Is Accusative Case Really the Case?

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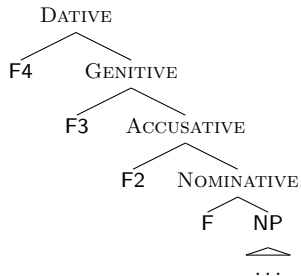
Introduction

- Decomposition of Cases
- Assumptions:
    - Morphological containment
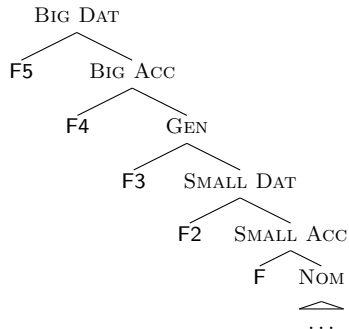   - Strict *fseq*
- Why though?

Cases *contain* the lower cases and their semantic primes.

First Proposal and Modification for Turkish

Caha, 2009:

Caha, 2018; Starke, 2017:

Analysis

The Problem
Genitive does contain accusative marker, which spells-out before BIG ACC according to Starke (2017).

The Evidence
- Morpho-phonological data from Turkic Languages
- Subject Relative Clause Data

Analysis: The Evidence: Gen-Acc in Turkic Languages

(1) a. Ädämlär-ni   quşlär-in-i
     men-GEN(ACC-GEN) birds-POSS-ACC

     "the men's birds"   Uzbek

   b. haqıqat-nı
     truth-ACC

     "the truth"   Uzbek

   c. Alar-dın   köz-ün-dü
     they-GEN(ACC-GEN) eye-POSS-ACC

     "their eye"   Kyrgyz

   d. Tuna-nın   kavaklar-ın-ı
     Tuna-GEN(ACC-GEN) poplars-POSS-ACC

     "Danube's poplars"   Gagauz

Analysis: The Evidence: SRC
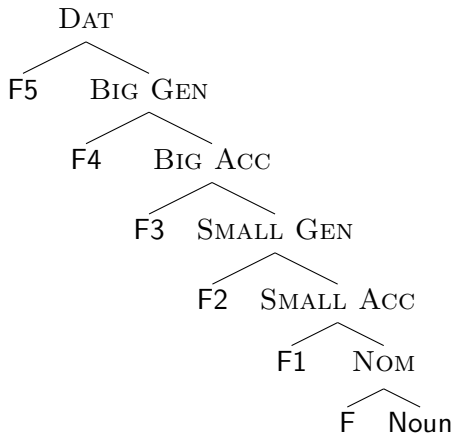
(2) [RC [DP *t* babası] ölen] kız

baba-sı   öl-en   kız
father-POSS die-NMLZ girl

"the girl whose father passed away"

Hakgüder, n.d.

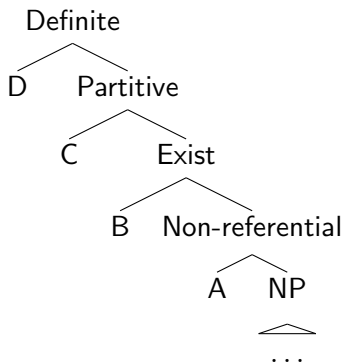# Analysis: Decomposition Proposal

What has been overlooked?

- Nanosyntax does not necessary *buy* the scope idea for different realization of semantic primes.
- Why did we split the cases into BIG and SMALL in the first place?

Analysis: Specificity Phrase

- Following the basic tenets of Nanosyntax, different semantic primes should be given with different projections.
- Reasons:
  - Pre-lexicon Syntax
  - Transparent LF Mapping
  - One Semantic Feature per Head
- Features bundled in BIG ACC:
  - Definiteness
  - Partitivity
  - Presupposition of Existence
  - Referentiality

Analysis: Specificity Phrase - Peeling

$$\{ A \} = \varnothing$$
$$\{ A , B \} = -(y)I$$

Evidence for Peeling

▶ Previous scope, (head/pseudo)-incorporation, specificity research provides immense ammount of evidence for different semantic primes.

Non-Referential

(3) a. * John kitap oku-du. Reng-i   kırmızı-y-dı.
        John book read-PST color-POSS red-CPL-PST
        Intended: "John read any book. It was red."

    b. John kitab-ı okudu. Rengi kırmızıydı.

(Adapted from Öztürk, 2004)

Evidence for Peeling

Presupposition of Existence

> What is Ahmet doing these days?

(4) * Ahmet kendin-e   bir eş-i   arıyor.
     Ahmet himself-DAT a   spouse-ACC looking.for-PROG

Intended: "Ahmet is looking for a spose for himself."

(Kelepir, 2001: 121)

Partitivity

(5)   a. Her   öğrenci bir kitap oku-du.
      every student a   book read-PST

      "Every student read a book."   (Kelepir, 2001: 83)

  b. Her   öğrenci bir kitab-ı   oku-du.
      every student a   book-ACC read-PST

      "Every student read a book."   (Kelepir, 2001: 84)

Evidence for Case Assignment

Causative skipping ACC

(6) Semra kitap oku-du.
Semra book read-PST

Semra did book-reading.

(7) *Furkan Semra-yı kitap oku-t-tu.
Furkan Semra-ACC book read-CAU-PST

Furkan made Semra do book-reading.

(8) Furkan Semra'ya kitap oku-t-tu.
Furkan Semra-DAT book read-CAU-PST

Furkan made Semra do book-reading.

Analysis: Delinking Proposal and Problems

Delinking Proposal

Accusative is **zero marked** and is an uninterpretable feature, like Nominative. However, there is a **Specificity Phrase** which type-shifts the Turkish NPs.

Problems

- Why don't we see *-(y)I* marker in other cases like NOM, DAT and others?
- Is *ABA problems resolved?

Reflection and *ABA

	Nom	Small Acc	Small Gen	Big Acc	Big Gen	Dat
Spell-out	∅	∅	∅	∅	-n	-A
with SP	∅	∅	∅	-(y)I	-(n)In	-A
Reflection	✗	✗	✗	✓	✓	✗

- ▶ Syncretism continuity is no longer a problem.
- ▶ Only BIG items can reflect more information than the case.

Selected References

Thank you!

Caha, Pavel (2009). "The Nanosyntax of Case". PhD thesis. Universitetet i Tromsø.
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