The Finnish Accusative: Long Distance Case Assignment by $\varphi$-Agreement

Abstract

One of the two object cases in Finnish, the accusative, has three variants. One of these is a pronoun form similar to the English accusative. The choice between the remaining two forms is based on a number of syntactic properties. Here we show that the correct rule needs to refer to the $\varphi$-features (number, person) of the noun itself, c-command, island constraints, and $\varphi$-agreement higher in the structure. Moreover, it will be shown that the two accusative forms instantiate what we call ‘long-distance case assignment’, namely a system in which the case assigner may be situated in a position arbitrarily far from the assignee. Despite the several interacting mechanisms which take part in determining the accusative form in Finnish, we present a simple system of grammatical Case assignment that allows us to account for the three-way accusative realization as a by-product of more general syntactic mechanisms. The results nevertheless suggest that the system of structural case assignment in UG needs to be broadened in order to capture all of the observed phenomena.

1 Introduction

There are two types of nominal case features: structural and inherent. Structural case features are assigned to noun phrases on the basis of their structural position, whereas inherent case features are assigned via subcategorization by individual lexical items. A further standard assumption concerning case marking is that the Case of a given DP is determined by the most local potential Case assigner. For instance, within many X-bar theoretic models structural Case is assigned under local spec-head relations or, at the very least, under local ‘governing’ relations. The Minimalist theory of Agree makes the same assumption. For instance, Chomsky’s more recent formulations of the theory of Agree (Chomsky, 2001, 2008) requires a Case assigner (e.g. the probe) to find the closest possible DP (e.g. the goal) to which Case may be assigned, while the search for a goal cannot cross a so-called phase boundary (CP, vP or DP).

1The latter category includes lexical, semantic and quirky case features. These are not identical notions, but since the present article is concerned almost exclusively with structural Case, we ignore the differences.
Finnish accusative case presents a challenge to the locality assumption. In Finnish, a case language with fifteen morphological cases, the morphological realization of accusative case depends on the syntactic properties of a clause arbitrarily far from the accusative site, the only limiting factor being strong islandhood. In addition to islandhood, the morphological realization of accusative case for any DP depends on the interaction of several factors: (i) the nominal number of the DP, (ii) the pronominal/non-pronominal status of the DP, and most interestingly, (iii) whether there is $\varphi$-agreement between grammatical heads and other arguments in the clause. While confusing at first, we show that the system is based on a simple principle which extends the standard unproblematic case assignment rules.

We proceed as follows: after developing the criteria for an accusative-marked DP, we present the arguments against the traditional generalization concerning the Finnish accusative, concentrating on several non-finite constructions. In Section 4 we consider the long distance nature of the phenomenon and its relationship to islandhood, and in Section 5 we provide our analysis.

2 Accusative Case in Finnish

2.1 The three accusative cases

Finnish has four types of structural case—nominative, accusative, partitive and genitive—as well about a dozen of semantic cases (Hakulinen et al., 2004; Nelson, 1998; Nikanne, 1990; Vainikka, 1989). The Finnish accusative is presumably the most complex one, as it lacks a comprehensive description or analysis either in traditional grammar or in modern syntax, and its analysis has far-reaching ramifications for syntax, morphology and the general theory of case (or Case).\(^2\) It has three morphological variants: the true accusative suffix (-t or ACC(t)), the accusative lacking a suffix and thus identical to the nominative (-0 or ACC(0)), and the accusative that is homophonous with the genitive (-n or ACC(n)). An example of each is provided in (1a–c).

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\(^2\)We will mostly ignore the semantic case system here. Nominative and partitive are perhaps the two most unproblematic structural cases in Finnish. Nominative is a suffixless subject case and partitive is the default object or complement case (Vainikka, 1993, 2003). Genitive is associated with various nominal constructions, but also with several verb types; we return to the genitive later.

\(^3\)Since Chomsky (1981), Case features have been partitioned into abstract Case features (capitalized) and morphological case features (lower-case). The latter designate concrete case suffixes that may differ somewhat from construction to construction, and from language to language, while abstract Case refers to universal syntactic features that part of the core syntax of Universal Gram-
(1)  
   a. Minä näin häné-t  
       I saw he-ACC(t)  
       ‘I saw him.’  
   b. Minä näin auto-n  
       I saw car-ACC(n)  
       ‘I saw the car.’  
   c. Minun täytyy nähätä auto  
       My must see car-ACC(0)  
       ‘I must see the car.’  

The t-accusative in (1a) emerges when the object is a pronoun (hän-et) (we consider later what happens in the plural). Kiparsky (2001) and Asudeh (2003) argue that the human pronouns in Finnish are the only DPs in Finnish that bear ‘true’ accusative Case. The same view is adopted in the new extensive reference grammar of Finnish (Iso Suomen Kieliorppi, "A Comprehensive Finnish Grammar”, Hakulinen et al. 2004, henceforth ISK). We adopt this view here as well.

If the object is non-pronominal and in the singular, then either the n-accusative (1b) or the 0-accusative (1c) emerges. The n-accusative emerges at least in standard transitive sentences with nominative subjects and agreement (1b). Now consider (2–5), all grouped together based on the fact that they take the 0-accusative, and do not allow the n-accusative.

The first construction is the impersonal passive which has no overt subject and no agreement, and only the 0-accusative is possible:

(2) Sinu-t / sisko / *sisko-n löydettiin pihalta  
    you-ACC(t) sister-ACC(0) sister-ACC(n) found.PASS yard  
    ‘You/The sister were/was found in the (back)yard.’

The same pattern holds both in the possessive construction and in the existential construction, where the logical subject (or a fronted locative phrase) occurs in a locative case and there is no agreement on the verb olla ‘be’; the possessive construction is exemplified here:

(3) Onneksi minulla on sinu-t / sisko /  
    fortunately I.ADE have.3SG you.ACC(t) sister.ACC(0)  
    *sisko-n  
    sister-ACC(n)  

mar (UG) and whose surface realization may vary or may even be completely absent, as in the case of English non-pronominal DPs.
Fortunately I have you/a sister.’

Similarly, the pattern holds in the necessive construction with genitive subject and no agreement on the verb (modal-like täytyy ‘must’):

(4) Minun täytyy löytää sinu-t / sisko / *sisko-n
    I.GEN must.3SG find.A you-ACC(t) sister-ACC(0) sister-ACC(n)
    ‘I must find you/the sister.’

Finally, the imperative construction reveals the same pattern; it normally occurs without a subject:

(5) Etsi nyt hän-et / sisko / *sisko-n!
    find now he/she-ACC(t) sister-ACC(0) sister-ACC(n)
    ‘Find her/the sister now!’.

These constructions all lack the nominative subject and (concomitant) subject-verb agreement. This data agrees with the so-called Jahnsson’s Rule (Jahnsson, 1871; Kiparsky, 2001) which states that if there is an external nominative subject, then the object must have a phonologically realized (i.e. non-zero) case ending. The Finnish n-accusative is precisely the non-zero form of the two possible suffixes, n-form and 0-form. All the constructions above lack a nominative subject, and therefore the accusative emerges without an overt suffix. Jahnsson’s generalization seems to imply that every finite sentence has only one nominative Case to assign. If it is not assigned to the grammatical subject, then it is assigned to the accusative position. One could therefore reason that what is going on in Finnish is similar to the English passive: when there is no nominative subject, the object rises to the subject position and obtains or "checks" nominative Case.

This conclusion must be resisted, however. First, recall that only singular non-pronominal DPs obtain such nominative Case, while other DPs are assigned accusative (cf. 1a–c). It is unlikely that singular non-pronominal DPs would occupy a subject position while other types of object DPs do not.

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4There is a possibility of an adjunct-like postverbal subject with the imperative (not possible with a finite verb). The imperative verb may carry number agreement (a unique morpheme) but no person agreement (e.g. Lue kirja! ‘Read the book!’ vs. Lukekaa kirja! ‘Read-PL the book!’)

5The nominative subject need not be overtly realized in order for the -n accusative to emerge: this also holds in null subject constructions (cf. Vainikka & Levy 1999) and in the so-called “missing person construction” involving an impersonal third person singular verb (cf. Hakulinen & Karttunen 1973 and Holmberg 2005).
Second, in several constructions with the nominative object listed above there are good reasons to think that the subject position cannot be filled with the accusative DP. The possessive and necessive constructions have an overt logical subject of their own (not in nominative Case), and it is unlikely that an accusative DP could co-occur in the subject position (nor does word order support such a view).

Third, direct evidence in favor of the conclusion that the 0-accusative is not nominative can be derived from the fact that there is no agreement with this accusative (that superficially looks like nominative) and the finite verb. The 0-accusative never agrees with anything in \( \varphi \)-features. The impersonal passive in Finnish behaves differently from the English personal passives and involves neither object raising nor agreement with the object.

Fourth, as we will show in the next section, all the various accusative objects, whether the n-accusative, 0-accusative or the unproblematic t-accusative, obey syntactic object tests in Finnish, hence they occupy the same syntactic object position.

Last but not least, we will demonstrate that Jahnsson’s generalization turns out not to be correct: it (accidentally) holds in finite contexts, but cannot be maintained in various non-finite contexts. We will find that the generalization fails in both ways: the presence of the nominative DP is not required for the n-accusative to occur while the 0-accusative can occur in the presence of nominative DP.

### 2.2 Object diagnostics

Before we criticize Jahnsson’s generalization in detail we will demonstrate that all three accusative suffixes are associated with the same syntactic position despite the fact that the n-accusative is homonymous with the genitive (in the singular) and that the 0-accusative is homonymous with the nominative. That is, we argue that the 0-accusative DP is not raised to the position of the grammatical subject normally associated with nominative Case.

The argument is structured as follows. First we define three unproblematic object diagnostics for Finnish, which allow us to gauge whether a given DP occurs in an object position or not. We will show that the t-accusative, n-accusative and the 0-accusative share properties with respect to these object diagnostics; hence they do not differ in their objecthood. In the second part, we show that the various accusatives are also treated similarly in terms of certain syntactic operations, such as clefting and raising.

First of all, given the completely uncontroversial status of accusative marking
with human pronouns, their distribution can be used as a test for determining whether other DPs occurring in the same object position are accusatives or not. This is captured by the following test:

(6) *The human pronoun test*

A DP can be treated as accusative if its human pronoun equivalent occurs in overtly marked accusative case with the suffix *-t*.

There are two main sentence types where this test is particularly useful, namely those involving agreement between the subject and the main verb, as in (7a), and those without subject-verb agreement, as in (7b). The human pronouns *hänet* 'him/her' and *heidät* 'them' occur in the accusative in both types of constructions. Plural DPs occur in the nominative form in both constructions (similar to accusative full DPs in English). Crucially, singular full DPs (and the inanimate pronoun *se* 'it') vary between genitive *-n* and nominative 0-accusative:

(7) a. Kutsuin *häne*-t / *heidä*-t / **poja-n** / I-invited him-ACC(t) them-PL.ACC boy-ACC(-n)
   poja-t / *se-n* / ne
   boys-PL.ACC it-ACC(-n) them-PL.ACC
   'I invited him/her, them, the boy, the boys, it, them (inanimate)'

b. Kutsu *häne*-t / *heidä*-t / **poika** / Invite.IMPER him-ACC(t) them-PL.ACC boy-ACC(0)
   poja-t / *se* / ne!
   boys-PL.ACC it-ACC(0) them-PL.ACC
   'Invite him/her, them, the boy, the boys, it, them (inanimate)!'

The human pronoun test thus shows that the accusative form of *poika* 'boy' is either *pojan* (7a) or *poika* (7b), depending on the syntactic context. Yet these DPs appear in a position which, when substituted by a pronoun, show the unambiguous t-accusative form.

Let us turn to plural full (non-pronominal) DPs where the accusative case situation is fairly straightforward. There are three possible scenarios in the plural:

(i) the DP is a human pronoun and receives the accusative *-t* suffix (*meidät* 'us', *teidät* 'you-pl' and *heidät* 'them'); (ii) the DP is not a pronoun, and it occurs with the plural *-t* suffix (identical to the plural

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6Unless otherwise stated the data and grammaticality judgments reported here are those of the present authors, both native speakers of Finnish.
nominative); and (iii) the DP is a non-human pronoun and receives neither the accusative \(-t\) nor the plural \(-t\) suffix; it occurs in the bare nominative form (there is only one DP of this type, \textit{ne} ‘they/them-inanimate’).

As we have seen, the Finnish accusative has a variant that looks identical to the genitive case (suffix \(-n\)). In the plural, however, the genitive variant of the accusative is never possible. This situation gives rise to the plural test relating to the accusative:

(8) \textbf{The plural test}

If a plural DP occurs in the genitive case, it is clear that the DP bears true genitive case, rather than accusative.

With this test we can distinguish thematic objects of a verb that bear accusative case (that happen to look like genitive) versus those that actually bear genitive case and also happen to be objects of a verb (in e.g. certain nominalizations). Consider the following examples:

(9) a. Minä näin Peka-n lähtemässä
    I saw Pekka-\(n\) leave.MA
    ‘I saw Pekka leaving.’

b. Minä näin Peka-n lähtevän
    I saw Pekka-\(n\) leave.VA
    ‘I saw Pekka leave.’

The subject of the embedded infinitival is \textit{Pekka} in both cases, and the forms of the proper name in (a) and (b) look identical: they both have the same \(-n\) suffix. Only the form of the infinitival differs: in (9a) the MA-infinitival is used, whereas in (9b) the VA-infinitival is used. The exact nature of these infinitivals is not important for the moment, only the fact that they differ in their syntactic properties. Which, if either, of these DPs occurs in true genitive Case and which, if either, occurs in genitive-look-alike n accusative? The plural test provides the answer, as can be seen when the embedded subject DP occurs in the plural. Here are the same examples with plural DPs:

\footnote{Finnish has a number of non-finite constructions which will be discussed in more detail in Section 3. For now, we indicate the type of non-finite verb in the gloss based on the identifying suffix on the verb, e.g. \textit{lähtemässä} ‘leave.MA’, where the \(-ma/mä\) suffix occurs at the end of the verb stem.}
(10) a. Minä näin laiva-tylähtemässä
I saw boat-PL.ACC leave.MA
‘I saw the boats leaving.’
b. Minä näin laivo-tenlähtevän
I saw boat-PL.GEN leave.VA
‘I saw the boats leave.’

The plural test reveals that the embedded subject DP of the VA-infinitive (9b) occurs in true genitive Case, whereas the embedded subject of the MA-infinitive (9a) carries the n-accusative. Therefore we can, and must, distinguish syntactically DPs which bear the genitive-looking n-accusative and the sui generis genitive case; in particular, the n-accusative case cannot be said to emerge in a process in which the syntactic position of the object changes into that of genitive DPs. Rather, it involves a genitive suffix which is suffixed to a DP in a syntactic object position.

A third test involves partitive case, the other objective case in Finnish (not discussed in any detail in this article). The test can be formulated as follows:

(11) The partitive test
If an object DP alternates between partitive case (suffix -(t)A) and potential accusative case based on the (semantic) features of the verb or the sentence, we can take the potential accusative to be actual accusative case.

For example, object DPs under the scope of negation occur in partitive case in Finnish, while in the equivalent affirmative sentence the accusative emerges. Let us consider the data in (9b) and (9a) again. The following data compares these two sentences when the matrix clause is affirmative (12a, 13a) as opposed to negated (12b, 13b):

(12) a. Minä näin Peka-tylähtemässä
I saw Pekka-ACC(n) leave.MA
‘I saw Pekka leaving.’
b. Minä en nähnyt Pekka-tylähtemässä
I not saw Pekka-PAR leave.MA
‘I did not see Pekka leaving.’

(13) a. Minä näin Peka-tenlähtevän
I saw Pekka-GEN leave.VA
‘I saw Pekka leave.’
b. Minä en nähnyt Peka-n lähtevän
   I not saw Pekka-GEN leave.VA
   ‘I did not see Pekka leave.’

Along with the earlier plural text, the negative test also reveals that the embedded subject of the MA-infinitival is in the -n accusative and hence alternates with the partitive, whereas the embedded subject of the VA-infinitival remains in the genitive Case and does not alternate.

A number of empirical tests show that all three accusative forms, the t-accusatives, the n-accusatives and the 0-accusatives, behave identically with respect to various syntactic processes. Here we show this for clefting, topicalization and idiom construction.

(14) Clefting:
   a. Pekka söi leivä-n / Se oli leipä jonka Pekka söi t
      Pekka ate bread-ACC(n) It was bread-NOM which Pekka ate t
   b. Pekan näki häne-t / Se oli hän jonka Pekka näki t
      Pekka saw him-ACC(t) It was he-NOM whom Pekka saw t
   c. Pekan täytyy syödä leipä / Se oli leipä joka
      Pekka-GEN must eat bread-ACC(-∅) It was bread-NOM that
      Pekan täytyy syödä t
      Pekka must eat t

(15) Topicalization
   a. Pekka söi leivä-n / Leivä-n Pekka söi t
      Pekka ate bread-ACC(n) Bread-ACC(n), Pekka ate t
   b. Pekka näki häne-t / Häne-t Pekka näki t
      Pekka saw him-ACC(t) him-ACC(t), Pekka saw t
   c. Peka-n täytyy syödä leipä / Leipä
      Pekka-GEN must eat bread-ACC(0) Bread-ACC(0),
      Pekan täytyy syödä
      Pekka-GEN must eat t

(16) Idiom construction:
   a. Pekka veti herne-en nenäänsä
      Pekka pulled pea-ACC(n) into-his-nose
      Pekka was offended
b. Kuka maksaa viulu-t
   who pays violin-PL.ACC
   Who will pay the bill?

c. Pekan täytyy vetää herne nenäänsä
   Pekka must pull pea-ACC(0) into-his-nose
   Pekka must get offended.

The results of the diagnostic and syntactic tests are important in showing that the various morphological forms of the accusative are realizations of the same structural accusative Case. The diagnostic tests themselves are clearly accurate, since the unambiguous accusative forms converge with respect to specific DPs in the postverbal position: the DPs in this position show (i) the uncontroversial accusative suffix -t when they are pronouns, and (ii) the uncontroversial suffix -t when they are in the plural; they also undergo (iii) the accusative/partitive alternation, where partitive is an uncontroversial object case. What is thus exceptional are the singular non-pronominal DPs that show different case suffixes when they occur in these same positions. Therefore we think it unlikely that the data should be explained by relying on raising or other devices which would change the syntactic position of the accusative objects.

3 Rethinking Jahnsson’s generalization

3.1 Impersonal passive

Jahnsson’s generalization states that the 0-accusative emerges if and only if there is no nominative subject in the same clause. We have seen that the generalization is quite successful in predicting the properties of a number of constructions in Finnish. Nevertheless, the generalization fails in both directions: there are sentences with a nominative subject which emerge together with the 0-accusative, and sentences which have the n-accusative but no nominative subject. Let us begin with the former problem.

The argument comes from the impersonal passive construction in colloquial speech. An impersonal passive in Finnish is formed by applying the passive morphology to a finite verb and suppressing the subject, while keeping the patient argument in the object position. As we pointed out earlier, the patient appears in the 0-accusative (or t-accusative) form. In colloquial speech, however, it is common to use the first person plural nominative subject together with the impersonal passive and the object:
This construction involves a nominative subject, a passive verb and a 0-accusative object; hence there are two nominative-looking arguments in this construction. It cannot therefore be true that it is the presence of a nominative subject which requires the appearance of the n-accusative.

Since in Finnish the matrix clause properties, such as passive morphology, may affect several object arguments downstream (Brattico, 2009a,b), it is possible to craft a sentence with three nominative-looking arguments (18a). As shown by (18b), the two nominative-looking objects are objects by the pronoun test:

(18) a. Me nähtiin Pekka ostamassa uusi auto
    We.NOM saw.PASS Pekka.ACC(0) buy.MA new.ACC(0) car.ACC(0)
    ‘We saw Pekka buying a new car.’

b. Me nähtiin hänet voittamassa heidät
    We.NOM saw.PASS him.ACC(t) win.MA them.ACC(t)
    ‘We saw him winning them.’

Therefore we conclude that the 0-accusative can occur together with a nominative subject, in the same clause. In fact, there is no limit on the number of nominative-looking arguments in a sentence.

### 3.2 Deverbal adjective phrases

Next we show that the n-accusative can occur without the presence of nominative subject. There are two relevant construction types, deverbal adjective phrases and several types of non-finite clauses. We will examine adjectives first.

In Finnish it is possible to form complex prenominal adjective phrases. One of these is a participial adjective which is formed by applying the participle suffix to an eventive verbal root. The resulting adjective inflects for tense (past, present) and may take patient arguments which appear in accusative Case, as exemplified in (19); applying the pronoun test, (19b) shows that the object of the participial adjective occurs in true accusative case. Furthermore, the adjective shares its number and case features with the noun head via ϕ-concord, as shown in (19c).
The adjective phrase can never contain a nominative subject. As we show later, adjective phrases are also grammatical islands which allow very little grammatical information to penetrate in and out. Yet the n-accusative is possible; hence it may appear without the presence of a nominative subject. Whether the matrix sentence has a nominative subject or not (or whether it has an agreeing verb) has no relevance to the n-accusative inside of the AP:

(20) a. Fido on se luun syönyt koira
    Fido.NOM is that bone.ACC(n) eat.VA.PAST dog
    ‘Fido is the dog that ate the bone.’

b. Fidon täytyy olla se luun syönyt koira
    Fido.GEN must be that bone.ACC(n) eat.VA.PAST dog
    ‘Fido must be the dog that ate the bone.’

We have seen, then, that Jahnsson’s generalization does not hold – the n-accusative occurs even when the construction cannot have a nominative subject, and the 0-accusative occurs even in the presence of a nominative subject. In an attempt to determine the correct generalization for the distribution of the accusative forms, we turn to a rich, relatively unexplored source of information on accusative case, the non-finite constructions.

3.3 Non-finite phrases

We now examine the Finnish non-finite constructions in some detail. Finnish has a number of non-finite verb forms (Hakulinen & Karlsson, 1979; Hakulinen et al., 2004; Koskinen, 1998; Vainikka, 1989), five of which will be discussed here. In addition to lacking finite verb suffixation, non-finite constructions in Finnish also lack the three markers of a finite clause: (1) a nominative subject; (2) the possibility of a negative verb (which carries full finite person/number agreement morphology in Finnish); and (3) the possibility of the auxiliary verbolla ‘be’ (Vainikka, 1989, 243). In addition, as shown in Koskinen (1998), the Finnish non-finite constructions lack a CP-level Focus Phrase. Yet contrary to what we would initially

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8In her detailed analysis of the non-finite constructions in Finnish, Koskinen (1998) shows that all of the Finnish non-finite constructions, whether participial or infinitival, contain a full-fledged
believe (given the impossibility of a nominative subject) on the basis of Jahnsson’s rule, non-finite verbs allow both n-accusatives and 0-accusatives. This supports the claim that accusative realization in Finnish is in fact not controlled by the presence or absence of a nominative subject DP. We will also begin to uncover a pattern that this case suffix is associated with some type of agreement. Various authors such as (Nelson, 1998; Reime, 1993) have suggested that agreement is more relevant for accusative distribution in Finnish than nominative subjects, based on finite clauses; however, a full analysis of both finite and non-finite constructions in terms of the accusative has not been developed in previous work.

In the following, we look at several non-finite constructions one by one. Such a detailed examination is warranted because in addition to further showing that Jahnsson’s generalization cannot be correct, the data allow us to arrive at what we believe to be the correct generalization.

### 3.3.1 The temporal adjunct

We will first consider two types of adjunct (adverbial) clauses in Finnish, the temporal adjunct and the rationale adjunct. In the first of these adjunct constructions, the verb in the temporal adjunct carries the suffix -essA (ongoing aspect, 'while Ving', active or passive; ESSA or ESSA/PASS in the glosses) and -tUA (completed aspect, 'after having Ved'; ESSA/PAST in the glosses). The term ”temporal adjunct” was introduced in Vainikka (1989); ISK (pp.536-7) refers to this as the ”temporal construction”. There is no traditional term for this construction, as it incorporates two traditional verb forms: in the present (or on-going) aspect, it is the traditional 2nd infinitive (active or passive) in inessive case, and the past (or completed) aspect, it is the traditional past participle in partitive case. According to ISK, the present and past forms in this construction are not exactly semantically equivalent, but for our syntactic purposes they are sufficiently equivalent. The three possible verb forms are listed in (21) together with concrete examples in (22a–c).

(21) lukiessa, luettua, luettaessa
read.ESSA, read.ESSA/PASS, read.ESSA/PAST

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In addition to these two adjuncts, Finnish has a third adjunct-type non-finite clause with the suffix -en on the verb, as in lukien 'while reading’. This verb form is fairly rare in spoken language, and we will not discuss it further in this paper.
'while reading’, 'having read’, 'while being read’

(22) a. Aika kuluu nopeasti [luksiessa hyvää kirja] 
   time runs fast [read.ESSA good.PAR book.PAR] 
   ‘Time runs fast when reading a good book.’

b. Hän meni nukkumaan [luettuaan hyvän 
   He went sleep.MA [read.ESSA/PAST good.ACC(n) 
   kirjan] book.ACC(n)]
   ‘He went to sleep after reading a good book.’

c. Aika kuluu nopeasti [luettaessa hyvää kirjaa] 
   time runs fast [read.ESSA/PASS good.PAR book.PAR] 
   ‘Time runs fast when a good book is being read.’

Importantly, example (23) shows that the n-accusative emerges in this construction, although there is no finite verb or nominative subject, and it does not matter what type of a main clause follows (or precedes) this adjunct:

(23) [Maijan löydettyä sinu-t / sisko-n / 
Maija.GEN find.ESSA/PAST you-ACC(t) sister-ACC(n) 
*sisko-0] meidän täytyi lähteä kotiin.
*sister-ACC(0) we.GEN must.PAST/3SG leave.A home 
‘After Maija found you/the sister, we had to go home’

There are three further key factors to note about the temporal adjunct construction. First, when the subject is a human pronoun, a possessive suffix is realized at the end of the verb form, as with regular possessive constructions involving a noun (24a–b).10

(24) a. (minun) kirja-ni 
   (my) book-Px/1SG 
   'my book’

b. (minun) lukiessa-ni lehteä... 
   (my) read.ESSA-Px/1SG magazine.PAR 
   'when I’m reading a magazine...’

10Even in the possessive construction, Px’s only occur with human pronouns, not with full DPs (or the inanimate pronouns) except when the full DP binds an empty pronominal from outside the nominal with the Px (cf. Vainikka (1989) and Trosterud (1993) for more discussion on the Px as a Binding Theoretic (Condition A) anaphor, requiring a local antecedent), and an alternative analysis of the Finnish Px’s in Toivonen (2000).
Second, the construction has a version of tense (or aspect) marking, given the two aspects in the active mood shown above. Third, as will be shown in detail later, the temporal construction is a strong island and thus WH-extraction out of the adjunct is not possible. Island considerations will turn out to be relevant for the distribution of the accusative forms in Finnish. However, while finite subject-verb agreement is lacking in the temporal construction, the possessive suffix at the end of the verb form does agree with a genitive (subject) DP (in the specifier position of the predicate). Moreover, the agreement reflected in the Px is complete: the suffix agrees with the genitive DP in all \( \varphi \)-features (number and person; Finnish does not have gender agreement).

There are many reasons to think that possessive agreement in Finnish is similar to verbal agreement. Possessives have five distinct person/number forms (3rd person singular and plural share a form), and some of the forms are morphologically related (see Table 1). Furthermore, as in finite clauses, the first and second person subjects are optional; Finnish is pro-drop in first and second person, but not in third, and the pattern holds for Px’s, as well (Vainikka & Levy, 1999).

| Table 1. Verbal and nominals \( \varphi \)-features. |
|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|
| SINGULAR        | FIRST           | SECOND          | THIRD           |
| PLURAL          | FIRST           | SECOND          | THIRD           |
| SINGULAR        | nuku-n          | nuku-t           | nukku-u         |
| PLURAL          | nuku-mme        | nuku-tte        | nukku-vat       |
| SINGULAR        | talo-ni         | talo-si         | talo-nsa        |
| PLURAL          | talo-mme        | talo-nne        | talo-nsa        |

In addition to the pro-drop pattern, the Px behaves like verb agreement in the sense that it is insensitive to the thematic roles of the arguments; the Px agreement obtains between any genitive DP in the prehead position. Consider (25).

(25) hänen esittely-nsä,  
his introduction-Px/3SG

This expression is ambiguous in three ways. According to one interpretation, the genitive DP is interpreted as a possessive and not an Agent or Patient. The expression then means 'his (artistic etc.) presentation’. On a second reading, the pronoun is the Agent of the predicate. In this case a reading 'the introduction (of

\[11\] In addition, in the related language Saami (Lappish), both the subject-verb paradigm and the Px paradigm contain morphologically related dual forms; cf. Nelson & Manninen (2003, 19–21). Finnish does not have dual forms.
somebody) by him’ is obtained. Finally, the pronoun may be interpreted as a Pa-
tient which then generates the reading ‘the introduction of him (by somebody)’. 
What is remarkable here is that despite the variation in interpretation, the posses-
sive suffix agreement remains the same. The same holds for verb agreement: there 
is agreement between a grammatical subject and a finite verb, completely regard-
less of the thematic role of the grammatical subject. In both cases, we conclude 
that the agreement pattern is a syntactic one.

The temporal adjunct thus presents a further counterexample to Jahnsson’s 
generalization since the accusative DP occurs in genitive case; the zero suffix is 
expected since the non-finite verb has no nominative subject and no finite subject-
verb agreement.

3.3.2 The rationale adjunct

The second non-finite adjunct construction, the rationale adjunct, consists of a 
non-finite verb form with the suffix -kse-, followed by an obligatory possessive 
suffix (coreferential with the subject of the matrix clause). The traditional term 
for the verb form in this construction is the 1st infinitive, long form. In ISK, the 
construction is unintuitively referred to as the ‘the finite construction’. We prefer 
Vainikka’s (1989:311-2) term ‘the rationale adjunct’.

(26) lukeakse(-ni)...
  read.KSE-Px/1SG 
  ‘in order (for me) to read...’

As with the temporal adjunct, the accusative object may emerge in the geni-
tive -n form, independent of subject/verb agreement (or nominative subject) in the 
rationale adjunct, or independent of the matrix clause. Consider the following ex-
amples from ISK (p.895), where the matrix verb in (27a) is an imperative, and the 
matrix verb in (27b) is the non-agreeing necessive verb täytyy ’must’ which shows 
tense marking but no subject-verb agreement; recall that these two constructions 
gave rise to the zero accusative in the finite clauses in Section 2:

(27) a. Paina [käynnistääksesi ohjelma-n] 
  Press OK start.KSE-Px/2SG program-ACC (-n) 
  ‘Press OK to start the program.’

b. Maalliko-n täytyy tietää hieman taustoa 
  layman-GEN must know little background 
  [tajutakseen laitoksen tärkeyde-n] 
  understand.KSE-Px/3SG faculty-GEN importance-ACC (-n)
‘The layman must know a little bit of the background in order to understand the importance of the faculty.’

The accusative object inside the rationale adjunct occurs with the genitive suffix -n even when embedded in a matrix construction that cannot have a nominative subject. Thus, the rationale adjunct constitutes another counterexample to Jansson’s generalization. However, similarly to the temporal adjunct, the verb form in the rationale adjunct carries an agreeing possessive suffix. In this construction, the Px is, in fact, obligatory.\(^\text{12}\)

The situation with the rationale construction is more complex than with the temporal construction: in addition to the -n accusative in the examples in (27), the 0-accusative is also possible in both sentences. Only the -n accusative was possible in the temporal construction. We return to a discussion of this option after considering three other constructions in Finnish that also allow the 0-accusative option, and after discussing the island status of the non-finite constructions in Finnish. In conclusion, given the data from the two non-finite adjunct constructions, while neither a nominative subject nor verbal ϕ-features are necessary and sufficient for the genitive -n accusative, a more general sort of agreement appears to be relevant.

3.3.3 The A-infinitive

When we turn to more argument-like non-finite complements, a new factor emerges: the matrix verb has the possibility of controlling the form of the accusative object of the embedded non-finite clause in three separate constructions. Such matrix verb control represents a relatively non-local (i.e., non-clause-bound) realization of the accusative case suffix. We will begin with the so-called A-infinitive.\(^\text{13}\)

Example (28) shows that the form of the embedded object of an A-infinitive is determined by whether the matrix clause has an agreeing verb and a nominative subject or not (Ross, 1967; Vainikka, 1989):

\(^{12}\)The obligatoriness of the Px in the rationale adjunct at least partially follows from a generalization that also holds in possessive DPs and in the temporal construction: whenever an overt ‘binder’ (DP) of the Px is lacking within the phrase/clause, an overt Px emerges. In the rationale adjunct construction, there is never such an overt DP—for whatever reason—and thus an overt Px occurs.

\(^{13}\)The traditional name of this construction is “the 1st infinitive, short form”. In Vainikka (1989) and Koskinen (1998) the term -TA-infinitive was used, and ISK uses “A-infinitive”, also adopted here.
(28) a. Yritimme löytää sinut / sisko-n / *sisko-0
   try.PAST/1PL find.A you-ACC(t) sister-ACC(n) *sister-ACC(0)
   pihalta
   yard-ABL
   ‘We tried to find you/the sister at the (back)yard.’

b. Yritä löytää hänet / sisko / *sisko-n
   try.IMP find.A him/her-ACC(t) sister-ACC(0) sister-ACC(n)
   pihalta!
   yard.ABL
   ‘Try to find her/the sister at the (back)yard!’

In (28a) the matrix verb carries subject-verb agreement, and the accusative object of the embedded A-infinitival verb löytää ‘to find’ emerges in the genitive, while in (28b) the matrix verb is an imperative verb, lacking agreement, and the genitive is not possible.

The A-infinitive is the least clause-like of the non-finite forms in Finnish in that the embedded verb does not normally have an overt subject at all, but is controlled by the matrix subject or object (see Vainikka 1989, Koskinen 1998 and ISK p.495-6 and p.893-894 for details). Recall that while the two adjunct constructions discussed above are more independent of the matrix verb (because they are adjuncts) than the A-infinitive (which is a complement), the genitive -n form of the (singular DP) accusative was found in the adjunct constructions. In striking contrast, when the A-infinitive occurs in a construction where the infinitive is independent of the matrix verb, the accusative occurs in the nominative, as in the examples in (24) (from ISK, pp. 895-6):

(29) a. Infinitive inside the subject DP
   [Mahdollisuus tehdä muuttoilmoitus ... ] voisi possibility,NOM make.A moving.announcement.ACC(0) ... could
   jäädä käyttämättä remain without-use
   ‘The possibility of filing a moving announcement might remain un-used.’

b. Infinitive as a complement of a noun
   Ahtisaari korosti olevansa hyvin tyytyväinen... [tilaisuuteen
   Ahtisaari emphasized be.VA,Px very satisfied opportunity
   tavata koko Venäjän johto] meet.A whole Russian leadership.ACC(0)
‘Ahtisaari emphasized his satisfaction with the opportunity to meet the whole Russian leadership.’

c. *Independent infinitive interrogative*

\[
[\text{Valitako vieras}] \quad \text{vai [oma pitkän linjan select.A.QUEST guest.ACC(0) or own long.GEN track.GEN mies]}? \\
\text{man.ACC(0)} \\
\text{‘To select an outsider or one’s own man?’}
\]

That is, when the A-infinitive is independent of a matrix verb, it does not support a genitive -n suffix on the accusative DP, and when it is *dependent* on the matrix verb, the case form of the object of the infinitive is determined by the matrix verb. The A-infinitive itself does not carry any type of subject-verb or Px agreement, neither verbal nor nominal (See Vainikka 1989, Ch.5, for discussion of the reduced structure for the A-infinitive).

### 3.3.4 The MA-infinitive

Another argument-type non-finite clause, the MA-infinitive, behaves similarly to the A-infinitive.\(^{14}\) In the examples (a–b), the matrix agreement controls the accusative realization of the object DP within the embedded MA-infinitive, while example (c) (from ISK p.514) provides an example of a MA-infinitive that is independent of the matrix verb; in (c) the embedded object occurs in the nominative (although there is agreement and a nominative subject in the matrix clause) since the MA-clause in this example is not a complement of the matrix verb:

\[
(30) \text{a. Lähdimme hakemaan hän-et / sisko-n} \\
\quad \text{went.PAST/1PL get.MA him/her-ACC(t) sister-ACC(n)} \\
\quad *\text{sisko-0} \\
\quad *\text{sister-ACC(0)} \\
\quad ‘We went to pick her/the sister up.’}
\]

\[
\text{b. Lähde hakamaan häne-t / sisko-0} \\
\quad \text{go-IMPER get.MA him/her-ACC(t) sister-ACC(0)} \\
\quad *\text{sisko-n!} \\
\quad *\text{sister-ACC(n)}
\]

\(^{14}\)The traditional name of this verb form is “the 3rd infinitive in inessive/elative/illative case”. Vainikka (1989) first called this construction the “MA-infinitive”, and this terminology has been adopted by ISK, as well. (Example forms: *lukemassa/lukemasta/lukemaan ‘reading/to read’*)
‘Go get her/the sister!’

c. Parhaiten runo aukeaa lukijalle [luomalla best.ADV poem.NOM open.PRES/3SG for-reader create.MA runo poem.ACC(0) uudestaan] again

‘The best way for a poem to open up to the reader is by recreating the poem’

As with the A-infinitive, a possessive suffix is not possible in the MA-construction (nor is an overt subject normally possible), and there is no tense marking.

To recap the non-finite constructions so far: within the two non-finite complements which normally occur as arguments (the A-infinitive and the MA-infinitive)—and which never allow a possessive suffix—the form of the accusative is dependent on the subject-verb agreement status of the matrix verb; in the unusual situation without a ‘controlling’ matrix verb, the 0-accusative emerges. Within the temporal adjunct and the rationale adjunct—both of which have the same Px agreement pattern as possessive DPs—the -n accusative is always possible, and this is the only form found in the temporal adjunct (and the second option with the rationale adjunct will be discussed below).

3.3.5 The VA-construction

We now turn to the final non-finite construction in Finnish, the participial complement or the VA-construction.\(^{15}\) This construction is the most sentence-like of the non-finite constructions in that in general an embedded finite \(\textit{että}-\)clause (that-clause) can be converted to a corresponding non-finite VA-construction.\(^{16}\) This construction has four verb forms, two active and two passive (and two for each aspect/tense):

\[
\begin{align*}
(31) \hspace{1cm} \text{a. Active, present or future} \\
\text{Arvaan [pankin nostaa-van korkokantaa].} \\
\text{guess.1SG bank.GEN raise.VA interest.PAR} \\
\text{‘I guess the bank will raise the interest rate.’}
\end{align*}
\]

\(^{15}\)The traditional term for the two verb forms involved in this construction is “the 1st and 2nd participle”. In Vainikka (1989) this construction was referred to somewhat misleadingly as “the clausal complement infinitival”, and ISK refers to it as “the referative construction”. We use here the term VA-construction on the basis of the overt morphological form of the non-finite verb.

\(^{16}\)The main exception are negative finite clauses, since—as with all the other non-finite constructions in Finnish—the negative verb cannot be expressed as a non-finite verb.
b. *Active, past

   Epäilen [sinun syö-neen luumuja]
   doubt.1SG you.GEN eat-VA/PAST plums.PAR
   ‘I suspect that you ate the plums.’

c. *Passive, present or future

   Aavistan [korkokantaa nostetta-van].
   suspect.1SG interest.PAR raise.VA/PASS
   ‘I suspect that the interest rate will be raised.’

d. *Passive, past

   Huomasin [kakkua maiste-tun].
   notice.1SG cake-PAR taste.VA/PASS/PAST
   ‘I noticed that the cake had been tasted.’

While the examples in (31) do not have a possessive suffix, this construction does allow a Px whenever the matrix subject and the embedded subject refer to the same individual:

(32) a. Sinä i muistat varmaan tavanee-si i hänet
       you 2SG remember almost meet.VA/PAST-Px/2SG him-ACC(t)
       ealier
       ‘You probably remember having met him earlier.’

b. *Sinä i muistat varmaan meidän, tavanee-mme hänet aikaisemmin
       you 2SG remember almost us.GEN meet.VA/PAST-Px/1PL
       him-ACC(t) earlier
       ‘You probably remember (that) we have met him earlier.’

c. Me kuvittelemme syö-vämme juhla-ateriaa
       we imagine eat.VA-Px/1PL feast-PAR
       ‘We imagine that we are eating a feast.’

d. *Me kuvittelemme teidän, syö-vänne, juhla-ateriaa
       we imagine eat.VA-Px/1PL feast-PAR
       ‘We imagine that you are eating a feast.’

These constructions thus involve some sort of long-distance agreement between the matrix and the embedded subject, common in other languages as well (Bhatt, 2005; Bošković, 2007; Polinsky, 2003; Polinsky & Postdam, 2001).
focus here will be on the case realization of the embedded object. Given the possibility of the possessive suffixes and a tense/aspect distinction in the VA-construction, we would expect the -n accusative to emerge in the VA-construction (as it did with the temporal and rationale adjuncts). On the other hand, the VA-construction is also a complement of the matrix verb, and we might expect it to behave similarly to the A-infinitive and the MA-infinitive; in these constructions, the form of the embedded object was typically determined by the matrix verb. With the VA-construction, we thus have a conflict of sorts, and we shall now consider what actually happens with the embedded accusative in this construction. Given the "conflict" with the VA-construction, an -n suffix of the embedded accusative could arise in two ways: either because there is (nominal, Px-related) agreement in the embedded clause, or because there an agreeing matrix verb that exerts its influence on the embedded complement. When the matrix verb is an agreeing one, the genitive suffix does surface on the embedded accusative in this construction, as expected, and the 0-accusative is impossible:

(33) Muistan tavaneneni häne-t / Maija-n / remember.1SG meet.VA/PAST-Px/1SG she-ACC(t) Maija-ACC(n)
*Maija-0 joskus ennen.
Maija-ACC(0) sometime earlier
‘I remember having met her/Maija sometime earlier.’

What if the matrix clause did not contain an agreeing verb? Such a situation would provide a test case for determining which of the two processes is more powerful, the local (Px) agreement or the matrix verb agreement that influences its complement clause. In order to occur at all in this construction, the embedded Px needs to be coindexed with something like a subject in the matrix clause. Nominative subjects cannot be considered because they would involve matrix subject-verb agreement. Neither the existential construction nor the possessive construction allow the VA-construction at all since they do not take any kind of a sentential complement. The passive construction in Finnish is an impersonal one and does not have a subject DP with which the embedded Px could be coindexed. While

17It should be noted, however, that the distribution of Px’s in the VA-construction differs slightly as compared to a possessive DP (and the temporal and rationale adjuncts). In all four constructions, a Px emerges when the subject/possessor DP is controlled by a matrix DP. In the possessive construction the Px also emerges when there is an overt (human) pronominal possessor, while this does not happen in the VA-construction, as can be seen in example (32b). For the purposes of accusative realization, all of these constructions behave as if they had a possessive suffix, even when a Px happens not to occur.
the imperative gives rise to 2nd person agreement, given its restricted nature it is not clear whether the imperative would be a reliable test case. The remaining construction, the necessive construction, fortunately presents a test case. The genitive subject of tättyy 'must' can be coreferential with the embedded Px:

(34) a. Meidän tättyy uskoa löytä-vämme häne-t / we.GEN must.3SG believe.A find-VA-PX/1PL she-ACC(t) sisko / sisko-n pihalta. sister-ACC(0) sister-ACC(n) yard.ABL
   ‘We must believe that we (will) find her/the sister at the (back)yard.’

b. Sinun tättyy kuvitella osta-neesi you.GEN must.3SG imagine-A buy-VA/PAST-Px/2SG hienompi sohva / hienomma-n sohva-n. better-ACC(0) sofa-ACC(0) better-ACC(n) sofa-ACC(n)
   ‘You must imagine that you have bought a better sofa.’

The result of this test is that both the 0-form and the -n-form of the accusative object are possible. The possibility of the n-form is tied to the local (Px, or nominal) agreement within the embedded VA-clause, but apparently the matrix verb exerts control over the embedded case form in its complement clause, as well, and allows the 0 accusative to emerge as an alternative.

Further evidence that both forms of the accusative are in fact possible is provided by the passive example in (35)(from Vilkuna 1996:298 and Vainikka 2003:251; cf. also Vainikka 1989:303-4), although an overt Px is lacking:

(35) Uolevin väitetään [saa-van palkankorotus/ palkankorotuk-sen].
    Uolevi claim.PASS get-VA rise-ACC(0)/ rise-ACC(n)
    ‘Uolevi is claimed to get a raise’

In (35) the embedded genitive subject Uolevin 'Uolevi-GEN' has been raised to the matrix clause in front of the matrix (impersonal) passive verb. While Vilkuna (1996) and Löbel (1999) discuss this problem, they do not provide a final analysis. Vainikka (2003) suggests that the variation is based on which of the verbs – the matrix or the embedded verb – has scope over the embedded object, but no independent evidence for the scope is provided.18 According to the present

18Vilkuna (1996), Löbel (1999) and Vainikka (2003) also discuss the accusative variation in the embedded version of the existential, possessive, or predicative constructions (involving the VA-construction). According to ISK (p.534–5), historically the postverbal DP behaves as an accusative
approach, an embedded (nominal) agreement gives rise to the -n accusative option, while the 0 accusative option would involve the lack of an agreeing verb in the matrix clause.

In sum, we conclude from the data examined in this section that Jahnsson’s generalization is not correct. The distribution of the 0-acusative and the n-acusative is based on something other than the presence/absence of a nominative subject. However, although Jahnsson’s generalization does not completely hold, it remains true over a significant number of constructions and therefore represents a correlation that is unlikely to be true just by random coincidence. The data examined in this section hint at a possibility for which we argue later in this paper, namely, that the n-acusative/0-acusative alternation is controlled by agreement. This hypothesis explains at once why there is a correlation, but only a correlation, between nominative subjects and the n-acusative: agreement is often triggered by nominative subjects.

4 Clause boundaries and islands

4.1 Several clause boundaries

The data cited in the previous sections show that the realization of the accusative case in a complement clause is sensitive to the matrix clause, in particular the presence or absence of subject-verb agreement in the matrix clause. The question therefore arises if such effects carry over several clause boundaries. Example (36) shows that the matrix agreement—present in (b), absent in (a)—is capable of penetrating two complement A-infinitivals and modulating the form of the accusative:

(36) a. Minun täytyy halu-<I>ta syödä</I> *tuo-n leivä-n / I.GEN must want.A that-ACC(n) bread-ACC(n)
tuo leipä that-ACC(0) bread-ACC(0)
‘I must want to eat that bread.’

b. Minä <I>aion</I> halu-<I>ta syö-dä</I> tuo-n leivä-n / I will.1SG want-A eat-A that-ACC(n) bread-ACC(n)
*tuo leipä that-ACC(0) bread-ACC(0)

object and occurs in the genitive (if singular and non-pronominal) in these constructions – all of which involve the main verb <I>olla</I> ‘to be’ – but nowadays the nominative is more common in these situations (ISK p.534-5).
‘I am going to want to eat that bread.’

To construct another similar test, recall that when agreement was eliminated in the matrix clause of a VA-complement, the accusative object of the embedded VA-complement was capable of taking either the -n form (nominal agreement inside the VA-construction) or the 0-accusative form (lack of agreement in the matrix clause). The VA-participle can take an A-infinitive complement, which results in a sequence of non-finite complements:

(37) Minä uskon haluava-ni syödä tuo-n leivä-n/
     I believe-1SG want.VA-Px/1SG eat.A that-ACC(n) bread-ACC(n)/
     *tuo leipä
     that-ACC(0) bread-ACC(0)
     ‘I believe (that) I want to eat that bread.’

We can then get rid of the matrix agreement by using the necessitative verb täytyy together with its genitive subject and observe what happens to the double-embedded accusative DP. This test is reported in (38).

(38) Minun täytyy uskoa haluava-ni syödä tuo-n
     I.GEN must believe.A want.VA-Px/1SG eat.A that-ACC(n)
     leivä-n / tuo leipä
     bread-ACC(n) that-ACC(0) bread-ACC(0)
     ‘I must believe (that) I want to eat that bread.’

Again, both forms are possible. The result is the same if we substitute a MA-infinitive for the lower A-infinitive:

(39) Minun täytyy uskoa pystyvä-ni syö-mään tuo-n
     I.GEN must believe.A be-capable.VA-Px/1SG eat-MA that-ACC(n)
     leivä-n / tuo-0 leipä-0
     bread-ACC(n) that-ACC(0) bread-ACC(0)
     ‘I must believe (that) I am capable of eating that bread.’

Again, both zero-derived and the -n form are possible while bringing back matrix agreement eliminates the possibility of the zero-form:

(40) Minä uskon pystyvä-ni syö-mään tuo-n
     I.NOM believe.1SG be-capable.VA-Px/1SG eat-MA that-ACC(n)
     leivä-n / *tuo-0 leipä-0
     bread-ACC(n) that-ACC(0) bread-ACC(0)
     ‘I believe (that) I am capable of eating that bread.’
Apparently the effect penetrates complement clause boundaries indefinitely, all else being equal. As shown in detail by Brattico (2009a,b), these non-finite clauses cannot be analysed as “reconstructed” monoclausal constructions: they involve their own argument structures and adverb modification. Hence we conclude that Finnish has a genuine long-distance Case assignment relation, reaching over several non-finite clauses. We will henceforth refer to this long distance phenomenon as LDCA (for Long Distance Case Assignment).

4.2 Islands

The object Case realization in Finnish is nevertheless blocked by certain kind of phrasal boundaries. As already noted by Ross (1967) for Finnish, the matrix clause effect on the embedded accusative object correlates with islandhood. That is, accusative case realization in Finnish is an island phenomenon. Islands are grammatical boundaries over which it is either impossible (strong islands) or only sometimes possible (weak islands) to extract elements, such as interrogative pronouns. Thus, note how in (41a–c) one can extract the embedded object interrogative pronoun from a complement finite clause only if the complement clause does not itself contain an interrogative (so-called Subjacency violation).

(41) a. What did Mary think that John found t?
   b. *What did Mary wondered how John found t?
   c. *How did Mary wondered what John found t?

We now turn to a presentation of the instances where accusative realization clearly correlates with islandhood, followed by certain less straightforward structures.

4.2.1 Islands that block LDCA

In general we can state that in Finnish long-distance Case assignment (LDCA) crosses only nonislands. Let us look at the individual constructions on a case-by-case basis. We have already seen that within a temporal adjunct the realization of the accusative Case is insensitive to matrix properties. The temporal adjunct is also an island with respect to wh-extraction:

To be more exact, weak islands are grammatical constructions which allow extraction when certain conditions are met. These conditions involve at least the type of the moved element, the presence or absence of other grammatical elements nearby and the presence or absense of agreement. See Huhmarniemi (2009, 2010) for further discussion of islands in Finnish.
Temporal adjunct island:

a. Lähditte kotiin heti [Maijan löydettyä went.2PL home immediately [Maija.GEN found.ESSA/PAST Hiljan pihalta] Hilja.ACC(n) yard.ABL]
   ‘You (pl.) went home immediately after Maija found Hilja in the (back)yard.’

b. *?Kenet lähditte kotiin heti [Maijan who.ACC(t) went.2PL home immediately [Maija.GEN löydettyä t pihalta]? found.ESSA/PAST t yard.ABL]?

c. *Kenet lähditte kotiin heti löydettyänne t who.ACC(t) went home immediately found.ESSA.PAST.Px/2PL ?

On the other hand, the A-infinitive, the MA-infinitive and the VA-construction do not behave as islands in terms of accusative realization (since they allow the matrix verb to influence the form of the accusative), and they allow wh-extraction, even over an overt embedded subject as in (45c):

(43) Wh-extraction out of the A-infinitive:

a. He yrittivät [löytää Hiljan pihalta] They attempted [find.A Hilja-ACC(n) yard]
   ‘They attempted to find Hilja in the (back)yard.’

b. Kenet he yrittivät [löytää t pihalta]? who-ACC(t) they attempted [find.A t yard]
   ‘Who did they attempt to find in the (back)yard?’

(44) Wh-extraction out of the MA-infinitive:

a. Lähdimme [hakemaan hänet koulusta] went [fetch.MA him.ACC(t) school]
   ‘We went to pick him up from school.’

b. Kenet lähditte [hakemaan t koulusta]? who-ACC(t) went [fetch.MA t school]
   ‘Who did you go pick up from school?’

(45) Wh-extraction out of the VA-infinitive:
a. Halusimme Hiljan lähtevän kotiin  
   want Hilja.GEN go.VA home  
   'We wanted Hilja to go home.' 

b. Kenen halusimme t lähtevän kotiin  
   who.GEN want t go.VA home  
   'Who did we want to go home?'

(46) Wh-extraction across several non-finite clauses:

a. Minun täytyy uskoa pystyväni syömään tuo-n  
   I.GEN must believe.A capable.VA-Px/1SG eat.MA that-ACC(n)  
   leivä-n / tuo leipä  
   bread-ACC(n) that-ACC(0) bread-ACC(0)  
   'I believe that I am capable of eating that bread.'

b. Mikä / Minkä minun täyttyy uskoa  
   what-ACC(0) what-ACC(n) I.GEN must believe.A  
   pystyväni syömään t  
   capable.VA-Px/1SG eat.MA t  
   'What do I believe that I am capable of eating?'

Thus, the argument-type non-finite constructions in Finnish (A-, MA-, and VA-constructions) are neither islands in terms of WH-movement, nor do they block LDCA; the form of the accusative is influenced by the matrix clause. However, the temporal adjunct is both an island with respect to WH-extraction, and it does not allow the matrix verb to influence the form of the accusative object (the accusative is always the n-accusative, given Px-agreement within the temporal adjunct).

An embedded clause with a finite CP-boundary behaves similarly to temporal adjuncts: matrix agreement does not influence accusative realization within a finite CP complement, and a CP complement is an island for WH-extraction. However, CP-complements are weak islands in Finnish. Thus, it is possible to extract the object but not the subject from an embedded CP:

(47) a. Mitä Pekka uskoi että Merja löysi t?  
   what Pekka believed that Merja found

b. *Kuka Pekka uskoi että t löysi Merjan?  
   who Pekka believed that found Merja?

Other instances of the correlation between islandhood and case assignment are reported in Brattico (2009a,b). In particular, LDCA also applies to the so-called partitivization by negation phenomenon which allows us to evaluate the
LDCA/island correlation against more data. We now turn to constructions in which the island correlation does not appear to hold in a straightforward fashion.

### 4.2.2 Challenges to islandhood in LDCA

There are three constructions which do not appear to follow the generalization about islandhood – the rationale clause, the adjunct version of the MA-construction, and a DP-construction.

The correlation between islandhood and the accusative realization does not hold in a straightforward fashion for the rationale clause. As pointed by Saara Huhmanniemi, the rationale clause behaves like an island yet matrix clause properties are able to affect accusative realization inside of the rationale clause. The minimal pair showing the effect is provided in (48a–b).

(48) a. Painoin nappia kaynnistääkseni ohjelman / Press.1SG button start.KSE.Px/1SG program.ACC(n) *ohjelma. 
   program.ACC(0) ‘I pressed the button in order to start the program.’

b. Minun täytyi painaa nappia kaynnistääkseni ohjelman 
   I.GEN must.3SG press button start.KSE.Px/1SG program-ACC(n) / ohjelma 
   program-ACC(0) ‘I had to press the button in order to start the program.’

In (48a) there is agreement both in the matrix clause (subject-verb agreement) and in the rationale clause (nominal, Px, agreement), and only the n-accusative is possible. In (48b) the nominal agreement gives rise to the n-accusative, and it must be the matrix lack of agreement that is responsible for the possibility of the 0-accusative. This is surprising given that the rationale clause is a strong island that does not allow wh-extraction:

(49) Rationale adjunct island:

a. Kävin kirjastossa [lainatakse[nI uusimman 
   went.1SG library.INE borrow.KSE-Px/1SG latest 
   dekkarin]. 
   detective.novel 
   ‘I went to the library in order to borrow the latest detective novel.’
b. *Minkä kävitet kirjastossa [lainataksetesi t ]?
   what went.2SG library.INE [borrow.KSE-Px/2SG t ]?
   ‘What did you go to the library in order to borrow?’

c. *Keneltä kävitet kaupungissa [lainataksetesi kirjan t]
   from.who went city borrow.KSE.Px/2SG book t
   ‘From whom did you went to a city to borrow a book t?’

The rationale clause thus stands in a marked contrast with the temporal adjunct which is both an island and opaque to LDCA.

Although the temporal adjunct and the rationale adjunct pattern similarly in terms of disallowing WH-extraction, the two constructions differ in terms of a number of other phenomena such as NPIs (negative polarity items). We believe that these differences are important in nailing down the correct relation between LDCA and islands. First, the three non-finite constructions that are not islands (the A, MA, and VA-constructions) allow—in fact prefer—the NPI mitään ‘anything’ in the (b) examples that also contain a matrix negation:

(50) A-infinitive:
      Jussi wanted buy.A something anything
      ‘Jussi wanted to buy something.’
   b. Jussi ei halunnut ostaa mitään / ?*jotakin.
      Jussi not wanted buy.A anything something
      ‘Jussi did not want to buy anything.’

(51) MA-infinitive:
   a. Jussi lahti ostamaan jotakin / *mitään.
      Jussi went buy.MA something anything
      ‘Jussi went to buy something.’
   b. Jussi ei lahtenyt ostamaan mitään / ?*jotakin.
      Jussi not went buy.MA anything something
      ‘Jussi did not go to buy anything.’

(52) VA-construction:
      Saw.1SG Jussi buy.VA something anything
      ‘I noticed that Jussi bought something.’
b. En nahnyt Jukan ostavan mitään / ?*jotakin.
   Not saw Jussi buy.VA anything something
   ‘I did not notice that Jussi bought something.’

Similarly to these constructions that are not islands, the rationale adjunct – in addition to being transparent to LDCA – allows matrix negation to license the NPI inside of the embedded rationale adjunct:

(53) a. Jäin pois töistä vältääkseni jotakin / *mitään
   Left out from.work avoid.KSE.Px/1SG some / any
   työtehtävää
   assignment
   ‘I stayed home in order to avoid some work assignment.’

b. En jäänyt pois töistä vältääkseni jotakin /
   Not left out from.work avoid.KSE.Px/1SG any assignment
   mitään työtehtävää
   ‘I did not stay at home in order to avoid some/any work assignment.’

The unproblematic temporal adjunct, on the other hand, licenses neither an NPI based on a negative matrix verb nor LDCA:

(54) Temporal adjunct:
      Jussi went home buy.TTU something anything
      ‘Jussi went home after he bought something.’
   b. Jussi ei lahtenyt kotiin ostettuaan jotakin / ?*mitään.
      Jussi not went home buy.TTU something anything
      ‘Jussi did not go home after he bought something.’

In addition to the NPI phenomenon, the temporal adjunct and the rationale adjunct also differ with respect to the distribution of a disjunction morpheme VAI ‘or’ that has to be licensed by a Yes/No Question Operator (see Vainikka 1993 for details); VAI cannot be licensed inside a tensed embedded from the matrix clause, nor can be licensed from outside of a temporal adjunct. The rationale clause, however, allows licensing of VAI from the matrix clause.

(55) a. CP/island
   *Muistatko etta Jussi osti lehden VAI kirjan?
   Remember that Jussi bought magazine or book

31
b. **VA-infinival/nonisland**

Muistatko Jussin ostaneen lehden VAI kirjan?
remember Jussi bought magazine or book?

b. **Rationale clause/island**

Menitko kauppaan ostaaksesi lehden VAI kirjan?
Went shop buy magazine or book

b. **Temporal adjunct/island**

?*Menitko kauppaan luettuasi lehden VAI kirjan?
Went shop read magazine or book

Furthermore, the rationale adjunct licenses a parasitic gap (glossed as e below), while the temporal adjunct does not:

(56) a. Jussi sai omenoita PRO syödäkseen e
Jussi got apples eat.KSE.Px/3SG
‘Jussi got apples to eat.’

b. *Jussi myi auton PRO rikottuaan e
Jussi sold car broke.TTU.Px/3SG
‘Jussi sold the car after breaking.’

The temporal adjunct and the rational adjunct are therefore both islands for movement yet they differ from each other in some syntactic dimension. The evidence examined above suggests that the rationale adjunct, even if it constitutes a strong island, is more transparent for the matrix properties than other islands: LDCA, polarity items, parasitic gaps and the disjunctive morpheme VAI all require specific matrix properties in order to be licensed, and these items are indeed licensed inside the rationale adjunct.

An anonymous reviewer of an earlier version of this paper noted the same pattern with the so-called MALLA-infinitive (an adjunct version of the MA-construction). S/he provides the following data, which shows that matrix agreement affects object Case realization within the MALLA-clause (57a–c) that constitutes an island (57d). We add the examples that show that the MALLA infinitival also licenses NPIs (57e), parasitic gaps (57f), and the disjunctive morpheme VAI (57g).

(57) a. Minä opin lukemalla tämän kirjan
I learn.1SG reading.MALLA this.ACC(n) book.ACC(n)
‘I learn by reading this book.’

b. Opitaan lukemalla tämä kirja
learn.PASS read.MALLA this.ACC(0) book.ACC(0)
c. *Opitaan lukemalla tämän kirjan
   learn.PASS read.MALLA this.ACC(n) book.ACC(n)

d. ?*Mitä Pekka oppii lukemalla t
   What Pekka learns read.MALLA

e. Minä en oppinut lukemalla mitään
   I not learn read.MALLA anything

f. Minä opettelin kirjan PRO lukemalla e
   I learn book read.MALLA
   ‘I learnt the book by reading (it).’

Thus, there are two non-finite constructions in Finnish – the rationale adjunct and the MALLA-adjunct – that are islands with respect to WH-extraction, yet they allow matrix properties to license various elements within the non-finite clause; furthermore, they allow matrix agreement to affect the form of the accusative in the embedded clause. In contrast, finite CPs and the temporal adjunct are islands with respect to all the phenomena discussed. There is yet another difference between the two classes of constructions that is most likely relevant: the two island constructions that are always islands have the possibility of an overt DP subject – a nominative DP in the finite CP, and an (optional) overt genitive subject DP in the temporal adjunct – while there can be no overt DP subject in the other two constructions. As already mentioned, the rationale adjunct always carries a Px co-indexed with the matrix subject, and no overt DP (genitive or otherwise) is possible within the adjunct. In the MALLA-adjunct, as well, no overt subject is possible (not even a Px). That is, the abstract subject of the MALLA-adjunct is obligatorily controlled by the matrix subject, while the possessive suffix in the rationale adjunct is obligatorily bound or controlled by the matrix subject. The impossibility of a DP subject in the rationale and MALLA adjuncts, along with obligatory control by the matrix subject, could also be a factor in the transparency of these constructions with respect to various matrix clause properties (while not allowing WH-extraction). For the purposes of the topic of this paper it suf-

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21There is a yet further phenomenon which distinguishes the two classes of ‘islands’, namely binding. To the extent that the 3rd person singular Px-nsa is a Binding Theoretic anaphor, it must be bound within the temporal adjunct and within a finite CP, but can apparently be bound from outside of the rationale adjunct and the MALLA-adjunct; however, given the status of subjects within the rationale adjunct and the MALLA-adjunct – as discussed in the text – such binding may actually take place within the rationale/MALLA-adjunct. We will not pursue this topic further here.

22In addition to the rationale clause and the MALLA-adjunct, there is yet a third construction in
fices to conclude that LDCA accusative realization can be grouped together with several other morphosyntactic dependencies involving NPIs, partivization under negation, licensing of VAI disjunction, licensing of parasitic gaps, presence of overt subject and perhaps binding, and that LDCA is blocked exactly in such island contexts that block all of these other phenomena, as well. That is, accusative realization under LDCA falls under a broader class of morphosyntactic dependencies. We call these dependencies as *PG-dependencies* (suggesting ‘probe’ and ’goal’, see Chomsky 2008). LDCA is therefore not an isolated phenomenon but follows the contours of many other grammatical dependencies.

Before we continue, a short comment is in order concerning the morphosyntactic PG-dependency that underlies LDCA. As the evidence suggest, this dependency has to do with a grammatical relation between two elements in which the more prominent element affects the morphosyntactic composition of the lower one. Such a relationship is generally thought of as consisting of several more primitive conditions, such as c-command, feature match, and locality (Chomsky, 2001, 2008). The present data warrants the first two conditions, but we remain sceptical about locality (Brattico, 2009a,b); clearly, accusative realization and LDCA in Finnish, in general, involve non-local dependencies. We return to this point in the last section.

23C-command refers to the containment-of-sister relation. For present purposes we can define c-command so that A c-commands B if and only if B is dominated by the sister of A. Feature match is one way to select the elements entering in a PG-dependency, as not every element agrees with everything else. We return to the feature match condition in the next section.
5 Analysis

5.1 Descriptive summary

The results from the previous sections are summarized in Table 2 (apart from the island data). This table lists all the constructions investigated so far (hence all the commonly used constructions in Finnish that assign accusative case). There is no universal definition of “subject”: in the table, “subject” is either a genitive or nominative DP that occurs in a preverbal position.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CONSTRUCTION</th>
<th>SUBJECT DP</th>
<th>(\varphi)-AGREEMENT</th>
<th>ACCUSATIVE FORM</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>FINITE CLAUSES</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>regular finite clause</td>
<td>nom</td>
<td>yes</td>
<td>-n</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>impersonal passive</td>
<td>no (nom*)</td>
<td>no</td>
<td>zero</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>possessive</td>
<td>no</td>
<td>no</td>
<td>zero</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>existential</td>
<td>no</td>
<td>no</td>
<td>zero</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>necessive</td>
<td>gen</td>
<td>no</td>
<td>zero</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>imperative</td>
<td>nom**</td>
<td>number only</td>
<td>zero</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>NON-FINITE CLAUSES</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>temporal adjunct</td>
<td>gen</td>
<td>yes(Px)</td>
<td>-n</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>rationale adjunct</td>
<td>gen†</td>
<td>yes(Px)</td>
<td>both</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A-infinitive</td>
<td>gen</td>
<td>no</td>
<td>zero</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MA-infinitive</td>
<td>no</td>
<td>no</td>
<td>zero</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VA-construction</td>
<td>gen‡</td>
<td>yes(Px)</td>
<td>both</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| OTHER                  |            |                        |                 |
| Participle AP          | (head N)   | yes(number/case)       | -n              |

* Nominate subjects in colloquial speech.
** The status of the subject DP in the imperative is unclear.
† No overt genitive DP, but arguably a covert one that is coindexed with the Px and matrix subject.
‡ While allows a genitive subject, this cannot co-occur with an overt Px.

Note that the ”zero” in the ”accusative form” column for the A-infinitive and the MA-infinitive means that the form is the 0-accusative when the clause is in

The only relevant construction not covered in this paper is the adverbial construction discussed in Maling (1993) and Vainikka (2003). Since this construction does not allow human pronouns, it is very difficult to determine whether the adverbs in question carry accusative or genitive case; we leave the details of this construction to future research.
isolation; when embedded under a matrix clause, the form of the accusative is determined solely by the matrix clause. As was detailed above, the "both" designation in the same column for the rationale clause and the VA-construction indicates that there exists variation between the two accusative forms, ACC(0) and ACC(n): the ACC(n) is always possible in these two constructions (due to the embedded Px); however, when the matrix clause lacks agreement, the ACC(0) is possible as well, based on the matrix clause.

The MALLA-adjunct discussed in the previous section is subsumed under "MA-infinitive" both in terms of morphology (MA + ADESSive case), and in terms of its accusative realization; neither the argument-type MA-infinitive nor the MALLA-adjunct carries Px marking or has an overt subject DP, and neither licenses the n-accusative within the non-finite clause. The form of the embedded accusative is determined by matrix properties in both subtypes. What made the situation complicated was that the MALLA-adjunct is an island with respect to WH-extraction – yet allowing matrix properties to license elements within the adjunct – while the argument MA-infinitive is not an island.

Table 2 reveals that the form of the accusative correlates with whether there is local or non-local ϕ-agreement, whether subject-verb agreement, nominal possessive suffix (Px) agreement, or even concord-type (number and case) agreement between a modifying deverbal adjective and the head noun. When non-local, the relationship is established from the complement clause (or phrase) to the matrix clause and it can penetrate several clause boundaries, but is sensitive to islands.

Notice further that what matters for the accusative realization is not ϕ-agreement between the accusative object and a more prominent predicate, but the ‘existential’ property that there are c-commanding overt ϕ-features. Thus, since in Finnish objects never agree with anything, it is the agreement between the subject and a predicate which affects accusative realization of the object. To put this finding in other words, the PG-dependency that regulates accusative realization obtains between two features: ϕ-set of a c-commanding predicate and the Case feature of the object noun phrase.

A further detail that needs to be addressed is the question of what type of ϕ-features trigger the n-accusative form. In addition to the ϕ-features discussed here, there are further ϕ-features in Finnish which do not affect object realization, namely, those within DPs. What is it that makes certain ϕ-features to affect Case realization while others do not? Following Chomsky (2001), Brattico (2009a,b) suggests that the ϕ-features relevant for accusative realization must be semantically uninterpretable. Thus, agreement between verbs and nouns matters because such agreement features emerge from argument DPs via a formal agreement rela-
tion, but the $\varphi$-features of DPs or the elements within DPs do not because they are semantically interpretable. Unless otherwise stated, we thus mean semantically uninterpretable $\varphi$-set in the discussion that follows.

5.2 Grammatical Case in Finnish and the accusative

We will now attempt to provide an analysis of the Finnish accusative that has as few stipulations specific to accusative realization as possible. The following are the grammatical Case marking rules needed for Finnish independent of the special accusative realization described in this paper, based on earlier work on grammatical case in Finnish (in particular Vainikka 1989, 2003 and ?). The rules are provided, to the extent possible, in the form of theory-neutral generalizations:

(58) **Regular Grammatical Case Rules for Finnish**

a. **Nominative case**
   Assigned by finite $C$ to the subject DP.

b. **Accusative case**
   Assigned by verb to its complement (object).

c. **Partitive case**
   Assigned by a lexical head (such as $V$, $P$, $Q$, and perhaps $A$ and $N$) to its complement.

d. **Genitive case**
   Assigned by a head (such as $N$, $P$, $V$, $A$) to its specifier.

We take the transitive verb to assign accusative to any object DP, be it a human pronoun, or a singular or plural DP; this accounts for the object behavior of all three types of accusatives, as we saw in Section 2. However, only the human pronouns in Finnish have a unique accusative form in the lexicon (with the -t suffix). This is not unlike the situation for accusative case in English, where only personal pronouns have an accusative form (e.g. ‘him’) in the lexicon. In fact, as far as plural DPs in Finnish are concerned, they end up in nominative case (or the lexical entry), similarly to what happens with all full DPs in English when accusative is assigned.\(^{25}\) What distinguishes the Finnish and English accusative

\(^{25}\)While the plural suffix on nominative (and accusative) plural DPs in Finnish is -t, homophonous with the singular accusative suffix, we can tell from the behavior of the inanimate plural ne ‘they-inanim.’ (Section 2.2) that plural DPs in an accusative position are actually nominative, rather than forms with the accusative suffix -t.
systems is the existence of the third accusative form, the n-accusative, in the singular.

The four rules presented here encompass all the basic grammatical cases in Finnish. As we pointed out above, we would like to explain the accusative alternation as a function of the above rules instead of positing a brand new system. This is made possible, in fact likely, by the fact that the n-accusative and 0-accusative forms are homophonous with the genitive (n-form) and the nominative (0-form). This suggest that what we are thus seeing are the sui generis genitive and nominative suffixes in the object position. Thus, in addition to the accusative rule, the nominative and genitive rules are relevant for accusative realization; it will turn out that accounting for accusative realization forces us to reconsider the genetive generalization.

We propose that when a non-pronominal singular DP receives the feature [ACC] under the accusative rule – and since there is no accusative form of such a non-pronominal singular DP in Finnish – secondary case assignment takes place based on one of the following rules:

(59)  Secondary genitive case
      Assigned by a c-commanding semantically uninterpretable ϕ-set (either nominal or verbal agreement).

(60)  Secondary nominative case
      Assigned by a c-commanding finite C.

Rule (59) is designed to capture the existential generalization that it is the presence of ϕ-set at a higher c-commanding predicate which assigns the n-accusative.\(^{26}\) (Recall that the ϕ-set must be semantically uninterpretable: interpretable ϕ-sets that originate from DPs or the internal elements therein, for instance, do not count.) Note that the secondary nominative case rule is basically identical to the regular nominative rule, except that the case assignee is not the subject of the sentence. We return shortly to the potential conflict between the two rules, or determining which rule to apply; we also return to the possibility of relating the two genitive rules.

Let us now consider how the rule system presented here accounts for the data summarized in Table 2. If the matrix clause has no subject-verb agreement, 0-accusative occurs due to the (secondary) nominative valuation rule (60). This

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\(^{26}\)Following the recent trend in Minimalism, we have excluded the functional projection AgrP from consideration. However, it may be possible to restate the secondary genitive case rule in terms of case assignment by Agr, if both subject-verb and Px agreement involve an AgrP projection.
holds for rows 2-6 in Table 2 (the finite contexts). A similar situation holds for the two non-finite contexts that never exhibit nominal agreement, the A-infinitive and the MA-infinitive, when they occur in isolation (that is, not embedded under a matrix clause with agreement). The lack of matrix agreement therefore triggers (60), assuming that finite clauses in general contain a CP projection. Perhaps most interestingly, note how the present system accomplishes long-distance case assignment (LDCA): we allow the case assignees to freely detect c-commanding case assigners without stipulating locality requirements other than standard islandhood (adjusted for the possibility of a class of phenomena including LDCA to penetrate certain islands), as discussed in Section 4.

In contrast, the secondary genitive rule is applied in a matrix clause with a ϕ-set at the finite verb, in a regular finite clause. Furthermore, the object DP of an embedded A-infinitive or MA-infinitive (i.e. non-islands) also occurs in the n-accusative when their matrix clause contains subject-verb agreement (not shown in the table). In addition, a similar situation obtains within a non-finite clause (of the strong island type) that carries nominal (Px) agreement, i.e. the temporal adjunct. Again, long-distance effects are derived based on c-command and islandhood.

When both agreement and a finite C are present, how do we determine which of the two secondary rules to apply? It follows from derivational architecture that the genitive rule applies first: agreement within a clause or a phrase occurs lower in the tree than the C head, which is the highest functional head in a sentence. Moving up the tree from the accusative object (which lacks case marking), we first determine whether any of the c-commanding predicates carry agreement; if so, the genitive rule applies. If not, we move up the tree to the CP, and the nominative rule applies. This holds for the construction types so far; we return to the constructions with variation.

Consider next the tensed deverbal participle adjective which allows for the n-accusative and never the 0-accusative:

(61) a. luun syönyt koira
    bone.ACC(n) eat.VA.PAST.SG dog.SG
    ‘A dog who ate the bone.’

b. *luu syönyt koira
    bone.ACC(0) eat.VA.PAST.SG dog.SG

These data are also accounted for since the tensed participle adjective head carries the ϕ-features [number, case], thus triggering the n-accusative. (In fact,
there is no finite C head inside the AP island that could give rise to the nominative.) Concerning the agreement features that are relevant for the n-accusative, we observe that the possible number marking on the imperative is not sufficient to qualify as $\varphi$-feature set, while the concord on the participial verb (with number and case agreement) does count as such an agreement set.  

What remains are the two constructions that allow variation between the 0-accusative and the n-accusative, the rationale adjunct and the VA-construction. We begin with the rationale adjunct. Recall that this construction is an island for WH-extraction, but it allows several PG-dependencies to penetrate the island. There is never an overt DP subject, but there is a Px that is bound/controlled by the matrix subject. Given the Px agreement within the adjunct, we would expect the genitive rule to apply, and it does; the n-accusative is always possible in this construction. What is surprising is that although the genitive rule is always relevant for this construction, there is also the possibility of the matrix clause agreement (or lack of it) to influence the form of the accusative object.

Let us consider the possibility that both of the secondary rules apply whenever possible; such an approach would explain the variation in the rationale adjunct (and the VA-construction). This approach would work for all the constructions that do not have agreement, since only the nominative rule can apply, resulting in 0-accusative (cf. Table 2). The approach would also work for the n-accusative in the temporal adjunct, since the adjunct does not have a finite C (and it is a strong island, not allowing any of the PG-dependencies from the matrix clause); only the genitive rule can apply. Similarly, the participial AP construction is a strong island without a finite C, and only the genitive rule could apply. The only construction where this approach creates a problem is the regular finite clause – if there is agreement, only the n-accusative is possible, despite the presumed presence of a finite C. We leave the problem of the finite clause with agreement for future research, and pursue the approach that either of the secondary rules will apply whenever possible.

Accounting for the VA-construction is now straightforward. Since this construction is not an island, and since it allows nominal agreement, as well, either of

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27 Furthermore, in addition to number and case, the participle might even agree in person, but this is impossible to test, given that an AP cannot modify a human pronoun – the only type of element in Finnish that triggers overt person agreement.

28 A possible line of inquiry to account for the finite clauses with agreement is that the status of nominal and subject-verb agreement differs, where nominal agreement is somehow ‘weaker’ than subject-verb agreement. If the genitive rule applies based on ‘weak’ agreement, the nominative rule may also apply, but if based on ‘strong’ agreement, only the genitive rule applies.
the secondary rules may apply: the n-accusative emerges either based on nominal agreement within the embedded clause or based on subject-verb agreement in the matrix clause, while the 0-accusative has the possibility of emerging if the matrix clause lacks agreement (i.e. the nominative rule applies based on the finite C of the matrix clause).

Apart from the remaining problem with finite clauses with agreement (i.e. the problem of why only the genitive rule applies, not both), the system presented so far accounts for all of the data. We now turn to some further discussion of the status of the secondary case rules.

5.3 Accusative vs. nominative and genitive

According to our analysis, the 0-accusative is in some sense a true nominative—since both are valued by C in the same fashion. We also wish to consider the possibility that both the regular genitive and the secondary genitive are instances of the same genitive (although this does not yet follow from the rules we have stated).

Strong evidence for this type of a model comes from Kiparsky (2001), and following Kiparsky’s ideas, Asudeh (2003). Our view differs from these authors in that we have argued that the relevant object DPs continue to carry the feature [ACC] even though their case realization comes from another case.

One of Kiparsky’s (2001) and Asudeh’s (2003) theoretical arguments states that in general (in other languages) allomorphy of the sort assumed in traditional grammar for Finnish, namely between -t, -n and -0, is not syntactically conditioned, whereas it is in Finnish. Furthermore, since Finnish generally lacks suppletive morphology (Kiparsky 2001:318), omitting such allomorphy altogether would be desirable. In addition, it is theoretically suspicious that two of the accusative variants correspond to another case form—a result that would be avoided if there simply were no accusative form in Finnish for singular full DPs. Our approach takes care of these problems since rather than having three variants of the accusative, we have just one, and the other two forms of accusative realization are, in effect, borrowed from the nominative and the genitive.

The strongest arguments by Kiparsky and Asudeh are the empirical ones which show that on the surface the 0-accusative tends to behave like the nominative, and the -n marked accusative behaves like the genitive. The first empirical argument involves case identity under gapping: a shared, gapped argument under coordination must share an identical case, where the zero-marked accusative (but not the -t marked accusative) counts as nominative (examples 62a–b from Asudeh 2003):
Recall that the Finnish passive is an impersonal one (without subject-verb agreement) and its fronted complement occurs in the accusative—showing up in the bare (nominative) form in (62a)—and in the t-accusative in (62b). However, while both forms in parentheses occur in the accusative position, only the one that superficially bears nominative case can be omitted under gapping. Omitting the t-marked accusative form (hänet ’him/her’) in (62b) results in ungrammaticality. This argument shows that contrary to the traditional approach, the accusative in (62a) behaves as a nominative, at least as far as syntactic gapping is concerned (recall, however, the various syntactic processes under which all of the accusatives behave as objects.)

The same argument is expected to hold for those accusatives that surface with genitive case. In (63a) the embedded non-finite verb takes a genitive subject. The argument appears to go through in this situation as well (our examples):

The subject DP of the non-finite VA-construction pyörrytvän ’fainting’ occurs in (true) genitive case in both examples, as shown by the genitive pronoun hänem
'his/her' in (62b). The object DP in the second conjunct occurs in accusative case, but only the accusative that matches the genitive subject in the first conjunct can easily be omitted. The possibility of omitting the second Mikon in (62a) shows that for gapping purposes Mikon is treated as genitive, although it occurs in the accusative position (it is an object of the matrix verb näämme 'we saw', a verb that normally takes an accusative object). The corresponding structure with the human pronoun does not sound as good when the accusative pronoun is omitted in (62b). Example (62), then, showed that the 0-accusative behaves like a nominative, while the genitive-marked accusative may behave like a genitive, as in (63).

One further empirical argument is provided by Kiparsky and Asudeh. The unique accusative forms in the lexicon include the interrogative kenen ‘whom’. However, when the interrogative pronoun agrees with a noun or an adjective, the accusative form is not possible. Consider (64) ([3b] from Asudeh 2003, ex. [14]):

(64) a. Kenen hän näki?
   Who.ACC he.NOM saw
   ‘Whom did he see?’

   b. *Kenen kumman hän näki?
   Who-ACC strange.ACC he.NOM saw
   ‘Who on earth (lit. who strange) did he see?’

In a regular WH-question, the accusative (object) WH-phrase occurs with the suffix -t, as in (64a). However, in (64b), where the WH-phrase involves complex internal structure, only the genitive form of the accusative is possible, presumably because of a requirement of case concord. The adjective kumma ‘strange’ does not have an accusative form, and thus emerges with the genitive suffix in the accusative context, and the WH-word kuka ‘who’ can only occur in the genitive form as well, even though it has an accusative form in the lexicon. This argument shows, then, that the clear accusative -t form is not accepted by the grammar as agreeing with the adjective that bears the -n accusative, i.e. the accusative that is superficially genitive.

Kiparsky’s and Asudeh’s arguments support our view that the Finnish accusative realization involves both nominative and genitive valuation, very similar or identical to regular nominative and genitive valuation. To the extent that we can unite the two genitive rules, our approach is thus superior to the traditional approach to the Finnish accusative, as well as generative analysis prior to Kiparsky (2001). Apart from improved empirical coverage beyond Jahnsson’s generalization, our approach also challenges Kiparsky (2001) and Asudeh (2003),
who maintain that the relevant DPs are not accusative at all, and who would thus have a problem in accounting for their behavior as regular objects of a verb under standard syntactic tests (see Section 2).

Finally, in order to pursue our approach fully, we need to determine how the two genitive rules are related. In what way would the secondary genitive involve borrowing the regular genitive suffix? The two genitive rules are repeated here:

(65) **Genitive case**
    Assigned by a head (such as N, P, V, A) to its specifier.

(66) **Secondary genitive case**
    Assigned by a c-commanding semantically uninterpretable $\varphi$-set (either nominal or verbal agreement).

An important consideration at this point is the status of possessive suffixes (Px’s). Many of the (pronominal) DPs marked with the (regular) genitive case agree with the head, and this agreement is realized as a Px; this is an instance of nominal $\varphi$-agreement (Brattico, 2009c). Such a pattern holds all four head types listed in the regular genitive rule – possessive DPs (67a), postposition phrases or PPs (67b), APs that take a genitive argument (67c), and non-finite VPs such as the temporal adjunct (67d):

(67) a. minun auto-ni
    my car.Px/1SG
    ‘my car’

b. minun lähellä-ni
    my near.Px/1SG
    ‘close to me’

c. minun löytämä-ni
    my found.Px/1SG
    ‘(a thing) found by me’

d. minun juostessa-ni
    my run.SSA-Px/1SG
    ‘while I run’

Thus, each type of head (and the corresponding specifier) involved in regular genitive assignment also reflects nominal agreement. This suggests to us that the

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$^{29}$However, some of the verbs that assign genitive to their subject do not evidence agreement, such as the impersonal necessive verb taytyy 'must' that takes a genitive subject.
regular genitive rule also involves agreement, similarly to what we have claimed for secondary genitive assignment. Although a full reanalysis of the regular genitive and the related Px’s is beyond the scope of this paper, we take it to be reasonable to assume that the secondary genitive rule is derived from the regular genitive rule, both involving agreement.

If this analysis can be maintained, the three forms of the accusative emerge from the system of grammatical case independently needed for Finnish. What is needed in addition to account for the three-way accusative marking is the possibility of secondary case assignment; the secondary case rules themselves, we maintain, are derived from the regular nominative and genitive rules, and they give rise to genitive and nominative marking of the accusatives.

6 Some further thoughts on long-distance case assignment

These findings bring out certain ramifications that seem quite relevant to any proposed system of nominal case assignment. In this last section we attempt to delineate these implications, in a way that need not assume any particular linguistic framework.

As we pointed out in the beginning of the present article, case assignment has traditionally been viewed as a local process. Whether it be verbs which assigns nominative and accusative to their arguments, or noun heads which assign genitive Case to their arguments, the resulting case assignment configurations are local, therefore theorized as grounded on some form of local case assignment relation. While we acknowledge that most case assignment relationships are indeed local, the present data show that a cross-linguistically valid theory of nominal case needs to assimilate the systematic and persuasive long-distance case assignment phenomenon found in Finnish.

More specifically, case assignees are able to ‘search’ for c-commanding case assigners over an unlimited amount of grammatical structure, the only limiting factor being certain island boundaries. However, the results of such searching can be predicted, at least for Finnish, on the basis of the standard grammatical case assignment rules. Thus, whatever assigns the genitive locally can also assign it non-locally; whatever assigns the nominative locally can also assign it non-locally. Long-distance case assignment does not therefore need a brand new system of case rules, but it can be understood as a fairly natural extension of the standard
Further, as argued in detail by Brattico (2009a,b), there seem to be no coding ‘tricks’ available which would allow us to maintain a completely local theory of case assignment under these findings. There is no evidence that the case assigner and the assignee would meet in a local domain via covert movement, since the Finnish non-finite clauses constitute a genuine polyclausal structure rather than a “reconstructed” monoclausal structure. Furthermore, the Finnish accusative phenomenon clearly falls under the grammatical system of case assignment; this is clear given the similarity of the Finnish accusative system to e.g. the English accusative system, and the similarity of the secondary accusative marking to garden-variety nominative and genitive marking in Finnish. Thus, we cannot claim that the phenomenon belongs to some other component of grammar, rather than case marking. In addition, the accusative rule, in particular, cannot be grounded on a semantic theory; it definitely involves a syntactic process of case assignment.

Recall from Section 4 that there are three types of constructions in Finnish with respect to islandhood: (1) non-islands, such as the A-construction, the MA-construction, and the VA-construction; (2) islands that block both WH-extraction and PG-dependencies (including the choice of the accusative form), namely, the finite CP, the temporal adjunct, and the participial (modifying) AP-construction; and (3) islands that in general block WH-extraction but allow PG-dependencies between the matrix and the embedded clause – the rationale adjunct, the MALLA-adjunct, and DPs. Class (2) blocks various PG-dependencies in addition to the LDCA involved in accusative realization, such as NPIs, the licensing of the disjunctive VAL, parasitic gaps, and partitive case under negation. The constructions in class (3) – while being islands with respect to WH-extraction – allow these PG-dependencies, and furthermore, these dependencies allow an unlimited amount of grammatical structure to appear between them, with any number of embedded non-finite clauses.

We suggested earlier that the difference between the two classes of islands may involve the status of the embedded subject DP, in that the two non-finite constructions in class (3) do not allow an overt subject DP, while the two sentential constructions in class (2) readily allow an overt subject DP. It might thus be that the structure for class (3) is somehow reduced, perhaps missing a specifier or subject position (such as Spec, CP). On the other hand, the finite CP – as a representative of the class that does not allow PG-dependencies to penetrate – definitely involves a full CP structure.

Notice further that it is well-known that $\overline{A}$-movement bleeds case assignment. Thus, it is interrogative and relative pronouns which have been assigned their case
features in situ that are moved. Their case feature composition does not change at the final landing site. We can therefore conclude with reasonable certainty that the PG-dependencies (e.g., LDCA) are established prior to extraction operations; extraction targets elements which have been processed morphosyntactically. There is therefore no prima facie reason to think that the WH-extraction and DP-dependencies fall within the same grammatical system; instead, CPs and strong islands are domains which constitute in some sense ‘complete spellout packages’, thus containing in itself all the morphosyntactic information required for a successful spellout.\textsuperscript{30} Whatever explains $\lambda$-movement targets packages readied for spellout, but the conditions on extraction appear to be quite heterogeneous.

The present dataset appears to have some relevance to the question of how to correlate $\varphi$-agreement and case assignment. These data show that the two are related to each other, again in a way that cannot be a random coincidence. It is the grammatical heads or predicates with uninterpretable $\varphi$-set which control the case feature composition downstream; but the case assignment does not imply $\varphi$-agreement between the case assigner and case assignee. Recall that in Finnish objects never agree with anything. Curiously, then, whether a predicate agrees with something else than the case assignee regulates how it assigns case to another element. We can imagine two ways to explain this curiosity: either by a direct model, in which $\varphi$-agreement between the two agreement partners (say the subject and the verb) affects, for some reason or another, the case features of other elements (say the object); or by an indirect model, in which it is the $\varphi$-set at the predicate which trigger case alteration, independent of how those features got there in the first place. Brattico (2009b) argues for the latter, noting that there are situations in which lexically determined $\varphi$-set of a grammatical head leads to case assignment. Such lexically detetermined $\varphi$-sets cannot originate via agreement. He interprets this in the light of the minimalist model of (Chomsky, 2001, 2008), who suggests that semantically uninterpretable $\varphi$-features are case assigners. For present concerns, we note that the data available from Finnish do appear to be consistent with Chomsky’s proposal, though not with its strong notion of locality (Brattico, 2009a).

\textsuperscript{30}That this holds for CPs needs no elaborate argument, since CPs constitute the root grammatical structure and therefore must stand on their own.
7 Conclusion

In this article we have shown that the traditional generalization about the Finnish accusative (Jansson’s generalization) is too narrow, namely that the accusative DP is realized with the (genitive) -n suffix whenever the sentence contains a nominative subject. The new generalization—which covers data from a number of finite and non-finite constructions, summarized in Table 2—is that an accusative DP is realized with the -n suffix whenever \( \varphi \)-agreement is present within the island containing the accusative DP; that is, accusative realization is a long distance phenomenon. In the absence of agreement, the accusative DP is realized without a suffix, i.e. in the nominative.

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