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A relative clause analysis of event existential constructions in Aklanon

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This study is the first to document and analyze the 'event existential construction' (EEC) in Aklanon (ᴀᴋʟ), an understudied Central Philippine language. In EECs, the apparent correlation between Philippine-type voice and nominal case appears to break down. However, I argue that the 'case-cleaving effect' of EECs is superficial. I argue for an analysis wherein the existential *maj* selects a relative clause as its complement and allows optional possessor raising of a relative-clause-external agent, which obligatorily controls a DP-internal PRO, to topic position, producing the case-cleaving effect. This study presents a typologically unusual type of obligatory DP control and contributes to a richer understanding of cross-linguistic variation in Philippine languages, while allowing us to maintain the robust generalization that Philippine-type voice is correlated with the argument role of the topic-marked nominal.

1 Introduction

In Aklanon (endonym *Inakeanon* [ʔinakɰaˈnon]), an understudied Central Philippine language (AKL; Western Visayan), Philippine-type 'voice' affixes generally reflect the argument role of a single discourse-prominent argument (henceforth 'topic'). For instance, in (1), the perfective patient voice morphology on the verb indicates that the *ro*-marked argument is construed as the patient of the giving event:

(1)   Canonical Aklanon Patient Voice Clause
        gin-ṭaʔó   *ʔit*   *maʔéstra*   *sa*   *ʔuŋáʔ*   *ro   líbro*.
        PV.PFV-give   UNM   teacher   DAT   child   TOP   book
        'A teacher gave <u>the book</u> to the child.'

However, this robust correlation between case and voice breaks down in so-called 'event existential constructions' (EECs).[1] EECs seem to 'cleave' case and voice apart: the *ro*-marked argument is the **semantic agent**, despite the patient voice morphology on the verb, as in (2).

(2)   Aklanon Patient Voice EEC
        maj   *gin-ṭaʔó*   *sa*   *ʔuŋáʔ*   *ro   maʔéstra*.
        EXIST   PV.PFV-give   DAT   child   TOP   teacher
        '<u>The teacher</u> gave something to the child.' (EEC)

In this paper, I will argue that the case-cleaving effect of EECs in Aklanon is superficial and dissolves under an analysis of EECs in which: (i) the complement of *maj* is a relative clause with an underlying genitive agent, (ii) the underlying genitive agent is generated external to the relative clause and obligatorily controls a relative-clause-internal PRO, and (iii) the existential *maj* allows optional raising of the genitive agent to a higher position where it receives its *ro*-marking and produces the superficial case-cleaving effect.

This paper is structured as follows: in Section 2, I will briefly describe the linguistic context of Aklanon, as well as some defining characteristics of Philippine-type voice and the distribution of the *maj* existential in Aklanon. This baseline understanding of *maj* will help inform the analysis of EECs in Section 3. I begin Section 3 by summarizing previous analyses of EECs, and then present the current analysis, divided into the three main claims and subdivided into the main arguments for each claim. Section 4 concludes.

The data throughout this paper has been collected via elicitation with one native, fluent speaker of Aklanon in the presence of her partner, a non-native, fluent speaker of the language. The consultant has lived in the United States for several decades, and she speaks Aklanon regularly. The Aklanon consultant and I have conducted regular elicitations since 2018, and during the pandemic, this has been done telephonically. To control for some intraspeaker variation, data

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[1] I follow Aldridge (2011) in using this term.

was only included in this paper if it was successfully re-elicited during two (or more) elicitation sessions separated by significant periods of time (one or more weeks). Because the data in this paper comes from a single speaker, the claims made herein should be understood as describing a single Aklanon grammar that exists; future research will address the extent to which the findings presented in this paper generalize to the grammars of other Aklanon speakers.

2 Background

Aklanon is a Western Visayan Central Philippine language (Zorc & de la Cruz 1968) spoken by ±550,000 people in the province of Aklan on the island of Panay (Ethnologue 2021). The only formal work that has been done on Aklanon is descriptive (e.g. Zorc & de la Cruz 1968), lexicographic (e.g. Zorc et al. 1969), and historical. Zorc & de la Cruz's (1968) very thorough descriptive grammar has been foundational for the work presented in this paper.

2.1 Philippine 'voice'

The so-called 'Philippine-type voice system' or 'Philippine alignment' has been a rich and active field of research for many decades (Schachter 1976, *passim*; Shibatani 1988; Kroeger 1993; Richards 2000; Rackowski 2002; Aldridge 2004 i.a.; Rackowski & Richards 2005; Latrouite 2011; Chen 2017; 2020). The essential generalization about Philippine 'voice' systems is that verbal morphology indicates the argument role of a single A'-extractable argument, known by convention as the 'subject,' 'pivot,' or 'topic' (Chen 2017:21–24). Although this system is widespread in Philippine and Formosan languages (among others, e.g. Malagasy), a long tradition of theoretical work on Philippine-type voice has been conducted on Tagalog, which is related to Aklanon.[2] Therefore, I will briefly compare Tagalog and Aklanon to show how these systems overlap in some ways, but not in others.

   Tagalog and Aklanon belong to separate primary branches of the Central Philippine language family (Zorc 1986). Tagalog is typically described as having four 'voices': agent, patient, locative, and circumstantial. This is shown by Chen (2017:22, ex. 8):[3]

(3)   a.   Tagalog Agent Voice Clause   (Chen 2017:22, ex. 8)
          b<um>ili ang babae ng tela mula sa tindera para sa nanay.
          <AV>buy   PIVOT woman ID.Y cloth from DF.Y shopkeep P   DF.Y mother
          'The woman bought cloth from the shopkeeper for mother.'

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b. Tagalog Patient Voice Clause (Chen 2017:22, ex. 8⁴)

bi-bilh-in ng babae *ang tela* mula sa tindera para sa nanay.
CONT-buy-PV ID.X woman PIVOT cloth from DF.Y shopkeep P DF.Y mother
'The woman will buy <u>cloth</u> from the shopkeeper for mother.'

c. Tagalog Locative Voice Clause (Chen 2017:22, ex. 8)

bi-bilh-an ng babae ng tela *ang tindera* para sa nanay.
CONT-buy-LV ID.X woman ID.Y cloth PIVOT shopkeep P DF.Y mother
'The woman will buy cloth <u>from the shopkeeper</u> for mother.'

d. Tagalog Circumstantial Voice Clause (Chen 2017:22, ex. 8)

i-bi-bili ng babae ng tela mula sa tindera *ang nanay.*
CV-CONT-buy ID.X woman ID.Y cloth from DF.Y shopkeep PIVOT mother
'The woman will buy cloth from the shopkeeper <u>for mother</u>.'

Aklanon also distinguishes four 'voices,' but where Tagalog uses *ng* to mark non-topic arguments, Aklanon has two possible choices: *ʔit* (UNM) or *ko* (OBL). In my data, *ʔit* and *ko* alternate among non-topic arguments with a definiteness effect: *ʔit* is construed as indefinite, and *ko,* as definite. For reference, a canonical paradigm using *bakáe* 'buy' in four 'voices' is shown below.⁴

(4) a. Aklanon Agent Voice Clause (Zorc & de la Cruz 1968:78, ex. a3)

ro tawo maga-bakáe it tinapay para sa ungá.
TOP man AV.FUT-buy UNM bread for DAT child
'<u>The man</u> will buy bread for the child.'

b. Aklanon Patient Voice Clause (Zorc & de la Cruz 1968:79, ex. c3)

ro tinapay bake-ón ku tawo ku kwarta para sa ungá.
TOP bread buy-PV.FUT OBL man OBL money for DAT child
'The man will buy <u>the bread</u> for the child with the money.'

c. Aklanon Locative Voice Clause (Zorc & de la Cruz 1968:79, ex. d3)

ro ungá bake-án it tinapay ku tawo ku kwarta.
TOP child buy-LV.FUT UNM bread OBL man OBL money
'The man will buy bread <u>for the child</u> with the money.'

d. Aklanon Instrument Voice Clause (Zorc & de la Cruz 1968:79, ex. b3)

ro kwarta iga-bakáe it tinapay ku tawo para sa ungá.
TOP money IV.FUT-buy UNM bread OBL man for DAT child
'The man will buy bread for the child <u>with the money</u>.'

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⁴ The paradigm in (4) is given in the orthography used by Zorc & de la Cruz (1968), where ‹e› represents [ɯ]. Additionally, the source gives these in a marked word order. In my data, clause-initial topics are consistently construed as focused. Morpheme boundaries and glosses are my own.

In languages for which Philippine 'voice' has been analyzed, such as Tagalog, it has been analyzed as *v*P phase-edge Agreement between T and the topic (Rackowski & Richards 2005), inherent ergative/structural absolutive case (Aldridge 2004; 2006; 2009), and topic agreement with C° (Chen 2017; 2020). The extent to which such systems resemble canonical active/passive-type voices in Indo-European languages is an area of active research (cf. references above).

The arguments for my analysis of EECs are not contingent on a particular analysis of Philippine-type 'voice,' and are therefore compatible with any of the aforementioned analyses. I opt to use conventionalized terminology and glosses (topic, unmarked/oblique, locative/dative), and in doing so, I do not intend to assume any particular view of case/voice in Aklanon. **Table 1** shows the distribution of Aklanon case particles by argument role across all voices. Note that for each voice, the left column contains case markers for common nouns, the right column contains equivalent markers used exclusively for proper names and some terms of address. The topic markers are bolded in each column.

	AV		PV		LV		IV	
External Argument	***ro***	***si***	*ʔit, ko*	*ni*	*ʔit, ko*	*ni*	*ʔit, ko*	*ni*
Internal Argument	*ʔit, ko*	*ni*	***ro***	***si***	*ʔit, ko*	*ni*	*ʔit, ko*	*ni*
Location/Goal	*sa*	*kaj*	*sa*	*kaj*	***ro***	***si***	*sa*	*kaj*
Instrument	*ʔit, ko*	*ni*	*ʔit, ko*	*ni*	*ʔit, ko*	*ni*	***ro***	***si***

Table 1: Aklanon Case Marking Paradigms for All Voices.

2.2 Existential *maj*

This section provides a baseline description of the distribution of *maj* in Aklanon. Zorc & de la Cruz (1968:215) describe three functions of this existential: (i) existential statements, (ii) indefinite statements, and (iii) statements of possession. This distribution roughly matches that of Tagalog ‹*may*› described by Sabbagh (2009). I give some examples of the Aklanon existential and possessive constructions below:

(5)   a.   Aklanon Existential
             maj   kwárta.
             EXIST   money
             Context: You open a box and look inside; someone asks 'what's inside?'
             'There is money.'

    b.   Aklanon Locative Existential

        maj   kwárta   sa   síja.

        EXIST money LOC chair

        'There's money on the chair.'

    c.   Aklanon Possessive Existential

        maj   kwárta ro   maʔéstra.

        EXIST money TOP teacher

        'The teacher has money.'

Maj is unlike verbal predicates in Aklanon in at least four respects. First, it does not inflect for voice;[5] second, (6) shows that *maj* prohibits argument scrambling. If scrambling were permitted, we would expect that the order of the bare noun and the topic should be able to alternate freely.

(6)   **maj ro   maʔéstra kwárta.*

        EXIST TOP teacher   money

        Intended: 'The teacher has money.' (cf. 5c)

Third, *maj* requires its complement to be bare (7) – that is, the complement of *maj* cannot be *ʔit/ko*-marked, and changing the word order does not ameliorate this ungrammaticality.[6]

(7)   **maj {ʔit/ko   kwárta} {ro maʔéstra}.*

        EXIST UNM/OBL money   TOP teacher

        Intended: 'The teacher has money.'

Fourth, the possessive existential construction permits possessor raising. Compare the alternations in (8a,b) and (9a,b). In each case, example (a) shows a topic-marked (raised) possessor and (b) shows the minimal pair with a prenominal genitive possessor. In the (b) examples, note that the phrase [GEN NP LK NP] is a standard prenominal possessive phrase in Aklanon. In other words, *ʔaj María ŋa pláto* (8b) in isolation means 'Maria's plate,' and *ʔákon ŋa kwárta* (9b) in isolation means 'my money.'

(8)   a.   External (Raised) Possession by a Proper Name

           maj   pláto   si   María.

           EXIST plate TOP M.

           'Maria has a plate.'

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[5] As Adar (2013) notes, Kaufman (2011:729) argues that Tagalog *may* can be reconstructed as an agent voice existential **k\<um\>a-i* from Proto-Austronesian **ka* EXIST + *\<um\>* AV + *-i* DET, supported by the fact that *may* assigns topic case to the possessor (in contrast to the Tagalog exclamative existential *kay* which assigns oblique case).

[6] {X}{Y} means either order, XY or YX; *{X}{Y} means that either order is ungrammatical.

    b.   Internal Possession by a Proper Name

        maj   *ʔaj   María* *ŋa* *pláto.*

        EXIST GEN M.   LK plate

        'Maria has a plate.'

(9)   a.   External (Raised) Possession by a Pronoun

        maj   *kwárta* *akó.*

        EXIST money 1SG.TOP

        'I have money.'

    b.   Internal Possession by a Pronoun

        maj   *ʔákon*   *ŋa* *kwárta.*

        EXIST 1SG.GEN LK money

        'I have money.'

The availability of possessor raising to *maj* is important for the present analysis of EECs in Aklanon and will be discussed at length in Section 3.2.2.

3 Event existential constructions

The term 'event existential construction' was applied by Aldridge (2011) to refer to a 'type of existential [which] involves embedding of a clausal complement under an existential verb' (Aldridge 2011:1). A canonical EEC in Tagalog (from Aldridge's study) and its equivalent in Aklanon are given below:

(10)   Tagalog EEC (Aldridge 2011, ex. 1; glosses modified)

      May   [*b<in>ili-ng*   *libro*] *ang* *babae.*

      EXIST <PV.PFV>buy-LK book TOP woman

      'The woman bought a book.'

(11)   Aklanon EEC

      maj   [*gin-bakáу* *ŋa* *líbro*] *ro*   *báji.*

      EXIST PV.PFV-buy LK book TOP woman

      'The woman bought a book.' (EEC)

EECs in both languages possess at least two defining characteristics. The first is case-cleaving, whereby the topic-marking on the semantic agent does not correlate with the voice of the embedded verb (otherwise 'the woman' in both examples above should be the patient of the giving event). The second is that the topic is obligatorily interpreted as an agent rather than a clausal possessor, i.e. (11) does not have the meaning 'the woman has a book that was bought (by someone else).' A further defining function of EECs is that they are the primary means to introduce indefinite, nonspecific arguments of verbs, such as 'some book' into discourse. This is

shown in (12), which introduces an indefinite, nonspecific patient. Aklanon has no lexicalized indefinites, such as 'some,' 'someone,' or 'something.'[7]

(12)   Aklanon Patient Voice EEC

maj	[*gin-taʔó*	*sa*	*ʔuŋáʔ*]	*ro*	*maʔéstra.*
EXIST	PV.PFV-give	DAT	child	TOP	teacher

'The teacher gave <u>something</u> to the child.' (EEC)

I will address each of these characteristics in the discussion to come. [8]

3.1 Previous analyses of EECs

Very limited research has been done specifically on event existential constructions in Philippine languages. Schachter & Otanes (1972:276–280) present a meticulous description of this construction in Tagalog. Zorc & de la Cruz (1968:215, ex. 2.2c) provide an example of an Aklanon EEC in their discussion of 'indefinite statements,' but EECs are not otherwise described as a distinct construction therein. The first theoretical analysis of Tagalog EECs (under the name 'impersonal construction') was developed by Law (2010), followed by Aldridge (2011) and Adar (2013).

Any theoretical account of EECs must answer the following questions:

(13)   a.   What assigns case to the topic-marked argument (i.e. the agent)?
        b.   What is the complement of *maj*?
        c.   How is the topic construed as the agent of the embedded verb?
        d.   How does the EEC introduce indefinite, nonspecific arguments like in (12)?

In this section, I summarize the main arguments of the two main analyses of Tagalog EECs.

3.1.1 Law's (2010) account: Relative clauses

The analytical claim of Law (2010) is that the complement of Tagalog ‹*may*› in EECs is a relative clause and the topic-marked argument receives its case from the existential itself, not the

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[7] Aklanon does have other constructions which introduce indefinite non-specific arguments, such as a free relative construction:

i
ga-ʔúsoj	*akó*	*ʔit*	*koŋ*	*náno*	*ro*	*ʔákon*	*ŋa*	*ma-druwíŋ-an.*
AV.IPFV-seek	1SG.TOP	UNM	C$_{[+Q]}$	what	TOP	1SG.GEN	LK	POT-draw-LV

'I'm looking for something I can draw on.'

[8] Note that my consultant has given a variety of translations into English of EECs. The most common translations of an EEC like (12) are of the form 'The teacher gave something …' or 'There is something that was given by the teacher…' For indefinite, nonspecific arguments, like 'some book,' her responses have more variation, including but not limited to: 'some book was given by the teacher…,' 'there is a book that was given…,' 'there is some book that was given…,' or 'the teacher gave a book…' If given, I opt for a translation without the existential frame (i.e. 'The teacher gave…' instead of 'There is some X that the teacher gave…'), and if my consultant alternates between 'a' and 'some,' then I give both of these in my translations of the EEC.

embedded verb. On this view, the nominal functions of ‹*may*› (existential, locative, possessive) can all be unified with the EECs, because the complement of ‹*may*› is always nominal — it is just that the nominal complement in EECs is a relative clause. To account for the function of EECs to introduce indefinite, nonspecific arguments like 'something,' Law (2010) proposes that there is an indefinite, null, external head of the relative clause:

(14) *may/mayroon*[10] [$_{NP}$ Ø$_N$ [$_{CP}$ [$_{IP}$ *niluto*]]] *ang guro.*
       EXIST   cooked.PV   TOP   teacher
       'The teacher has <u>something</u> that was cooked.' (Law 2010, ex. 45a)

Law (2010) argues for this analysis using facts about pluralization, adverbs, extraction, and relative clause 'stacking.' For instance, he argues that the proposed null nominal head accounts for the fact that the seemingly verbal complement of ‹*may*› can be pluralized:

(15) *may/mayroon* *dalawa-ng* [$_{NP}$ Ø$_N$ [$_{CP}$ [$_{IP}$ *niluto*]]]   *ang   guro.*
       EXIST   two-LK   cooked.PV   TOP   teacher
       'The teacher cooked <u>two things</u>.' (Law 2010, ex. 46a)

Law (2010) does not explain how the topic-marked argument is construed as the agent of the relative clause. On this point, he comments: 'I thus have no explanation for why *ang guro* 'the teacher' [in (14)] is necessarily understood to be the Actor of the passive verb *niluto* 'cook', even though it is not the syntactic argument of the verb' (Law 2010:315, fn. 13).

3.1.2 Aldridge's (2011) rebuttal: Raising from *v*P

Aldridge (2011) argues against Law (2010) on two grounds. First, Aldridge (2011) claims that Tagalog permits argument extraction out of EECs:

(16) Tagalog (Aldridge 2011:3, ex. 6; glosses modified)
       Sa   lalaki *may*   [*i-b<in>igay*   *na bulaklak* t_{PP}] *ang   babae.*
       DAT man   EXIST   APPL-<PV.PFV>give   LK   flower   TOP   woman
       'To the man, the woman gave a flower.'

By virtue of the Complex-NP Island Constraint, the relative clause analysis predicts that argument extraction should be ungrammatical. This data is crucial for Aldridge (2011), who argues on the basis of (16) that 'the relative clause analysis must be rejected, because it cannot account for the lack of island effects in extraction from event existentials' (Aldridge 2011: 3).

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[9] Both Law (2010) and Aldridge (2011) treat the existentials ‹*may*› and ‹*mayroon*› as equivalent, but Law (2010:313) notes that they have slightly different syntactic behaviors. For instance, only ‹*mayroon*› allows *wh*-extraction from its complement. The same difference is found in Aklanon *maj* vs. *maj ʔúnaʔ,* where *ʔúnaʔ* is a demonstrative. I leave *maj ʔúnaʔ* for future work and focus my analysis only on the properties of Aklanon *maj.*

Aldridge's second counterargument to Law (2010) is that the relative clause structure cannot derive the fact that what is asserted to exist in EECs is an *event,* not just an individual: 'the translations given by my consultants […] all have the event interpretation, not the nominal interpretation that Law gives' (Aldridge 2011).[10]

Instead, Aldridge relates Tagalog EECs to 'modal existential constructions' (Šimík 2011, cf. also Šimík 2017; 2019) and proposes 'that the existential verb in Tagalog embeds a *v*P. The external argument raises to the edge of matrix *v*P' (ibid: 7). The exact structure that Aldridge proposes is in (17).[11] Note that the $DP_{[Abs]}$ argument (i.e. the topic) raises out of the embedded *v*P complement and lands in external argument position of the higher *v*P, i.e. of ‹*may*› 'exist.' That is how the topic-marked argument receives its interpretation as the agent of the embedded clause. Then, the embedded *v*P complement raises to the edge of the higher *v*P and the existential moves to T as a standard consequence of deriving V1 syntax.

(17)   (Aldridge 2011:8)

In summary, for Aldridge (2011), the complement of ‹may› is a *v*P, and the topic-marked argument gets its topic-marking from ‹may›. The reason why the topic is construed as the agent of the embedded complement is that it raises directly from the embedded *v*P's external argument position to the external argument position of ‹may›. This raising operation thus produces on case-cleaving effect. However, while Aldridge (2011) strongly motivates her account with the Complex-NP Island Constraint, she does not attempt to account for Law's (2010) pluralization facts or the function of EECs to introduce indefinite, nonspecific arguments. I will show that Aldridge's analysis cannot be directly applied to Aklanon EECs.
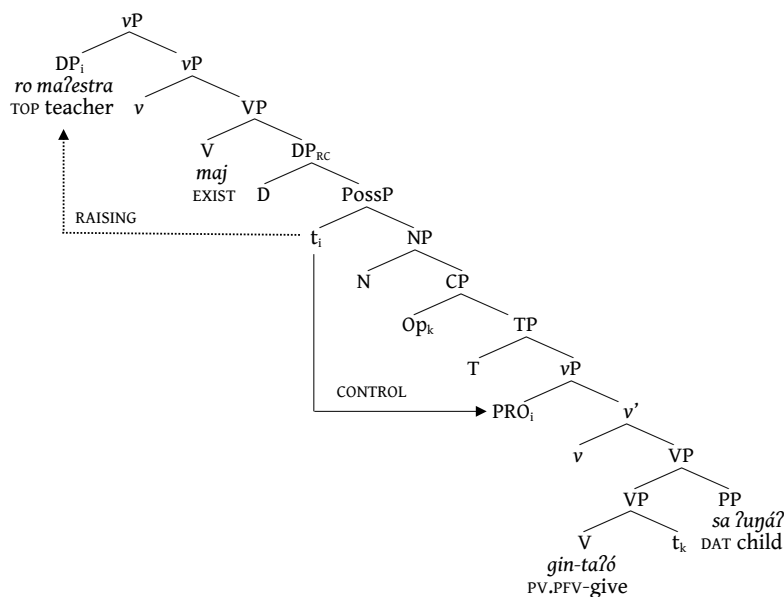
3.2 The present analysis

I propose the following analysis of Aklanon EECs:

(18)   a.   The complement of *maj* is a relative clause (a la Law 2010), which can be headless or headed, not a *v*P (contra Aldridge 2011).

        b.   Case-cleaving arises because the topic-marked argument raises to its position from a DP-internal position which I label PossP; it is assigned topic by *maj*.

        c.   The topic is construed as agent via control of a relative-clause-internal PRO.

        d.   Clause-initial syntax is derived by VP-remnant raising of *maj* and its complement.

To preview my analysis, an EEC like (2) would have the following pre-V1 movement structure:

(19)   Structure of Aklanon PV EEC before V1 Movement

ro   maʔéstra$_i$ maj   [$_{DP}$ [$_{PossP}$ t_i [$_{NP}$ [$_{CP}$ Op$_k$ [$_{vP}$ PRO$_i$ *gin-taʔó* t_k *sa*   *ʔuŋáʔ*]]]]].
TOP   teacher   EXIST   PV.PFV-give DAT child
'The teacher gave something to the child.'

On the present analysis, the complement of *maj* is a (headless) relative clause, the topic-marked argument is base-generated in PossP and raises to a higher position, where it is assigned topic by *maj,* and is construed as the agent of this relative clause via control, in contrast to Aldridge (2011), who posits raising directly from the embedded external argument position. On the present analysis, the case-cleaving effect thus becomes a superficial consequence of the argument structure of *maj* in EECs.

The remainder of this section is divided according to three main claims: first, that the complement of *maj* is a relative clause, second that the agent originates as a possessor outside of the relative clause and raises to topic of *maj,* and third, that the topic controls a relative-clause-internal PRO.

3.2.1 Claim 1: Complement of maj is a relative clause

This section will focus on arguments for that the complement of *maj* is a relative clause:

(20)
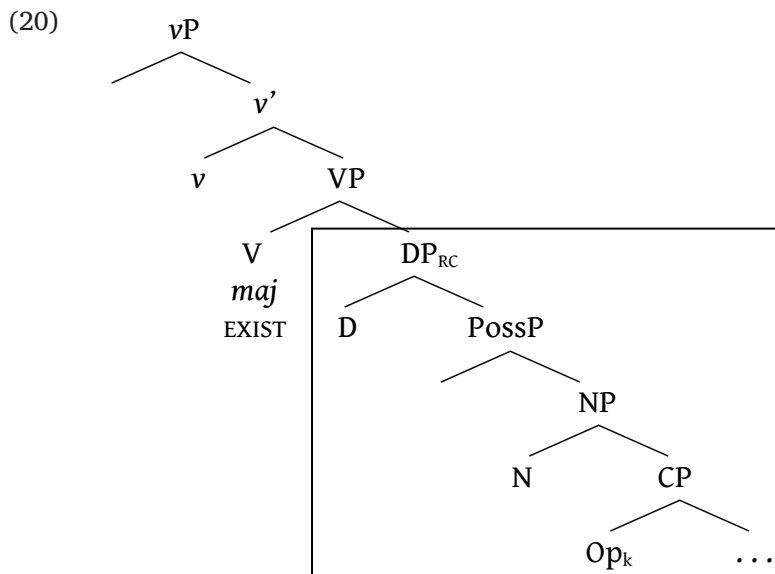
3.2.1.1 Overt heads of the relative clause are possible

In Aklanon, matrix and relative clauses mirror each other, by which I mean that case and voice-marking facts remain constant in both. Compare the matrix clause in (21a) to its embedded counterpart in (21c), with a baseline for the case-marking of *naʔílaʔ* 'like' in (21b).

(21)   a.   Aklanon Baseline PV Clause
       gin-ɰáhaʔ   *ni*   *María*   *ro*   *ʔísdaʔ*
       PV.PFV-COOK   UNM   M.   TOP   fish
       'Maria cooked the fish.'

b. Aklanon Baseline with *naʔílaʔ* 'like'

naʔílaʔ   *akó*   *ʔit*   *ɥáŋkaʔ.*
(STAT)like   1SG.TOP   UNM   jackfruit
'I like jackfruit.'

c. Aklanon PV Headless Relative

naʔílaʔ   *akó*   ⌐*ʔit*   *gin-ɥáhaʔ*   *ni*   *María*⌐.
(STAT)like   1SG.TOP   UNM   PV.PFV-cook   UNM   M.
Context: At a potluck dinner: 'I like <u>what Maria cooked</u>.'

Relative clauses can be headless, like (21c), or headed by an overt noun. Compare the following headless vs. headed minimal pair:

(22) a. Aklanon PV Headless Relative

naʔílaʔ   *si*   *María*   ⌐*ko*   *gin-taʔó*   *ko*   *ʔuŋáʔ*   *sa*   *maʔéstra*⌐.
(STAT)like   TOP   M.   OBL   PV.PFV-give   OBL   child   DAT   teacher
'Maria likes <u>what the child gave to the teacher</u>.'

b. Aklanon PV Headed Relative

naʔílaʔ   *si*   *María*   ⌐*ko*   **líbro**   *ŋa*   *gin-taʔó*   *ko*   *ʔuŋáʔ*   *sa*   *maʔéstra*⌐.
(STAT)like   TOP   M.   OBL   book   LK   PV.PFV-give   OBL   child   DAT   teacher
'Maria likes <u>the **book** that the child gave to the teacher</u>.'

The prediction for the relative clause analysis of EECs is that the same alternation between headless and headed relative clauses should obtain in the complement position of *maj*. It does, in precisely the same way:

(23) a. Aklanon PV EEC with Headless Relative

maj   [*gin-taʔó*   *sa*   *ʔuŋáʔ*]   *ro*   *maʔéstra.*
EXIST   PV.PFV-give   DAT   child   TOP   teacher
'The teacher gave <u>something</u> to the child.' (EEC)

b. Aklanon PV EEC with Headed Relative

maj   [⌐*líbro*⌐   *ŋa*   *gin-taʔó*   *sa*   *ʔuŋáʔ*]   *ro*   *maʔéstra.*
EXIST   book   LK   PV.PFV-give   DAT   child   TOP   teacher
'The teacher gave <u>a/some book</u> to the child.' (EEC)

The relative clause analysis captures that fact that relative clauses internal to EECs pattern together with relatives throughout the language.[12] I propose to use the same structure to account for both. In the headless case, there is no overt head:

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[12] I have omitted discussion of a second configuration in which headed relatives may appear, compare:

(i) a. *maj*   ⌐*líbro*   *ŋa*   *gin-taʔó*⌐   *sa*   *ʔuŋáʔ*]   *ro*   *maʔéstra.*
EXIST   book   LK   PV.PFV-give   DAT   child   TOP   teacher
'The teacher gave <u>a/some book</u> to the child.' (EEC)

(24) Structure of (23a) before V1 Movement

*ro   maʔéstra*ᵢ *maj*   [$_{DP}$ [$_{PossP}$ tᵢ [$_{NP}$] [$_{CP}$ Op$_k$ [$_{vP}$ PROᵢ *gin-taʔó* t$_k$ *sa   ʔuŋáʔ*]]]].
TOP   teacher EXIST   PV.PFV-give   DAT child
'The teacher gave something to the child.'

In the headed case, the overt head occupies the NP position in the structure above. I assume that the linker *ŋa* is a head in C°.

(25) Structure of (23b) before V1 Movement

*ro   maʔéstra*ᵢ *maj*   [$_{DP}$ [$_{PossP}$ tᵢ [$_{NP}$ *líbro*] [$_{CP}$ Op$_k$ [$_{C}$ *ŋa* [$_{vP}$ PROᵢ *gin-taʔó* t$_k$ *sa   ʔuŋáʔ*]]]]].
TOP teacher EXIST   book   LK   PV.PFV-give DAT child
'The teacher gave a/some book to the child.'

By contrast, for Tagalog, Aldridge (2011) proposes that the complement of ‹*may*› is an embedded *v*P in EECs. Her analysis mentions, but does not include, headed relative clauses like (23b), and would require modification to allow an attachment site for an external head of the relative clause. Consider again Aldridge's proposed analysis, where the *v*P complement of ‹*may*› is boxed.

(26)   (Aldridge 2011:8)
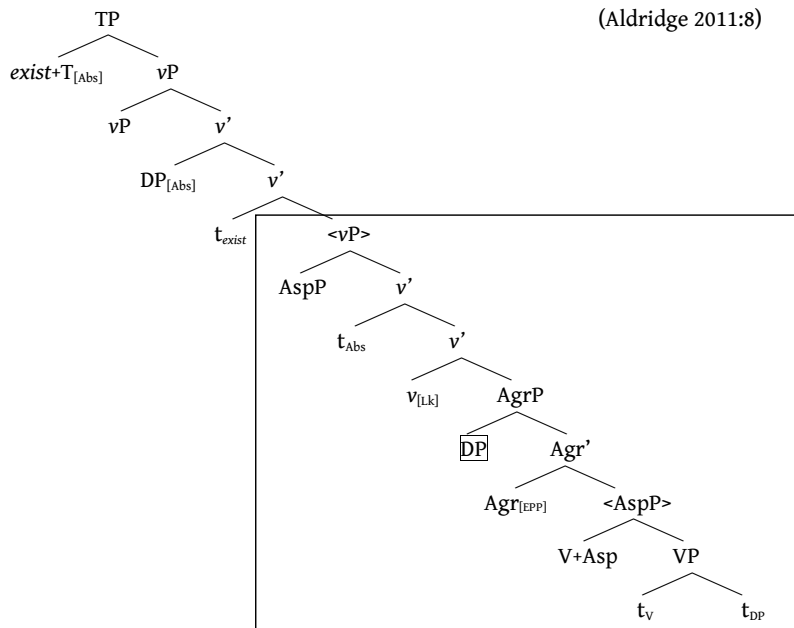
b. *maj*   [*gin-taʔó   ŋa líbro*] *sa   ʔuŋáʔ*] *ro   maʔéstra*.
    EXIST PV.PFV-give LK book DAT child TOP teacher
    'The teacher gave a/some book to the child.' (EEC)

In (a) above, the head of the relative clause appears before the predicate. In (b), the head appears after the predicate. Aldridge (2003) analyzes these configurations at length in Tagalog, and argues that the structure analogous to (a) constitutes a head-external relative clause, and (b) constitutes a head-internal relative clause. In her treatment of EECs, however, Aldridge (2011) only includes EECs that are of the head-internal type and does not discuss the head-external case in (a). While noting that the Aklanon also appears to have head-external and head-internal relative clauses, and that this alternation obtains in EECs, I will leave more detailed analysis of the two relative clause types to future research.

On this structure, the complement of the existential is a *v*P, which contains an AspP projection that has moved to the outer specifier of *v*P.[13] The linker occupies *v*, and the internal argument occupies the boxed DP in SpecAgrP. Now try to apply this structure to the headed relative clause from Aklanon, repeated below:

(27)   Aklanon PV EEC with Headed Relative

      maj   [*líbro*   *ŋa* *gin-taʔó*   *sa*   *ʔuŋáʔ*] *ro*   *maʔéstra.*

      EXIST book   LK PV.PFV-give DAT child   TOP teacher

      'The teacher gave a/some book to the child.' (EEC)

This data poses a problem for the structure in (26), because it requires that the head noun (the internal argument) *líbro* 'book' be attached to the left edge of *v*P or AspP, rather than its base-generated position in SpecAgrP, to derive the correct word order. How exactly to motivate this movement to the left edge of the phrase is unclear, and it is also unclear how to interpret the noun if it were in such a position. Finally, this *v*P analysis results in two undesirable outcomes: first, it obscures the fact that, in Aklanon, the headless vs. headed alternation found in EECs patterns together with relative clauses throughout the language; second, it would require that *maj* sometimes take a *v*P as its complement (i.e. headless relatives), or take a DP/NP or a *v*P with a nominal at its left edge in other cases (i.e. headed relatives).

By contrast, the relative clause analysis has explanatory power because it unifies the observed overlap between relative clauses in the complement position of *maj* with those that occur in other positions in the language. This analysis also accommodates the presence of nominal heads without requiring additional stipulations. On this analysis, *maj* always takes a bare nominal complement: if just a bare noun, then it expresses existence or clausal possession; if a bare relative clause, then it produces an EEC interpretation.

To summarize this argument, the fact that the complement of *maj* in Aklanon permits an overt nominal head motivates an analysis wherein the complement of *maj* is a relative clause, not an embedded *v*P.

3.2.1.2 Aklanon prohibits argument extraction from EECs

Recall that Aldridge (2011) strongly motivates her embedded-*v*P analysis of Tagalog EECs using the extraction fact in (28). The logic of her argument is: if the complement of *‹may›* were a relative clause as Law (2010) argues, extraction should be ungrammatical by virtue of the Complex NP-Island Constraint; because extraction is grammatical in Tagalog, Aldridge (2011) argues that Law's (2010) analysis does not hold water.

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[13] Aldridge (2011) motivates this phrasal movement to account for certain word order facts in Tagalog.

(28)   Tagalog (Aldridge 2011:3, ex. 6; glosses modified)
  | Sa   lalaki | *may*   [*i-b<in>igay*   *na   bulaklak* t_{PP}] *ang   babae.*
  DAT man   EXIST APPL-<PV.PFV>give   LK   flower   TOP   woman
  'To the man, the woman gave a flower.'

However, Aklanon data does not replicate the Tagalog facts:

(29)   Aklanon Equivalent of (28)
  *| *sa   ʔŋáʔ*_{i} | *maj*   [*gin-taʔó*   *ŋa   líbro* t_{i}] *ro   maʔéstra.*
  DAT child   EXIST PV.PFV-give   LK   book   TOP   teacher
  Intended: 'To the child, the teacher gave a book.'

The ungrammaticality of (29) is truly due to extraction, since the unextracted minimal pair is grammatical:

(30)   *maj*   [*gin-taʔó*   *ŋa   líbro* | *sa   ʔŋáʔ* | *ro   maʔéstra.*
  EXIST   PV.PFV-give   LK   book   DAT   child   TOP   teacher
  'The teacher gave a book to the child.' (EEC)

And the ungrammaticality of (29) is not due to a general prohibition against dative arguments or adjuncts being fronted, since that too is grammatical (in non-EEC clauses) – (31) shows fronting of a dative argument and (32) shows fronting of a locative adjunct from a control complement (bracketed).

(31) | *sa   ʔŋáʔ* | *gin-taʔó*   *ko   maʔéstra ro   líbro.*
  DAT child   PV.PFV-give   OBL   teacher   TOP   book
  'To the child, the teacher gave the book.'

(32) | *sa   prénte*_{i} | *naʔílaʔ*   *akó*   [*mag-líŋkod* t_{i}].
  LOC front   (STAT)like   1SG.TOP   AV-sit
  'I like sitting in front.'

Aldridge's (2011) argument against Law's (2010) analysis of Tagalog EECs as relative clauses thus does not carry over to Aklanon, and the two languages seem to differ significantly here. However, the ungrammaticality in (29) is not surprising if we consider data like (33), which shows that headless relative clauses in Aklanon generally do not permit arguments to scramble out of them. In (33b,c), for instance, it is ungrammatical for the dative argument of 'give' to be scrambled left of the headless relative.

(33)   a.   *naʔílaʔ*   *akó*   [*ko   gin-taʔó* | *sa   maʔéstra* |].
       (STAT)like   1SG.TOP   OBL   PV.PFV-give   DAT   teacher
       'I like what was given to the teacher.'

b. *naʔílaʔ akó   sa   maʔéstra_i [ko gin-taʔó   t_i].
   (STAT)like 1SG.TOP DAT teacher   OBL PV.PFV-give
   Intended: 'I like what was given to the teacher.'

c. *sa   maʔéstra_i naʔílaʔ   akó   [ko gin-taʔó   t_i].
   DAT teacher   (STAT)like 1SG.TOP OBL PV.PFV-give
   Intended: 'I like what was given to the teacher.'

Taken together, the facts above present a strong argument *in favor* of the relative clause analysis of Aklanon EECs: the reason why argument extraction from EECs is ungrammatical in Aklanon is, in fact, due to the Complex-NP Island Constraint.

3.2.1.3 Modifiers to the relative clause

This section shows that Law's (2010) evidence from pluralization and other prenominal modifiers can be replicated in Aklanon, in addition to novel evidence from postnominal modifiers. Like Tagalog, Aklanon *maŋa* is a prenominal plural morpheme used as follows:

(34) a. *ro   maʔéstra*
         TOP teacher
         'the teacher'

      b. *ro   maŋa   maʔéstra*
         TOP PL   teacher
         'the teachers'

(35) a. *ʔit   hampáŋ-an*
         UNM play-LV
         'a toy'

      b. *ʔit   maŋa hampáŋ-an*
         UNM PL   play-LV
         'toys'

Two distributional restrictions on *maŋa* are that it precedes the head noun (36) and cannot modify verbal projections (37):

(36) *ro   maʔéstra maŋa*
      TOP teacher   PL
      Intended: 'the teachers'

(37) *maŋa gin-taʔó   ko   maʔéstra sa   ʔuŋáʔ ro   líbro.*
      PL   PV.PFV-give OBL teacher   DAT child TOP book

However, *maŋa* can modify headless relatives in argument positions:

(38) Context: At a potluck dinner…

naʔílaʔ   akó   [ko maŋa gin-ʍáhaʔ ni   María].
(STAT)like 1SG.TOP OBL PL   PV.PFV-cook UNM M.
'I loved all of what Maria cooked.'

Therefore, if the complement of *maj* is a relative clause, then it should be accessible for pluralization. This is borne out in both headless and headed relatives: [14]

(39) Aklanon Pluralized PV EEC, Headless

maj   [maŋa gin-taʔó   sa   ʔuŋáʔ] ro   maʔéstra.
EXIST PL   PV.PFV-give DAT child   TOP teacher
'The teacher <u>gave things to the child</u>.' (EEC)

(40) Aklanon Pluralized PV EEC, Headed

maj   [maŋa libro ŋa gin-taʔó   sa   ʔuŋáʔ] ro   maʔéstra.
EXIST PL   book LK PV.PFV-give DAT child   TOP teacher
'The teacher <u>gave books to the child</u>.' (EEC)

The grammaticality of (39) is difficult to reconcile with an embedded *v*P analysis because on such an analysis, the complement of *maj* would be *v*P or TP/AspP, and would therefore lack a nominal projection for *maŋa* to adjoin to. However, on the relative clause analysis, prenominal modifiers such as *maŋa* receive straightforward treatment as modifiers to the relative clause. In the structure below, I assume *maŋa* is an adjunct to NP, but this analysis is compatible with other theoretical assumptions, i.e. that *maŋa* may be in NumP or another projection above NP:

(41) Structure of (40) before V1 Movement

ro   maʔéstra$_i$ maj   [$_{DP}$ [$_{PossP}$ t$_i$ [$_{NP}$[$_{XP}$ maŋa] [$_{NP}$ líbro
TOP   teacher EXIST   PL   book
[$_{CP}$ Op$_k$ [$_C$ ŋa [$_{vP}$ PRO$_i$ gin-taʔó t$_k$ sa   ʔuŋáʔ]]]]]]].
             LK   PV.PFV-give DAT child
'The teacher gave books to the child.'

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[14] In fact, like in Tagalog (Law 2010), other prenominal modifiers can also modify the complement of *maj*:

(i) maj   [dájwa=ŋ gin-ʍáhaʔ] si Raʔúl.
     EXIST two=LK   PV.PFV-cook TOP R.
     'Raul <u>cooked two things</u>.' (EEC)
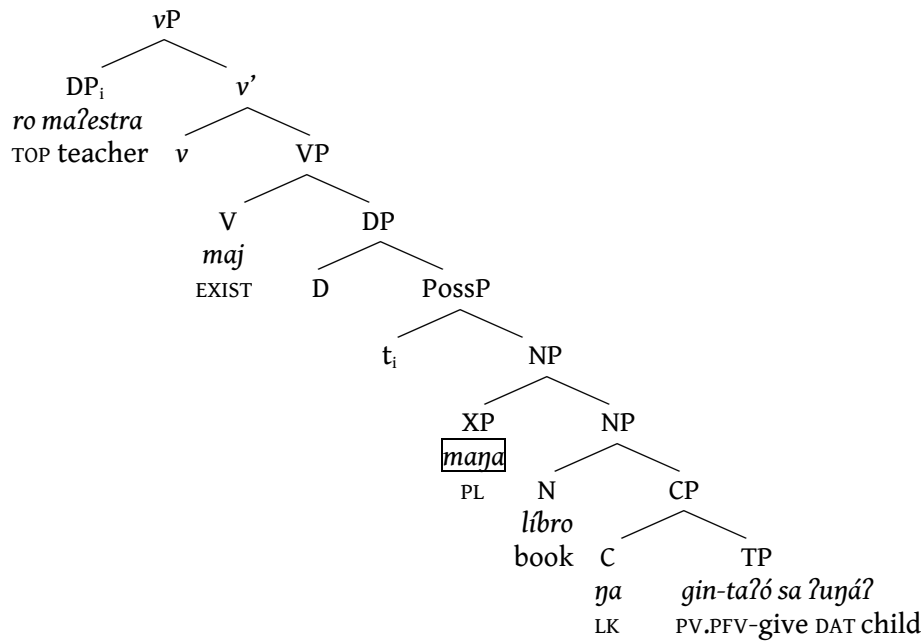
Similar support for this argument comes from postnominal modifiers. Consider the following sentence, which illustrates that nouns can host PP adjuncts:

(42) *gin-bása*   *ni Raʔúl* ⌐*ro*   *líbro*   *tuŋód*   *sa*   *Akuɲán*⌐.
      PV.PFV-read   UNM R.   TOP book   about   DAT   A.
      'Raul read <u>the book about Aklan</u>.'

The prediction for EECs is that adjuncts like *tuŋód sa Akuɲán* 'about Aklan' should also be able to modify the head of the relative clause. In EECs with an overt head, this is borne out; compare the minimal pair (43, 44):

(43) *maj*   [⌐*líbro*⌐ *ŋa* *gin-bása*]   *si*   *Raʔúl.*
      EXIST book   LK PV.PFV-read   TOP   R.
      'Raul read <u>some book</u>.' (EEC)

(44) *maj*   ⌐*líbro*   *tuŋód*   *sa*   *Akuɲán*⌐   *ŋa* *gin-bása*]   *si*   *Raʔúl.*
      EXIST book   about   DAT   A.   LK PV.PFV-read   TOP   R.
      'Raul read <u>some book about Aklan</u>.' (EEC)

Because prenominal modifiers could modify headless relatives, the expectation is that postnominal modifiers should be able to, too. This has not been reported for Tagalog, but it is indeed the case in Aklanon:

(45)   *maj*   [*tuŋód sa   Akųán* *ŋa* *gin-bása*]   *si*   *Raʔúl.*
        EXIST about DAT A.   LK PV.PFV-read   TOP R.
        'Raul read <u>something about Aklan</u>.' (EEC)

The grammaticality of (45) is striking when we consider that preverbal PPs cannot modify matrix verbs.

(46)   *??/*tuŋód sa   Akųán (ŋa)* *gin-bása*   *ni*   *Raʔúl.*
        about DAT A.   LK   PV.PFV-read UNM R.
        Intended: 'Raul read about Aklan.' (Consultant's Comment: No, very awkward construction which would not be used in conversation.)

Again, if adopting the *v*P analysis for Aklanon, it would be unclear what projection would host the PP adjunct in (45). Yet the relative clause analysis can handle this with adjunction to the nominal layer of the relative clause:

(47)   Structure of (45) before V1 Movement
     si   *Raʔúl*$_i$ *maj* [$_{DP}$ [$_{PossP}$ t$_i$ [$_{NP}$ [$_{NP}$] [$_{PP}$ *tuŋód* *sa*   *Akųán*]] [$_{CP}$ Op$_k$ [$_C$ *ŋa*]
     TOP R.   EXIST   about DAT A.   LK
     [$_{TP}$ PRO$_i$ *gin-bása* t$_k$]]]].
             PV.PFV-read
     'Raul read something about Aklan.'
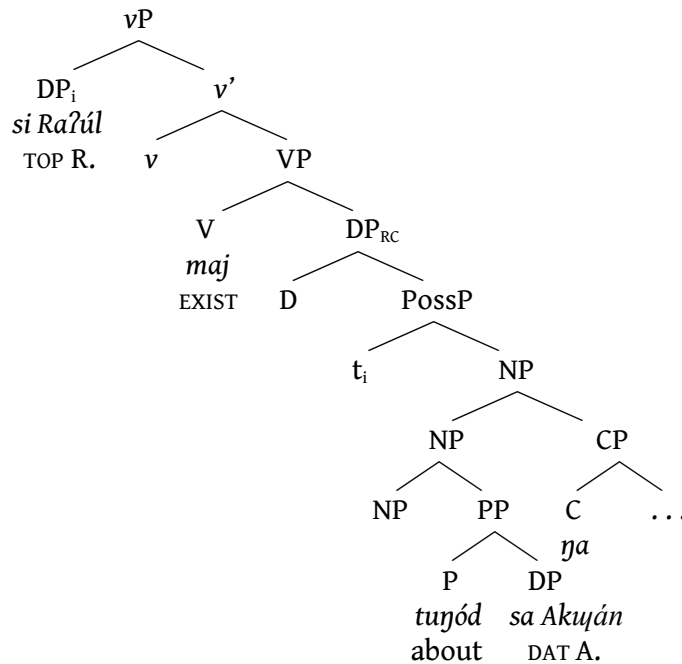
In summary, pre- and post-nominal adjuncts reveal an asymmetry between the complement of *maj* and matrix clauses. This data has shown that these adjuncts are systematically available in complement position of *maj*, even though they cannot modify matrix verbal predicates. On the present analysis, this is because the complement of *maj* is a relative clause.

3.2.1.4 Constraints on long-distance relativization

Aklanon exhibits the 'subject-only constraint' (Schachter 1976) that is well-attested in other Austronesian languages (Clemens & Polinsky 2017). This restriction refers to the fact that only topics (on my terminology) are accessible for A'-extraction, such as relativization and pseudoclefting. Thus (48a) below shows the baseline to which we can compare the relative clause in (48b), where the relativized internal argument is grammatical if the verb is in patient voice, but not if the verb is in agent voice (48c).

(48) a. *gin-balígjaʔ   ni   Pédro   ro   ʔísdaʔ.*
          PV.PFV-sell   UNM   P.   TOP   fish
          'Pedro sold the fish.'

      b. *ʔísdaʔ   ŋa   gin-balígjaʔ   ni   Pédro*
          fish   LK   PV.PFV-sell   UNM   P.
          'fish that Pedro sold'

      c. **ʔísdaʔ   ŋa   nag-balígjaʔ   si   Pédro*
          fish   LK   AV.PFV-sell   TOP   P.
          Intended: 'fish that Pedro sold'

The subjects-only constraint applies also to long-distance A'-extractions, a pattern which has been described by Hsieh (2020) as the Matrix Verb Constraint:

(49) Matrix Verb Constraint (Hsieh 2020: 132, ex. 46)
      Higher verbs crossed by a long-distance (DP) A'-dependency must appear in the
      voice form that designates the clause containing the dependency gap as the pivot
      [i.e. TOPIC].

This is exemplified by the pseudocleft in (50a), which shows that an A'-extracted internal argument of an embedded clause triggers patient voice (boxed) on the embedding verb. If the embedding verb appears in another voice, the result is ungrammatical (50b).

(50) a. *máŋga   [ro   gin-hínjoʔ   [ŋa kiwáʔ-on]   ko   ʔuŋáʔ].*
          mango   TOP   PV.PFV-request   LK   slice-PV   OBL   child
          'Mango is [what the child requested [to be sliced].'

b. *mánga [ro ⌜nag⌝-hínjoʔ [ŋa kiwáʔ-⌜on⌝] ro ʔuŋáʔ].
mango TOP AV.PFV-request LK slice-PV TOP child
Intended: 'Mango is [what the child requested [to be sliced].'

However, in non-extraction contexts, the voice of the higher verb and lower verbs can mismatch:

(50) ⌜ga⌝-hínjoʔ ro ʔuŋáʔ ŋa kiwáʔ-⌜on⌝ ro mánga.
AV.IPFV-request TOP child LK slice-PV TOP mango
'The child is asking that the mango be sliced.'

The restriction imposed by the Subjects-Only and Matrix Verb Constraints makes a straightforward prediction for EECs: if the complement of *maj* is a relative clause, then it should be sensitive to them. The examples below show that this turns out to be the case. In (52a), both verbs in the relative clause are in patient voice, construed as a single chain of extraction with *do ʔuŋáʔ* 'the child' as the agent of both embedded predicates. But in (52b,c) it is not possible for there to be a voice mismatch between either the higher or lower verb in the relative clause. In the latter cases, the actual interpretation of such mismatches is that the higher predicate embeds the lower predicate, not that they form a single chain of extraction with a shared argument (constituency of embedded predicates bracketed).

(52) a. maj [⌜gin⌝-hínjoʔ ŋa kiwáʔ-⌜on⌝] do[16] ʔuŋáʔ.
EXIST PV.PFV-request LK slice-PV TOP child
'The child [asked to slice something].' (EEC)

b. #maj ⌜nag⌝-hínjoʔ [ŋa kiwáʔ-⌜on⌝ do ʔuŋáʔ].
EXIST AV.PFV-request LK slice-PV TOP child
Intended: 'The child asked to slice something.'
Actual: 'Somebody asked [that the child be sliced].'

c. #maj ⌜gin⌝-hínjoʔ [ŋa ⌜mag⌝-kíwaʔ ro ʔuŋáʔ].
EXIST PV.PFV-request LK AV-slice TOP child
Intended: 'The child asked to slice something.'
Actual: 'Somebody was asked (for permission) [that the child could cut (something)].'

The present analysis captures these facts about long-distance extraction if we assume that there is successive-cyclic operator movement in the relative clause (52a). The simplified diagram below shows this proposal. The operator originates in the complement position of the lowest verb, *kíwaʔ* 'cut' and is first extracted to the outer specifier of *v*P. This corresponds to the PV morphology on the lower verb. The operator then extracts from the edge of the complement of the verb *hínjoʔ*

'request,' which corresponds to PV morphology on the higher verb and thus obeys Hsieh's (2020) Matrix Verb Constraint. The operator lands at the highest edge of the relative clause CP.

(53)   Simplified Structure of (52a) before V1 Movement

```
                  VP
                 /  \
                V    DP_RC
              maj    /  \
             EXIST  D    PossP
                         /  \
                        NP
                       /  \
                      N    CP
                          /  \
                        Op_k   TP
                              /  \
                             T    vP
                                 /  \
                                v    VP
                                    /  \
                                   V    vP
                               gin-hínjoʔ  / \
                            PV.PFV-request Op_k  vP
                                              /  \
                                             v    VP
                                                 /  \
                                                V    Op_k
                                           kiwáʔ-on
                                            slice-PV
```
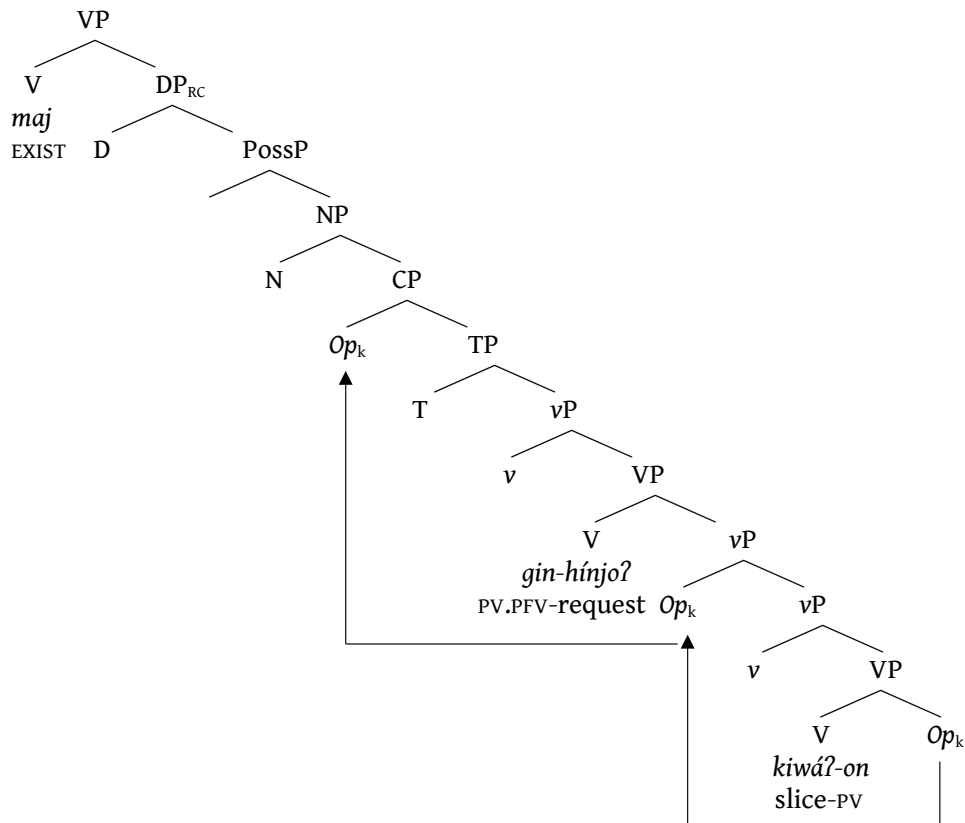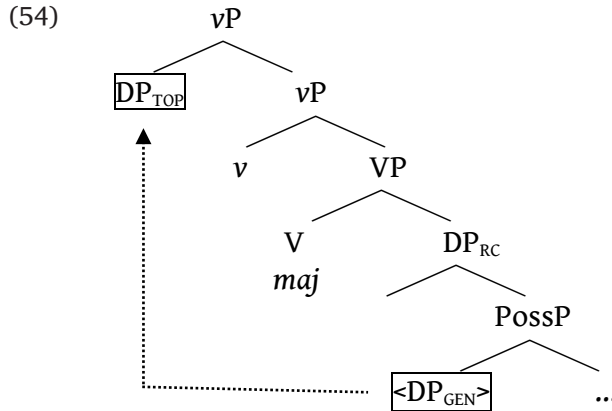
This constitutes the fourth and final argument that the complement of *maj* in EECs is a relative clause. To summarize all four arguments briefly: I have shown that the complement of *maj* in Aklanon EECs patterns together with relative clauses throughout the language. The complement of *maj* shows headless/headed alternations, prohibits extraction, allows pre- and post-nominal modification to headless and headed relative clauses, and shows constraints on long-distance relativization that is consistent with the subjects-only constraint on A'-extraction more generally in the language. The next sections relate these arguments to claims about the argument structure of *maj* in order to derive the agentive reading of the topic.

3.2.2 Claim 2: Agent raises to topic of *maj*

Having established that the complement of *maj* is a relative clause in Aklanon, I will now turn to how exactly the topic-marked argument of *maj* (i.e. the agent of the relative clause) gets

its topic-marking. In this section, I will develop an argument that the topic-marked agent of *maj* has raised to topic position from a base position as a genitive agent (i.e. possessor) of the relative clause:

(54)

```
                        vP
                       /  \
                  [DP_TOP]  vP
                    ↑      /  \
                    :     v    VP
                    :    /    /  \
                    :   V    DP_RC
                    :  maj   /   \
                    :      PossP
                    :      /    \
                    :...[<DP_GEN>]  ...
```

Recall from Section 2.2 that in possessive existential constructions, the possessor is licensed either as TOPIC or GENITIVE, shown in example (9) repeated below:

(9)   a.   External (Raised) Possession by a Pronoun
           maj   *kwárta*   [*akô*],
           EXIST   money   1SG.TOP
           'I have money.'

      b.   Internal Possession by a Pronoun
           maj   [*ʔákon*]   *ŋa*   *kwárta.*
           EXIST   1SG.GEN   LK   money
           'I have money.'

Also recall that [GEN NP LK NP], i.e. *ʔákon ŋa kwárta* in (9b), is a standard prenominal possessive phrase, 'my money.' This is relevant to the relative clause analysis of EECs because agents of non-AV relative clauses can be expressed as genitive 'possessors' in Aklanon.[16] The examples (55a–c) below show *ʔána* '3SG' as a genitive agent, and example (55d) shows, by contrast, that a genitive agent is not grammatical with an AV relative clause.

---

[16] In Tagalog, the same has been discussed in detail by Hsieh (2020:157–72), who calls this construction 'genitive inversion.' This construction, at first glance, also shows structural similarities to so-called 'genitive relatives' that have been described in Polynesian, see Herd et al. (2011) for an overview and Otsuka (2010) on Tongan. Future work should discern the degree to which Polynesian genitive relatives resemble the 'genitive inversions' of Central Philippine languages like Aklanon and Tagalog. Thank you to Emily Drummond for making me aware of this connection!

(55) Context: Maria is going gift shopping and I have already gone pre-shopping with her, so
she showed me what she's planning on buying and where she'll go.

    a. *ha-kítaʔ*   *ko*   [*ro* $\boxed{\textit{ʔána}=\textit{ŋ}}$ *bákɥ-on*].
       PV.HAP-see 1SG.UNM TOP 3SG.GEN=LK buy-PV.FUT
       'I saw what she will buy.'

    b. *ha-kítaʔ*   *ko*   [*ro* $\boxed{\textit{ʔána}=\textit{ŋ}}$ *bákɥ-an*].
       PV.HAP-see 1SG.UNM TOP 3SG.GEN=LK buy-LV.FUT
       'I saw (the place) from where she will buy.'

    c. *ha-kítaʔ*   *ko*   [*ro* $\boxed{\textit{ʔána}=\textit{ŋ}}$ *iga-bakáɥ*].
       PV.HAP-see 1SG.UNM TOP 3SG.GEN=LK IV.FUT-buy
       'I saw her stash (i.e. the money, cash, card, etc. with which she will buy).'

    d. **ha-kítaʔ*   *ko*   [*ro* $\boxed{\textit{ʔána}=\textit{ŋ}}$ *maga-bakáɥ*].
       PV.HAP-see 1SG.UNM TOP 3SG.GEN=LK AV.FUT-buy

Importantly, the genitive paradigm, found as prenominal possessors and preposed agents
of non-AV relative clauses, are not licensed as direct arguments of verbs. The minimal
pair below shows that the argument form of the pronoun has some additional morpheme,
n-. I refer to the *n-* class of pronouns as 'postposed.' See **Table 2** in the appendix
which summarizes the preposed (GENITIVE) and postposed (UNMARKED) paradigms in
Aklanon.

(56) Context: Maria is at the market deciding what to spend the last of her money on.

    a. **bákɥ-on* $\boxed{\textit{ʔána}}$ *ro*   *tauɥóŋ*.
       buy-PV.FUT 3SG.GEN TOP eggplant
       Intended: 'S/he will buy the eggplant.'

    b. *bákɥ-on* $\boxed{\textit{nána}}$ *ro*   *tauɥóŋ*.
       buy-PV.FUT 3SG.UNM TOP eggplant
       'S/he will buy the eggplant.'

Note that proper names host distinct morphemes *ʔaj* in the preposed configuration (57a) and *ni*
in the postposed one (57b).

(57)   a. *naʔílaʔ*   *akó*   [*ʔit* $\boxed{\textit{ʔaj \ \ María}}$ *ŋa* *gin-ɥáhaʔ*].
       (STAT)like 1SG.TOP UNM GEN M.   LK PV.PFV-cook
       Context: At a potluck dinner: 'I like <u>what Maria cooked</u>.

    b. *naʔílaʔ*   *akó*   [*ʔit* *gin-ɥáhaʔ* $\boxed{\textit{ni \ \ María}}$].
       (STAT)like 1SG.TOP UNM PV.PFV-cook UNM M.
       Context: At a potluck dinner: 'I like <u>what Maria cooked</u>.'

The overall distribution of preposed and postposed forms can be summarized as follows (data has been collected but examples have not been shown for all of these cells):

		Preposed GEN, e.g. *ʔána*	Postposed UNM, e.g. *nána*
AV	Verbal Agent	✗	✗
	Relative Agent	✗	✗
non-AV	Verbal Agent	✗	✓
	Relative Agent	✓	✓

Because the genitive forms are *not* licensed as direct arguments of verbs (56a), I propose that genitive agents of relative clauses are actually base generated in a projection within the relative clause DP, but not as a direct argument of the relativized verb. Pending future investigation, I label the projection which hosts the external agent PossP for now, assuming that it is part of the extended DP.

(58) *ʔaj   María   ŋa   gin-ɰáhaʔ*
      GEN M.   LK PV.PFV-cook
      'what Maria cooked'
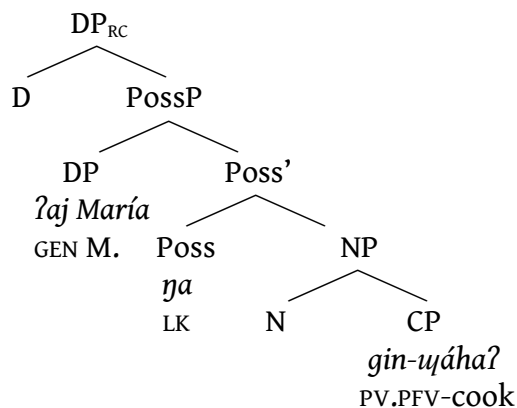
Some evidence for this constituency comes from plural *maŋa* as an adjunct below the agent:

(59) *ʔána*   *ŋa   maŋa   bákɰ-an*
      3SG.GEN LK   PL   buy-LV.FUT
      '(the places) where s/he will buy from'

With these facts about genitive agents of relative clauses in mind, I would like now to return to EECs, to show that they also hold true for the complement of *maj*. In EECs, preposed genitive agents are only possible when the complement of *maj* is a non-AV relative clause, a pattern which exactly parallels the relative clauses in (55):

(60) a. *maj* ⌐*ʔaj   María*¬ *ŋa bákuɥ-on.*
          EXIST GEN M.   LK buy-PV.FUT
          'Maria will buy something.' (EEC)

     b. *maj* ⌐*ʔaj   María*¬ *ŋa bákuɥ-an.*
          EXIST GEN M.   LK buy-LV.FUT
          'Maria is buying for someone.' (EEC)

     c. *maj* ⌐*ʔaj   María*¬ *ŋa iga-bakáɥ.*
          EXIST GEN M.   LK IV.FUT-buy
          'Maria has the means to buy [something].' (EEC)

     d. **maj* ⌐*ʔaj   María*¬ *ŋa maga-bakáɥ.*
          EXIST GEN M.   LK AV.FUT-buy

The examples (60a–c) show that non-AV relative clauses with preposed genitive agents are grammatical as the complement of *maj*, while AV relative clauses with genitive agents are ungrammatical (60d). Not only is this further evidence that *maj* takes a relative clause as a complement — it also explains one of the defining features of EECs shown at the outset of this paper: the case-cleaving effect.

On the present analysis, I argue that case-cleaving arises from a combination of factors: First, if the relative clause is not agent voice, a genitive agent is possible, and second, *maj* allows optional raising of genitive agents (or possessors) to a higher topic position (recall example 9). Because only non-AV relatives allow genitive agents, only non-AV complements of *maj* allow case-cleaving:
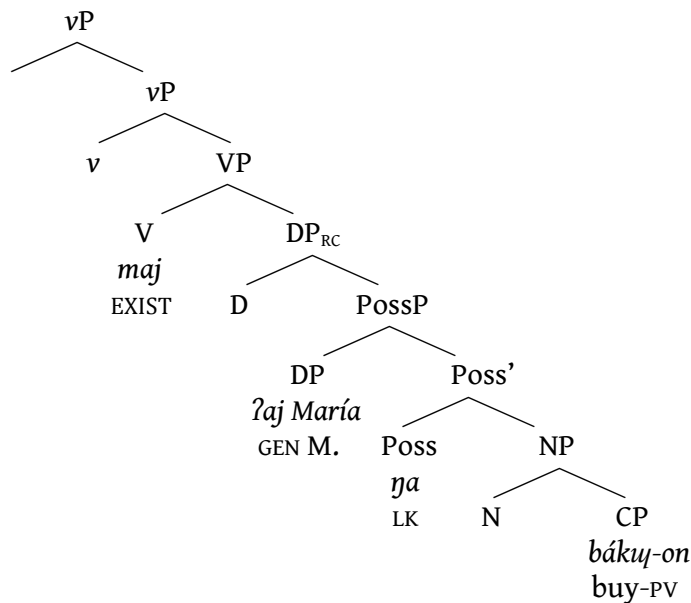
(61) a. *maj bákuɥ-on* ⌐*si   María*¬.
          EXIST buy-PV.FUT TOP M.
          'Maria will buy something.' (EEC)

     b. *maj bákuɥ-an* ⌐*si   María*¬.
          EXIST buy-LV.FUT TOP M.
          'Maria is buying for someone.' (EEC)

     c. *maj iga-bakáɥ* ⌐*si   María*¬.
          EXIST IV.FUT-buy TOP M.
          'Maria has the means to buy [something].' (EEC)

     d. **maj maga-bakáɥ* ⌐*si   María*¬.
          EXIST AV.FUT-buy TOP M.

To capture the facts presented throughout this section, I apply the structure in (58) to EECs. For EECs with preposed genitive agents, I propose that the agent is base-generated in PossP. This

structure is modeled below using (60a) as an example (see Section 3.2.3 for discussion of the relative clause structure and how the external agent receives its interpretation as agent of the relative clause; see 78 for the full structure of 62).

(62) Simplified Structure of (60a)

    maj   [$_{DP}$ [$_{PossP}$ *ʔaj María* [$_{Poss'}$ [$_{Poss}$ *ŋa*][$_{NP}$ [$_{CP}$ *bákuɬ-on*]]]]].

    EXIST   GEN M.   LK   buy-PV.FUT

    'Maria will buy something.'

```
                    vP
                   /  \
                     vP
                    /  \
                   v    VP
                       /  \
                      V    DP_RC
                    maj    /  \
                   EXIST  D    PossP
                             /   \
                           DP     Poss'
                        ʔaj María  /  \
                        GEN M.  Poss   NP
                                 ŋa    /  \
                                 LK   N    CP
                                         bákuɬ-on
                                         buy-PV
```
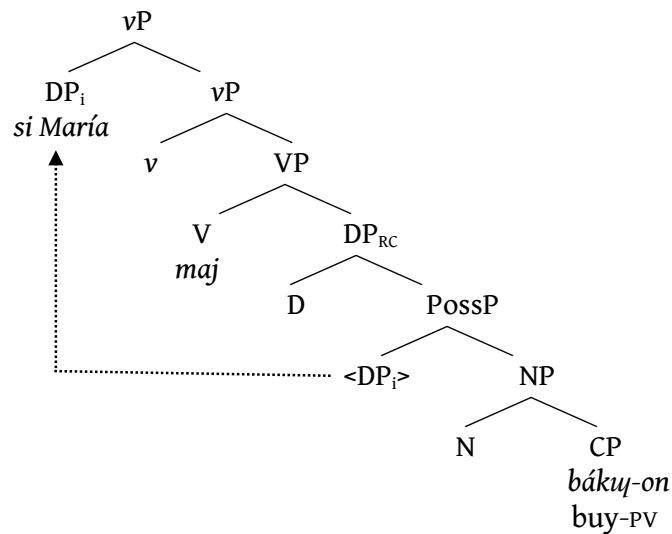
I use the same structure to derive EECs with case-cleaving, but in these cases, the preposed agent in SpecPossP is possessor-raised to a higher position, such as the external specifier of *v*P or a higher projection. I remain neutral on the landing site of the raised agent, and, while I assume that this raising operation is optional and is unique to the predicate *maj*, I also do not currently have an explanation as to why *maj* allows optional possessor raising in the first place.[17]

(63) Simplified Structure of (61a) before V1 Movement

    [$_{vP}$ [$_{DP}$ *si María*$_i$][$_{vP}$ *maj* [$_{DP}$ [$_{PossP}$ t$_i$ [$_{Poss'}$ [$_{Poss}$]   [$_{NP}$ [$_{CP}$ *bákuɬ-on*]]]]]]].

        TOP M.   EXIST   buy-PV.FUT

    'Maria will buy something.'

---

[17] An anonymous reviewer suggests that possessor raising in the existential constructions receives a straightforward treatment if we assume that topic-marking is actually nominative case: on this assumption, the existential predicate still has an unvalued nominative case feature on C or T, which can be optionally valued by the genitive agent. This hypothesis will be considered in future work.

```
                          vP
                   ┌───────┴───────┐
                  DPᵢ              vP
                si María     ┌──────┴──────┐
                   ▲         v            VP
                   ┊              ┌────────┴────────┐
                   ┊              V               DP_RC
                   ┊             maj         ┌──────┴──────┐
                   ┊                         D           PossP
                   ┊                               ┌──────┴──────┐
                   ┊⋯⋯⋯⋯⋯⋯⋯⋯⋯⋯⋯⋯⋯⋯⋯⋯⋯ <DPᵢ>          NP
                                                        ┌────┴────┐
                                                        N        CP
                                                              báku͙-on
                                                              buy-PV
```

On this analysis, the selectional criteria of *maj* is the same across all existential constructions. In all cases, *maj* takes a bare nominal as its complement. However, what is unique about EECs is that *maj* takes a relative clause as its complement, and the argument structure of the relative clause feeds the argument structure of *maj*: non-AV relative clauses in Aklanon generally allow preposed genitive agents that resemble external possessors, and these genitive agents can optionally undergo possessor-raising by *maj*, producing the case-cleaving effect.

3.2.3 Claim 3: Topic obligatorily controls a relative-clause-internal PRO

At this point, two main claims have been established: the complement of *maj* is a relative clause, and case-cleaving arises because the *maj* predicate allows possessor raising of the genitive agent to topic position. This final section ties these claims together to derive the agentive reading of the agent, which I have argued is not a direct argument of the relativized verb. Accomplishing this portends the perennial debate between control versus raising, and the option space of analyses contains at least a few viable hypotheses:

(64)   Hypothesis 1a: The genitive agent raises to topic of *maj* from PossP, and from either position **obligatorily controls PRO** in the external argument position of the relative clause.

Hypothesis 1b: The genitive agent raises to topic of *maj* from PossP, and from either position **non-obligatorily controls PRO** in the external argument position of the relative clause.

Hypothesis 2: The genitive agent raises to topic of *maj* from PossP and **corefers with pro** in the external argument position of the relative clause.

Hypothesis 3: The genitive agent **raises directly to the topic position of *maj*** from the external argument position of the relative clause.

Hypotheses 1a, 1b, and 2 require a principled differentiation of obligatory control ('OC') and non-obligatory control ('NOC'), as well as coreferential *pro*, in Aklanon, which is a *pro*-drop language.[18] Hypothesis 3 essentially posits that *maj* is a raising predicate and that the external argument raises out of the relative clause to topic position of *maj*. However, because I have already shown that the complement of *maj* is a relative clause and an island for extraction, the following discussion focuses on deciding between control analyses.

Sundaresan (2014:64) presents the following summary of diagnostics to probe for OC PRO:

(65) (i) The availability of a sloppy reading – and the unavailability of a strict reading for the null subject under *v*P ellipsis (citing Lebeaux 1985).
(ii) Obligatory coreference with a syntactically represented antecedent.
(iii) Obligatory *de se* interpretation of the null element with respect to this antecedent, if the control predicate is attitudinal (citing Chierchia 1989).

(Sundaresan 2014:64)

By contrast, she describes the following qualities of *pro:*

(66) (i) It may be accidentally coreferent with a syntactic antecedent, but crucially is not obligatorily so.
(ii) It can yield both strict and sloppy readings under *v*P ellipsis.
(iii) While compatible with a *de se* interpretation, it is not interpreted obligatorily *de se;* i.e. it can be interpreted both *de se* and *de re.*

(Sundaresan 2014:64)

In the following sections, I will show that according to the diagnostics above (see also Landau 2013 and Sichel 2010), Aklanon EECs do seem to pattern most closely with an analysis that posits an OC PRO in external argument position of the relative clause. I will also show that Aklanon EECs permit an alternation between covert OC PRO and overt DPs in what appears to be a finite context, which is a typologically unusual pattern of control.

3.2.3.1 Obligatory coreference

One factor which provides strong motivation for obligatory control of the topic into the relative clause is that the topic-marked argument is obligatorily interpreted as the external argument of

---

[18] Here I assume that there is a real difference between PRO and *pro*: PRO as a bound variable in external argument position bound by an antecedent, and *pro* as a contextually recoverable null argument that refers deictically and can occur in any argument position (see Sundaresan 2014:63–4). In this option space, I do not consider control-as-movement (Boeckx et al. 2010) or arbitrary control.

the relative clause. This has been the case for all EECs presented thus far, but consider the EEC in (67) below given in two contexts. In the first context, (67a), coreference obtains, and (67b) is judged as infelicitous because coreference is obligatory.

(67) *si   María   maj   gin-dibúho.*
     TOP M.   EXIST PV.PFV-carve
     'Maria did a carving.' (EEC)

    a. Context 1: Maria is taking a carving class, and by the end of class, she has carved something. (Consultant's Comment: 'Then it's Maria who's the carver […] (67) means that she did the action herself.')
    b. #Context 2: Maria recently got a piece of artwork from a local museum, so now she has carving (that someone else made). (Consultant's Comment: 'No, because (67) means that Maria did it herself, not that she got a carving.')

The infelicity of (67b) is evidence against an analysis that involves pragmatic coreference between the topic and *pro*, as well as evidence against a NOC PRO in external argument position of the relative clause. Note that the intended context (67b) is felicitous without voice morphology (68), so pinpointing what argument structure is instantiated by voice morphology is an interesting area for further research:

(68) *si   María   maj   dibúho.*
     TOP M.   EXIST carving
     'Maria has a carving.' (Consultant's Comment: 'That is clearly not Maria's carving, it just means she bought it or stole it. She has a carving that wasn't made by her.')

For now, I take the evidence in (67) to show that EECs satisfy Sundaresan's (2014) criterion (65ii), which motivates an OC PRO in external argument position of the relative clause in EECs.

3.2.3.2 Sloppy readings under ellipsis

The next diagnostic for control which can be readily shown for Aklanon is that under VP ellipsis, only sloppy readings of PRO are available. That is, in (69) below, the boxed clause can only be understood to mean 'Raul also cooked something' (sloppy reading), and not 'Raul is also such that Jose cooked something' (strict reading).

(69) *maj   gin-ɰáhaʔ   si   Hosé* $\boxed{\textit{ʔag maw man si Raʔúl}}$.
     EXIST PV.PFV-cook TOP J.   &   so   also TOP R.
     'Jose$_x$ cooked something and so did Raul$_y$ [PRO$_{*x/y}$ cook something].' (EEC)

This is especially striking in contexts like (70), where the antecedent clause contains a possessive phrase which permits both a strict and a sloppy reading under ellipsis, even though only the sloppy reading is available to the agent of the elided clause.

(70)   *maj*   *gin-taʔó*   *sa*   *ʔána=ŋ*   *ʔasáwa*   *si Gloría*
         EXIST   PV.PFV-give   DAT   3SG.GEN=LK   spouse   TOP G.
         'Gloria$_x$ gave something to her$_x$ partner,'

         ʔag   *maw*   *man*   *si María.*
         and   so   also   TOP M.
         'and so too did Maria$_y$ [PRO$_{*x/y}$ give something to her$_{x/y}$ partner].' (EEC)

The availability of only the sloppy reading of the external argument under ellipsis satisfies Sundaresan's (2014) criterion (65i) and thus provides further evidence for an OC analysis of Aklanon EECs.

3.2.3.3 Antecedent must c-command PRO

A familiar constraint on PRO is that its controller must c-command it, and this can also be shown in Aklanon EECs. In (71), for instance, the agent of the relative clause cannot be understood as *RaʔúI* 'Raul,' but only as the referent of the entire possessive phrase, *ro tátaj ni RaʔúI* 'Raul's father.'

(71)   *maj*   [PRO$_{*x/y}$ *gin-ɥáhaʔ*]   [*ro*   *tátaj*   *ni*   *RaʔúI$_x$*]$_y$.
         EXIST   PV.PFV-cook   TOP   father   UNM   R.
         '[Raul's$_x$ father]$_y$ cooked something.' (EEC)

This data shows that control in the EEC patterns in a way that is familiar from 'classical' types of control.

3.2.3.4 PRO alternates with overt DPs

The final observation that is crucial to understanding the issue of control in EECs is to understand that it *is* possible for overt external arguments to be expressed in the relative clause with canonical case marking. The relative clause analysis actually predicts this, since there is, in principle, nothing that blocks an external argument from merging as an argument of the relative clause. Example (72) shows three configurations (note that all three express clausal possession): in (72a), the possessor is genitive and the relative clause has a canonically-marked external argument; in (72b), the genitive possessor has undergone optional possessor-raising to topic and the relative clause has a canonically marked external argument; in (72c), the possessor has undergone optional possessor-raising to topic like (72b), but in this case, the agent of the relative clause is genitive. Note again that in (72), the topics are not construed as the agent of the relative clause, only as possessors. One key takeaway from this data is that PRO in EECs appears to alternate with overt DPs.

(72) Context: Raul is a carver. A group of children come to visit his collection. Maria takes one of his carvings, and after they leave, the teacher exclaims:

    a. *maj   ʔaj   **Maria**   ŋa   gin-dibúho   ni   Raʔúl.*

        EXIST GEN M.   LK   PV.PFV-carve UNM R.

        'Maria has something that Raul carved.'

    b. ***si***   ***María***   *maj*   *gin-dibúho   ni   Raʔúl!*

        TOP M.   EXIST PV.PFV-carve UNM R.

        'Maria has a carving of Raul's!' (Consultant's Comment: '*Maj* is ownership in this instance; she has something that Raul had carved.')

    c. ***si***   ***María***   *maj*   ʔaj   Raʔúl   *ŋa   gin-dibúho.*

        TOP M   EXIST GEN R.   LK   PV.PFV-carve.

        'Maria has a carving that Raul made.' (Consultant's Comment: 'Same meaning as [a] above.')

However, recall that in the absence of a lower external argument, the topic is obligatorily interpreted as the agent of the relative clause:

(73) *si   María   maj   gin-dibúho.*

     TOP M.   EXIST PV.PFV-carve

     'Maria did a carving.'

A somewhat complicated picture has emerged about control in Aklanon EECs. I identify the following traits of EECs which a control analysis must account for:

(74) a. The topic-marked argument **must** be interpreted as the agent of the relative clause, except when a distinct external argument is present.

    b. Only sloppy readings of the agent are available under VP ellipsis.

    c. The external argument of the relative clause is interpreted with sensitivity to c-command.

    d. The topic-marked argument **cannot** be interpreted as any other argument of the relative clause (e.g. internal argument).

    e. The relative clause is finite and unconstrained for tense-aspect or 'voice.'

To account for these traits on an OC analysis of EECs would require us to posit an alternation between covert OC PRO (73) and overt non-coreferential DPs (72). Landau (2013:99–101) and Sundaresan (2014) discuss cross-linguistic alternations between PRO and overt DPs in control contexts at great length. Non-finite examples of this come from Landau (2013:99, ex. 191c) and Sundaresan (2014:71):

(75)   Last week, Sue$_i$ favored/insisted on [PRO$_i$/Anna moving to Chicago today].

(76)   Tamil Null and Overt Subjects Alternating (Sundaresan 2014:71, ex. 16, 17)
   a.   [EC$_{i/*j}$ *poori*   *porikk-æ*] *Raman*$_i$ *maavŭ*   *vaangi-n-aan.*
         poori[ACC]   fry-INF   R.[NOM]   flour[ACC]   buy-PST-3MSG
         'Raman$_i$ bought flour [EC$_{i/*j}$ to fry pooris].'

   b.   [Vasu$_j$ *poori*   *porikk-æ*] *Raman*$_i$ *maavŭ*   *vaangi-n-aan.*
         V.[NOM]   poori[ACC]   fry-INF   R.[NOM]   flour[ACC]   buy-PST-3MSG
         'Raman$_i$ bought flour [for Vasu$_j$ to fry pooris].'

There is thus a cross-linguistic precedent for OC PRO to alternate with DPs. However, key differences between Aklanon EECs and the data presented in (75, 76) are that the relative clauses in EECs appear to be finite and unconstrained for tense-aspect and that this type of control involves control inside of DP.

Landau (2013, Section 5.6.2) discusses some variation that has been noted with respect to control into DPs and whether this involves *pro* or PRO. He states, 'A fundamental descriptive question is whether the null subject of nominalizations ever displays the strict referential dependence that OC PRO does. It turns out that the answer is not straightforward; sometimes it does, sometimes it does not' (Landau 2013:209). He then cites a study which shows four types of verbs in Catalan, Spanish, and Italian, some of which induce OC into their nominal complement, and some of which induce NOC, or a combination of both. Consider the following Catalan example of *dedicar-se* 'dedicate oneself to,' which induces OC into its nominal complement according to the author of that study:

(77)   Catalan OC in Nominal Complement (Landau 2013 ex. 415a, citing Alba-Salas 2006)
       L'Eva$_i$ *es*   *dedica*   *a* [PRO$_{i/*j/*arb}$ *la*   *falsificació*   *de*   *passaports*].
       the.Eva REF devotes to   the   forgery   of   passports
       'Eva forges passports (for a living).'

By contrast, Sichel (2010) argues against positing OC PRO in DP control contexts, opting instead for a coreferential relationship with *pro*. At present, resolving the debate between N/OC PRO or *pro* in DPs is well beyond the scope of this article, and further work will need to be done to explore how closely Aklanon fits into the typology of DP control in other languages. For now, however, based on the diagnostics presented in this section, I posit obligatory control of PRO in external argument position of the relative clause. I speculate that the presence of OC PRO in relative clauses is related to whether or not they have a genitive agent. That is, relative clauses which allow a genitive agent require OC of PRO into the relative clause by the agent. However, relative clauses which disallow a genitive agent will not have a PRO in external argument position (or at least, this analysis does not claim that, though it is possible).
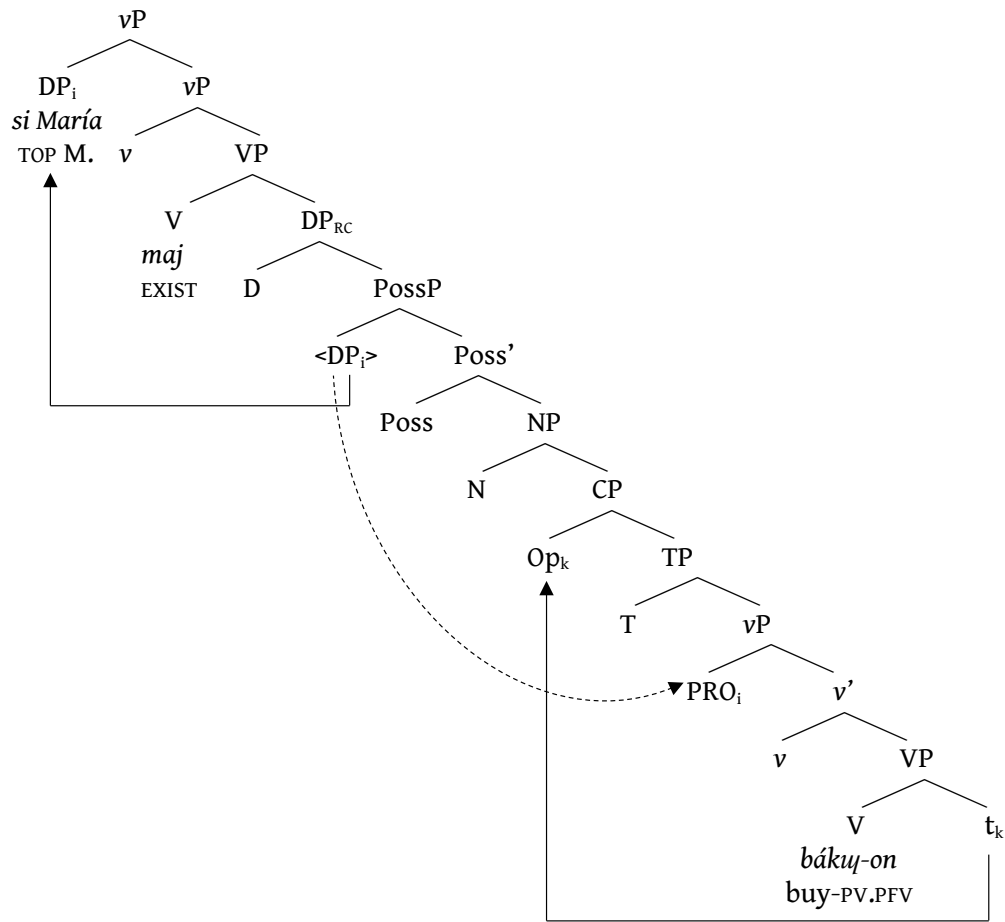
To demonstrate the full analysis, the structure of an EEC with a preposed agent (62) is elaborated in (78). On this structure, the preposed agent, *ʔaj María* 'Maria' is generated in PossP, and obligatorily controls PRO in external argument position.

(78)   *maj   ʔaj   María ŋa bákuɥ-on.*
        EXIST GEN M.   LK buy-PV.FUT
        'Maria will buy something.' (EEC)
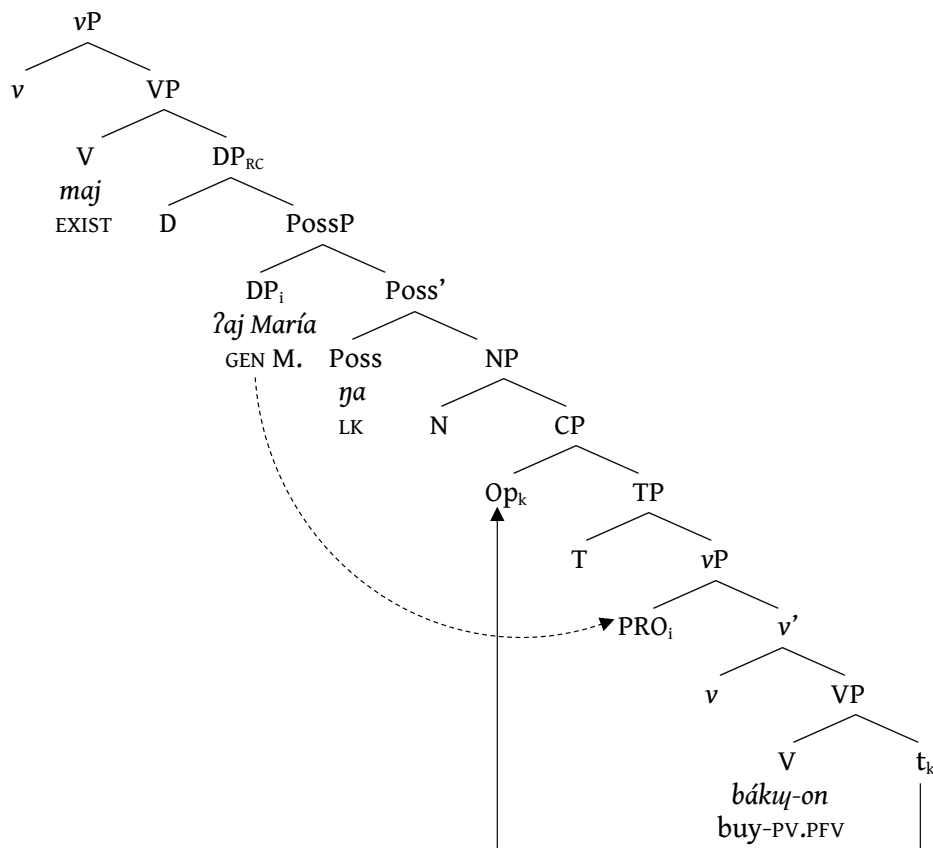
For an EEC with case-cleaving, the same structure is proposed, but with the additional possessor raising of the agent to topic position of *maj*. Again, I remain neutral as to the landing site of the raised topic. In the structure below, I have not shown an additional step of VP-movement which yields the predicate-initial surface word order of (79).

(79)   Full Structure of (61a) before V1 Movement
        [$_{vP}$ [$_{DP}$ *si María$_i$*] [$_{vP}$ *maj* [$_{DP}$ [$_{PossP}$ t$_i$ [$_{Poss'}$ [$_{Poss}$] [$_{NP}$ [$_{CP}$ PRO$_i$ *bákuɥ-on*]]]]]]].
            TOP M.   EXIST   buy-PV.FUT
        'Maria will buy something.'

```
                          vP
                     ┌─────┴─────┐
                   DP_i          vP
                  si María   ┌────┴────┐
                  TOP M.     v         VP
                            maj    ┌───┴────┐
                            EXIST  V       DP_RC
                                  maj   ┌───┴────┐
                                  EXIST D       PossP
                                      ┌────┴────┐
                                   <DP_i>     Poss'
                                         ┌──────┴──────┐
                                       Poss            NP
                                                   ┌────┴────┐
                                                   N        CP
                                                        ┌───┴───┐
                                                      Op_k      TP
                                                           ┌────┴────┐
                                                           T        vP
                                                               ┌─────┴─────┐
                                                             PRO_i        v'
                                                                     ┌─────┴─────┐
                                                                     v          VP
                                                                            ┌────┴────┐
                                                                            V       t_k
                                                                         báku-on
                                                                         buy-PV.PFV
```

The analytical claim is thus that all Aklanon EECs, whether with or without case-cleaving, have the underlying structure with a genitive agent that controls into the relative clause. Those with case-cleaving have undergone an additional step of possessor raising, which the predicate *maj* allows optionally.

Obligatory control into a finite relative clause is certainly not theoretically 'classical,' especially not with alternations between PRO and an overt non-coreferential DP in agent position. However, this typologically unorthodox construction sheds light on our cross-linguistic understanding of what is possible with control, and future work on EECs in Philippine languages has the potential to reveal cross-linguistic connections, whether internal to the Philippine language family (e.g. Tagalog 'genitive inversions' in Hsieh 2020), in other branches of the Austronesian family (e.g. Herd et al.'s 2011 analysis of 'genitive relatives' in Niuean and other Polynesian languages), or beyond (e.g. languages highlighted in Landau's 2013 study).

4 Conclusion

In this paper, I have proposed an analysis of event existential constructions in Aklanon in which the complement of *maj* is a relative clause. This was shown using data that reveals that (i) the complement of *maj* patterns together with other relative clauses throughout the language, (ii) is an island for extraction, (iii) can host nominal adjuncts, and (iv) is sensitive to the Subjects-Only and Matrix Verb Constraints. From this central claim, I presented data that showed both that *maj* allows optional possessor raising of a preposed genitive possessor, and that Aklanon non-AV relative clauses generally allow the agent to be expressed as a preposed genitive 'possessor,' which then feeds the argument structure of *maj* and results in case-cleaving. Finally, I argued on the basis of several diagnostics that the topic-marked agent gets its agentive interpretation via obligatory control into the relative clause, a claim which merits further attention and analysis in the future, especially with respect to how this form of obligatory control patterns in a broader typology of control.

As Law (2010) argued for Tagalog, this analysis of Aklanon allows for a unified analysis of existential *maj* in Aklanon. In all cases, *maj* selects a bare nominal as its complement. However, in event existential contexts, this nominal is a relative clause. At first glance, EECs in Aklanon appear to violate a core generalization about Philippine-type languages – namely that nominal case is closely correlated with verbal 'voice.' However, as a result of this study, I have shown that this apparent case-cleaving effect is superficial. The relative clause analysis of EECs allows us to maintain this robust generalization about Philippine-type voice systems. This analysis also reveals a typologically rare instantiation of obligatory control within the DP domain, which merits more attention in future research. Furthermore, this is the first theoretical analysis which brings Aklanon data to bear on issues surrounding Philippine-type voice, control, and existential constructions. The introduction of Aklanon into this body of literature allows for a more nuanced understanding of EECs and of cross-linguistic variation within Philippine languages.

Appendix: Preposed vs. Postposed Possessor/Agent Forms

	Preposed (GEN)	**Postposed (UNM)**
PROPER NAME	*ʔaj*	*ni*
1SG	*ʔákon*	*nákon*
2SG	*ʔímo*	*nímo*
3SG	*ʔána*	*nána*
1PX	*ʔámon*	*námon*
1PI	*ʔáton*	*náton*
2PL	*ʔínjo*	*nínjo*
3PL	*ʔánda*	*nánda*

Table 2: *Preposed/postposed pronouns* (Zorc & de la Cruz 1968:147, 158, replicated with my data).

Abbreviations

1SG = 1st person singular, 3SG = 3rd person singular, APPL = applicative, AV = agent voice, COMP = complementizer, DAT = dative argument, EXIST = existential, FUT = future, GEN = genitive, HAP = happenstance mood, INF = infinitival, IV = instrument ('circumstantial') voice, LK = linker, LOC = locative, LV = locative voice, OBL = oblique argument, PFV = perfective, POT = potential, PV = patient voice, STAT = stative, SBJV = subjunctive, TOP = topic argument, UNM = unmarked (i.e. non-topic) argument

Ethics and consent

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Competing interests

The author has no competing interests to declare.

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