1. Introduction: The issue of structural case

Case in the linguistic sense seems to be some kind of morphosyntactic device that indicates—imperfectly, no doubt, but often usefully—the role or position of a noun phrase (NP, including DP, etc.) in the larger structure. But what kind of device is it exactly?

For example, nominative and accusative are structural cases in Sakha, a Turkic language spoken in Siberia. In a simple clause, the subject or agent is nominative, which is morphologically unmarked (there is no overt affix on the noun stem), whereas the object or theme bears one of the allomorphs of the accusative suffix –(n)I. This is shown by the examples in (1), including (1a), an intransitive clause that has a nominative agent-subject, but no theme-object, hence no NP bearing that accusative affix –n(I).

(1)  
   a. Min kel-li-m.  
      I.NOM come-PAST-1sS  
      ‘I came.’

   b. Min oloppoh-u aldjat-ty-m.  
      (Vinokurova 2005:285)  
      I.NOM chair-ACC break-PAST-1sS  
      ‘I broke the chair.’

   c. Erel kinige-ni atyylas-ta.  
      [why both 1b and 1c ?]  
      Erel book-ACC buy-PAST.3sS  
      ‘Erel bought the book.’

For this range of data, it does not matter too much how one states the case marking principle—in terms of thematic role, grammatical function, structural position, or some combination thereof—because the simple examples are, well, simple.

And for some of the cases—the so-called semantic or inherent cases—there might be little more to say than this from a syntactic perspective. For example, the ablative case in Sakha is not used for core arguments or grammatical functions, and it does have a fairly straightforward meaning. In the words of Stachowski and Menz (xx:xx) it “expresses a starting point, a source, a time interval, a cause, etc”—roughly the same range of situations in which English uses the preposition from. An example is:

(2)  
   Bihigi beqhehee Saaska-ttan suruk tut  
      (NV:241)  
   we yesterday Saaska-ABL letter receive.  
      ‘We received a letter from Sakha yesterday.’

So we might say that the ablative suffix –ttan in Sakha corresponds fairly directly to the preposition from in English. It has a similar lexical meaning, and it plus the associated noun phrase has a similar syntactic distribution—for example, as an “extra” phrase included in the larger verb phrase. We may then say that Saskattan in (2) is, essentially, an adpositional phrase (PP). That is perhaps nearly all there is to say about this sort of case from a syntactic

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1 There are two plausible ways to spell this out, which are technically different. One could say that the morpheme –ttan is a direct realization of the P meaning ‘from’; it appears on the noun as a result of cliticization or morphological merger (or perhaps head movement) ((ia)). Or one could say that the P meaning ‘from’ corresponds
perspective. And languages may have many inherent cases of this sort: for example, Sakha has three others (instrumental, comitative, comparative), Finnish has approximately 11 (xx), Lezgian has 14 (Haspelmath 1993:74).

But this is certainly not all there is to say about accusative in Sakha, for example, which does not correspond to an adposition in English, does not have a consistent semantic value, and seems to be used more dynamically.

1.1 The problem of language particular detail

The structural-grammatical cases are notably not like the inherent-semantic cases in that they can change depending on the syntactic context. For example, the passive sentence in (3) contains a theme argument comparable to the one in (1b). But in (3) this nominal is marked with the (null) nominative case, not with the accusative.

(3) Caakky aldjat-yn-ny.
    Cup break-PASS-PAST.3sS
    ‘The cup was broken.’

Therefore, the affix –(n)I cannot simply be regarded as a marker of the theme/patient thematic role, the way that the affix –ttan can (perhaps) be regarded as a marker of the source thematic role.

Conversely, the embedded sentence in (4) has (arguably) an agentive subject, comparable to the one in (1a). Nevertheless in this sentence the comer is marked accusative, not nominative.

    Keskil Aisen-ACC come-NEG.AOR.3sS that become.sad-PAST.3sS
    ‘Keskil became sad that Aisen is not coming.’ (NV:366)

Examples like these show that one cannot state (nearly) exceptionless rules that relate morphological markings to thematic roles like agent and patient-theme in Sakha. Indeed, one cannot in most other languages either, perhaps all.

One might then move to stating the rules of structural case marking in terms of grammatical function like subject and object, rather than in terms of thematic role. In these terms, a noun phrase is nominative if it is the subject of the clause and accusative if it is the

to a null morpheme, but it assigns its own distinctive form of oblique case (‘ablative’) to its NP complement, and that is realized as ablative. Moreover, in some languages both the P and the case it assigns might be spelled out separately, resulting in what might be described as bimorphemic case markers, like the Lezgian example in (ic).

(1) a. [Saaska+OBL FROM]  Saaska-Ø-ttan
    b. [Saaska+OBL-ABL FROM]  Saaska-ttan Ø
    c. [BEAR-OBL UNDER]  sew-re-k ‘under the bear’ (Lezgian, Haspelmath 1993:74)

Presumably which of these analyses is used for which inherent case is to be decided (if at all) by careful consideration of the morphological details. (For example, does the case spread on to modifiers of the noun? Is the same case assigned by any other element? How does the oblique NP compare to clearer instances of PP in the language, with overt separate P?) These questions can be interesting on a local level, but typically do not have so much broad syntactic significance. Therefore, I do not consider them much here.
object. This type of formulation might work for (3) as well as for (1), assuming that the object of a transitive sentence corresponds to the subject of the passive version. But it is less clear that it works for (4). This would only work if one said that (4) (like so-called Exceptional Case Marking in English), is an instance of “raising to object”. But there is little motivation for this in Sakha, apart from the case marking. Note that the matrix verb in (4) is an intransitive one, ‘become sad’, which is not the sort of verb that one would expect to take an object, thematic or not. (Indeed, the matrix bears the anticausative suffix –j, which otherwise marks intransitive verbs of the unaccusative class; see xx for discussion.)

Another problem for equating structural case directly with thematic role is that the theme argument in a sentence like (5) is not accusative, but rather nominative/unmarked, in contrast to (1c). This is true despite the fact that ‘book’ here is clearly not the grammatical subject, but rather Erel is, as shown by subject-verb agreement, not to mention subject-object-verb word order and other considerations.

(5)  Erel  kinige atyylas-ta.
     Erel book  buy-PAST.3sS
     ‘Erel bought a book/books.’

So the structural case of an NP is not a direct function of that NP’s independently determined grammatical function, any more than it is direct function of its thematic role.

Perhaps then we can use structural terms instead of or in addition to thematic roles and grammatical functions to formulate the rules of case distribution. Indeed, I will claim (non-uniquely) that this is essentially the answer. But even this is not an easy or trivial answer, because the structural differences can be subtle. For example, there is no gross syntactic difference in the position of the theme/object between (1c) and (5); if anything, the superficial difference appears to be a semantic one, whether the object is interpreted as a nonspecific indefinite (‘some book(s)’) or a specific one (‘the book’ or ‘a certain book’). However, a structural difference does come to light when one includes an adverb: the bare object with a nonspecific indefinite interpretation must be next to the verb, but the accusative object with a specific or definite interpretation need not be.

(6)  a. Masha türgennik salamaat-(y) sie-te.
     Masha quickly  porridge-ACC eat-PAST.3sS
     ‘Masha ate porridge quickly.’ (ACC on ‘porridge’ only if it has contrastive focus)

   b. *Masha salamaat türgennik sie-te.
     Masha porridge-ACC  quickly  eat-PAST.3sS
     ‘Masha ate the porridge quickly.’

   c. Masha salamaat-y türgennik sie-te.
     Masha porridge-ACC  quickly  eat-PAST.3sS
     ‘Masha ate the porridge quickly.’

Another subtle structural difference that influences case marking in Sakha is that the theme argument in a passive clause can be accusative rather than the nominative shown in (3).
Indeed, the theme argument must be accusative if agent-oriented adverbs like ‘intentionally’ and ‘with a hammer’ are present, as shown in (7).

cup-ACC intentionally hammer-INST break-PASS-PAST.3sS
‘The cup was intentionally broken with a hammer.’ (* with caakky ‘cup(NOM’)

A third such difference is that the subject of an embedded clause may be nominative as well as accusative. And indeed the embedded subject must be nominative if it follows an adverb belonging to the lower clause, one that modifies the lower verb/event, as shown in (8b) as opposed to (8a).

    I you you-ACC today win-FUT-2pS that hope-PAST-1sS
    ‘I hoped that you would win today.’

b. Min [sarsyn ehigi-(*ni) kel-ieux-xit dien] iht-ti-m.
    I(NOM) tomorrow you-(ACC) come-FUT-2pS that hear-PAST-1sS
    ‘I heard that tomorrow you will come.’

I take this range of data to show two things. The first is that syntactic structure has the potential to explain fine-grained differences that cannot be explained just in terms of thematic role or gross grammatical function. In this respect, the term “structural case” is not a misnomer, but an important truth. But the second is that it will be none too easy to get an account even in structural terms. First, the syntax will have to be fairly detailed to distinguish (1c) from (5), (3) from (7), and (8a) from (8b). Nor is it immediately obvious how to get a unified syntactic account of these three differences, which do not on first glance seem to have anything to do with each other.

We see, then, that part of the problem of structural case is that it is easy to get principles of case assignment that sort of work, but it is hard to get ones that work exactly, especially over a broad domain in a particular language. Nor is Sakha notably more difficult than other languages in these respects. There is nothing unique to my framing of this problem—although I hope to have framed it well. It has been a classic problem in syntactic theory for years. But it is not a solved problem in syntactic theory. In this work, I attempt to take a big step toward solving it.

1.2 The problem of crosslinguistic generality

The problem of structural case gets even harder and more interesting when it is given a crosslinguistic dimension, couched within a theory that has universal aspirations. We have seen that the structural details matter in Sakha. They also matter in other languages, and they matter differently.

I chose a less-known language for my initial presentation on purpose, hoping that many readers would be struck by both similarities and differences with what they already know. For example, there are many languages with data like (1) in Sakha, in which the object of a transitive verb is distinguished from the subject of a transitive or intransitive verb by a morphological
marker on the object. At that level of description, many languages are the same, including Turkish, Tamil, Amharic, Japanese, Quechua, Hopi, Russian … and even English when one considers the differing forms of some personal pronouns. But when it comes to examples like (3)-(8), one probably notices unfamiliar details. For example, English has a passive, but the theme argument of a monotransitive passive must be nominative in English, like in Sakha (3). Accusative case on this argument is not an option in English, the way it is in Sakha, as shown in (9).

(9)  
   a. He was beaten on purpose with a hammer.  
   b. *Him was beaten on purpose with a hammer.

Similarly, in English the subject of an embedded clause can be marked accusative, but in English this happens only if the clause is a complement of the matrix verb, in contrast to Sakha (4), and only if the embedded verb is nonfinite ((10a) vs. (10b)), in contrast to Sakha (8a). This form of accusative case marking is also possible with a smaller range of matrix verbs in English than in Sakha, so (10c) is not very good in English, in contrast to (8a) in Sakha.

(10)  
   a. I hoped/expected that she (*her) would win today.  
   b. I expected her to win today.  
   c. ??I hoped her to win today.

Indeed, it is notable that, although Turkish is genetically related and typologically similar to Sakha rather than to English, Turkish is more like English than like Sakha in these details of how accusative case is used. So we can have significant differences in the grammar of case marking within a family, and significant similarities in the grammar of case marking across families.

   Turkish is like Sakha in that it has so-called differential object marking, with some objects marked accusative and others not ((1b,c) versus (5); see also (6)). But not all languages with overt accusative marking on common nouns are like this. Cuzco Quechua, for example, is not: in matrix clauses in Quechua, objects are marked with overt accusative case even if they are nonspecific indefinites and adjacent to the verb:²

(11)  
   Juan wawakuna man miski-*(ta) qunpuni. (LS, p.c.; see Cole 1985:70-71 on IQ)  
   Juan children-DAT candy-ACC give-3S-HAB  
   ‘Juan gives candy to the children (habitually).’

In terms of the recent literature, Turkish and Sakha have differential object marking, but Quechua does not.

   So we find ourselves a common kind of quandary. We want to capture the similarities across languages, that characterize a system of (say) accusative case marking. But we also need to capture the differences. So this raises questions like what is the core of the notion of accusative case marking (if any), and what its range of allowable variation? This is the classic Principles and Parameters question (Chomsky xxx ref?), applied to this domain, which is not

² In some embedded clauses, however, accusative case can be omitted on the object in Quechua—namely in nominalized clauses (Lebevre and Muysken xxx, Cole xxx). Although the contrast is very interesting (see chapter 2 ?) it only emphasizes the point at hand.
only finite and accessible, but also interesting and strategic to our understanding of grammar as a whole.

There are, of course, larger scale differences among languages when it comes to case marking. Not all languages have a standard nominative-accusative system, where there is a special case marker for the direct object of a transitive clause. Famously, there are also ergative languages, in which a special affix marks the subject of a transitive clause, while the subject of an intransitive clause and the object of a transitive clause have the same marking (typically null). (12) shows an example of this kind in Shipibo, a language from the Panoan family, spoken in Peru.

(12) a. Maria-nin-ra ochiti noko-ke. (Ergative ergative, Shipibo)
   Maria-ERG-PRT dog find-PRF
   ‘Maria found the dog.’

   b. Maria-ra ka-ke.
   Maria-PRT go-PRF
   ‘Maria went.’

Indeed, ergative languages are almost as common as accusative languages among languages with overt structural case markers. Some rarer types are also known: tripartite languages, in which intransitive subjects, transitive subjects, and transitive objects are all marked differently, and marked nominative languages in which it is the subject of the clause (transitive or intransitive) that bears an overt affix rather than the object. This work will attempt to account for these larger scale differences in case marking as well as the smaller scale ones.

As a final piece of the puzzle, it turns out that even languages that seem to have quite different kinds of case system can show surprising similarities when one considers details at the corners of the system. For example, despite being an ergative language, Shipibo has a limited number of verbs (around 10?) which take two distinct NP arguments, neither of which is marked ergative. Rather, both are absolutive, as shown in (13).

(13) José-ra yapa keen-ai. (also PV:339, 342-344; LLD:34)
   Jose-PRT fish want-IMPF
   ‘José wants some fish.’

These verbs tend to have psychological meanings, where the subject is an experiencer, rather than an agent. Korean, on the other hand, is a nominative accusative language. But it also has a minority pattern in which both arguments have the same case, in this case nominative. Moreover, it is nonagentive predicates with experiencer subjects that have this behavior in Korean, as in Shipibo.

(14) a. Nom ACC example (also intransitive)
   xxxx
   xxxx

   b. xxxx Nom-Nom example (use K to avoid wa, 1st restrict in Kuno exx)
   xxxx
   xxx
These languages seem to have something in common then, in regard to the fact that their special case for transitive clauses (accusative or ergative) is not used with certain experiencer predicates—a similarity that transcends the high level distinction between an ergative language and an accusative language. Another case in point is the ergative language Ostyak. We saw above that when the object is a nonspecific indefinite next to the verb in Sakha, the object is not marked for accusative case (see (xx)). Something similar happens in Ostyak: when the object is a nonspecific indefinite next to the verb, the subject is not marked for ergative case, as shown in (15).

(15)  

a. Mä t'akäjaylänä  ula manyälam.  
   We.dual(nom) younger.sister-COM berry  pick-PAST-1pS  
   ‘I went to pick berries with my younger sister.’

b. Ma-ŋən ḷaḷa  allə  juŋ  kaña  amayaloy.  
   We-ERG them large tree beside  put-PAST-3pO/1pS  
   ‘We put them (pots of berries) beside a big tree.’

Here again we can discern something significant that Sakha and Ostyak have in common, that transcends the fact that one language is accusative and the other is ergative. Suggestive similarities like these suggest to me that ergative and accusative are not radically different systems, with very different principles and logics, but rather are somehow variations of a single system. That is why the same kinds of factors, like agentivity of the subject and specificity of the object, can be relevant to both. We see then a complex pattern of both similarity in the midst of difference and difference in the midst of similarity, and this is what it is my goal to say something about.

1.3 Goals of the inquiry

A feature of this book, then, is that it will attempt to address both the problem of language particular detail and the problem of crosslinguistic variation in a balanced way. Of course, it is impossible to do this fully in one go: one cannot go both deeper and broader to the fullest degree in one finite book, even if one had all of the expertise to do so (which I do not). But there is some value in trying to advance simultaneously in both dimensions to some degree, given that some of the interesting crosslinguistic differences—and also some of the interesting crosslinguistic similarities!—only appear when one reaches a certain level of detail. Therefore, this book will follow what in other work I have called “The Middle Way”: I consider a medium number of languages in a medium amount of detail. Roughly this amounts to considering some 20 languages from different families at the level of detail of studying a complete grammar of the language—not just the obvious ten pages on case marking—or a series of articles—not just one—trying to take into account pretty much everything that comes up at that level regarding structural case in these languages. In particular, I look at roughly four languages of each of four types—accusative languages like Sakha, ergative languages, tripartite languages, and marked nominative languages—in an effort to see both what is stable about each type, and what can vary. [Revise numbers by the end xxx].

A related goal is that, for each language considered, I seek principles of case assignment that are as unified as possible. What this means is that, say for a language like Sakha, I will seek one rule of (structural!* ) accusative case assignment that captures when NPs are accusative and when they are not over the entire range that accusative is used in the language—and similarly for ergative, nominative, absolutive, dative, and genitive. At least that is the ideal to be aimed for.
Some no doubt will question whether this is the right goal. (Sometimes I question it myself.) Descriptive grammars typically do list a variety of disparate-seeming uses of accusative or some other case in the relevant sections. Modern theories of a construction grammar sort would presumably follow this practice, saying that it is a property of some constructions that they have an accusative NP in them, and a property of other constructions that they do not, without necessarily trying to find a structural property that all and only the former have in common that distinguishes them from the latter. That is certainly the easier way. It is also a useful way to present material in a practical grammar, and it may thus seem to get at kind of truth in some cases. But I assume that if we provided a unified account of each of the structural cases is desirable where it can be given, for familiar reasons: Ockham’s razor, elegance, learnability, and so on. Indeed, seeing whether we can provide a unified account and if so at what cost, goes a long way toward showing whether we should have a unified account or not.

1.4 A further word on inherent case and how to put it aside

There is an important caveat to be made here though, in the light of the distinction between structural and inherent/semantic case. I believe that nearly every fully-articulated case theory draws this distinction in one way or another. I mentioned it above, when I distinguished accusative case in Sakha from ablative case in Sakha, where the latter but not the former can simply be treated as the morphological realization of a PP. But between these relatively clear cases, there are intermediate cases that make it harder to draw the line between the two kinds of case. Indeed, it is probably impossible to do so in any pretheoretical or theory-neutral way. A classic example is dative case, which is either something in between a structural case and an inherent case, or (better, I think) it has some structural uses when it is assigned by configuration, and some inherent uses, in which it is equivalent to an adposition with a semantic value. For example, in Sakha, instances of nominals in dative case can be added to practically any clause (even if the verb is intransitive) to mean that the event was done for the benefit of the referent of that nominal. An example is (12).

(16) Küндül ynaq-ar ot ürgee-te. (NV:330)
Küндül.NOM cow-3.DAT grass pick-PAST.3sS
‘Kündül picked grass for his cow.’

This is probably an instance of inherent case, not very different from PPs like for the cow in the syntax. At the same time, as in many languages, dative case in Sakha is used to express the agent of a caused action in a morphological causative if and only if the root verb is transitive, hence in (13b) but not in (13a).

(17) a. Sardaana Aisen-y/*Aiseŋ-ŋa yta(a)-t-ta
Sardaana Aisen-ACC/*DAT cry-CAUS-PAST.3sS
‘Sardaana made Aisen cry.’

   b. Misha Masha-qa miin-(i) sie-t-te.
   Misha Masha-DAT soup-(ACC) eat-CAUS-PAST.3sS

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3 (Possible exception: Manzini and company, who claim that all morphemes have some kind of meaning, including then the case morphemes. Xx)
‘Misha made Masha eat (the) soup.’

This is probably an instances of structural case, because the dative NP does not have a fixed thematic role—it is not a benefactee, like the dative NP in (12), but rather an agent—and because whether that NP is dative or not depends on aspects of the broader structure, such as the presence of an object of the caused verb. So the unified rule of structural dative case will presumably not cover all instances of dative case in Sakha, because there are two kinds of dative case that should not be unified. And just where the line should be drawn between the two is a theoretical matter. For example, dative case is also used on the goal argument of ditransitive verbs in Sakha, as in (14).

(18) Masha Misha qa at-y bier-de.
    Masha(NOM) Misha-DAT horse-ACC give-PAST.3sS
    ‘Masha gave Misha a horse.’

Now it is not hard to imagine extending the analysis of inherent dative case in (12) to (14). This is plausible because the goal of a giving event is often also the beneficiary of that event. Goals and benefactees are thus similar theta roles, and we might well expect the same adposition to mark both. But it is also not hard to imagine extending the analysis of structural dative case in (13b) to (14). The presence of the theme object in (13b) but not in (13a) presumably plays a role in triggering the dative case on the causee in (13b) but not in (13a) (see xx below for an explicit proposal). But there is a theme argument distinct from the goal argument in (14) too, so it is not unreasonable to extend whatever principle gives dative case in (13b) to (14) as well. So there are two reasonable analyses of the dative case in (14), one in which it is structural, and hence inside my primary domain of inquiry, and one in which it is inherent, and hence outside it.

Which is correct, and should my theory be accountable for (14) or not? I know only two ways forward. One is to let the theory decide, by stating the rule for the clearer instances of structural dative case and seeing whether it does in fact account for (14), more or less “for free”. If so, it is reasonable to say that it is structural case. The other is to hope that one can find some fine-grained syntactic properties which distinguish the two kinds of dative in (12) and (13b): a process of clefting, perhaps, or quantifier floating—the sorts of things known to apply to NPs but not to PPs in other languages. Then one can see where (14) falls with respect to that. (See xx below for a possible test of this sort for Sakha.) That of course depends both on knowing a lot about the syntax of the relevant language and on being a bit lucky to find a construction that draws the right distinction. We can reasonably expect such data to be available in some instances but not all in a work of this scope, at this stage of linguistic inquiry. So we must expect some indeterminacy at the border between structural and inherent case, where there is no choice but to let the theory decide where the dividing line is.\(^4\)

\(^4\) Note that this is not the most troubling kind of problem to have, since here we have two plausible analyses for (14), an embarrassment of riches. That is easier to live with than an embarrassment of poverty, where neither an analysis in terms of structural case nor one in terms of inherent case seems suitable.

In fact, I can imagine a rule of structural case that assigns dative case in both (14) and (13b) being extended to cover (12) as well. In particular, (12) could be amenable to being analyzed as an applicative, with a null applied affix and ‘cow’ as the NP argument that it introduces. This NP would then get dative case when in it is in the environment of a distinct theme NP, just as the goal NP does in (14) and the causee does in (13b) (but not (13a)). However, this clearly will not work for all unselected dative expressions—especially in Sakha, where the Turkic locative case has been largely lost, its function being taken over by the dative. So I doubt that any
I mention this point here because what is fairly clearly true for dative case in this regard is probably true to a lesser degree even for the more prototypical structural cases. For example, accusative is used on adverbs of duration and extent in many IE languages, including English:

(19) a. He threw the ball a full fifty meters. (clearly ACC in older English)
    b. She stayed in London five weeks. (Use Russian instead)

Now these are probably instances of inherent accusative case, not structural. They are associated with a consistent meaning, which one might expect to use a P for in another language. They are unlike accusative case object-themes in that they do not have to be adjacent to the verb. Furthermore, they do not alternate with nominative case in related sentences such as passives:

(20) a. *A full fifty meters was thrown the ball.
    b. *Five weeks were stayed in London.

If these nominals bear inherent case, then the structural case principle for accusative should not apply to them. But again, there is no easy way to tell the difference, particularly across languages, and in some cases the theory will have to decide.

To make things even more interesting, similar-looking cases might fall out differently with respect to the inherent-structural distinction in different languages. For example, the European but not Indo-European language Finnish also uses accusative case to mark adverbs of duration, as in (17).

(21) a. Tuo-n karhu-n. (Kiparsky 2001:333)
    bring-1sS bear-GEN (=ACC)
    ‘I’ll bring the/a bear.’

    b. (Minää) viivyin matkalla viiko-n. (Maling hb: 78)
    I.NOM stay.1sSstrip-ADESS week.ACC
    ‘I stayed on the trip one week.’

But in a Finnish impersonal passive, the case on this sort of adverb switches to nominative:

(22) a. Siellä näh-tiin karhu. (Kiparsky 2001:353)
    there see-PAST-PASS bear(NOM)
    ‘A bear was seen there.’

    b. Siellä viivyttiin kokonainen viikko. (Maling hb: 78)

Generalization of a structural case rule for (13b) and (14) will also account for the dative case on the locative adjunct of an intransitive verb, as in (i), for example. So the point about the same morphological form having uses both as structural case and inherent case goes through whatever one thinks about (12).

(i) En baan-ŋa ülelee-ti-ŋ. (NV:254)
    You bank-dat work-PAST-2sg
    ‘You worked in the bank.’
"We/they/one stayed there a whole week."

This gives us two reasons to think that accusative case on adverbs is structural case in Finnish. First, whether it appears or not depends on structural properties of the containing clause, such as whether it is passive or not. Second, the alternation it undergoes is clearly similar if not identical to the alternation that normal accusative direct objects undergo in Finnish—the quintessential example of structural case. We thus have a clear motive for including them under the same case.

I conclude that accusative case on adverbs of duration is structural case in Finnish, and inside the domain of inquiry, whereas accusative case on adverbs of duration is (probably) inherent case in English, and outside the domain of inquiry. Similarly, I have little doubt that what might be called dative (or allative) case on the goal arguments of ditransitive verbs will turn out to be structural case in some languages (e.g., languages that use dative in morphological causatives) and as inherent case in others (e.g., languages with no other evidence of having a structural dative case). I take this kind of variation to be simply another instance of the theme that the details of case theory vary in interesting and instructive ways from language to language—part of the motivation for the current study.

Similar issues arise for other cases in other languages. For example, ergative is a structural case associated with the subjects of transitive clauses in Diyari and Warlpiri and many other Australian languages, and it interacts grammatically with the switch reference system in Diyari and with the system of subject clitics/agreement in Warlpiri. But it is also homophonous with an instrumental case, which has different syntactic properties: the switch reference system is not sensitive to instruments in Diyari, instruments are not doubled by S2 clitics). When it appears on instruments, this is presumably an inherent case, with similar syntactic status to the PP with X in English, even though it shares the same morphological exponent as the structural case ergative.

The existence of inherent case gives me a way of cheating. If a certain NP has case X unexpectedly, I can say X doubles as an inherent case X. But there is no way around this, at least for now: structural versus inherent is a theoretical distinction, and theory is going to have to decide where it is drawn. It will perhaps be of some comfort that these ambiguities typically go only one way. One cannot get out of a problem of the form “A certain NP does not have case Y and should have it” by appealing to inherent case. But I will have to try to exercise good judgment on what is included and what is not in this respect, and the reader will have to decide if I did or not.

1.5 On the syntax and morphology of case

Another topic of variation, how cases are realized morphologically. This could be DM style syncretism, of a familiar kind. This handles local glitches, but also affects typology: cf. Legate on split ergative Australian languages really being tripartite with syncretisms. I indeed will assume that all NP based split ergativity is of this type. (More) Does this best go here?

Also realizations of two cases on one NP when that may be possible: Summary of the Sakha story. (How extensive is this?)

[Outline only? Where it fits? Definitely some is morphology: details of declension classes, syncretism, etc. But some is definitely syntax (or a mapping from it), or morphology...]

5 (unless perhaps the NP does not have case Y because it has case Z, and Z is an inherent case...)
would be no good at expressing syntactic relationship. Rough and ready standards: rship of case marker to N root it attaches to can very well be morphological – cf. NP based split ergativity in an Australian language.

1.6  The design of the book

The rest of the book is divided up into two parts. One difficult design choice to make in a project like this is which comparisons should one organize the exposition around: language internal ones, or language external ones. For example, suppose one is considering dative case on the causee of a morphological causative in Sakha. Is the most urgent and instructive comparison with dative case in causatives in some other language, or is it with other uses of dative and accusative case in Sakha. It is easy to make a case both ways, at least from a generative perspective. Crosslinguistic comparisons are necessary to bring out what is stable and universal across languages, and they often seem like comparing apples to apples. But language internal comparisons are necessary to understand what role (say) dative plays within the larger system of Sakha. And it is that language-internal system that has psychological reality, within the mind of a speaker of Sakha, which is the essential unit of generative understanding—whereas no one mind presumably grasps all the options of universal grammar and all their relations. So both are necessary, but they pull in different directions when it comes to choices of exposition.

In light of this, I attempt to do some of each in this book, by dividing it into two parts. The first part presents the fundamental principles and parameters of case assignment in as direct and straightforward a way as possible, with sufficient but far from exhaustive examples taken from particular languages to support and illustrate the points that are being made. It is organized by the logic of principles of dependent case assignment. Chapter 2 motivates this and gets the idea out there, showing why agreement assigned by case is not sufficient. Then the next three chapters go through each important part of the definition in more detail: first the role of c-command (chapter 3), then the role of locality domains (phases) (chapter 4), then the role of category features in defining what interacts with what for purposes of case (chapter 5). This part emphasizes crosslinguistic comparisons, and the universal aspects of the topic. As a major subtopic, it will show how the same theoretical notions play a crucial role in the syntax of languages assigned to different types. In other words, it will show what accusative languages, ergative languages, tripartite languages, and marked nominative languages all have in common. However, no one language will be discussed thoroughly or in detail here. Nor do I devote much effort to arguing against alternative analyses for particular constructions in particular languages in this part. Part 1 should be readable on its own.

Part 2 then will be organized as a series of case studies, in which the overall system of structural case for the chosen languages will be presented, to see how it works together as a system. It is divided up by typological category: chapter 6 is about accusative languages, chapter 7 about ergative languages, chapter 8 about tripartite languages, and chapter 9 about marked nominative languages. For each type, I consider four (to five?) specific languages chosen from different families that illustrate that type. In this part, the immediate comparisons will be between one construction in a given language and another construction in that same language, and (at a higher level) between languages of the same general type. The goal is to show how the various case resources fit together into an overall system. This is also the place to consider alternatives and to argue against them, since constructing those arguments typically depends on using the particular resources of that language. Although I endeavor to make this part readable
on its own too, in the interests of avoiding redundancy I do not repeat material already discussed in part 1 in part 2. Therefore, if I used a relatively large number of examples from language X in part 1 (e.g., Sakha), the discussion of language X in part 2 is more terse and outline-like, whereas languages that were mentioned only in passing or not at all in part 1 have a more complete and fleshed out discussion in part 2. Also, as a special case, three of these languages have published analyses in this framework: Sakha, Amharic, and Shipibo. I also do not repeat some of the language particular details discussed in those articles, but rather refer interested readers to those articles where the point is not immediately crucial to the picture developed here.

Of course no compromise is ever perfect, but I hope this design will serve the needs of my topic and my readers well.