

NON CANONICAL, BUT STRUCTURAL

TOPIC: In many morphologically rich languages, case marking on internal arguments can "alternate" between the accusative/absolutive (*strong* Case, following de Hoop 1996) and a non-canonical/weak variant (instrumental, dative, genitive, ablative, etc.). Finnish (8, 9) is a typical example.

These configurations are supplemented by instances in which certain classes of verbs only allow non-canonical case (also labeled deviant, oblique, inherent, quirky, lexical, etc.), as seen in the Icelandic examples in (1, 5, 6)

A typology of non canonical Case

With few notable exceptions (de Hoop 1996, more recently Sigurðsson 2012), *weak* Case is traditionally analyzed as an instance of inherent, lexically-derived Case

weak Case licensing: generally insensitive to argument structure altering phenomena (Kurylowicz 1949, Jakobson 1956/1984, Chomsky 1981)

- however, non-canonical Case can be affected by argument structure altering processes, other than the 'passive'

- this can be seen in the Icelandic examples in (2), (3) and (4), or in Inuktitut (13a, b, c) and has been attested in other genetically unrelated languages (Blake 2000, Fox and Hopper 1994, Freidin and Sprouse 1991)

GOALS:

- Typology of non canonical case marking: morphological, syntactic, semantic, phylogenetic correlates
- What types of argument structure altering phenomena is non canonical Case sensitive to?
- Is non canonical Case reducible to a unified formal implementation?

Methodology: generative typology (Baker 1996, Bobaljik 2012, etc.)

SEVERAL OBJECT CASE ALTERNATING SYSTEMS

- Aspect-based (A): marked morphology on weak case
- Specificity – based (B): D(ifferential) O(b)ject M(arking)
- Case agreement vs. dedicated Case on predicates (C)

2 Finnish (A), Romanian (B), Russian (C)

Finnish: aspect-based split

Finnish indefinite vs. definite DP

(8a) Anne tapaa vieraita.
Anne meets guest.PL.PART.
'Anne meets some guests.'

(8b) Anne tapaa vieraat.
Anne meets guest.PL.ACC.
'Anne meets the guests.'

Finnish: atelic vs. telic eventuality

(9a) Anne rakensi taloa.
Anne built house. PART.
'Anne was building a/the house.'

(9b) Anne rakensi talon.
Anne built house. ACC.
'Anne built a/the house.'

Finnish dedicated predicative case

(10) Ravisti-i-n mato-n.
Shake-PST.1SG. carpet-ACC.SG.
clean.SG. - TRNSL
'I shake the carpet clean.'

Romanian: specificity-based split on animates

(11a) Văd un copil.
See I. SG. a child.
'I see some child or other.'

(11b) Îl văd pe un copil.
CLT.3.SG.M. see I. SG. DOM a child.
'I see a specific child.'

(11c) *Îl văd pe un tren.
CLT.3.SG.M. see I. SG. DOM a train.
'I see a specific train.'

Russian: Case agreement vs. dedicated Case on predicates

(12a) Ivan preži domoj iz bol'nicy.
Ivan-NOM.SG. arrived home from hospital. healthy-NOM.SG.
'Ivan arrived home from the hospital healthy.'

(12b) Ivan preži domoj iz bol'nicy.
Ivan-NOM.SG. arrived home from hospital. healthy-INS.TR.M.SG.
'Ivan arrived home from the hospital healthy.'

(12c) Ivan preži domoj iz bol'nicy.
Ivan-NOM.SG. arrived home from hospital. healthy-TRNSL.M.SG.
'Ivan arrived home from the hospital healthy.'

(12d) Ivan preži domoj iz bol'nicy.
Ivan-NOM.SG. arrived home from hospital. healthy-TRNSL.M.SG.
'Ivan arrived home from the hospital healthy.'

1 Icelandic - Quirky Case selecting predicates

(data from: Thráinsson 1979, p. 19, Yip et al. 1987, Sigurðsson 2012, Levin and Simpson 1981)

- Við lokuðum gluggunum.
We.NOM. closed.1.PL. windows.the.DAT.
(2) **Gluggunum** var lokað. *Regular passive*
Windows.the.DAT. was.DFT. closed.DFT.
'The windows were closed.'
- (3) **Gluggarnir** lokuðust. *Anticausative*
Windows.the.NOM. closed.3.PL.ST.
'The windows closed.'
- (4) **Gluggarnir** voru lengi lokaðir. *Stative passive*
Windows.the.NOM. were.3.PL.long closed.NOM.M.PL.
'The windows were closed for a long time.'
- (5) Ég vanti þín.
I.NOM. miss you.GEN.
'I miss you.'
- (6) DAT OBJECT
*kasta*_{DAT} 'throw, fling, hurl'
*þeyta*_{DAT} 'fling, flow'
*henda*_{DAT} 'throw away, discard'
*þrykja*_{DAT} 'kick or smash'
- (7) ACC OBJECT
*draga*_{ACC} 'pull, drag, draw'
*flytja*_{ACC} 'move, transport, carry'
*færa*_{ACC} 'move, bring'
*kekka*_{ACC} 'raise'

Svenonius' generalization (2002, 197): 'Accusative case in Icelandic is available when the two subevents introduced in a transitive verb phrase are temporally identified with each other, and dative case is available when the two parts are distinct.'

Main point: non canonical Case can be overridden in certain argument structure altering processes in Icelandic or Inuktitut; such facts also hold in other genetically unrelated languages, arguing against a purely lexical source for such licensing mechanisms

3 Inuktitut (A) and Romanian (B) – some diachronic remarks

INUKTITUT is an ergative language; in the antipassive, the internal argument is marked with the *-mik* oblique case (Spreng 2012)

- however, diachronic data from the South Baffin (SB) dialect shows that the *-mik* marker can be overridden by the absolutive when a stative (passive) is added to an antipassive

- (13a) Piita-up surak-taa.
Peter-ERG. radio.ABS. surak-taa.
'Peter is breaking the radio.'
- (13b) Piita surak-si-juq naalauti-mik.
Peter.ABS. break-AP-PART.3.SG. radio-mik. *Antipassive*
'Peter is breaking a radio.'
- (13c) Naalauti surak-si-tau-juq Piita-mut.
radio.ABS. break-AP-PASS-PART.3.SG. Peter-ALL. *Passive antipassive*
'The radio is being smashed by Peter.'

ROMANIAN: 19th century and early 20th century – three way contrasts (still visible in some dialectal variants, with an archaic flavor)

- (14a) Bate oamenii.
Beat.3.SG.PRES. people.
'S/he beats people.'
 - (14b) Îi bate pe oameni.
CLT.3.PL.M. beat.3.SG.PRES. DOM. people.
'S/he beats specific people.'
 - (14c) Bate la oameni.
Beat.3.SG.PRES. at people.
'S/he is beating people.'
- DOM: obligatory clitic doubling (an argumenthood diagnostic)**
- generally, if a language has two internal argument alternation systems, non -canonical Case has structural correlates in only one of them

4 Towards an analysis

Starting point - aspect-based splits and specificity-based splits follow from the same source: one of the members of the pair involves supplementary structure

- typologically, the imperfective tends to be structurally more complex than the perfective
- proposal: DOM derives from the presence of a functional projection with *evidential* semantics

Non canonical Case

- non canonical cases appear to exhibit striking similarities cross-linguistically
- typical semantic correlates cross-linguistically: stativity, atelicity, imperfectivity, non-animacy, non-humanness, exclusion of first/second person, etc.
- Aktionsart and grammatical aspect (telic/atelic, perfective/imperfective) are both too coarse to explain all the contrasts, as well as inadequate for languages in which the distinctions are not established along these lines (among which many native Australian languages, DOM-languages where object alternation is centered around the notion of specificity, etc.)

Non canonical licensing

Non-canonical marking has the same *structural* root: case assignment is a result of structure building operations and is sensitive to the size of the syntactic structure

Structure modification occurs as a result of a multiplicity of factors:

- introduction of functional projections
- interactions between core functional projections and the configurations found around them in the clausal spine
- hence non-canonical Case could be the reflex of the presence of functional heads which are not necessarily (eventuality) aspectual in nature

NON-CANONICAL CASE LICENSING: Assign non-canonical Case when the configuration contains supplementary material besides the minimal projections independently required to license the DP/NP.

- Building on the notion of default (aspectual, other functional) specifications (Comrie 1976)
- Case is an interpretable feature of functional heads (following Pesetsky and Torrego 2001, 2004), and structure building operations

Inherent, yet structural

- the reflex of marked vs. unmarked aspectual specifications
Accessive on object: unmarked perfective
Non-canonical case on object: marked imperfective
(imperfective implies more complex functional structure – Comrie 1976 and much subsequent formal work)
- the reflex of supplementary functional endings
a) default morphology on object: unmarked TAM
b) differential marking on object: marked TAM (evidentiality, other types of modality, specificity, ...)
- the reflex of added probes (person, animacy, etc.)

ARGUMENT STRUCTURE ALTERING PHENOMENA

CANONICAL-PASSIVIZATION	Structural case: YES
(GENITIVE OF) NEGATION	Oblique case: NO Structural case: YES
MIDDLE (MEDIO-PASSIVE)	Oblique case: NO Structural case: YES
IMPASSIVE PASSIVE	Oblique case: YES Structural case: YES
STATIC PASSIVE	Structural case: YES Oblique case: YES
ANTI-CAUSATIVIZATION	Structural case: YES Oblique case: NO

LANGUAGES EXAMINED

German (German, Icelandic)
Finnic-Ugric (Finnish, Estonian)
Altaic (Turkish)
Korean
Romance (Romanian, Spanish, French)
Navajo
Japanese
Hindi (Hindi-Urdu)
Slavic (Russian)
Georgian (Kartvelian)
Inuktitut (Eskimo-Aleut)

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