

Alineable-inalienable asymmetry in Japanese and Korean possessors

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The asymmetry between alienable and inalienable (i.e., Part-Whole relation) possessors have been often discussed in the literature (Alexiadou 2003, Nichols 1988, *inter alia*). This paper adds further evidence from Japanese and Korean to the claim proposed by Alexiadou 2003 that the two types of possessive constructions are syntactically distinct. The asymmetry is that inalienable possessors can be extracted from possessive DPs and directly undergo A-bar movement (e.g., topicalization and relativization), whereas alienable possessors have to land in an A-position before undergoing A-bar movement. Contra Ura 1996, who argues that only inalienable possessors can undergo movement in these languages, I will show that alienable possessors can also undergo movement (i.e., possessor raising), but only if a possessor is the possessor of '(underlying) internal arguments' (i.e., an object of transitives, or a subject of unaccusatives, passives, middles, adjectival and nominal predicates). The analysis the paper proposes is as follows:

- i. The inalienable possessor is an argument of a possessee and receives inherent case from the possessee, thus can be extracted and directly undergo A-bar movement without landing in an A-position.
 - ii. The alienable possessor does not receive internal case, thus needs to land in an A-position before it undergoes A-bar movement to check off the case feature.
 - ii. There is an escape hatch at the edge of VP whence the antecedent possessor can locally license its trace: the position of the escape hatch is accessible from internal arguments but not from external arguments. This is why alienable possessors are extractable only from (underlying) internal arguments.
- On the basis of these facts, I argue that not only vP but also VP should be taken as a phase (cf. Chomsky 2000, 2001), which requires any elements in the complement of V that need to move outside the phase must move to the phase edge before Spell-Out.

Fact 1: Alienable-Inalienable asymmetry in terms of A-bar movement (cf. Ura 1996)

In Japanese & Korean, inalienable and alienable possessors behave differently in terms of A-bar movement; the former freely feeds into A-bar movement (see (1)), whereas the latter does not (see (2)).

Fact 2: Asymmetry between an alienable possessor of internal and external arguments

Alienable possessors can undergo A-movement (i.e., Multiple Nominative construction; hereafter MNC) only if the predicate is an unaccusative type predicate (see (3-a)). This includes unaccusatives, passives, middles, adjectival and nominal predicates. The same restriction on predicate type holds for A-bar movement, as exemplified in (3). This suggests that A-bar movement of alienable possessors must build on A-movement.

New generalization: possessor-raising is only possible from (underlying) internal arguments

Why is the MNC sensitive to unaccusative-type predicates (see (3))? There are two reasons: (i) 'possessor raising is in general only possible from internal arguments' (Baker 1988, Masaam 1985). Japanese and Korean are also subject to this well-attested condition on possessor raising; (ii) the multiple nominative position is an A-position (Sakai, 1994), which is sensitive to minimality. (3-a) is impossible since the external argument 'Mary' intervenes.

Asymmetry between Alienable and Inalienable possessors: double-accusatives in Korean

The basic facts above hold for both Japanese and Korean. However, the two languages differ in terms of the distribution of accusative case: Korean allows double accusatives but Japanese does not ((4-a); cf. 'Double-o constraint'; Harada 1973). Interestingly, Korean double-accusative construction is known to be compatible with inalienable but not with alienable possessors; see (4-b) and (4-c) (Maling and Kim 1992, Dong-In and Cho 1993). This suggests that inalienable possessor is already split from its possessee before the accusative projection is merged, but alienable possessor is not. Given that possessors of external arguments cannot undergo movement, there must be an escape hatch that allows the alienable possessor to move out of the possessive DP lower than the position external argument is merged and higher than the accusative projection. This leads to the analysis sketched above: the alienable possessor requires to land in the local escape hatch which is located at the edge of VP phase in order to properly license its trace. On the other hand, the inalienable possessor is an argument of possessee (Gueron 1984, Authier 1988, among others) and receives an inherent case, thus it can directly undergo A-bar movement without landing in the nominative A-position.

Examples: (Note that the judgments provided here assume no contextual support)

(1) Topicalization

- a. *John_i-wa Mary-ga [t_i aisu]-o tabe-ta.
John-top Mary-nom ice.cream-acc eat-past.
'As for John_i, Mary ate his_i ice cream.' [Alienable]
- b. Sono ringo-wa Mary-ga kawa-o mui-ta.
that apple-top Mary-nom skin-acc peel-past
'As for that apple, Mary peeled its skin.' [Inalienable]

(2) Relativization

- a. *[[Mary-ga aisu-o tabe-ta] syoonen]-wa oonaki-sita.
Mary-nom ice.cream-acc eat-past boy-top heavy.cry-did.
'The boy whose ice cream Mary ate cried heavily.' [Alienable]
- b. [[Mary-ga kawa-o mui-ta] ringo]-wa kusatte-ita.
Mary-nom skin-acc peel-past apple-top was-rotten.
'The apple whose skin Mary peeled was rotten.' [Inalienable]

(3) MNC/Topicalization: only compatible with unaccusative-type predicates

- a. *John-ga Mary-ga aisu-o tabe-ta.
John-nom Mary-nom ice.cream-acc eat-past.
'John_i, Mary ate his_i ice cream.' [Transitive]
- b. *?John-{ga/wa} zitsensya-ga obaasan-ni butuka-ta.
John-{nom/top} bike-nom old.lady-dat bump-past.
'(As for) John_i, his_i bike bumped into an old lady.' [Transitive]
- c. *Yamada-sensei-{ga/wa} gakusei-ga fukai umi-de oyoi-da.
Yamada-teacher-{nom/top} student-nom deep sea-loc swim-past.
'(As for) Mr. Yamada_i, his_i students went swimming in the deep sea.' [Unergative]
- d. John-{ga/wa} konpyutaa-ga {kowareta / Mary-ni kowas-are-ta}.
John-{nom/top} computer-nom {broke / Mary-dat break-pass-past}
'(As for) John, his computer {broke/ was broken by Mary.}' [MNC/Topic: Unacc/Passive]
- e. konpyutaa-ga {kowareta / Mary-ni kowas-are-ta} syoonen-wa oonaki-sita.
computer-nom {broke / Mary-dat break-pass-past} boy-top cry.heavily-did
'The boy whose computer {broke / was broken by Mary} cried heavily.'
[Relative: Unaccu/Passive]

(4) Korean vs. Japanese/ alienable-inalienable possessor asymmetry

- a. *John-ga ringo-o kawa-o tabe-ta.
John-nom apple-acc skin-acc eat-past
Int: 'John peeled the apple skin.' [Double-O constraint: Japanese]
- b. Nay-ka sakwa-lul kkepeil-up kka-ass-ta.
I-nom apple-acc skin-acc peel-past-ind.
Int. 'I peeled the apple skin.' [Korean:Inalienable]
- c. *Chelsoo-ka Suni-ul aisukurim-ul mek-ess-ta
Chelsoo-nom Suni-acc ice.cream-acc eat-past-ind
Int: 'Chelsoo ate Suni's ice cream.' [Korean:Alienable]

SELECTED REFERENCES

Alexiadou, A (2003), Some notes on the structure of alienable and inalienable possessors *From NP to DP*, John Benjamins Publishing Company.

Ura, Hiroyuki (1996), *Multiple feature-checking : a theory of grammatical function splitting*, Doctoral dissertation, MIT.