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Expanding the CP/DP Parallelism: case alignment in nominals

Intro. Nominalisations and corresponding verbal/clausal constituents share properties that can be accounted for by either relating them derivationally or attributing some common intrinsic properties (as Chomsky 1970 suggests) to both of them. A less discussed parallelism concerns case alignment in nominals. This is probably due to the fact that the best studied languages usually exhibit a non-clause-like pattern in their nominals, whereby any adnominal arguments may bear the same default case, commonly referred to as the 'genitive', regardless of thematic relationships. In a number of languages, however, adnominal arguments may also bear a non-default case, dependent upon the presence of a default-marked argument. In this paper we establish that in such languages, the alignment in nominals is of the same type as case alignment in clausal constituents. We further address the question whether, in order to get clause-like case combinations, the verbal projections typically associated with them need to be present and get nominalised or whether the same case assigning principles operate in nominals and clauses alike, with no need to share v-structure.

When there is enough v-structure in nP. We follow Alexiadou, Iordachioaia & Schäfer (2011), who correlate differences across types of nominalisations with the presence/absence of certain heads either from the nominal or the verbal extended projection. We can then discern 2 types of languages in which the shared cases of the clausal and the nominal domain can fully be attributed to the presence/availability of the respective v-/clausal projections within nP. **I**. Nominative-Accusative systems. In the light of this approach, it is tempting to argue that the absence of the nominative from the nominal domain of any language is due to the fact that *n* never selects TP. Nevertheless, this is not empirically correct. As shown by Siloni (1997), Hebrew action nominals constitute an example of TP-nominalisations. Therefore, the incompatibility of such nominalisations with the nominative should be an indication that (i) T in fact inherits its ϕ-features and its nominative-assigning capacity from C and that (ii) *n* is universally unable to select CP. This reinforces Alexiadou's (2017) tentative generalisation that *n* never nominalises propositions and situations. Extending this to the accusative, we argue that (i) the mere presence of agentivity does not suffice, (ii) like T, the accusative-case assigning capacity is inherited from Voice, (iii) the accusative in nominals is possible only if *n* selects VoiceP. Crucially, this possibility is parameterised. Evidence for the claim that the licensing of (overt) agents is not enough comes from the fact that e.g. German allows an overt genitive agent in the presence of an overt internal argument (IA), but the accusative is still impossible. In Turkish, instead, Voice can safely be argued to be present in nominalisations, as Turkish deverbal nouns can also include a passive voice morpheme. A necessary theoretical implication of the above is that agents are probably introduced by some high *v* head, which is the only projection that (active/transitive) Voice can select, thus recasting Burzio's (1986) generalisation. **II**. Ergative-absolutive systems with *Low* ABS: whatever head (within VoiceP) is necessary for ABS assignment, it can also be found in deverbal nominalisations. There are 3 subtypes with regards to the realisation of the dependent case (the one marking the external argument (EA)), also depending on the varying source of the ergative in the clausal domain (high (TP) vs. low (vP)): **(a)** languages with low ERG, and therefore ergative EAs, as in Lak (1), **(b)** languages with high ERG and nominalisation of lower projections only, and therefore genitive EAs only, as in Chukchi (2) (see Bobaljik & Branigan (2006) for arguments for TP-licensed ergative in Chukchi), **(c)** systems in which absolutive, ergative and genitive co-exist: Archi is such a language, with 2 types of nominalisations/masdars. **(i)** Archi has a group of unaccusative verbs that obligatorily contain a light verb. The nominaliser attaches to the root of the lexical verb and the light verb disappears resulting in nominalisations that only have genitive arguments (3). **(ii)** Transitive and unergative verbs take a different nominalizer. Unlike the 1st type of masdars, IAs are absolutive, while EAs can be either ergative or genitive (4). Importantly, the alternation between the 2 cases (ergative and genitive) is not free and corresponds to 2 meanings: factual and process. The Archi data suggest that vP is the minimum requirement for clausal cases when a non-genitive case can be assigned within vP; ergative case is licensed higher than vP, probably in VoiceP (Polinsky et al 2017).

(1) Rasul-ɬu-l q:ačaɣ ∅-iwč'-awu *Lak*
Rasul-OS-ERG criminal.I.SG.ABS I.SG-murder-MSD
'the murder of the criminal by Rasul' (Radkevich 2016)

(2) ətɬʔən-in (ɣəm-in) ɬʔu-wərg-ən *Chukchi*

father-POSS 1SG-POSS see-NMLZ-ABS
'Father's seeing me' (Polinsky 2017: 328)

(3) Pat'i-n/*Pat'i qe-t'i sini *Archi*
Pati.II-GEN/Pati.II.SG.ABS dance-MSD.IV.SG.ABS know
'I know that Pati dances.' (M. Chumakina, p.c.)

(4) Rasul-li tilivizor b-uš-mul *Archi*
Rasul.I-SG.ERG TV.III.SG.ABS III.SG-buy-MSD
'Rasul's buying of a TV set' (Polinsky et al 2017: 60)

When there is *not* enough v-structure in nP. III. Ergative-absolutive systems with high ABS and lower nominalisations: the projection which is the source of clausal ABS can never be embedded/selected by *n*. One type of such languages includes languages such as Georgian, in which ABS is high (TP-level) and AspP-size nominals (McGinnis-Archibald 2016, Finn 2017) do not have absolutive marked arguments. Another type of high ABS languages, however, shows a more intriguing behavior: cases typically associated with verbal arguments can also mark different types of possessor arguments in non-deverbal/"result" nominals (Grimshaw's 1990 distinction). Such is the case of some Mayan languages (Imanishi 2014) in which possessor arguments are marked via head-marking, namely ϕ-agreement on the head noun (5): possessive agreement affixes correspond to ergative agreement marking. We argue that this is not a case of genitive/ergative syncretism: in low-ABS Mayan agreement is impossible in non-finite contexts of intransitive nominalizations (6), e.g. in PP complements of progressive auxiliaries, which signals the absence of ABS-related projections. Nevertheless, non-finite verb forms only display "ergative" agreement on IAs as long as there is an understood EA (7), thus suggesting that ergative marking is dependent in nominals, just like in clauses. This pattern constitutes evidence that understood EAs must be syntactically realized in the nominalisation even in the absence of the functional projection licensing them.

(5) ka-tz'i *Q'eqchi*
ERG1PL-dog
'our dog' (Berinstein 1985)

(6) yoo-qu in [chi alinac]
PROG-ASP ABS.1S PREP running.NMNL
'I am running.' (Berinstein 1985: 272)

(7) yoo-k in [chi aa-sak'-b'al]
PROG-ASP ABS.1S PREP ERG2S-hit-MNML
'I'm hitting you.' (Imanishi 2014: 171)

IV. Active-stative systems. Languages with this alignment in their clausal domain often use the 2 agreement series for distinguishing between different types of possessors. In Mohawk, (Mithun 1996), e.g., relational nouns are marked with a portmanteau affix realizing the ϕ-features of both the adnominal argument and the head noun itself (8). We argue that such languages treat relational nouns as two-place predicates and mark both the R-argument and the other participant of the relationship. The R-argument seems to absorb an external-like θ-role and gets marked accordingly, while the possessor is marked by agreement for IAs. Alienable possessors are invariably marked like IAs (9), while marking of inalienable possessors displays variation, which is determined either lexically/culturally, or depending on how much control they are perceived to exert on the head noun. Other such languages include Paresi (da Silva 2013), Yup'ik (Nonato 2014), Kadiwéu (Sandalo 1996), a.o.

(8) rakeʔníka *Mohawk*
rake-ʔní-ka
M.SG.AGT/1SG.PAT-father-DIM
'my father' (Mithun 1996: 635)

(9) akhnà:taʔ
ak-hnaʔt-aʔ
1SG.PAT-bag-NS
'my purse' (Mithun 1996: 638)

Proposal/Conclusion. We propose that clausal-like alignment in nominals can be the result of *either* (a) embedding projections (under nP) which are independently associated with the relevant cases in the clausal domain *or* (b) the same case-assigning algorithm operating in both domains. However, the latter option is not freely available. Specifically, it is not available when a projection associated with default case (e.g. the absolutive) in the clausal domain is also available in the nominal domain, in particular in deverbal nominals. In other words, (a) and (b) cannot co-exist in a language; (b) can only apply as long as (a) is not an option in any subtype of nominals. When (b) arises, it is made possible either through the syntactic representation of the understood argument that would bear default case, if overt (in high ABS languages), or through a system of completely θ-related case marking, which arguably does not require any functional structure and, as such, can be freely applied to nominals and clauses alike (in active-stative languages).