

Nominative as a default case. But it no longer allows us to relate Nominative morphology to certain kinds of syntactic environments.<sup>8</sup> Thus, traditional characterizations of case positions vs. non-case positions, such as, say, the object of active vs. passive verbs, will also have to be entirely divorced from the actual appearance of Nominative case. So the theory still needs the equivalent of abstract case-licensing to determine why the object of a passive verb is not licensed *in situ*, with Nominative, and so Pesetsky maintains abstract case in the system, relabeling it “Vergnaud-licensing” in (9):

(9) Feature Assignment (FA) and licensing (Pesetsky, p. 75)

FA applies to DP only in the position in which it is Vergnaud-licensed

Although Vergnaud-licensing is nowhere defined by Pesetsky, it is, for all intents and purposes, the Case Filter. He does not define it, but presumably assumes what is standardly assumed, namely that Vergnaud licensors are (typical) case assigners, (and that something about passive and unaccusative verbs interferes with Vergnaud-licensing). For Pesetsky, (9) blocks Accusative, and default Nominative appears. There is no discussion of why Vergnaud-licensing fails here, but clearly it must. So we need a system of abstract case licensing. However, the need to maintain something like Vergnaud-licensing in Pesetsky’s system comes as a disappointment, given the book’s remarkable achievements in (otherwise) reducing case to part of speech, and also considering the fairly significant overlap between the part of speech $\leftrightarrow$ case associations in (1) and the presumed class of Vergnaud-licensors (V; P; N, etc.). We neither eliminate abstract case, nor have insight into this potentially significant overlap.

There may be a way out: notice that it is primarily Pesetsky’s  $D_{\text{NOM}}$  claim that underlies the need for Vergnaud-licensing. If instead Nominative were associated with a category *outside* DP (such as [T]), then (9) (blocking of case due to lack of Vergnaud-licensing) would perhaps not be necessary. Whenever DP objects of passives get no Accusative from V (an assumption every system needs), Nominative (from T) would appear

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<sup>8</sup>Note, importantly, that the monograph’s claims about Accusative (= [V]), Oblique (= [P]), and even Genitive (= [N]) in the adnominal instances, do not encounter this issue, - as pointed out above, these associations accord with traditional notions of case assignment, for the most part. But that is not true of Nominative and D.

as expected. That is, Vergnaud-licensing would be worked into the associations in (1) rather than be entirely divorced from them.<sup>9</sup> As it stands, we are forced to maintain Pesetsky's conclusion, following Schütze (2001), that "licensing and morphological case are independent systems... [D]efault case ... can never 'save' a DP from violating the Case Filter." (p. 73)

The third consequence of the  $D_{\text{NOM}}$  system involves the necessary separation of Nominative and Accusative contexts for the purposes of the Paucal (and higher numeral) Puzzle. In Pesetsky's system, we expect Acc to overwrite Nom and Gen (in Accusative contexts), and this needs to be prevented. That is, we expect the primeval Genitive of (5) in paucals to disappear when the phrase is an object, as in (10):

(10) a. expected form in Accusative context, showing Accusative overwrite:

*ja	videl	[ <b>dva</b>	novy <b>e</b>	stol <b>y</b> ]
I	saw	2- <b>Acc</b>	new- <b>Acc.PI</b>	table- <b>Acc.pl</b>

"I saw two new tables"

b. actual form in Accusative context, traditional labeling:

ja	videl	[ <b>dva</b>	novyx	stola]
I	saw	2- <b>ACC</b>	new-Gen.PI	table-Gen.Sg

"I saw two new tables"

c. actual form in Accusative context, with Pesetsky's labeling:

ja	videl	[ <b>dva</b>	novyx	stola]
I	saw	2- <b>NOM</b>	new-Gen.PI	table-Gen.Sg

"I saw two new tables"

First and foremost, the system must prevent (10)a, in which Accusative overwrites primeval Genitive.

Chapter 7 deals with this prevention, attributing it to a complex system of resistance to Accusative overwrite in exactly those instances

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<sup>9</sup>Granted, this is a significant change to the system – the Paucal Puzzle would have to be resolved somewhat differently. It is not my place to suggest significant revisions to the Pesetsky theory, but it is interesting that all three issues discussed here involve the  $D_{\text{NOM}}$  claim in particular.