

## Marantz 1991 - Case and Licensing Do we even need Case?

Previously on ST@BU ...

- Chomsky and Lasnik were trying to formulate a filter that ‘rules in’ the occurrences of [ NP to VP ] in (1-a) but rules out the ones in (1-b).

- (1) a. good cases of [NP to VP]
- (i) I believe [ **John** to be incompetent ]. VERB
- (ii) I’d prefer for [ **John** to leave ]. FOR
- (iii) For [ **John** to be successful ] would be unlikely. FOR
- b. bad cases of [NP to VP]
- (i) \*It is illegal [ **John** to vote ]. ADJECTIVE
- (ii) \*I want very much [ **John** to win ]. ADVERB
- (iii) \*\_\_\_ [ **John** to be successful ] would be unlikely. ‘NOTHING’
- (note: all become good if *for* is inserted right before **John**.)

abstracting away from the complications in how we best write this into a filter...

(2) \*[NP to VP] unless it’s in the domain of a VERB or *for*.

- **Vergnaud:** Wait a minute, this is suspiciously similar to the distribution of pronouns in Governed Case!

- (3) The distribution of pronouns in Governed Case
- a. (i) I saw **him**. pronoun governed by V
- (ii) I made this cake for **him**. pronoun governed by P
- (iii) Mary’s description of **him** was amusing. pronoun governed by P
- b. (i) \***Him** saw Mary. pronoun not governed by V or P
- (ii) \*Mary’s description **him** was amusing. pronoun not governed by V or P

(4) \*NP<sub>governed case</sub> unless it’s in the domain of V or P.

The filter in (4) is independently needed. But it also gives us the facts in (5) for free!

- (5) a. (i) I believe [ **him** to be incompetent ]. governed by V  
 (ii) I'd prefer for [ **him** to leave ]. governed by *for*<sup>a</sup>  
 (iii) For [ **him** to be successful ] would be unlikely.  
 b. (i) It is illegal \*(for) [ **him** to vote ].  
 (ii) Our plan \*(for) [ **him** to be the president ]  
 has found no supporters.  
 (iii) \*(For) [ **him** to be successful ] would be unlikely.

↪ Then, maybe we don't need a special \*[NP to VP] unless.. filter!

<sup>a</sup>Assumption: *for* is category P but occupies a C head.

• The case for Case

- We wanna be able to say that it is (6) that rules out (7-a) and rules in (7-b).

(6) \*NP<sub>governed case</sub> unless it's in the domain of V or P.

- (7) a. \*John to be successful would be unlikely.  
 b. For John to be successful would be unlikely.

- (8) John<sub>governed case</sub> to be successful would be unlikely. RULED OUT BY (6)  
 good result!

- But our job is not done here!

- Suppose John is caseless in (9). If we ONLY rely on (6), (9) will be not ruled out!

- (9) John<sub>caseless</sub> to be successful would be unlikely. NOTHING RULES IT OUT!  
 bad result!

- We need a filter that blocks all NPs in certain positions. e.g.

(10) \*NP to leave would be smart.

- Solution: a universal filter that punishes NPs without any Case. This is known as CASE FILTER (Chomsky 1981):

(11) \*NP<sub>caseless</sub>.

- (12) a. \*It is illegal **John**<sub>caseless</sub> to vote. RULED OUT BY (11)  
 b. \*Mary's description **John**<sub>caseless</sub> was amusing. RULED OUT BY (11)

What exactly is the notion of Case here? At the very least, it must be a sufficiently abstract feature whose morphological manifestation **need not always be distinct from genuine caselessness**.

- (13) a. \*John<sub>caseless</sub> to be successful would be unlikely. RULED OUT BY (11)  
 b. \*John<sub>governed</sub> to be successful would be unlikely. RULED OUT BY (6)

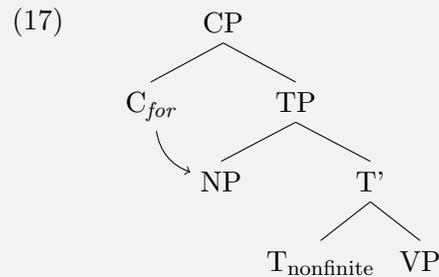
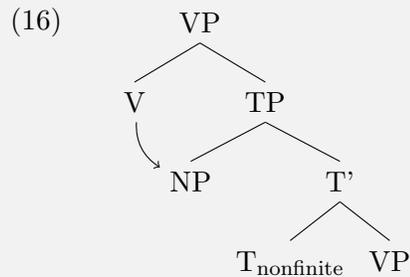
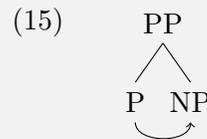
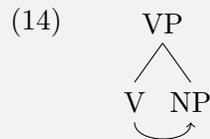
Perhaps, for this reason, it is usually referred to as (Abstract) Case.

- Does this make our theory of Case exempt from making the correct predictions about the way we pronounce NPs?  
 (We better hope not!)

what Case Theory predicts about the way we pronounce NPs

In the configurations below, NP receives **Governed Case** (i.e. ACC);  
 This predicts that NP

- \* can be **Mary, him, her, me, them**, etc.
- \* but cannot be *he, she, I, they, his, my*, etc.



\* \* \*

Similarly,

A subject NP in the spec of a finite T bears **SUBJECT CASE** (i.e. NOM). This predicts that an NP in this position

- \* can be **Mary, he, she, I, they**, etc.
- \* but cannot be *him, her, me, them, his, my*, etc.

- **What does Marantz say?**

- Does our theory of Case get the facts right? Nah...
  - \* Empirical claim: Chomskian theory of abstract Case fails to make good predictions about the way we pronounce NPs (i.e. ‘morphological case’) (well, we just gotta look at some languages other than English.)
  - \* Proposal: We have better ways of accounting for ‘morphological case’ if we admit that case can be
    - a reflex of a relation **between NPs** or
    - simply the morphological interpretation of **caselessness**.
- What does (abstract) Case do for us if it is not making correct predictions about morphological case? Can we get rid of it?
  - \* Well, Case is used to *license* NPs in certain positions and bar them in others.
  - \* But we can actually do without it!

\* \* \*

Does Chomsky’s theory of Case get the facts about morphological case right?

- Subject Case vs. Governed Case distinction that works for English falls apart in many languages.

**Georgian.**

- Under different aspects, the (abstract) Subject Case seems to correspond to distinct morphological cases

- (18) a. Vano pikrobs Marika-ze  
Vano.NOM thinks Marika-on  
‘Vano is thinking about Marika.’ Vano = NOM
- b. Vano-**m** ipikra Marika-ze  
Vano.ERG thought Marika-on  
‘Vano thought about Marika.’ Vano = ERG

- Under different aspects, the (abstract) Governed Case seems to correspond to distinct morphological cases

- (19) a. Nino gia-s surateb-**s** ačvenebs  
Nino.NOM gia-DAT pictures-ACC shows  
‘Nino is showing pictures to Gia.’ pictures = ACC
- b. Nino-**m** gia-s surateb-**i** ačvena  
Nino-ERG gia-DAT pictures-NOM showed  
‘Nino showed pictures to Gia.’ pictures = NOM

- Subjects of unaccusatives are always NOM - they don't become ERG in past tense!

- (20) a. Es saxl-i Ivane-s aušendeba  
This house-NOM Ivane-DAT will.be.built  
'This house will be built for Ivane.' this house = NOM
- b. Es saxl-i Ivane-s aušenda  
This house-NOM Ivane-DAT was.built  
'This house was built for Ivane.' this house = NOM

- 'Experiencer' subjects are always DAT, regardless of aspect.

- (21) a. Šen pelamuši g-iqvars  
You.DAT pelamuši.NOM 2SG.OBJ-like  
'You like pelamuši'
- b. Šen pelamuši g-eqvare  
You.DAT pelamuši.NOM 2SG.OBJ-liked  
'You liked pelamusi'

↪ The Subject Case vs. Governed Case distinction seems hopeless in the face of the facts about morphological case in Georgian.

\* \* \*

### What we need is a theory of morphological case!

- Morphological case is not always a reflex of a relation between head like V/P and an NP.
- Morphological case can also be a reflex of
  - the **relation between NPs** = DEPENDENT CASE
  - caselessness (not having received any case value)
- Accordingly, we have three 'types' of morphological case realization:
  - ACC and ERG = DEPENDENT CASE :  
requires there to be more than one NP in the same domain
  - NOM = the morphological interpretation of caselessness
  - locally assigned lexical cases (e.g. sigara-**dan** nefret ediyor)
- When do we get which?  
through a realization hierarchy (aka 'competition')

- (22) A hierarchy of morphological case realization  
locally assigned lexical case > dependent case > caselessness

- We see a DEPENDENT CASE on an NP, if there is another NP in the same domain (provided that neither of them got a lexical case).

\* ergative is the DEPENDENT CASE assigned to the higher of the two NPs.

(23) Lezgian (Haspelmath 1993. A Grammar of Lezgian)

- a. stxa k'wali-z xta-na  
brother.NOM house-to come-PST  
'The brother came home.'
- b. wax-a stxa k'wali-z raque-na  
sister-ERG sister.NOM house-to send-PST  
'The sister sent the brother home.'

\* accusative is the DEPENDENT CASE assigned to the lower of the two NPs

- (24) a. Ayşe konuştu.  
b. Ayşe Murat-ı selamladı.

– When there are two NPs one of which is assigned a lexical case, we don't see DEPENDENT CASE. The NP that gets a lexical case becomes invisible to the case calculus.

- (25) a. Gogo xink'al-s čams  
Girl.NOM xink'al-ACC eats  
'The girl is eating xink'al.'
- b. Šen pelamuš-i g-iqvars  
You.DAT pelamuši-NOM 2SG.OBJ-like  
'You like pelamuši.' DAT on the subject bleeds ACC on the object

The logic of this realization hierarchy has much potential for the case realization among non-subject NPs, too.

(see: Öztürk, B. 2004: Asymmetry in Double-object Constructions in Turkish. Proceedings of WAFL2.)

- (26) a. Ayşe bu kitab-ı okudu.  
b. Ali Ayşe-ye bu kitab-ı okuttu.  
DAT appears on the causee.

- (27) lexical case bleeds DAT on the causee!  
a. Ayşe sigara-dan nefret etti.  
b. Ali Ayşe-yi sigara-dan nefret ettirdi.  
c. \*Ali Ayşe-ye sigara-dan nefret ettirdi.

### Does (abstract) Case still do anything for us?

- First of all, if our theory says that NOM is the morphological interpretation of **caselessness**, we can't have \*NP<sub>caseless</sub> anymore!
- But what did \*NP<sub>caseless</sub> do for us in the first place?
  - For example, it allowed us to motivate movement to subject position in passives:

- (28) a. \*\_\_\_ was caught John<sub>caseless</sub>. (filtered by \*NP<sub>caseless</sub>)  
b. \*\_\_\_ was caught John<sub>governed case</sub>.  
(assumption: passive V cannot assign Governed Case)  
c. John<sub>subject case</sub> was caught *t*.

- But how about this case:

- (29) a. \*\_\_\_ has never been sat on this chair<sub>governed case</sub>. (we need EPP!)  
b. This chair has never been sat on.

↪ If we can make EPP do the job of \*NP<sub>caseless</sub>, (abstract) Case may be entirely superfluous.

- But there are cases that cannot be explained by EPP. E.g.

- (30) \*(For) John to win would be unlikely.

\* We anyway have to say that infinitival clauses in subject position has to have an overt *C for*. And maybe that's all we have to say?

#### Some further issues to settle

\* In many languages, the canonical 'subject case' is unavailable for subjects of non-finite clauses. Maybe, sometimes we still need to posit a finite-T related case? (like a lexical case, assigned by a head)

- (31) For him/\*he to leave would be smart.

\* In many languages, the canonical 'object case' is unavailable for low nominalizations (where verb is deverbalized). (voice/v related case?)

- (32) a. (Belediyenin) bina-**yı** yıkması iki saat sürdü.  
b. \*(Belediyenin) bina-**yı** yıkımı iki saat sürdü.