Artemis Alexiadou (Stuttgart), Elena Anagnostopoulou (Crete) & Christina Sevdali (Ulster)

## Dative-Nominative alternations and the place of Case in Grammar

**1.** In this paper we investigate the relationship between structural Case and morphological case by looking into the conditions under which dative arguments become nominative (Dat-Nom alternations) in passives and unaccusatives across languages. We explore the derivation of Dat-Nom alternations in models which dispense with Case theory as part of narrow syntax as opposed to models that treat Case as part of the computational system. The former models place case-alternations (Acc-Nom, Erg-Abs) in the morphological component as an effect of disjunctive spell-out hierarchies interpreting syntax (as most clearly stated in Marantz 1991). We show that a number of crucial statements must be added to such approaches to cover the empirical domain. We thus argue against eliminating phi-Agree/Case from the computational system as formal features implicated in DP licensing and we then propose such an alternative.

**2** It is often assumed that dative arguments bear *inherent* or *quirky* Case as they retain their case in passives/unaccusatives (Chomsky 1986; 2001). However, dat(ives) may become nom(inatives) in German and Dutch *bekommen/krijgen 'become'-passives* (Haider 1984; Reis 1985; Broekhuis & Cornips 1994, 2010) (1), Ancient Greek and Japanese passives (Larson 1988; Adams 1971; Miyagawa 1997), Icelandic "*-st* middles", certain unaccusatives and stative passives (Zaenen & Maling 1990; Sigurðsson 1989, 2010; Svenonius 2002, 2006).

(1)      Er   bekam dieBlumen  geschenkt
        He-NOM got  the flowers-ACC given      'He was given the flowers'

In languages where Dat-Nom alternations occur, variation occurs along three main dimensions: *(i) Ditransitive vs. monotransitive asymmetries:* Dutch as well as Low German (Lower Saxon) and Upper German dialects limit the *krijgen/bekommen*-passive exclusively to ditransitives. Dialects of the West Middle area and Luxemburg German also permit it with monotransitives. This partition is well-documented cross-linguistically: in Japanese, datives alternate only in ditransitive, not in monotransitive passives (Fukuda, to appear, Ishizuka 2010). In Ancient Greek, datives alternate both in ditransitive and in monotransitive passives (Anagnostopoulou & Sevdali 2009, 2010). *(ii) Dative passives with and without Voice.* We apply tests such as the licensing of (i) agentive *by*-phrases, (ii) purpose clauses, and (iii) agentive adverbs, signalling the presence of an implicit external argument (EA) in passives to German and Dutch. These suggest that Dutch *krijgen*-passives contain an implicit EA, while the German *bekommen* passive does not do so. Both allow *by* phrases but control and agentive adverbs (2) are licit only in Dutch. We conclude that German *bekommen*-passives lack Voice where the implicit EA is licensed (Kratzer 1996). *By*-phrases aren't necessarily associated with Voice: they are also licit in English nominalizations, and resultative participles which lack an implicit EA (Fox & Grodzinsky 1992, Alexiadou 2001, Embick 2004).

(2)      a.      Zij kreeg opzettelijk het verkeerde boek toegestuurd.
                 'She was deliberately sent the wrong book.'
         b.      ??Der Junge kriegte absichtlich das falsche Paket zugeschickt
                 the boy      got       deliberately the wrong parcel sent

*(iii) High vs. low dative licensing.* In Dutch, Ancient Greek and Japanese, Dat absorption happens in true passives; Dat is assigned (and, when possible, 'absorbed') to objects of monotransitives that are typically human/animate, goals, not themes, not measurers, never objects of causative verbs; finally, the dative 'absorbed' in ditransitives is the case of the IO. Icelandic presents a different system. First, Dat absorption *never happens* in passives. It happens in *-st* middles, certain anticausatives and adjectival passives, which have all been argued to lack Voice. Second, causative monotransitive verbs may assign Dat and themes of motion may bear Dat. Third, the Dat 'absorbed' in ditransitives is the case of the DO, never of the IO, even in the context of an *-st* middle ((3) from Sigurðsson 1989:270):

(3) **Mér** gaf-st þetta tækifæri (*viljandi).
     me-D gave-ST this opportunity-N (*willingly) 'I happened to get this opportunity.'

**3.** Morphological case systems, as they stand, cannot account for the full range of alternating datives cross-linguistically. Harley's (1995) Mechanical Case Parameter (MCP) is designed to account for systems with the *monotransitive vs. ditransitive* distinction such as Japanese, (some) German and Dutch. According to the MCP, Dat is realized on an argument checking structural Case only when three cases are realized, i.e. in ditransitives, not when two cases are realized, i.e. in monotransitives. But this leaves Icelandic, Ancient Greek and Luxemburg German unaccounted for. Consider now Marantz's (1991) 'dependent case' system, which assumes a case realization disjunctive hierarchy: (a)lexically governed case, (b) "dependent" case ("downwards" accusative and "upwards" ergative), (c) unmarked case (environment-sensitive) and (d) default case.

(4)     Dependent case is assigned by V+I to a position governed by V+I when a
        distinct position governed by V+I is:
            a. not "marked" (not part of a chain governed by a lexical case determiner)
            b. distinct from the chain being assigned dependent case

As it stands, this model cannot account for structural dative, i.e. for alternating dative DOs in Icelandic, Ancient Greek and Luxemburg German which become nominative qualifying as having *dependent case* rather than "lexically governed" case. One would have to admit the **parametric possibility** of dative being a dependent case:

(5)     Dependent case down to object: accusative, dative

Which one of the non-environment sensitive cases is realized in each individual case must be decided on the basis of properties of the Root. We argue that the modified dependent case approach, similarly to the MCP, can account for ditransitives but not for monotransitives. Specifically: *(I)* In Icelandic ditransitives, IO dative qualifies as "lexically governed" case since it never alternates. In Japanese /Ancient Greek, where both cases can alternate: (i) one of the two dependent cases (accusative or dative) cannot be assigned in opposition to a higher position and, therefore, the argument that would bear it surfaces with environment sensitive nominative; (ii) the other argument bears the dependent case (dative or accusative) that would bear in the corresponding transitive in opposition to the 'higher' nominative argument. A mechanism is needed to decide which argument will surface with nominative and which one with dependent accusative or dative. The simplest decision mechanism is locality: The **first** dependent case cannot be assigned and the argument surfaces with nominative. The **second** argument bears dependent case in opposition to the ('derived') nominative. Assuming that the underlying order of arguments is IO>DO, indirect passives of ditransitives in Ancient Greek and Japanese are environments where Dat becomes Nom and Acc is retained. Something extra must be added for direct Ancient Greek and Japanese passives where Acc becomes Nom and Dat is retained, as in all locality approaches dealing with symmetric passives. *(II)* In the modified system, 'absorption' in monotransitives involves a dependent case that cannot be realized. But Dat can still be realized as dependent while Acc not in the Icelandic passive. On the other hand, both Dat and Acc aren't assigned as dependent cases being realized as Nom in Ancient Greek passives, and the same holds for Icelandic middles, anticausatives and stative passives. To account for this complex picture, appealing to formal properties of heads involved in licensing is unavoidable. Assuming a verbal decomposition as in (6), (Marantz 2005; Alexiadou, Anagnostopoulou & Schäfer 2006), we propose that the head responsible for dative 'assignment'/'absorption' (i.e. licensing) can be either Voice (high) or v (low).

(6)     [Voice [v [ Root ]]]

Dative licensing happens in Voice when the dative affected is that of human/animate/goal-like DOs of monotransitives while it happens in v (causatives, anticausative-like constructions) when the dative affected is that of theme DOs. Ancient Greek instantiates the Voice pattern, while Icelandic the v one. Deficient Voice is involved in the blocking of dative and now it follows that deficient is *lack of Voice* for Icelandic and *[+passive] Voice* for Ancient Greek.