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)  

- because the pronouns are in the wrong case.

Morphological case in English:

(2)

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

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)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>features</th>
<th>Nominative</th>
<th>Ergative</th>
<th>Accusative</th>
<th>Instrumental</th>
<th>Genitive</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Proper Name</td>
<td>Maya</td>
<td>Maya ne</td>
<td>Maya ko</td>
<td>Maya se</td>
<td>Maya kaa/ii/e</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NPSg</td>
<td>vo larkaa</td>
<td>us larko ko</td>
<td>us larko se</td>
<td>us larko kaa/ii/e</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NPPl</td>
<td>vo/e larka</td>
<td>un larko ne</td>
<td>un larko ko</td>
<td>un larko kaa/ii/e</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1Sg</td>
<td>mE</td>
<td>mE ne</td>
<td>mujh ko/mujh-e</td>
<td>mujh se</td>
<td>meraa/ii/e</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1pl</td>
<td>ham</td>
<td>ham ne</td>
<td>ham ko/ham-e</td>
<td>ham se</td>
<td>hamaaraa/ii/e</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2Sg</td>
<td>tuu</td>
<td>tuu ne</td>
<td>tujh ko/tujh-e</td>
<td>tujh se</td>
<td>teraa/ii/e</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2pl</td>
<td>tum</td>
<td>tum ne</td>
<td>tumko/tumh-e</td>
<td>tum se</td>
<td>tumhaaraa/ii/e</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3Sg</td>
<td>vo</td>
<td>us ne</td>
<td>us ko/us-e</td>
<td>us se</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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.
\( X^0 \) assigns case to YP

Specifier-Head

\[
X^0 
\quad \xrightarrow[]{} \quad YP
\]

Head-Complement

\[
X^0 
\quad \xrightarrow[]{} \quad YP
\]

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. \[ [[\_P.Pt \_VP \_NP \_eat \_the \_apple] ] ]
(what would this be realized as?)
b. \[ [[\_W.I \_VP \_NP \_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.