Chapter 4: Nonagreement and Ergativity in Balto-Slavic Participial Predicates: The Case of North Russian -no/-to and Lithuanian -ma/-ta Constructions

4.0 Introduction

We now turn to nonagreeing participial constructions in North Russian and Lithuanian. I will argue that these predicates differ from their Polish and Ukrainian counterparts by occurring with a fully-thematic, lexically-realized, subject and a structurally-marked nominative object. On the surface, this construction consists of (i) a nonagreeing participle functioning as the main predicate, (ii) a preverbal oblique (or PP) constituent, and (iii) a postverbal NOM NP (under neutral discourse). Note that the North Russian -no/-to construction appears with the predicate-final (areally-distinct) allomorphs /-n/-t/ and /-(v)ši/. Examples for North Russian are given in (1):

(1) North Russian

   a. -no/-to
      U lisicy unesenno kuročka.
      at fox:GEN carried-off:–NO chicken:NOM.FEM
      ‘A fox has carried off a chicken.’ [Kužmina & Nemčenko (= K&N) 1971:27]

   b. -n/-t
      U nas kadočka ogurcov posolen.
      at us:GEN barrel:NOM.FEM of-cucumbers pickled:–N
      ‘We have pickled a barrel of cucumbers.’ [K&N 1971:77]

   c. -(v)ši
      U menja už korova podoivši.
      at me:GEN already cow:NOM.FEM milked:–(v)ši
      ‘I have already milked the cow.’ [Filin 1969:72]

1 This chapter elaborates on ideas first discussed in Lavine 1999.
2 Forms in /-no/-to/ occur in the North Russian dialect groups of Ladoga-Tixvin, Onega, Lača, Belozersk, and the northern part of the Vologda group, as well as the western Central Russian dialects of Novgorod, Pskov, and the western part of Seligor-Toržok. Forms in /-n/-t/ are found only in the northern part of the western Central Russian dialects (see K&N 1971, map 1). Predicative /-(v)ši/ with the preverbal u ‘at’ + GEN constituent is limited mainly to those parts of the Seligor-Toržok group where forms in /-no/-to/ and /-n/-t/ are not used (K&N 1971:142-143, and map 4). Note that I will refer to the -no/-to form as a catch-all for all three North Russian predicate types.
3 Note that the English glosses here, and throughout section 4.0, assume the non-passive reading that will be argued for in section 4.1.
The Lithuanian counterpart to North Russian -no/-to includes a present-tense form in /-ma/ and a past-tense form in /-ta/. As we will see shortly, this is the sole tense specification for Lithuanian -ma/-ta; tense-marking auxiliaries generally do not cooccur with the /-ma/-ta/ ending (with the intended semantics, also to be discussed shortly).

Examples are given in (2):

(2) Lithuanian
   a. -ma
      Girdėjau, jo mieste namas statoma.
      I-heard he:GEN in-city house:NOM.MASC being-built:-MA
      ‘I heard he is building a house in town.’ [Ambrazas et al. 1997:281]

   b. -ta
      Gal Jonuko tie grybai atnešta.
      maybe Jonukas:GEN these mushrooms:NOM.PL brought:-TA
      ‘Maybe Jonukas brought these mushrooms.’ [Ambrazas et al. 1997:281]

In general terms, our central concern here, as in chapter 3, is the explicit characterization of new uses for old morphemes. In their canonical agreeing capacity, North Russian /-nol-to/ and /-n/-t/ are the neuter and masculine singular short forms, respectively, of the past passive participle;¹ /-(v)ši/ is the feminine singular form of an erstwhile agreeing short form past active participle. Lithuanian /-ma/ and /-ta/ correspond to the “old” neuter singular forms of the present and past passive participles; /-ma/ is the modern Lithuanian reflex of common Slavic */-mo/ (i.e., Lithuanian statoma ‘being-built’ may be literally translated into modern Russian as *stroimo, a non-productive participial construction (cf. the modern Russian departicipial adjective ljubimyj ‘beloved, favorite’)), while /-ta/ is the modern Lithuanian reflex of common Slavic */-to/, the same morpheme used in Polish and Ukrainian -no/-to. Lithuanian /-ma/-ta/ is referred to as

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¹ As I will discuss in section 4.1, North (and Central) Russian /-nol-to/ and /-n/-t/ may be considered “old” since the dialects with which we are concerned use the long form of adjectives and participles in the
“old” since the modern language has assimilated all neuter nouns to the masculine and feminine declensions.

Following similar claims made in chapter 3, I will argue that these North Russian and Lithuanian participial forms no longer contain inflectional morphology. That is, under the present analysis, the examples in (1-2) do not cooccur with distinct neuter, masculine, and feminine agreeing null expletive pronouns. */-no/-to/ and */-ma/-ta/ will be viewed as derivational morphemes with their own argument structure and dedicated function. It has been widely noted that */-no/-to/ in North Russian marks the perfect tense (see Petrova 1968, K&N 1971, and Trubinskij 1984). Lithuanian */-ma/-ta/ marks the “evidential mood,” often compared to the “indirect mood,” with which it competes in terms of its areal distribution.5

It may also be noted that both North Russian */-no/-to/ and Lithuanian */-ma/-ta/ occur in a distinct construction that takes an ACC object. These constructions most closely resemble Polish */-no/-to/, with the obvious difference that the “subject” (by hypothesis) in North

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5 The evidential mood is discussed in Ambrāz 1978:347-348 and Ambrāz et al. 1997:281. It denotes an action that is inferred or assumed to be true (this meaning is indicated in the English glosses by expressions, such as apparently, evidently, they say, etc…). Evidential */-ma/-ta/, in the case of transitive verbs, is generally not used in those regions where the indirect mood, expressed by means of a NOM subject combined with an agreeing active participle, is productive. The example in (i) of the “canonical” indirect mood is most productive in the Zemaitija dialect, where evidential */-ma/-ta/ is not used.

(i) Lithuanian Indirect Mood

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Jis rašęs laišką.
he:NOM wrote:ACT-PART.NOM,MASC letter:ACC
'(They say) he wrote a letter.' [Schmalstieg 1988:113]
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Alternatively, evidential */-ma/-ta/ is reported as quite productive in the eastern, southern, and western Aukštaitija dialects (eastern Lithuania), where the active-participial construction in (i) is not used. For the sake of comparison, the evidential */-ma/-ta/ counterpart of (i) is given in (ii):

(ii) Lithuanian Evidential */-ma/-ta/

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Juo rašoma laiškas.
he:GEN written:MA letter:NOM
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According to Ambrāz (1978:348), the two forms are used together only in the northern dialects, and especially in the northeastern corner of Lithuania. Intransitive evidential */-ma/-ta/ is used more freely, with no dialectal restrictions.
Russian and Lithuanian is a phonologically-overt lexical NP (inside of a PP in North Russian), rather than a pro-arb argument. Note that the correlation drawn in the previous chapter (section 3.3.2) between the licensing of ACC objects of participial predicates and the lack of subject-predicate agreement is independently supported by these constructions. Examples of North Russian -no/-to and Lithuanian -mal/-ta with ACC objects are given in (3-4):

(3) North Russian: -no/-to + ACC
   U bat’ki saženo berezk.
   father:GEN planted:-NO birch:ACC
   ‘Father has planted a birch.’ [K&N 1971:38]

(4) Lithuanian: -mal/-ta + ACC
   Jo su geiniu iš drevių medų kopama.
   he:GEN with stepladder from hollows honey:ACC being-taken:-MA
   ‘He apparently took the honey from the hollows of the tree with a stepladder.’
   [adapted from Ambrazas 1978:345]

These forms will be discussed only briefly in section 4.4 on case and licensing. The focus of this chapter will be on those structures that take a NOM object. This is motivated, in part, by the fact that -no/-to + NOM for North Russian is the dominant pattern (as reported by K&N 1971:30-34, table 2). In fact, in the case of transitive constructions in /-n/-t/ and /-(v)ši/ (when predicated of an u ‘at’ + GEN PP) the object appears exclusively in the NOM (K&N 1971:77, 137). The Lithuanian -mal/-ta + ACC construction is similarly marginal and is generally treated as a recent innovation under the influence of the dominant NOM-ACC pattern elsewhere in the language (Ambrazas 1978:345; Schmalstieg 1982:123). A second reason for focusing on the NOM object construction is that it presents a larger and

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6 To be sure, it has not yet been shown that the postverbal NOM argument in (1-2) is indeed an object, rather than some sort of derived (and, subsequently, extraposed) subject. These facts will be sorted out in the course of my argumentation against a passive analysis for these predicates in section 4.1. For now, let us assume the NOM-object analysis as a working hypothesis.
potentially more interesting problem with respect to current theory. This point will be taken up shortly.

Before moving beyond the most basic facts of the North Russian -no/-to + NOM construction, it is worth considering whether there are any purely morphological restrictions on its formation, such as those suggested for NOM objects elsewhere for (Old) North Russian in Timberlake 1974 and 1976. Timberlake (1974:64-67) found that the NOM object construction of nonfinite categories (infinitives and short form adverbial participles) in Old North Russian did not apply in those cases when the object was a pronoun or a masculine animate noun. These were the forms in (Old North) Russian that distinguished a special animate GEN form for ACC objects. Timberlake’s generalization was that the NOM object construction was thus subject to an “animacy constraint”. It is interesting to note in this connection that modern -no/-to + NOM is considerably more regular and applies regardless of the type of NP involved. Examples of -no/-to + NOM in violation of Timberlake’s animacy constraint are given in (5), along with a feminine consonant stem noun (plus modifier to distinguish case) for the sake of completeness:

(5) North Russian -no/-to + NOM
a. MASC-ANIMATE
   U nas vzjato ot Van’kinyx takoj ploxoj kot.
   at us:GEN taken:-TO from Vankin’s such bad cat:NOM
   ‘We have taken such a bad cat from the Vankin’s.’ [K&N 1971:35]

b. PRONOUN / MASC-ANIMATE.PL
   U babki-to vse ob‘ezženo, ne tol’ko doktora.
   at grandma:GEN everyone:NOM passed-through:-NO NEG only doctors:NOM
   ‘Grandma has visited everyone, not only doctors.’ [K&N 1971:35]

c. FEM CONS-STEM
   U menja postavljeno lošad’ bol’naja.
   at me:GEN stood:-NO horse:NOM sick
   ‘I have stood up (made to stand) the sick horse.’ [K&N 1971:35]
The North Russian and Lithuanian nonagreeing participial construction exhibits an impressive array of seemingly unrelated and typologically-anomalous properties that appear to cluster around the special predicate-final morphology and attendant tense or mood specification that we have already noted. Before proceeding, let us note each of these properties in turn, with additional examples when necessary:

(i) The GEN or $u + GEN$ constituent appears obligatorily in the preverbal position.

(ii) This preverbal oblique constituent shows subject properties typical of agreeing preverbal nominative constituents.

Here, in addition to the subject-positional property noted in (i), we may note the ability to bind reflexives and control the understood subject (PRO)$^7$ of embedded infinitival and participial clauses. Examples are given in (6-7):

(6) North Russian -no/-to: Control of Embedded Infinitive
   U babki$_i$ naverno [PRO$_i$ kosit’ ujdeno].
   at grandma:GEN probably to-mow left:-NO
   ‘Grandma has probably left to mow (hay).’ [Matveenko 1961:123]

(7) Lithuanian -ma/-ta: Binding of Reflexive
   Studento$_i$ sudeginta savo$_i$ / * jo$_i$ namos.
   student:GEN burned-down:-TA REFL his house:NOM
   ‘The student apparently burned down his (own) house.’

(iii) Lithuanian /-ma/-ta/ is in complementary distribution with overt tense-marking auxiliaries (the same does not hold for North Russian /-no/-to/).

That fact that /-ma/-ta/ and overt auxiliaries do not cooccur in Lithuanian suggests an analysis similar to the one proposed for Polish /-no/-to/; namely, that the etymologically passive participial morpheme /-ma/-ta/ has been reanalyzed as an auxiliary element. Note that the auxiliary facts in the Lithuanian -ma/-ta evidential construction may be obscured by the use of /-ma/-ta/ as a marker of default agreement for the impersonal passives of

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$^7$ It will be recalled that “PRO” is used for terminological convenience alone. Thus its use in (6), as well as in section 4.1.2.2 below, should not be taken as an affirmation of its existence. Cf. chapter 3, fn. 70.
intransitives, quirky-case-assigning verbs, and verbs with quantified-NP and infinitival complements (Ambrazas et al. 1997:278-280). This possible confusion is compounded by the fact that the bare GEN used in the -mal/-ta evidential marks the passive by-phrase as well. The crucial difference, as noted by Geniušienė (1973:49-51, 72-75), Ambrazas et al. (1997: 281-283), and others, is that the impersonal passive appears obligatorily with a tense marking auxiliary. Only the lack of an auxiliary in such structures patterns with the evidential semantics. An example is given in (8):9,10

(8) Lithuanian
   a. Impersonal Passive: Unergative Intransitive
      Ten ūns buvo bėgta.
      there dog:GEN AUX:PAST run:~[ -AGR]
      ‘By a dog had been running there.’

   b. Evidential -mal/-ta
      Ten ūns (* buvo) bėgta.
      there dog:GEN AUX:PAST run:~ TA
      ‘A dog must have run there’ [there are footmarks] [Ambrazas et al. 1997:283]

A particularly interesting case is that of the present tense, in which the tense-marking auxiliary in passives (and copular constructions) appears in overt form only optionally.

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9 We will note in the following section (4.1) that this homophonous bare GEN constituent, ambiguous between a passive by-phrase and the preverbal element of the -mal/-ta evidential, together with the l-m/-t/- morphology, common to both constructions, constitutes the basis for the analysis (or, in some cases, simply the assumption) that both constructions are Passive.

9 The reader should be warned that the judgments here between the impersonal passive in the indicative mood and the -mal/-ta evidential are subtle. The printed sources mentioned above in the text may be consulted for additional discussion.

10 Note that the auxiliary facts in the passive/evidential alternation in (8) parallel the case of the canonical indirect mood noted earlier, and its alternation with the perfect tense. Both the indirect mood and the perfect indicative are formed by combining a NOM subject with an agreeing active participle. The two constructions minimally differ by the use of a tense-marking auxiliary in the perfect construction (given in (i) below) versus its absence in the indirect mood (in (ii)):

(i) Lithuanian Perfect
   Jis ( yra) mataš si filmą.
   he:NOM AUX:PRES seen:ACT-PART.NOM.MASC this film:ACC
   ‘He has seen this film.’

(ii) Lithuanian Indirect Mood
   Jis (*yra) mataš si filmą.
   ‘(They say) he has seen this film.’
Here, the only way to distinguish an impersonal passive with a null form of `AUX: PRES` from a `-ma/-ta` evidential with no `AUX` is by means of the predicate’s semantics. We will note in section 4.1 that in the case of transitive predicates, the evidential versus indicative passive reading is also disambiguated by the position of the bare `GEN` constituent.

The final property of the North Russian and Lithuanian nonagreeing participial construction that is of special interest concerns its distribution:

(iv) North Russian `-no/-to` and Lithuanian `-ma/-ta` occur with semantically-unaccusative and reflexive verbs:

(9) North Russian `-no/-to`: REFL
    U menja bylo pobespokoeno- s'.
    at me:GEN AUX:PAST worried:-NO REFL
    ‘I had been worried.’ [K&N 1971:115]

(10) Lithuanian `-ma/-ta`: Semantic Unaccusative
    Ledo staiga ištirpta.
    ice:GEN suddenly melted:-TA
    ‘The ice suddenly melted.’

It was noted above that the passive by-phrase in Lithuanian is marked by the same bare `GEN` NP used in the `-ma/-ta` construction. In North Russian, the passive by-phrase is likewise marked by the same `u `at’ + GEN PP that appears in `-no/-to`. On the surface, then, the North Russian and Lithuanian constructions that we are considering might be nothing more than impersonal passives of some sort. An immediate problem, however, is posed by the unaccusatives in (9-10); namely, what argument is dethematized to license these “by-phrases”? Under standard accounts of unaccusativity, it would have to be an `internal` argument, which would force the stipulation of a special, anomalous type of passive just to account for these North Russian and Lithuanian constructions. Note additionally that on this type of analysis, the absence of similar passives in other languages would remain
a mystery. Furthermore, as we will see shortly, the other properties of this construction listed above, namely, the preverbal positional constraint on the GEN / u ‘at’ + GEN constituent, the subject properties that this constituent displays, and the seemingly unrelated auxiliary facts for Lithuanian -mal/-ta, would fail to receive a unified account.

The proposal that will be made in this chapter is that the North Russian -no/-to and the Lithuanian evidential -mal/-ta display properties which are typical of morphologically-ergative languages. Thus, I will argue that these predicates are basic and active, rather than derived and passive. Morphological ergativity, in contrast to the more robust syntactic ergativity, is confined to the marking of morphological case. In the most straightforward cases, the object argument of a transitive verb appears in the absolutive case (= NOM) along with the single argument of an intransitive verb, while the agent argument of a transitive verb is marked differently, by what is known as the ergative case, which is usually an oblique case that is used elsewhere in the language, most often to mark either a passive by-phrase or possession. That is, I will claim that the preverbal oblique (or PP) argument in the examples above is the ergative subject, while the NOM NP is the absolutive object. Note, additionally, that morphologically-ergative languages are all split ergatives, that is, languages in which ergativity is restricted to certain tenses, aspects, or moods (see Anderson 1976 and Trask 1979 for discussion).

The North Russian and Lithuanian data considered in this chapter are of considerable interest to current theory. They instantiate the complete de-coupling of the subject properties of NOM case, subject-predicate agreement, and the subject positional constraint known as the EPP. That is, the preverbal constituent satisfying (by hypothesis) the EPP

\[11\text{ It will be recalled that semantic unaccusatives are verbs that lack an underlying external theta role.}\]
and the lower constituent bearing NOM case clearly cannot be treated as occupying the same position, nor can either be implicated in subject-predicate agreement. In the case of the lower NOM NP, we will note the lack of a straightforward correlation between morphological case and a dedicated structural position in the syntax. In particular, the licensing of NOM objects will be shown to force the introduction of mechanisms into the syntax that are not standardly assumed in the feature-checking framework. Finally, if the proposal regarding ergativity is correct, the appearance of “ergative” marking on the subject of unaccusatives, as in (9-10), a typologically-rare phenomenon, will be shown to provide evidence for a novel licensing strategy for ergative subjects.

This chapter is organized in the following way. Section 4.1 deals with the passive analysis for North Russian and Lithuanian -no/-to / -ma/-ta. Here, a more thorough review of the basic facts is presented which argues against treating /-no/-to/ and /-ma/-ta/ as morphemes involved (obligatorily) in passivization. Section 4.2 addresses the discussion of North Russian and Lithuanian in the crosslinguistic passivization literature. In section 4.3, I take up the question of ergativity and the problem of properly placing North Russian and Lithuanian in the ergativity typology. Finally, section 4.4 deals with the formal problems of case and licensing.

4.1 The Impersonal Passive Analysis

The impersonal passive analysis for North Russian -no/-to and Lithuanian -ma/-ta is based on the passive participial morphology of the main predicate and the homophony of the preverbal oblique element with the passive by-phrase of these languages (see, for example, Timberlake 1976 (on North Russian) and Timberlake 1982 and Keenan 

Timberlake 1985 (on Lithuanian)). As we saw in chapter 3 (and noted above), under canonical passivization, which obligatorily involves the dethematization of a verb’s initial external theta role, the cooccurrence of /-no/-to/ and /-ma/-ta/ with unaccusative and reflexive verbs raises an immediate typological problem for the impersonal passive analysis. These distributional facts will be examined first, in section 4.1.1. Then we turn to a discussion of the subject properties of the preverbal oblique constituent in section 4.1.2, followed by a closer examination of the predicate-final morphology involved in this construction in section 4.1.3. On the basis of this evidence, the proposal that this nonagreeing participial construction in North Russian and Lithuanian is non-derived (i.e., non-passive) and basic will be largely substantiated.

4.1.1 The Impersonal Passive Analysis and Unaccusativity

Under the view that passivization affects an external argument, predicates lacking such an argument, such as unaccusatives and passives (the latter--derived unaccusatives), should not be passivizable, or further passivizable. This is a well-known and strong crosslinguistic generalization which derives from earlier work in the Relational Grammar framework (for example, Perlmutter 1978 and Perlmutter & Postal 1984a, 1984b). The general rule is that impersonal passives along the German model of es wurde getanzt ‘it was danced’ are formed from unergative predicates only. This is not to suggest, however, that unaccusative verb-stems and passive-participial morphology do not cooccur. Such a conclusion is immediately contradicted by the Polish and Ukrainian -no/-to facts discussed in chapter 3. Alternatively, it may be objected that the question of passivehood here is a mere terminological problem, and that the passivization of unaccusative predicates should be admitted as a theoretical possibility, following the central
assumption of Timberlake 1982 for Lithuanian -ma/-ta. It should be borne in mind, however, that broadening the possible distributional base for passivization entails the subsequent burden of explaining why the world’s languages make so little use of this broadened base. To avoid such an additional explanatory burden, let us assume the standard view of passivization, as suggested, for example, in Jaeggli 1986, and pursue the hypothesis that the North Russian and Lithuanian constructions under consideration are non-passive predicates. Additional typological motivation for this non-passive analysis is discussed in section 4.3 on split-ergativity.

Thus, under standard assumptions, (11-14) are underlying unaccusatives to which -no/-to/ and -mal/-ta/ are attached, forming the following licit non-passive structures:

(11) North Russian -no/-to: Unaccusatives
   a. Existential
      Zdes’u skotiny byto, xoženo.
      here at cattle:GEN been:-TO walked:-NO
      ‘There have been cattle here, grazing.’ [Matveenko 1961:123]
   b. Experiencer Predicate
      Oj u menja pogorevano, a tut opjat’ syna poterjala.
      oh at me:GEN grieved:-NO and here again son:ACC lost:FEM
      ‘Oh how I had grieved, and now again I lost my son.’ [Trubinskij 1984:143]

(12) North Russian -no/-to: Derived Unaccusatives
   a. U nix v ispokome otmečeno-s'.
      at them:GEN in executive-committee registered:-NO REFL
      ‘They have registered (themselves) at the executive committee.’ [K&N 1971:115]
b. Kupat'sja zoveš', a u samoj odetosja.
to-swim invite and at yourself dressed:-TOREFL
‘You are inviting me to go swimming, but you yourself have gotten dressed.’
[Matveenko 1961:122]

(13) Lithuanian -mal-ta: Unaccusatives
a. Semantic Unaccusative
Čia namo degta.
here house:GEN burned:-TA
‘Here a house burned down.’

b. Existential
Panašių atsitikimų būta ir kituose kraštuose.
similar events:GEN been:-TA and in-other areas
‘There were apparently similar events in other areas as well.’ [Geniušienė 1973:123]

(14) Lithuanian -mal-ta: Derived Unaccusatives
a. Petro at-si-kelta anksti.
Petras:GEN REFL got-up:-TA early

b. Visų keleivių iš-si-gelbėta su laivais.
all travelers:GEN REFL saved:-TA with boats
‘All the travelers were apparently saved by boats.’ [Ambrazas et al. 1985:251]

The examples in (15) show a Lithuanian -mal-ta evidential derived from a passive. Under
the impersonal passive analysis for such predicates, (15c) would be considered the
passive of a passive, in which the “final” by-phrase corresponds to an initial internal
argument, as in the examples of the other -mal-ta unaccusatives in (11-14).

(15) a. Lithuanian Active
Jos vyra paprašė ji [parašyti tą laišką].
her husband:NOM asked him:ACC to-write that letter
‘Her husband asked him to write that letter.’

b. Lithuanian Canonical Passive
Jis buvo paprašytas (jos vyro) [parašyti tą laišką].
he:NOM AUX:PAST asked:NOM.MASC her husband:GEN to-write that letter
‘He was asked (by her husband) to write that letter.’
c. Lithuanian -ma/-ta
   Jo būta (jos vyro) paprašyto [paprašyti ta laišką].
   he:GEN AUX:-TA her husband:GEN asked:GEN.MASC to-write that letter
   ‘Evidently he was asked to write that letter by her husband.’
   [Timberlake 1982:519-520]

Note that the overt auxiliary in (15b), *buvo*:AUX:PAST, is now the element that bears the
/-ma/-ta/ morphology in (15c). That is, under the passive analysis for (15c), it is an
auxiliary that is passivized, creating an even larger typological problem for the
impersonal passive analysis. Rather than passivizing on an internal argument, as in (11-
14), (15c) passivizes on no argument at all since auxiliaries have no argument structure of
their own. Furthermore, under the impersonal passive analysis, we would be forced to
admit the existence of two by-phrases: *jo* ‘he:GEN’ and *jos vyro* ‘her husband:GEN’; that
is, a by-phrase based on the suppression of both the initial external and internal
arguments of the main predicate *ask*.

It should be noted that Timberlake’s (1982) impersonal passive analysis of (15) is
designed to argue against specific aspects of Relational Grammar’s theory of
passivization. It is not meant to suggest an explicit analysis for Lithuanian -ma/-ta.

Timberlake mainly takes issue with the advancement analysis of the Passive, which
requires all instances of “demotion” to be accompanied by an “advancement” of some
sort. This is the essence of RG’s “Motivated Chomage Law” (see Perlmutter 1978). If the
subject *jis* ‘he’ in (15b) has been demoted (into a by-phrase) to yield GEN *jo* in (15c), this
is precisely an instance of a demotion with no corresponding advancement. As noted

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16 It has been noted that tense-marking auxiliaries do not cooccur with -ma/-ta predicates. In (15c) it is the
tense-marking auxiliary of the canonical passive in (15b) that itself bears the /-ma/-ta/ morphology. It is no
longer a finite auxiliary form, but rather a non-finite marker of the evidential mood. It will be suggested in
section 4.1.3 that /-ma/-ta/ heads T in Lithuanian, in the same way that /-no/-to/ does in Polish. It follows
that any auxiliary stem that is involved in Lithuanian -ma/-ta must appear with this morphology.
subsequently by many researchers in the GB framework, the advancement component of passivization is indeed problematic on various grounds (see, for example, Jaeggli 1986, Grimshaw 1990, and Babby 1993). Certainly, the case of Ukrainian -no/-to demonstrates this uncontroversially. Invoking Lithuanian -ma/-ta to argue this point is unnecessarily costly. Given the typological rarity of “passives” such as (11-14) and (15c), it makes more sense simply to consider whether there is something special about North Russian and Lithuanian -no/-to / -ma/-ta; otherwise, as mentioned earlier, we are faced with the problem of explaining why such passives do not occur in the world’s languages more regularly.

To summarize thus far, I have shown that the distribution of North Russian -no/-to and Lithuanian -ma/-ta is typologically inconsistent with a passive analysis. We now consider certain subject properties of the preverbal oblique constituent which are also anomalous under a passive analysis for these predicates.

4.1.2 Subject Properties of the (u ‘at’ +) GEN Constituent

Having shown that the preverbal constituent in the North Russian and Lithuanian constructions under discussion cannot be considered a passive by-phrase under standard assumptions of passivization, let us now pursue the possibility that these constructions are “active,” and that the preverbal constituent is a fully-thematic subject.

4.1.2.1 Word Order

It is a striking fact about the North Russian and Lithuanian construction under discussion that the underlying thematic subject appears obligatorily in the preverbal position (under neutral intonation). That is, despite its non-NOM marking and apparent “demotion” (in
RG terms), it behaves like a fully-thematic argument. Assuming that this position is the site of EPP satisfaction, then the EPP is surprisingly satisfied in this construction in the canonical way; that is, by the highest thematic argument (assuming, for this purpose, some sort of theta-hierarchy such as that proposed by Grimshaw 1990 or Pesetsky 1995). Thus, in the case of agentive transitive predicates, the oblique preverbal constituent of North Russian and Lithuanian -no/-to / -ma/-ta will correspond to the Agent, regardless of its case (see, for example, (1-2)). In unaccusative predicates, such as (11-14), the internal Theme argument is most prominent and, correspondingly, also appears preverbally. In SubjExp predicates, such as North Russian (9) and (11b), the Experiencer appears preverbally, with the same oblique marking. Where an Experiencer competes for thematic prominence with a Theme argument, the Experiencer (standardly assumed to be ranked higher than Theme) is the EPP-satisfying constituent. This is exemplified by the Lithuanian SubjExp predicate in (16):

(16) Lithuanian SubjExp Predicate
   a. Active Indicative
      Tėvai didžiuojasi savo sūnum.
      parents:NOM proud:3.PL REFL son:INST
      ‘The parents [EXP] are proud of their son [THEME].’

   b. Evidential -ma/-ta¹⁹
      Tėvų didžiuojamasi savo sūnum.
      parents:GEN proud:-MA REFL son:INST
      ‘The parents are apparently proud of their son.’

¹⁷ This subsection focuses on Lithuanian data. Word-order facts for the North Russian -no/-to construction are discussed in Petrova 1968:123-124 and Timberlake 1976:560.
¹⁸ Recall that under current theory the EPP position is not a NOM-case licensing position, nor is it (necessarily) devoted to a particular discourse function, such as topic.
¹⁹ Note that the object here, as in the passive in (16c), remains INST since the predicate is a quirky-case-assigning verb. Examples such as (16b) will be taken to indicate that the NOM object of -ma/-ta is assigned structural case (see section 4.4).
c. Impersonal Passive

\[
\text{Sùnum (yra) têvù didžiuojamasi.}
\]

\[
\text{son:INST AUX:PRES parents:GEN proud:[-AGR]}
\]

‘The son is esteemed by his parents.’

The significance of (16) is the fact that the underlying relative thematic relations are maintained in the -\text{mal}-\text{ta} form, as indicated by the neutral word order given in (16b). In the impersonal passive in (16c), the neutral word order, as expected, shows movement of the Theme argument to the sentence-initial (EPP) position.\textsuperscript{20,21} The Theme argument is now most prominent since the Experiencer is dethematized as a result of passivization. That is, in short, passivization dethematizes and, as a result, alters the relative thematic prominence of a predicate’s arguments, while in the case of evidential -\text{mal}-\text{ta}, the predicate’s initial thematic relations are maintained. Note additionally that the word order facts indicate two distinct functions for homophonous têvù ‘parents:GEN’ in (16b-c). In (16b), the GEN NP is, by hypothesis, a fully-thematic subject; in (16c) it is a passive by-phrase adjunct.

The fully-thematic status of the sentence initial GEN NP in (16b) is further supported by the interpretation of -\text{mal}-\text{ta} structures in which two GEN NPs appear in the same clause. In (17b), for example, the matrix verb paprašyti ‘ask, request’ takes a quirky GEN complement. As a result, (17b) is potentially ambiguous between an evidential -\text{mal}-\text{ta} reading with a fully-thematic GEN NP subject, and an impersonal passive reading, in which the preverbal GEN NP is interpreted as the raised quirky object of a passive verb, while the postverbal GEN NP is interpreted as a passive by-phrase. The interpretation of \[\]

\textsuperscript{20} For word-order facts of the passives of quirky-case-assigning verbs, see Ambrazas et al. 1997:278-279.

\textsuperscript{21} Following the results of chapter 3, and recent work by Marantz (1991) and Harley (1995), movement to the “subject position” in passives is not case-driven, but a pure EPP-effect. In the case of passives of quirky-case-assigning verbs, movement for case would be unmotivated.
the PRO subject of the embedded infinitival in this control structure (indicated by coindexing) disambiguates the two readings. The passive of (17a) is given in (17c):

(17) Lithuanian
a. Active Indicative

.Studentas papraše tėvo₁ [PRO₁ pirkti laikrodį].
student:NOM asked:3.SG father:GEN to-buy watch:ACC
‘The student asked his father to buy the watch.’

b. Evidential -ma/-ta

Studento paprašyta tėvo₁ [PRO₁ pirkti laikrodį].
student:GEN asked:-TA father:GEN to-buy watch:ACC
i. ‘The student apparently asked his father to buy the watch.’
ii. ??’The student was asked by his father to buy the watch.’

c. Impersonal Passive

Tėvo₁ buvo paprašyta studento [PRO₁ pirkti laikrodį].
father:GEN AUX:PAST asked:-TA student:GEN to-buy watch:ACC
‘The father was asked by the student to buy the watch.’

It is striking that the first available interpretation for (17b) (that is, (17b-i)) is the one in which it is the father who should buy the watch (as indicated by the coindexing). Under such an interpretation, the basic thematic relations of (17b-i) are the same as those in (17a). I have noted that studento ‘student:GEN’ in (17b) can also, secondarily, be construed as the raised direct object, in which case it is the student who should buy the watch as in (17b-ii) (that is, where studento ‘student:GEN’ controls the embedded PRO, rather than tėvo ‘father:GEN’, which is interpreted as the by-phrase). This second reading is degraded, however, due to the lack of a tense-marking auxiliary, which is otherwise obligatory in Lithuanian passives (see Ambrazas et al. 1997:278-281). The fact that the first available reading, (17b-i), treats the preverbal GEN NP as the thematic subject indicates that -/ma/-/tal/, in its new dedicated function, does not involve dethematization (i.e., the “suppression” of the external argument). It is only in the case of the impersonal passive in (17c), where tėvo ‘father:GEN’ is thematically most prominent and
correspondingly appears in the sentence-initial position, that the underlying Agent, the student, is actually dethematized.

Use of word order as a diagnostic for thematic status in such cases is supported by the corpus study of Lithuanian canonical (agreeing) passives reported in Geniušienė 1973. Here, on the basis of over 8000 passive constructions, a by-phrase adjunct was found to appear sentence-initially only 5% of the time. This is in sharp contrast with the homophonous GEN NP found in the -ma/-ta construction, which appears exclusively in the sentence-initial position (Geniušienė 1973:116). The frequency of each of the major word-order patterns from Geniušienė’s corpus of agreeing (transitive) passives is given in (18):

   a. Subj:NOM / by-phrase:GEN / predicate participle -- 59%
   b. Subj:NOM / predicate participle / by-phrase:GEN -- 32%
   c. by-phrase:GEN / predicate participle / Subj:NOM -- 5%

Each of these word orders is exemplified in (19a-c). Note again that the agreeing passive, in contrast to the evidential -ma/-ta, requires an overt auxiliary (or its phonologically-null variant in the case of yra:AUX:PRES) to mark tense.

(19) Lithuanian Agreeing Passive
   a. Subj:NOM / by-phrase:GEN / predicate participle
      Mergaitės buvo tévo kviestos.
      girls:NOM,FEM,PL AUX:PAST father:GEN invited:NOM,FEM,PL
      ‘The girls were invited by their father.’ [Ambrazas et al. 1997:277]

   b. Subj:NOM / predicate participle / by-phrase:GEN
      Klaidos buvo ištaisytos mokytojo.
      mistakes:NOM,FEM,PL AUX:PAST corrected:NOM,FEM,PL teacher:GEN
      ‘The mistakes were corrected by the teacher.’ [Geniušienė 1973:78]

---

22 Geniušienė (1973:113) distinguishes the three word-order options on the basis of focus structure. The option in (18c) is encountered so infrequently due to the possibility of a finite inversion structure in this "free word-order" language.
Recall that on the impersonal passive analysis for Lithuanian -ma/-ta, the obligatory sentence-initial GEN NP is interpreted as a by-phrase, which is licensed, under the usual circumstances, by the dethematization of an underlying Agent. Given the word-order facts in (18), it remains a mystery, on such an analysis, why the position of this by-phrase violates the standard attested word order (given in (18)) only when it patterns with nonagreeing /-ma/-ta/. There is no obvious reason why nonagreement should have such an effect on the word order. We have seen in (16c) and (17c) that default agreement (= [-AGR]) in the case of the passivization of quirky-case-assigning verbs conforms to the standard word-order pattern of Lithuanian agreeing passives: the underlying object raises to the sentence-initial position. In fact, the word-order difference between the passives of quirkily-marked objects in (16c) and (17c) versus their evidential counterparts in (16b) and (17b) forces the distinction assumed thus far between default agreement (in the case of the former) and systematic nonagreement (for the latter). We have seen that the difference in the underlying syntax between passive participles in Lithuanian with default morphology and /-ma/-ta/ is further reflected in auxiliary facts. It has been suggested in this subsection that the apparent anomalous word order in the evidential -ma/-ta construction is a result of the fact that /-ma/-ta/ is not involved in dethematization. The sentence-initial GEN NP is fully-thematic and, therefore, occupies the initial position as a result of its thematic prominence. This predicts that the GEN NP
(or the *u ‘at’ + GEN PP in North Russian -no/-to) should behave like a fully-thematic subject in other respects, as well. We now turn to a discussion of various standard subject diagnostics to test whether this prediction is borne out.

4.1.2.2 Binding and Control

In a pre-theoretical, descriptive sense, the binding of reflexives identifies “subjects”. In (20a-b) we see that the North Russian preverbal PP constituent binds the subject-oriented REFLEX svoj ‘one’s own’, in contrast to the by-phrase (marked by the INST) in the Standard Russian example in (20c), which cooccurs with non-REFLEX *ego ‘him’. Note in (20d) that in Standard Russian passives it is the derived subject that controls the anaphor. The North Russian preverbal PP thus patterns with the derived subject in (20d), rather than with the dethematized subject in (20c):23

(20) North Russian: Control of REFLEX svoj
   a. -no/-to
      U Šurki privedeno svoja staraja nevesta.
         at Šurka:GEN brought:-NO REFLEX old bride:NOM
      ‘Šurka has brought his old bride.’ [K&N 1971:35; Timberlake 1976:559]

   b. -no/-to
      A u menja svoj, rebenok byl vzjato v Slancy.24
         and at me:GEN REFLEX child:NOMAUX:PAST taken:-TO to Slancy
      ‘And I have taken my son to Slancy.’ [K&N 1971:36; Timberlake 1976:559]

   c. Standard Russian: Canonical Passive
      Šurkoj byla privedena *svoja/ *ego nevesta.
      Šurka:INST AUX:PAST:FEM brought:FEM REFLEX his bride:NOM:FEM
      ‘By Šurka was brought his bride.’

   d. Standard Russian: Canonical Passive
      Otec, byl zabyt svoimi/ *ego det’mi.
      ‘The father was forgotten by his own children.’ [Timberlake 1976:558]

23 These facts were first discussed in Timberlake 1976.
24 Note in (20b) that the auxiliary agrees with the NOM object. According to Timberlake (1976:559), this partial agreement marks an historically transitional form in the development of North Russian -no/-to.
Similar facts are found in Lithuanian. Here, as in Standard Russian, a preposed passive by-phrase does not felicitously bind a reflexive in a lower NOM NP. This is shown in (21b), the agreeing passive of (21a). The facts for the canonical passive by-phrase contrast neatly with the homophonous preverbal GEN NP of the -ma/-ta construction in (21c), in which the lower reflexive is indeed bound by the preverbal oblique constituent (cf. also (16b)). Again, under an impersonal passive analysis for -ma/-ta, it is not clear how this difference in the status of the preverbal GEN NP in (21b-c) can be explained.

(21) Lithuanian: Control of REFL savo
a. Active Indicative
Jonas sudegino savo namą.
Jonas:NOM burned-down REFL house:ACC
‘Jonas burned down his (own) house.’

b. Canonical Passive
Jono buvo sudegintas ?savoj jojij namas.
Jonas:GEN AUX:PAST burnt-down:NOM.MASC.SG REFL his house:NOM.MASC.SG
‘By Jonas was burnt down his house.’

c. Evidential -ma/-ta
Jono sudeginta savoj jojij namas.
Jonas:GEN burnt-down:-TA REFL his house:NOM
‘Jonas apparently burned down his house.’

(22) Lithuanian: Control of REFL savo
a. Active Indicative
Mokytojas ištaisė savo klaidas.
teacher:NOM corrected REFL mistakes:ACC
‘The teacher corrected his (own) mistakes.’

b. Canonical Passive
Mokytoj buvo ištaisytos ?savoj jojij klaidos.
teacher:GEN AUX:PAST corrected:NOM.FEM.PL REFL his mistakes:NOM.FEM.PL
‘By the teacher was corrected his mistakes.’

25 For the purposes of providing a c-commanding antecedent for the REFL, the infrequent by-phrase-initial word order given in (18c) is used here.
c. Evidential -ma/-ta
Mokytojų istoriškia savo / jo jį klaidos.
teacher:GEN corrected:-TA REFL his mistakes:NOM
‘The teacher apparently corrected his own mistakes.’

I will not dwell on the fact that the preverbal GEN NP in the (c) examples in (21-22) can bind the reflexive. This alone does not distinguish the preverbal GEN NP of the -ma/-ta construction since it is well-known that a passive by-phrase (or perhaps the external theta-role alone, in the sense of Williams 1987) can also bind anaphors and, in fact, generally competes with derived subjects in passives for role of controller, subject to various word-order and pragmatic constraints (see Klenin 1974, Timberlake 1980, Babby & Franks 1998, and sources cited therein). What is interesting here is that under coreference, only REFL savo is used with the -ma/-ta form, whereas in the agreeing passive forms in the (b) examples in (21-22) the possessive pronoun jo ‘his’ can also be used (with no apparent violation of Binding Condition B), while REFL savo is, in fact, slightly degraded. This strongly suggests that the preverbal GEN NP in the case of -ma/-ta is syntactically more “subject-like” (in a sense to be made more precise below) than its homophonous counterpart in agreeing passives.

The GEN NP of Lithuanian -ma/-ta exhibits similar subject behavior in its ability to control the understood subject of embedded adverbial participles (gerunds). Lithuanian gerunds come in two varieties: (i) an agreeing form, typically used under identity of the matrix and embedded subjects (i.e., the relation that was formerly expressed in terms of “equi-NP deletion”); and (ii) a fixed, nonagreeing form, used when the subject of the embedded gerund is distinct from that of the matrix verb. In present terms, the former is a

26 In the case of North Russian -no/-to, where I am relying exclusively on printed sources, I have found no examples of control into an embedded gerund. It is assumed, however, that North Russian patterns here in the relevant respects with Lithuanian.
case of obligatory subject control and, thus, is a diagnostic for a subject controller. In the latter case, the gerund’s overt subject appears in the DAT, in a vestigial absolute construction. An example of the agreeing gerund is given in (23a); its nonagreeing counterpart is given in (23b):

(23) Lithuanian: Gerunds
   a. Agreeing Gerund (= Control)
      Vaikai, dainavo [PRO, grįždami namo].
      children:NOM.MASC.PL sang:3.PL returning:NOM.MASC.PL home
      ‘The children sang while returning home.’

   b. Nonagreeing Gerund
      Vaikams grįžtant, prapydo lakštingala.
      ‘When the children were returning, a nightingale burst into song.’
      [Ambrazas et al. 1997:363]

Note that when the gerund is embedded in the evidential -ma/-ta construction, as in (24-25), the gerund optionally surfaces in a form agreeing in case, number, and gender with -ma/-ta’s preverbal GEN NP. That is, the word-final morphology on the gerund indicates control by the matrix NP with which it agrees. This shows that the GEN NP is felt to be a subject in some way that the NOM object (in (24)) is not. That is, if the understood subject of the matrix verb was the underlying object, which must be the case under the passive analysis for -ma/-ta, then the understood subject of the gerund would indeed be distinct and, consequently, require the default nonagreeing form (as in (23b)), which is not the case.

(24) Lithuanian -ma/-ta: Control of Embedded Gerund\(^{27}\)
    Žmonių, skaityta ši knyga [PRO\(_{DAT}\) sėdint / PRO\(_{sedinčių}\) prie židinio],
    by fireplace
    ‘People apparently read this book sitting by the fireplace.’

\(^{27}\) Timberlake (1982:514) reports that the agreeing gerundive form in examples such as (24-25) is slightly degraded. My informants find both forms equally acceptable.
(25) Lithuanian  
\[
\text{Čia } \text{jono}_{1} \text{ būta, prieš } [\text{PRO}_{\text{DAT}} \text{išeinant } / \text{PRO}_{i} \text{ezėinčio].}
\]

here Jonas:GEN.MASC.SG been:-TABefore leaving: [-AGR]
\[
\text{leaving:GEN.MASC}
\]

‘Jonas was apparently here before leaving.’ [Timberlake 1982:514]

As for control of the understood subject of embedded infinitivals, an example for
North Russian was given in (6). A similar example is repeated below in (26):

(26) North Russian  
\[
\text{U ejį [ v Leningrad PRO}_{i} \text{ postupat’] uexano.}
\]

at her:GEN to Leningrad to-enroll left:-NO

‘She has gone off to Leningrad to enroll.’ [K&N 1971:200; Timberlake 1976:556]

Subject control on the part of the preverbal oblique constituent in Lithuanian  

\[\text{-ma/-ta} \text{ is equally straightforward. An example is given in (27):} \]

(27) Lithuanian  
\[
\text{Jonas:GEN žadėta Jonukui [PRO}_{i} \text{ ateiti].}
\]

Jonas:GEN promised:-TA Jonukas:DAT to-come

‘Jonas (apparently) promised Jonukas to come.’

To be sure, control of embedded infinitivals does not fully distinguish the preverbal oblique constituent of  

\[\text{-no/-to} \text{ and } \text{-ma/-ta} \text{ from the by-phrase of the agreeing passive. It is usually the case that the passive by-phrase (or the suppressed theta role that licenses it) exhibits the same control properties (as was mentioned above for the control of anaphors).}^{28} \]

The examples in (26-27) are given, then, for the sake of completeness in our
more general discussion of binding and control. In light of the argument being developed that the preverbal oblique (or PP) constituent in these constructions is a fully-thematic subject in an ergative construction, it would be a problem if control in (26-27) were not straightforwardly instantiated.

\[\text{Note also instances of logophoric control discussed in Williams 1994:85-97.}\]
4.1.2.3 Raising

Raising is standardly assumed to single out subjects that originate (or Merge) in a position in which case cannot be assigned. The subject of a lower caseless predicate is believed to move to a non-theta position in which case is available. The Lithuanian -ma/-ta construction shows that the subject of raising predicates is not limited to NOM NPs. Instead, raising appears to be EPP-motivated, as we will see shortly. Examples include the canonical raising predicate seem in (28) and the copular constructions in (29a-c):

(28) Lithuanian -ma/-ta: Raising Predicate
Jo pasirodyta didvyrio.
he:GEN seemed:-TA hero:GEN
‘He seemed (to be) a hero.’ [Schmalstieg 1988:185]

(29) Lithuanian -ma/-ta: Copular Predicate
a. Jo tévo būta medžiotoj.
his father:GEN been:-TA hunter:GEN
‘(I heard) his father was a hunter.’

b. Jo tebesama gyvo.
he:GEN being:-MA alive:GEN
‘(They say) he is still alive.’

c. Pušų būta stirų.
pinetrees:GEN been:-TA thick:GEN
‘The pinetrees were apparently thick.’
[Ambrazas et al. 1997:283]

The crucial question of structure here is how to account for the GEN marking on the predicate adjective or noun. As we see in (30) below the “raised” constituent initially merges in a small clause structure with the main predicate word. The predicate’s theta role is discharged, but no case is assigned (checked). Next, the -ma/-ta participle is merged, which assigns quirky GEN to the entire small clause (under the hypothesis that
checking relations are established by all instances of concatenation, and the assumption that features percolate to the maximal projection). It follows that the subsequent raising of the preverbal GEN constituent cannot be for case purposes, in contrast to standard instances of raising, in which a caseless subject raises to be licensed by Tense. In (30), Tense is headed by the non-finite, quirky-case-assigning raising/copular verb. Note that this structure is abbreviated; the goal is to avoid positing more movements than are required to describe the basic facts.

(30) Derivation of Raising Predicate (cf. (28-29))

Note the problem that the examples in (28-29) present for a passive analysis of Lithuanian -ma/-ta. Raising and copular verbs lack argument structure; this is what allows raising in the more usual sense for case, and this is precisely what disallows passivization of such verbs crosslinguistically (cf. the discussion of the passivization of auxiliary verbs in section 4.1.1). Passivization, as a voice-altering operation, is uncontroversially involved in the rearrangement of a predicate’s argument structure. In the case of (28-29), the passive analysis would have to hold that /-ma/-ta/, as a passive morpheme, is involved in the rearrangement of arguments of a predicate to which it is not itself affixed.

29 Details of case assignment are discussed in section 4.4.
4.1.2.4 Across-the-Board Extraction and Parallelism

In the VP-conjunction structure in North Russian (31), the NOM subjects of the lower predicates are deleted under identity with the u ‘at’ + GEN constituent of the first conjunct. Note that subject ellipsis here appears to be sensitive to a notion of subjecthood that crucially does not rely on morphological case. (Note in (31) that the NOM gaps are indicated by boldface e).

(31) North Russian -no/-to: Subject Ellipsis

U ego vybežano na bereg, da e napilsja vody, da v les at him run-out:-NO to bank and had-his-fill water:GEN and into woods i e ušel.
PRT left

‘He ran out onto the bank, had his fill of water, and went off into the woods.’

[Šapiro 1953:143; Timberlake 1976:561]

The example in (32) shows that a passive by-phrase and an elided NOM subject cannot be conjoined in the same way in Standard Russian (where the by-phrase appears in the INST):

(32) Standard Russian

??? Im byla pročitana kniga i ušel domoj.

him:INST read:FEM.SG book:NOM,FEM.SG and left home

‘By him the book was read and went home.’

Across-the-board (ATB) constructions involve syntactic processes, such as ellipsis, that apply across conjoined phrases under some notion of parallelism. The example of ATB extraction in (31) is interesting because the PP “subject” of the first conjunct binds the NOM gaps of the subsequent finite conjunct clauses below it. This will be taken as evidence that the lack of parallelism in morphological case is “overridden” by a parallelism in grammatical function (or, in thematic prominence, in the sense of Franks 1995:64-77). That is, the parallelism that licenses the ATB extraction in (31) refers to a
notion of abstract logical subjecthood, rather than morphological identity (see Dyła 1984). Under Franks’s proposal that the relevant parallelism constraint refers to thematic prominence, (31) can be taken as evidence for the fully-thematic status of the preverbal PP constituent.30

Timberlake (1976:561) points out similar instances of parallelism (not involving ATB extraction) between the North Russian *u* ‘at’ + *GEN* constituent and canonical *NOM* subjects of finite clauses. These are given in (33):

(33) North Russian

a. Žili dva brata. U onnovo bylo ženjanos’,
   lived two brothers at one:*GEN AUX:PAST married:*NO and
   drugoj byl xolostoj.
   the-other:*NOM MASC.SGAUX:PAST MASC.SG bachelor
   ‘There lived two brothers. One got married and the other was a bachelor.’

b. U menja zabyto, a Stepanida pomnit.
   at me:*GEN forgotten:*TO but Stepanida:*NOM remembers
   ‘I have forgotten, but Stepanida remembers.’

Evidence against treating the *NOM* object as a derived, nonagreeing subject of a passive construction is provided in (34), where the elided (*u* ‘at’ + *GEN*) subject of the second conjunct is bound by the elided (*u* ‘at’ + *GEN*) subject of the first conjunct, rather than by the overt *NOM* argument:

(34) North Russian

   e pečka zatopleno i e ujdeno.
   stove:*NOM lit:*NO and left:*NO
   (i) ‘They lit the stove and left.’
   (ii) *’The stove was lit and left.’ [K&N 1971:29]

To summarize, based on evidence ranging from word-order facts and binding and control phenomena, to raising and subject-ellipsis constructions, the preverbal oblique constituent in North Russian and Lithuanian *-no/-to/-ma-ta* has been shown to pattern

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30 Similar examples for Lithuanian *-ma/-ta* are not available presumably due to a pragmatic constraint
more regularly with canonical agreeing NOM subjects than with the by-phrase adjuncts of passives. The following section examines some morphological facts that further undermine the impersonal passive analysis.

4.1.3 The Impersonal Passive Analysis and Non-Passive-Participial Morphology

It was noted earlier that North Russian -no/-to occurs in some dialects with active participial morphology. Schmalstieg (1982) notes that the Lithuanian -ma/-ta construction is likewise not limited to passive-participial morphology and also occurs with a form of the (etymological) past active participle. Examples from North Russian and Lithuanian are given in (35-36), respectively. Such examples are taken as further evidence against treating the preverbal oblique constituent as a passive by-phrase.\(^{31}\)

(35) North Russian: -(v)ši
   a. (= (1c))
       Ù menja už korova podoivši.
       at me:GEN already cow:NOM milked:-(v)ši
       ‘I have already milked the cow.’ [Filin 1969:72]
   b. Ù tebjà truba zakryvši?
      at you:GEN flue:NOM closed:-(v)ši
      ‘Have you closed the flue?’ [K&N 1971:140]
   c. Rož’ gorit - naverno, u nemcev zažžovši.
      rye:NOM is-burning probably at Germans:GEN set-on-fire:-(v)ši
      ‘The rye is burning; probably the Germans set it on fire.’ [K&N 1971:140]

(36) Lithuanian: -ė\(^{32}\)
   a. Čia grybų buvę.
      here mushrooms:GEN being: -ė
      ‘There were (apparently?) mushrooms here.’

\(^{31}\) The North Russian form in -(v)ši originally marked the FEM.SG past active participle. Lithuanian -ė functions elsewhere as a productive form of the past active participle, where it marks the MASC.PL.

\(^{32}\) It is unclear if the forms in (36) truly carry the evidential semantics. Regardless, under any interpretation, the preverbal GEN constituent in (36a) cannot be treated as a by-phrase given the lack of passive-participial morphology.
b. Pasnige.
   snowed: -צ
   ‘It (apparently?) snowed.’

Next, we turn to the status of the /-no/-to/ and /-ma/-ta/ morphemes themselves. It will be recalled from chapter 3 (section 3.1.1) that Standard Russian, in contrast to Polish and Ukrainian, continues to use NEUT.SG /-o/ for adjectives and participles in the predicative position. The replacement of NEUT.SG /-o/ by /-e/ in Polish and Ukrainian (i.e., the use of long form participles in predicative position) was argued to have resulted in the isolation of short form /-o/ and its subsequent “availability” for a new dedicated function. It is interesting to note in this connection that certain North Russian and western Central Russian dialects follow Polish and Ukrainian, and not Standard Russian, in their predicative use of long form adjectives and participles (see, for example, K&N 1971:284-294, Meščerskij 1972:217-218, and Trubinskij 1984:92-94). To be sure, the North and Central Russian dialects are quite varied and we certainly cannot speak of a single pattern in this respect, but the reported use of long form predicative participles in these dialects suggests that the short form endings are isolated in some sense here as well, at least with respect to the standard language and, thus, may also be available for a new dedicated function.\footnote{Most instances of long form participles used predicatively are MASC.SG (i.e., /-nyj/-tyj/), which may certainly be argued to have led to the isolation of /-n/-t/ (cf. (1b)). In fact, Meščerskij (1972:217) notes that the use of predicative long form MASC.SG /-nyj/-tyj/ is most widespread precisely in the area where short form MASC.SG /-n/-t/ is the standard /-no/-to allomorph. The extent to which this development affects /-no/-to/ itself is unclear from the printed sources and the reader is therefore warned that any conclusions here can only be tentative.} Examples of North and Central Russian use of long form (LF) participles (and adjectives) in the predicative position are given in (37):

(37) North Russian: Long Form Predicative Participles
   a. Komu ključ dadenij?
      whom:DAT key:NOM.MASC given:MASC.LF

   33
‘To whom was given the key?’ [K&N 1971:286]

b. Belyj xleb byl včeras’ privezenyj.
white bread:NOM.MASC AUX:PAST.MASC yesterday brought:MASC.LF
‘White bread was delivered yesterday.’ [Meščerskij 1972:217]

c. Davno už èto zabytoe.
long-ago already this:NOM.NEUT forgotten:NEUT.LF
‘This has long ago been forgotten.’ [K&N 1971:286]

d. Ty sama vinovatajš.
you:NOM.FEM yourself guilty:FEM.LF
‘You yourself are guilty.’ [Meščerskij 1972:237]

As for Lithuanian -ma/-ta, recall that the etymologically NEUT.SG morpheme /-a/ can be considered isolated purely by virtue of the fact that the language no longer contains any NEUT nouns with which it can agree. The fact that Lithuanian /-mal/-ta/ in the evidential construction does not appear to cooccur with tense-marking auxiliaries indicates that this morpheme might have an additional special property distinguishing it from other passive morphemes built on the /-m-/t-/ stem. That is, the AUX HYPOTHESIS for Polish /-no/-to/ appears to hold for Lithuanian /-mal/-ta/ as well. Treating /-mal/-ta/ as an auxiliary element predicts that -ma/-ta formation should hold of any predicate type, a fact which has been borne out thus far, and further distinguishes -ma/-ta from passivization, where use of a tense-marking auxiliary in Lithuanian is obligatory (although AUX:PRES yra may optionally appear phonologically null). Compare, for example, the evidential -mal/-ta constructions given earlier in (2), repeated below in (38), with their canonical passive counterparts given in (39) (see also (8)). Note that the use of an auxiliary in (39) patterns with agreement morphology on the participle and the “promotion” of the underlying direct object:
(38) Lithuanian Evidential -ma/-ta

a. Girdėjau, jo (* yra) mieste namas statoma.
   I-heard he:GEN AUX:PRES in-city house:NOM,MASC being-built:-MA
   ‘I heard he is building a house in town.’ [Ambrazas et al. 1997:281]

b. -ta
   Gal Jonuko (* buvo) tie grybai atnešta.
   maybe Jonukas:GEN AUX:PAST these mushrooms:NOM,PL brought:-TA
   ‘Maybe Jonukas brought these mushrooms.’ [Ambrazas et al. 1997:281]

(39) Lithuanian Canonical Passive (cf. (38a-b))

a. Namas yra (jo) statomas mieste.
   house:NOM,MASC,SG AUX:PRES he:GEN being-built:MASC,SG in-city
   ‘The house is being built by him in the city.’

b. Tie grybai buvo atnešti Jonuko.
   These mushrooms:NOM,MASC,PL AUX:PAST brought:MASC,PL Jonukas:GEN
   ‘These mushrooms were brought by Jonukas.’

The difference in word order between (38) and (39) now receives a straightforward explanation under the AUX HYPOTHESIS for Lithuanian /-ma/-ta/. It has been argued that the GEN NPs appear obligatorily in the preverbal position (under neutral intonation) because they are fully thematic. The lack of dethematization is, in fact, forced by the AUX HYPOTHESIS: the participial predicates in (38) contain no passive morpheme. The /-ma/-ta/ morpheme is base generated, perhaps “abstractly”, in the head of T. That is, the mental representation that the Lithuanian speaker assigns to this structure generates the /-ma/-ta/ morpheme in the Infl system, a fact which accounts for the non-passive-like distribution (and word order) of the -ma/-ta construction. As we will see in section 4.4, the fact that the verb-stem does not raise overtly to T to “pick up” /-ma/-ta/ is a natural consequence of the gradual nature of reanalysis.

34 Note that the auxiliaries in (38) are starred only under the evidential meaning. Ambrazas et al. (1997:277, 281) report that use of the auxiliary in nonagreeng passive-participial constructions is possible in some dialects of Lithuanian, but that the evidential meaning with the overt auxiliary is either weakened significantly or lost.
It should be noted that the same evidence in favor of the AUX HYPOTHESIS for Lithuanian /-ma/-ta/ (summarized below in (40)) applies to North Russian /-no/-to/ as well, with one single and obvious exception: /-no/-to/ does cooccur with overt auxiliaries. This may rule out for North Russian /-no/-to/ the AUX HYPOTHESIS per se, but leaves open the possibility that North Russian /-no/-to/ is also base-generated, again, perhaps “abstractly”, in a higher functional head. This would have the effect of removing this morpheme from the passive-participial paradigm and, as a consequence, would account for the same range of facts that the AUX HYPOTHESIS does for Lithuanian /-ma/-ta/. These ideas will be further elaborated in section 4.4. For now, let us merely note that both /-no/-to/ and /-ma/-ta/ are isolated, in some sense, morphologically and exhibit syntactic properties distinct from their agreeing counterparts.

4.1.4 Summary of Section 4.1

The table in (40) reviews the evidence against an impersonal passive analysis for North Russian /-no/-to/ and Lithuanian /-ma/-ta/.

(40) Summary of Section 4.135

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>North Russian</th>
<th>Lithuanian</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>-no/-to</td>
<td>/-ma/-ta</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>a. Semantic Unaccusatives (4.1.1)</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>b. Reflexives (4.1.1)</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>c. Preverbal Oblique NP (PP) (4.1.2.1)</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>d. Binding Reflexives (4.1.2.2)</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>e. Control Subj of Gerunds (4.1.2.2)</td>
<td></td>
<td>+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>f. Control Subj of Infinitives (4.1.2.2)</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>g. Raising (4.1.2.3)</td>
<td></td>
<td>+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>h. Parallelism Effects (4.1.2.4)</td>
<td>+</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>i. Active Participle Allomorphs (4.1.3)</td>
<td>+</td>
<td>(+)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>j. Isolated /-o/ and /-a/ (4.1.3)</td>
<td>(+)</td>
<td>+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>k. /-no/-to/ and /-ma/-ta/ as AUX (4.1.3)</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>+</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

35 Where information is not available for one of the languages, the appropriate cell in (40) is left blank. Parentheses indicate inconclusive results.
Note that this evidence ranges from the distributional facts of \textit{-no/-to / -ma/-ta} formation in (a-b) and the subject properties of the (\textit{u `at’ +}) GEN NP in (c-h), to certain properties of the predicate-final morphology in (i-k).

Thus, we see in (40) that the argument against an impersonal passive analysis for North Russian \textit{-no/-to} and Lithuanian \textit{-ma/-ta} is based on a wide range of predicate-types and syntactic phenomena. Before considering the alternative, ergative analysis for these constructions, let us briefly review some recent proposals which make mention of this North Russian and Lithuanian construction in the broader passivization literature.

\textbf{4.2 North Russian, Lithuanian, and the Crosslinguistic Passivization Literature}

We now return to the passivization literature discussed in chapter 3 (section 3.3.1). In addition to Polish and Ukrainian \textit{-no/-to}, researchers interested in a universal characterization of the Passive have also sought to include North Russian and Lithuanian in their empirical scope. The main preoccupation with North Russian and Lithuanian involves the exotic “passive” of unaccusative and reflexive verbs. The central question here is whether the explanations posited for this phenomenon merely invoke special machinery and parameters specific to this construction, or whether these explanations lead to genuine insights that account for the other properties of North Russian and Lithuanian nonagreeing participial predicates as well (that is, those summarized in (40)).

\textbf{4.2.1 The Passive-Morpheme-as-Argument Analysis}

We begin with a discussion of Baker 1988, Baker, Johnson & Roberts 1989 (BJ&R), and Boeckx 1998. The leading idea of these analyses for canonical passives is that the verb’s \textbf{external} theta role and \textbf{internal} case (\textit{ACC}) are assigned to a single argument, the passive
affix (or, in the case of Boeckx 1998, to a covert pro subject licensed by a feature of the passive affix). The passive affix (or covert pro) is a full-fledged nominal argument that requires both a theta role and case for PF-Visibility. This has the immediate effect of accounting for the usual suppression of the external theta role and the absorption of ACC case in canonical passives without making reference to a specific rule of Passive formation. Thus, on the passive-morpheme-as-argument analysis, it is not that the verb’s external theta role and internal case mysteriously fail to be assigned under passivization; they are just not assigned to a lexical NP. The immediate result is that the underlying object is assigned a theta role, but lacks case, while the underlying subject is dethematized (i.e., not assigned a theta role), creating a non-thematic cased position into which the object can move.

One of the virtues of this approach is that it leads to a principled explanation for the failure of unaccusative verbs to undergo passivization. If the verb has no external theta role to assign, then the passive morpheme will be in violation of the Theta-Criterion. The question is how to account for languages, such as North Russian and Lithuanian, which appear exceptionally to permit the passivization of unaccusatives. Relevant examples were discussed in section 4.1.1. Additional examples of apparent passives of unaccusatives are given below in (41-42):

(41) North Russian -no/-to: Derived Unaccusative
Vo kak u menja udareno- s’.
PRT how at me:GEN struck:-NO REFLECTIVE
‘Oh, how I was struck.’ [Meščerskij 1972:221]

36 The details of these analyses will not be repeated here. See chapter 3, sections 3.3.1.1 and 3.3.1.2, for more extensive discussion.
37 The Theta-Criterion states that each (and every) argument must bear one and only one theta role, and that each (and every) theta role must be assigned to one and only one argument (Chomsky 1981:36).
Lithuanian -ma/-ta: Semantic Unaccusative

Bombos sprogta nakti.
bomb:GEN exploded:-TA at-night
‘A bomb exploded at night.’

Note that the apparent by-phrases in (41-42) represent initial internal (Theme) arguments. Possible ways of admitting such passives on the passive-morpheme-as-argument analysis involve either (i) parameterizing the Theta-Criterion (permitting the passive morpheme to remain non-theta-marked in such structures); or (ii) parameterizing the site of generation of the passive morpheme (with the effect of allowing the passive morpheme to be assigned the verb’s internal theta role). (Note that the passive morpheme is normally generated in a position in which it can only be assigned the verb’s external theta role (under Inf for Baker 1988 and BJ&R, and in light v for Boeckx 1998)). Clearly, parameterizing the Theta-Criterion for the purposes of accounting for a single construction is completely unprincipled. It is the second option that is pursued, in one form or another, by Baker 1988, BJ&R, and Boeckx 1998. This type of solution is formalized in Baker 1988 (331-332) and BJ&R (232) in the Passive-Morpheme Category Parameter given in chapter 3 as (77), and repeated below in (43):

(43) Passive-Morpheme Category Parameter
   a. The passive morpheme is an Inf element (English, Dutch, German…)
   b. The passive morpheme is an N element (North Russian/Lithuanian??)

The basic idea is that, as a N(ominal) element, the passive morpheme in North Russian and Lithuanian is free to be generated in any position, including the VP-internal object position, with the result of dethematizing the object (rather than the subject). It was noted

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38 Under Boeckx’s (1998) analysis, pro, the implicit external argument in passive constructions, is parameterized to be potentially generated VP-internally (following Baker 1988 and BJ&R) to be assigned (= absorb) the verb’s internal theta role, with the result of admitting the passivization of unaccusatives. The pro argument, which requires case for visibility, is assumed to receive NOM from T(ense) in such constructions (see Boeckx 1998:303-307).
in chapter 3 that, on the surface, this appears to be nothing more than a parameterization of theta-absorption (i.e., which theta role gets absorbed by the passive morpheme). The parametric choice in (43) is conceptually unappealing since it merely replaces the descriptive notion of “absorption” with a theory-internal formal mechanism that is not independently motivated elsewhere for North Russian and Lithuanian passives. What, for example, prevents the dethematization of an internal argument (under (43b)) in a transitive -mal/-ta structure, such as Lithuanian (44b) from the active in (44a) below?

The antipassive-like -mal/-ta form in (44b) is falsely predicted to optionally occur (with the reading indicated by the English gloss). That is, it is not obvious how the option to passivize on the direct object can be regulated to operate only as a last resort mechanism in the case of unaccusatives.

(44) Lithuanian -mal/-ta
a. Active Indicative
   Tėvas kviečia svečius.
   father:NOM invites guests:ACC
   ‘Father is inviting guests.’

b. Evidential -mal/-ta
   *Tėvas svečių kviečiama.
   father:NOM guests:GEN being-invited:-MA
   ‘Father is apparently inviting by the guests.’

Thus, if we assume the passive analysis for Lithuanian -mal/-ta (and North Russian -no/-to) following Baker 1988 and BJ&R, it appears that in the case of transitives, the N-element passive morpheme must obligatorily be assigned the external theta role, as in the grammatical (44c):

c. Evidential -mal/-ta
   Tėvo kviečiama svečiai.
   father:GEN being-invited:-MA guests:NOM
   ‘Father is apparently inviting guests.’
Note, additionally, that the same is true in the case of canonical agreeing passives, such as (44d):

d. Canonical Passive

Svečiai yra (tėvo) kviečiami.
guests:NOM.MASC.PL AUX:PRES father:GEN being-invited:MASC.PL
‘Guests are being invited by father.’

The result is that the parametric choice in (43b) accounts for the surface syntax of the unaccusative examples from North Russian and Lithuanian in (41-42), but overgenerates the range of “passivization” facts for the transitive Lithuanian predicate in (44). Correction of this overgeneration would require an extra-syntactic filter with the sole purpose being to exclude the dethematization of the “wrong” argument.

It may also be noted from the examples in (44) that a parameter designed merely to dethematize the correct argument fails to make any predictions regarding the word-order differences between the -ma/-ta example in (44c) and the canonical passive in (44d). In both of these cases, as we have seen, the passive morpheme (or pro) argument is assigned the verb’s external theta role. However, in the -ma/-ta form in (44c) the underlying subject appears obligatorily in the sentence-initial position, while in the canonical (agreeing) passive in (44d) the basic word-order pattern has the underlying object in this position instead (cf. (18)). We have also noted a divergent set of “implicit subject properties” (section 4.1.2.2) between the -ma/-ta and agreeing forms. Under the analysis that the verb’s external theta role is assigned to the passive argument in both cases, and that it is precisely the presence of this quasi-argument (or pro, for Boeckx) that is responsible for such subject properties (see, e.g., Baker 1988:316-318), the differences we have seen with respect to binding and control phenomena are unexpected. That is, we
would not expect such differences to follow from the mere presence or absence of subject-predicate agreement.

Finally, the North Russian and Lithuanian predicates under consideration pose a problem internal to the frameworks of both Baker 1988/BJ&R and Boeckx 1998 regarding the assignment of case to the passive morpheme (or pro subject). Under the pattern of canonical passivization, in which the passive morpheme (or pro subject) is assigned the combination of the verb’s external theta role and internal (ACC) case, movement of the object NP follows as a natural result of the independent PF-Visibility requirement stating that all theta-marked arguments receive abstract case (Chomsky 1986). Since the verb’s external theta role in such cases is assigned to the passive morpheme rather than to the underlying subject, the subject position is non-theta-marked and, as such, is an available site for movement. This type of analysis predicts the word order and case-marking for canonical agreeing passives, such as Lithuanian (44d). However, the requirement that the passive morpheme receive case appears to unnecessarily complicate the analysis of the transitive and unaccusative -ma/-ta (-no/-to) forms. In the Lithuanian transitive -ma/-ta in (44c), for example, T(ense) does not bear a nominative case feature and, indeed, the movement that is analyzed as case-driven does not occur. The underlying object remains postverbal, while the underlying subject appears, as we have seen, in the sentence-initial position. In such instances it is not clear, under an analysis along the lines of Baker 1988/BJ&R and Boeckx 1998, precisely which argument has been dethematized (or, in their terms, which case and which theta role have been assigned to the passive morpheme/pro subject). If the passive morpheme is assigned ACC, as in canonical passivization, this will falsely predict movement of the object for
case. Note that evidence will be introduced in section 4.4 which suggests that the object bears *structural* NOM, while remaining within the VP-shell system. Under a passive analysis for the North Russian and Lithuanian nonagreeing passive participial construction, the passive morpheme or pro subject of passives would have to be assigned this structural NOM to induce the standard NP-movement associated with the Passive. Examples such as (44c) show that this is clearly not the case.

As for the unaccusative -no/-to/-ma/-ta constructions in (41-42), it appears that the passive morpheme/pro subject will be forced to remain caseless, based on the evidence from the transitive counterpart of this construction, in which NOM case is not available in the Tense system (and assuming that ACC is not available in standard instances of unaccusatives, and given that structural NOM on the object is unavailable in the case of intransitives). Under a passive analysis for North Russian -no/-to and Lithuanian -ma/-ta, this would force the parameterization of the Visibility requirement, which would be a very costly move given the limited additional empirical coverage that it allows.

The analysis that will be argued for in the remainder of this chapter holds that under /-no/-to/ and /-ma/-ta/ affixation, there is no dethematization at all, neither of the initial Agent, in the case of canonical transitives, nor of an underlying object, in the case of unaccusatives. For example, the only evidence that the sentence-initial GEN NP in (44c) is not fully thematic is its non-NOM marking. It will be recalled that under current minimalist assumptions, and in contrast to the assumptions of both GB and RG, there is no independent requirement that grammatical function should pattern with specific case-marking. It will be argued that the sentence-initial GEN NP in transitive (44c) is a full-fledged syntactic subject which acquires its sentence-initial position as a result of EPP-
checking, itself a result of its thematic prominence with respect to the object. The sentence-initial (u ‘at’ +) GEN NPs in the case of the -no/-to / -ma/-ta unaccusatives in (41-42) are also fully-thematic (i.e., non-dethematized) arguments, appearing sentence-initially also as a result of EPP- (and case-) checking, in a way to be made more precise in section 4.4.

4.2.2 -no/-to / -ma/-ta Unaccusatives as Raising Constructions

In recent work on the question of Lithuanian impersonal passives, Nuñes (1994) argues that the unaccusative -ma/-ta form does not involve dethematization (of the internal argument) and, thus, has been misanalyzed as passive. He treats unaccusative -ma/-ta as a simple instance of movement of a caseless internal argument to a preverbal position in which case is available. The unaccusative in (42), repeated below as (45), will have the structure in (46), under Nuñes’s account:

(45) Lithuanian -ma/-ta: Semantic Unaccusative
Bombos sprogta.
bomb:GEN exploded:-TA
‘A bomb exploded.’

(46) Derivation of -ma/-ta Unaccusative (cf. (45) and Nuñes 1994:353)

\[
\begin{array}{c}
\text{TP} \\
\text{NP:GEN}
\end{array}
\]

For the moment, we will gloss over certain details of structure that will become important in section 4.4. There, I will argue that the verb-stem + participle enters the structure fully-formed and that /-ma/-ta/ (as well as North Russian /-no/-to/) is a lexical-case assigner,
thus providing a case-marked position within the VP for the sole argument of unaccusatives (movement to [Spec,TP] in such instances is thus motivated by T’s EPP-feature alone). The /-ma/-ta/ morpheme subsequently excorporates and is re-merged into the head of T, providing a case-marked position in its specifier for the subject of transitive -ma/-ta predicates. Note in (46) that V-, as an unaccusative verb-stem, lacks an ACC-case feature.

The immediate advantage of the raising approach in Nuñes (1994) is that unaccusative -ma/-ta is treated unexceptionally along the lines of other unaccusatives, with the positive result that we are not forced to admit a new type of passive just for this construction. We will note shortly, however, that the implementation of Nuñes’s (1994) proposal is problematic from the perspective of accounting for the full range of -ma/-ta constructions and for properly distinguishing -ma/-ta from its agreeing canonical passive counterpart.

Note that Nuñes (1994) deals only with the more “exotic” passive participial constructions, such as those involving semantically-unaccusative verbs, raising verbs, and verbs that have already been passivized (i.e., passives of passives). His leading idea is that what appears on the surface of such structures to be a passive by-phrase is merely a raised internal argument assigned possessive GEN by a nominal head of T(ense). This type of case assignment is treated analogously to the possessive -ing construction in English, such as John’s arriving late. The central assumption here is that the passive participial morphology in Lithuanian is categorially-specified as a noun (Nuñes 1994:350-351), following the similar proposal in Baker 1988 and BJ&R (see (43)). According to Nuñes, the apparent passives of unaccusative and derived-unaccusative predicates differ minimally from canonical passives (with underlying external arguments)
in that only the latter involve dethematization. Both cases, however, assign the same possessive GEN to the constituent in the [Spec,TP] position due to the specification of the passive participial morphology heading T as an N-category. In other words, this proposal states that the GEN by-phrase in agreeing Lithuanian passives, such as (44d), repeated below as (47), is licensed for case in the same way as the sole, internal argument of -ma/-ta unaccusatives, as in (45). Note, however, that the by-phrase in (47) does not obligatorily appear in a position in which it can be licensed by T; that is, according to the corpus study reported in Geniušienė 1973 (see (18)), the adjunct by-phrase of agreeing passives exhibits two dominant word-order patterns, one preverbal and the other postverbal.

(47) Lithuanian Canonical Passive
Svečiai yra (tėvo) kviečiami (tėvo).
guests:NOM.MASC.PL AUX:PRES father:GEN being-invited:MASC.PL father:GEN
‘Guests are being invited by father.’

As we have noted repeatedly, the relatively free position of the by-phrase in the agreeing passive in (47) is in sharp contrast to its normal sentence-initial position in the -ma/-ta form. Note, for example, the -ma/-ta counterpart of (47) in (44c), repeated below as (48a). If the GEN NP is moved from the sentence-initial position, as in (48b), the evidential reading is no longer available and the sentence is no longer grammatical (under neutral intonation) with the nonagreeing morphology on the predicate:

(48) Lithuanian Evidential -ma/-ta
a. Tėvo kviečiama svečiai.
father:GEN being-invited:-MA guests:NOM
‘Father is apparently inviting guests.’

b. *Svečiai kviečiama tėvo.
guests:NOM being-invited:-MA father:GEN
The ungrammaticality of (48b) will be taken as evidence that the oblique NP têvo 
‘father:GEN’ is merged with the predicate as its (fully-thematic) subject. It is of higher 
themetic prominence and, thus, according to a theory of locality of movement, it should 
maintain its prominence in the functional domain of the derivation (i.e., where it checks 
T’s EPP-feature).

The examples in (47-48) present several problems for an attempt to unify all instances 
of the GEN NP, as in Nuñes 1994. First, for agreeing passives, such as (47), if the GEN by-
phrase is case-licensed by a feature in participial T, this case-licensing mechanism is 
apparently optional in a way that crucially does not hold for the nonagreeing 
unaccusative -mal/-ta form in (45) and the transitive -mal/-ta form in (48). The correct 
descriptive generalization is that the GEN NP obligatorily appears sentence-initially, and 
thus in a local relation with T, only when T is headed by -mal/-ta. This difference in 
licensing requirements, together with the fact that the GEN NP of the -mal/-ta construction 
displays a distinct set of subject properties, suggests that we are dealing with two 
homophonous GEN NPs, contra the assumption in Nuñes 1994 that these two 
instances of GEN marking can be unified structurally.

For the remainder of this chapter, we will be concerned with the GEN NP that occurs 
sentence-initially, together with sentence-initial u ‘at’ + GEN in North Russian, and the 
special relationship of this constituent with the predicate-final nonagreeing morphology. 
We have seen in this section that attempts to assimilate North Russian -no/-to and 
Lithuanian -mal/-ta to more standard cases of passivization by means of extending certain 
parameters of the passive construction lead to empirically inadequate results. The cluster 
of properties exhibited by these nonagreeing participial predicates discussed in section
4.1, and summarized in (40), in particular, the word-order facts and subject properties of the preposed oblique (PP) constituent, are in sharp contrast to the corresponding agreeing passives. This suggests that -no/-to and -mal/-ta are not simply nonagreeing (or default-agreeing) counterparts of the fully-inflected participle, but instead constitute a distinct predicate-type with a distinct set of syntactic features. The proposal that we will now pursue is that these are ergative constructions in otherwise NOM-ACC languages. Thus, the central idea is that predicates headed by /-no/-to/ and /-mal/-ta/ are not passive, but, instead, have been reinterpreted as syntactically basic structures.

### 4.3 Morphological Ergativity

Ergativity is standardly described as a case-marking system in which the object of a transitive verb appears in the absolutive (= NOM) case along with the subject of an intransitive verb, while the Agent argument of a transitive verb is marked differently, by what is known as the ergative case. The latter is usually an oblique case used elsewhere in the language (perhaps only at an earlier stage) to mark either the by-phrase of passives or possession. The central claim of this chapter is that the sentence-initial (u ‘at’ +) GEN constituent in North Russian and Lithuanian passive participial constructions is the basic, fully-thematic ergative subject, while the NOM NP is the non-promoted absolutive object.  

As first pointed out by Anderson (1976), morphologically-ergative languages pattern with NOM-ACC languages with respect to syntactic processes, such as binding, control, and the establishment of parallelism in conjoined structures (see sections 4.1.2.2 and

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39 The question of ergative marking on the subject of intransitives will be taken up in section 4.3.2.
4.1.2.4 for the relevant examples). That is, regardless of overt case-marking, morphologically-ergative languages treat all subjects the same for the purposes of syntax; it is a lack of the usual correspondence between subjecthood and morphological case that is striking here.

Morphological ergativity is in contrast to the typologically rare system of syntactic ergativity, such as the well-known case of Australian Dyirbal, where syntactic-likes are determined on the basis of case-marking (Dixon 1994). Under this more robust, latter form of ergativity, parallelism in conjunction, for example, refers directly to morphological case, rather than to grammatical function. The result is that a NOM (= absolutive) subject of an intransitive verb is most naturally conjoined with the NOM object of a transitive verb, rather than with its ergative subject.

The claim that North Russian and Lithuanian exhibit morphological ergativity would reduce to an ad hoc stipulation if this type of ergativity were not shown to follow from properties in these languages that other morphologically-ergative languages share. In the following brief review of the typological literature in section 4.3.1, I will show that the North Russian and Lithuanian ergatives conform to a unified characterization of morphological ergativity that relies crucially on a possessive predication.

4.3.1 Trask’s Type-B Ergativity and have- versus be- Languages

It is well known that morphologically-ergative languages typically display ergative marking for a restricted range of constructions, or, indeed, often only for a single construction, with the NOM-ACC pattern used elsewhere (Anderson 1976, Trask 1979). This type of pattern is referred to as “split-ergativity”. According to the typological survey provided in Trask 1979, split (or “Type B”) ergativity is correlated with the
absence in a particular language of the distinct lexeme *have*. As we will see shortly, this is directly related to a particular (accidental) affinity between the perfect tense and the development of ergativity, discussed, for example, in Anderson (1992:354-360).

The significance of the presence versus absence of the lexeme *have* for the development of split ergativity is pointed out by Benveniste (1952) on the basis of Old Persian, Classical Armenian, and other languages. Here, Benveniste observed that the ancient synthetic perfect of Proto-Indo-European was frequently replaced by an expression of action as *possessed* by the actor. In languages which lack *have*, the actor in the resulting possessive predication appears in an oblique form. The main predicate usually consists of a periphrastic passive participial construction. When the passive participial morphology is reanalyzed as the marker of the perfect tense, the oblique possessive marker is reinterpreted as its ergative subject.\(^\text{40}\) The underlying object is marked NOM and either agrees with the participle or appears in a nonagreeing structure after participial agreement is lost. In the case of intransitives, the special possessive predication is unnecessary: the subject (or underlying object, in the case of unaccusatives) simply agrees with the participle.

In the case of North Russian and Lithuanian, the old inflectional morphemes, /-o/ and /-a/, form a new, complex morpheme with the derivational stem, yielding /-no/-to/ and /-ma/-ta/, which are subsequently reinterpreted as the triggers for the particular ergative split in each language (the perfect tense in North Russian and the evidential mood in Lithuanian). So the distinct ergative pattern either signifies a tense/aspect split or some

\(^{40}\) Anderson (1992:357) points out that the affinity between new perfects and ergative morphology is, thus, essentially, accidental, rather than following from the underlying semantics of the perfect tense.
other well-defined contrast in meaning with a competing NOM-ACC construction (see Trask 1979:395-400 for discussion).\textsuperscript{41}

Split ergatives of this type are fairly widely attested in Indo-European non-*have* languages. The examples in (49a-c) are perfects from Classical Armenian, Irish, and Hindi, respectively:

(49) a. Classical Armenian: Perfect
    Ėr nora hraman areal.
    be:PAST him:GEN decree:ACC received:[-AGR]
    ‘He had received the decree.’ [Benveniste 1952:57]

b. Irish: Perfect
    Tá sé déanta agam.
    be:PRES it:NOM done:[-AGR] at-me
    ‘I have done it.’ [Orr 1984:42]

c. Hindi: Perfect
    Raam- ne vah kitaabê parî thî.
    Ram: ERG those books:NOM,FEM,PL read:FEM,PL be:PAST,FEM,PL
    ‘Ram had read those books.’ [Mahajan 1994:318]

In Classical Armenian and Irish the ergative morphology (= Armenian GEN and the Irish *at* PP) is a completely transparent marker of possession. Compare (49a-b) with (50a-b):

(50) a. Classical Armenian: Possessive Predicate
    Zinc’ šnorrh ē jer?
    what gratitude:ACC be:PRES you:GEN
    ‘What gratitude do you have?’ [Luke 6:32] [Benveniste 1952:59]

b. Irish: Possessive Predicate
    Tá leabhar agam.
    be:PRES book:NOM at-me
    ‘I have a book.’ [Orr 1984:42]

The case of the ergative marker in Hindi is more complex. Mahajan (1994:318) proposes to account for ergativity in Hindi (and elsewhere) on a theory that seeks to unify

\textsuperscript{41}Ergative languages that do not contain such a split are believed to derive from passive constructions reinterpreted as active. Trask (1979) refers to this more robust type of ergativity as “Type A”.
the following traditional observations: (i) split-ergative languages do not select the AUX *have* for periphrastic constructions; and (ii) split-ergative languages usually make use of a wide range of oblique subject constructions elsewhere in the language.\(^{42}\) Following proposals ranging from Benveniste (1960) to Kayne (1993), Mahajan (1994) argues that *have* and *be* are derivationally related. In more specific terms, *have* is an oblique form of *be*. The notion of oblique is meant to imply the presence of an incorporated prepositional or case element. In this way, the difference between split-ergative languages and NOM-ACC languages reduces to a difference in the form of *be*: an oblique form of *be* (or one with an incorporated preposition, as in Kayne 1993) yields *have* and patterns with a NOM subject in the transitive perfect, while in the case of the non-oblique, “bare” form of *be*, the same oblique marker is affixed to the subject itself and constitutes the ergative marking. We will not pursue the more basic question of what regulates (or allows) the incorporation of the P or Case element that yields surface *have* (see Mahajan 1994 for discussion). The key observation for our purposes is that the case-marking differences between ergative and NOM-ACC constructions are not basic, but follow from a particular lexical resource of the language, which, itself, might be further reducible (see also Mahajan 1997). Note that if the type of ergativity that we are investigating follows from a mere statement about a language’s lexical inventory (which leads to morphological ergativity alone), the underlying syntactic relations of such a language should, indeed, be unaltered and, thus, follow the more general NOM-ACC pattern, as initially observed in Anderson 1976.

To review in more explicit terms, in the Hindi example in (49c), the ergative marker

\(^{42}\)The correlation between ergativity and dative-, genitive-, and locative-subject constructions used to predicate possession is discussed in Klimov 1973 (reviewed in Comrie 1976b).
-/ne/ is the P or case element that has failed to incorporate into be to form have. The result is that the possessive predication is marked by the use of /-ne/ as an adposition on the subject. Ergativity is derived as a result of a distinct type of predication in be-languages for transitive perfects. It is the relation of the verb to the subject that differs between transitive and intransitive forms, rather than the more familiar difference in AUX-selection in the innovated perfects of Germanic and Romance. The fact that the ergative marking in North Russian and Lithuanian is extended to the subject of intransitive predicates is taken up shortly, in section 4.3.2.

The idea of North Russian u ‘at’ + GEN in passive participial clauses as a possessive marker rather than as a passive by-phrase was suggested by Petrova (1968) and further developed by Trubinskij (1984). The u ‘at’ + GEN PP as an ergative marker in the sense of Trask’s Type-B ergativity was first proposed by Orr (1989, 1991). Note that North Russian, like Standard Russian, is a be-language, which uses the u ‘at’ + GEN PP for ordinary expressions of possession as well (cf. (North) Russian variant of Irish (50b): u:at menja:me.GEN kniga:book.NOM ‘I have a book’).43 The fact that this locative PP has been grammaticalized to function like the have AUX in Germanic and Romance perfects (i.e., to establish a predication for the stative participle) is indicated by those instances in which the complement of u ‘at’ is inanimate and, thus, not used to mark standard cases of possession. Examples are given in (51):

(51) North Russian -no/-to
   a. Èto u avtomobilja ideno.
      PRT at automobile:GEN gone:-NO
      ‘That was a car that went by.’ [Matveenko 1961:123]

43 Standard Russian imet ‘have, possess’ is a Church Slavonic borrowing that is more typical of abstract possession and, crucially, is not used as an AUX in periphrastic constructions.
b. U traktora tut proexano.
   at tractor:GEN here passed-by:-NO
   ‘A tractor has passed by here.’ [Kuznecov 1954:96]

Let us now turn to a brief discussion of the question of Type-B ergativity in
Lithuanian. The possessive nature of the Lithuanian -ma/-ta construction is indicated by
the form of the sentence-initial GEN NP. Ambrazas (1978:341-342) notes that early
Lithuanian forms in */-mo/ and */-to/ (> modern Lithuanian /-ma/-ta/) were deverbal
nouns that patterned with the possessive GEN just like other nouns. The etymological
possessive predication is preserved in the modern language in the 1ST and 2ND persons SG
(and the REFL) personal pronouns, which distinguish two GEN forms: one is purely
possessive (i.e., my, your) and the other serves as a quirky GEN complement of certain
verbs and prepositions. Examples of the two GEN forms are given in (52). Note crucially
that -ma/-ta patterns with the possessive GEN, as indicated in the examples in (53):

(52) Lithuanian GEN: 1ST / 2ND Person SG
   a. Possessive
      *Mano / tavo tėvas yra senas.
      my your father:NOM is old:NOM
      ‘My / your father is old.’

   b. Complement
      Draugai manės / taves laukė.
      friends:NOM me:GEN you:GEN waited
      ‘The friends waited for me / you.’

(53) Lithuanian -ma/-ta
   a. Čia mano (*manės) / tavo (*tavės) dirbta.
      here me:GEN (GEN) you:GEN (GEN) worked:-TA
      ‘I / you apparently worked here.’

   b. Mano (*manės) / tavo (*tavės) draugas pakviesta.
      me:GEN (GEN) you:GEN (GEN) friend:NOM invited:-TA
      ‘(Evidently) I / you invited a friend.’

44 Note that laukti ‘wait’ assigns quirky GEN.
According to Ambrazas (1978:340-343), the possessive form of the \textit{GEN} was reinterpreted as the agentive by-phrase when the periphrastic passive later developed as a productive category.

The next question is whether Lithuanian is truly a \textit{be}-language, along the lines of other Type-B ergatives, especially in light of the productive use of \textit{turėti} ‘have’ (the Lithuanian variant of Irish (50b) is not an \textit{at me} construction, but rather the transitive construction \textit{aš}:I.NOM \textit{turiu}:have.1SG \textit{knygą}:book.ACC). The key point here is that Lithuanian has not grammaticalized \textit{turėti} ‘have’ to function in the \textit{AUX} system. Lithuanian does have a productive periphrastic perfect, but uses the \textit{AUX} \textit{būti} ‘be’ for both transitive and intransitive verbs (with an agreeing form of the active participle). Examples of the periphrastic perfect in Lithuanian are given in (54):

(54) Lithuanian: Periphrastic Perfect

\begin{enumerate}
\item Transitive
\begin{itemize}
\item \textit{Esu apkeliau̇s visą pasaulį ir daug kraštų matęs.}
\end{itemize}
\begin{itemize}
\item BE:PRES.1SG travelled whole world:ACC and many countries:GEN seen
\item ‘I have travelled the whole world and have seen many countries.’ [Ambrazas et al. 1997:249]
\end{itemize}

\item Intransitive
\begin{itemize}
\item \textit{Kažkas namie yra nakvęs.}
\item somebody:NOM at-home BE:PRES.3SG spent-the-night
\item ‘Somebody has spent the night at home.’ [Ambrazas et al. 1997:248]
\end{itemize}
\end{enumerate}

On the basis of the examples in (52-54), we can conclude that Lithuanian \textit{-ma/-ta} conforms to Trask’s Type-B ergativity and, thus, like North Russian, is typologically well-behaved. Lithuanian is a \textit{be}-language, its ergative construction derives from a possessive predication, and it bears a distinctive semantic interpretation (i.e., evidentiality) that is absent in the corresponding agreeing passive.\footnote{An ergative analysis for Lithuanian \textit{-ma/-ta} was first proposed by Matthews (1955).}
4.3.2 On the Problem of Ergative Subjects of Intransitive Predicates

In this section we address a major typological difference between North Russian and Lithuanian, on one hand, and the more robust Type-B ergatives, on the other: in North Russian and Lithuanian, as we have repeatedly observed, the subject of intransitive predicates is also marked “ergative”. Orr identifies this typological anomaly (1989:20, fn. 18), but offers no explanation for it, suggesting only that it is common for the ergative argument “to extend its range” to intransitives. Note, however, that under a finer-grained analysis of intransitive predicates, it has been shown that ergative subjects commonly appear with intransitives, as long as they are of the unergative variety (see Marantz 1991, Bobaljik 1993, and Dixon 1994). This makes use of (and, to a certain extent, independently motivates) Hale & Keyser’s (1993) proposal that unergatives are hidden transitives. The typological anomaly of North Russian and Lithuanian, then, can be isolated to the appearance of ergative subjects with unaccusative verbs, which has been shown to occur in the world’s languages only quite rarely (for examples, see Boeder’s (1979) discussion of West Georgian dialects). The relevant examples from North Russian and Lithuanian are given in (55-56) (repeated from (41-42)):

(55) North Russian -no/-to: Derived Unaccusative
Vo kak u menja udareno- s’.  
PRT how at me:GEN struck:-NO REFL  
‘Oh, how I was struck.’       [Meščerskij 1972:221]

(56) Lithuanian -ma/-ta: Semantic Unaccusative
Bombos sproga ta nakti.  
bomb:GEN exploded:-TA at-night  
‘A bomb exploded at night.’

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Here I refer to Dixon’s “fluid-S” system, which essentially entails the same unergative/unaccusative distinction (1994:78-83).
At this point we need to account for the assignment of ergative case (= \(u + \text{GEN}\) or bare \(\text{GEN}\)), rather than the expected \(\text{NOM}\) (or absolutive), to the subject of these unaccusative predicates. The question is whether examples such as (55-56) are fatal for the ergativity analysis being proposed. I will argue that the assignment of \(\text{ERG}\) case in such instances can be unified in a principled way with all other instances of \(\text{ERG}\)-case assignment for the appropriate split in North Russian and Lithuanian. In fact, we will see shortly (in section 4.4.1) that the extension of ergative marking to the subject of unaccusative predicates provides an important insight into the case-marking mechanism employed in \(-\text{no/\text{to}}\) and \(-\text{ma/\text{ta}}\) more generally. It is precisely this case-marking mechanism that distinguishes these constructions from those of other, more robust split-ergative languages.

The observation that ergative marking normally extends to the subject of unergative intransitives only has been formalized by Marantz (1991) in the following generalization:\(^{47}\)

(57) Marantz’s Ergative Generalization\(^{48}\)

If a verb does not assign an external theta role, it will not assign ergative case to its subject (i.e., though ergative case can be assigned to the subject of an intransitive verb, it will not appear on a derived subject).

This generalization is derived from Marantz’s (1991) theory of “Dependent Case”. In Marantz’s framework, the assignment of a dependent case (\(\text{ERG}\) or \(\text{ACC}\)) relies on the crucial condition that the position to which this case is assigned may be set in opposition

\(^{47}\) Note that unaccusatives were referred to at one time in the GB literature as “ergatives” (Burzio 1986). Non-unaccusative verbs, that is, those monadic verbs that select a single, \textbf{external} argument, were thus referred to as “unergative”. This latter term is now generally used in opposition to “unaccusative”.

\(^{48}\) Marantz’s Ergative Generalization is formulated to be the ergative-language analogue of Burzio’s Generalization. The two generalizations conflate to read: If a verb does not assign an external theta role, it will not assign \text{ACC} to its object (Burzio) or \text{ERG} to its subject (Marantz) (Marantz 1991:236).
to another (structural or “environment sensitive”) case position that constitutes a distinct chain. The essence of this proposal is that the ERG (and ACC) cannot be assigned in isolation as a property of a particular NP or of its configuration with a particular case-assigner (or checker). Instead, reference must be made to the rest of the clause, specifically, to the presence of another structural NP position. In this way, Marantz rules out the ergative on a derived subject NP (i.e., of an unaccusative): both positions are in the same chain. The subject of unergative intransitives can bear ergative case because the object position in such a configuration is empty and available to count as a structural position in opposition to which the ergative case can be assigned (Marantz 1991:249).

Note that case realization in Marantz’s framework is treated as a property of the clause, in the same spirit as the “Case in Tiers” model proposed in Yip et al. 1987. The lack of “Dependent Case” effects in North Russian and Lithuanian (i.e., the presence of ergative subjects of unaccusative predicates) suggests that the assignment of ergative case in North Russian and Lithuanian is not a clausal property in the strict sense. Note that this, in turn, may be considered to indicate a certain “marginality” of the split-ergativity in these languages, or point to its “embryonic” nature.

In section 4.4.1 I will propose that ergative case assignment in North Russian and Lithuanian is a lexical property of the /-no/-to/ and /-ma/-ta/ morphemes themselves, rather than a clausal property of the relevant split (i.e., the perfect tense in North Russian or the evidential mood in Lithuanian).

49 Note that in a bottom-up minimalist-type derivation, the implementation of Dependent Case appears to obligatorily involve some notion of “look-ahead”, which is generally believed to introduce additional complexity into the derivation that should be ruled out by considerations of economy. This issue will be taken up in section 4.4.
4.4 Case and Structure

Data from North Russian and Lithuanian ergative constructions suggest that the realization of morphological case need not necessarily involve the features that are standardly assumed to be responsible for abstract case licensing. According to basic minimalist assumptions (Chomsky 1993), T and V contain the NOM and ACC case features, respectively. Abstract ACC is checked against V in the functional domain of the derivation after the adjunction of V to AgrO. Abstract NOM is checked against T after the adjunction of T to AgrS. Assuming an Agr-system (for the moment), a standard (early-) minimalist phrase structure will appear as in (58):

(58) (Early-) Minimalist Phrase Structure

```
AgrSP
   /\    
  /   
AgrS'    AgrS
   \   
     T  TP
     \ 
      T  AgrOP
           / \  
          /   
         AgrO'  VP
              /  
             /   
            AgrO  V' 
                /  
               /   
              NP:Subj  V  NP:Obj
```

It will be recalled from the discussion of phrase structure in chapter 3 (section 3.3.2) that I assume clausal architecture to vary with respect to the checking requirements of each particular derivation. That is, there is no universal template, as in (58). Only the structure needed for convergence is projected. Any additional structure will be in violation of some

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50 The term “embryonic ergativity” is borrowed from Orr 1989.
notion of economy. The absence of subject-predicate agreement in North Russian and
Lithuanian ergatives, for example, forces the absence of an AgrS projection. If present in
the structure, its dedicated function of checking subject agreement would fail to be
instantiated and the derivation would not converge. Note also from earlier discussion that
I do not adopt the strict complementarity between theta-theory and feature-checking,
assumed in Chomsky 1995a (312). That is, feature-checking is permitted in all local
domains, including the position in which NPs are merged (i.e., their theta-positions). The
lack of any empirical consequences associated with the more standard assumptions for
projecting phrase structure, together with the leaner structures that I propose below, will
be taken as positive evidence for the approach to phrase structure that I adopt (cf.

In what follows in sections 4.4.1 and 4.4.2, (58) will be reworked in such a way that
morphological NOM will be shown to be distinct from T(ense). The notion of abstract
nominative is subsumed under “subject positional licensing” (in the sense of Schütze
1993), an effect of the EPP, which is checked, as we have seen, by the morphological
ERG (i.e., (u ‘at’ +) GEN). The ERG itself will be treated as an instance of quirky case
assignment. The crucial difference between quirky case here and the more familiar
instances of quirky case elsewhere in Slavic, or quirky case assignment to subjects in
Icelandic, is that in the case of North Russian and Lithuanian, this quirky case is assigned
as a lexical property of an affix, rather than of the verb to which it attaches.

4.4.1 The Ergative Subject

In this section I will argue that the trigger for the ergative construction in North Russian
and Lithuanian is the derivational morphology affixed to the participial predicate (or to
the copula, if the predicate is a noun or adjective). Following Di Sciullo and Williams (1987), let us assume that affixes head the stems to which they are attached, and that these affixes have their own lexical specification which determines the argument structure of the derived forms. The oblique (or PP) \textit{ERG}, then, is assigned as a selectional property of the /-no/-to/ and /-ma/-ta/ morphemes.

4.4.1.1 The Ergative Subject and Dependent Case

An immediate consequence of this approach is that the trigger for the ergative construction in North Russian and Lithuanian does not project a prototypical ergative template, but, rather, achieves an ergative pattern by means of the case properties associated with this trigger. If the ergative marking ((u ‘at’ +) \textit{GEN}) is a lexical property of the /-no/-to/ and /-ma/-ta/ affixes, then the lack of Dependent Case effects in North Russian and Lithuanian is explained in a straightforward manner. Rather than clausal ergativity in the more robust sense (as in, e.g., Georgian, Hindi, and Basque), North Russian and Lithuanian exhibit a particular analogue of quirky case assignment, similar to the type known in Icelandic, where quirky case is assigned to the surface subject (see Zaenen et al. 1985, Sigurðsson 1992, and Schütze 1993). The crucial difference, as noted above, is that in Icelandic quirky case is assigned as a lexical idiosyncrasy of particular verbs, while in North Russian and Lithuanian, for the appropriate tense and mood, it is assigned in all instances, regardless of both the verb’s lexical semantics (= argument structure) and the larger clausal structure, as a lexical idiosyncrasy of a particular affix. It is precisely in this way that the ergative marking can be extended to subjects of unaccusative predicates (in violation of Marantz’s Ergative Generalization in (57)).
Note that the ergative trigger in North Russian and Lithuanian remains a transparent quirky case assigner; that is, /-no/-to/ and /-ma/-ta/ have not been grammaticalized to indicate a new set of structural checking relations that would bear out a more basic Dependent-Case pattern. Recall, for example, the Agr-based theory of case, where all instances of abstract case assignment are assimilated to Spec-Head agreement in Agr-phrases designed specifically for this purpose (see (58)). If /-no/-to/ and /-ma/-ta/ were truly grammaticalized as markers of an ergative template, we might expect a reassignment of the functions of these Agr-phrases in a way that would bring the North Russian and Lithuanian ergative constructions more in line with Marantz’s Ergative Generalization.

One proposal designed to implement a Dependent-Case system (based on a different set of split-ergative languages) is to parameterize the “activeness” of the Agr elements in a way that would reduce the choice between the two case-marking strategies to a more primitive difference in the case properties of these functional heads. According to Bobaljik’s (1993) “Obligatory Case Parameter”, the choice of language (or construction) type depends on which Agr is active in intransitive sentences, where the active Agr assigns the less marked (= NOM) case to its specifier. This type of parameter gets at Dependent Case by identifying which case, for each language type, is obligatory, leaving the other case, for transitive predicates, as the dependent one (i.e., ERG and ACC). That is, under this type of parameterization, the dependent ERG cannot be assigned “upstairs” unless the obligatory NOM (absolutive) is assigned “downstairs” (just as the ACC cannot be assigned “downstairs” unless the obligatory NOM is assigned “upstairs”).

Indeed, the assignment of the dependent structural ACC “downstairs” in Ukrainian -no/-to (discussed in ch. 3) is thus a straightforward counterexample to the theory of Dependent Case.

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51 The assignment of the dependent structural ACC “downstairs” in Ukrainian -no/-to (discussed in ch. 3) is thus a straightforward counterexample to the theory of Dependent Case.
under such an approach, the dependent ERG case would be appropriately ruled out for unaccusatives. The fact that such a “tweaking” of the Agr-system would fail to yield the correct results for North Russian and Lithuanian indicates that assignment of the ERG subject in these languages is not a clausal property in the sense that is usually assumed for ergative languages. It can therefore be concluded that the North Russian and Lithuanian ERG is not a dependent case in the sense of Marantz 1991.

It is interesting to note, however, that at the core of the theory of Dependent Case is the intuitively appealing idea that the morphological realization of structural case is not strictly related to particular functional projections (see, especially, the discussion in Harley 1995, ch. 4). That is, there can be no obligatory one-to-one relationship between a particular functional head and the case that it licenses. In fact, we will see that this type of idea is forced by the North Russian and Lithuanian NOM object. Thus, while it will be shown that there is indeed a case-dependency with respect to the NOM object (to be discussed in sections 4.4.1.3 and 4.4.2), the ERG subject is assigned as an independent lexical property of /-no/-to/ and /-ma/-ta/, rather than as a property of the clause that these affixes project. If we bear in mind that the theory of Dependent Case is meant to account for the distribution of structural case only, the assignment of ERG case to the derived subject of unaccusatives in North Russian and Lithuanian is not truly exceptional. Under the theory of Dependent Case, and Marantz’s Ergative Generalization, the subject of unaccusatives should be assigned NOM as the sole “mandatory” structural case in the clause. Since the ERG is quirkily marked in North Russian and Lithuanian, structural case

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52 Note that the same result is achieved by Harley’s (1995:151) “Mechanical Case Parameter”. Under such accounts, unergatives are treated as hidden transitives, following Hale and Keyser 1993.
here is overridden independently on the basis of more general principles governing the
distribution of quirky case (such as the Projection Principle).

4.4.1.2 Quirky Subjects and Derivational Morphology

Before moving on, it is reasonable to consider whether derivational affixes in North
Russian and Lithuanian assign quirky case to subjects elsewhere. Here, the goal is to
demonstrate that the case-assigning strategy proposed for the ERG subject in these
languages is not a mere stipulation to account for a single “exotic” construction, but,
rather, a strategy that is used in other, completely unrelated contexts. First, in both North
Russian and Lithuanian (as well as in standard Russian) the infinitival suffix /-ti/ assigns
quirky DAT to the infinitive’s overt-NP or PRO subject (see Babby 1998b:22-23).53

Infinitival /-ti/ originally developed in Balto-Slavic as a deverbal (i-stem) noun with DAT
inflection (Meillet 1952:194-198; Sprinčak 1960:95). It patterned with a subject agreeing
in (DAT) case in an absolute-like construction, as in the Church Slavonic example in (59):

(59) Old Church Slavonic (11th - 12th Cent.)
Byst’ že umrěti ništjumu.
was PRT die:-TI beggar:DAT
‘And it came to pass, that the beggar died.’ [Luke 16, 22; King James Trans.]
[cited in Meillet 1952:394]

After the reinterpretation of /-ti/ as a derivational marker of the infinitive (a new category
in Balto-Slavic), its DAT subject was reanalyzed as quirkily marked by this infinitival
suffix, rather than receiving case by agreement with a DAT-marked quasi-predicative
noun. That is, once the infinitive developed, the original source of the DAT case on its
logical subject was obscured. The DAT case continued to be related to /-ti/, but the latter
was now interpreted as a caseless derivational morpheme that merely selected the DAT,
rather than being marked DAT itself. Examples of subjects of infinitives assigned quirky DAT by infinitival /-ti/ are given in (60) for North Russian and in (61) for Lithuanian:

(60) North Russian: Infinitive + DAT Subject
   a. š kem mne-ka budet sveža ryba kušat’?
      with whom me:DAT AUX:FUT fresh fish:NOM to-eat:-TI
      ‘With whom will it be possible for me to eat fresh fish?’
   b. Ne tebe na ètogo konja uzda nadevat’.
      NEG you:DAT on this horse bridle:NOM to-put-on:-TI
      ‘It is not for you to put a bridle on that horse.’

[Timberlake 1974:104-105]

(61) Lithuanian: Infinitive + DAT Subject
   a. Kitiems laiškai rašyti buvo daug lengviau.
      others:DAT letters:NOM to-write:-TI AUX:PAST much easier
      ‘For others to write letters was much easier.’ [Schmalstieg 1988:149]
   b. Per mišką žmogui basam eiti nepatogu.
      through forest man:DAT barefoot:DAT to-walk:-TI uncomfortable:[-AGR]
      ‘It is uncomfortable for a man to walk barefoot through the forest.’
      [Schmalstieg 1988:222]

Note that the DAT subject of infinitives can also be detected indirectly on the basis of the case marking of secondary predicates of object-controlled embedded infinitives (Babby 1998b). In the Lithuanian example in (62), the antecedent of the DAT-marked secondary predicate viena- ‘alone’ is the infinitive’s PRO subject, with which it agrees in case, number, and gender. Thus, (62) establishes that infinitival PRO can also be assigned quirky DAT by infinitival /-ti/ (cf. the DAT secondary predicate in (61b) which has an overt DAT antecedent).

(62) Lithuanian: Infinitive + DAT PRO Subject
   Vytautas paprašė tėvo [ PRO ateiti vienam].
   Vytautas:NOM asked father:GEN PRO:DAT to-come:-TI alone:DAT
   ‘Vytautas asked his father to come alone.’

53 Unstressed infinitival /-t/ in North Russian and standard Russian has the allomorphs /-t’/ and /-č/.
54 I am grateful to Leonard Babby for discussion of this point.
55 The NOM object in the examples in (60-61), a “Case-in-Tiers” effect, will be discussed in section 4.4.2.
A second instance of a predicate’s derivational morphology assigning quirky case to its subject concerns the Lithuanian gerund. In Lithuanian embedded gerundive clauses whose subject is distinct from that of the matrix clause, the gerundive suffixes, */-Vnt/* (present) and */-us/* (past), assign quirky DAT to the embedded clause’s subject (see Babby 1991:14-15). These morphemes represent unchanging fossilized forms of erstwhile agreeing active participles. Note, crucially, that these frozen gerundive forms were initially DAT.SG (most likely FEM) (Schmalstieg 1988:92-98). In Old Lithuanian, as well as in Common Slavic, DAT forms of the present and past active participle participated in a productive Dative Absolute construction, in which the DAT participle was predicated of a subject with which it agreed in case. The Dative Absolute marked a subordinate clause, which could be paraphrased by an overt complementizer and an embedded finite predicate. An example from Old Lithuanian is given in (63).

(63) Old Lithuanian: Dative Absolute (16th - 17th Cent.)

Ir Ponas passirode iem Girioie Mamre, sedinczam
and Lord:NOM appeared him:DAT in-forest Mamre sitting:ACT PART:DAT.MASC.SG
iam\(^{56}\) pas anga sawa schėtro.

him:DAT at door REFL tent

‘And the Lord appeared to him in the forest of Mamre, while he was sitting at the door of his tent.’ [Genesis 18, 1] [cited in Schmalstieg 1988:94]

Case by agreement in the Old Lithuanian Dative Absolute was replaced in the modern language by quirky case associated with frozen gerundive */-Vnt/* and */-us/* when the Dative Absolute ceased to be a productive construction in the language. The word-final gerundive morphology in the modern Lithuanian examples in (64) is no longer transparently DAT; like infinitival */-ti/*, it is interpreted synchronically as a derivational morpheme that selects a DAT subject as part of its lexical specification.

\(^{56}\) Schmalstieg (1988:94) notes that *iam:*’him:DAT’ was an alternate spelling of DAT iem.
Modern Lithuanian: Nonagreeing Gerunds

a. Saulei tekant pasiekėme kryžkelę.
   sun:DAT rising:GER we-reached crossing:ACC
   ‘We reached the crossing when the sun was rising.’ [Ambrazas et al. 1997:364]

b. Žuvus Mindaugui, Lietuva atsidūrė pavojuje.
   perished:GER Mindaugas:DAT Lithuania:NOM found-itself in-danger
   ‘After Mindaugas had perished, Lithuania found itself in danger.’
   [Mathiassen 1996:155]

The key difference between Lithuanian and Slavic in the formation of gerunds is that
in Lithuanian a DAT form of the earlier active participle was generalized for the gerund,
while in Slavic the gerund was based on a NOM form of the participle, with the
consequence that in the modern Slavic languages there is no vestigial DAT in gerundive
constructions. Like infinitival /-ti/, as well as North Russian /-no/-to/ and modern
Lithuanian /-ma/-ta/, the formation of the new category of gerunds in Lithuanian involves
an initial inflectional form that is reanalyzed as nonagreeing derivational morphology
with its own dedicated argument structure. The central concern of this subsection has
been to show that the lexical entry for such morphemes may involve quirky case
assignment to the subject of the predicate that these morphemes head. Quirky case in
such instances thus follows from a synchronic lexical idiosyncrasy that is diachronically
motivated.

4.4.1.3 The Ergative Subject and Questions of Structure

Quirky case is generally assumed to be assigned in the site of base-generation (i.e., at
Merge). This immediately raises the question of where exactly /-no/-to/ and /-ma/-ta/ are

57 It may be noted that in Old East Slavic texts, a DAT subject NP does appear (irregularly) with a frozen
NOM gerundive form, indicating a once productive Dative Absolute construction there as well. When the
gerund fully developed as a productive category in the modern East Slavic languages, it ceased to cooccur
with its own subject and instead became anaphoric on the subject of the matrix clause.
merged. If the /-no/-to/ and /-ma/-ta/ morphemes are associated with a higher functional head, as was the case with Polish -no/-to, discussed in ch. 3, how can we ensure that the bare verb stem does not assign (check) structural ACC at Merge? Alternatively, assuming that these affixes enter the derivation already attached to V (in the lexicon), and that all instances of Merge instantiate licit checking relations, our concern is to admit the assignment of quirky ERG to the verb’s complement in the case of unaccusatives, while ruling out such case assignment at Merge for the complement of transitive V. This first instance of Merge that we are concerned with is given in (65):

(65) Merge V + Complement

The base-generation of the /-no/-to/ and /-ma/-ta/ affixes (Af) together with the verb is forced by the necessity to override the verb-stem’s default ACC case feature. Evidence presented earlier that Lithuanian /-ma/-ta/ and tense-marking auxiliaries do not cooccur (under the evidential reading) suggests that /-ma/-ta/ subsequently excorporates and moves to T(ense). Such an analysis is further supported by the distributional facts of both Lithuanian -ma/-ta and North Russian -no/-to, presented in section 4.1, such as the cooccurrence of both /-ma/-ta/ and /-no/-to/ with semantically unaccusative verbs and verbs containing the REFL morpheme. In the case of North Russian /-no/-to/, which does cooccur with tense-marking auxiliaries, we can assume its excorporation and movement to an Aspect Phrase, with which it seems to be related, rather than to T(ense). That is,
North Russian /-no/-to/ is the marker for the perfect tense, more specifically, the perfect of result (Comrie 1976a:56-58), which is an aspectual category.

Recall that the basic idea here is that /-no/-to/ and /-ma/-ta/ are not passive participial morphemes. They appear affixed to the verb as an historical relic, which suggests that the effects of their reanalysis have not been fully ‘‘actualized’’, in the sense of Timberlake 1977. The idea, then, is that /-no/-to/ and /-ma/-ta/ ‘‘abstractly’’ head functional categories; the ultimate actualization of this reanalysis would result in the surface string being brought more closely in line with the innovative underlying structure. That is, reanalysis can implicate functional structure without a direct surface manifestation. The underlying (abstract) structure is established on the basis of indirect evidence only, such as the novel set of distributional properties of /-no/-to/ and /-ma/-ta/.

Now we still have the problem of regulating the assignment of the quirky ergative case. We want to allow its assignment in (65) for unaccusatives, but ‘‘suppress’’ its assignment if the VP in (65) is predicated of an external argument, in which case it is the external argument that will ultimately be assigned ergative. Recall the leading idea of Marantz’s (1991) theory of Dependent Case, elaborated in Harley 1995, that the realization of morphological case is viewed as a property of the clause as a whole. Under such an approach, the choice of whether or not the quirky case of V+Af can be discharged at Merge will rely on the structure of the rest of the clause, which, strictly speaking, has not been merged yet, and, thus, formally, should not be available information at this stage of the derivation. This reliance on ‘‘look-ahead’’ is the central problem with ‘‘clause-bound’’ case assignment. A solution to this dilemma, which does not involve look-ahead, is to assume that when a derivational morpheme introduces a
case-dependency into the derivation, all thematic relations must be discharged before feature checking can take place.\textsuperscript{58} That is, at the point of the initial Merge in (65), the derivation makes reference to V’s argument structure, rather than to the clause’s final design. If all thematic relations are discharged by the time that the operation Merge applies in (65), V+Af is free to discharge its quirky case. The underlying object will subsequently raise to satisfy T’s EPP feature, yielding the most widely-attested word order, as in the examples in (66), repeated from (41-42). The structure for these examples is given in (67):

(66) Ergatives of Unaccusatives
   a. North Russian: Derived Unaccusative
      Vo kak u menja udarenos’s.
      PRT how at me:GEN struck:-NO REFL
      ‘Oh, how I hit my head.’ [Meščerskij 1972:221]

   b. Lithuanian: Semantic Unaccusative
      Bumbos sprogta nakėji.
      bomb:GEN exploded:-TA at-night
      ‘A bomb exploded at night.’

(67) Derivation of Unaccusative \(-no/-to / -ma/-ta\)\textsuperscript{59}

\textsuperscript{58} Such an approach to phrase structure has been proposed to hold more generally in Bowers (1999).
\textsuperscript{59} Note that there is no evidence for a distinct Aspect projection for Lithuanian. It follows that movement of Lithuanian \(-ma/-ta\) to T\textsuperscript{\prime} need not pass through Asp\textsuperscript{\prime}, and, thus, is not in violation of minimality.
Note that (67) is essentially the structure that was proposed for Lithuanian unaccusative
-*ma/-ta constructions in Nuñes 1994 (cf. (46)). The structure that I am proposing here
differs, however, in the following respects: (i) V+Af enters the derivation fully formed;
(ii) quirky case is assigned in situ by the operation Merge; (iii) /-no/-to/ and /-ma/-ta/
subsequently excorporate and move to a higher head, leaving a trace in the VP; and (iv)
the predicate’s sole argument raises to check T’s EPP-feature (that is, raising of the
internal argument is exclusively an EPP-effect, rather than being case-driven). Note that
the idea behind positing the excorporation of /-no/-to/ and /-ma/-ta/ is that these
morphemes are interpreted in one position (as the head of Asp(ect) or T(ense)), while
being pronounced in another; that is, it is the trace (or copy) that is pronounced, again, as
an historical relic from a process of reanalysis that has not been fully actualized.

To review, ergativity is derived by virtue of the fact that the North Russian aspectual
marker and the Lithuanian marker of evidentiality head the main predicate word (or
copula) and select a quirky case for this predicate’s subject (or derived subject). The
quirky case associated with these functional heads developed diachronically from a
possessive predication.

Let us now examine what happens if we merge an external argument with the
structure in (65). It is precisely at this point that some notion of a case-dependency must
be introduced to avoid the assignment of quirky ERG to the wrong NP. Recall that V+Af
can assign its quirky case at Merge only if it has discharged all of its thematic relations.
In this way, the dependency that is invoked to account for whether the object is assigned
/-no/-to/ and /-ma/-ta/’s quirky ERG relies on lexical information (i.e., V’s argument
structure), which is available at all stages of the derivation. Under the assumption that the
external argument is associated with its own projection, light-\(v\), the introduction of an external argument will involve the following elaboration of (65), given below in (69). This structure is meant to account for examples such as those in (68), repeated from (1-2):

(68) Transitive Ergatives
   a. North Russian -\(no/-to\)
      \[ U \text{ lisicy unesenno kuročka.} \]
      \[ \text{at fox:GEN carried-off:-NO chicken:NOM.FEM} \]
      \[ 'A fox has carried off a chicken.' [K&N 1971:27] \]
   b. Lithuanian -\(ma/-ta\)
      \[ Girdėjau, jo mieste namas statoma. \]
      \[ I-heard he:GEN in-city house:NOM.MASC being-built:-MA \]
      \[ 'I heard he is building a house in town.' [Ambrazas et al. 1997:281] \]

(69) Derivation of Transitive -\(no/-to\) / -\(ma/-ta\)

Merging out all theta relations is the necessary stipulation in order to account for the dependency of the object. That is, assign \(\text{ERG}\) to the object only if there is no higher thematic element. Exactly in what way the affixation of /\(-no/-to\)/ and /\(-ma/-ta\)/ suppresses \(V\)'s \(\text{ACC}\)-case feature remains mysterious (see section 4.4.2 for more discussion). As for the specifics of the structure in (69), note first that light-\(v\) heads a projection that is dedicated to the introduction of the external argument. This distinct argument-introducing
projection is motivated on semantic grounds in Kratzer (1993). This idea goes back to Marantz’s (1984) observation that while V selects its complement, the external argument is selected by the entire VP (or, under current theory, by a distinct head that selects VP). A light-ν projection will be assumed for predicates containing an external argument with no further discussion. Lexical V is standardly assumed to raise and adjoin to ν° forming the complex head [, V+Af ν]. Upon the Merger of the external argument, this creates a licit configuration for the assignment of quirky ERG to the subject. Note, alternatively, that this quirky case assignment can take place higher in the functional domain after the excorporation of /-no/-to/ and /-ma/-tal/. That is, North Russian u + GEN can be assigned in [Spec,AspP] and Lithuanian GEN in [Spec,TP]. I will assume that (u +) GEN is assigned in [Spec,νP] at Merge, though these different options for case assignment on the external argument do not appear to be easily distinguishable on either empirical or conceptual grounds. In either case, the quirkily-marked subject subsequently raises overtly to [Spec,TP], where it checks T’s uninterpretable EPP-feature.

To summarize the results of this subsection, the ERG case in North Russian and Lithuanian is assigned as a lexical idiosyncrasy of the morpheme that triggers the split-ergative construction. The theory of Dependent Case, which is designed to regulate the assignment of structural ERG, is overridden in North Russian and Lithuanian, where the ERG case is still transparently quirky. The result is that the ERG in North Russian and Lithuanian is not subject to a case dependency, in contrast to the ERG case in the more robust ergative languages (where the ERG is interpreted synchronically as a structural case), which leads to the (typologically-rare) licit assignment in the former of ERG case to

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60 Feature-checking in [Spec,νP] for subjects is ruled out in Chomsky 1994 due to the fact that, under normal circumstances, this would result in the inappropriate assignment of V’s ACC-case feature to the
the derived subject of unaccusatives. Derivational morphology was shown to be responsible for the assignment of quirky case elsewhere in both North Russian and Lithuanian, providing independent evidence for the case assigning mechanism that I have proposed for the ERG. A structure was provided for the North Russian and Lithuanian ergative construction in (69) which captures the fact that the /-no/-to/ and /-ma/-ta/ morphemes are pronounced in a position distinct from where they are interpreted. Finally, the case-dependency observed on the object (i.e., the ERG ~ NOM alternation) was shown to be regulated by assuming that all theta relations are discharged before quirky ERG can be assigned. In such a way, reference is made to a predicate’s argument structure, rather than to a clausal structure which has not yet been merged.

4.4.2 The NOM Object

We now turn to a more explicit characterization of the NOM object in the case of transitive ergative constructions in North Russian and Lithuanian. The ERG ~ NOM alternation has already been accounted for by relating the notion of a case dependency to the thematic saturation of a predicate’s arguments. This is essentially a relativized version of Chomsky’s (1994) strict complementarity between theta role assignment and feature checking. For those instances in which particular derivational morphology marks a case dependency, both theta assignment and feature checking can take place in the same position (i.e., at Merge) only if the predicate has saturated all of its thematic relations. This has the result of “postponing” the assignment of quirky ERG in the case of transitives until the external argument has been merged (with the consequence that quirky ERG is correctly assigned to the predicate’s external argument, rather than to its complement).
That is, case assignment (or checking) takes place for transitive predicates only at that point in the derivation when the structure in (70) is fully projected:

(70) Transitive -no/-to / -ma/-ta: Projection of Thematic Relations

\[ \begin{array}{c}
\text{vP} \\
\text{NP}_{(u+)} \text{GEN} \quad v' \\
[\text{v'} \text{V+Af v}] \quad \text{VP} \\
\text{t}_{v+Af} \quad \text{NP:Obj} \\
\end{array} \]

What remains is to identify a formal licensing mechanism for the NOM object. It is not enough merely to account for why the object is not assigned ERG. In what follows, I will argue against the one-to-one relationship between a functional head and case, which is standardly assumed in the feature-checking framework (cf. (58)). We begin by returning to the theory of Dependent Case, and related crosslinguistic generalizations, which appear, at least descriptively, to account for the distribution of case in the North Russian and Lithuanian ergative construction.

4.4.2.1 The NOM Object and Dependent Case

Marantz’s (1991) theory of Dependent Case is designed to capture, in less stipulative terms, the strong crosslinguistic generalization given in Yip et al. (1987), namely, that the assignment of NOM to the object NP is dependent on the unavailability of morphological NOM for the subject NP. In other words, NOM is assigned to the first available NP; if not to the subject, then to the object. Recall that the theory of Dependent Case holds that case realization is a property of the clause, rather than strictly of V (ACC) or T (NOM). This idea is formalized in Harley’s Mechanical Case Parameter (1995:151):
(71) Harley’s Mechanical Case Parameter
   a. If one case feature is checked structurally in a clause, it is realized as NOM (/ absolutive) [= mandatory case]
   b. If two case features are checked structurally in a clause, the second is realized as ACC (/ ERG) [= dependent case]
   c. The mandatory case in a multiple-case clause is assigned in the top (/ bottom) AgrP

Since the ERG case in North Russian and Lithuanian is still transparently quirky, the NOM object is indeed the sole structural case and, thus, correctly predicted by (71a) to surface as NOM. At the same time, however, statements such as (71a) are immediately contradicted by the Polish and Ukrainian -no/-to facts: dependent ACC is assigned in the absence of a mandatory NOM argument elsewhere in the clause (thus contradicting (71b) as well). As a result, the theory of Dependent Case cannot be considered to hold universally. Regardless, the oblique subject ~ NOM object correlation does appear to hold widely among the world’s languages and, thus, cannot be considered a mere coincidence.61 Note, finally, the statement in (71c), designed to account for the NOM-ACC versus ERG pattern, which reduces, under Harley’s proposal, to a parameter regulating which Agr will host the features of the mandatory (NOM) case. According to (71c), in the case of transitive ergatives, it is precisely the “lower” Agr (i.e., the projection canonically associated with ACC case) that will check NOM.62 An immediate consequence of this

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61 The difference in the case-realization of the sole structurally-marked NP between Polish and Ukrainian -no/-to and their cognate North Russian and Lithuanian counterparts is, thus, subject to further sub-parameterization which will not be pursued here in formal terms. In a purely descriptive sense, this difference appears to follow from two different case-assigning strategies. In Polish and Ukrainian all structurally-marked direct objects are treated the same morphologically and marked ACC. In North Russian and Lithuanian, as we will see below, the case-marking of objects is subject to a clausal dependency which makes reference to the way in which the subject, if present, is case-marked (See Babby, forthcoming, (ch. 3) for discussion of similar facts).

62 A conceptual problem with (71c) noted earlier (and acknowledged by Harley (1995:178-179)) is that when a lower Agr is projected, it must already be aware of the status of the higher Agr, which has not yet entered the structure. One possible solution, as I have suggested, is to rely on the predicate’s argument structure, which is available at all stages of the derivation, rather than relying on the final clausal structure, which appears to require some form of “look-ahead”.
proposal is that NOM is crucially divorced from Tense. It will be argued in section 4.4.2.3 that such an assumption is necessary to account for the distribution of NOM objects more generally in both North Russian and Lithuanian.

For now, let us focus on the well-known descriptive generalization referred to as the “Case-in-Tiers” effect, stated explicitly in (72):

(72) Case-in-Tiers Generalization (Yip et al. 1987:224)
“If a verb has a quirky-case subject--which is thus not available for association with syntactic [= structural] case--then the next NP (the object) will be associated with N[OM] by simple L[left]-to-R[ight] association.”

The fact that NOM objects pattern with oblique subjects accounts for a wide range of facts in Balto-Slavic. Earlier, we noted that NOM objects pattern with infinitives in both North Russian and Lithuanian, where infinitival /-ti/ (or the North Russian allomorph /-t'/) selects a quirky DAT subject. The relevant examples from (60-61) are repeated below as (73-74):

(73) North Russian
a. S kem mne-ka budet sveža ryba kušat’?
   with whom me:DAT AUX:FUT fresh fish:NOM to-eat:-TI
   ‘With whom will it be possible for me to eat fresh fish?’

b. Ne tebe na etogo konja uzda nadevat’.
   NEG you:DAT on this horse bridle:NOM to-put-on:-TI
   ‘It is not for you to put a bridle on that horse.’
   [Timberlake 1974:104-105]

(74) Lithuanian
Kitiems laiškai rašyti buvo daug lengviau.
others:DAT letters:NOM to-write:-TI AUX:PAST much easier

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63 Yip et al. (1987:219-220) propose that for ergative languages the direction of association (of arguments with structural case) is right-to-left, rather than left-to-right. Since the ergative subject in North Russian and Lithuanian is still transparently quirky (i.e., assigned by a lexical head), I will assume that -no/-to / -ma/-ta follows the left-to-right pattern exhibited, for example, by the Icelandic quirky-subject construction with which the Case-in-Tiers model is most concerned.

64 The NOM object in Lithuanian infinitival constructions such as (74) alternates with a competing ACC form in the modern language (cf. -ma/-ta + ACC in (4)). That is, Lithuanian exhibits the two distinct case-assigning strategies mentioned earlier: a clausal strategy (where oblique subjects patterns with NOM objects) and a strictly local strategy (where all objects are uniformly marked ACC).
‘For others to write letters was much easier.’ [Schmalstieg 1988:149]

For Lithuanian (as well as North Russian), the NOM object of infinitives is attested even in the absence of an overt oblique subject. Consider the examples in (75):

(75) Lithuanian
a. Jam nepatiko [ laukelis arti].
   him:DAT didn’t appeal field:NOM to-plough:-TI
   ‘He didn’t like to plough the field.’ [Ambrazas et al. 1997:638]

b. Tau pačiam reiks [ rugiai pjauti].
   you yourself:DAT will-be-necessary rye:NOM to-cut:-TI
   ‘You will have to cut the rye yourself.’ [Ambrazas et al. 1985:323]

As noted in section 4.4.1.2, a null DAT subject of infinitives can be detected indirectly on the basis of the case marking of secondary predicates (cf. Babby 1998b). Thus, in the example in (62), repeated below as (76), the only possible antecedent of the secondary predicate viena- ‘alone’ is the infinitive’s DAT PRO subject:

(76) Lithuanian: Infinitive + DAT PRO Subject
Vytautas paprašė tėvo [ PRO ateiti vienam].
Vytautas:NOM asked father:GEN PRO:DAT to-come:-TI alone:DAT
   ‘Vytautas asked his father to come alone.’

On the basis of (76), we can conclude that the embedded infinitives in (75) also contain a DAT PRO subject, thus bringing these examples in line with the more general pattern of NOM objects appearing only when dominated by an oblique subject.

It would be interesting to observe at this point what happens when the embedded infinitive’s PRO subject can be shown to be NOM, and not DAT. Note, for example, the -ma/-ta evidential in (77), in which the object of the matrix clause appears in the NOM, along the standard ergative pattern. What is interesting here is that the secondary
predicate *viena-* ‘alone’ of the embedded clause appears obligatorily in the NOM, suggesting a NOM PRO antecedent, rather than the DAT PRO as in (76).\(^{65}\)

(77) Lithuanian: Infinitive + NOM PRO Subject

\[
\text{Studento įkalbėta tėvąs [PRO ateiti vienas / *vienam].} \\
\text{student:GEN persuaded:-TA father:NOM PRO:NOM to-come alone:NOM */DAT}
\]

‘The student apparently persuaded his father to come alone.’

The absence of an oblique subject in the embedded clause of (77) predicts that for transitive infinitival complements the object will obligatorily surface in the ACC, rather than the NOM, assuming that the Case-in-Tiers model applies more generally to Lithuanian. This is precisely what we find in (78):

(78) Lithuanian: Infinitive + NOM PRO Subject

\[
\text{Studento įkalbėta tėvąs [PRO pirkti laikrodį / *laikrodis].} \\
\text{student:GEN persuaded:-TA father:NOM PRO:NOM to-buy watch:ACC */NOM}
\]

‘The student apparently persuaded his father to buy a watch.’

An additional example of a Case-in-Tiers effect concerns the North (and western Central) Russian -no/-to allomorph /-všil/. Earlier, it was noted that /-všil/, like /-nol/-to/, takes an oblique PP subject in its function to mark the perfect tense. This predicate-type alternates (perhaps areally) with a second construction in /-všil/ that patterns with a canonical subject in the NOM. The resulting case on the object for these two constructions in /-všil/ (i.e., NOM versus ACC) thus presents an interesting testing ground for the Case-in-Tiers system. As we will see shortly, when a participle in /-všil/ is predicated of a PP *u + GEN subject it patterns obligatorily with a NOM object (K&N 1971:137). Alternatively, when a participle in /-všil/ is predicated of a NOM subject, it patterns with an object in the ACC. Examples of these two predicate-types are given in (79) and (80), respectively. Note

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\(^{65}\) Strictly speaking, the notion of a NOM PRO needlessly complicates our analysis of the infinitival morpheme as a quirky-case assigner. The PRO:NOM subject of the embedded clause in (77) (and (78) to follow) is meant only to indicate that the embedded infinitive does not have an oblique subject. See Babby 1998b for details of what this structure might look like.
that both patterns are correctly predicted by the Case-in-Tiers model, as well as by

Harley’s Mechanical Case Parameter in (71).

(79) North (and western Central) Russian /-yši/: Oblique Subject/NOM Object
   a. U menja už korova podoivši.
      at me:GEN already cow:NOM milked:-(V)ši
      ‘I have already milked the cow.’ [Filin 1969:72]

   b. U menja nadevši valeni.
      at me:GEN put-on:(V)ši felt-boots:NOM
      ‘I have put on my boots.’ [K&N 1971:139]

(80) North (and western Central) Russian /-yši/: NOM Subject/ACC Object
   a. Ja zabvyši svoju žijn’.
      I:NOM forgotten:(V)ši REFL life:ACC
      ‘I have forgotten my life.’ [K&N 1971:132]

   b. On ne zakončivši semiletku.
      he:NOM NEG finished:(V)ši seven-year-school:ACC
      ‘He hasn’t finished the seven-year school.’ [K&N 1971:132]

Based on the data from (73-80) we can conclude that a Case-in-Tiers (-like) system applies in some sense to the grammar of North Russian and Lithuanian. Furthermore, this is a general property of these languages, which is not limited to the ergative construction. The appearance of NOM objects in these languages is systematically related to the presence of oblique subjects; NOM is thus predictably assigned “downstairs” when it fails to be assigned “upstairs”. However, an obvious flaw with the Case-in-Tiers system, which applies equally to the theory of Dependent Case and Harley’s Mechanical Case Parameter, is that it is not clear why such generalizations concerning the distribution of NOM objects should hold in some languages (like North Russian and Lithuanian), but not in others (such as Polish and Ukrainian). This suggests the need for even greater parameterization, which is conceptually unappealing and not explanatory. A second problem, particularly for the Case-in-Tiers approach, is that there is no obvious formal
implementation for the algorithm on which it relies. If the NOM object of North Russian and Lithuanian truly bears structural case, then this introduces a [-interpretable] formal feature into the derivation (in contrast to quirky case, which enters the derivation [+interpretable]). Under a feature-checking framework, this raises the question of where exactly this [-interpretable] feature is checked and, more specifically, whether case on the NOM object is checked against T(ense) in the same way that NOM subjects are. These questions are taken up in the next two sections.

4.4.2.2 On the NOM Object as Structural Case

The structural, rather than quirky, status of the NOM object is established on the basis of the fact that, despite its non-canonical case-marking, NOM objects in North Russian and Lithuanian behave like structural ACC objects in all relevant respects. Here, we will examine three diagnostics that exclusively target structural objects: (i) genitive of negation (GENNEG); (ii) partitive genitive; and (iii) the ability to be overridden by quirky case. The basic data are given in (81-88). Discussion of these diagnostics is limited since they are well-known and uncontroversial.

We begin with examples of the licit application of GENNEG to the object of the North Russian and Lithuanian ergatives in (81-82). Here, the object appears in the GEN under negation, alternating with the NOM form in the absence of negation.

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66 Yip et al. (1987:227) note that quirky NOM is unattested crosslinguistically.
67 Note that GENNEG is grammaticalized in Lithuanian, like Polish, and, thus, applies obligatorily to all structurally-marked objects within the scope of negation. In North Russian, like Standard Russian, GENNEG applies to structurally-marked indefinite objects only.
68 The corresponding NOM forms in the absence of negation are given for Lithuanian only, since, in the case of North Russian, I am relying exclusively on published sources of data, where the NOM forms, though predictable, are not given.
(81) North Russian -no/-to: GENNEG
a. U nego i četyre klassov ne končeno.
   at him:GEN PRT four grades:GEN NEG finished:-NO
   ‘He hasn’t even completed four years of school.’

b. Kljukovki u tebja moej ne vzjato?
   cranberries:GEN at you my:GEN NEG taken:-TO
   ‘Have you taken my cranberries?’

[K&N 1971:62]

(82) Lithuanian -ma/-ta: GENNEG
a. Jo ne matoma paukšcio. [cf. Jo matoma paukštis]
   he:GEN NEG seen:-MA bird:GEN bird:NOM
   ‘Evidently he hasn’t seen the bird.’

b. Tėvų ne skaitytą šitų knygų. [cf. Tėvų skaitytą šitos knygos]
   parents:GEN NEG read:-TA these books:GEN these books:NOM
   ‘The parents apparently haven’t read these books.’

Note in the Lithuanian example in (83) that the quirky-case-assigning verb didžiuotis ‘be proud of’ fails to occur licitly with GENNEG; this shows that the GEN marking on the object of negated verbs applies to structurally-marked objects only:

(83) Lithuanian -ma/-ta: GENNEG
Jų ne sididžiuojama *savō sūnaus / savo sūnum.
   they:GEN NEG proud:-MA REFL son:GEN SELF son:INST
   ‘They are not proud of their son.’

These facts are duplicated by the application of the partitive genitive exemplified in (84-85):

(84-85):

(84) North Russian -no/-to: Partitive Genitive
a. Èto s Leningrada u nevestki naposlano trjap’ja.
   PRT from Leningrad at daughter-in-law:GEN sent:-NO clothes:GEN
   ‘My daughter-in-law sent these clothes from Leningrad.’ [K&N 1971:65]

b. U mizgirja natjanuto merežek.
   at spider:GEN spun:-TO webs:GEN

(85) Lithuanian -mal-:a: Partitive Genitive
Broliai atnešta oboulių.
   brother:GEN brought:-TA apples:GEN
‘My brother apparently brought some apples.’

The final diagnostic for the NOM object’s status as a structural case is the fact that it is licitly overridden by quirky case (when the latter is required by the lexical semantics of a particular verb). If the NOM itself were quirky, we would expect an “irresolvable case conflict” (in the sense of Babby 1986), resulting in an ill-formed structure. This idea is illustrated on the basis of the examples from Standard Russian in (86), in which two quirky-case assigners compete to assign distinct quirky cases to the single NP that they dominate. Here, the verb *vladet* ‘know, be master of’ selects an INST complement, while the distributive preposition *po* selects the DAT.

(86) Standard Russian

a. *Oni vladenju po inostrannomu jazyku.*
   
   they  know  PREP: DISTRIBUT foreign  language: DAT

b. *Oni vladenju po inostrannym jazykom.*
   
   foreign  language: INST

‘They know one foreign language each.’ [Babby 1986:196]

First we note the North Russian examples in (87), in which distributive *po* licitly overrides the default NOM marking on -no/-to’s object, in contrast to the Standard Russian example in (86):

(87) North Russian -no/-to + Distributive *po*

a. *U nix kupleno po plat’ju.*
   
   at  them: GEN bought: NO PREP: DISTRIBUT dress: DAT

   ‘They bought one dress each.’

b. *U rebjat vzjato po jabloku.*
   
   at  children: GEN taken: TO PREP: DISTRIBUT apple: DAT

   ‘The children took one apple each.’

   [K&N 1971:76]

In the Lithuanian examples in (88), the verb itself assigns quirky case to its complement. Quirky case takes precedence over default NOM, resulting in a well-formed structure. This
is the final piece of evidence in support of treating the NOM object of -no/-to and -ma/-ta ergatives as structural case.

(88) Lithuanian -ma/-ta + Quirky Case

a. Jū didžiuojamasi savo sūnum / * savo sūnus.
   they:GEN proud:-MA SELF son:INST SELF son:NOM
   ‘They were apparently proud of their son.’

b. Studento papašyta tévo / * tēvas ateiti.
   student:GEN asked:-TA father:GEN father:NOM to-come
   ‘The student apparently asked his father to come.’

As we noted earlier, the example in (88b) is particularly interesting because it also independently motivates the present analysis of underlying grammatical relations. Note crucially that the understood subject of the embedded infinitive (ateiti ‘come’) is father and not student. This is precisely what we would expect for such an object control structure, under the analysis that father is indeed the object, rather than an agentive by-phrase of an impersonal passive.

Let us conclude that the NOM object of the North Russian and Lithuanian ergative construction is a well-behaved bearer of structural case. What remains to be resolved is how this case is formally licensed. Recall that V’s ACC-case feature is suppressed by affixation of -no/-to and -ma/-ta. These affixes introduce a case dependency on the object which is responsible for the ergative pattern. In those languages in which the morphological realization of case is subject to such a dependency, the licensing of structural case does not appear to be subject to “checking” in the minimalist sense. That is, where case realization makes reference to the larger clausal structure, or, in our terms, to the argument structure of the main predicate (to avoid the formal complexity of “look-

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69 The verbs didžiuotis ‘be proud of’ and paprašyti ‘ask, request’ select quirky INST and GEN, respectively.

70 I argued earlier that no such dependency holds of the ergative subject since it bears quirky case and, thus, is licensed by a lexical head (which, in this case, is a morpheme).
ahead”), structural case is subject to some notion of Dependent Case, such as the generalization given in Harley’s Mechanical Case Parameter in (71a), repeated below in (89):

(89) Mandatory Nom
If one case feature is checked structurally in a clause, it is realized as Nom (/ absolutive).

According to (89), if there is only one structurally-marked NP in a clause, it will be marked Nom, **even if it is the object**. We have seen that this holds for North Russian and Lithuanian infinitival clauses, as well as the ergative construction. In the case of intransitive ergatives, (89) does not apply since the predicate’s sole argument is assigned quirky, rather than structural, case.

To be sure, we have noted repeatedly that this pattern of Dependent Case is not a universal component of Case Theory, but merely a language-specific case-assigning strategy. The other strategy states that all objects are uniformly marked ACC, as we noted for Polish and Ukrainian -no/-to. In fact, in both North Russian and Lithuanian this more local case-assigning strategy competes with the Dependent Case strategy, and is responsible for those instances of -no/-to and -ma/-ta + ACC, given in (3-4), and repeated below in (90):

(90) -no/-to / -ma/-ta + ACC
   a. North Russian
       U bat’ki saženo berezku.
       at father:Gen planted:-No birch:Acc
       ‘Father has planted a birch.’ [K&N 1971:38]
   b. Lithuanian
       Jo su geiniu iš drevių medų kopama.
       he:Gen with stepladder from hollows honey:Acc being-taken:-Ma
       ‘He apparently took the honey from the hollows of the tree with a stepladder.’
       [adapted from Ambrazas 1978:345]
For (90a-b) we assume the structure given for Polish -no/-to + ACC in section 3.4, in which the predicate-final morphology is merged in a higher functional head, with the result that the bare verb-stem is a full-fledged ACC-case checker. In both cases, the predicate selects an external argument; in North Russian and Lithuanian, in contrast to Polish, this external argument is lexically realized. An abbreviated version of this structure is given in (91):\(^{71}\)

(91)  \(-no/-to \mid -ma/-ta + ACC\)

This structure is in contrast with the one proposed for North Russian and Lithuanian -no/-to \mid -ma/-ta + NOM, in which /-no/-to/ and /-ma/-ta/ are merged together with \(V\), where they mark the ergative pattern and concomitant case dependency, and then subsequently excorporate to the higher functional head where they are interpreted. Thus, the structure for -no/-to \mid -ma/-ta + NOM minimally differs from (91) in the following way: \(V\) enters the structure fully-formed with the ergative-marking affix. This introduces the case dependency which results in the non-realization of \(V\)’s ACC-case feature in accordance with (89) (for languages in which such a case-marking strategy is available). The structure for -no/-to \mid -ma/-ta + NOM given in (69) is repeated in (92):

\(^{71}\) Recall that XP equals TP for Lithuanian (and Polish) and AspP for North Russian.
(92) -no/-to / -ma/-ta + NOM

We may note, of course, that the mere statement of a case dependency does not resolve the question of how the NOM object is formally licensed. Before making my own proposal explicit, let us consider the “default hypothesis” which assumes that all instances of structural NOM are checked in the same way, against T(ense) in the [Spec,TP] position.

4.4.2.3 On the Licensing of the NOM Object and [Spec,TP]: The Default Hypothesis

NOM-case marking is generally taken to reflect a structural relation with Tense and finiteness. In the minimalist framework, morphological NOM is licensed by virtue of checking T’s case feature. The question, then, is whether T always bears a NOM case feature (as a selectional property of the head), and, if so, whether all instances of morphological NOM can be treated in the same way. Given the conceptual preference in generative syntax for unification (where unifying seemingly diverse structures is believed to increase learnability), we can take the checking of NOM objects in [Spec,TP], along with canonical NOM subjects, to be the default hypothesis.72 This is precisely the analysis that I will argue against in this section.

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72 See, for example, Schütze 1993 on the licensing of NOM objects in Icelandic quirky-subject constructions.
The argumentation against checking NOM objects in [Spec,TP] rests on the assumption that T’s case and agreement features pattern together. In nonagreeing structures, T is impoverished, in the sense that it lacks both sets of features. That is, where T (or AgrS) lacks agreement features, it also lacks its NOM case feature. It contains an EPP (D-) feature alone (see Lavine 1998). What I am proposing, then, is that NOM NPs occurring in the absence of subject-predicate agreement are not licensed by T. Evidence for divorcing NOM case from Tense comes from those instances in which non-finite Tense and morphological NOM cooccur. We have already seen this to be the case in North Russian and Lithuanian for the NOM objects of both ergative predicates and infinitives. It is a well-known observation that subjects of non-finite clauses need a case assigner distinct from Tense. In English, for example, the subject of infinitivals can receive case from either a preposition or an ECM verb. This is illustrated by the examples in (93) from Chomsky (1986:186):

(93) Infinitival Clauses in English
   a. *[John to be the winner] is unlikely.
   b. For [John to be the winner] is unlikely.
   c. I believe [John to be the winner].

Such examples are standardly taken to indicate that Tense bears a NOM case feature only when [+finite]. In the case of infinitival clauses in North Russian and Lithuanian, we have seen that a licit subject appears by virtue of being assigned quirky case by the infinitival affix, rather than being assigned structural case by Tense.

Further evidence against checking the object’s NOM case in (an additional) [Spec,TP] comes from the interpretation and form of anaphors. It was noted in section 4.1.2.2 that reflexives regularly occur as NOM objects of North Russian and Lithuanian ergatives. Examples from Lithuanian are given in (94):
(94) Lithuanian -ma/-ta + REFL

   Jonas:GEN burnt-down:TA REFL his house:NOM
   ‘Jonas apparently burned down his house.’

b. Mokytojo pamatyta saveš / *ji veidrodyje.
   teacher:GEN seen:-TA REFL:GEN him:ACC in-mirror
   ‘The teacher apparently saw himself in the mirror.’

Note first that the anaphor is interpreted “low”: it has an obligatory c-commanding antecedent higher in the clause. Under LF movement to [Spec,TP] for case, we would expect an alternative “higher” interpretation which is independently ruled out by Condition A of the Binding Theory, which states that anaphors must be locally bound.73

A second problem with the object’s case being checked in [Spec,TP] specifically concerns the example in (94b), where the object is marked GEN, rather than the expected NOM. Paradigms for the REFL personal pronoun generally lack a NOM form precisely due to its non-occurrence sentence-initially, where the NOM is canonically licensed. In the case of (94b), checking the GEN REFL savės in [Spec,TP] (under the assumption that [-finite] T contains a NOM case feature) would result in a “feature mismatch” and a non-convergent derivation.74 Let us conclude at this point that the case-checking of anaphors in [Spec,TP] is (potentially) unappealing on both interpretive and formal grounds.

Assuming that the Tense projection in the North Russian and Lithuanian ergative construction is indeed impoverished (in terms of its featural specification), and contains, as a result, the EPP-feature alone, then T’s sole checking requirement is satisfied

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73 To be sure, under Chomsky’s (1994) revision of LF feature-checking which holds that only formal features move, leaving the lexical element that bears these features in situ, NOM case of the object could be checked in [Spec,TP] without resulting in a Condition A violation.
74 An explicit account for the licensing of the default GEN REFL in (94b) is actually problematic under any account.
independently by the \((u \text{ ‘at’ } +) \text{ GEN}\) constituent, which provides further evidence that the NOM object does not enter into a checking relation with T.

At this point we have concluded that the NOM object in North Russian and Lithuanian does not refer to finiteness (i.e., the abstract case feature in T) as its licensing mechanism. What remains to be resolved is specifying where else NOM case can be checked. Recall that the case on the NOM object is structural and that this structural object exhibits the properties of other structural objects in these languages. Among the properties that I have treated, these include the ability to undergo GENNEG and to be the target of reflexivization, as well as to function as the antecedent for the PRO subject of embedded object-controlled infinitives. It might also be noted that the NOM object is indistinguishable from other objects in these languages in terms of word order. The fact that the NOM object bears the verb’s direct internal argument suggests that it enters the structure in the following way, repeated from (65):

(95) Merge V + Complement

\[
\begin{array}{c}
\text{VP} \\
\text{V+Af} \\
\text{NP} \\
\text{Case?}
\end{array}
\]

The question, as indicated in (95), is whether structural case can be licensed for the NOM object at Merge for North Russian and Lithuanian, as argued for Polish and Ukrainian -\text{no/-to} + ACC in chapter 3.

Recall that when a case dependency is introduced into a derivation, this disrupts the usual one-to-one relation between a head and the features that it licenses (checks). We have already seen that T does not necessarily check NOM, and, indeed, T’s EPP-feature is checked by an oblique constituent. Under the assumptions that the NOM object is indeed
structural and that heads are not inherently associated with particular case morphology (unless they are quirky-case assigners), I will suggest that the NOM object is indeed licensed at Merge in (95). While V canonically licenses abstract ACC, which may be taken to refer to a positional licensing requirement of direct objects, it does not determine its complement’s morphological realization. In this case, the realization of morphological NOM is a clausal property (in the sense of Harley 1995) which follows from the case dependency introduced by the /-no/-to/ /-/ma/-ta/ affix. That is, case on an NP is determined not solely by its position in the clause, but by the structure of the rest of the clause, for languages that admit a Case-in-Tiers-like system. We have seen that in North Russian and Lithuanian, the structural case assigned to the object makes reference in some sense to what kind of case is assigned above. Nonagreeing, nonfinite predicates which select an external argument (for which NOM case is not available) are thus predicted to pattern with NOM-marking on the object, as the sole structurally-realized case in the clause. This prediction was shown to be borne out for infinitival clauses in both languages, as well as for predicates in /-(v)i/ in North Russian.

4.5 Chapter Summary

The North Russian and Lithuanian constructions in /-no/-to/ and /-/ma/-ta/ lend additional empirical support to the claim that subject properties cannot be linked universally to a single position. In particular, we have seen that NOM case can be checked in more than one position, and that the argument that bears NOM case is not obligatorily involved in

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75 In a system in which the licensing of formal features is limited exclusively to the functional domain of the derivation, my proposal would read that structural NOM is checked either in AgrO or in an adjoined vP. Cf. Harley 1995, ch. 4, for a similar proposal.
subject-positional licensing. In the case of the North Russian and Lithuanian ergative construction, the EPP-feature of Tense is checked by a distinct, non-NOM NP (or PP).

In section 4.1 the question of a passive analysis for these predicates was taken up. The impersonal passive analysis is based on the presence of apparent passive-participial morphology and an oblique constituent homophonous with the passive by-phrase of these languages. Here, it was argued that the distribution of these predicates, along with the subject-like behavior of the oblique constituent (i.e., the underlying external argument) indicates a cluster of properties that would be unexpected and anomalous under an impersonal passive analysis. Further evidence was provided to suggest that the apparent passive-participial morphology is interpreted in the functional domain of the clause, along the lines of Polish -no/-to, rather than as a voice-altering affix attached to the verb-stem.

In section 4.3 it was shown that treating these nonagreeing passive-participial structures as ergative is typologically motivated, consistent with the subject properties of the preverbal oblique constituent, and, crucially, does not require amending a widely-held view of passivization just for these constructions (this latter approach is argued against in section 4.2). The basic claim of this section, then, is that the sentence-initial (u ‘at’ +) GEN constituent is a basic, fully-thematic ergative subject, while the NOM NP is a “non-promoted” (absolutive) object.

Ergativity in both languages was shown to develop from an erstwhile possessive predication, along the lines of other split-ergative languages that lack the distinct lexeme have. Quirky ergative is assigned in North Russian and Lithuanian as a lexical idiosyncrasy of the affix that marks the ergative split (i.e., the perfect aspect in North
Russian and the evidential mood in Lithuanian). It is precisely the assignment of quirky case by an affix, rather than as a lexical property of particular verbs, that accounts for its wide (and non-passive-like) distribution. That is, the affix that marks the ergative split transparently assigns quirky case to the verb-stem’s thematically most-prominent argument. In the case of unaccusatives, where the predicate’s sole argument is initially internal, quirky ergative is assigned exceptionally (from the point of view of Marantz’s Generalization) to a derived subject.

The discussion in section 4.4 relied largely on previous observations concerning the distribution of NOM objects. The primary focus was on the Case-in-Tiers system (Yip et al. 1987) and the theory of Dependent Case (Marantz 1991). Here, we found that the phenomenon of NOM objects in North Russian and Lithuanian was subject to a more general pattern attested crosslinguistically, according to which NOM objects regularly cooccur with oblique subjects. The central question of structure was to ensure that quirky ergative be assigned to the correct argument. That is, at the initial point in the derivation in which the verb merged with its complement, our concern was to admit the assignment of quirky ergative in the case of unaccusatives, while ruling out, or delaying, such case assignment for the complement of transitive V. This required the introduction of a dependency that would regulate at what point in the derivation quirky ergative should be discharged.

The theory of Dependent Case, especially as implemented in Harley 1995, was shown to apply merely as a well-formedness constraint that permitted the assignment of structural NOM to the object just in case the rest of the clause met certain conditions (namely, the unavailability of structural case assignment higher in the clause). It was
noted repeatedly that from the point of view of bottom-up derivations, such a system introduces the conceptually unappealing mechanism of look-ahead. Returning to the initial point in the derivation when V merges with its complement, it was proposed, instead, that the assignment of quirky ergative is “delayed” until all thematic relations are saturated. If this single instance of Merge saturates the verb’s sole argument, then the assignment of quirky ergative licitly applies. Alternatively, if the verb selects an external argument, this argument is projected before the quirky ergative is discharged. The result is that in those instances in which an external argument is present, it is precisely this higher argument that will be in a checking domain with quirky-case assigning V+Af.

Finally, it was proposed that the NOM object is licensed in situ, i.e., in the site of canonical abstract ACC licensing. This follows from the fact that the NOM object bears a structural case unrelated to finiteness and, thus, to Tense, more generally, while exhibiting the properties of a well-behaved object. This proposal involves the assumption, largely empirically motivated by the broader discussion in this work, that there is no one-to-one relation between a particular head and the case that it licenses. To be sure, the projection of a NOM case feature in V (or in AgrO or $v$) remains a non-trivial matter for a minimalist system and requires the elaboration of a mechanism that would properly constrain the application of the dependency that underlies this case-assigning strategy.