

Deconstructing Inverse Case Attraction

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Introduction Inverse case attraction (ICA) is a phenomenon whereby the head of a relative clause (RC) bears the case assigned to the gap inside the relative clause (internal case), rather than the case assigned to it in the matrix clause (external case). In this paper, I argue against both of the existing analyses of ICA (Harbert 1982; Bianchi 1999; et seq.) based primarily on fieldwork data from Koryak, a highly-endangered Chukotko-Kamchatkan language of northeastern Russia. Specifically, I argue that *the RC heads that bear internal case surface in a left-peripheral position inside the RC*, unlike heads that bear external case, which are outside of the RC. I also show that this analysis is supported by (or compatible with) the data from all other languages with ICA. Finally, I propose a connection to a type of relative clause found in the (caseless) Gur/Mabia languages of West Africa (Hiraiwa 2005 et seq.) ICA, I argue, falls out without any analytical machinery specific to the phenomenon when a language has both overt case-marking and Gur-like relative clauses.

Koryak Data Koryak RCs have a relative pronoun (RP) obligatorily bearing the case assigned to the gap inside the RC. As shown in (1-3), however, both external case (ABS, DAT, and ERG, respectively) and internal case (ERG, ABS, and DAT, respectively) are possible on the RC head, regardless of which of the 11 grammatical cases of Koryak is assigned inside or outside the RC. These two options are not always in free variation: for the head to bear internal case, the noun phrase containing the RC

- must be left peripheral in its clause (4), and the relative clause cannot be extraposed (5), though there is no adjacency requirement between the head and the RP (3). Additionally, if RC-internal material scrambles across the head (6), only the internal case (ERG) can surface on it. The word-order facts in (4-6) have led some analysts (Bianchi 1999, 2000; Belyayev 2012) to posit that ICA constructions are actually correlatives. However, noun phrases with ICA can be modified by quantifiers (7), admit non-restrictive modification (8), and permit stacking of relative clauses (data omitted), none of which are found in correlatives (Srivastav 1999 et seq.)
- (1) [ɲavəčɲ-{}ən/a} mikənek nakətʔajɲaye] kujunetəɲ woteɲɲak
woman-{}ABS/ERG} who.ERG scold.2SG.O live.PRS this.house.LOC
'The woman who scolded you lives in this house.'
 - (2) [ʔeɣəlɲə-{}ɲ/n} meɲin kojəpʔajɲaj] qəjəm məčejmevək
wolf-{}DAT/ABS} who.ABS howl.PRS NEG.IRR approach.1SG.S
'I will not approach the wolf that is howling.'
 - (3) [eʎʔa-{}ta/naj} təjəlnew meknaj kampetaw] ačəčyo kinelɲəɲ
girl-{}ERG/DAT} give.1SG > 3PL who.DAT candy.PL laugh.3SG > 1SG
'The girl that I gave candies to is laughing at me.'
 - (4) woteɲɲak kujunetəɲ [ɲavəčɲ-{}ən/*a} mikənek nakətʔajɲaye]
this.house.LOC live.PRS woman-{}ABS/*ERG} who.ERG scold.2SG.O
'The woman who scolded you lives in this house.'
 - (5) [eʎʔa-{}ta/*naj} t_i] ačəčyo kinelɲəɲ [meknaj təjəlnew kanpetaw]_i
girl-{}ERG/*DAT} laugh.3SG > 1SG who.DAT give.1SG > 3PL candy.PL
'The girl that I gave candies to is laughing at me.'
 - (6) [ajɣəve ɲavəčɲ-{}a/*ən} miknek enakətʔajɲaj] təjeləʔuɲən mitiw
yester. woman-{}ERG/*ABS} who.ERG scold.1O.AOR see.1SG.FUT tomor.
'Tomorrow I will see [the woman that scolded me yesterday].'
 - (7) [ɣamɣa-ʔoʎajə-{}kəɲ/k} mikəjək nakətʔajɲayəm] təjəlnew kampetaw
every-man-{}DAT/ERG} who.ERG.PL scold.1O.AOR give.1SG.A candy.PL
'I gave candy to every man that scolded me.'
 - (8) [ʎenin-{}ø/ənek} mikənek jəlenin revoʎucijan] viʔi 1924 ɣivik
Lenin-{}ABS/ERG} who.ERG lead.3 > 3 revolution.ABS die.3SG 1924 year
'Lenin, who led the revolution, died in 1924.'

On the other hand, other analysts (Harbert 1982; Gračanin-Yuksek 2013) have attempted to analyze ICA as involving externally headed relatives, and invoking an otherwise unmotivated mechanism to allow the internal case to appear on the external head. These analyses do not explain why internal

case can be assigned to the head when it is not adjacent to the RP due to scrambling (3), but not when the non-adjacency is due to RC-extraposition. Further, they cannot account for the contrast in (6), where RC-internal material can precede the head of the relative clause just in case of ICA.

Analysis The crux of my proposal is that RCs whose heads have internal case are surface-internally-headed, though their internal head is pronounced in the left periphery of the RC. When the head bears external case, however, it is located outside of the relative clause. In both cases, the nominal head D° is present above the relative CP, in line with the evidence that ICA does not involve a correlative construction, which has no nominal layer above the relative CP. This is schematized for the RC in (1) in (9) for ICA and (10) for external case. I assume Rizzi (1997)'s decomposition of the C domain, though I am agnostic as to the exact nature of the heads. I also schematize the head external case as being derived by matching, though nothing in my analysis depends on this.

(9) $[_{DP} D^\circ [_{CP_3} C^\circ [_{CP_2} \text{woman.ERG}_1 C^\circ [_{CP_1} [t_1 \text{ who-ERG}]_2 C^\circ [_{vP} t_2 v^\circ [\text{scold } pro_{2sg}]]]]]]$

(10) $[_{DP} D^\circ [\text{woman} [_{CP} C^\circ [_{CP} \text{woman.ERG}_T C^\circ [_{CP} [t_1 \text{ who-ERG}]_2 C^\circ [_{vP} t_2 v^\circ [\text{scold } pro_{2sg}]]]]]]$

This analysis accounts for the fact that only heads with internal case can have RC-internal material scramble across them, as only those heads are inside the relative clause on the surface. On this account, the scrambled modifiers can move across a head with internal case into the specifier of CP_3 . Assuming that clausal extraposition can only target the highest of the projections that make up CP, this analysis also accounts for the fact that ICA does not permit extraposition of the relative clause from the head, as the head is in fact inside the relative clause. Finally, positing a nominal projection above the relative clause in ICA structures allow this analysis to account for the fact that noun phrases bearing ICA interact with the matrix clause as though they had matrix case. For example, the quantifier *əməŋ* ‘all’ can only strand off of absolutive nouns. However, when a noun phrase is marked with internal non-absolutive case, and the external case is absolutive, *əməŋ* ‘all’ is able to strand (example omitted.) This analysis does not on its own account for the requirement that the noun phrase with ICA and its relative clause must occur left-peripherally. Unlike in Nez Perce (Deal 2016), this cannot be attributed to a requirement that noun phrases with ICA be left-dislocated, as left-dislocation requires a case-marked resumptive pronoun, unlike ICA (1-8). Instead, I propose that noun phrases with relative clauses with ICA are treated by the grammar like null pronouns, and must move to the left periphery of their clause to be licensed, as argued for Italian in Rizzi (1990). This accounts for the lack of resumption found with left-peripheral noun phrases with ICA, as well as the fact that their movement to the left is island-bound (example omitted).

The Crosslinguistic Picture If the analysis of ICA presented here is applicable to this phenomenon across languages, we correctly predict that the same diagnostics that show that the internal-case-bearing head is inside the RC should replicate in other languages. Both Dari (Houston 1974) and Xranje Albanian (Bevington 1979) ban RC extraposition just in case the head bears internal case. A variety of Uralic languages (Kholodilova 2013; Beliaev 2012; Privizenceva 2016; Dëmina 2019) allow scrambling of RC-internal material across the head if and only if ICA is present, and ban RC extraposition in the same environment. Furthermore, the Uralic languages present robust evidence similar to the type discussed above for Koryak showing that ICA does not involve a correlative structure. Additionally, as argued in Hiraiwa (2005 et seq.), Gur languages have a type of relative clause which, as a variety of syntactic and semantic tests show, have their head move overtly to the left periphery of the RC and no further. This is exactly the structure I have argued is implicated in the derivation of ICA; the fact that these phenomena have been described and analyzed differently is only due to the fact that Gur languages do not have case marking. **Conclusion** In this paper, I propose a novel, crosslinguistically-adequate account of the derivation of inverse case attraction, based primarily on fieldwork data from Koryak. This analysis is the only one to be able to account for all of the relevant data, and additionally unifies the left-headed internally-headed relatives of Gur languages with ICA, showing that the latter can be derived using only independently-necessary analytical machinery.

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