In the last few years, Chomsky's deep structure has lost in depth and changed its name, becoming an *initial structure* because of the numerous misinterpretations which could lead to the wrong idea that "deep structures" are supposed to be so profound that they should be listed among language universals.1 The purpose of this article is to reconstruct the initial structures of "false possessives" (i.e., adverbal–dative and accusative–constructions corresponding to possessive adnominal constructions) in order to advocate the hypothesis that "translation" does not always rest upon identical deep structures. The same event might be differently experienced and, consequently, filtered by different grammatical devices.

1. The constraints imposed by [Inalienable Possession] on the formation of relative clauses were the point of departure in considering two different phrase-markers in order to account for the acceptability or the inacceptability of the following type of sentences:

   (1) *Mary has a house
   (2) *This house belongs to Mary

   and

   (3) *Mary has eyes
   (4) *These eyes belong to Mary
   (5) *Mary has a father

But, since the theory of Speech Acts has been brought into the picture, the above-mentioned constraints may be accounted for in a more convincing way by conditions of well-formedness appertaining to the informational and pragmatic level. Sentences such as (3), (4), or (5) are not acceptable (or rather have a low degree of acceptability) because they rest upon meaning postulates; they carry no new information since, under normal conditions, everyone has

1. See Chomsky’s criticism of these misinterpretations in Reflections on Language (New York: Pantheon, 1975), pp. 82-83.
eyes, a father, etc. Under special circumstances, however, one can say: (6) *You have eyes in your head, don't you? Then why don't you look where you're walking?*. In a sentence such as (7) *Mary has blue eyes*, or (8) *Mary has an understanding father*, the determiner (*blue, understanding*) brings in precisely the new information necessary to the felicity of any speech act.\(^2\)

2. Romance possessives have contributed in an even more peculiar way to the theoretical development of the transformational and pragmatic approaches. For instance, in his doctoral thesis, Weber Donaldson\(^3\) has developed Chomsky's hypothesis\(^4\) about possessives within the framework of Fillmore's Case Grammar,\(^5\) in order to account for the differences between dative possessives and genitive possessives in French. In his opinion, genitive possessives rest upon an embedded possessive clause (see structure I), while dative possessives are to be related to an adnominal structure such as (II).

(I) \(S[V \text{ Objective}[k \ NP][\text{Det} \ N \ S[V[\text{Poss}])V \ Dative [k \ NP] \ Dative \ Objective[k \ NP] \ Objective \ Agent[k \ NP] \ Agent]S\)

(II) \(S[V \text{ Objective}[k \ NP][\text{Det} \ N \ Dative [k \ a \ - \ possessive] k \ NP] \ Dative \ NP] \ Objective \ Agent[k \ era] k \ NP] \ Agent] S\)

Several linguists have pointed out, however, that there are languages where the choice between dative or genitive possessives is also governed by other conditions, such as:

(i) The lexical item assigned to the verb;
   Cf. (9) Fr. *Je lave mon frère* "I wash my brother"
and (10) **Je me lave le frère, litt. "I wash to me the brother" but (11) *On ne lui connaît ni parents ni amis* "He is thought not to have any relatives or friends,"
   as opposed to (12) *On ne connaît ni son père, ni sa mère*\(^6\) "one does not know his father nor his mother."