Toward a Phase Account of Dependent Case

Ivona Kučerová
McMaster University

Toward a Phase Account of Dependent Case

Abstract

In the generative tradition, Accusative case ACC is often analyzed as a dependent Case, where being dependent means being dependent on another argument (Burzio 1986), more precisely a theta-role, or being dependent on a chain assigning Nominative case NOM to another argument (Marantz 1991), more precisely, an unmarked, i.e. non-lexically governed, case. In both approaches, ACC is a result of grammatical competition. The Minimalist Program (Chomsky 2001, 2008) seems to be an exception: in this framework, abstract Case is assigned by functional heads. Concretely, ACC is assigned by v*. Whether or not v* assigns ACC then depends on whether or not v* is a strong phase. Even though the Minimalist Program doesn't seem to employ a competition view of ACC as a dependent case, it is at its core a look-ahead system. Although the dependency on another argument is not explicitly declared, it is inherent to the system.

This paper presents data from Polish, Ukrainian and Northern Russian that contradict the dependency view of ACC and suggest an alternative in terms of structure-dependency, independent of another argument receiving a theta-role or another case being assigned to a chain. This bears on the question of the role of case in syntax and on the nature of spell-out and of cyclic domains.

Toward a Phase Account of Dependent Case

Ivona Kučerová[*]

1 Introduction

In the generative tradition, Accusative case (ACC) is often analyzed as a *dependent Case*, where being dependent means being dependent on another argument (Burzio 1986), more precisely a θ-role, or being dependent on a chain assigning Nominative case (NOM) to another argument (Marantz 1991), more precisely, an unmarked, i.e. non-lexically governed, case. In both approaches, ACC is a result of grammatical competition. The Minimalist Program (Chomsky 2001, 2008) seems to be an exception: in this framework, abstract Case is assigned by functional heads. Concretely, ACC is assigned by $v*$.[1] Whether or not $v*$ assigns ACC then depends on whether or not $v*$ is a strong phase.[2] Even though the Minimalist Program doesn't seem to employ a competition view of ACC as a dependent case, it is at its core a look-ahead system. Although the dependency on another argument is not explicitly declared, it is inherent to the system.[3]

This paper presents data from Polish, Ukrainian and Northern Russian that contradict the dependency view of ACC and suggest an alternative in terms of structure-dependency, independent of another argument receiving a θ-role or another case being assigned to a chain. This bears on the question of the role of case in syntax and on the nature of spell-out and of cyclic domains.

2 Puzzle

The so called *-no/-to construction* in Polish and Ukrainian (henceforth NT), shown in (1–2), resembles on the surface the canonical passive in that it does not have any overt external argument and in that the surface form of the main verb is identical to the passive participle form.[4]

(1) *Polish:*

    a. *Pies   był/został   zabity   przez samochód.*
       dog-M-SG-NOM was/stayed-M-SG killed-M-SG by   car
       'A dog was killed by a car.'   *canonical passive*

    b. *Psa   zabito.*
       dog-M-SG-ACC killed-N-SG
       'A/The dog was killed.'   NT

(2) *Ukrainian:*

    a. *Žinky   buly   vbyty*
       woman-NOM-F-PL was-F-PL killed-F-PL
       '(The) women were killed.'   *canonical passive*

    b. *Žinok   bulo   vbyto*
       woman-ACC-F-PL were-N-SG killed-N-SG

[1]What exactly assigns ACC is subject to a continuous debate. For example, according to Lavine and Freidin (2002) ACC is assigned by ϕ-features on v. For many authors, ACC is related to telicity or aspect. Concretely, ACC is assigned by a telic v head (e.g., Borer 1994, 2005, Kiparsky 1998, Kratzer 2004).

[2]But see Legate 2003 for an alternate view.

[3]The dependency view is clearly spelled out, for example, in Sigurðsson 2006, In press.

[4]Except for the inflectional ending, as we'll see later.

'(The) women were killed.'   NT

Though the construction superficially resembles the canonical passive, it differs from it in several ways, which can be demonstrated on Polish. First, the internal argument in NT is realized as ACC instead of NOM in a seeming violation of Burzio's generalization, as seen in (3).

(3)   a. *Psa   zabito.*
          dog-M-SG-ACC killed-N-SG
          'A/The dog was killed.'
      b.*Pies   zabito.*
          dog-NOM-M-SG killed-N-SG

Suggestive evidence that the external argument is syntactically indeed absent comes from the fact that NT can be formed by unaccusatives, raising verbs (Maling and Sigurjónsdóttir 2002: 104), and modal verbs (Migdalski 2006: 145).

(4)   a. *Balon   **rozerwano**.*
          balloon-ACC pierced-N-SG-PPP
          'The balloon was pierced.'   *unaccusative*
      b. ***Zdawano** się   nas nie zauważać.*
          seem-IMP REFL us   not notice-INF
          'They seemed not to be noticing us.'   *raising*
      c. ***Musiano** to   vwykonać, bo   zbliżał   się   termin.*
          must-NT this do-INF   because approached REFL deadline
          '(They) had to do this, because the deadline was approaching.'   *modal*

Note that the ACC marker behaves as a morphological reflex of a structural, not of a lexical case. For instance, if the nominal argument of NT appears in the scope of a sentential negation, the ACC morphology is obligatorily converted to GEN, the usual pattern for structural ACC in this group of Slavic languages. The relevant data are given in (5).

(5)   a. *Kobietę   zabito.*
          woman-ACC killed
          'A woman was killed.'   ✓POS+ACC
      b. **Kobietę/Kobiety   nie zabito.*
          woman-ACC/woman-GEN not killed
          'A woman was not killed.'   NEG+GEN

Second, even though the main verb is in a non-finite form, there is no overt Tense marking in the clause which is rather unusual in Polish and impossible in the canonical passive.

(6)   a. *Kobieta   była/została zabita.*
          woman-NOM was/stayed   killed
          'The/*A woman was killed.'   *canonical passive*
      b. *Kobietę   *(było) zabito.*
          woman-ACC *(was) killed
          'A woman was killed.'   NT

Third, the only verbal form present in the construction does not agree with the internal argument. The attested agreement is N.SG, i.e., the default verb agreement attested with weather predicates.

(7)   *Psa   zabito/*zabity.*
       dog-M-SG-ACC killed-N-SG/killed-M-SG
       'A/The dog was killed.'   ✓DEFAULT/*AGR

Fourth, the Tense of NT *must* be interpreted as Past. The Future or Present tense interpretation is not possible. The canonical passive has no such restriction on its temporal interpretation.

(8) *Samochód jest/był/będzie malowany.*
     car-NOM   is/was/will-be painted
     'The car is/was/will be painted.'   *canonical passive: any tense*

(9) **Teraz/✓ wczoraj/*jutro opisano   problem.*
     now/yesterday/tomorrow described-N-SG problem-M-SG-ACC
     'The problem was described/ they described the problem yesterday.' **Present/✓ Past/*Future*

Fifth, while the internal argument in the canonical passive tends to be interpreted as given, there is no restriction on the information-structure properties of the internal argument in NT. As can be seen in (10), the internal argument can be interpreted, for instance, as focus. The contrast between givenness and focus is approximated by the definite and indefinite English articles, respectively.

(10) a. *Kobietę   zabito.*
        woman-ACC killed
        'A woman was killed.'   NT ∼ FOCUS
     b. *Kobieta   była/została zabita.*
        woman-NOM was/stayed   killed
        'The/*A woman was killed.'   *canonical passive* ∼ GIVEN

Once we consider Ukrainian and Northern Russian dialects, additional differences between NT and the canonical passive emerge. First, in these language, NT has an optional auxiliary. Interestingly, even if there is an inflected auxiliary in the structure, the Tense interpretation is still restricted, namely, only the Past tense and the Future tense interpretation is possible. The Present tense interpretation is always excluded. The following examples are from Ukrainian.[5]

(11) *Presidenta   bulo/*jest/bude vbyto*
     president-ACC was/is/will-be   killed
     'The president was/will be killed.'   ✓ *Past/*Present/✓ Future*

If there is no overt auxiliary, as in (12) from Ukrainian, Ukrainian and Northern Russian behave exactly like Polish: the NT structure is obligatorily interpreted as Past (Nedashkivska Adams 1998).

(12) *Žinky   vbyto.*
     woman-ACC-F-SG killed-N-SG
     'A woman was/(*is)/(*will be) killed.'

The NT construction has attracted a significant amount of attention in the literature (e.g., Sobin 1985, Borsley 1988, Maling 1993, Billings and Maling 1995, Nedashkivska Adams 1998, Lavine 2000, 2005, 2010a, Maling and Sigurjónsdóttir 2002, Blevins 2003, Danylenko 2006, Kibort 2008). Most of the existing literature concentrates on the seeming violation of Burzio's generalization (Burzio 1986). Consequently, most literature concentrates on the ACC case assignment and the lack of agreement. As far as I know, none of the existing analysis accounts for all the basic properties of the construction (partially because they don't address them). Most of the work agrees that NT is some form of an impersonal passive (e.g., Sobin 1985, Borsley 1988, Billings and Maling 1995, Nedashkivska Adams 1998, Blevins 2003, Kibort 2008, Lavine and Freidin 2002, Lavine 2005, 2010b). Some authors argue that the Polish version of the construction is in fact active and the passive morphology is a morphological 'accident': the seemingly passive morpheme is analyzed as an incorporated auxiliary (e.g., Maling 1993, 2006, Maling and Sigurjónsdóttir 2002, Lavine 2000, 2005). Lavine and Freidin (2002) attribute the lack of NOM and agreement to the Tense head being defective. According to Maling (1993, 2006) and Maling and Sigurjónsdóttir (2002), the Polish NT contains a null subject that gets NOM; ACC is then assigned to the internal argument exactly as we expect: under this view Ukrainian is a morphosyntactic accident. According to some authors, there are language-specific exceptions to the Case assignment system (Sobin 1985 for Polish and

---

[5]There are additional differences between Polish and Ukrainian suggesting that Polish NT might contain a covert external argument in some cases while Ukrainian never does (e.g., Sobin 1985, Maling 1993, Lavine 2000, Maling and Sigurjónsdóttir 2002, Maling 2006). I leave the issue of a possible covert argument aside.

Ukrainian, and Sigurðsson In press on a similar construction in Icelandic). According to Lavine, the
Polish NT has an auxiliary, but it gets incorporated into the participle. However, none of the exist-
ing proposals address the issue of the restricted tense interpretation and the unexpected information
structure properties, thus a new account of NT is needed.

3 NT as a *Have*-Perfect Construction

Two main properties that remain unexplained under the existing proposals are the tense restrictions,
specifically the fact that (i) if there is no finite auxiliary in the structure, then the structure must get
the Past tense interpretation, and that (ii) if a finite auxiliary is present, it must be either in the Past
or in the Future tense. ThePresent tense auxiliary is not possible.

Cross-linguistically, the Past tense interpretation in the absence of an overt morphological mark-
ing for Tense is not entirely unusual. So-called tense-less languages, i.e., languages that have no
overt tense marking either allow *any* tense interpretation,[6] or they enforce the Past tense interpre-
tation (Bohnemeyer and Swift 2004, Jóhannsdóttir and Matthewson In press). It remains an open
question whether the Past tense interpretation is the default interpretation of a phonologically null T
head, or whether the T head is entirely missing and the Past tense interpretation arises as the default
semantic interpretation (for example, as in f-seq in Starke 2004 or via semantic straightening of the
interpretation of the event as in Bohnemeyer and Swift 2004).

The ban on the Present tense interpretation is more surprising. We know that in Slavic the
Present tense is excluded with perfective verbs, but NT may be formed both by Perfective and Im-
perfective verbs. Furthermore, passive constructions cross-linguistically do not display any such
restriction on the tense interpretation.

Interestingly, the dialectology and descriptive linguistics literature (Kuz'mina and Nemčenko
1971, Maslov 1984, Trubinskij 1988, Kuz'mina 1993, Leinonen 2002, Danylenko 2006) often men-
tions that the syntactic distribution of NT resembles the Western European *habere* Perfect.[7] I argue
that NT is indeed a Perfect construction and all the properties observed in Section 1 are a direct con-
sequence of NT being a *have*-Perfect. This section provides semantic, syntactic and morphological
evidence for this claim.

Let's start with the semantic piece of evidence. If NT is indeed *have*-Perfect its interpretation
should differ from the canonical passive. More precisely, we should be able to find contexts in which
only one but not the other would be grammatical. This is exactly what we observe in (13–14).

(13) *Polish*

    a.*Anna*   *jest szczęśliwa od   kiedy jej syn   był   zabrany.*
       Anna-NOM is happy   since then her son-ACC stayed taken-away
       Intended: 'Anna has been happy since her son has been sent away.'   *canonical passive*

    b. *Anna*   *jest szczęśliwa od   kiedy jej syna   zabrano.*
       Anna-NOM is happy   since then her son-ACC taken-away
       'Anna has been happy since her son has been sent away.'   NT

(14) *Ukrainian*

    a.*Anna je shtaslyva vid   koly jij syn   zabranij*
       Anna is happy   since then her son-NOM taken-away-PP
       Intended: 'Anna has been happy since her son has been sent away.'   *canoical passive*

    b. *Anna je shtaslyva vid   koly jij syna   zabrano.*
       Anna is happy   since then her son-ACC taken-away-NT
       'Anna has been happy since her son has been sent away.'   NT

If NT indeed has a Perfect interpretation the immediate question is how the Perfect interpreta-
tion could arise in passive. The passive participle morphology is cross-linguistically often identical

---

[6]Even though the range of aspectual and other tense-related interpretations may still be restricted, see, for
example, Fitzpatrick 2006.

[7]Note, Perfect does not equal Perfective.

to the perfect participle morphology (Iatridou et al. 2001). It is thus plausible that what has been traditionally analyzed as a passive participle is in fact a Perfect participle. If this is correct, then the difference between Perfect and passive should reveal itself in the syntactic properties of the construction. In English, the canonical passive differs from the so-called adjectival passive (Wasow 1977). This is not the case in Polish, Ukrainian, or Czech. The canonical passive may be formed by the adjectival passive participle in Czech, and it must be in Polish and Ukrainian. Consequently, the adjectival morphology coincides with the syntactic structure we expect in adjectival and copular clauses (Veselovská and Karlík 2004).[8] We consider here two relevant properties testable for Ukrainian NT.[9] First, the canonical passive may contain two independent aspectual projections. Second, the canonical passive may contain two independent negation projections. As the following examples show, unlike the canonical passive, NT may have only one aspectual projection and only one negation.

(15) *Two independent aspectual projections impossible in* NT*:*

    a. *Žinky*   *byvaly*   *vbyty.*
       woman-NOM-F-PL was-HAB-F-PL killed-PF-F-PL.
       '(The) women used to be killed.'   *canonical passive*

    b.**Žinok*   *byvalo*   *vbyto.*
       woman-ACC-F-PL was-HAB-N-SG killed-PF-N-SG.
       Intended: 'Women used to get killed.'   NT

(16) *Two independent negations impossible in* NT*:*

    a. *Žinky*   *ne buly*   *ne vbyty.*
       woman-NOM-F-PL not was-F-PL not killed-PF-F-PL
       'It wasn't the case that the women weren't killed.'   *canonical passive*

    b.**Žinok*   *ne bulo*   *ne vbyto.*
       woman-ACC-F-PL not was-N-SG not killed-PF-N-SG.
       Intended: 'It was't the case women were killed.'   NT

Furthermore, the NT ending is a participle ending but the canonical passive inflects as a deverbal adjective (Sobin 1985, Lavine 2000, Danylenko 2006). The canonical passive neuter singular ending would be *-e*, not the attested *-o*. This morphological fact thus provides additional evidence that NT is structurally different from the canonical passive. More precisely, the participle found in NT is a Perfect participle, not a passive participle.

Three pieces of evidence (semantic, syntactic and morphological) thus seem to converge on the same hypothesis: NT is not a passive construction, instead it is some form of a Perfect construction, as suggested by the traditional grammarians. Once we adopt the Perfect hypothesis, more precisely the *have*-Perfect hypothesis, some facts immediately follow. First of all, cross-linguistically *have*-Perfect participles never agree with the subject (e.g., Kayne 1993, Iatridou et al. 2001). Thus whatever agreement mechanism we adopt for *have*-Perfect participles, it naturally extends to NT. No additional mechanism is needed. Furthermore, unlike in the canonical passive, there is no information-structure requirement on the internal argument.

The question is whether analyzing NT as *have*-Perfect might shed light on the Tense restrictions we find with the construction. There is a continuing debate on the semantic nature of Perfect which surmounts to the question of whether Perfect should be semantically analyzed as Aspect (i.e., in addition to Perfective and Imperfective) or as Tense. An interesting perspective is offered in von Stechow (To appear). von Stechow argues that Perfect is relative time but the denotation of *have* adds additional aspect-like component.[10] Consequently, the denotation of Perfect is identical

---

[8]Veselovská and Karlík (2004) investigate clitic-like properties, morphological contraction properties, colloquial forms, zero morpheme distribution and a dialectal variation.

[9]The tests cannot be done for Polish because there is not enough overt morphology.

[10]Perfect is thus semantically distinct from morphological Perfective and Imperfective.

According to Iatridou et al. (2001) anteriority is not part of the meaning of the Perfect participle. Instead, anteriority follows from independent properties of the perfect time span, namely, from the fact that the eventuality always precedes the right boundary of the span. As far as I can tell, either of the proposals makes the

to the denotation of simple Past. The denotation of *have* then adds a requirement on the subinterval property, basically the "extended now" of McCoard 1978, here modeled after Dowty 1979.[11]

(17) Paslawska and von Stechow (2003: 322)
POST = $\lambda P \lambda t \exists e \, . \, \tau(e) < t \, \& \, P(e)$ *"Perfect"*

(18) XN-Perfect
$[\![has]\!] = \lambda t . \lambda P_{it} \, . \, (\exists t')[t$ is a final subinterval of t' & P(t')]   (von Stechow To appear)

This proposal has direct consequences for the Tense interpretation of NT. Since the denotation of the *have* component is XN, it is incompatible with the proper episodic "now" of the Present Tense. Consequently, *have*-Perfect is compatible with the Past and Future interpretation but there is no Present. Furthermore, since the denotation of POST is identical to the denotation of the Past tense, unless the time of the event is overtly shifted to the future, Past arises as the default interpretation, thus explaining the other crucial property of the NT construction.

A question that immediately arises though is if NT really is *have*-Perfect, how come there is no auxiliary *have*? A suggestive answer comes from the distribution of *be* and *have* in Slavic dialects. Roughly, the distribution of *be* and *have* forms a continuum with the western dialects having a higher degree of *have* than the eastern dialects. Even though Polish has possessive *have*, already in Polish the syntactic distribution of *have* is very much restricted which can be demonstrated by the fact that there is no auxiliary usage of *have* in Polish. Ukrainian is in between, in Russian *have* is entirely absent. Consequently, if the morphological forms of *have* are missing in these languages, or at least their auxiliary variants, *have* cannot be used to mark Tense. Hence, Tense may stay morphologically unexpressed (obligatory in Polish, possible in Ukrainian and Russian) or it may be realized by the default auxiliary forms based on *be* as in Ukrainian and Northern Russian dialects.

The fact that the NT construction is an instance of *have*-Perfect in and of itself does not explain the ACC marking on the internal argument. A possible hypothesis worth investigating is whether the ACC assignment could be related to the fact that the *have*-Participle does not agree with the subject. Alternatively, one could ask whether the ACC assignment might arise because of the Tense head being in some sense defective (Lavine and Freidin 2002), thus not being able to assign NOM.

The evidence from Northern Russian dialects suggests that neither of these hypothesis is empirically adequate. Northern Russian dialects have the same type of NT as Ukrainian and Polish.[12] Crucially, in addition to the Polish/Ukrainian type of NT these dialects exhibit a version of the construction in which the internal argument is in NOM. Interestingly, even if the internal argument carries the NOM marking, the finite auxiliary still fails to agree with the NOM argument, as shown in (19). Only NT with ACC is compatible with the Perfect interpretation (Zhanna Glushan, p.c.), as witnessed by (20).

(19) *Northern Russian* (Danylenko 2006: 255–256, originally from Kuz'mina 1993:135–137):

    a. (u njego) *syn*   (*bylo*)   *otpravleno*
      at him   son-NOM-SG-M be-N-SG-AUX-PRET send-away-N-SG-PPP
      'His son has been sent away (by him).'

    b. (*u njego*) *parnja*   (*bylo*)   *uvedeno*
      at him   fellow-ACC-SG-M be-N-SG-AUX-PRET take-away-N-SG-PPP
      'The guy has been taken away (by him).'

(20) a.*Vot uže   tre goda kak u nego syn   v amerku uvezeno.*
      here already three years how by him son-NOM to America taken   away

    b. *Vot uže   tre goda kak u nego syna   v amerku uvezeno.*
      here already three years how by him son-ACC=GEN to america taken   away
      'It has been three years since his son has been taken away to America.'

---

same predictions for the issues at hand.
  11

  Cf. also Iatridou et al.'s claim that *have*-Perfect is always XN.

[12]These dialects in fact have several distinct constructions related to NT. See Kuz'mina and Nemčenko (1971) for a detailed descriptive overview.

We can thus conclude that the Case assignment (or at least its morphological realization) is in principal independent of agreement. Consequently, the ACC case assignment in NT does not seem to have any direct relation to the Tense head. In the next section, I will propose instead that the ACC case assignment is a direct reflex of the *have*-Perfect structure.

4 Dependent Case without a Dependent Chain

I argue that there is no real dependency of ACC on NOM. In fact, what looks like a structural (or morphological) dependency is a side-effect of phase-based syntax.[13] In a way, this proposal is close to the view of Case in an early GB era, i.e., the pre-Burzio formulation of Case (Chomsky 1981, Emonds 1985). For Chomsky (1981), Case was a marker for making categories visible to the interpretive components of the grammar. Concretely, if we adopt a morphological view of Case, i.e., case as an interpretation of grammatical structures instead of a "visibility" marker, then Case is less likely to involve any case-internal specific dependencies beyond correlations already present in the structural relation.

The intuition behind the dependency view of ACC is based on the presence of another argument. But perhaps what really matters is not that there are two argument (chain)s in the structure. Instead, the crucial fact is that the structure is big enough to allow for merge of two arguments. In other words, whenever we find ACC in environments other than NT, the first Merge of v and VP is not the maximal projection of v. In all these cases, vP has been further extended.[14]

Once we view the more common cases of the ACC assignment as instances of a vP-structure extension, we can investigate the hypothesis that the ACC assignment in NT is a result of a structure extension. If this is correct, we can ask what might cause the relevant extension as there is no external argument merged in the structure.

I argue that the extension is a result of NT being *have*-Perfect. If NT is *have*-Perfect, then it should contain a *have*-related structure, i.e., a structure which is in a certain technical sense 'transitive'. Concretely, I follow Kayne (1993) in that whether a language has *have* or *be* depends on head-movement properties of the language. In particular, *have* is an instance of a functional-head incorporation into *be*. Even though the presently discussed languages do not have the corresponding morphological realization of the auxiliary, the underlying syntactic structure is still present. I argue that the instance of head-movement crucial for incorporation yields a structure extension responsible for the ACC assignment.[15]

The question that immediately arises is why an extension should matter. A suggestive answer has been offered in the work on the linearization of syntactic structures, specifically in Richards's Distinctness Condition on Linearization (Richards 2003, 2006).

(21) If the Merge of v and its complement is not followed by another extension of v within the same projection, spelling out vP would violate the Distinctness Condition on Linearization

If we adopt this condition, a possible consequence is that a vP may be Spelled-out only if it can be linearized. This can be formalized as in (22).

(22) *Strong Phase Condition*:
vP may be a strong phase only if v undergoes more than one instance of Merge within its Spell-out domain.

---

[13] Supporting evidence for this claim comes from the fact that ACC can be systematically found in measure phrases, i.e., in a syntactic environment lacking NOM (Henk van Riemsdijk, p.c.).

[14] I assume a version of Bare Phrase Structure with no vacuous structures.

[15] Whether or not head-movement extends the structure is subject of a continuous debate, even though the issue arises only under certain definitions of c-command. See Kayne 1994 for a discussion and for a proposal that avoids problems with governing traces in head-movement chains. See also Chomsky 1995 for a reformulation of the same idea within the Bare Phrase Structure framework. I refer here to Fukui and Takano (1998), Toyoshima (2001), Mohr (2005) and Matushansky (2006), who argue that head movement, like phrasal movement, targets the root and as such extends the tree (contra Chomsky 2000).

It follows from (21) that at the point of Spell-out, the internal argument is assigned ACC by $*v$. Alternatively, if ACC is a morphological case, ACC may be defined as the case assigned to the sole argument with the vP spell-out domain which is governed by $V + v$ (assigned down).[16] After C/T is merged, NOM remains unassigned/unrealized because the internal argument has already been spelled-out. The difference between the NT with and without an auxiliary is a property of T. If there is no valued Tense feature on T, no auxiliary is inserted and the resulting interpretation is Past as the default interpretation.

5   Conclusion

I have argued that ACC arises only in structures that are in some sense "transitive", where the relevant notion of transitivity needs to be formulated in terms of phasehood (related to a structure extension), not with respect to another argument or an argument chain. Here, "transitivity" is a result of a *have*-Perfect structure. Interestingly, the observed relation between ACC and *have*-Perfect is reminiscent of the case distribution in so called split ergative languages. It is thus plausible that the case assignment we observe in NT is cross-linguistically more prevalent than usually assumed. The Slavic data suggest that there is no one type of a passive structure: instead we are likely to deal with a whole range of constructions with different degrees of argument demotion.

References

Billings, Loren, and Joan Maling. 1995. Accusative-assigning participial -no/-to construction in Ukrainian, Polish, and neighboring langauges: An annotated bibliography. *Journal of Slavic Linguistics* 3:177–217, 396–430.

Blevins, James P. 2003. Passives and impersonals. *Journal of Linguistics* 39:473–520.

Bohnemeyer, Jürgen, and Mary Swift. 2004. Event realization and default aspect. *Linguistics and Philosophy* 27:263–296.

Borer, Hagit. 1994. On the projection of arguments. In *Functional projections: University of Massachusetts Occasional Papers 17*, ed. Elena Benedicto and Jeffrey T. Runner, 19–48. Amherst: GLSA.

Borer, Hagit. 2005. *Structuring Sense: An Exo-skeletal Trilogy*. New York: Oxford University Press.

Borsley, Robert D. 1988. A note on impersonal passives. *Journal of Linguistics* 24:483–487.

Burzio, Luigi. 1986. *Italian Syntax: A Government-Binding Approach*. Dordrecht: Reidel.

Chomsky, Noam. 1981. *Lectures on Government and Binding*. Dordrecht: Foris.

Chomsky, Noam. 1995. *The Minimalist Program*. Cambridge: MIT Press.

Chomsky, Noam. 2000. Minimalist inquiries: The framework. In *Step by Step: Essays on Minimalist Syntax in Honor of Howard Lasnik*, ed. Roger Martin, David Michaels, and Juan Urigereka. Cambridge: MIT Press.

Chomsky, Noam. 2001. Derivation by phase. In *Ken Hale: A life in language*, ed. Samuel Jay Keyser and Kenneth Stevens, 1–52. Cambridge: MIT Press.

Chomsky, Noam. 2008. On phases. In *Foundational Issues in Linguistic Theory: Essays in Honor of Jean-Roger Vergnaud*, ed. Jean-Roger Vergnaud, Robert Freidin, Carlos Peregrín Otero, and Maria L. Zubizarreta, 133–166. Cambridge: MIT Press.

Danylenko, Andrii. 2006. *Slavica et Islamica: Ukrainian in Context*. München: Verlag Otto Sagner.

Dowty, David. 1979. *Word Meaning and Montague Grammar*. Dordrecht: D. Reidel.

Emonds, Joseph E. 1985. *A Unified Theory of Syntactic Categories*. Dordrecht: Foris Publications.

Fitzpatrick, Justin M. 2006. Deletion through movement. *Natural Language & Linguistic Theory* 24:399–431.

---

[16]This formulation is very close to Katzir's 2007 reformulation:

(i)   Dependent case is assigned by V+I to a uniquely merged DP in the domain of V+I.
          Dependent case assigned up to subject: ergative
          Dependent case assigned down to object: accusative

                                                                                      (Katzir 2007)

(ii) DP_i is uniquely merged in the domain of a head x if DP_i is either a complement of x or a specifier of x but not both

Fukui, Naoki, and Yuji Takano. 1998. Symmetry in syntax: Merge and demerge. *Journal of East Asian Linguistics* 7:27–86.

Iatridou, Sabine, Elena Anagnostopoulou, and Roumyana Izvorski. 2001. Observations about the form and meaning of the perfect. In *Ken Hale: A life in language*, ed. Michael Kenstowicz, 189–238. Cambridge: MIT Press.

Jóhannsdóttir, Kristín M., and Lisa Matthewson. In press. Zero-marked tense: The case of Gitxsan. In *Proceedings of NELS 37*.

Katzir, Roni. 2007. Abstract case, morphological case, and ergativity. Paper presented at the Ergativity Research Seminar, MIT, September 2007.

Kayne, Richard. 1993. Toward a modular theory of auxiliary selection. *Studia Linguistica* 47:3–31.

Kayne, Richard. 1994. *The Antisymmetry of Syntax*. Cambridge: MIT Press.

Kibort, Anna. 2008. Impersonals in Polish. *Transactions of the Philological Society* 106:246–289.

Kiparsky, Paul. 1998. Partitive case and aspect. In *The Projection of Arguments*, ed. Miriam Butt and Wilhem Geuder, 265–308. Stanford: CSLI Publications.

Kratzer, Angelika. 2004. Telicity and the meaning of objective case. In *The Syntax of Time*, ed. J. Guéron and J. Lecarme, 389–424. Cambridge: MIT Press.

Kuz'mina, Irina B. 1993. *Sintaksis russkich govorov v lingvogeografičeskom aspekte*. Moscow: Nauka.

Kuz'mina, Irina B., and Elena V. Nemčenko. 1971. *Sintaksis pričastnych form v russkich govorach*. Moscow: Nauka.

Lavine, James, and Robert Freidin. 2002. The subject of defective T(ense) in Slavic. *Journal of Slavic Linguistics* 10:251–287.

Lavine, James E. 2000. Topics in the syntax of non-agreeing predicates in Slavic. Doctoral Dissertation, Princeton University.

Lavine, James E. 2005. The morphosyntax of Polish and Ukrainian -no/-to. *Journal of Slavic Linguistics* 13:75–117.

Lavine, James E. 2010a. Case and events in transitive impersonals. *Journal of Slavic Linguistics* 18:101–130.

Lavine, James E. 2010b. Case and events in Ukrainian experiencer predicates. In *Formal Approaches to Slavic Linguistics 18: The Second Cornell Meeting*, ed. Wayles Browne, Adam Cooper, Alison Fisher, Esra Kesici, Nikola Predolac, and Draga Zec, 285–300. Ann Arbor: Michigan Slavic Publications.

Legate, Julie A. 2003. Some interface properties of the phase. *Linguistic Inquiry* 34:506–515.

Leinonen, Marja. 2002. Morphosyntactic parallels in North Russian dialects and finno-ugric languages. *Scando-Slavica* 48:127–146.

Maling, Joan. 1993. Unpassives of unaccusatives. Paper presented at UC Irvine.

Maling, Joan. 2006. From passive to active: Syntactic change in progress in Icelandic. In *Demoting the Agent: Passive, Middle and Other Voice Phenomena*, ed. Benjamin Lyngfelt and Torgrim Solstad, 197–223. Amsterdam: John Benjamins.

Maling, Joan, and Sigríður Sigurjónsdóttir. 2002. The 'new impersonal' construction in Icelandic. *Journal of Comparative Germanic Linguistics* 5:97–142.

Marantz, Alec. 1991. Case and licensing. In *Proceedings of ESCOL '91*, 175–195. Ithaca: Cornell Linguistic Club.

Maslov, Ju. S. 1984. *Očerki po aspektologii*. Leningrad: Izdatel'stvo Leningradskogo Universiteta.

Matushansky, Ora. 2006. Head movement in linguistic theory. *Linguistic Inquiry* 37:69–109.

McCoard, Robert W. 1978. *The English Perfect: Tense Choice and Pragmatic Inferences*. Amsterdam: North Holland.

Migdalski, Krzysztof. 2006. The syntax of compound tenses in Slavic. Doctoral Dissertation, University of Tilburg.

Mohr, Sabine. 2005. *Clausal Architecture and Subject Positions*. Amsterdam: John Benjamins.

Nedashkivska Adams, Alla. 1998. -no/-to and voice: Statality and actionality in contermporary Ukrainian. *Canadian Slavonic Papers* 40:189–208.

Paslawska, Alla, and Arnim von Stechow. 2003. Perfect readings in Russian. In *Perfect Explorations*, ed. Artemis Alexiadou, Monika Rathert, and Arnim von Stechow, 307–362. Berlin: Mouton de Gruyter.

Richards, Norvin. 2003. Why there is an EPP. *Genko Kenkyu: Journal of the Linguistic Society of Japan* 123:221–256.

Sigurðsson, Halldór Ármann. 2006. The nominative puzzle and the low nominative hypothesis. *Linguistic Inquiry* 37:289–308.

Sigurðsson, Halldór Ármann. In press. On the New Passive. To appear in *Syntax*.

Sobin, Nicholas J. 1985. Case assignment in Ukrainian morphological passive constructions. *Linguistic Inquiry* 16:649–662.

Starke, Michal. 2004. On the inexistence of specifiers and the nature of heads. In *Structures and Beyond: The Cartography of Syntactic Structures*, ed. Adriana Belletti. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

von Stechow, Arnim. To appear. Tenses in compositional semantics. In *The Expression of Time in Language*, ed. Wolfgang Klein.

Toyoshima, Takahashi. 2001. Head-to-Spec movement. In *The Minimalist Parameter: Selected Papers from the Open Linguistics Forum, Ottawa, 12−23 March 1997*, ed. Galina M. Alexandrova and Olga Arnaudova. Amsterdam: John Benjamins.

Trubinskij, Valetin I. 1988. Resultative, passive, and perfect in Russian dialects. In *Typology of Resultative Constructions*, ed. V. P. Nedjalkov and B. Comrie, volume 12 of *Typological studies in language*, 389–410. Amsterdam: John Benjamins.

Veselovská, Ludmila, and Petr Karlík. 2004. Analytic passives in Czech. *Zeitschrift für Slavistik* 2:163–243.

Wasow, Thomas. 1977. Transformations and the lexicon. In *Formal Syntax*, ed. Peter W. Culicover, Adrian Akmajian, and Thomas Wasow, 327–360. New York: Academic Press.

Department of Linguistics and Languages
McMaster University
Hamilton, ON, Canada L8S 4M2
ivona@alum.mit.edu