Covert possessor raising in Japanese

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Abstract Japanese has a set of idiomatic predicates that invoke possessor raising counting as A-movement. With the possessor-raising predicates, the possessor is overtly raised to SpecTP when it is marked with dative case. When the possessor receives nominal genitive case, it is located within the possessum nominal on the surface, and SpecTP is left unfilled. It is shown that the genitive possessor, which has remained in nominal-internal position in overt constituent structure, undergoes covert A-movement into SpecTP. The new data from Japanese illustrate that the specifier requirement of T (i.e., the EPP requirement), which is often assumed to be fulfilled only by an overt syntactic operation, may be satisfied by covert movement if the syntactic derivation feeds into its phonetic form before this requirement is fulfilled.

Keywords Possessor raising · Possessor · Case · EPP · Covert A-movement · Japanese

1 Introduction

In this article, I will take a close look at possessor-raising idioms in Japanese (e.g., *kioku-ni aru* 'remember'), which can form two different variants depending on whether the possessor is marked with dative case or genitive case. The idioms have the following structural property: when the possessor is marked with dative case, it is placed in the clause-subject position via overt possessor raising, but when marked with genitive case, it superficially stays within its host possessum nominal. Nevertheless, the genitive possessor located in its host possessum behaves in an unexpected way, displaying certain subject properties that are not possessed by other types of

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