

Syntax Case Theory

Modul 04-006-2002
Phonology – Morphology – Syntax

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Morphological case

Point of departure:

- Many languages involve morphological case marking on noun phrases (and its dependents, such as determiners and adjectives). How many different morphological cases there are depends on the language.
- German, for instance, distinguishes nominative, genitive, dative, and accusative (1-a-d).

- (1)
- a. Die blaue Elise schläft.
the.NOM blue.NOM Elise.NOM sleeps
- b. Die blaue Elise bedarf der Hilfe (der Ameise).
the blue Elise needs the.GEN help.GEN the.GEN ant.GEN
- c. Die Ameise entkommt der blauen Elise.
the ant escapes the.DAT blue.DAT Elise.DAT
- d. Die blaue Elise hat einen Plan.
the blue Elise has a.ACC plan.ACC

Structural and abstract case

The syntactic dependency of case:

- The case on an NP depends on the syntactic context the NP shows up in.
- In German, for instance, the object of a verb generally bears accusative, the subject generally bears nominative. Such cases do not depend on the concrete predicate that is involved (2): *structural case*.
- Even if a case is not always morphologically visible (cf. no morphological marking on the noun *Elise* itself in (2-a-c)), it is assumed to be abstractly present (as also suggested by NP-internal case-agreement).

- (2)
- | | | | | | | |
|----|---------|----------|------------|---------|----------|-----------|
| a. | Die | blaue | Elise | hat | einen | Plan. |
| | the.NOM | blue.NOM | Elise.NOM | has | a.ACC | plan.ACC |
| b. | Die | blaue | Elise | hasst | die | Ameise. |
| | the.NOM | blue.NOM | Elise.NOM | hates | the.ACC | ant.ACC |
| c. | Die | Ameise | überlistet | die | blaue | Elise. |
| | the.NOM | ant.NOM | outwits | the.ACC | blue.ACC | Elise.ACC |

Lexical case

Lexical case:

- Sometimes NPs do not bear structural case. In German, for instance, an object may bear a case other than accusative. This case then depends on the concrete lexical predicate the NP is an argument of (see genitive and dative in (1-b) and (1-c), respectively).
- In Icelandic, even subjects may bear another case than nominative (e.g., accusative or dative), which then depends on the concrete lexical predicate that is involved. (3-a,b) (Sigurðsson 2004).
- Since the argument's case is not determined by the structural configuration but by a lexical property of the predicate, one speaks of *lexical* (or *inherent*) case.

- (3)
- a. Hana grunar að hann fari.
her.ACC suspects that he leaves
'She suspects that he will leave.'
- b. Henni líkuðu hestarnir.
her.DAT liked horses.the
'She liked the horses.'

Structural accusative

Question:

Where does the structural accusative come from?

Two answers (more are possible):

- Structural accusative is “assigned” by the lexical verb.
- Structural accusative is “assigned” by the *v* associated with the lexical verb.

Two arguments for case assignment by v:

- As already noted, structural case is not sensitive to the individual predicate involved. This follows if accusative is not dependent on the lexical verb but on *v*.
- There is a correlation, called *Burzio’s generalization* (alternatively: the Burzio-Perlmutter generalization), that holds between the assignment of accusative case and the presence of an external argument in Spec_v.

The Burzio-Perlmutter generalization

Perlmutter (1978), Burzio (1981, 1986):

- The internal argument of a predicate P may not receive accusative case unless P has (is associated with) an external argument.
- Unaccusative verbs merge their only argument in object position. Yet, this argument typically does not receive structural accusative (but, e.g., nominative). Why? Because there is no external argument.

- (4) a. Posy/She/*Her fell.
b. Pottwal/He/*Him collapsed.

Consequence:

Since the external argument is introduced by v, the generalization can be formulated straightforwardly if v also assigns accusative:

- (5) *Burzio-Perlmutter generalization:*
Only if v introduces an external argument, it also assigns accusative.

Case “assignment”

Question:

What exactly does it mean that case is “assigned”?

Idea:

If case assignment is a relation between a functional head and an argument (e.g., between *v* and the object), then it seems plausible to assume that case assignment works like agreement.

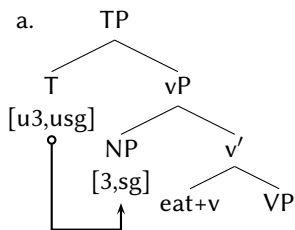
Reminder: Agreement

Recall:

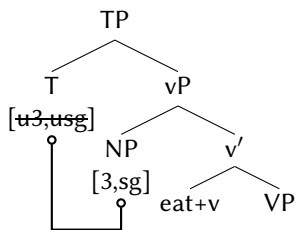
- Agreement is the result of a probe scanning its c-command domain for a matching goal. Once the goal is found, agreement applies.
- Agreement can be formulated in terms of feature checking (7-a,b) (i.e., the probe, here T, already bears a value and gets checked by the goal, here the subject) . . .

(6) Dr. Brumm eat-s the honey.

(7) a.



b.

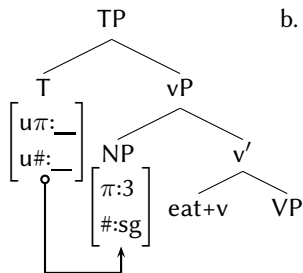


Reminder: Agreement

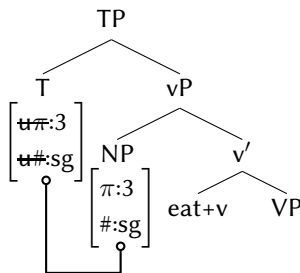
(continued from previous page):

- ... or it can be formulated in terms of feature valuation (via the operation Agree) (8-a,b) (the probe is valued by the goal and gets checked).

(8) a.



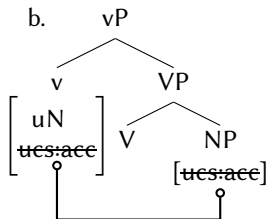
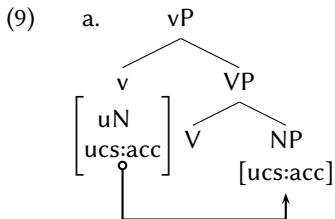
b.



Accusative assignment as checking

Case checking:

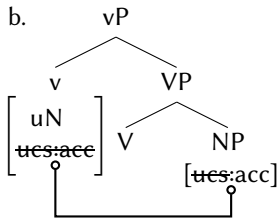
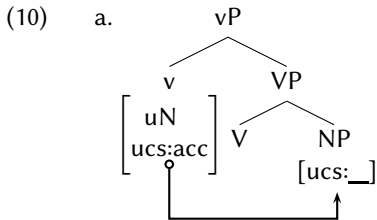
Little *v* bears [*uN*] (and [*uCase:acc*], see the Burzio-Perlmutter generalization). It searches its *c*-command domain for a goal NP that also bears [*uCase:acc*]. Once such a goal is found (9-a), case is checked (on both *v* and NP), see (9-b).



Accusative assignment as valuation

Case valuation (Agree):

Little *v* bears [*u*N] (and [*u*case:acc]). It searches its c-command domain for a goal NP that bears an unvalued case feature [*u*case:___]. Once such a goal is found (10-a), Agree applies: the goal is case-valued as [*u*case:acc] and case is checked (on both *v* and NP), see (10-b).



Checking or valuation: probe-hood

Note:

- A potential issue that is raised by the valuation account of case assignment is the notion of probe-hood.
- If probes are characterized as features that need to be valued, then the Agree-based case theory implies that Agree can apply “upward”, in contrast to what was assumed so far (for a general theory of upward Agree, see Bjorkman and Zeijlstra 2019).
- This is because the element that is to be case-valued is the downstairs NP-argument, not the upward functional head.
- One can escape this conclusion by assuming that probes are characterized as features that bear a diacritic u-prefix, be they valued or not: [uF:α]/[uF:___]. (Since case on NP is not interpreted, this means that the u-prefix does no longer signal uninterpretability in the narrow sense of the word.)
- Transitive little v would then bear [ucase:acc] (a probe), while NP-arguments would be assumed to be lexically specified as bearing [case:___] (a non-probe).

Checking or valuation: a trade-off

Checking:

- Checking theory contains a certain redundancy: both elements (probe and goal) contain the same set of features although, intuitively, the feature value of one depends on the value of the other.
- Moreover, derivations that start with non-matching probe-goal pairs (e.g., [ucase:acc] on v, [ucase:dat] on NP) are doomed from the beginning.

Valuation:

- The valuation theory accounts for the intuitive asymmetry between probe and goal (and avoids many crashing derivations).
- But it encounters the problem that it apparently involves a violation of the Inclusiveness Condition: the feature-value of the dependent element is added in the course of the derivation.

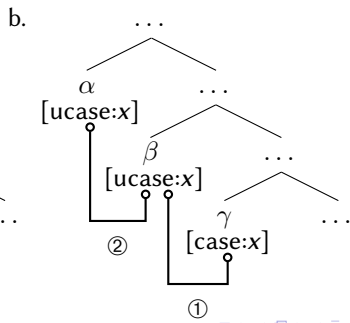
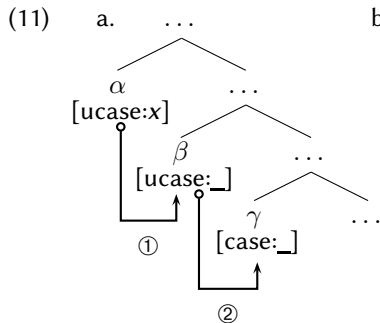
Note:

The same considerations apply to agreement.

Checking or valuation: an asymmetry

An asymmetry:

- Suppose there are α , β , and γ , such that α can case-agree with β , β can agree with γ , but α cannot agree with γ (due to locality).
- Under valuation, the only way to proceed is: α values β , and then β values γ . The last step violates strict cyclicity (see later): (11-a).
- If, however, α , β , γ have case values, then the derivation can proceed strictly cyclic via checking (11-b).



Checking or valuation: an asymmetry

Consequence:

- If one can find a credible instantiation of the pattern in (11-a/b), one could make an argument that a checking analysis is preferable at least for some configurations.
- One such case involves case attraction phenomena in relative clauses (e.g., Harbert 1983, Pittner 1995, Georgi and Salzmann 2017), see (12) (Middle High German, from Georgi and Salzmann 2017, citing Pittner 1995).
- The relative pronoun in (12) is in the genitive, agreeing with the head-noun of the matrix clause, assigned by the verb *verplac* ‘abandoned’. Crucially, the case that is assigned to the relative pronoun inside the relative clause is nominative.

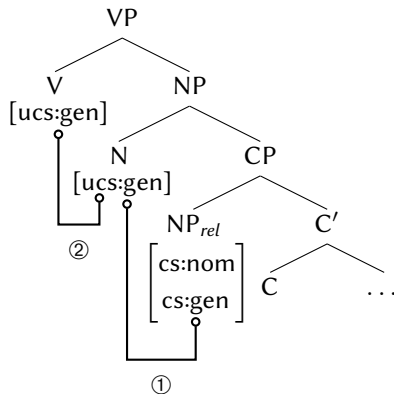
(12) daz er [...] all **des** **verplac** **des** [daz] im ze
 that he all that.GEN abandoned which.GEN [that] him to
 schaden mohte komen
 damage might come
 ‘that he abandoned all that might cause damage to him.’

Checking or valuation: an asymmetry

Note:

Due to the MLC, genitive checking/ valuation of the relative pronoun by the matrix verb is impossible: the head-noun intervenes.

(13)

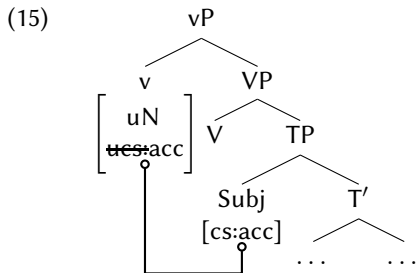


Case in ECM-infinitives

Recall:

- The ECM-construction involves an overt subject in the embedded infinitival TP (14-a). Crucially, the subject of such an infinitive receives accusative case (only visible with pronouns in English) (14-b).
- Analysis: Accusative is checked/valued by the *v* that is associated with the embedding predicate (15).

- (14) a. Hackenpiep considers [_{TP} Pottwal to be a thief].
b. Hackenpiep considers [_{TP} *he/him to be a thief].

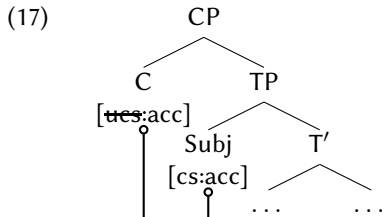


Case in *for*-infinitives

Recall:

- *For*-infinitives also involve an overt subject (16-a). This subject is also marked as accusative (16-b,c).
- Analysis: Accusative is checked/valued by the complementizer *for*.

- (16) a. Pottwal wants [_{CP} for Dr. Brumm to shave].
b. Pottwal wants [_{CP} for *he/him to shave].

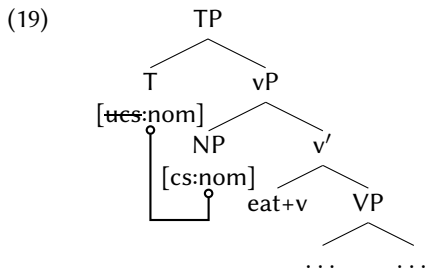


Structural nominative

Structural nominative:

- Structural nominative seems to be connected to finiteness/agreement: In infinitives, nominative is not checked/valued.
- This makes it possible in some cases for accusative to be checked on the subject of the infinitive by some higher functional head (see ECM and *for*-infinitives).
- Since finiteness/agreement is associated with T, the hypothesis is that structural nominative is checked/valued by a finite T-head (19).

(18) He/*him eats the honey.



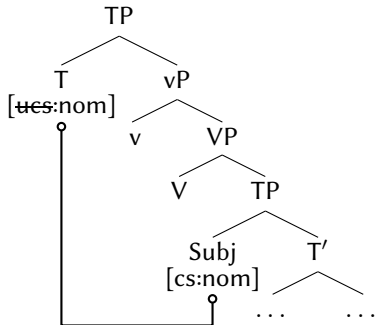
Case in raising infinitives

Recall:

- In raising infinitives, the subject of the raising verb is merged in the embedded infinitive. From there, it undergoes movement (via the embedded SpecT) to the matrix SpecT-position.
- Since only the matrix T-head is finite/agreeing, nominative case is assigned to the subject by the matrix T-head (before raising) (20).

(20) Pottwal appears [TP to be sick].

(21)



Lexical case

Lexical case:

- Some verbs determine a particular case on their object as a lexical property. In such a case (e.g., in German), the object is not marked with accusative but with some other case, such as dative (22-a) or genitive (22-b).
- Other languages allow for the assignment of further lexical cases (Fanselow and Felix 1987): Latin (23-a) (ablative) or Russian (23-b) (instrumental).

(22) a. Die Ameise entkommt der blauen Elise.
the ant escapes the.DAT blue.DAT Elise.DAT

b. Dr. Brumm bedient sich einer List.
Dr. Brumm serves self a.GEN ruse.GEN

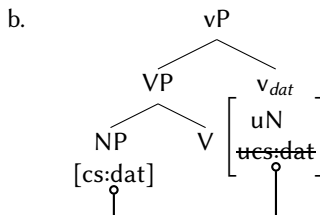
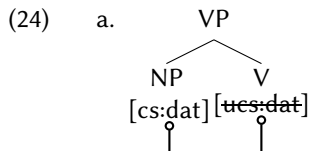
(23) a. variis instrumentis ad lanificia untuntur
various.ABL instruments.ABL for weaving use.3.PL

b. Ivan rukovodit otdelom.
Ivan leads section.INST

Lexical case

Analysis of lexical case:

- Lexical case is either checked/valued by the lexical verb itself (24-a)
...
- ... or by a functional head that is associated with this particular type of lexical verb (for instance a special variant of *v*, say v_{dat}), see (24-b).



Structural vs. lexical case: absorption

Absorption of structural accusative:

- In many languages (but not all) structural accusative is ‘absorbed’ in the passive construction.
- In a passive, there is no external argument (except in form of an optional element such as a *by*-phrase in English) (25-a). According to the Burzio-Perlmutter generalization, *v* then does not assign accusative. Consequently, the internal argument can receive nominative case by T (25-b).
- In languages that require SpecT to be filled (such as English), the internal argument also moves to become the subject of the clause (cf. (25-c)).

- (25)
- a. Dr. Brumm was bitten (by a carnivorous plant).
 - b. He/*Him was bitten.
 - c. *Was bitten Dr. Brumm.

Structural vs. lexical case: absorption

No absorption of lexical dative:

- If the internal argument of a passivization is marked by a lexical case, no absorption takes place.
- In German, for instance, the dative that is assigned to the object by the verb *helfen* ‘help’ (26-a) is preserved under passivization (26-b,c).

- (26)
- a. Die Ameise hilft der blauen Elise.
the ant helps the.DAT blue.DAT Elise.DAT
- b. *Die blaue Elise wird geholfen.
the.NOM blue.NOM Elise.NOM becomes helped
- c. Der blauen Elise wird geholfen.
the.DAT blue.DAT Elise.DAT becomes helped

Structural case and double object verbs

Double object verbs:

- In some languages, both cases associated with double object verbs are structural. In some, the dative is lexical while the accusative is structural.
- Depending on whether passive is formed with the auxiliary *werden* 'become' (28) or *bekommen* 'get' (29), German does not allow/allows absorption of the dative in a double object construction.

(27) Die blaue Elise stellt der Ameise eine Falle.
the blue Elise sets the.DAT ant.DAT a.ACC trap.ACC

(28) a. Der Ameise wird eine Falle gestellt.
the.DAT ant.DAT becomes a.ACC trap.DAT set

b. *Die Ameise wird eine Falle gestellt.
the.NOM ant.NOM becomes a.ACC trap.DAT set

(29) a. *Der Ameise bekommt eine Falle gestellt.
the.DAT ant.DAT gets a.ACC trap.DAT set

b. Die Ameise bekommt eine Falle gestellt.
the.NOM ant.NOM gets a.ACC trap.DAT set

Structural case and double object verbs

Question:

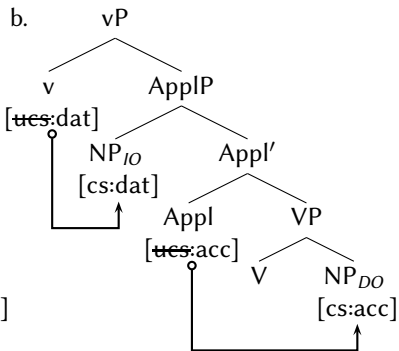
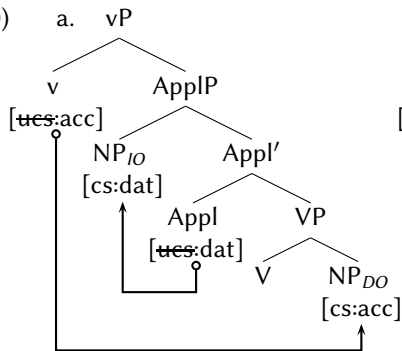
Which head assigns dative and which assigns accusative in a double object construction? Assuming that the indirect object in double object constructions is introduced by a functional head Appl ('applicative'), which takes VP as its complement, at least the following analytical options arise.

Two analyses:

- Dative is assigned by Appl, accusative is assigned by v (as in transitives), (30-a) (see Georgala and Whitman 2009, Georgala 2011 for different lexical cases assigned by Appl): nesting case assignment.
- Accusative is assigned by Appl and dative is assigned by v, (30-b) (Ura 1996, 2000, McGinnis 1998, Doggett 2004): non-nesting case assignment.

Structural case and double object verbs

(30)



Structural case and double object verbs

Ad (30-a):

- The analysis allows a uniform treatment of the case capacities of v in both transitives and ditransitives: in both cases v checks/values accusative.
- However, it involves a complication with respect to locality theory ('minimality'): accusative checking/valuation by v must cross the indirect object, which is closer to v than the direct object.
- Note that case can be checked/valued under c -command if the probe on Appl projects onto Appl' . However, under a valuation theory something needs to be said about why Appl *cannot* assign its case downward (e.g., before the indirect object is merged).

Ad (30-b):

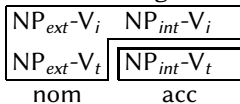
- Here, no minimality issue arises because each head checks/values case on the closest NP in its c -command domain.
- However, v in ditransitives must now be different from v in transitives with respect to the exact case feature it checks/values.

Accusative vs. ergative case alignment

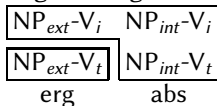
Two types of languages (others exist):

- Many languages (English, Japanese, Latvian, Hungarian, . . .) assign the same case (called nominative) to the external argument of transitives and the sole argument to intransitives (be they unergative or unaccusative), while the internal argument of a transitive gets a special case: accusative (31-a).
- Fewer languages (Hunzib, Tukang-Bezi, Chukchi, Yup'ik, . . .) assign the same case (called absolutive) to the internal argument of transitives and the sole argument to intransitives (be they unergative or unaccusative), while the external argument of a transitive gets a special case: ergative (31-b).

(31) *Accusative alignment*



Ergative alignment



Accusative vs. ergative case alignment

(32) Latvian (Mathiassen 1997):

- a. Putn-s lidoja.
bird-NOM fly.PST.3
'The bird was flying.'
- b. Bērn-s zīmē sun-i.
child-NOM draw.PRES.3 dog-ACC
'The child is drawing a dog.'

(33) Hunzib (van den Berg 1995):

- a. kid-Ø y-ut'-ur
girl-ABS CL2-sleep-PST
'The girl slept.'
- b. oždi-l kid-Ø hehe-r
boy-ERG girl-ABS hit-PST
'The boy hit the girl.'

Accusative vs. ergative case alignment

Question:

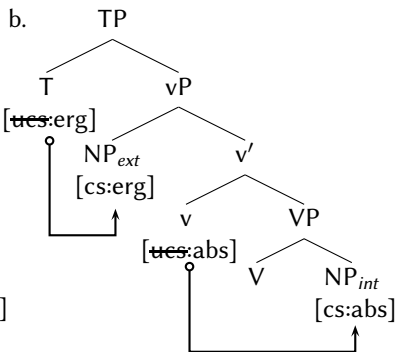
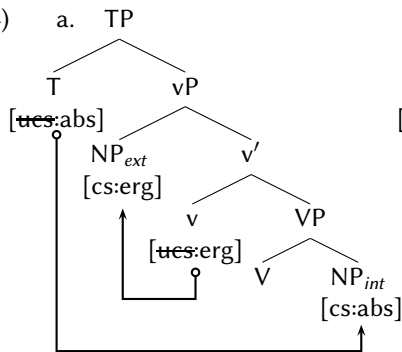
Which head assigns ergative and which assigns absolutive in the transitive clause of an ergative-aligning language? Interestingly, similar analytical options arise as with double objects.

Two analyses:

- Ergative is checked/valued by v, absolutive by T, (34-a)
(Murasugi 1992, Jelinek 1993, Ura 2000): nesting case assignment.
- Ergative is checked/valued by T, and absolutive by v, (34-b)
(Levin and Massam 1985, Bobaljik 1993, Chomsky 1993): non-nesting case assignment.

Accusative vs. ergative case alignment

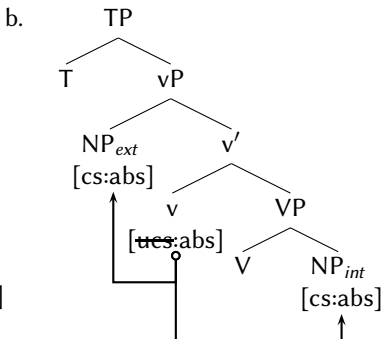
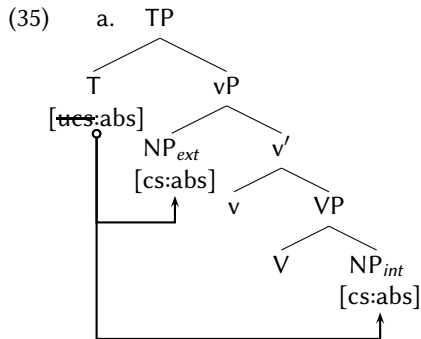
(34)



Accusative vs. ergative case alignment

Intransitives:

- For intransitives, it must be ensured that the functional head that assigns absolutive remains active (while the other one is deactivated).
- In the first theory, *v* is inactive (as in accusative languages). T checks/values absolutive on the only argument (NP_{ext} or NP_{int}) (35-a). In the second theory, T is inactive, and *v* checks absolutive case (35-b).



Accusative vs. ergative case alignment

Ad (34-a)/(35-a):

- The questions that arise are: a) Why doesn't v check/value ergative case on the internal argument (e.g., before the external argument is merged)? b) How can T check/value absolutive across the external argument ('minimality') and across v' ('phase theory'; we return to phases later).
- The case that is cross-linguistically often morphologically unmarked (nominative/absolutive) and the case that is often morphologically marked (accusative/ergative) are checked/valued by the same head in accusative and in ergative languages (namely T and v , respectively).

Ad (34-b)/(35-b):

- No locality issues arise (both minimality and phase theory are respected).
- The morphologically unmarked case is checked/valued by the head that remains active in the intransitive scenario in accusative and ergative languages alike (while the morphologically marked case is checked/valued by the head that becomes inactive in intransitives).

Accusative vs. ergative case alignment

The ergative-accusative parameter:

- First analysis: In ergative languages, *v* checks/values case on the external argument, in accusative languages it checks/values case on the internal argument. (T then just values the remaining argument in the transitive case.)
- Second analysis: In ergative languages, the head that checks/values case in intransitive scenarios (the ‘active’ head) is *v*; in accusative languages, it is T.

The case filter

Vergnaud (1977):

- Every NP-argument that is phonetically overt must receive case. This has become known as the ‘case filter’ (36).
- (36) is supposed to explain (among other things) why the subject of control infinitives must not be overt, see (36-a,b) vs. (36-c). (This presupposes that the position occupied by PRO (and the overt subjects) in (36) does not receive case: The embedded T is non-finite and matrix v either does not assign accusative or cannot assign accusative across a CP-boundary.)
- Likewise, (36) explains (38-a), provided that N does not assign case.

(36) *Case filter:*

*NP if NP does not have case and NP has phonological features.

- (37)
- *Posy claimed [_{CP} Posy to have proven the theorem].
 - *Posy claimed [_{CP} she to have proven the theorem].
 - Posy claimed [_{CP} PRO to have proven the theorem].
- (38)
- *Posy’s proof [_{NP} the theorem] is brilliant.
 - Posy’s proof [_{PP} of [_{NP} the theorem] is brilliant.

Complications (there are more)

Case assignment by non-finite T:

- In some languages (accusative and ergative), case is assigned in the context of a non-finite (non-agreeing) T-head (Baker 2015, 44-45).
- A possibility is to assume that the ability by T to assign case is tied to the category feature of T itself.
- (39) illustrates for Burushaski: both absolutive and ergative show up in infinitives; similar facts hold for other ergative languages (Shipibo, Chukchi, Greenlandic Inuit); an relevant accusative language is Tamil.

(39) a. Já-a [ún ní-as-e] r rái
1SG-ERG 2SG.ABS go-INF-OBL to want
é-t-c-abaa.

3SG.OBJ-do-NONPAST-1SG.SUBJ.PRES

'I want you to go.'

b. Gús-e [hir-e in mu-del-as-e] r rái
woman-ERG man-ERG 3SG.ABS 3F.OBJ-hit-INF-OBL to want
a-é-t-c-ubo.

NEG-3SG.OBJ-do-NONPAST-3F.SUBJ.PRES

'The woman doesn't want the man to hit her.'

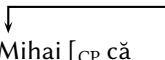
Complications (there are more)

Raising to object from finite clauses:

- In some languages (e.g., Sakha, Baker and Vinokurova 2010, Romanian, Alboiu and Hill 2016) the subject of an embedded finite clause may raise to the matrix clause where it receives accusative.
- Alternatively, the subject may remain in the embedded clause, where it receives nominative case. (40-a,b) illustrate for Romanian.
- Such constructions raise the question as to how the subject can acquire accusative case if it is already valued by the finite T-head within the finite embedded clause.

(40) a. Am auzit [CP că Mihai repară casa].
have.1SG heard that Mihai fixes house.the
'I've heard that Mihai is fixing the house.'

b. L-am auzit pe Mihai [CP că repară casa].
him-have.1SG heard DOM Mihai that fixes house.the
'I've heard Mihai (claiming) that he's fixing the house.'



Complications (there are more)

Case on floating Q in Icelandic (Sigurðsson 1991):

(41-a-d) show case agreement between a floating quantifier ‘all’ and the subject it is associated with. Different cases for the subject show up with different predicates.

- (41)
- a. Strákarnir komust **allir** í skóla.
the.boys.NOM came all.NOM.PL.MASC to school Schule
‘The boys all came to school.’
 - b. Strákana vantaði **alla** í skólann.
the.boys.ACC missed all.ACC.PL.MASC in school
‘The boys were all missing at school.’
 - c. Strákunum leiddist **öllum** í skóla.
the.boys.DAT bored all.DAT.PL.MASC in school
‘The boys were all bored at school.’
 - d. Strákanna var **allra** getið í ræðunni.
the.boys.GEN were all.GEN.PL.MASC mentioned in speech
‘The boys were all mentioned in the speech.’

Complications (there are more)

Case on PRO in Icelandic (again Sigurðsson 1991):

(42-a-c) then suggest that PRO must be able to bear case: the quantifier in the embedded control clause shows the same variation with respect to case as in (41-a-d), which should therefore be due to case agreement with PRO .

(42) Strákarnir vonast til ...
the.boys hope for

a. ... [CP að PRO komast **allir** í skóla].
that come all.NOM.PL.MASC to school
'The boys hope that they all go to school.'

b. ... [CP að PRO vanta ekki **alla** í skólann].
that miss not all.ACC.PL.MASC in school
'The boys hope that they are not all missing in school.'

c. ... [CP að PRO leiðast ekki **öllum** í skóla].
that bore not all.DAT.PL.MASC in school
'The boys hope that they are not all bored in school.'

d. ... [CP að PRO verða **allra** getið í ræðunni].
that be all.GEN.PL.MASC mentioned in speech
'The boys hope that they are all mentioned in the speech.'

Dependent case theory

An alternative:

- Case is not assigned/valued by functional heads. Rather, case is the result of the interaction of NPs.
- The idea shows up in many variants (e.g., Marantz 1991, Wunderlich 1997, Bittner and Hale 1996, Kiparsky 2001, Stiebels 2002, McFadden 2004, Bobaljik 2008, Baker 2015).
- The most popular version is, perhaps, Marantz (1991), a version of which is worked out by Baker (2015).

Dependent case theory

Marantz (1991):

- There are different types of case, which are determined in the order given by the hierarchy in (43).
- The most interesting part concerns the computation of “dependent” case.
- Baker (2015) presents a very detailed analysis of the interaction of lexical, dependent, and unmarked case, the latter also comprising structural dative.

- (43)
- a. lexical case (dative, oblique)
 - b. dependent case (accusative, ergative)
 - c. unmarked case (nominative, absolutive)
 - d. default case

Dependent case theory

Baker (2015) (roughly!):

(44) *Rules of dependent case in accusative languages:*

- a. If there are two distinct NPs in the same VP such that NP₁ c-commands NP₂, then value the case feature of NP₁ as dative, unless NP₂ has already been marked for case.
- b. If there are two distinct NPs in the same TP such that NP₁ c-commands NP₂, then value the case feature of NP₂ as accusative, unless NP₁ has already been marked for case.

(45) *Rule of unmarked case in accusative languages:*

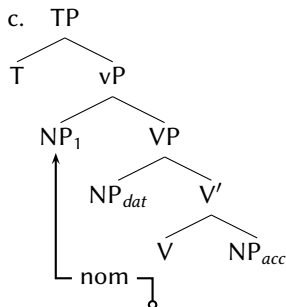
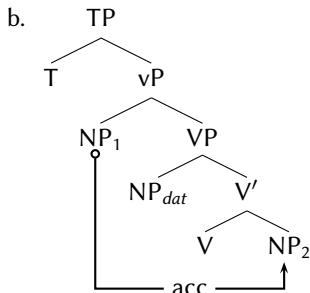
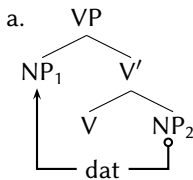
Assign nominative case to any NP in the clause.

Dependent case theory

Note:

- First, lexical case that is determined by some predicate P is assigned to some NP within the projection of P (not shown in (46)).
- Next, dependent dative is computed within VP (46-a), followed by dependent accusative within TP (46-b).
- Finally, any NP that is not case-marked yet receives unmarked case (46-c).

(46)



Dependent case theory

Baker (2015) (again, roughly):

(47) *Rules of dependent case in ergative languages:*

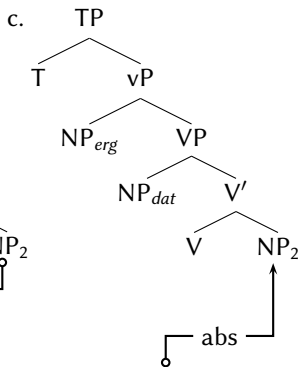
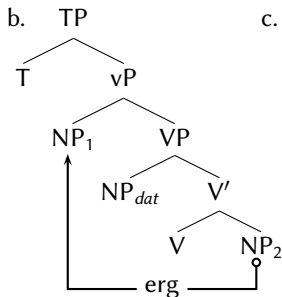
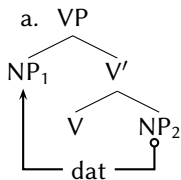
- a. If there are two distinct NPs in the same VP such that NP₁ c-commands NP₂, then value the case feature of NP₁ as dative, unless NP₂ has already been marked for case.
- b. If there are two distinct NPs in the same TP such that NP₁ c-commands NP₂, then value the case feature of NP₁ as ergative, unless NP₂ has already been marked for case.

(48) *Rule of unmarked case in ergative languages:*

Assign absolutive case to any NP in the clause.

Dependent case theory

(49)



Comment:

In both (46-b) and (49-b), NP_{dat} should also be assigned accusative/ergative. Either one excludes NPs that are already case marked from the computation of dependent case, or one assumes that only the case that is assigned first is realized (cf. Baker and Vinokurova 2010 on Sakah).

Dependent case theory

Note:

- Dependent case theory has no problem whatsoever accounting for the emergence of nominative or ergative/absolutive in non-finite clauses.
- Assuming that the raised subject has left the TP *before* case within TP is computed, it follows that it can receive accusative in the matrix clause (cf. Baker and Vinokurova 2010; Baker 2015), which requires that ECM also involves raising (a claim first made in Postal 1974).

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