nP-internal arguments, agency, causation and Relation R

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In Marantz's 1997 PLC talk, he revisited a core data set from Chomsky 1971, demonstrating that causativization of (a certain class of) causative-alternation verbs was a syntactic proccess, and unavailable in nominalizations of those verbs. He concluded that this was support for the then-new idea that the external argument was 'severed' from its verb, introduced only in the verbal spine as an argument of the v head—causativization is a truly syntactic process, not a lexical one, and it's syntax all the way down. The v head is not included in the nominalizations, and this is why only nominalizations of roots like $\sqrt{}$DESTROY license agentive readings, while nominalizations of $\sqrt{}$GROW-type roots do not.

26 years later we know a lot more about the structure of the VP/vP/VoiceP, growing out of those conclusions. We can still be sure that causativization cannot occur inside $\sqrt{}$GROW-type nominals. Furthermore, we can be sure, based on evidence from Harley and Noyer 2000, that membership in the $\sqrt{}$GROW-class is itself a property of the entire phrasal projection that is selected by v, rather than (just) a property of $\sqrt{}$. So what accounts for the readings possessors of such nominals *do* have?

Based on results from the literature on inalienable possession, notably Partee and Borschev 2003 & Barker 2011, I argue that the relation R introduced by the 's possessive is precisely constrained by the properties of the nP that is its complement. If the nP denotes an event, as in the nominalization cases, and if there is an open event participant argument, the possessor will be construed as binding that event participant. If the nP specifies a relation between entities, then the possessor will bind the open entity relation (an 'inalienable possession' reading). If the nP is a predicate of entities, then, following P&B, a type-lifting possession relation is introduced by 's, possibly as a Last Resort for interpretation. I run through some cases in English and other languages, including Hiaki, which shed light on these and related questions.