

1 Case Theory

Why are some of the examples in (1) good and the others bad?

- (1) a. He saw me. (*He saw I, *Him saw I, *Him saw me)
b. I saw him. (*I saw he, *Me saw he, *Me saw him)

- because the pronouns are in the wrong **case**.

Morphological case in English:

(2)

features	Nominative	Accusative	Genitive
Proper Name	Jane	Jane	Jane's
NP	the man	the man	the man's
1sg	I	me	my
2sg	you	you	your
3sg.m	he	him	his
3sg.f	she	her	her
3sg.n	it	it	its
1pl	we	us	our
2pl	you	you	your
3pl	they	them	their

Morphological case in English appears only on pronouns and not on proper names or lexical NPs.

This is not the case across languages. In many languages, case is overtly marked on all NPs.

The distinction between case and pre/postpositions is not clear in many languages e.g. Hindi.

(3)

features	Nominative	Ergative	Accusative	Instrumental	Genitive
Proper Name	Maya	Maya ne	Maya ko	Maya se	Maya kaa/ii/e
NP.Sg	vo lar̄kaa	us lar̄ke ne	us lar̄ke ko	us lar̄ke se	us lar̄ke kaa/ii/e
NP.Pl	vo/e lar̄ke	un lar̄ko ne	un lar̄ko ko	un lar̄ko se	un lar̄ko kaa/ii/e
1Sg	mĒ	mĒ ne	mujh ko/mujh-e	mujh se	meraa/ii/e
1Pl	ham	ham ne	ham ko/ham-e	ham se	hamaaraa/ii/e
2Sg	tuu	tuu ne	tujh ko/tujh-e	tujh se	teraa/ii/e
2Pl	tum	tum ne	tumko/tumh-ē	tum se	tumhaaraa/ii/e
3Sg	vo	us ne	us ko/us-e	us se	us kaa/ii/e
3Pl	vo/e	us ne	us ko/us-e	us se	us kaa/ii/e

1.1 Where does Case come from?

Case is assigned by certain elements:

Verbs assign Accusative case to their objects

Prepositions assign Accusative case to their objects

Nouns assign Genitive case to their 'subjects'.

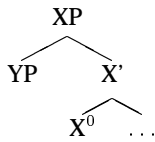
Who assigns Nominative Case? Where is Nominative Case assigned?

Case is assigned in very particular configurations:

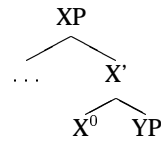
By heads to maximal projections.

X⁰ assigns case to YP

Specifier-Head



Head-Complement



1.2 Abstract Case

Since morphological case in English appears only on pronouns, do only pronouns need to be assigned case?

It turns out that irrespective of whether case is overtly realized on a Noun Phrase or not, NPs behave as if they need to be assigned case.

- (4) a. John is fond of Mary/her.
 b. *John is fond Mary/her.

- (5) **Case Filter:** Every overt NP needs to be assigned abstract case.

What configurations can case be assigned in?

Adjacency requirements:

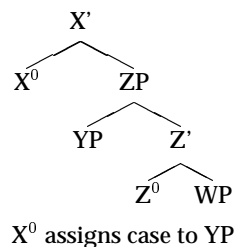
- (6) a. *Bill ate without warning the pizza.
 b. Bill left without warning for Berlin.

But do we need to state adjacency requirements? Or do they automatically fall out of the configurational nature of case-assignment?

What about the following cases:

- (7) Exceptional Case Marking
 a. I want [John/him to win].
 b. I hope [for John to win].
 c. I prefer very much [for him to go now].

Another case assigning configuration:



2 NP-movement

Back to the [Spec, VP]

We started this discussion in order to explain why the NP in [Spec, VP] has to move to the [Spec, IP]. Why can it not stay put? i.e. why can't we say:

- (8) a. [_{I'} [+Pst] [_{VP} John [_{V'} eat the apple]]].
(what would this be realized as?)
- b. [_{I'} will [_{VP} John [_{V'} ate the apple]]].

The answer lies in the Case Filter. [Spec, VP] is not a place where case can be assigned, [Spec, IP] is. Therefore, the NP is forced to move out of [Spec, VP] to [Spec, IP] to get case.

Since the reason behind the displacement/movement of the subject NP is case, this movement is *case-driven movement*.

We will soon see several other environments which involve case-driven NP-movement.