Resumption in Gilaki Possessor Split

Arsalan Kahnemuyipour and Mansour Shabani
University of Toronto Mississauga and Guilan University

This paper investigates a type of split topicalization (van Riemsdijk 1989, Androutsopoulou 1997, Fanselow & Cavar 2002, van Hoof 2006, Roehrs 2009, Ott 2011, a.o.) found in Gilaki (NW Iranian, Caspien). This type of topicalization, what we call *possessor split*, can break up a possessive noun phrase, placing the possessum in a clause-initial position, leaving the possessor in the thematic position of the noun phrase followed by a gap or a resumptive element. The example in (1) shows the variant with a resumptive element (in italics), the only available option in the Rasht dialect of Gilaki (hereafter RG). (Persian uses a similar construction as (1) with the resumptive element *maal*, Ghomeshi 2006, which we will discuss in parallel at the talk.)

(1)   a. man də:n-əm   Hassan-ə   maashin   xəraab-ə
         I   know-1sg   Hassan-gen.   car   broken-is
            'I know Hassan's car is broken.'
      b. maashin, man   də:n-əm   Hassan-ə   *shin*   xəraab-ə

In Eshekevarat Gilaki (hereafter EG), while (1) is available (with irrelevant phonological differences), a more common strategy is to have a gap in place of the italicized resumptive element. In previous work, we provided an analysis of the gapped case in EG. Using a battery of tests such as island effects, intervention, freezing effects, P-stranding, and idiomatic interpretation, we argued that possessor split (with a gap) in EG involves syntactic movement. Using similar tests, we will show that possessor split (with resumption) is a case of base generation. The adjunct island test is given in (2), with other tests to be provided at the talk.

(2) maashin,   asəbani   bobəst-əm   chun   Ali   mi-*shin*-ə   bavərd
    car   angry   got-1sg   because Ali   my-SHIN-acc. brought.3sg
        'As for the car, I got angry because Ali brought mine.'

A question arises as to what the difference is between EG and RG such that the former allows the movement strategy in *possessor split*, while the latter uses base-generation only. Meanwhile, there is another split topicalization construction in both EG and RG, in which the head noun appears in the clause-initial position separated from the numeral, as in (3). We have called this construction *numeral split* and have shown that it uses the base-generated strategy.

(3)   a. bogoft-əm man   du   tə   maashin   bed-em
         said-1sg   I   two   classif. car   want-1sg
            'I said I saw two cars.'
      b. maashin,   bogoft-əm   man   du   tə   ----------   bed-em

This raises a second question: What is the difference between *numeral split* and *possessor split*, both base-generated constructions, such that only *possessor split* requires a resumptive element? Following Kayne (1984) and Guéron (1985, 2003), we take the structure of the possessive construction in Gilaki to be a small clause in which the possessor DP is the subject and the possessum DP/DemP the predicate. We have argued previously that *numeral split* is the result of merging a null nominal in the NP position, licensed by any other element present in the DP/DemP. The question is why this null nominal cannot replace the whole possessum DP/DemP. With the assumption that DP is a phase, we may be able to relate the unavailability of the base-generated structure with a gap in *possessor split* to a more general ban on the emptiness of a phasal domain (Kandybowicz 2015). Under this view, movement or base-generation with

resumption can be seen as two strategies to address this ban. When the base-generated strategy is used, the resumptive *shin* replaces the possessum DP leading to a non-empty phase. For the movement strategy, we will have to assume that the lower copy of movement is deleted after the emptiness of the phasal domain is assessed. We will explore the implications of this proposal.

References

Androutsopoulou, A. 1998. Split DPs, Focus, and Scrambling in Modern Greek. Proceedings of the *West Coast Conference in Formal Linguistics (WCCFL) 16*, 1-16.

Fanselow, Gisbert & Damir Ćavar. 2002. Distributed deletion. In Artemis Alexiadou (ed.), *Theoretical approaches to universals* (Linguistik Aktuell/Linguistics Today 49), 65-107. Amsterdam: John Benjamins.

Ghomeshi, Jila. 2006. NP-anaphora and focused possessors in parallel architecture. *Linguistics* 44.4: 721-748.

Guéron, Jacqueline. 1985. Inalienable possession, PRO-inclusion and lexical chains. In Jacqueline Guéron, Hans-Georg Obenauer & Jean-Yves Pollock (eds.), *Grammatical Representation,* 43-86. Dordrecht: Foris.

Guéron, Jacqueline. 2003. Inalienable possession and the interpretation of determiners. In Martine Coene and Yves D'hulst (eds.), *From NP to DP Vol. 2* (Linguistik Aktuell/Linguistics Today 56), 189-220. Amsterdam: John Benjamins.

van Hoof, Hanneke. 2006. Split Topicalization. In Martin Everaert & Henk van Riemsdijk (eds.), *The Blackwell companion to syntax Vol. IV*, 408–462. Oxford: Blackwell.

Kandybowicz, Jason. 2015. On Prosodic Vacuity and Verbal Resumption in Asante Twi. *Linguistic Inquiry* 46(2), 243-272.

Kayne, Richard. 1984. *Connectedness and binary branching*. Dordrecht: Foris.

Ott, Dennis. 2011. *Local Instability: The Syntax of Split Topics*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University doctoral dissertation.

Riemsdijk, Henk van. 1989. Movement and Regeneration. In Paula Benincá (ed.), *Dialect Variation and the Theory of Grammar*, 105-136. Dordrecht: Foris.

Roehrs, Dorian. 2009. Split NPs. Ms., University of North Texas.