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## THE STRUCTURAL LOCATION OF CASE PHRASE (KP) IN OLD ENGLISH

### 0. INTRODUCTORY REMARKS

With the rise of the notion of the functional projection, both in the clausal and in the nominal domain, it has been recognized that functional material is able to project syntactic structure in conformity with the X-bar Theory of phrase. This has led to a proliferation of functional projections as practically each morphosyntactic feature could project its own functional projection. Consequently, case situated in a functional head could be represented as a constituent rather than a feature. This shift from a feature-based approach to a structural perception of case has some consequences. Conceptually, for example, as argued by Toman (1994), the idea of case assignment should be replaced by a more neutral theory of case licensing as case is represented at the level of constituent structure; therefore, it cannot be assigned. Instead, it 'has to meet basic conditions that govern the distribution of nodes in phrase structure' (TOMAN 1994:174). Thus, movement of a NP to [Spec, IP] driven by the need to assign case can be reformulated in terms of KP-movement that requires licensing of a KP. Irrespective of the technical execution of movement, the KP analysis opens up more theoretical possibilities.

Another theoretical consequence of the introduction of KP is connected with the theory of parametrization, a very important issue in the Chomskyan tradition. Toman (1994) suggests that the KP analysis can solve the problem of two cases in GB theory, namely abstract and morphological case. The existence of a new functional category, KP, allows us to parametrize languages according to whether or not they have morphological case, without the need to posit two distinct cases.

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Such an approach supports a widely expressed view that functional categories are the locus of parametric variation and show crosslinguistic contrasts.

Despite potential advantages that the KP analysis brings, it also raises some questions. The most fundamental one concerns the placement of a KP in the structure. With a feature-based approach, the location of case is a relatively easy task. For instance, in minimalism, DPs are equipped with a bundle of features, including case, already in the lexicon and check these features in appropriate configurations during derivation. However, when we posit an independent projection we have to decide where exactly it is merged. In what follows we shall consider three basic possibilities: KP can be merged above DP, below DP or conflated with DP. We shall see that case is located in DP in Old English, which means that KP as a separate functional projection cannot be postulated in Old English.

### 1. KP ABOVE DP

The first option puts KP above DP, making it a nominal counterpart of CP (HALE & BITTNER 1996). The reasoning behind such an approach is that DPs are licensed by or assigned case from external case-assigners (verbs, prepositions etc). Then this case percolates downwards onto the entire phrase. In other words, if the KP is absent, morphological or structural/inherent case, as Hale & Bittner call it, cannot be licensed/assigned. Hale & Bittner give further evidence for the C(omp)-C(ase) parallelism from a variety of languages arguing for a head-like behaviour of K. For example, according to them, it is possible to observe a crosslinguistic parallel between ‘case-drop’ and ‘comp-drop’ phenomena in Japanese (cf. LAMONTAGNE & TRAVIS 1987). Finally, evidence that KP closes off the nominal domain, similar to CP, which is the highest clausal projection, is offered by the syntactic behaviour of the possessive marker *'s* (genitive case). Consider:

- (1) It's not in the people of Iran's interest  
 \*It's not in the people's of Iran interest

As shown in (1), the genitive is a phrasal affix that attaches to the right edge of the entire DP, which suggests that KP is higher than DP because the possessive *'s* corresponding to K takes DP as a complement (see HONG 2005).

In the KP-above-DP analysis K can equal other categories. For example, Toman (1994) tentatively suggests that from a semantic point of view K may be identified with Q rather than with D (cf. also VANGSNES 2001) because both con-

stituents seem to belong to the same natural class. This parallel is supported by the fact that the partitive case, quantificational in nature, can be licensed by an abstract Q-head (for details see GIUSTI 1991 and CARDINALETTI & GIUSTI 1991).

## 2. KP BELOW DP

Mallen (1998) on the basis of data from German and Romance languages considers another possibility. Specifically, he assumes that K is selected by Num (cf. also VALOIS 1991, who argues that case phrase is directly below NumP), which in turn is selected by D, the locus of nominal inflectional features in German. These functional categories form an agreement chain, which enables feature percolation downwards. Parametric differences between languages depend on whether movement to these categories is overt or covert. In this way, he explains the prenominal versus postnominal realization of genitives inside the noun phrase. Furthermore, the lower placement of KP helps Mallen to account for the distribution and morphology of adjectives. He assumes that adjectives must move to [Spec, KP] in German to appear prenominally. Adjectives raise to satisfy the morphological requirement of feature checking as they are overtly case-marked in German.

The structure proposed by Mallen, in which the functional layers consist of D, Num and K forming a chain, also accounts for the distribution of so-called strong and weak adjectival endings. That is important in the light of the fact that Old English has weak and strong endings as well. In particular, according to Mallen, the case features may be morphologically realized either at the head (D) or at the tail of the chain (K), not halfway through the chain. Thus the following data are explained:

- (2) **derj** NUMj schöne Wagenj  
 DETj einj **schöner** Wagenj  
 \*DETj **einerj** schöne Wagen  
 ‘the/a nice car’

(MALLEN 1998:225)

Similarly, case percolates onto the topmost member of a string of adjectives in [Spec, KP], that is the tail of the chain if it does not find expression on the overtly filled D.

### 3. KP CONFLATED WITH DP

The final option on where KP could be located is represented by Giusti (1995). She postulates a nominal functional projection, call it FP, whose realization is subject to parametric variation. More specifically, she argues that F(P) realizes K(P) in languages with overt case marking. On the other hand, in languages with articles F(P) is represented by D(P). In other words, this proposal conflates the DP projection into the same functional head as case, KP. This is supported by the observation that there is a close interdependence between case and articles. That is, in most languages the article evolved from a demonstrative when these languages were losing morphological case. This cannot be due to chance. Then, by hypothesis, case morphology is reinterpreted as an independent word.

Such an approach allows a straightforward explanation of strong/weak morphology. In particular, Giusti suggests that all modifiers, which she assumes to be in AgrPs, have weak morphology if FP is realized. By contrast, all modifiers have strong morphology if FP is empty. This is illustrated below:

- (3) die alten netten Frauen  
 alte nette Frauen  
 ‘the old nice women’

(GIUSTI 1995:88)

A different situation arises with what she calls possessives and quantifiers. She shows that these elements sometimes trigger strong morphology on the following adjectives, at other times they take strong endings, thus yielding weak morphology on the following modifiers. Compare:

- (4) ein/kein/mein/ihr alter /Roman  
 ‘a/no/my/her old novel’
- (5) einem/keinem/meinem/ihrem alten Roman  
 ‘a/no/my/her old novel’

(GIUSTI 1995:88)

Examples such as above forced Mallen (1998) to argue that K is the lowest functional category in the chain. However, he did not consider cases in which so-called weak quantifiers take strong endings (example (5)), in which case adjectives inflect weak (cf. example (4)). According to Giusti, examples such as those

above suggest that case is not fully realized. Thus, the lower Agr's have strong morphology. This is predicted in her framework as only articles and demonstratives in German reside within FP. Therefore, they are the only elements that trigger weak morphology on the following modifiers.

#### 4. KP IN OLD ENGLISH

Now let us see how these proposals fare when confronted with OE data. As a rule, OE demonstratives, located in DP, perform the same role as German determiners, triggering weak morphology on the following modifiers since strong endings attach to the overt material in D (example (6)). To this list can be added OE possessives, which invariably have the same effect (cf. GIUSTI 1995). By contrast, if D is empty, strong morphology has to be attached to overt material located below. Therefore strong endings percolate downwards and attach to all modifiers below DP as agreement markers (example (7)) (cf. OLSEN 1989). Consider:

- (6) ne hi syngian ne magon buton ðam anum ðe þanon afeollon for heora modignysse ongean ðone ælmihtigan God  
 'nor can they [angels] sin except for those alone who fell down from there for their pride [directed] against the Almighty God'  
 coaelhom, ÆHom\_12:26.1801\_ID

- (7) niwne steorran beorhtne  
 'a new, bright star'  
 (ÆCHom i.106.24) (MITCHELL 1985:§169)

A similar situation obtains when uninflected possessives (3<sup>rd</sup> person) are unable to carry case endings. Then a following modifier hosts strong endings:

- (8) his getreowne ðegn  
 'his faithful thane'  
 (CP 393.8)
- (9) mid hire scamleasre bæld  
 'with her shameless confidence'  
 (GD 212.17)

The data above can be handled both by Mallen's (1998) theory and by Giusti's (1995) approach since Old English behaves in a similar fashion to German. However, there are data in Old English that are more difficult to explain. Consider:

- (10) Se cristena man þe on ænire þyssere gelicnysse bið gebrocod & he þonne his hælðe secan wile æt unalyfedum tilungum oððe æt awyrigedum galdrum oððe æt ænigum wiccecræfte þonne bið he þam hæðenum mannum gelic þe ðam deofolgyldre geoffrodon for heora lichaman hælðe & swa heora sawla amyrdon.

'The Christian man who is afflicted in any manner like this and when he wants to seek his cure in unlawful works or in wicked incantations or in any witchcraft then he is similar to heathens who sacrificed to the devil-worship for the health of their bodies and so killed their souls'

(cocathom1, ÆCHom\_I, 31:449.303.6323)

- (11) and micel wolcn oferwreah ealne ðone munt  
'and a huge cloud covered the whole mountain'

(cocathom2, ÆCHom\_II, 12.1:113.122.2465)

- (12) Iacob todælde ða Lian bearn & Rachele & begra ðæra ðinena.  
'Jacob divided the children among Leah and Rachel and the two maids'

(cootest, Gen:33.1.1348)

- (13) On þysse dune ufanweardre bæd Sanctus Albanus fram Gode him wæter seald beon to sumre his þenunge.  
'On the top of this hill Saint Alban prayed that water might be given him for this use by God'

(cobede, Bede\_1:7.38.30.323)

Quantifiers take strong endings even in the presence of determiners/possessives because the former precede the latter. This could suggest that K is actually located in Q and percolates downwards to D, as argued by Toman (1994) and Vangsnes (2001). Then, however, we lose the beautiful crosslinguistic observation made by Giusti (1995) that there is a parallel between the weakening of case and the rise of the article (see MILLAR 2000). Therefore we assume, in agreement with Giusti's (1995) views, that strong morphology assigned or licensed by external case assigners percolates downwards as far as D, where K is located, which acts as a

kind of filter that does not allow strong morphology to go any further since it has reached K. In examples (10)-13), quantifiers carry strong endings because this filter has not been reached. With this proposal in mind, consider the final set of data:

- (14) þær man ofsloh Theodbald æðelferðes broðor. mid eallan his weorode  
 ‘There Theodbald, Ethelfrith’s brother, was slain with all his band’  
 (cochronE, ChronE\_[Plummer]:603.1.243)
- (15) & se cyng Willelm com suðan mid eallan his fyrde  
 ‘the king William came from the South with all his army’  
 (cochronE, ChronE\_[Plummer]:1068.5.2543)
- (16) He wæs on eallen Godes beboden swyðe fullfremed  
 ‘he was perfect in fulfilling all God’s commandments’  
 (coneot, LS\_28\_[Neot]:33.27)

*Eallan/eallen* looks like a weak inflection form even though it is not preceded by a determiner. Such examples as above can only be explained in terms of inflectional breakdown as part of phonological change in the transition from Old to Middle English. For example, *-an* in example (15), which exhibits feminine *fyrde*, comes from the second half of the 11<sup>th</sup> century, when inflectional attrition was well under way. In others, however, *-an* seems to be an alternative to *-um*, which can also be a weak dative plural ending (example (16)). Similarly, in (14), with the neuter noun, *-an* is apparently confused with *-um*, as often happened in dative contexts. Thus, these cases are no longer exceptional if we take into account phonological linguistic mechanisms affecting the nominal domain in Old English.

At the same time, however, Mitchell (1985:§125) remarks that Qs can turn a following item, usually an adjective ‘proper’, into a weak variant. Then a Q retains its strong character. In such cases quantifiers probably have determinative function. Consider:

- (17) ælces lichamlican gemanan  
 ‘of all fleshly intercourse’  
 (GD 276.5) (Mitchell (1985:§125))

Other exceptional cases can be explained away in a similar fashion. For example, Mitchell (1985:§118-121) shows that strong adjectival forms after demonstra-

tives and possessives are confined to dative contexts, where *-an/-um* confusion was common. Thus these exceptions cannot be taken as evidence against the general rule regulating strong and weak morphology in the nominal phrase, which is that K is located in D. The handful of genuine exceptions given by Mitchell (1985:§121) may suggest that possessives were not always found in determinative function, thus residing below DP.

## 5. CONCLUSIONS

To sum up, we have considered three proposals relating to the location of a separate functional projection, KP. On the basis of OE data we have shown that it is best to conflate KP with DP, which regulates strong and weak morphology. If elements blocking the spread of strong morphology such as demonstratives and possessives are absent or outside the DP area, other nominal modifiers take strong endings, which have to be adjoined to overt lexical material. Additionally, the fact that KP is merged with DP explains the crosslinguistic fact that the gradual loss of case morphology is accompanied by the rise of the definite article. Languages differ as to the degree of realization of this process. For instance, Old English does not have a definite article, though it has case morphology. German, on the other hand, has the definite article as a separate item but retains case endings on it. Finally, Modern English has an uninflected form of the definite article, with case morphology lost at some point of the historical development. Finally, exceptional cases are explained by other linguistic processes such as phonological weakening.

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STRUKTURA FRAZY PRZYPADKA (KP)  
W JĘZYKU STAROANGIELSKIM

Streszczenie

Artykuł omawia strukturę frazy przypadku (KP) w języku staroangielskim w ujęciu generatywnym. Zamiast jednak analizy przypadku jako cechy, zgodnie z wczesnymi założeniami Programu Minimalistycznego Noama Chomsky'ego, autor podejmuje próbę analizy tego elementu jako samodzielnej projekcji funkcjonalnej (KP). Autor rozważa trzy możliwości: w pierwszym przypadku projekcja funkcjonalna KP umieszczona jest nad frazą określnika (DP); w drugim podejściu KP znajduje się pod frazą określnika; w trzecim wreszcie – fraza KP jest połączona w jedną całość z DP. Aplikacja danych z języka staroangielskiego pokazuje, że jedynie ostatnia możliwość jest w stanie wyjaśnić dane w zadowalający sposób. W związku z tym postulowanie frazy przypadku jako samodzielnej projekcji funkcjonalnej jest zbędne.

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**Słowa kluczowe:** przypadek, język staroangielski, fraza przypadku (KP), projekcja funkcjonalna.  
**Key words:** case, Old English, Case Phrase (KP), functional projection.