

On Silent Categories and Case

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Starting point:

Arguments are visible to A-relationships, a property of which the computational system is aware, or else it wouldn't engage them.

So they must have some specific property convenient only to the syntactic component and inconvenient to other levels of representation. As such, Spell-Out must ensure satisfaction of this property or else the derivation will crash.

This visibility property is typically correlated with Case, so I will assume that arguments are endowed with [uCase].¹

- ⇒ Case *values* are equivalent to engaging in an A-relationship
- ⇒ (c)overt status of argument has no bearing on Case checking and valuation

In effect, the A-relationship guarantees interaction with specific properties/features of some Probe. This feature complex guarantees a certain morphological instantiation of the vocabulary item inserted post-Spell-Out, as follows:

- NOMINATIVE value, *iff* the Probe is specified as [uD, u π]
- ACCUSATIVE value, *iff* the Probe is specified as [uD]
- default, *iff* no Probe

Syntax then “has no case features” (Sigurðsson 2007, 2008a), but A-relations in syntax enable specific Case values.²

¹ This is somewhat reminiscent of Chomsky's (1981) reduction of the Case Filter to the theta-criterion, where he states that a Caseless argument will violate the θ -criterion. However, given that non-arguments are also Case-marked (e.g. nominal predicates, adverbials, left dislocated constituents, *aso*), and that clauses (at least in some languages) are Case-resistant, [uCase] is perhaps best viewed as a property of some head (say, D), rather than locus of structural insertion (i.e., as argument, adjunct or predicate). Nonetheless, the focus here is not on all instances of Case marking (much of which is probably default, à la Schütze 1997, 2001, Sigurðsson 2008b).

² A line of reasoning that is hugely indebted to the work of Marantz (2000).



- phi-features are NOT compulsory for structural Case valuation, but the phase head is;
- T lacks an intrinsic NOM value; whether lexical subjects have NOM or ACC values is strictly dependent on the presence of a phi-Probe;
- this phi-Probe ($u\phi$) may be encoded on a verbal head (e.g., T, Aspect) or a nominal head (i.e., null expletive *pro*);
- null expletive *pro* is a parametrized UG primitive with a role in Case valuation;
- No argument engaged in an A-relationship has ‘default’ Case;
- PRO participates in Case-checking mechanisms on a par with any argument

1. Phi-features (agreement) as a Case prerequisite

Standard since George & Kornfilt (1981) and Chomsky (1981, et seq.).

More recently: Branigan (2005), Chomsky (2006, 2008), Landau (2004), Schütze (1997, 2001).

Chomsky's Feature Inheritance Model (Chomsky, 2006, 2008, Richards 2007) :

- A-related features (EPP/uD and $u\phi$) are inherited from the Phase head
- T and v act as Probes derivatively
- $u\phi$ acts as a Case Probe (i.e., no [uCase] on the Probe)

So, in this model:

- ϕ -complete T Probes are synonymous to lexical subjects with NOM Case
- ϕ -complete v Probes are synonymous to DP objects valued ACC
- ϕ -incomplete Probes cannot license Case

However :

- Unclear what properties of T and v would license this split (Sigurdsson 2007) or why ϕ -completeness matters (Carstens 2001, Pestesky & Torrego, 2004b).
- Besides, neither T nor v are ϕ -complete, and, in fact, given the lack of agreement between v and the argument it Case-marks, there really is no evidence that v has $u\phi$ (see also Baker et al 2005).³

³ By ‘agreement’ here, I refer strictly to phi-feature agreement and not cases of object agreement that reflect on the definiteness of the DP object (e.g. Hungarian, Farkas p.c., Chichewa and Bantu more generally, Baker 2008, Slave, Rice 1989, Ndebele, Alboiu & Avery 2008). I also discount Iroquoian type languages, where object DPs are adjuncts rather than arguments (Baker 1996).

- ✓ What seems to matter is **person (π)** agreement as past participles and adjectival predicates cannot assign Case, despite cases of gender and number agreement.⁴

Two Empirical complications for [u ϕ] as a Case prerequisite:

1.1 overt subjects in non-finite (uninflected) phasal domains, with variation for NOM or ACC values, at both a macro- and a micro-parametric level:

A. strictly Nominative: infinitives and gerunds in most Ibero-Romance, Greek gerunds (Sitaridou 2002), West Flemish infinitives (Haegeman 1985), absolute participial constructions in Hungarian (Liptak, p.c.), Albanian (Kallulli, p.c.), Italian Aux-to-Comp (Rizzi 1982, Belletti 1990), etc.

- (1) a. \hat{i} punea la calculator [CP *(pentru) a avea
CL.3PL.M.ACC put.3SG at computer [CP *(for) INF have
tu / *tine liniște] ’ (Romanian)
2.SG.NOM-*ACC quiet]
‘She would leave them at the computer for you to have peace and quiet.’
- b. [CP Fiind **noi** gata cu toții], am pornit la drum.
[being.GER we.NOM ready with all] 1PL started on way
‘Given that we were all ready, we started on our way.’ (Romanian)
- c. [CP Odată (**fata / ea**) deșteptată (**fata / ea**),
[CP once girl-the.NOM / she awoken.3FSG, girl-the.NOM / she]
mama puse de mîncare. (Romanian)
mother-the put.PAST.3SG of food
‘The girl having awoken, mother started preparing some food.’
- d. [CP *(Mee) ik da te zeggen], hee-se dat hus
[CP *(with) I.NOM that to say] has-she that house
gekocht. (West Flemish, adapted from Haegeman 1985:125)
bought
‘Because of my saying that she has bought that house.’
- e. [CP Avendo **Gianni / (lei)** chiuso il dibattito], la riunione
[CP having Gianni / (3SGF.NOM) closed the debate] the meeting
è finita prima. (Italian, adapted from Belletti 1990: 98)
is finished before
‘Gianni (Her) having closed the debate, the meeting ended early.’

⁴ Uriagereka (2006, 2008) also focuses on the relevance of π in relationship to Case.

In tensed (personal) infinitive clause adjuncts (1a,d), gerund adjuncts (1b,e) and absolute participial constructions (1c), lexical **Nominative subjects** are licit in the absence of inflected T!

B. strictly **Accusative**: English infinitive and gerund clauses, infinitives in Irish (McCloskey 1985), Latin (Wyngaerd 1994), and Ancient Greek (Sevdali 2005, 2006):

- (2) a. [CP For **him** to listen to that talk] was awkward.
- b. [CP **Him** baking the pie] pleased everyone.
- c. Fe:mi [CP se men egno:kenai peri touto:n]
 say-I you-ACC to know-PRF about these-GEN]
 [CP eme de suneire:kenai tais sais epithumiais]
 [me-ACC to go along-PRF the your wishes-DAT]
 ‘I say that since you knew about these things, I went along with your wishes.’ (Isokrates, *Ad Philippum III*, 3:3-4. In Sevdali 2005: 134)
- d. Cánathaobh í a bheith chomh deacair?
 Why it.ACC be.INFIN so difficult
 ‘Why should it be so difficult?’ (Irish, McCloskey 1985: 194)
- e. Me interest [CP te studere].
 me.ABL it is good [you.ACC study]
 ‘It is to my advantage that you study.’ (Latin, Wyngaerd 1994: 124)

C. either **Accusative** or **Nominative**:

➤ Old Italian infinitives, with micro-variation being sensitive to word order, (i.e., postverbal subjects strictly Nominative (Mensching 2000:20):

- (3) a. Tu non ti rallegrì [CP aver io incontrata una morte]
 you not CL delight [to-have I found a death]
 ‘You are not glad that I have found death.’
 (Old Italian, D’Azeglio, ch. 18, p222, cf. Schwehendener 1923:72)
- b. Negar non voglio esser possibile, [CP lui essere beato ..
 to-deny not (I) want to-be possible **him** to-be blessed
 ‘I do not want to deny that it is possible that he is blessed.’
 (Old Italian, Boccaccio, Dec., I, 1; cf. Schwehendener 1923:82)⁵

⁵ To avoid any confusion given that in Old Italian *lui* was also sometimes used for the NOM (e.g. in Dante’s work), Mensching (2000:208) points out in Footnote 6 that Boccaccio strictly distinguishes between *lui/lei* (ACC) and *egli/ella* (NOM) in the Decameron.

➤ Latin gerunds, with typically ACC subjects, allow postverbal NOM (Mensching 2000: 202):

- (4) [In convertendo Dominus captivitatem Sion] facti sumus
 [in undoing Lord.NOM captivity.ACC Zion] made (we) are
 sicut consolati. (Vulgar Latin, Ps, 125, 1, cf. Kaulen 1904:299)
 like dreaming
 ‘When the Lord lets the prisoners of Zion go, we become like dreamers.’

1.2 covert subjects triggering Case concord on various types of elements (e.g., predicates, quantifiers, participles) or ‘overt PRO’:⁶

Latin and Italian, DAT DPs control ACC PRO only:

- (5) Civi Romani_i licet [_{CP} PRO_i esse Gaditanum]
 citizen Roman.DAT it-is-permitted [be Gadian.ACC]
 ‘A Roman citizen is allowed to be a citizen of Gades.’
 (Latin, Pepicello 1977:476 in Wyngaerd 1994:125)
- (6) (Io) gli_i ordinai [di PRO_i essere me nel film]
 I him.DAT ordered [COMP to-be me.ACC in-the film]
 ‘I asked him to play me in that movie.’ (Italian, Cecchetto&Oniga 2004:145)

Icelandic

→ If no Case transmission & no embedded quirky Case, OC PRO is NOM (7a);

→ as is NOC PRO (7b).

- (7) a. Hún bað Ólaf_i [að PRO_i fara bara einn
 she.NOM asked Olaf.ACC [to go just alone.NOM
 í veisluna]
 to party.the
 ‘She asked Olaf to just go alone to the party.’ (Sigurðsson 2008a: 414)
- b. [að PRO vera ríkur] er ágætt.
 to be rich.NOM is nice (Sigurðsson 2008a: 417)

Ancient Greek

→ NOC PRO is ACC (8).

⁶ I assume that PRO bears structural or quirky Case and not ‘null Case’ (see Baltin and Barrett 2002, Cecchetto & Oniga 2004, Landau 2007, Schütze 1997, Sigurðsson 1991, 2008a, a.o., but contra Chomsky 1982, Chomsky & Lasnik 1995, Martin 2001, Uriagereka 2008). In addition, I do not discuss cases where PRO bears the Case of its controller as in these instances it is arguably difficult to maintain Case-assignment within the non-finite clause. Presumably, some sort of Case transmission mechanism is at stake, implementable in a variety of ways (e.g. Hornstein 1999, Landau 1999, 2007, Pires 2007, a.o.).

a. Subject clitics: In Friulian these are required in finite clauses but are illicit in gerunds, even if Nominative subjects are okay

(12) (*E) Vint Marie / je ciacaraat cun ti, e ha
 SCL having Mary / she spoken with you, SCL have
 dicideut di cumprà el livri.
 decided of buy.INF the book
 ‘Having spoken with you, Mary decided to buy the book.’ (Paoli, p.c.)

- if SCL are agreement markers (Rizzi 1986), specifically $u\phi$ (Roberts 2006), (12) shows $u\phi$ is absent on *uninflected* T heads

b. PCC: Romanian clitic ordering is sensitive to Person ranking ($\pi_1 > \pi_2$) and Case ranking (DAT > ACC), but π ranking disappears in non-finite contexts (Săvescu-Ciucivara 2007)

(13) a. *Ți m - a prezentat Ion la petrecere.
 2nd DAT 1st ACC- has introduced John at party
 “John has introduced you to me to the party”

b. Dîndu- ți- mă de nevastă, tata a câștigat mulți bani.
 Giving.GER- 2nd DAT- 1st ACC of wife, father has gained much money
 “Giving me to you in marriage, my father has gained a lot of money”.

- ✓ non-finite C lacks [$u\phi$];
- ✓ structural Case needs the phase head and not phi-features;
- ✓ (C)-T lacks an intrinsic NOM value

▪ **Is [$u\phi$] still relevant for Case?**

⇒ Yes,

as there is various cross-linguistic evidence that ϕ -features, with π being crucial, play a role in NOM Case assignment (Alboiu 2006, 2007, Szabolcsi 2007).

➤ Romanian Vs of liking and disliking take Dative subjects; the postverbal object can only surface as NOM if agreement is present:

(14) a. Îți plac fetele / ele (/ *de fete) ?
 2SG.DAT like.3PL girl.PL-the.NOM / they (/of girl PL.ACC)

b. Îți place de fete (/ * fetele / *ele)?
 2SG.DAT like.3SG of girl PL.ACC (/ girl.PL-the.NOM / they)
 ‘Do you like the(se) girls?’

- Schütze (1997, 132-133) discusses Belfast English data from Henry (1995).
- (15) a. Usuns is happy.
 b. *We takes the bus.
 c. Them's no good, are they / *are them?

=> lack of [$u\phi$] on T forces ACC subjects, presence of [$u\phi$] forces NOM subjects.

- Khoekhoe (Central Khoisan, Namibia) interrogatives lack phi-features & both subject and object are marked with the **-a** morpheme (ACC here, but descriptively termed 'oblique')

- (16) axa-p-a ko !^xo ani-s-a ?
 child-M.SG-OBL/ACC RCT.PST catch bird-F.SG-OBL/ACC
 'Did the boy catch the bird?' (Compton 2005:11)⁸

Proposal A:

Case spell-out:

- a. NOM, *iff* the Probe is specified as [$uD, u\pi$]
 b. ACC, *iff* the Probe is specified as [uD]

=> a ϕ -complete Probe: crucial role in NOM Case *valuation*

Focusing on non-finite CP domains, our task is to account (at least) for:

- NOM versus ACC subject instantiation
 ➤ Basis for this parametrization

However, 2 questions to sort out prior to developing any analysis:

- ⇒ Could Case be Tense?
 ⇒ Could Case have a 'default' value in phi-deficient contexts?

2. Tense and Case values

Since Stowell (1982): C-T yields 'non-anaphoric' tense (dependent or independent, in the sense of Landau 2004), while 'anaphoric' T is NEVER selected by C.

(other references where Tense is a C attribute: Dobrovie-Sorin 1994, Farkas 1992, Krapova 2001, Roberts & Roussou 2002, Varlokosta 1994, a.o.)

=> assume temporal deixis / Tense value on T only if selected by C
 (Chomsky 2006, 2008)

⁸ Khoekhoe lacks agreement morphology, 'RCT' stands for 'recent' past and '!^x' denotes an alveolar click with a velar fricative manner/release (Richard Compton, p.c.).

So, one possibility is to argue for Tense as a Case prerequisite (see Alboiu 2005, Haerberli 2002, Martin 2001, Mathieu 2006, Pesetsky & Torrego 2001, 2004a, Svenonius 2001)

Problems:

(i) Hungarian possessives (Szabolcsi 1983, Kenesei 1986)

(17) a te ház-ad
 the you.NOM house-SG
 'your house' (Kenesei 1986: 115)

- agreement obligatory but no Tense

=> what is relevant is $u\phi$ and DP (i.e., **phasal**) status

(ii) Romanian gerunds lack Tense (Avram 2003)

- semantically denote events; are verbal in nature but cannot combine with auxiliaries (i.e. T) or Negation and any temporal adverbs denote time of event not time of reference

- allow for epistemic adverbs & topicalized subjects

=> CP (i.e., **phasal**) domains with Aspect but no T

=> **Temporal deixis in CP domains is epiphenomenal to Case** and vice-versa

3. On 'default' Case

Schütze (1997, 2001): not all morphological case forms are a reflex of syntactic abstract Case

⇒ adverbials, predicates, vocatives, left dislocated constituents, etc. have 'default' Case

Q: So could we be dealing with instances of default Case?

A: No --

- Conceptual issues:

If Case is determined by a syntactic mechanism, it cannot be default (Schütze 2001).⁹

⇒ Given that A-relationships are properties of the computational system, resulting Case values cannot be arbitrary

⁹ Schütze (2001:4) makes the excellent point that default Case cannot be a syntactic feature or else the Case Filter would be vacuous.

- Empirical issues:

3.1 Icelandic (Sigurðsson 1991, 2008a)

Non-finite **NOM** is **structural** and NOT DEFAULT (contra Boeckx and Hornstein 2006):¹⁰

- (18) Þessi saga var skrifuð til [að PRO vera lesin/*lesið].
 this story.NOM.F.SG was written for to be read.NOM.F.SG/*DFT
 (Sigurðsson 2007: 8)

- DEFAULT agreement: only with dislocated & vocative DPs (i.e., DEFAULT NOM)

- (19) Strákurinn, við hann var ekki dansað/*dansaður
 the.boy.NOM with him.ACC was not danced.DFLT/*NOM.SG.M
 ‘The boy, nobody danced with him.’ (Sigurðsson 1991: 338)

3.2 Old Italian

Micro-parametric variation is systematic and tied to linearization such that postverbal subjects have to be NOM (Mensching 2000).

⇒ **Need a principled account for NOM and ACC values**

3.3 Latin

Left-dislocations in Latin are NOM => NOM is default (Schütze 2001:21).

But overt subjects of non-finite domains are typically ACC

⇒ Difficult (if not impossible) to argue for both NOM and ACC as default

3.4 Ancient Greek

Examples of NOM subjects in AG absolute constructions; rare, but available

- (20) [Entautha machomenoi kai basileus kai
 there fighting.PRTC.PERS.NOM.M and king.NOM and
 Kuros] Ktesias legei (Xenophon, Anabasis: I, 8.27)
 Cyrus.NOM Ktesias-nom says
 ‘While the king and Cyrus were fighting there, Ktesias says ...’

4. ANALYSIS: The role of null expletives

4.1 Probe correlate

Recall assumption that:

- phi-features [uφ] are absent from non-finite C

¹⁰ See also Bobaljik and Landau (2007) and Landau (2007).

Common observation (e.g. Ledgeway 1998, Sitaridou 2002) is that:

- NOM subject in uninflected clauses allowed only in null subject/*pro*-drop languages (NSLs);
- but West Flemish is not *pro*-drop (Haegeman, p.c.) --

Further support: various Western dialects of English (e.g. Newfoundland English, working-class Somerset English) permit lexical NOM subjects:

(21) For **he** to listen to that talk was awkward. (Newfoundland English, Ruth King, p.c.)

These dialects are not *pro*-drop but have null expletives (Somerset English, Ihalainen 1991: 205):

- (22) a. Ø Was old chaps called Toutes use to do it.
 b. You could hardly see ‘cause Ø was so much dust around.

Table 1 DATA SUMMARY for non-finite domains

Language	Structural Case on overt subject of non-finites	Evidence for independently Case-marked PRO	Null Subject Language <i>pro</i> [D, iφ]	Null Expletive Language <i>pro</i> [D, uφ]
Ancient Greek	ACC, NOM	ACC	✓	✓
Modern Greek	NOM	-	✓	✓
Latin	ACC, NOM	ACC	✓	✓
Old Italian	ACC, NOM	-	✓	✓
Mod. Italian	NOM	-	✓	✓
Romanian	NOM	-	✓	✓
Spanish	NOM	-	✓	✓
West Flemish	NOM	-	*	✓
Newfoundland English	NOM	-	*	✓
Hungarian	NOM	-	✓	✓
Albanian	NOM	-	✓	✓
Icelandic	*	NOM	*	*
English	ACC	ACC	*	*
Irish	ACC	-	*	?

- lexical subjects with NOM Case values presuppose a **null expletive**¹¹

¹¹ Icelandic has NOM PRO but no null expletive and no NOM lexical subjects, an issue I return to later.

Note that there is little evidence for a null expletive in Irish: either the subject DP occupies Spec,TP and V is higher (Noonan 1994) or Spec,TP is occupied by the predicate (Oda 2002).

➤ Crucially, NELs is a prerequisite, not a guarantee for NOM --

Question: But why? What is the role of the null expletive?

Answer: Null expletive acts as a **Probe** –

Proposal B:

Where available, *pro*, as $u\phi$ (i.e., null expletive), acts as a phi-complete Probe => ensures NOM lexical subjects

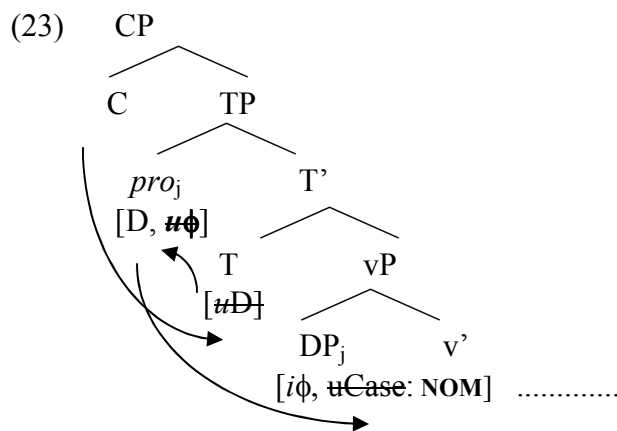
So, in languages with null expletives, EPP/uD on T may be satisfied by a *phi-deficient* nominal.

In non-finite CP domains, see (23), T lacks $[u\phi]$, so once *pro* checks off EPP ($[uD]$) on T, T will not Probe further for the thematic subject.

BUT: the expletive will --

→ $u\phi$: satisfies the Chomskyan ‘Probe requirement’ (i.e., ensures an A-chain, hence a Case value)

→ $u\phi$: guarantees NOM, as opposed to ACC Case spell-out on thematic subject



4.2 on *pro*: $[D, u\phi]$

Questions:

(i) what guarantees *pro* in the lexical array?

- minimum premise: $[D, u\phi]$ as part of the mental lexicon

Typically, in Ls that are structurally pragmatically oriented (Tomić 2006);

Why?

Because this ensures that contentful DPs are free to occupy structural positions with various semantic and pragmatic relevance

- see, e.g., Alboiu (2002) for arguments that Romanian exploits syntactic structure to encode sentence pragmatics)

=> [D, u ϕ] is a formal device required by “discourse conditions” or “communicative intentions” (Rizzi & Shlonski 2005)

✓ Null expletive *pro* is a parametrized UG primitive with a role in pragmatic encoding and (by proxy) Case valuation

(ii) does the ‘null’ status of the expletive have any bearing on the issues at hand?
- shouldn’t, as phonetic features are not visible to the syntactic component and perhaps not even available prior to Spell-Out (as in Distributed Morphology)

For example, German *es* and Icelandic *það* cannot be pronounced S-internally (see Cardinaletti 1997 & (24)). However, in both languages, these are specified for [3,SG,N], so not featurally deficient. Even if silenced (i.e., S-internally), there is no [u ϕ] Probe associated with these forms. ¹²

- (24) a. Es wurde getanzt.
b. Wurde (*es) getanzt.

Most overt expletives have various degrees of ϕ -specifications (crucially, a π feature, see 25) and possibly deixis (see Kayne 2006 on *there*) => different syntax

- (25) [D, u ϕ] [D, π :3, #:SG, g:N] [D, π :3] [D, π :3, u#, ug]
pro *il, it, es, það* *there* *von* (Czech)

4.3 Evidence for *pro*?

Expletive *pro* was the norm for NSLs in the 80s, early 90s (Burzio 1986, Chomsky 1981, 1982, Rizzi 1982, a.o.), but later questioned and/or eliminated due largely to the Minimalist program (Alexiadou & Anagnostopoulou 1998, Manzini & Savoia 1997, 2002) and the eeriness of silent categories;

¹² Following Cardinaletti (1997), I take these to be expletives generated in Spec,TP (IP) and moved to Spec,CP.

→ however, re-emerged recently with both empirical and conceptual support (Alboiu 2005, 2007, Cardinaletti 2004, Rezac 2004, Rizzi & Shlonski 2005, Torrego 1998). Though see Epstein & Seely (2006) who renounce the EPP altogether --

- Empirical evidence for *pro* in the lexical array of Romanian:

(i) specificity requirement on preverbal subjects (Alboiu 2002, Cornilescu 1997, 2000, Dobrovie-Sorin 1994) => arguably Topics (unless contrastive Focus)

AND

VS(O) inthetic sentences, regardless of predicate type

(ii) Binding

(26) a. După expoziție (i)-a fost înapoiat
 after exhibition (DAT.CL.3SG) -AUX.3SG been returned.3SG
 [pictorului său_j]_k [fiecare tablou]_j.
 [painter-DAT his_j]_k [each painting]_j-NOM
 ‘After the exhibit, each painting was returned to its own artist.’

b. *[Pictorului său_j]_k după expoziție i-a fost
 [painter-DAT his_j]_k after exhibition DAT.CL.3SG -AUX.3SG been
 înapoiat <[pictorului său_j]_k> [fiecare tablou]_j
 returned.3SG [painter-DAT his_j]_k [each painting]_j-NOM
 ‘After the exhibit, each painting was returned to its own artist.’

→ a null expletive in Spec,TP only solution; see (27)¹³

(27) [CP C [TP *pro*_j T [DP-DAT POSS_j]_k DP_j]
 [D, $\#$ φ] [iT, $\#$ D, $\#$ φ] [D, iφ, $\#$ Case:NOM]

Note: Datives don't passivize in Romanian => opaque domains

- Conceptual evidence: Rizzi & Shlonski (2005)

“**Criteriaal freezing**” (Rizzi 2003, in R&S, 2005:1): “An element moved to a position dedicated to some scope-discourse interpretive property, a criteria position, is frozen in place.”

Given (28), R&S (2005:11), expletives are assumed to enable thematic subjects to obviate criteriaal freezing:

¹³ Note that binding of DP_j by its associate is ruled out (see Chomsky 1995: 275, Den Dikken 1995).

- (28) a. *What do you think that t_{what} is in the box?
 b. What do you think that there is t_{what} in the box?

Consequently, (29), R&S (2005:11), is taken to contain a null expletive, *pro*:

- (29) Chi credi [che [*pro* Subj vincerà t_{chi}]]
 ‘Who do you think that will win.’

5. Variation within NELs

- Macro-parameter: NEL (e.g. Romanian) versus non-NELs (e.g. English)
- Micro-parameteric variation: NOM – ACC variation (e.g. Latin, Old Italian): expected because the null expletive is a necessary but insufficient condition

Claim here is that:

- *uninflected* phasal domains permit NOM lexical subjects only in Ls with null expletives
- *as long as* null expletive satisfies T’s EPP

Old Italian (OI_t)

Mensching (2000): OI_t infinitives permitted both ACC and NOM subjects; *however*, preverbal subjects mostly ACC, while postverbal subjects strictly NOM.

Assuming that discourse conditions determine how EPP is checked, feature checking for (3a) and (3b), repeated here in (30), is schematically shown in (31)

- (30) a. Tu non ti rallegrì [_{CP} aver io incontrata una morte]
 you not CL delight [to-have I found a death]
 ‘You are not glad that I have found death.’

(Old Italian, D’Azeglio, ch. 18, p222, cf. Schwehender 1923:72)

- b. Negar non voglio esser possibile, [_{CP} lui essere beato ..
 to-deny not (I) want to-be possible **him** to-be blessed
 ‘I do not want to deny that it is possible that he is blessed.’

- (31) a. infinitives with *pro* (representation identical to the NELs situation):
- | | | | | |
|-------------------|---|--------------|------------------|----------|
| [_{CP} C | [_{TP} <i>pro</i> _j | T | DP _j | <v>....] |
| | [D, uφ] | [INF, v, #D] | [#Case: NOM, iφ] | |
- b. infinitives without *pro* (representation identical to the non-NELs situation):
- | | | | | | | |
|-------------------|-----------------|------------------|-------------|--------------------|-----|-------|
| [_{CP} C | [_{TP} | DP _i | T | <DP _i > | <v> |] |
| | | [#Case: ACC, iφ] | [iT, v, #D] | | | |

Note, that in principle, postverbal NOM DP in (29a) can further undergo topicalization, but given the pragmatic role of *pro* these cases are scarce (Mensching mentions 2 such examples in his data). Look at (32):

- (32) a. perchè io disso [io aver trovato iscritto ...]
 because I said [I to-have found written
 “because I said that I had found that it was written ...” (OIT)
 (Mensching 2000:133, Malispini, ch. 42, 13th c; cf. Diez 882:946)

b. infinitives with *pro* and subject fronting

[_{CP} C	[_{TopP}	DP _j	[_{TP}	<i>pro</i> _j	X	<DP _j >	<v>....]]]
		[#Case: NOM, iφ]		[D, uφ]	[INF, v, #D]		

6. Back to PRO

So, assuming that pragmatics will block an expletive *pro* in derivations with PRO subjects, we would not expect NOM.¹⁴

Recall, however, that Icelandic PRO has a structural NOM value –
 How?

First, let's establish the properties of PRO

Suppose that for a D to be licit in an argument position, a referential index is required (or else null expletives could be arguments, contrary to fact).¹⁵

→ PRO = [D, uCase, uφ, uR]¹⁶

¹⁴ Note that when the subject is PRO, the silence of this DP makes it uninteresting for discourse properties, so *pro* cannot be part of the Numeration.

¹⁵ Okay, I take this term loosely, as clearly in sentences like:

Every woman sat on the chair in front of her, under the anaphoric reading *her* is a bound variable without reference to any specific individual. But the idea is that some sort of indexing to yield semantic saliency is required and that this property has a morpho-syntactic correlate, say [uR].

▪ Brief look at English:

- (33) a. [CP For her to give up now] was unthinkable.
 b. [CP (*For) PRO_{arb} / * her to give up now] was unthinkable.

(33a) is straightforward and yields (34):

- (34) for-to CP infinitives

[CP C	DP _i	T	\langle DP _i \rangle v ...]
<i>for</i>	[u Case: ACC, iφ]	[iT, , INF- u D] <i>to</i>	V

(33b), less so –

However, suppose that the absence of overt C indicates a merged C/T projection

Crucial to merged heads (see Culicover 1999, Giorgi & Pianesi 1997, Haider 1988):

- i. feature sharing & ii. absence of an intervening specifier

Specifically:

- In the absence of any A-related features (i.e., [uD] in non-finites as there is nothing else), C and T do not project independently.

Crucially, given that C has no A-related features to transfer to T:

- *nothing in the T domain probes for the DP subject*

However, PRO seems to undergo raising

- (35) John promised his psychologist [PRO to seem to himself/*herself [\langle PRO \rangle to be competent] before leaving therapy]. (example offered by LI reviewer)

=> **PRO will ALWAYS dislocate to the left edge of the phase** to become accessible to Probes in higher domains.¹⁷

⇒ dislocates to the left edge to try and satisfy its feature-al deficiencies

⇒ Note that under the proposed analysis, this is not an instance of A-movement, so [uCase] is not checked and valued.¹⁸

¹⁶ That [uR] (i.e., Referential indexing) and [uφ] are distinct properties is clear given sentences like, *Todd_i saw him_{j/*i} in the car*, where *Todd* and *him* display identical φ-features. See Baker (2008:31) for more on the relationship between referential indexing and phi-features.

¹⁷ Alternatively see Manzini & Roussou (2000), Landau (1999, 2007).

¹⁸ Marcel den Dikken (p.c.) points out that (ia) might be a counter-argument as Baltin (1995) argues that quantifiers cannot be floated from A-bar positions. Let us consider all data in (i):

(i) a. They promised their psychologist [to all see a doctor].

Assuming that Spell-Out checks off all uninterpretable features (à la Branigan 2005 who proposes such a mechanism for phi-features):

→ [uCase] is satisfied at Spell-Out and the **default** morphology is inserted (i.e., ACC for English, NOM for German, aso, Schütze 1997, 2001), as seen in (36).¹⁹

(36) Prepositionless CP infinitives

[_{CP}	PRO	C/T	<PRO>	v ...]
	[D, u Case: ACC-DEF, uφ, uR]	[iT, INF]	<i>to</i>	V

However, it is clear that in cases where C and T are split, an A-relationship is established and a structural Case value guaranteed (see 37).²⁰

(37) a. **Who(m)** did they decide to be the best?

b.	[_{CP} <who(m)>	C <who(m)>	T	<who(m)>	v ...]
	[D, u Case: ACC, iφ, iwh, uOP]		[iT, , INF, u D]	<i>to</i>	

- Next: Icelandic (no lexical NOM but structural NOM PRO)

Scenarios:

- (i) Icelandic non-finite C contains [uφ]:
 - ruled out by the absence of any lexical NOM --
- (ii) only certain non-finite C in Icelandic maintains its [uφ]:
 - but why? And, when?
- ✓ (iii) no [uφ] on Icelandic non-finite C

Idea: presence of complementizer **að** indicates that C is distinct from T²¹

b. [to all leave now] would be unthinkable.

c.*[All to leave now] would be unthinkable

Crucially, Baltin (1995) argues that PRO does not move out of VP as *to* does not have a Case feature. Given that floating quantifiers need immediately c-commanding subjects, the facts in (i) are thus explained. However, (35) shows PRO movement. Perhaps the facts in (i) can be reconciled with a movement analysis of PRO if the locus of movement is neither A- nor A-bar (i.e., Spec,CP/TP). PRO c-commands the quantifier in (ia,b) but given that movement to the phase edge is not purely Case-related, *all* cannot tag along (ic).

¹⁹ I remain agnostic as to whether Spell-Out is equally capable of erasing [uCase] on fully referential DPs.

²⁰ Note that the evidence for Case on PRO in English seem to point to an ACC value, rather than a NOM one as hinted in Baltin and Barrett (2002).

²¹ That is of category C can be seen from the following example:

- | | | | | | | | | |
|-----|---|-------|-----------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------------------|
| (i) | Jón | segir | að | Mariu | hefur | Helgi | aldri | kysst. |
| | John | says | that | Mary | has | Helgi | never | kissed |
| | 'John says that Helgi has never kissed Mary.' | | | | | | | (Thráinsson 1986) |

- ⇒ C has the A-related [uD] feature or else it would not project independently:
 - *PRO is probed, so engaged in an A-relationship.*

A logophoric operator, controlled by discourse (or a matrix argument), is present with PRO;

→ logophoric OP has a human orientation, hence a variable person feature ($\alpha\pi$).

→ Given requirement of Spec-Head agree, this feature is also a property of C and, by inheritance, T

Consequently,

- (38) a. [að PRO vera ríkur] er ágætt.
 to be rich.NOM is nice
- b. [CP **OP_{LOG}** C PRO ← T <PRO> v]
 [$\alpha\pi$] að [$\alpha\pi$] [D, μ Case: NOM, $u\phi$, uR] [iT , INF, μD , $\alpha\pi$]
-

Note:

→ **OP_{LOG}** as a π guarantor explains the absence of lexical subjects in Icelandic infinitives.

→ **OP_{LOG}** is present cross-linguistically. However, it can only guarantee a NOM PRO in the presence of an A-related Probe (or else PRO is not involved in a syntactic relationship and default Case ensues).

Summing up discussion on PRO:

Spec,TP projects independently:

⇒ T Probes

⇒ PRO has Case-checked and assigned a value:

→NOM (Icelandic)

→ACC (English, when a wh-operator replaces the LOG-operator)

Spec,TP fails to project independently:

⇒ PRO has Case-checked at Spell-Out, so default morphological case

→ ACC (English, possibly Ancient Greek, Latin)

→ NOM (German)

7. Empirical Predictions

→ analysis predicts Ls with identical Case values for both subject and object DPs given that NOM and ACC values are not intrinsic properties of T and v, respectively.

(i) ACC on both subject and object:

Imbabura Quechua, a Nominative-Accusative SOV language, shows Accusative marking on both the subject and the object in desiderative clauses.

- (39) a. Ñuca-Ø can-da ricu-ni/*-ngui.
I-NOM you-ACC see-1SG/-2SG
'I see you.'
- b. Ñuca-ta can-da ricu-naya-n/*-ni/*-ngui
I-ACC you-ACC see-DES-IMP/-1SG/-2SG
'I would like to see you.'
(Cole & Jake 1978:74)

(ii) NOM on both subject and object:

Newfoundland English data, Japanese (Ura 2000), Georgian (Baker 2008)

- (40) a. **She** pushed **I** / me down.
b. Pass **he** / him over to me. (Ruth King, p.c.)

=> C-T and v*-V lack intrinsic NOM and ACC, respectively
--

8. Conclusions

- ⇒ Phi-features are not required for Case-checking/syntactic licensing
- ⇒ given that A-related features are phasal properties (Chomsky 2006 inter alia), it follows that syntactic licensing is a property of the phase
- ⇒ lexical subjects in non-finite domains receive systematic Case values (and never default)
- ⇒ silent arguments (e.g. PRO) are always Case candidates (by virtue of being arguments)
- ⇒ abstract/structural Case is equivalent to an A-relationship (which, incidentally, does not presuppose a Spec-Head relationship)
- ⇒ in the absence of an A-relationship, 'default' case ensues
- ⇒ a priori Case values on [+/- finite] C or v do not exist:
 - π probing domains in search of a nominal Goal, assign NOM values
 - probing domains in search of a nominal Goal, assign ACC

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