Inherent Case: its Semantic Import and Licensing of Inherently Case-marked NPs

This paper provides empirical arguments for the often expressed intuition that inherent case (IC) has semantic import (e.g., Chomsky 2000) and tries to detect licensing conditions for IC-marked NPs. The data in (1) involve pseudogapping. (1) shows that pseudogapping is possible in SC, where the objects in the first and second conjuncts have the same cases, either structural accusative as in (1a), or inherent cases such as dative in (1b). There is, however, a number of verbs in SC that allow case alternations on their objects. Some such verbs are *sluziti 'serve*, which as shown in (2a), allows either dative or accusative objects, and *komandovati 'command*, which takes either dative or instrumental objects, as in (2b). What has gone unnoticed so far is that when these verbs are plugged into the pseudo-gapping construction, both objects necessarily have to appear in the same case. Having case mismatches is not allowed in pseudo-gapping, as shown in (3), although in the non-elled sources for pseudogapping, this is allowed (3’). I will show that the same situation holds of sluicing. The question is why ellipsis is not possible in (3). On reason may be that there is no structural isomorphism between the two conjuncts. However, Merchant (2001) argues convincingly that structural isomorphism is not a necessary condition for either sluicing or VP ellipsis (which pseudogapping is an instance of, as in Lasnik (1995) among others). Rather, he shows that the relevant identity condition is a semantic identity condition. Since ellipsis fails in (3), this semantic condition is violated in these examples. More precisely, I argue that different IC possibilities with the verbs in (2) are a reflex of a difference in some part of the meaning of the verb in (a) and (b) examples, and this difference causes Merchant's semantic identity condition to fail in (3). This means that IC has semantic import.

The data in (4) illustrate the distribution of quantified numeral phrases (QNs) in SC. QNs are headed by a higher numeral quantifier NQ (*five* and above) that takes a genitive NP as a complement. NQs are not declinable, i.e., they have no case affixes; their form is always the same. These data show that a QNP can occur in structural case contexts as in (4a-b), as well as complements of all IC assigning prepositions (4c). They cannot, however, appear as complements of dative and instrumental assigning verbs and nouns, (4d-e). Case assignment to and within NQPs has been discussed for SC, among others, by Franks (1995), Boskovic (to appear), and Wechsler and Zlatic (2003). I will be concerned with the following questions, which have not been fully addressed in these works: First, why are QNPs felicitous complements of all IC assigning P's as opposed to IC assigning V's? Next, (5a) shows the verb *okrenuti se 'turn to' takes a dative object. (5b) shows that when a QNP is a dative object, the sentence is bad. However, as seen in (5c), if the QNP appears within the PP headed by the P *prema* or *ka 'toward', the sentence is good. The same holds of the dative complements of the noun *privrenost 'adherence'* in (5d-f). The question is why there is this possibility of alternation between complement PPs and IC-marked NPs. The generalization is that P emerges where morphological dative cannot (the same holds of instrumental), as long as the P has the right semantics. The relevant PP has to match the semantics of a dative NP that can occur as a complement of the N or V in question. Both the dative NP in (5a) as well as PP in (5c) denote directionality. Since non-declinable QNPs crucially cannot occur in these positions, they cannot denote directionality. This means that P and dative in (5a, c) are responsible for the relevant semantics of their PP and NP. Furthermore, consider the data in (6). This example shows that QNPs are infelicitous in positions where NPs that need case (e.g., 'John') cannot also appear, in this case in the subject position of a small clause that is a complement to a passivized ECM verb. The data in (8) thus show that QNPs, although indeclinable are not caseless (as proposed in some analyses of QNPs); they must be case-checked. The question is why this is so. In order to answer all of these questions I will propose that IC-marked NPs must undergo structural licensing, which means that V, P or N, as well as their complement IC-marked NPs and QNPs have uninterpretable features that need to be checked against each other. This is much like standard structural case checking. In addition, P and IC on Ns are parallel in that they have an interpretable feature, which itself need not be checked, but it can check a matching uninterpretable feature on V. NQs crucially do not have this interpretable feature. This allows me to explain why QNPs can be complements of IC marking P's but not V's. In V P QNP contexts, P has the interpretable feature that can check the matching uninterpretable feature of V. In V QNP contexts, the uninterpretable feature of V cannot be checked, as NQ does not have the interpretable feature, and therefore the derivation crashes. IC
marked N’s also have the interpretable feature, just as P’s, since they can occur in these contexts. IC is thus semantically interpretable.

(1) a. Petar je procitao knjigu, a Marija je novine.
   Petar read book(A) and Marija is newspaper(A)  
   ‘Petar read a book, and Marija did a newspaper.’

b. Petar je pomogao Marku, a Marija je Ivanu.
   Petar is helped Marko(D), and Marija is Ivan(D)  
   ‘Petar helped Marko, and Marija did Ivan.’

(2) a. Petar je vjerno služi svoj narod / svom narodu.  
   Petar loyally serves his people(A)/(D)  
   ‘Peter serves his people loyally.’

b. Petar komanduje divizijom / divizijii.  
   Petar commands a division(I)/(D)  
   ‘Petar is a commander of a division.’

(3) a. *Petar je vjerno služio svoj narod, a Marija je svojoj zemlji.  
   Petar is loyally served his people(A), and Marija is her (D) country  
   ‘Peter loyally served his people, and Marija did her country.’

b. *Petar je komandovao jedinicom, a Marija je divizijii.  
   Petar is commanded platoon(I) and Marija is division(D)  
   ‘Peter was a commander of a platoon, and Marija was a commander of a division.’

(3’) Petar je komandovao jedinicom, a Marija je komandovala divizijii.  
   Petar is commanded platoon(I), and Maja is commanded division(D)  
   ‘Petar was a commander of a platoon, and Mary was a commander of a division.’

(4) Nom. context:  Accusative context:  Dative P context:
   a. Pet djevojaka voli Marka.  b. Marko voli pet djevojaka.  c. prema pet djevojaka five girls love Marko  Marko loves five girls toward five girls  
   ‘Five girls love Marko.’  ‘Marko loves five girls.’  ‘toward five girls’

   Instrumental context:  Dative or instrumental context:
   d. *Upravlja sedam fabrika.  e. *privrzenost deset djevojaka.  
   He manages seven factories  commands ten girls  
   ‘He manages seven factories.’  ‘adherence to ten girls’

(5) a. Okrenuli su se Rusiji.  
   turned are SE Russia(D)  
   ‘They turned to Russia.’

b. Okrenuli su se devet zemalja Savjeta bezbjednosti turned are SE nine countries of-security council  
   ‘They turned to nine countries of the Security Council.’

c. Okrenuli su se prema/ka devet zemalja Savjeta bezbjednosti. 
   they turned are SE toward nine countries of-security council  
   ‘They turned to nine countries of the Security Council.’

d. privrzenost Rusiji 
   adherence Russia(D)  
   ‘adherence to Russia’

e. privrzenost *(prema) devet zemalja Savjeta bezbjednosti adh rence toward nine countries of-security council 
   ‘adherence to nine countries of the Security Council’

(6) a. *Ponekad se smatra Petar budalom.  b. Ponekad se Petar smatra budalom  
   sometimes SE consider Petar fool  s metimes SE Petar consider fool  
   ‘Petar is sometimes considered a fool.’  ‘Petar is sometimes considered a fool.’

c. *Ponekad se smatra / smatraju pet djevojaka budalama.  
   sometimes SE considers / consider five girls fools  
   ‘These five girls are sometimes considered fools.’

d. Ponekad se pet djevojaka smatra / smatraju budalama.  
   sometimes SE five girls considers/consider a fool