantic relations in the double genitive constructions based on BNC and COCA

Semantic relation	Example	Percentages and absolute number of examples derived from COCA	Percentages and absolute number of examples derived from BNC
interpersonal	<i>a friend of Nana’s</i>	67.1% (539/803)	54.9% (73/133)
kinship	<i>a cousin of mom’s</i>	5% (40/803)	7.5% 10/133)
authorship	<i>this neat sentence of grandpa’s</i>	9.6% (77/803)	8.3% (11/133)
ownership	<i>no shirt of Aidan’s</i>	10.2% (82/803)	17.3% (23/133)
attribute	<i>no fault of his uncle’s</i>	2.5% (20/803)	3.8% (5/133)
agent	<i>a habit of mother’s</i>	2.4% (19/803)	4.5% 6/133)
evaluation	<i>a favourite of my father’s</i>	2.4% (19/803)	1.5% (2/133)
body part	<i>those glittering eyes of Noriko’s</i>	0.2% (2/803)	0% (0/133)
experience	<i>this experience of your son’s</i>	0.4% (3/803)	1.5% (2/133)
concern	<i>purely personal matter of the pilot’s</i>	0.2% (2/803)	0.8% 1/133)
theme	<i>American release of Aftermath’s</i>	0.1% (1/803)	0% (0/133)

Table 11. Frequency of semantic relations in the *of*-genitive constructions based on BNC and COCA.

Semantic relation	Example	Percentages and absolute number of examples derived from COCA	Percentages and absolute number of examples derived from BNC
interpersonal	<i>a lifelong friend of Bill Clinton</i>	18.2% (146/803)	21.8% (29/133)
kinship	<i>the son of Sam Hensley</i>	17.3% (139/803)	32.3% (43/133)
depiction	<i>a photo of his son</i>	11.6% (93/803)	9% (12/133)
authorship	<i>the words of John Searl</i>	8.5% (68/803)	0% (0/133)
experience	<i>the everyday experience of young American children</i>	7.5% (60/803)	5.3% (7/133)
ownership	<i>the house of her mother</i>	7.8% (63/803)	3.8% (5/133)
body part	<i>the eyes of his mother</i>	8% (65/803)	6% (8/133)
attribute	<i>the fault of the lawyers</i>	8.2% (66/803)	16.5% (22/133)
agent	<i>the arrival of a mysterious young woman</i>	3.2% (26/803)	3% (4/133)
membership	<i>a member of my family</i>	6.8% (55/803)	0.8% (1/133)
evaluation	<i>a favourite of my mom</i>	0.2% (2/803)	0% (0/133)
theme	<i>the election of Donald Trump</i>	2.5% (20/803)	1.5% (2/133)

4.5. Definiteness

The last factor discussed in the current thesis is the definiteness of the post-genitive constructions. As it has been already mentioned in Chapter 2, the use of determiners in the double genitive constructions affects the meaning of the construction (Kiel 1997: 4). According to Kiel (1997), the double genitive constructions preceded by the indefinite determiner are most likely to convey the meaning of partitivity, namely “one of many”, whereas constructions preceded by demonstrative determiners convey the meaning of familiarity. The current data provides 687 double genitive constructions preceded by the indefinite article and 87 double genitive constructions preceded by the demonstrative determiner. There are only 39 constructions with the definite article in front of the possessee of the double genitives. The *of*-genitive constructions, on the other hand, are more likely to occur in the current data with the definite article rather than the indefinite one. There are 579 *of*-genitive constructions preceded by the definite article, 198 constructions preceded by the indefinite article and only 7 *of*-genitive constructions which follow the demonstrative. The detailed overview of the frequency of determiners in each construction is illustrated in Table 12.

According to Quirk and Greenbaum (1973: 99), the possessor in the double genitive “must be both definite and personal”. The current data, however, presents one construction with the inanimate possessor (see Section 4.1.) and one construction where the possessor is indefinite, as illustrated in (107). Apart from these two constructions, all double genitive constructions include either proper noun possessors or definite determiners such as definite article *the* as in (108), demonstrative, as in (109), or a pronoun as in (110).

(107) The essay was to be about the most precious possession in your household? perhaps a baby photograph or **an old dish of a grandmother’s**, a cherished wedding present. (COCA; FIC; 1990).

(108) Jones was **a friend of the director’s**, but his account of that experience does not inspire our envy. (COCA; NEWS; 1999)

(109) Section 4 (1) (c) provides: (c) (i) that the only supply of the product to another by the person proceeded against was otherwise than in the course of **a business of that person’s**; and (c) (ii) that section 2 (2) above does not apply to that person or applies to him by virtue of things done otherwise than with a view to profit... (BNC; POLIT_LAW; 1985-1994).

(110) Gilleski introduced the president to the other musicians and, because he was a little ashamed, he whispered in the leader’s ear: “He’s **an old cousin of my father’s**. I brought him along because he was bored at the hotel where he’s spending his vacation”. (COCA; FIC; 1998).

Another quite rare feature of the double genitive constructions, according to the current data, is the occurrence of the pronoun in front of the possessee. Only one example was found with the pronoun *my* preceding the construction *favorite lines of my dad’s* as shown in (111). In the data set of the *of*-genitive constructions, there are three examples of the *of*-genitive construction preceded by the pronouns. As shown in (112-114), these are constructions the semantic relation of which would not normally be permitted with the double genitive constructions. For example, in (112) the *of*-genitive *her portrait of her mother* expresses the depiction relation, namely that her mother is depicted in the portrait. In addition, the determiner *her* in front of the possessee indicates that this portrait belongs to *her*, not to *her mother*. In (113), the *of*-genitive construction *her murder of her rich aunt* indicates that *her rich aunt* is the “theme” of *her murder*. Again, theme relation is not usually expressed by the double genitive constructions. Finally, in (114), the *of*-genitive construction *his lapel photo-button of little smiling Jean* shows that *little smiling Jean* is illustrated on the photo-button which belongs to *dad*.

(111) I grew up on a farm, and one of **my favorite lines of my dad’s** was when Charles and Diana got married. (COCA; MAG; 2013).

(112) **Her portrait of her mother**, who died of cancer at 45, is raw and bitter and reverent all at once. (COCA; NEWS; 2012)

(113) The Strange Love of Martha Ivers. “A ruthless, domineering woman is married to an alcoholic D.A., her childhood companion who is the only living witness to **her murder of her rich aunt** 17 years earlier. 7:30 p.m. Thursday.” (COCA; NEWS; 2015)

(114) I remember them outside the funeral home the day we buried Jean, mom holding dad up, dad trying to sit on a hydrant, wearing his lapel button, **his lapel photo-button of little smiling Jean**. (COCA; FIC; 2005)

Of special interest are the double genitive constructions which are preceded by the definite determiner *the*. Although it had been argued in the literature that the double genitive construction introduced by the definite article *the* must be post-modified by the relative clause (Lyons 1986; Barker 1998), Payne and Berlage (2014) proved the opposite. According to Payne and Berlage (2014), the double genitive constructions preceded by the determiner *the* can be post-modified by a restrictive relative clause, by a non-restrictive relative clause by an adjective phrase or other post-head dependents. Furthermore, Payne and Berlage (2014: 355) show that some double genitive constructions introduced by the determiner *the* may occur without post-modification.

Payne and Berlage (2014) name three functions of the unmodified double genitive constructions preceded by determiner *the*. These are the factor of contrast, the semantic factor and the discourse-functional factor. The factor of contrast, as pointed out by the authors, indicates that the double genitive construction is “chosen in order to contrast different dependents (Payne & Berlage 2014: 356). Payne and Berlage’s (2014: 356) example of the double genitive construction showing contrastive focus on its possessor is reproduced in (115). The second factor, namely the semantic one, helps to avoid ambiguity. Payne and Berlage (2014: 356) argue that the use of the construction *the birth of Celia Hazell’s* in (116) implies that *Celia Hazell* is the mother. The use of either the *s*-genitive or the *of*-genitive, according to the authors, may convey two meanings, namely that *Celia Hazell* is either the mother or the baby. The discourse functional factor of the double genitive construction, as pointed out by Payne and Berlage (2014: 357), deals with “the information structure of the sentence”. In Payne and Berlage’s (2014: 357) example, which is reproduced in (117), is shown that the possessor, namely *Michelle* is already used in the preceding sentence and, therefore, “represents old information”. Consequently, the authors argue that choosing the double genitive construction in (117) “enhances the discourse prominence of the head” (Payne & Berlage 2014: 357). Thus it can be argued that some double genitive constructions are used to emphasize the object, namely the possessee while others are used to emphasize the possessor.

(115) That is our aim and it is **the aim of the Government’s** and I believe the people’s in the countries which I have visited and certainly here (BNC; taken from Payne & Berlage 2014: 356-357).

(116) You've just said you remember **the birth of Celia Hazell's**; Oh, no, I wasn't there when she delivered, the ex-matron reminded her. (BNC; taken from Payne & Berlage 2014: 356-357).

(117) Unlike Michelle in Eastenders, my situation was quite different as I was going out with the father of my son. But in the nine months of carrying my child, **the feelings and reactions of Michelle's** were very much the same as my own (BNC; taken from Payne & Berlage 2014: 356-357).

In the light of the three functions of the unmodified definite double genitive constructions proposed by Payne and Berlage (2014), the current data provides similar unmodified definite constructions which are exemplified below. In the current data, there are 39 double genitive constructions preceded by the article *the* 9 of which are not post-modified. For example, in the double genitive construction *the son of the country's* in (118), the contrastive focus is placed on the possessor, namely *the country's*. This possessor contrasts with the following phrase *not of mine*. Similarly, in (119), the possessor *the school's* in *the fault of the school's* contrasts with the following possessive pronoun *hers*. These constructions express different semantic relations. Whereas the double genitive in (118) expresses kinship relation, the construction in (119) expresses attribute relation. However, both constructions take possessors which refer to collective communities, namely *country* in (118) and *school* in (119), and in both constructions the contrastive focus is placed on these possessors.

(118) "...He was **the son of the country's**, not of mine," said his mother, Bhagwani. (COCA; NEWS; 1999)

(119) For a variety of reasons, none of which were **the fault of the school's** or hers, she had missed every opportunity to receive free glasses. (COCA; ACAD; 2014)

The following example of the unmodified double genitive in (120) is used in the pseudo-cleft sentences. As it is known, pseudo-cleft sentences are used to emphasize the information that follows the *what*-clause + *be*. The use of the double genitive construction in (120) can be related to Payne and Berlage's (2014) discourse functional factor. Thus it can be argued that the head noun *the patrons* in the double genitive construction *the patrons of Buck's* in (120) receives the discourse prominence while the information that follows the *what*-clause + *be*, namely *it's last call*, is in focus.

(120) What **the patrons of Buck's** don't know is it's last call (COCA; SPOK; 1999)

Some other examples of the unmodified double genitive constructions preceded by the determiner *the* are illustrated in (121) and (122). In (121), the use of the determiner *the* in front of the unmodified double genitive construction contradicts the prototypical use of double genitives in that the construction as a whole is not post-modified. In (122), the definite double genitive construction is also not post-modified. However, it expresses "true" possession,

relation which is typical for the double genitive constructions. In addition, it is part of the larger construction, namely *none of the clinical efficiency of his mother's* which indicates that the double genitive construction itself functions as the PP complement. The use of such structure makes it possible to believe that the possessee is topical while the possessor is in focus.

(121) "...like yesterday was **the anniversary of my dad's**, you know, and I normally would have, but I found out from my sister that she was doing fine. So, it was like, Mom, how are you? I was praying for you today."
(COCA; SPOK; 2008)

(122) Isobel looked at the muddle with distaste, then quickly washed her hands, put a kettle of water on the gas stove and assembled cups and saucers on a tray, while Hank ambled curiously around the old-fashioned kitchen. It had **none of the clinical efficiency of his mother's**, but it did remind him of his grandmother's kitchen out on the farm, with its prosaic line of battered saucepans which shared a shelf with a large bowl for making bread and a hopeful looking collection of cake tins (BNC; FICT_PROSE; 1960-1974).

Another type of determiners which are frequently used with the double genitive constructions is demonstrative. One of the main functions of the demonstrative determiners, as mentioned in Maclaran (1999: 94), is that they seem to "differ from each other in that *this/these* is marked for proximity to the speaker or is a "stronger" demonstrative". According to Maclaran (1999), "stronger" or also "marked" means that using *this/these*, the speaker emphasizes a referent which makes it easier for the hearer to identify this referent. In other words, the demonstrative *this/these* gives prominence to the noun phrase. Demonstratives usually introduce the double genitive as in (123). However, there is also a number of examples where the demonstrative precedes the possessor as in (124-125). From the examples below we can see that the possessors which follow the demonstratives are most of the time in focus. This finding again shows that applying Abel's (2006) focus hypothesis to the double genitive constructions, which says that possessee is in focus, is not completely satisfying.

(123) It was **that stupid remark of Father's** at dinner -- his reminder that Peter would be in Ender's shadow, no matter what he did. (COCA; FIC; 2008)

(124) Let me ask you about another big issue in the news this week, because Henry Louis Gates is also a friend of yours, in addition to being **a friend of this president's**. (COCA; SPOK; 2009).

(125) There is, though, **one recent series of this photographer's** that transcends cynicism for something as disquieting, and as incisive about media, as his 1960s TV collages. (COCA; NEWS; 2015).

Furthermore, as suggested by Kiel (1997: 8), demonstrative preceding double genitive constructions tend to function as the so-called "textual reminder". As already mentioned in Chapter 2 of this thesis, Kiel's (1997) "textual reminder" function reminds a reader or a hearer of a topical object (possessee) but focuses on the possessor of the construction. In addition,

Dahl and Fraurud (1996: 58) claim that animate nouns often occur in discourse as topics. Considering the fact that the possessors in the double genitive constructions are usually animate both possessors and possesseees which are preceded by the demonstrative appear to be emphasized. An example of the demonstrative functioning as a textual reminder is provided in (126). In (126), it is clear that the speaker wants the addressee to be reminded how *daddy* and *mama* cooked *a gallon of oysters*. The demonstrative together with the double genitive is used here to remind the addressee of *that big old white platter* and to emphasize the fact that it belongs to *mama*.

(126) "Remember how Daddy used to stop here on his way home from New Orleans and pick up a gallon of oysters? He and Mama would get in the kitchen and meal'em up and season em and fry'em in that big black iron skillet? Drain'em on brown paper? Remember **that big old white platter of mama's**? Heaped up, hot and crisp. Whooee!" (COCA; FIC; 1990)

In general, the current data provides 87 double genitive constructions which follow a demonstrative determiner. On the contrary, there are only 7 *of*-genitive constructions in the data in which the demonstrative precedes the construction. One of these 7 constructions is exemplified in (127). While Kiel (1997) applies the function of textual reminder only to double genitive constructions, for the purpose of comparison of the two post-genitive constructions I apply the function of textual reminder to both the double genitive and the *of*-genitive. Thus the use of the demonstrative determiner *those* in (127) indicates that the possessee is topical and the possessor is in focus. The object *pictures* is pre-modified by the word *same*. This enhances the possessee's topicality. Therefore, it can be argued that the demonstrative's function of textual reminder presented by Kiel (1997) can be applied to both post-genitive constructions.

(127) As a result, 20 years from now some will remember where they were when they learned John F. Kennedy Jr.'s plane went down, Life magazine will print another Kennedy anniversary issue and some network television special will do a retrospective and show all over again **those same pictures of little 3-year-old John-John** saluting his father's casket. (COCA; NEWS; 1999)

Finally, the current analysis yielded some other quantifiers occurring with the two post-genitive constructions which have not been mentioned yet in this section. For example, the quantifier *every* was found in the data preceding both the double genitive, as in (130) and the *of*-genitive, as in (131). In (132) and (133), the determiner *some* precedes the two post-genitive constructions. As argued by Kiel (1997: 6), *some* has an inherently partitive nature and when used with the double genitive constructions the focus of the construction is placed on the possessor. As shown in (132), the double genitive construction *some friend of this girl's* can

be interpreted as “one of many friends of this girl’s”. Furthermore, the use of demonstrative *this* in front of the possessor enhances the focus of the possessor. Similarly, in (133), the partitive meaning of the *of*-genitive construction, *some parents of these children*, is possible due to plural possessor *children*. Had it been the singular possessor, the partitive meaning of the construction would be awkward as one child usually has one set of parents. In addition, like in (132), the possessor in (133) is preceded by the demonstrative *these* which, as a result, enhances the focus on the possessor.

(128) Came and her husband moved several times, and each time, Carrie would apply for admission to the new college or university her husband attended and would pursue course work as she was able. She acknowledged that her personal expectations were non-existent or way too low, and that with **every move of her husband’s**, she had to wait a year for residence to afford tuition. (COCA; ACAD; 1998)

(129) The fact that no Republican supported the bill underscores their party’s complete refusal to participate in legislation that will ultimately be in the best interest of **every citizen of this country**. (COCA; NEWS; 2010)

(130) He said **some friend of this girl’s** suggested it. (COCA; FIC; 1990).

(131) **Some parents of these children**, though, felt that the article didn’t match their own experience. (COCA; MAG; 2002)

Some other quantifiers occurring with the two post-genitive constructions in the current data are exemplified below. For example, quantifier *many* precedes the double genitive in (134) and the *of*-genitive in (135). In (136), the double genitive is preceded by the quantifier *another* whereas in (137), the *of*-genitive is preceded by *other*. According to the current data, these quantifiers are rarely used with the post-genitive constructions. Nevertheless, they are worth mentioning here. The overview of the frequency of all determiners occurring in the post-genitive constructions is illustrated in Table 12.

(132) By the mid-sixties, half of the town’s population consisted of ex-convicts, many of them superbly educated - actors, doctors, geologists, certain teachers at school - and **many acquaintances of my father’s**. (COCA; FIC; 2011)

(133) **Many members of this group** have either made or raised enormous amounts of cash on Wall Street. (COCA; MAG; 2013)

(134) **Another student of Pence’s**, 67-year-old Dr. George Grimball, took the class after being named district governor of Rotary International; he knew he’d be making many speeches. (COCA; NEWS; 1992)

(135) **Other members of the family** clutched photographs of the young man. (BNC; NEWSP; 1985-1994)

Table 12. Frequency of determiners in the post-genitive constructions derived from COCA and BNC

Determiner	Percentages and absolute number			
	double genitive		<i>of</i> -genitive	
	BNC	COCA	BNC	COCA
the	5.3% (7/133)	4% (32/803)	9% (73/133)	63.1% (507/803)
a/an	70.7% (94/133)	73.8% (593/803)	18% (24/133)	21.8% (175/803)
null	3.8% (5/133)	7.3% (59/803)	24% (32/133)	11.8% (95/803)
this/these	7.5% (10/133)	4.2% (34/803)	0% (0/133)	0.4% (3/803)
that/those	5.3% (7/133)	4.5% (36/803)	0.8% (1/133)	0.4% (3/803)
numeral	0.8% (1/133)	0.9% (7/803)	0% (0/133)	0.2% (2/803)
some	2.3% (3/133)	2.2% (18/803)	0.8% (1/133)	0.1% (1/803)
other/another	0.8% (1/133)	1.1% (9/803)	0.8% (1/133)	0.4% (3/803)
many	0% (0/133)	0.1% (1/803)	0% (0/133)	0.1% (1/803)
no	3% (4/133)	0.7% (6/803)	0.8% (1/133)	0.7% (6/803)
pronoun	0% (0/133)	0.1% (1/803)	0% (0/133)	0.4% (3/803)
every	0% (0/133)	0.5% (4/803)	0% (0/133)	0.2% (2/803)
more	0% (0/133)	0.1% (1/803)	0% (0/133)	0% (0/803)
certain	0% (0/133)	0.1% (1/803)	0% (0/133)	0% (0/803)
which	0% (0/133)	0.1% (1/803)	0% (0/133)	0% (0/803)
a few	0.8% (1/133)	0% (0/803)	0% (0/133)	0% (0/803)
several	0% (0/133)	0% (0/803)	0% (0/133)	0.1% (1/803)
each	0% (0/133)	0% (0/803)	0% (0/133)	0.1% (1/803)

4.6. Summary

In conclusion, this chapter has presented an analysis of the two post-genitive constructions, namely the double genitive and the *of*-genitive constructions derived from both BNC and COCA. This analysis was divided into five sub-sections. Each sub-section focused on one determining factor. Hence the current chapter analysed the post-genitive variation on the basis of five conditioning factors, namely animacy, number, complexity, semantic relations and definiteness of both the double genitive and the *of*-genitive constructions. According to the fact that COCA is relatively larger corpus than BNC, the absolute number of the double genitive constructions derived from COCA is larger than the absolute number of the double genitive constructions derived from BNC. However, the percentages of the constructions derived from each corpus is more or less the same (0.000143% of double genitives from the BNC corpus and 0.000143% of double genitives from the COCA corpus). According to the fact that the double genitive constructions in the current analysis were compared with the *of*-genitive constructions, the same percentages of the *of*-genitive constructions were derived from each corpus.

Analysing animacy in the two post-genitive constructions, the findings of the current analysis support the findings of the previous studies in that the double genitive constructions are used with the animate possessors whereas the *of*-genitive constructions can be used with both

inanimate and animate possessors. However, there are some exceptions. This analysis, for example, showed that the double genitive constructions may be used with the inanimate possessors too. These inanimate possessors, according to the data, may refer to the name of a company (e.g. *a sister of The Telegraph's*), the name of the album (e.g. *the American release of Aftermath's*) or it may refer to the city as a whole (e.g. *director of the city's*). Furthermore, this analysis contradicts Poutsma's (1914: 81) argument that *of*-genitives not double genitives are used with the collective noun possessors. The current data provides examples of both post-genitive constructions used with the collective noun possessors such as *family*, for example (e.g. *a friend of the family's/one member of my family*).

Another exception identified in this analysis is the use of plural possessor with the double genitive construction. Although double genitive constructions do not usually take plural possessors, one example from the whole data set of double genitive constructions was found with the irregular plural possessor such as *children* in *an old friend of the children's* (the construction is derived from COCA). The *of*-genitive constructions, on the other hand, can take both regular and irregular possessors. The percentages of the *of*-genitive constructions with regular plural possessors found in BNC and COCA are 3.7% and 8.3% respectively. The *of*-genitive constructions with the irregular plural possessors constitute 5.3% of the data set derived from BNC. The data set of the *of*-genitive constructions derived from COCA, however, does not provide any examples of the *of*-genitive constructions with the irregular possessors.

In the light of complexity of the two post-genitive constructions, this analysis, again, support the findings of the previous studies in that more complex possessors are preferred with the *of*-genitive constructions whereas less complex possessors are preferred with the double genitive constructions. The complexity of the possessor in both post-genitive constructions can be expressed by the length of the proper name, for example. According to the findings of the current analysis, the proper name possessors in the double genitive constructions are restricted to one word only (19.5% of the data set of the double genitive constructions derived from BNC and 27% of the data set derived from COCA). The proper name possessors in the *of*-genitive constructions, on the other hand, may consist of one to four words. Most frequently, the proper name possessor in the *of*-genitive constructions consists of two words (24% of the data set of the double genitive constructions derived from BNC and 15.2% of the data set derived from COCA). In addition, only in the *of*-genitive constructions, not in the double genitive ones, the possessor may be post-modified by the relative clause, apposition, or other post-modifiers such

as PP. Post-modification of the whole construction, however, may occur with both post-genitive constructions.

Apart from post-modification, both the double genitive and the *of*-genitive may function in a discourse as a component part in the appositive construction. Furthermore, both post-genitive constructions may refer to the preceding information as well as to the following information. According to the findings of this analysis, the frequency of the post-genitive constructions which refer to the preceding information is larger than the frequency of those which refer to the following information. In addition, comparing double genitive constructions with the *of*-genitive ones, this analysis showed that the *of*-genitive constructions, not the double genitives may occur with more than one possessor (e.g. *a colleague of Mr. Udall and Mr. Bennet*). The double genitives, instead, may be followed by elliptical genitives (e.g. *a friend of Clover's as well as Henry's*), possessive pronouns (e.g. *a schoolmate of my sister's and mine*), or by a combination of a possessive determiner + *own* (e.g. *some reason of her mother's and his own*).

In addition, the current analysis showed that the speaker's choice of the construction determines the meaning of this construction. For example, the use of the same head noun may express the depiction relation with the *of*-genitive construction but the authorship relation with the double genitive construction (e.g. *the story of his father/a story of his father's*). Also, the depiction relation expressed by the *of*-genitive construction may shift to the ownership relation when the same head noun is used with the double genitive construction (e.g. *pictures of aunt Bess/those damned embroidered pictures of her sister's*). According to the previous literature on semantic relations expressed by the double genitive constructions, the double genitives cannot express the depiction and theme relations. However, the current analysis showed one example of the double genitive construction where the semantic relation is clearly thematic in nature (e.g. *the American release of Aftermath's*).

Finally, another factor which may impact the meaning of the construction is the use of determiners. As it is known from previous studies, the double genitive constructions are more preferred with the indefinite determiners rather than the definite ones. The findings of the current analysis support this fact. Consequently, the indefinite determiner *a/an* precedes 70.7% of the double genitive constructions derived from the BNC corpus and 73.8% of the constructions derived from the COCA corpus. In the data set of the *of*-genitive constructions the percentage of the constructions preceded by the article *a/an* is much smaller, 18% of the constructions derived from the BNC corpus and 21.8% of the constructions derived from the

COCA corpus. In addition, the current analysis contributes to the fact that some double genitive constructions preceded by the definite article *the*, are not always post-modified. It was shown that some unmodified double genitive constructions preceded by the determiner *the* may be followed by a possessive pronoun (e.g. *the fault of the school's or hers*), may be used within the pseudo-cleft sentence (e.g. *what the patrons of Buck's don't know is its last call*), or within the larger of-phrase (e.g. *none of the clinical efficiency of his mother's*).

To sum up, this chapter described and compared two post-genitive constructions, namely the double genitive and the *of*-genitive according to five interrelated factors such as animacy, number complexity, semantic relations and definiteness. The next chapter will introduce the findings of the experimental study among British and American native speakers of English

5. Findings: the experimental study

The current chapter sheds light on the analysis of the experimental study about the use of the two post-genitive constructions in the context where both constructions are grammatically acceptable. This experimental study included 20 relatively short texts taken from either the BNC or the COCA corpora. Each text included a choice between a double genitive and an *of*-genitive construction. The participants were supposed to choose the one which, according to them, would be the best choice in a given text. For a full list of texts, see Appendix I in the end of this thesis. The total number of the participants is 20 among which are 10 native American speakers and 10 native British speakers. The current chapter attempts to answer the question of which post-genitive construction analysed in this thesis is preferred by British subjects and which one is favoured by American subjects in cases where both are, in fact, possible.

Before we proceed, however, I would like to mention a few restrictions imposed on the experimental study in general. First, the subjects must be either British or American native speakers. Speakers of any other variety of English (e.g. Canadian or Australian) were not included. Second, the subject must highlight or circle only one option. Those surveys in which the participant did not highlight any construction out of the two, were not included. Third, the text must provide a choice between the two post-genitive constructions if they are grammatically acceptable in a given context. Examples with post-modified possessors as in (i) were not included because they, as shown in the corpus-based analysis in Chapter 4, do not occur with the double genitives. Examples which are structurally ambiguous were also not included. For example, in (ii) post-modification *whom you met yesterday* may apply to the possessor if the sentence is used with the *of*-genitive. If the sentence is used with the double

genitive, on the other hand, this post-modification may have the scope of the whole construction. In both cases the structure of the sentence would be grammatically possible but the meaning of it would be different depending on the chosen construction. As a result, the experimental study aims at the choice of the post-genitive constructions which express the same meaning.

- (i) **The son of Sam Hensley**, a former Georgia Tech football star and retired civil engineer, **and Iris Hensley**, artistic director of the Georgia Ballet, the actor has long used his humour to balance his athletic and artistic interests. (COCA; NEWS; 2002)
- (ii) **The daughter of the farmer's/The daughter of the farmer** whom you met yesterday. (Abel 2002: 56)

The subjects were randomly chosen and, therefore, there is no particular age category. The youngest participant is 21 years old whereas the oldest is 81 years old. In total, there are 9 female participants and 11 male participants. Age, gender and the choice of the construction made by each participant are illustrated in Tables 13 and 14 in the end of this chapter. The findings in Table 13 correspond to the data derived from British subjects whereas the findings in Table 14 correspond to the data derived from American subjects. The first column of each table constitutes the number of an example from the list of texts which was given to each participant. As shown in Tables 13 and 14, there were 20 texts each providing a choice between the double genitive (DG) and the *of*-genitive (OF) construction. The subjects filled in the list of texts with their choices either manually or in PDF format with the help of computers. Two participants left a short comment about their experience choosing a certain construction. One subject admitted that he/she had to think for a few minutes which construction to choose. The second participant wrote: “I found on the second reading that my answers were the same as the first time. However, in my head, as I “sounded-out” the phrases, I found that for some I did in fact use the double genitive in my head – but could not bring myself to circle it on the paper since it looked absolutely wrong”. This raises a question whether the use of double genitive constructions indeed may be more preferred in spoken language rather than in written form.

Apart from the context in which both post-genitive constructions are grammatically correct, the experimental study includes three texts in which only one construction is possible. They are exemplified in (iii-v). This was done on purpose in order to make sure that the participants are not just randomly highlighting a given construction but rather reading the whole sentence and think about the appropriate answer. Thus it was expected to obtain such answers as *no son of mine* in (iii), *the fire of 1666* in (iv) and *the dog of the old man next door* in (v). As shown

in Tables 13 and 14, all participants chose the same constructions which means that all participants had made their choice consciously.

(iii) “Father...,” low, imploring. **1) “No son of mine/no son of me** would ever lie to me.” He set his feet apart. (COCA; FIC; 2017)

(iv) It was destroyed in **2) the fire of 1666/the fire of 1666’s**. (Foley & Hall 2012: 20)

(v) I was kept awake by **3) the dog of the old man next door/the dog of the old man next door’s**.

In addition, both British and American subjects also agreed on the same construction in examples (vi), (vii) and (viii) which are numbered in the survey as 9, 16 and 17 respectively. All participants chose the *of*-genitive constructions. This supports the findings of the corpus-based analysis in that proper names possessors with two or more than two proper nouns as in (vi) and (viii) are preferred with the *of*-genitive constructions. In (vii), there are two possessors, namely *his mother(‘s) and brother(‘s)*. The fact that all participants chose the *of*-genitive construction in (vii), again, supports the findings of the corpus-based analysis in that the double genitive constructions must include only one possessor and, therefore, more complex possessors are more favored with the *of*-genitive constructions.

(vi) So, after less than three years it was removed to Cleveland Lodge in Great Ayton which was **9) the home of John Pease/the home of John Pease’s**. (BNC; NEWSP; 1985-1994)

(vii) The kitchen was made of very new-looking pine and **16) the clothes of his mother and brother/the clothes of his mother’s and brother’s** were very clean. (BNC; BIOGRAPHY; 1985-1994)

(viii) **17) This son of St. Vincent de Paul/This son of St. Vincent de Paul’s** showed great love for the poor. (COCA; MAG; 2005)

Moreover, the survey also includes another sentence which provides a choice between two post-genitive constructions with two possessors. This example is illustrated in (ix). As shown in Tables 13 and 14, only two out of 20 participants, one British and one American, preferred the double genitive construction over the *of*-genitive one in (ix). Presumably, the fact that the interpersonal relation is one of the most frequent relations occurring with the double genitive constructions and, in addition, most of the double genitive constructions are indefinite makes it possible to use the double genitive in (ix). However, the frequency of subjects who preferred the *of*-genitive over the double genitive in (ix) is larger. This means that again, more complex structures are preferred with the *of*-genitive constructions.

(ix) (6) He’s **a neighbour of my sister’s and brother-in-law’s/a neighbour of my sister and brother-in-law**.

Like in (vii), the construction in (x) expresses ownership relation. The difference between (vii) and (x) is that the construction in (vii) is preceded by determiner *the* whereas in (x) it is preceded by determiner *some*. As argued in sub-section 4.5., the determiner *some* has the meaning of “one of many”. This partitive meaning is also expressed by the indefinite double genitive constructions. Unlike in (vii), where all participants agreed on the use of the *of*-genitive constructions, the majority of the participants preferred the double genitive over the *of*-genitive in (x). To be more precise, 9 British subjects and 8 American subjects chose the double genitive construction, namely *some posh clothes of your mother’s* in (x). Only 3 participants out of 20 chose the *of*-genitive.

(x) “Can you bring **11) some posh clothes of your mother’s/some posh clothes of your mother** to school tomorrow?” she asked. (COCA; FIC; 1997)

Similarly, in (xi), the construction is indefinite, the possessor is animate and the semantic relation expressed by the whole construction is the ownership relation. These factors, apparently, inspired the majority of the participants to use the double genitive construction. The findings suggest that 9 British subjects and 7 American subjects chose the double genitive construction in (xi).

(xi) They were chatting with my mother, who was in the recliner with a bowl in her lap, peeling potatoes. Your mother was dressed in **15) a nylon sari of my mother’s/a nylon sari of my mother**, purple with red dots in various sizes. (COCA; FIC; 2006)

Another semantic relation which, according to the findings of the previous studies as well as the findings of the current corpus-based analysis in Chapter 4, can be expressed by both the double genitive and the *of*-genitive constructions is the evaluation relation, as illustrated in (xii). The results of the experimental study show that the majority of the participants, namely 16 subjects (9 British subjects and 7 American subjects) prefer the double genitive construction over the *of*-genitive construction in (xii).

(xii) (14) That’s **14) a favourite line of my sister’s/a favourite line of my sister**. She started using it years ago when both of us were busy with babies. (COCA; FIC; 1994)

However, the *of*-genitive construction is favored over the double genitive in the texts exemplified in (xiii) and (xiv) below. Notice that the only difference between the two examples is, again, the determiner which introduces the construction. In (xiii) definite article *the* precedes the construction whereas in (xiv) the construction is preceded by indefinite article *a*. All British subjects chose the *of*-genitive constructions for both examples. The results of the American

subjects, on the other hand, are slightly different. Two Americans chose the double genitive construction in (xiii) and four Americans chose the double genitive construction in (xiv). Again, the choice of the double genitive construction may be inspired due to the indefinite determiner preceding the whole construction. For a detailed account on the results of the experimental study, see also Figures 7 and 8. In addition, Appendix I provides you with the whole list of examples in context.

(xiii) They got the information from **8) the friend of the owner/the friend of the owner's**. (Foley & Hall 2012: 18)

(xiv) I'm **18) a friend of the owner's/a friend of the owner**. (BNC; HOR; 1985-1994)

What contradicts the initial expectations from the results of the experimental study is the frequency of the constructions chosen by the participants, which are illustrated in (xv), (xvi) and (xvii). According to the corpus-based analysis in Chapter 4, constructions which are preceded by the indefinite article *a* and in which both the possessor and the possessee refer to animate nouns expressing interpersonal relation are more favored with the double genitives rather than with the *of*-genitives. However, in this case the results of the experimental study somewhat differ from the results of the corpus-based analysis. Furthermore, the frequency of the chosen constructions differs among British and American subjects. For example, in (xv), eight American subjects and only four British subjects chose the double genitive construction *a friend of my father's*. In (xvi), the majority of all participants chose the *of*-genitive construction *a colleague of my father*. Only three British subjects and one American subject chose the double genitive construction in (xvi). In (xvii), however, whereas the majority of British subjects prefer the *of*-genitive *a good friend of my mother* the majority of American subjects prefer the double genitive *a good friend of my mother's*. To be more precise, seven British subjects chose the *of*-genitive and seven American subjects chose the double genitive. Thus it can be concluded that American subjects were more likely to prefer the double genitive construction over the *of*-genitive in cases where the constructions were preceded by the indefinite article *a*.

(xv) He'd been in attendance at my mother's death and was **5) a friend of my father/a friend of my father's**. (COCA; FIC; 2007)

(xvi) Roger is the son of **12) a colleague of my father's/a colleague of my father** and as children we had spent summers together on Lake Saranac. (COCA; FIC; 1998)

(xvii) I had known Stanley or, more precisely, I had occasionally been in the same room as Stanley for about a decade. His mother, Bea, was **13) a good friend of my mother/a good friend of my mother's**. The

two women, both widows, had been playing mahjong together on Tuesday nights at the Jewish Community Center for nearly a decade. (COCA; FIC; 2014)

The last point that I would like to mention in this chapter is the choice of the constructions preceded by the demonstrative determiner as illustrated below. Both texts, (xviii) and (xix), provide a choice between constructions the possessor of which refers to animals such as *Rabbit* and *dog*. Whereas *Rabbit* in (xviii) refers to a name of a personified character in a children story, *dog* in (xix) - does not. The majority of the participants, namely eight British and eight American subjects chose the double genitive *that statement of Rabbit's* in (xviii). In (xix), on the other hand, the double genitive *this habit of my dog's* was chosen by six British subjects and only two American subjects. The overview of the frequency of the constructions chosen by British and American subjects is illustrated in Tables 13 and 14 respectively. In addition, Figures 3 and 4 provide the list of constructions together with the participants' answers.

- (xviii) Suppose for example, as in Figure 4, that Pooh, visiting Rabbit, asks him if there's honey still for tea, and Rabbit says yes, there is. **7) That statement of Rabbit's/That statement of Rabbit** will be true (as our first truism about truth tells us) if and only if there really is honey still for tea. (BNC; FBD; 1985-1994)
- (xix) Then he trots out to the woods, but not after the live deer; only to excavate the forest floor after an inferior maxillary or a slightly decayed metatarsus, packed with dirt. He tosses these skeletons around the yard and eventually stows them under the woodpile, where the spiders inhabit them. I'm bothered by **10) this habit of my dog's/this habit of my dog** for two reasons. The first is that it reminds me of my own death. It invokes a fear of exhumation, decades hence, in some post-nuclear chaos where the metastasized population is left to grub for roots below the permafrost. My dog is preparing in some way of which I'm incapable. (COCA; FIC; 1990)

Table 13. Frequency of the constructions which were chosen by British subjects.

Example	British subjects										Percentages and absolute number of chosen constructions	
	21 y.o. (f)	25 y.o. (m)	27 y.o. (f)	35 y.o. (m)	46 y.o. (f)	48 y.o. (m)	51 y.o. (m)	71 y.o. (m)	72 y.o. (m)	81 y.o. (f)	DG	OF
1	DG	DG	DG	DG	DG	DG	DG	DG	DG	DG	100% (10/10)	0% (0/10)
2	OF	OF	OF	OF	OF	OF	OF	OF	OF	OF	0% (0/10)	100% (10/10)
3	OF	OF	OF	OF	OF	OF	OF	OF	OF	OF	0% (0/10)	100% (10/10)
4	OF	OF	OF	OF	OF	OF	DG	OF	DG	DG	30% (3/10)	70% (7/10)
5	OF	OF	DG	OF	DG	OF	DG	OF	OF	DG	40% (4/10)	60% (6/10)
6	OF	OF	OF	OF	OF	OF	DG	OF	OF	OF	10% (1/10)	90% (9/10)
7	DG	DG	OF	DG	OF	DG	DG	DG	DG	DG	80% (8/10)	20% (2/10)
8	OF	OF	OF	OF	OF	OF	OF	OF	OF	OF	0% (0/10)	100% (10/10)
9	OF	OF	OF	OF	OF	OF	OF	OF	OF	OF	0% (0/10)	100% (10/10)
10	DG	DG	OF	OF	OF	OF	DG	DG	DG	DG	60% (6/10)	40% (4/10)
11	DG	DG	DG	DG	OF	DG	DG	DG	DG	DG	90% (9/10)	10% (1/10)
12	OF	OF	DG	DG	OF	OF	OF	OF	OF	DG	30% (3/10)	70% (7/10)
13	DG	OF	OF	OF	OF	OF	OF	OF	DG	DG	30% (3/10)	70% (7/10)
14	DG	DG	DG	DG	OF	DG	DG	DG	DG	DG	90% (9/10)	10% (1/10)
15	DG	DG	DG	DG	OF	DG	DG	DG	DG	DG	90% (9/10)	10% (1/10)
16	OF	OF	OF	OF	OF	OF	OF	OF	OF	OF	0% (0/10)	100% (10/10)
17	OF	OF	OF	OF	OF	OF	OF	OF	OF	OF	0% (0/10)	100% (10/10)
18	OF	OF	OF	OF	OF	OF	OF	OF	OF	OF	0% (0/10)	100% (10/10)
19	DG	OF	OF	DG	OF	OF	OF	DG	OF	DG	40% (4/10)	60% (6/10)
20	DG	DG	OF	OF	OF	DG	OF	DG	OF	OF	50% (5/10)	50% (5/10)

Table 14. Frequency of the constructions which were chosen by American subjects.

Examples	American subjects										Percentages and absolute number of chosen constructions	
	21 y.o. (f)	23 y.o. (f)	24 y.o. (m)	28 y.o. (f)	32 y.o. (m)	32 y.o. (m)	53 y.o. (m)	58 y.o. (f)	68 y.o. (m)	70 y.o. (f)	DG	OF
1	DG	DG	DG	DG	DG	DG	DG	DG	DG	DG	100% (10/10)	0% (0/10)
2	OF	OF	OF	OF	OF	OF	OF	OF	OF	OF	0% (0/10)	100% (10/10)
3	OF	OF	OF	OF	OF	OF	OF	OF	OF	OF	0% (0/10)	100% (10/10)
4	OF	OF	OF	DG	OF	OF	DG	OF	DG	OF	30% (3/10)	70% (7/10)
5	DG	DG	DG	DG	DG	DG	OF	OF	DG	DG	80% (8/10)	20% (2/10)
6	OF	OF	OF	DG	OF	OF	OF	OF	OF	OF	10% (1/10)	90% (9/10)
7	DG	DG	DG	DG	DG	DG	OF	OF	DG	DG	80% (8/10)	20% (2/10)
8	OF	OF	DG	OF	OF	DG	OF	OF	OF	OF	20% (2/10)	80% (8/10)
9	OF	OF	OF	OF	OF	OF	OF	OF	OF	OF	0% (0/10)	100% (10/10)
10	OF	OF	OF	OF	DG	DG	OF	OF	OF	OF	20% (2/10)	80% (8/10)
11	DG	DG	DG	DG	DG	DG	DG	OF	OF	DG	80% (8/10)	20% (2/10)
12	DG	OF	OF	OF	OF	OF	OF	OF	OF	OF	10% (1/10)	90% (9/10)
13	DG	DG	DG	OF	DG	DG	DG	OF	OF	DG	70% (7/10)	30% (3/10)
14	DG	OF	DG	DG	DG	DG	OF	OF	DG	DG	70% (7/10)	30% (3/10)
15	DG	DG	DG	DG	DG	DG	OF	OF	OF	DG	70% (7/10)	30% (3/10)
16	OF	OF	OF	OF	OF	OF	OF	OF	OF	OF	0% (0/10)	100% (10/10)
17	OF	OF	OF	OF	OF	OF	OF	OF	OF	OF	0% (0/10)	100% (10/10)
18	DG	DG	DG	OF	OF	DG	OF	OF	OF	OF	40% (4/10)	60% (6/10)
19	OF	OF	OF	OF	OF	OF	OF	OF	OF	DG	10% (1/10)	90% (9/10)
20	OF	DG	OF	OF	OF	OF	OF	OF	DG	OF	20% (2/10)	80% (8/10)

5.1. Summary

To sum up, the results of the experimental study in this chapter support the results from the corpus analysis outlined in Chapter 4. In general, both British and American subjects of the experimental study mostly agree on the use of a certain construction in the given texts. There is no huge difference between the answers of the two groups. As a result, the majority of the participants prefer the *of*-genitive constructions with more complex possessors and the double genitive constructions with less complex possessors. Consequently, the use of the two possessors are favored with the *of*-genitive constructions over the double genitive constructions. However, the use of the indefinite determiners such as *a* or *some* in front of the construction encouraged the American participants to use the double genitive construction rather than the *of*-genitive one. British participants, on the contrary, were more likely to use the *of*-genitive constructions in some cases where the construction expressed the social relation and was preceded by the indefinite article *a*. Like the findings of the corpus analysis in Chapter 4, the findings of the experimental study in this chapter support the fact that such factors as animacy, number, complexity, semantic relations and definiteness of the constructions are interacting and to some extent interdependent factors which may impact the speaker's choice between the double genitive and the *of*-genitive constructions.

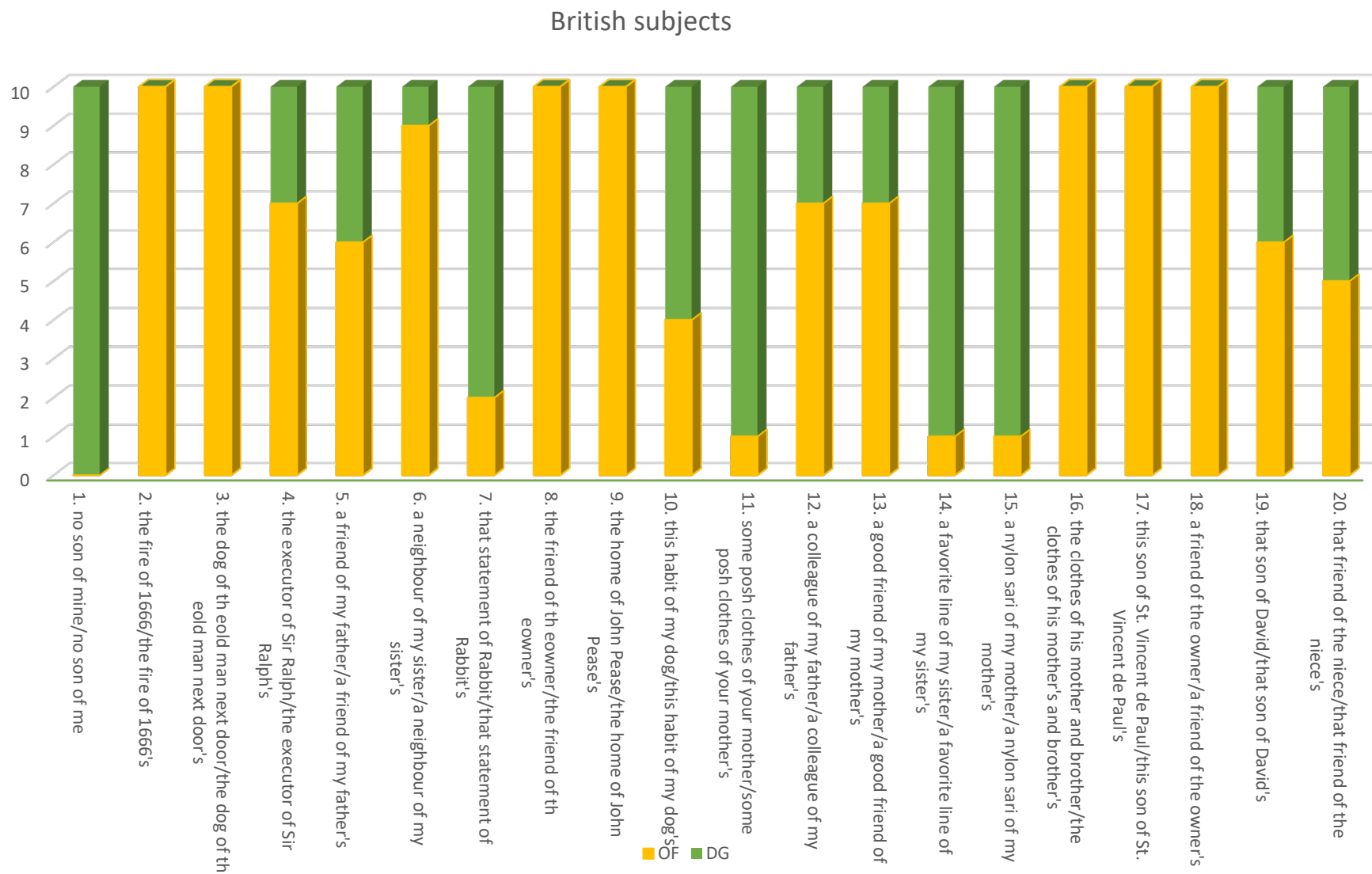


Figure 3. Frequency of the post-genitive constructions chosen by British subjects.

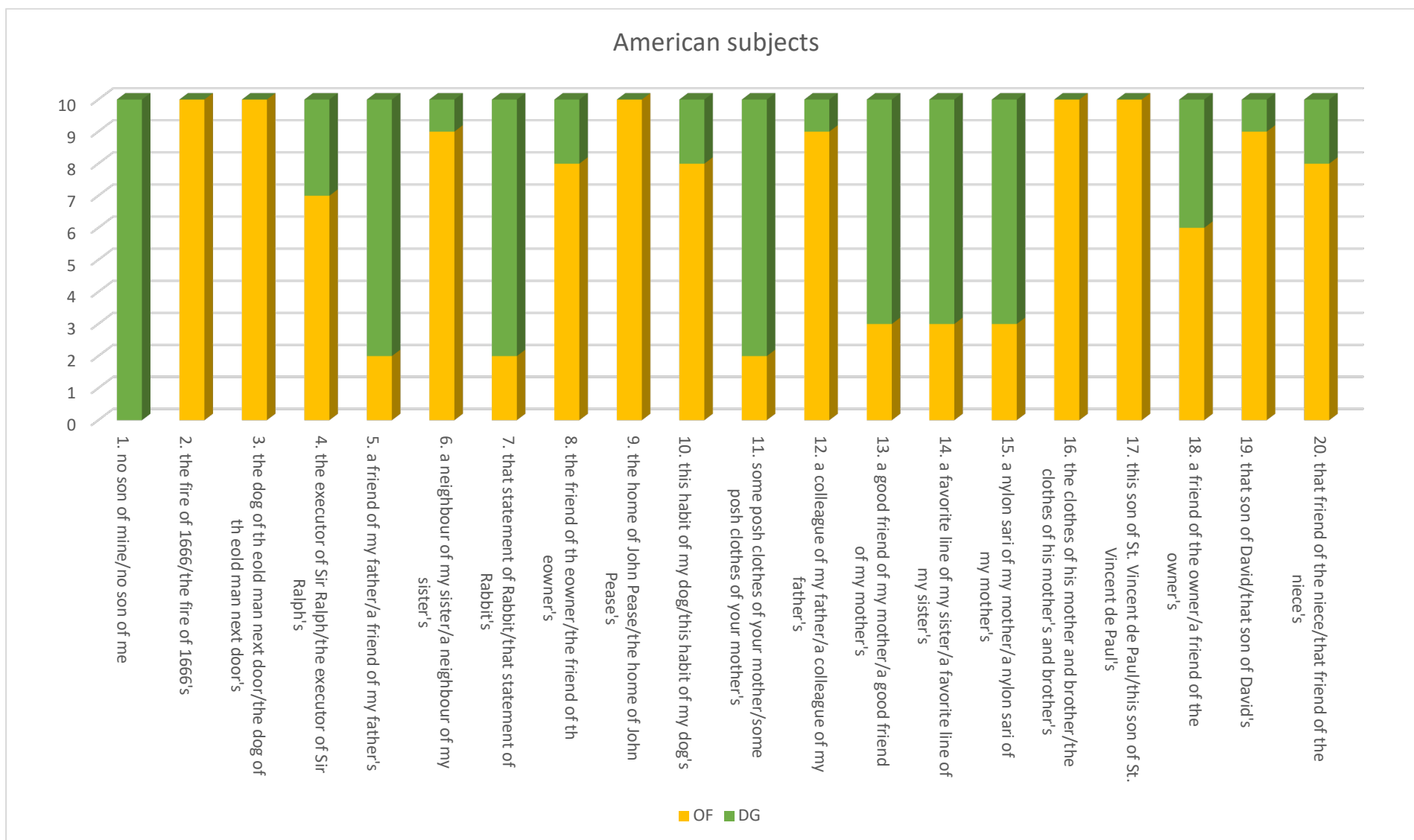


Figure 4. Frequency of the post-genitive constructions chosen by American subjects.

6. Discussion

This thesis has explored the alternation between the double genitive (e.g. *a friend of John's*) and the *of*-genitive (e.g. *a friend of John*) constructions which is also referred to in the current study as the post-genitive variation. Unlike the traditional genitive variation (variation between the *s*-genitive and the *of*-genitive), the post-genitive variation has not been dealt with in depth in the previous literature. As a result, this thesis is one of the first studies to compare the syntactic and semantic differences and similarities of the two post-genitive constructions. Using a multifactor approach, the current study outlines the context where both the double genitive and the *of*-genitive are grammatically acceptable. All constructions were derived from BNC and COCA and are coded in MaxQDA Software. The variation between the two post-genitive constructions was further investigated due to the experimental study where both British and American subjects had to choose in each text either a double genitive or an *of*-genitive construction. In total, 20 texts were provided to 10 British participants and 10 American participants.

The data derived from BNC and COCA were analysed on the basis of the five interdependent factors which affect the speaker's choice of the two post-genitive constructions in question. These were animacy, number, complexity, semantic relation and definiteness of the possessor and the possessee in the post-genitive constructions. The findings on animacy of the double genitive construction are consistent with the previous literature (Quirk & Greenbaum 1973: 99; Payne 2012: 180; Payne & Berlage 2014: 347) where it has been claimed that the possessor in the double genitive must be animate. However, as has been shown in Chapter 4, a few examples of double genitive constructions with the inanimate possessors or with the possessors which have low degree of animacy were found. According to the corpus-based analysis, these possessors may refer to animals, a title of an album, the name of the company or to collective communities. Further work needs to be done to establish whether these possessors or any other type of inanimate possessors occur with the double genitive constructions. Furthermore, these findings can be compared in the studies to other varieties of English such as Canadian or Australian.

Considering the fact that the most animate noun is a proper noun (Kreyer 2003: 175), the two post-genitive constructions were analysed according to the length of the proper noun possessors. Comparing these two constructions, it has been concluded that the double genitive constructions are usually preferred with the one-word proper noun possessors whereas the *of*-genitives occur most frequently with the two-words proper noun possessors. Furthermore, all

subjects in the experimental study agreed on this hypothesis by choosing the *of*-genitive rather than the double genitive in cases where the proper noun possessor consisted of more than one word. In addition, this finding supports the fact that more “heavy” possessors are preferred with the *of*-genitive constructions whereas less “heavy” and not complex possessors are rather preferred with the double genitives. Consequently, another confounding factor concerning complexity is about the scope of the post-modifier. In cases where post-modification has the scope of the whole construction, both the double genitive and the *of*-genitive constructions are possible. However, if post-modification applies only to the possessor, as suggested in Chapter 4, the *of*-genitive construction is the only choice.

Furthermore, the choice of the double genitive was excluded in the current data in cases where the construction consisted of two possessors. As shown in Chapter 4, the data being analysed does not provide examples of the double genitive constructions which include more than one possessor. Instead, there are double genitive constructions which are followed by phrases a head noun of which is inferred from the context (e.g. elliptical genitives, possessive pronouns, possessive determiner + *own*). This is an interesting topic for future research. The current data set of the *of*-genitive constructions does not provide the *of*-genitive constructions followed by the elliptical genitives. However, it does not mean that they do not exist.

As shown in Chapter 4, the speaker’s choice of the construction may impact the meaning of the chosen construction. As a result, if both the double genitive and the *of*-genitive constructions include animate possessors and are followed by a relative clause, the meaning of the sentence may change depending on the use of a given construction (e.g. *the daughter of the farmer’s whom you met yesterday/the daughter of the farmer whom you met yesterday*). Furthermore, in some cases the use of the same head noun in both post-genitive constructions may also influence the interpretation of the chosen construction (*a story of his father’s/the story of his father*). As a result, further studies, which take such factors as post-modification and semantic relations in the post-genitive variation into account, will need to be undertaken. On a wider level, research is also needed to semantic factors of the post-genitive constructions in particular. It has been claimed that both constructions may express the same semantic relations. However, a close attention has to be drawn to the use of the possessee in the constructions which express these relations. As shown in the current thesis, the use of a head noun may result in a semantic shift in the post-genitive variation.

In the light of the experimental study, it was argued in Chapter 5 that the answers of the participants support the findings of the corpus-based analysis in Chapter 4. Hence the majority of participants agreed on using more complex possessors with the *of*-genitive constructions and less complex possessors with the double genitive constructions. According to a few comments which were left in the surveys by some participants, the written form of choosing a construction encouraged some subjects to use the *of*-genitive rather than the double genitive construction. Thus it is recommended that further research should also include naturally elicited data such as interviews to investigate spoken usage of the post-genitive constructions. In addition, the results of the current experimental study suggest that there is no significant difference between the answers of British subjects and the answers of American subjects. In other words, it is assumed that both British and American subjects not always but mostly agree on the use of a certain construction. One disadvantage regarding the methodology of the experimental study is that the absolute number of the participants may be too small for making generalizations. Nevertheless, these results are encouraging and should be validated by a larger sample size. Therefore, further data collection is required to compare the answers from British subjects with the answers from American subjects.

In conclusion, this thesis has raised a few questions in need of further study. It has successfully investigated the syntactic, semantic and discursive properties of the two post-genitive constructions, namely the double genitive and the *of*-genitive constructions derived from both BNC and COCA. The speaker's decision to use one of the two constructions is determined by a number of interacting factors such as animacy, number, complexity, semantic relation and definiteness of the possessor and the possessee of a given construction. Moreover, it has been concluded that these factors impact the post-genitive variation in both British and American English.

7. Conclusion

The current thesis has provided an extensive analysis of the two post-genitive constructions in English. In this thesis it has been argued that the post-genitive variation, namely the variation between the double genitive construction (*a friend of John's*) and the *of*-genitive construction (*a friend of John*) is possible under a number of certain conditions. Unlike the traditional variation in English, namely the variation between the *s*-genitive and the *of*-genitive constructions, the post-genitive variation has not been yet widely investigated. It may be due

to the fact that the double genitive constructions are seldom used in English. The findings of the current thesis support this fact and contribute to the scope of the study in question.

The results of this thesis indicate that a speaker's decision to choose either a double genitive or an *of*-genitive construction depends on a number of interrelated factors. In this thesis five factors have been analyzed, namely animacy, number, semantic relations, complexity and definiteness of the possessor and the possessee of the post-genitive constructions. On the basis of these factors, both post-genitive constructions are semantically and syntactically acceptable and are, in fact, likely to be in variation if they comply with the following statements:

- i) The possessor of both the double genitive and the *of*-genitive constructions must refer to the animate noun.
- ii) The possessor of both the double genitive and the *of*-genitive constructions must be a singular noun.
- iii) Although both the double genitive and the *of*-genitive constructions may express a number of the same semantic relations, a direct comparison is possible when the two constructions express social or human relation.
- iv) Similarly, although the two constructions can be preceded by a range of different determiners, a direct comparison is possible when they are preceded by an indefinite determiner.

These five statements refer to the conditions under which the two post-genitive constructions are most likely to be used interchangeably. In other words, these statements describe syntactic and semantic properties which are shared by the two genitive constructions. However, as has been already argued in this thesis, the *of*-genitive constructions differ from the double genitive constructions in many other aspects. For example, the possessor in the *of*-genitive construction may take a proper name consisting of more than one word whereas it is mostly limited to one-word proper name possessor in the double genitive construction. Another evident difference between the two post-genitive constructions concerns the factor of post-modification. It has been demonstrated in this thesis that the possessor in the *of*-genitive constructions can be post-modified whereas the possessor in the double genitive constructions cannot. If the double genitive construction is followed by a post-modifier, this post-modifier usually has the scope over the whole construction. Furthermore, post-modification as well as the use of the same head noun may impact the semantic relation of the construction. Finally, although both post-genitive constructions may occur with either definite or indefinite determiners, in the current

data the double genitive constructions are more preferred with the indefinite determiner in front of the possessee whereas the *of*-genitive constructions are more frequently used with the definite determiner.

In conclusion, the current thesis has systematically analysed and compared the main syntactic, semantic and discursive properties of the two post-genitive constructions. On the basis of a number of interacting factors, this thesis defined some conditions under which the double genitive and the *of*-genitive may be used interchangeably. In addition, it has provided the most important syntactic and semantic differences between the two post-genitive constructions in both British and American English.

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Appendix I. The list of texts for the experimental study.

Post-genitive variation in British and American English: the case of the double genitive and the of-genitive constructions.

This is an experimental study about the use of two genitive constructions, namely the double genitive (e.g. a friend of John's) and the of-genitive (e.g. a friend of John) in both American English and British English. It is strictly ANONYMOUS and will be used for scientific purpose only.

This study consists of 20 relatively short texts. Each text includes a choice between a double genitive and an of-genitive constructions. Please choose THE ONE which, according to you, would be the best choice in a given text.

Please note that the study ONLY investigates native American or British usage. Native speakers of other varieties of English (e.g. Canadian, Australian) or non-native speakers of English will NOT be included.

Personal background information

Gender: ☐ male ☐ female

Age: _____ years old

Country of origin: ☐ the USA ☐ the UK ☐ other

Native language: ☐ English ☐ other

Which variety of English do you speak?

☐ British English ☐ American English ☐ other

Thank you for your time and participation!

Please highlight or circle ONLY ONE option in bold.

“Father...,” low, imploring. **1) “No son of mine/no son of me** would ever lie to me.” He set his feet apart.

It was destroyed in **2) the fire of 1666/the fire of 1666’s.**

I was kept awake by **3) the dog of the old man next door/the dog of the old man next door’s.**

They were hiding mutual dislikes and rivalries in their over-eagerness to answer his questions. “I suppose,” he remarked drily, “you have already been through Sir Ralph’s papers?” Athelstan looked at Sir Fulke who nodded. “Of course, I have been through my brother’s documents, household accounts, memoranda and letters. I found nothing untoward. I am, after all,” he added, glaring round the room as if expecting a challenge, **4) “the executor of Sir Ralph’s/the executor of Sir Ralph.**” Of course, of course,” Cranston assured him.

He’d been in attendance at my mother’s death and was **5) a friend of my father/a friend of my father’s.**

He’s **6) a neighbor of my sister’s and brother-in-law’s/a neighbor of my sister and brother-in-law.**

Suppose for example, as in Figure 4, that Pooh, visiting Rabbit, asks him if there’s honey still for tea, and Rabbit says yes, there is. **7) That statement of Rabbit’s/That statement of Rabbit** will be true (as our first truism about truth tells us) if and only if there really is honey still for tea.

They got the information from **8) the friend of the owner/the friend of the owner’s.**

So, after less than three years it was removed to Cleveland Lodge in Great Ayton which was **9) the home of John Pease/the home of John Pease’s.** Unfortunately, only wildly out-of-focus pictures exist of Darlington’s first fountain, so a little bit of artistic license has had to be employed to show what it probably looked like.

Then he trots out to the woods, but not after the live deer; only to excavate the forest floor after an inferior maxillary or a slightly decayed metatarsus, packed with dirt. He tosses these skeletons around the yard and eventually stows them under the woodpile, where the spiders inhabit them. # I'm bothered by **10) this habit of my dog’s/this habit of my dog** for two reasons. The first is that it reminds me of my own death. It invokes a fear of exhumation, decades hence, in some post-nuclear chaos where the metastasized population is left to grub for roots below the permafrost. My dog is preparing in some way of which I'm incapable.

“Can you bring **11) some posh clothes of your mother’s/some posh clothes of your mother** to school tomorrow?” she asked.

Roger is the son of **12) a colleague of my father’s/a colleague of my father** and as children we had spent summers together on Lake Saranac.

I had known Stanley or, more precisely, I had occasionally been in the same room as Stanley for about a decade. His mother, Bea, was **13) a good friend of my mother/a good friend of my mother’s.** The two women, both widows, had been playing mahjong together on Tuesday nights at the Jewish Community Center for nearly a decade.

That’s **14) a favorite line of my sister’s/a favorite line of my sister.** She started using it years ago when both of us were busy with babies.

They were chatting with my mother, who was in the recliner with a bowl in her lap, peeling potatoes. Your mother was dressed in **15) a nylon sari of my mother's/a nylon sari of my mother**, purple with red dots in various sizes.

His whole family was pretty. His mother looked about twenty-five and his brother looked like a hermaphrodite Greek deity. Both were photographed standing in the kitchen in Kalmar. The kitchen was made of very new-looking pine and **16) the clothes of his mother and brother/the clothes of his mother's and brother's** were very clean.

Peruvian authorities accused him-unjustly, it is now being admitted-of meddling in politics, mismanagement and lack of theological formation. **17) This son of St. Vincent de Paul/This son of St. Vincent de Paul's** showed great love for the poor. He is reported to have given away his episcopal ring to a poor family he met while visiting a poor district of Lima.

He therefore changed direction and went along the wharf. "I'm **18) a friend of the owner's/a friend of the owner**". He said. "Good evening".

It's clear from the gospels that a lot of people imagine Jesus to be **19) that son of David/that son of David's**, long anticipated and long denied. Matthew does his best to match prophecies with their fulfillment in Jesus.

On the contrary, **20) that friend of the niece/that friend of the niece's** is now accused by the CIA as having acted as Lilli's and Jakob's courier to spread the report in the USA.

Thank you again for your time and participation!

Appendix II. English abstract

This thesis examines the semantic, syntactic and discursive properties of the two post-genitive constructions, namely the double genitive (*a friend of John's*) and the *of*-genitive (*a friend of John*). The alteration of these two constructions is called in the current thesis a post-genitive variation. The analysis of this post-genitive variation takes a multivariate approach. In other words, the current thesis analyses the post-genitive variation due to five interacting factors such as animacy, number, complexity, semantic relations and definiteness of the possessor and the possessee of each construction in comparison to both British and American usage. Furthermore, this thesis attempts to answer the question of to what extent the above-mentioned factors determine a speaker's decision to choose one or the other construction in cases where both are grammatically acceptable. The methodology of this research consists of two parts, namely the corpus analysis and the experimental study. The findings of the corpus-analysis indicate that the two constructions are likely to be used interchangeably if they are preceded by the indefinite determiner, the possessor is not "heavy" and if they express human or social relation. However, there are some exceptions and the two constructions differ to a large extent in many other factors. The speaker's choice to use one construction over the other highly depends on the range of factors mentioned above. In addition, the findings of the experimental study suggest that there is no substantial difference between British and American usage.

Keywords: *post-genitive variation, of-genitive, double genitive, British English, American English, corpus-based analysis, experimental study, animacy, complexity, number, semantic relation, definiteness.*

Appendix III. German abstract (Deutsche Zusammenfassung)

Diese Arbeit untersucht die semantischen, syntaktischen und diskursiven Eigenschaften der beiden postgenitiven Konstruktionen, nämlich des Doppelgenitivs (*a friend of John 's*) und des Genitivs (*a friend of John*). Die Veränderung dieser beiden Konstruktionen wird in der vorliegenden Arbeit als postgenitive Variation bezeichnet. Die Analyse dieser postgenitiven Variation erfolgt nach einem multivariaten Ansatz. Mit anderen Worten, die vorliegende Arbeit analysiert die postgenitiven Variationen aufgrund von fünf zusammenwirkenden Faktoren, wie z. B. Animität, Anzahl, Komplexität, semantische Beziehungen und Bestimmtheit des Possesseees und des Possessor jeder Konstruktion im Vergleich zur britischen und amerikanischen Verwendung. Darüber hinaus soll die Frage beantwortet werden, inwieweit die oben genannten Faktoren die Entscheidung eines Sprechers für die eine oder andere Konstruktion in Fällen beeinflussen, in denen beide grammatikalisch akzeptabel sind. Die Methodik dieser Untersuchung besteht aus zwei Teilen, nämlich der Korpusanalyse und der experimentellen Untersuchung. Die Ergebnisse der Korpusanalyse zeigen, dass die beiden Konstruktionen wahrscheinlich austauschbar sind, wenn ihnen der unbestimmte Bestimmer vorausgeht, der Possessor nicht „schwer“ ist und wenn sie eine menschliche oder soziale Beziehung ausdrücken. Es gibt jedoch einige Ausnahmen, und die beiden Konstruktionen unterscheiden sich in vielen anderen Faktoren erheblich. Die Entscheidung des Sprechers, eine Konstruktion über der anderen zu verwenden, hängt stark von den oben genannten Faktoren ab. Darüber hinaus legen die Ergebnisse der experimentellen Studie nahe, dass es keinen wesentlichen Unterschied zwischen britischer und amerikanischer Verwendung gibt.

Keywords: *Post-Genitivvariation, of-Genitiv, Doppelgenitiv, Britisches Englisch, Amerikanisches Englisch, Korpus-basierte Analyse, experimentelle Studie, Animiertheit, Komplexität, Anzahl, semantische Beziehung, Bestimmtheit.*