

INTERPRETABILITY OF RUN-AWAY ALIENABLE POSSESSORS⁴

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1 Introduction

The present paper argues that a chain formed by a syntactic object (SO) dislocated from its θ -position to the Case-checking position is interpreted as legitimate by the Chain Condition which applies at LF, given the minimalist assumption that grammatical conditions apply exclusively at LF (Chomsky 1995). We further argue that a legitimate chain is interpreted in such a way that a dislocated SO is linked to its θ -position. Take, for example, chains formed by DP-internal arguments that are θ -marked by head Ns, and DP-internal adjuncts that are not. Consider (1)

- (1) a Hanako-ga [_{DP} kinoo-no John-no oyogi]-o home-ta
 Hanako-NOM yesterday-GEN John-GEN swim-ACC praise-PAST
 ‘Hanako praised John’s yesterday’s swimming’
 b Hanako-ga John-_{ok} [_{DP} kinoo-no _{ik} oyogi]-o home-ta
 Hanako-NOM John-ACC yesterday-GEN swim-ACC praise-PAST
 ‘Hanako praised John’s yesterday’s swimming’
 c *Hanako-ga kinoo-_{ok} [_{DP} _{ik} John-no oyogi]-o home-ta
 Hanako-NOM yesterday-ACC John-Gen swim-ACC praise-PAST
 ‘Hanako praised John’s yesterday’s swimming’

(1a) shows that the DP-internal argument *John-no* ‘John-GEN’ and the DP-internal adjunct *kinoo-no* ‘yesterday-GEN’ appear within the object phrase. Following Ura (1996), we assume that in (1b), the argument with the accusative case-marker raises out of the object phrase. In contrast, (1c) indicates that the adjunct seems not to be able to move from within the object phrase. In our analysis, a DP-internal argument dislocated from within the object phrase to the Case-checking position forms a legitimate chain, and it can be interpreted in the θ -position. On the other hand, a dislocated DP-internal adjunct fails to be interpreted in the base position within the object phrase, as its movement does not yield a legitimate chain.

This paper focuses on the well-known contrast between inalienable and alienable possessors with respect to possessor-raising, which can be observed in non-related languages. For example, it has been shown that while the inalienable possessor can raise out of the object phrase, the alienable possessor cannot. (2) displays this contrast in the Chinese *ba* construction.

- (2) a Ta ba Lisik duan-le [_{ik} tui] [inalienable]
 he ba Lis1 break-Asp leg
 ‘He broke Lis1’s legs’

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two accusative objects We assume that *John* and *kinoo* with the accusative case-marker raise out of their respective object phrases and are Case-checked in [Spec, v]

- (5) a Hanako-ga **John-o**_k [_{DP} kinoo-no *t*_k oyogi]-o home-ta [Argument]
-
- b *Hanako-ga **kinoo-o**_k [_{DP} *t*_k John-no oyogi]-o home-ta [Adjunct]
-

In (5a), *John-o* is θ -marked in the base position and its Case-feature is checked off in its head, forming a legitimate chain. Thus, *John-o* can be linked to the θ -marked position and undergo interpretation there. On the other hand, the adjunct *kinoo-o* in (5b) is not θ -marked in the tail position and raises outside the object phrase to have its Case-feature checked, which yields an illegitimate chain. Therefore, it cannot be linked to the base position within the object phrase, and the derivation crashes.

In this section, we have provided our analysis with regard to the contrast observed between dislocated DP-internal arguments and adjuncts.¹ We will show in what follows that our analysis can explain the contrast between inalienable and alienable possessors observed in the possessor-raising phenomenon.

3 Possessor-raising

In this section, we will argue that the Chain Condition applying at LF accounts for the discrepancy between inalienable and alienable possessors raising out of the object phrase as has been illustrated in (2) above.

Following Ura (1996), among others, we define the inalienable possession relationship as a ‘permanent’ relationship between the possessor and the possessee, as in the whole-part relationship (e.g. John’s arm) and kinship (e.g. Mary’s father). On the other hand, the alienable possession relationship is defined such that the possessor and the possessee are in a relationship other than a permanent one (e.g. Bill’s car). As for the difference between these two types of possession relationships, Kitahara (1993: 403) points out that in *John’s arm*, there is only one interpretation possible, i.e. the arm that is part of John, whereas *Bill’s car* can receive multiple interpretations, e.g. the car that Bill owns, used to own,

¹Italian has the following contrast between arguments and adjuncts in terms of raising (Giorgi and Longobardi 1991: 62)

- (i) a In quel museo si possono vedere opere di tre pittori fiamminghi [Argument]
 In that museum it is possible to see works of three Flemish painters
- b In quel museo si possono vedere opere di 300 anni fa [Adjunct]
 In that museum it is possible to see works of three hundred years ago
- (ii) a Di quanti pittori fiamminghi_k si possono vedere opere *t*_k in quel museo? [Argument]
 of how many Flemish painters is it possible to see works, in that museum
- b *Di quanti anni_k fa si possono vedere opere *t*_k in quel museo? [Adjunct]
 of how many years ago is it possible to see works, in that museum

(ii) shows that *di quanti pittori fiamminghi* ‘of how many Flemish painters’, which is an argument of the head N *opere* ‘works’, is subject to WH-movement, but the adjunct *di quanti anni* ‘of how many years ago’ is not.

In the remainder of this subsection, we will show that the subcategorization of undervived Ns introduced above, which views the relational role assigning property as an inherent part of relational Ns, is not in accordance with empirical findings. We will propose that the relational role assigning property is an optional feature of undervived Ns.

It should be mentioned at first that in the minimalist framework (Chomsky 1995), any lexical item is considered to be made up of a bundle of features: π features to be read at PF, λ features at LF and formal features (FFs) in syntax. In this light, θ -role assigning properties of, say, Ns and Vs, are features as well, i.e. λ features. Likewise, the relational assigning property is also one of the λ features of undervived Ns, and can be represented as [relational]. We will use this notation throughout the rest of the paper. We will show in what follows that [relational] is an optional feature on undervived Ns by three pieces of evidence.

The first piece of evidence comes from Modern French. Vergnaud and Zubizarreta (1992) point out that even body-part nouns, which have been attested as 'inherently' relational in languages, are ambiguous between relational and non-relational. Consider the ambiguity shown in (9).

- (9) Les enfants ont levé la main
 the children have raised the hand
 a 'The children raised the hand' [alienable]
 b 'Each of the children raised his/her hand' [inalienable]

The two translations in (9) indicate that the body-part noun *hand* is ambiguous between relational and non-relational.² That is, in the first translation, *la main* 'the hand' is not part of any of the children mentioned in the sentence, i.e. the alienable possession relationship. In the second reading indicated in (9b), however, *la main* is an inalienable part of each child.

The second empirical support for our proposal comes from Ainu, which displays a clear contrast between the two types of possessive constructions (Kindaichi 1960). In this language, the inalienable possessive construction is formed by a possessor DP and an inalienable head N marked by a suffix that has been regarded as a morphological realization of the [relational] feature (see Ura 1996). The alienable possessive construction, on the other hand, consists of a possessor CP, i.e. a restrictive relative clause, and a head N.³ (10a) and (10b) represent the two possessive constructions (Tamura 1988: 33).⁴

- (10) a [DP toan hekacɨ] cikir-ihɨ [inalienable]
 that boy foot-[relational]
 'that boy's foot'

² See Yoon (1998) for the ambiguity of relational nouns in Korean.

³ The fact that in Ainu the alienable possessor as in (22b) is a restrictive relative clause like in a few other polysynthetic languages such as Southern Tlwa and Wichita (Baker 1996) supports our claim (cf. Kitahara (1993) for a similar treatment) that an alienable possessor adjoins to its head N, in that restrictive relative clauses have properties of adjuncts rather than complements (Radford 1988: 218).

⁴ The default word order in Ainu is Sub-Obj-V as in (i), which contrasts with that of the alienable possessive construction as in (10b).

- (i) toan hekacɨ seta kor
 that boy dog have
 'that boy has a dog'

- b [CP toan hekaci kor] seta [inalienable]
 that boy have dog
 'that boy's dog'

Returning to our proposal that the [relational] feature on underived Ns is optional, note that in Ainu, seemingly non-relational Ns such as *sake* 'rice wine' and *ay* 'arrow,' for example, can be used both in inalienable and alienable possessive constructions (see Tamura 1988:35)⁵

- (11) a *pro sake-he* [inalienable]
 sake-[relational]
 'sake (made from *pro* (=some particular rice))'
 b *acapo kor sake* [alienable]
 uncle have sake
 'uncle's sake'
- (12) a (kan) *k-ay-ehe* [inalienable]
 (I) 1st sg-arrow-[relational]
 'my arrow'
 b (kani) *ku-kor ay* [alienable]
 (I) 1st sg-have arrow
 'my arrow'

(11a) shows that the head N *sake* 'rice wine' and the possessor *pro* (i.e. the material from which the *sake* is made) are in the inalienable possession relationship, while the relationship between the possessor *acapo* 'uncle' and the head N *sake* in (11b) represents the alienable possession relationship and thus it is expressed by the alienable possessive construction. In addition, as (12) clearly indicates, *ay* 'arrow' can occur in the two types of possessive construction as well.

Finally, Old French (i.e. the French used between the 10th and 13th centuries) provides additional piece of evidence for the optionality in question. In this language, inalienable and alienable possession are expressed by two different constructions as in (13) and (14) (De Lage 1972)

- (13) a *le filz [DP sainte Marie]* [inalienable]
 the son St Marie
 'the son of St Mary'
 b *es braz [DP mon ami]*
 in arms my friend
 'in the arms of my friend'

⁵ Tzutujil (Mayan, Penutian (Dayley 1985, cited in Heine 1997:180) displays a similar contrast between inalienable and alienable constructions, as in Ainu, in that the [relational] feature is morphologically realized. In the following examples, *muuj* 'shadow' is used in the two possessive constructions

- (i) *nuu-muuj* [alienable]
 my-shadow
 'my shade' (e.g. of a tree that I am sitting in)
- (ii) *n-muuj-aal* [inalienable]
 my-shadow-[relational]
 'my shadow'

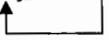
b Ta ba Lisì pian-le
 he ba Lisì cheat-ASP
 'He cheated Lisì'

[*ba* construction]

The Obj *Lisì* appears in the postverbal position in the non-*ba* construction as shown in (16a), whereas it appears in the preverbal position in the *ba* construction as in (16b). Concerning this word-order change with the presence of *ba*, Huang (1982) claims that in the *ba* construction, Obj is moved from the rightmost position to the position between Subj and V in order to escape the Case filter. Sharing much with Huang's idea of object-raising, we assume that Obj is raised from the base position to a higher position between Subj and V as illustrated in (17b).

(17) a Subj V Obj [non-*ba* construction]

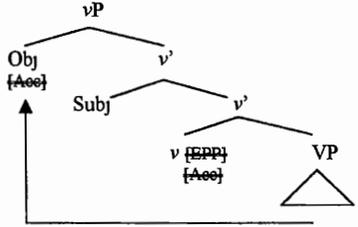
b Subj **ba** Obj_{jk} V t_k [*ba* construction]



In what follows, we will consider how we can capture the object-raising phenomenon in the *ba* construction in minimalist terms.

In the Minimalist Program (Chomsky 1995), it is assumed that movement is induced to check off uninterpretable formal features under certain structural conditions. Object-raising is motivated by uninterpretable features such as the EPP-feature on *v* and formal features on Obj and V. Since the EPP-feature on *v*, being an uninterpretable feature, must be checked off before Spell-out, the object must raise and enter into a checking relation with it. By this instantiation of the operation Move, the feature in question is deleted along with other formal features on Obj and V such as Case-features and ϕ -features. Based on this analysis of object-raising within the framework of the Minimalist Program, we have proposed in our previous study (Oga, Hu & Ayano 1999) that the object in the *ba* construction is raised to [Spec, *v*] to enter into a checking relation with the EPP-feature of *v*⁷. Hence, the EPP-feature is checked off by the object as are other formal features such as the Case-features on Obj and V. This is illustrated in (18).

(18)



(Chomsky 1995)

Having briefly reviewed the structure of the Chinese *ba* construction, we are now in a position to examine possessor-raising in this construction.

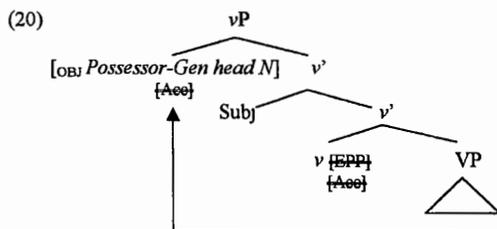
Unlike (2), where only the inalienable possessor raises, when the possessor appears with the

⁷ Oga, Hu & Ayano (1999) have argued that *ba* is a morphological realization of *v* (Chomsky 1995), and the object-raising is induced by the strong EPP-feature of this overt *v*.

genitive case-marker *-de*, the entire object phrase raises for both inalienable and alienable possessive constructions as in (19), just as in the case of default object-raising in the *ba* construction as shown in (16)

- (19) a L_{1S1} ba [$_{DP}$ Lao L_{1-de} tui] $_k$ $duan-le$ t_k [inalienable]
 L_{1S1} ba Lao L_{1-Gen} leg break-Asp
 'L_{1S1} broke Lao L₁'s legs'
 b Wo ba [$_{DP}$ Lao L_{1-de} $juzi$] $_k$ $bo-le$ t_k [alienable]
 I ba Lao L_{1-Gen} orange peel-Asp
 'I peeled Lao L₁'s orange'

We simply assume that the object DPs raise in (19) for the same reason other objects raise in the *ba* construction, as proposed earlier. That is, the possessive phrase in the base object position raises to [Spec, v] to check off the EPP-feature of v. In this position, the Case-feature [ACC] of the possessive phrase and the Case-feature [assign ACC] of V are also checked off. (20) illustrates the overt possessive phrase movement and the feature-checking relevant to this movement.



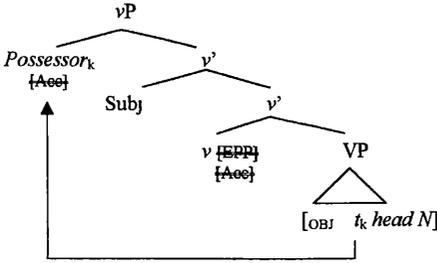
As opposed to the above case where the entire possessive phrase raises from the base object position, it is important to note that in the *ba* construction, part Ns and kinship terms (i.e. inalienable possessees) can be postverbal elements, and their inalienable possessors alone are subject to raising to the preverbal position, whereas other types of Ns cannot be postverbal elements, as has been shown in (2) in the introduction (repeated below as (21))

- (21) a Ta ba L_{1S1k} $duan-le$ [t_k tui] [inalienable]
 he ba L_{1S1} break-Asp leg
 'He broke L_{1S1}'s legs'
 b * Ta ba L_{1S1k} $duan-le$ [t_k $zhuozi$] [alienable]
 he ba L_{1S1} break-Asp desk
 'He broke L_{1S1}'s desk'

We assume that both the inalienable possessor in (21a) and the alienable possessor in (21b) bear the Case-feature [ACC], are base-generated in the postverbal position within the object phrase, and raise to the Case-checking position.⁸

⁸ Oga, Hu & Ayano (1999) propose that *ba* is the morphological realization of v and it has the EPP-feature which raises the inalienable possessor to [Spec, v]. A Case-feature on V is checked off against the identical feature on the raised inalienable possessor.

(22)



Recall that the head Ns, *tu* ‘leg’ and *zhuozi* ‘desk’ are crucially different in that the former has the [relational] feature, while the latter does not. Thus, as for the inalienable possessor, it is base-generated within the object phrase and is θ -marked there by the inalienable head N. Then, it alone raises to [Spec, v] in order to satisfy the EPP-feature of v and to have its Case-feature (t_e [ACC]) checked off against the Case-feature of V (t_e [assign ACC]).⁹ The inalienable possessor raised from the θ -marked position to the Case-checking position in [Spec, v] forms a chain that satisfies the Chain Condition. This chain formed by the dislocated inalienable possessor undergoes interpretation at LF, and the possessor is interpreted in the base position where it is θ -marked as illustrated in (21a’)

(21a’) Ta ba *Lisi*_k duan-le [_{t_k} *tu*] [inalienable]

Turning to (21b), *zhuozi* ‘desk’ is a non-relational N and it does not have the [relational] feature. Thus, the alienable possessor *Lisi* is not θ -marked in the base position, and it raises to the Case position where its Case-feature [ACC] is checked off along with other uninterpretable features.

(21b’) *Ta ba *Lisi*_k duan-le [_{t_k} *zhuozi*] [alienable]

The chain formed by the movement of the alienable possessor *Lisi* does not satisfy the Chain Condition. Thus, the alienable possessor cannot be interpreted in such a way that it modifies its possessee in the object phrase. Therefore, (21b) does not converge.

3.3 Possessor-raising in Korean, Japanese and French

We will argue that the analysis applied to possessor-raising in the *ba* construction in Chinese accounts for the same phenomenon in Korean, Japanese and French.

⁹ As for a Case-feature of the object phrase, it is either overtly checked in situ, or is covertly checked in a higher position.

In Korean and Japanese, only the inalienable possessor can appear either with the genitive case-marker or the accusative case-marker, whereas the alienable possessor can appear only with the genitive case-marker. The contrast in Korean is shown below.

- (23) a Mary-ka John-uy tali-lul chaessta [inalienable]
 Mary-NOM John-GEN leg-ACC kicked
 'Mary kicked John's leg'
 b Mary-ka John-uy chayk-ul chaessta [alienable]
 Mary-NOM John-GEN book-ACC kicked
 'Mary kicked John's book'
- (24) a Mary-ka John-ul tali-lul chaessta [inalienable]
 Mary-NOM John-ACC leg-ACC kicked
 'Mary kicked John's leg'
 b *Mary-ka John-ul chayk-ul chaessta [alienable]
 Mary-NOM John-ACC book-ACC kicked
 'Mary kicked John's book'

We can observe the same contrast in Standard Japanese. Consider (25) and (26) ¹⁰

- (25) a Hanako-ga Taroo-no atama-o tatai-ta [inalienable]
 Hanako-NOM Taroo-GEN head-ACC hit-PAST
 'Hanako hit Taroo's head'
 b Taroo-ga Hanako-no terebi-o kowasi-ta [alienable]
 Taroo-NOM Hanako-GEN TV-ACC break-PAST
 'Taroo broke Hanako's TV'
- (26) a ?Hanako-ga Taroo-o atama-o tatai-ta [inalienable]
 Hanako-NOM Taroo-ACC head-ACC hit-PAST
 'Hanako hit Taroo's head'
 b *Taroo-ga Hanako-o terebi-o kowasi-ta [alienable]
 Taroo-NOM Hanako-ACC TV-ACC break-PAST
 'Taroo broke Hanako's TV'

¹⁰ There are two points to be noted. First, (26a) in Standard Japanese shows degraded acceptability in comparison with (24a) in Korean. We assume that the degraded grammaticality for (26a) is due to the double accusative constraint at PF (see Takano (1996) and the references cited therein, and Ayano (1999)). We would like to emphasize, however, that (26a) is much better than (26b). Second, in the Hakata dialect of Japanese, inalienable and alienable possessors exhibit the clear contrast as shown below. (iia) does not show the degraded grammaticality as opposed to (26a) in Standard Japanese.

- (i) a Hanako-ga Taroo-n atama-ba tatai-ta [inalienable]
 Hanako-NOM Taroo-GEN head-ACC hit-PAST
 'Hanako hit Taroo's head'
 b Taroo-ga Hanako-n terebi-ba kowasi-ta [alienable]
 Taroo-NOM Hanako-GEN TV-ACC break-PAST
 'Taroo broke Hanako's TV'
- (ii) a Hanako-ga Taroo-ba atama-ba tatai-ta [inalienable]
 Hanako-NOM Taroo-ACC head-ACC hit-PAST
 'Hanako hit Taroo's head'
 b *Taroo-ga Hanako-ba terebi-ba kowasi-ta [alienable]
 Taroo-NOM Hanako-ACC TV-ACC break-PAST
 'Taroo broke Hanako's TV'

It has been argued that the inalienable possessor with the accusative case-marker in Korean is outside the object phrase, whereas both the inalienable and alienable possessors with the genitive case-marker are within the object phrase as illustrated below (Choe 1987, Maling and Kim 1992, Kitahara 1993, Ura 1996, among others) ¹¹

- (27) Subj [OBJ POSSESSOR-GEN head N]-ACC V [inalienable] & [alienable]
- (28) a Subj POSSESSOR-ACC_k [OBJ t_k head N]-ACC V [inalienable]
- ↑
- b *Subj POSSESSOR-ACC_k [OBJ t_k head N]-ACC V [alienable]
- ↑

Following this idea, we argue that the inalienable possessor with the accusative case-marker is outside the object phrase both in Korean and Japanese. Thus, as for the inalienable possessor, it is assigned a relational role from the head N within the object phrase and raises to [Spec, v], where formal features such as the Case-feature [ACC] on the inalienable possessor and the EPP-feature of v are checked off. The chain formed by the dislocated inalienable possessor satisfies the Chain Condition. Thus, the dislocated inalienable possessor can be interpreted in the θ-marked position within the object phrase as shown in the Korean example (24a')

- (24a') Mary-ka John-ul_k [DP t_k tali-lul] chaessta [inalienable]
- ↑ Syntax ↑ θ-marked
- ↑
- LF
- Mary-NOM John-ACC leg-ACC kicked
- 'Mary kicked John's leg'

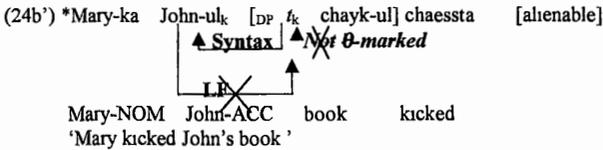
Let us now turn to the dislocated alienable possessor. We assume that the alienable possessor with the accusative case-marker has a Case-feature [ACC] and is subject to possessor-raising. Within the minimalist framework, uninterpretable features such as Case-features must be checked off. Therefore, we argue that the alienable possessor with the Case-feature [ACC] does raise to [Spec, v] for feature-checking in syntax. Given that the alienable possessor is not assigned any θ-role from the head

¹¹ Ura (1996) shows that the following adverb test exhibits that accusative inalienable possessors raise out of the object phrase in Korean

- (i) a *Kay-ka [DP John-uy ecey son-ul] mul-ess-ta [inalienable]
 dog-NOM John-GEN yesterday hand-ACC bite-PAST-IND
 'The dog bit John's hand yesterday'
- b *Kay-ka [DP John-uy ecey chayk-ul] mul-ess-ta [alienable]
 dog-NOM John-GEN yesterday book-ACC bite-PAST-IND
 'The dog bit John's book yesterday'
- (ii) a Kay-ka John-ul_k ecey [DP t_k son-ul] mul-ess-ta [inalienable]
 dog-NOM John-ACC yesterday hand-ACC bite-PAST-IND
 'The dog bit John's hand yesterday'
- b *Kay-ka John-ul_k ecey [DP t_k chayk-ul] mul-ess-ta [alienable]
 dog-NOM John-ACC yesterday book-ACC bite-PAST-IND
 'The dog bit John's book yesterday'

Standard Japanese and the Hakata dialect also show the same result with regard to this test

N in the base position, the chain formed by the alienable possessor cannot be interpreted in its tail within the object phrase at LF. Thus, the alienable possessor cannot modify its possessee¹² (24b') illustrates our analysis



We further argue that the contrast observed in Japanese as in (26) can be accounted for in the same way

Before concluding this subsection, we will show that our argument captures the contrast between inalienable and alienable possessor dative clitics in the so-called possessor dative construction in French. In French, the inalienable possessor dative can be expressed either as a clitic or as a PP (i.e. a + DP) as shown below (Gueron 1985, cited in Landau 1999)

- (29) a J'ai coupe les cheveux à Pierre
I have cut the hair to Pierre
'I cut Pierre's hair'
- b Je lui_k ai coupe les cheveux t_k
I to-him/her have cut the hair
'I cut his/her hair'

In (29a), the inalienable possessor consists of *Pierre* plus the preposition *a*, which follows the inalienable N *cheveux* 'hair', whereas in (29b), the possessor appears as a clitic *lui* between the subject and the verb.

When the head of the object phrase is an alienable N, the alienable possessor cannot appear as a clitic; it appears only as a PP as illustrated below.

- (30) a (?)J'ai lave le chat à Jean
I have washed the cat to Jean
'I washed Jean's cat'
- b *Je lui_k ai lavé le chat t_k
I to-him/her have washed the cat
'I washed his/her cat'

We assume that these dative possessors are associated with the head Ns of the respective object phrases, not with the verbs. Given that inalienable Ns such as *cheveux* 'hair' are selected from the Lexicon with the [relational] feature, the dative possessor phrase *a Jean* 'to Jean' in (30a) is base-generated within the

¹² Our account also explains seemingly contradictory data in Kinyarwanda, in which dislocated alienable possessors can be interpretable (Bickford 1986). We argue that an alienable possessor in this language is in fact a PP adjunct. In cases where Ps are affixal and must incorporate into Vs (Baker 1988), their objects raise to their Case-checking position. Thus, an applied object is θ -marked by P within PP, and is Case-checked possibly in [Spec, v]. This movement satisfies the Chain Condition, and thus, the derivation converges.

object phrase and assigned a relational role from the head N *cheveux* 'hair'. Details aside, we argue that the inalienable dative clitic in (29b) is also base-generated within the object phrase and assigned a θ -role from the inalienable N in the base-position before raising. In (30a), the dative possessor phrase *a Jean* 'to Jean' appears as an adjunct phrase within the object phrase and is not assigned any θ -role from the alienable N *chat* 'cat'. Likewise, the alienable dative clitic is not assigned any θ -role from the alienable N *chat* 'cat' in the base-position. Since the chain formed by the possessor dative clitic does not satisfy the Chain Condition at LF, the clitic cannot be interpreted in the base position.

In the present section, we have shown that the analysis provided for the contrast between dislocated DP-internal arguments and adjuncts can explain the possessor-raising phenomenon in Chinese, Korean, Japanese and French.

4 Conclusion

In this paper, we have provided an account for the possessor-raising phenomenon observed in Chinese, Korean, Japanese and French, focusing on the contrast between dislocated inalienable and alienable possessors. We have argued that the head N in the inalienable possessive construction bears the optional feature [relational], while the head N in the alienable construction does not. We have also claimed that the inalienable possessor can be interpreted within the object phrase at LF because the chain formed by the inalienable possessor satisfies the Chain Condition. On the other hand, the alienable possessor is not in a θ -marked position in its tail, and, therefore, it cannot go back home to the object phrase.

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