The nominative case in Baltic
in a typological perspective

Ilja A. Seržant

University of Konstanz / Vilnius University

The paper is a semasiological study of the nominative case in Baltic languages, including morphological and primarily syntactic and semantic-pragmatic aspects. Morphologically, the Baltic nominative case is marked in almost all declensions and numbers by dedicated affixes. Syntactically, the nominative marking is a necessary but not sufficient condition to claim subjecthood; in fact, different nominative NP types correlate with subjecthood to different degrees in Baltic. Except for locutor (i.e. first and second person) pronouns, only the combination of the nominative marking with verbal agreement justifies analyzing an NP as a subject. In addition to subjects, the nominative case also codes "direct" nominative objects and nominative time adverbials. Pragmatically, (overt) nominative NPs are predominantly used in the subject position to signal emphasis (e.g. in terms of contrastive topic or topic shift, focus/new information), i.e. to signal that the subject referent is unexpected on the background of the set of the discursively salient alternative referents. With time adverbials, the nominative case encodes emphasis on the time value referred to by the adverbial against the set of contextually potential alternatives. Semantically, the correlation of the nominative case with agenthood and/or volitionality/control parallels emphasis in that agenthood can be viewed as prominence on the level of semantic roles whereas emphasis as prominence in terms of pragmatics.

1. Introduction

The aim of this paper is to give a full description of the nominative case in Baltic including its morphological, syntactic, semantic and pragmatic properties and functions. Even though often stemming from lexical cases, cases that code A or A/S or P arguments (in Lazard 2002's terms) lose their original meaning in favor of the syntactic function much faster and to a greater extent than do the other cases not feeding the core syntactic roles. Nevertheless, there is cross-linguistic variation as to the proportion between the syntactic and non-syntactic (semantic

and/or pragmatic) properties of such cases. In some languages, primarily semantic considerations such as agenthood, volitionality or information-structure role determine the (case-)marking of the A or A/S argument, while in others syntactic considerations are more decisive (Malchukov & Spencer 2009: 660ff). There are many languages favoring syntactic functions of cases over semantic or information-structure related functions, however not necessarily to the complete exclusion of the latter. Semantic or discourse-organization considerations may still marginally and additionally constrain the so-called structural cases. For example, the Finnish partitive, which is commonly considered to be a structural case, may also have quantificational, (in)definiteness, information-structure and, more generally, discourse-organization-related and prominence-related functions (Helasvuo 1996; Kiparsky 1998; DeHoop 2003). In the same vein, the ergative case may have pragmatic functions of focus, contrast or unexpectedness in the *optional ergative marking* (*inter alia*, Chelliah 2009 (agentive case); Gaby 2010; Verstraete 2010; McGregor 2010; Rumsey 2010; Fauconnier 2011).

Being primarily a case with syntactic functions, the Baltic nominative largely correlates with the syntactic role of *subject* and therefore constitutes one of the subject-coding properties in Baltic. Its syntactic role is especially important as Baltic generally lacks unequivocal non-nominative syntactic subjects in contrast to, for example, Icelandic (cf., *inter alia*, Holvoet 2013; Seržant 2013b). To anticipate, despite this high degree of syntacticization, as is argued below, it does also have denotational facets related to agentivity and control as well as to emphasis (as defined in Frey 2010) but not to topichood (which is one of the functions of verbal agreement). The functions of flagging and indexing in the subject position are orthogonal to each other.

To investigate all facets of the Baltic nominative, I proceed as follows. First, I discuss the morphological properties of the nominative with different NP types (Section 2) which reveal certain correlations to syntax. Then, I focus on the differential time-adverbial marking based on the alternation between the nominative and accusative case (Section 3). Section 4 is devoted to the phenomenon of *nominative objects*: I describe the lexical input restrictions and scrutinize the syntactic properties of these arguments. In Section 5, properties and meaning of the nominative case in the subject position are discussed. In turn, Section 6 illustrates different degrees of correlation between subjecthood and the nominative of different NP types in Baltic. Finally, I provide conclusions and a summary in Section 7.

2.   Morphology of the nominative case

The nominative case of Lithuanian and Latvian is not a typical one on the areal background of Standard Average European or Circum-Baltic. First of all, it shows a dedicated morphological marking for every number and gender (with partial nominative-accusative syncretism in the plural and nominative-genitive syncretism with a small class of nouns such as *rudens* 'fall.NOM = GEN.SG' in Latvian), whereas the nominative case of the languages of Europe, the Circum-Baltic area and more broadly is typically a morphological zero lacking a dedicated affix (cf., *inter alia*, Bickel & Nichols 2001:47):

Table 1. The nominative case endings of the main declensions in Lithuanian and Latvian

		o-stems	*ā*-stems	*i*-stems	*u*-stems
singular	Lithuanian	*nam-as*	*galv-a*	*nakt-is*	*turg-us*
	Latvian	*nam-s*	*galv-a*	*nakt-s*	*tirg-us*
plural	Lithuanian	*nam-ai*	*galv-os*	*nakt-ys*	*turg-ūs*
	Latvian	*nam-i*	*galv-as*	*nakt-is*	*tirg-i*

As can be observed from Table 1, the nominative case is coded by a dedicated concatenative exponent on nouns. However, this is not the case with the first and second person pronouns, which adhere to the cross-linguistically common morphological split (cf. Iggesen 2009:249, *passim*):

Table 2. Declension of the personal pronouns (singular)

	1st singular		2nd singular	
	Lithuanian	Latvian	Lithuanian	Latvian
Nominative	*aš*	*es*	*tu*	*tu*
Accusative	*man-e*	*man-i*	*tav-e*	*tev-i*
Dative	*man-#*	*man-#*	*tau-#*	*tev-#*
Genitive	*man-es* / *man-o*	*man-is*	*tav-ęs*	*tev-is*
Instrumental	*man-imi*	*man-i(m)*	*tav-imi*	*tev-i(m)*
Locative	*man-yje*	*man-ī*	*tav-yje*	*tev-ī*

The functions of the nominative case here are performed by the suppletive base with no concatenation.[1] The situation with the plural forms of the first person

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1.   One may argue that the dative singular form also lacks morphological marking (N. Nau, p.c.). However, the dative form is not suppletive; it must be analyzed as containing a zero ending and the oblique base *man-* '1SG' and *tav-* '2SG' (*tev-* in Latvian). The reason for this assumption of a zero ending is that this base is the same for all other oblique cases. Assuming that *man*

is basically the same, cf. *mes* (Latvian *mēs*) 'we.NOM' as opposed to the oblique *mūs-/mu-*, while the second-person plural *jūs* 'you.NOM' has undergone analogical leveling and there is indeed the same base *ju-/jū-/jus-* throughout the paradigm:

Table 3. Declension of the personal pronouns (plural)

	1st plural		2nd plural	
	Lithuanian	Latvian	Lithuanian	Latvian
Nominative	*mes*	*mēs*	*jūs*	*jūs*
Accusative	*mus*	*mūs*	*jus*	*jūs*
Dative	*mums*	*mums*	*jums*	*jums*
Genitive	*mūsų*	*mūsu*	*jūsų*	*jūsu*
Instrumental	*mumis*	*mums*	*jumis*	*jums*
Locative	*mumyse*	*mūsos*	*jumyse*	*jūsos*

However, even with the second plural, one would not analyze the nominative form as concatenative, containing some nominative case ending. This is easily disproved by other case forms in which the final *-s* is contained in the base: *jūs-ų* (GEN) in Lithuanian or *jūs* (NOM=ACC) *vs. jūs-u* (GEN) in Latvian.

Not unexpectedly, third-person pronouns group together with nouns rather than with locutor pronouns, exhibiting a dedicated affix for the nominative case in both Latvian (*viņ-š/a* '3SG-M.NOM/F.NOM') and Lithuanian (*j-is/i* '3SG-M.NOM/F.NOM'):

Table 4. Declension of the third-person pronouns (singular)

	3rd singular	
	Lithuanian	Latvian
Nominative	*j-is /j-i*	*viņ-š / viņ-a*
Accusative	*j-į / j-ą*	*viņ-u*
Dative	*j-am / j-ai*	*viņ-am / viņ-ai*
Genitive	*j-o / j-os*	*viņ-a / viņ-as*
Instrumental	*j-uo / j-a*	*viņ-u*
Locative	*j-ame / j-oje*	*viņ-ā*

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is the dative form *per se* would require an analysis in terms of case stacking for other oblique cases, which is unlikely. Notably, the dative ending has been lost recently as it is still present in Old Lithuanian. On the other hand, the nominative forms *aš* '1SG' and *tu* '2SG' have been retained with no changes from Proto-Baltic. Thus, I claim that the bare base form in the dative is a historical accident, while the suppletive nature of the nominative form – although inherited – resembles cross-linguistic patterns.

There is thus a morphological split between the nominative of the locutor (1st and 2nd person) pronouns and the nominative forms of all other NP types such as nouns, third-person pronouns, question/relative pronouns etc.: while the former employ a non-concatenative strategy, namely, suppletion, the latter code the nominative case concatenatively throughout:[2]

Table 5. Morphological exponent with full NPs vs. 1&2 person pronouns in Baltic

	NOMINATIVE CASE	OBLIQUE CASES
1&2 person pronouns	non-concatenative, idiosyncratic	concatenative
Full NPs, third person pronouns	concatenative	concatenative

In view of the fact that pronouns generally tend to be less transparent morphologically, the suppletion strategy as such does not come as a surprise (cf., *inter alia*, Corbett 2005). What matters here is that the suppletive nominative strategy is found only with locutor pronouns, which constitute a natural class. Moreover, as will be argued below, this split is replicated in other domains of Baltic grammar: a systematic distinction between locutor pronouns and other NP types is also found in the different degrees of correlation with subjecthood (Section 6), in reference-tracking properties (Section 5.3) and in the morphological make-up of verbal agreement (Section 5.3). In view of these facts, it is obvious that the distribution of suppletion *vs.* concatenation is not purely accidental in Baltic but rather follows intra-linguistic and cross-linguistic patterns. I discuss this in Section 6.

3.   Nominative time adverbials

3.1   Description

Durational time adverbials refer to the time span within which (minimally) the situation is claimed to be true. These adverbials are typically marked by the accusative case; this is the unmarked option in terms of both frequency and semantics, as accusative time adverbials do not have any additional semantic effects (*inter alia*, Roduner 2005):

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2.   As several reviewers have noted, this morphological split is inherited in Baltic from Proto-Indo-European. While this is largely correct, I still think that Baltic languages should be described in their own right and not just by referring to the proto-language. This appears to be especially meaningful here, since the morphological split is concomitant to a syntactic split, see Section 6. Moreover, Baltic has undergone extensive changes as compared to Proto-Indo-European; these have led to the system just described.

(1) Lithuanian

Latvij-oje **treči-us** **met-us** *didėja* *gimstamum-as*
Latvia-LOC three-ACC.PL year-ACC.PL increase.PRS.3 birth_rate-NOM.SG
'The birth rate is increasing in Latvia for the third year.'[3,4]

However, instead of the default accusative, the nominative case can be used for nearly the same meaning. Thus, (1) can be modified as in (2) with superficially no difference in meaning:

(2) Lithuanian

Latvij-oje **trej-i** **met-ai** *didėja* *gimstamum-as*
Latvia-LOC three-NOM.PL year-NOM.PL increase.PST.3 birth_rate-NOM.SG
'The birth rate is increasing in Latvia for the third year.' [Constructed example]

There is no change in the syntactic structure of the clause from (1) to (2). Equally, the syntactic status of the time phrase does not change; it remains an adverbial.

A typical property of *nominative time adverbials* (henceforth NomTA) is that they are often placed preverbally or even at the very onset of the sentence (Roduner 2005: 44), cf. Example (1) above. The verb is usually in the present tense (including present perfects). It may occur in the past tense as in (3), but only on its imperfective reading, i.e. temporally unbounded. This is because the predicate necessarily acquires a *progressive* or *continuative* interpretation with a NomTA, i.e., it denotes a situation still ongoing at the reference time (Roduner 2005: 52f):

(3) Lithuanian

Jau **trej-i** **met-ai** *ji* *ne-vaikščiojo,*
already three-NOM.PL year-NOM.PL 3.NOM.SG.F NEG-walk.PST.3
nors *puikiausiai* *galėjo* *eiti*
although good.SUPER.ADV can.PST.3 walk.INF
'[For] already three years she had not been walking although she could perfectly walk [before].'   (Roduner 2005: 44)

(4) *Jo* […]   *automašinos* **jau** **mėnuo** *ieško* *Kauno*
3.GEN.SG.M car.GEN   already month.NOM.SG seek.PRS.3 Kaunas.GEN
kriminalistai
criminalists.NOM.PL
'Already [for] a month, the Kaunas criminal investigators have been trying to find his car.'   (Roduner 2005: 44)

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3. All examples are from Lithuanian if not otherwise stated.

4. http://www.delfi.lt/news/daily/health/latvijoje-trecius-metus-dideja-gimstamumas.d?id=63807686.

(5) **Trys**   **mėnesiai**   *nesu*   *jam*   *žodžio*
   three.NOM   month.NOM.PL   NEG.AUX.PRS.1SG   3.DAT.SG.M   word.GEN.SG
   tarus.
   say.PA.PST.NOM.SG.F
   'I have not said [even] a word to him [for] three months.' (Roduner 2005: 44)

Since the situation must be lasting homogenously at the reference time with no implication that it will stop soon, not all predicate types are eligible to combine with NomTAs. They are thus different from their accusative counterparts: for example, delimitatives (formed by the prefix *pa-*) that entail a temporal boundary at the right edge of the time scala are compatible with the accusative but not with the nominative time adverbials.

The continuative meaning does not necessarily presuppose that the current state of affairs was different at some earlier time, although, I concede, this is a frequent implicature here. Thus, by default, (1) is interpreted in the way that during the time before the last three years the birth rate had decreased every year, but this nuance is not obligatory and might be cancelled by the suitable context. Neither does it require that the situation will cease to hold in the future.

If used with the perfect the NomTAs tend to measure the after-effects of an action rather than the action itself, cf. the following example containing the periphrastic perfect with the auxiliary *yra* 'is' and the perfect past active participle *deklaravęs* 'having declared':

(6) *asmuo*   *ne*   *trumpiau*   *kaip*   **vieneri**   **metai**
   person.NOM.SG.M   NEG   short.CMP   as   one.NOM.PL   year.NOM.PL
   yra   **deklaravęs**   *gyvenamąją*
   AUX.PST.3   declare.PA.PST.NOM.SG.M   live.PP.PRS.ACC.SG
   vietą   *šioje*   *namų*   *valdoje*
   place.ACC.SG   DEM.LOC.SG   house.GEN.PL   estate.LOC.SG
   'person [that] has declared residence in this housing estate no shorter than one year' (lit. 'that has declared residence not shorter than one year')[5]

Furthermore, only NPs denoting conventional time measures are allowed to be marked with the nominative, e.g., **jau visos atostogos* 'already the whole vacations (NOM)' is not possible while *jau visa savaitė* 'already the whole week (NOM)' is perfectly acceptable. There are also some statistical preferences of certain time measures for either accusative or nominative marking. Thus, *jau kelinti metai* 'already several years (NOM)' is more frequently used than *jau kelintus metus* 'already several years (ACC)', the ratio being 254 (NOM) vs. 33 (ACC) (Roduner 2005: 43).

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5.   http://www.palanga.lt/vaktai/default.aspx?Id=3&DocId=20691

Given the continuative meaning, the NomTA cannot have a fully indefinite interpretation because it can only denote the time period until the reference point/ time of speech, not an arbitrary time period. Thus even if modified by indefinite determiners as in (7) it does not refer to any unspecified four years but rather implies that the number of years is uncertain and just very approximately estimated as four; but these are exclusively the last four years immediately preceding the time of speech:

(7) O   turtas   lizingu   pirktas
     and   property.NOM.SG leasing.INS.SG   buy.PP.PST.NOM.SG
     jau   **kokie**   keturi   metai.
     already some.NOM.PL   four.NOM.PL   year.NOM.PL
     'And the property has been bought on leasing [since] some four years.'[6]

While the accusative marking is an old option, the nominative one is considered to be an innovation, possibly derived from a complex sentence with the time adverbial being originally the predicative/subject argument of the existential head of the first clause like 'It is X years/weeks/etc. that Y holds true' (Fraenkel 1928: 31; Jablonskis 1957: 560; nominative being an old option is tacitly assumed in Šukys 1998: 83). Thus, the source construction of (7) must have been something like (8):

(8) **Jau   yra   kokie   keturi   metai,**
     already be.PRS.3SG some.NOM.PL.N four.NOM.PL   year.NOM.PL
     kai turtas   lizingu   pirktas
     as property.NOM.SG   leasing.INS.SG   buy.PP.PST.NOM.SG
     'It is already four years that the property has been bought on leasing.'
                                                             [Reconstructed]

In what follows I refer to the source construction as the cleft construction, following the definition in Lambrecht (2001).

Importantly, the nominative option is not – or no longer – dependent on the existence of the cleft construction and can freely be used at any linear position with no traces of a cleft construction whatsoever. For example, (7) lacks a phonetic pause that one would expect on a bi-clausal account. Syntactically, the nominative adverbial is independent and should be treated in its own rights. Thus, if Example (7) is supplied with the subordinating conjunction *kai* 'as, when' and the copula *yra* 'are' to yield the cleft construction as in (9), the sentence becomes ungrammatical:

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6. http://www.tax.lt/temos/568-lizingas/41

(9) *Kai*   *turtas*   *lizingu*   *pirktas*
     *when   property.NOM.SG   leasing.INS.SG   buy.PP.PST. NOM.SG
     jau   ***yra*   *kokie*   *keturi*   *metai***
     already   *be.PRS.3   some.NOM.PL   four.NOM.PL   year.NOM.PL
     'And the property has been bought on leasing [for] some four years.'

Furthermore, there is a subtype of nominative time adverbials, namely, the nominative adverbials modified by the (in this context) indeclinable *kas* or *kiekvienas* 'each' (formally both nominative singular):

(10) *Tam*   *tikslui*   *siųsdavau*   *jiems*   ***kas***
     this.DAT.SGM   aim.DAT.SG   send.ITER.PST.1SG   3.DAT.PL.M   each.INDECL
     mėnuo/ mėnesį   *po*   *50 rublių.*
     month.SG.NOM/ month.SG.ACC   each   50 rubles
     'For this purpose, I used to send them 50 rubles each month.'
                                                  (A. Vienuolis, *Pati*[7])

(11) *Skrenda*   *lekia*   *ten*   *paukšteliai*
     fly.PRS.3   fly.PRS.3   there   birds.NOM.PL
     kas   ***savaitė/savaitę.***
     each.INDECL   week.NOM.F.SG/week.ACC.F.SG
     'Birds run and fly there every week.'   (Vincas Krėvė, *Šiaudinėj pastogėj*[8])

This type of NomTA is borrowed from Polish (*co niedziela* 'every week (NOM)' alongside *co niedzielę* 'every week (ACC)', A. Holvoet, p.c.) and for reasons of space I will not further discuss it.

3.2   Function of the nominative case in NomTAs

So what kind of function does the nominative marking of the time adverbial fulfill when replacing the default accusative one? I claim that, in addition to the obligatory continuative meaning which is not found with the accusative, there is some additional meaning that the time adverbial and its host clause receives with the nominative marking, namely, *emphasis*: while the whole VP acquires continuative meaning, the very time referred to by an NomTA is assigned emphasis. The idea that emphasis may be part of grammar is controversial. Nevertheless, there is a series of recent studies arguing that *emphasis,* or its more restricted correlate *contrast,* may be part of grammar (*inter alia*, Bayer 2001; Frey 2010; Cruschina 2012; Bayer & Dasgupta 2014).

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7.   http://old.antologija.lt/texts/34/tekstas/24.html

8.   http://antologija.lt/text/vincas-kreve-siaudinej-pastogej/15

Emphasis has been defined in the pragmatics literature as the part of the focus constituent that the speaker considers unexpected in a particular discourse situation (cf. Hartmann 2008). While both contrast and emphasis invoke an implicit set of alternatives, Frey (2010) claims that emphasis additionally involves a ranking among the alternatives by the speaker according to criteria of different types depending on the situation and context. That is to say, the choice of the right alternative is not purely governed by truth conditions but additionally entails that the speaker has selected the highest-ranked alternative according to a context-dependent scale. One of the differences between *contrast* and *emphasis* is that the implicit set of alternatives, for contrast, contains only contextually-given or derivable entities with the contrastive or corrective focus (and expectedly contrastive topics) (Molnár & Winkler 2010: 1395; Sudhoff 2010: 1459–1460), whereas the set underlying emphasis seems to be much less restricted:

(12)   (German, Frey 2010)
       Die Tür braucht eine neue Farbe.
       GRÜN will sie Maria streichen
       'The door needs a new paint. **Maria wants to paint it GREEN**.'

The members of the invoked set (potential door colors) are alternatives (selected based on world knowledge and the context) that could potentially have occurred in the constituent bearing the emphasis. They are contextually restricted but are not presupposed. The dedicated prosodic contour and word order in (12) signal that the denotation of the constituent 'green' is highest ranked by the speaker according to some subjective scale, e.g., according to the appropriateness of different colors. The criteria underlying the ranking are not uniform, and different contexts may evoke different criteria of ranking and different sets of alternatives; thus, unexpectedness in (12), i.e. 'the most unexpected color of many other door colors', is just one factor among many (Frey 2010: 1428).

In this vein, I claim that the nominative marking correlates with the assignment of high significance to the particular duration as opposed to potentially alternative durations for the given context. Concomitantly and as a consequence, the information provided by the host proposition pragmatically becomes foreground information, since the time adverbial (such as, say, 'three years') does not provide an interpretable piece of information alone and its emphatic effect makes only sense within a particular proposition. In addition, the foregrounding effect is supported by the requirement that, with NomTAs, the duration of the event must obligatorily encompass the current moment, because past events might be less relevant than those still ongoing. As can be observed in the examples, the host sentence is singled out on the background of the respective discourse chunk, not being part of a sequence of events. Often, the NomTAs occur in a summarizing,

concluding or introductory part of a larger discourse chunk (chain of events) and provide the entire time frame for the events that had been or will be discussed in the given piece of discourse:

(13) *Na matau cia daug tokiu moteru su ta pacia problema*
      o as galvojau kad tik man vienai taip.
      As   taip pat   ne-galiu   pastoti
      1SG.NOM so   even NEG-can.1SG.PRS become_pregnant.INF
      jau   metai
      already **year.NOM.PL**
      nors turiu suneli ir maniau kad antras vaikelia bus greičiau ir paprasciau.
      *Su pirmu nepastojau **du metus**.*
      'Yet, I see that there are many women [experiencing the same problem] here, while I thought that it happened only to me. I also haven't been able to become pregnant **already for a year (NOM)**, even though I have a son and thought that I would get another child easier and sooner. With my first one I couldn't become pregnant **for two years (ACC)**.'⁹

The crucial point in the discourse chunk in (13) is contained in the sentence with the NomTA – the fact that the speaker cannot become pregnant for a year (NOM) is the reason why she writes this message in the blog. The speaker assigns high significance to the length of the period; other potential alternatives (5 months, 8 months, etc.) with the same background would not have reached the same degree of concern and unexpectedness according to the speaker. Note that, contrastively, the fact that she could not become pregnant for two years (ACC) with her first child is part of the background information that only serves to better understand the worries of the speaker; it additionally motivates the unexpectedness of the situation referred to by the NomTA sentence. The NomTA encompasses the time period relevant for the discourse, while the sentence with the accusative time adverbial refers to the time frame not encompassing the relevant situation. Since the information focus here is the whole VP, the emphasis scopes over the whole VP because the very value of the time adverbial *per se* does not represent an independent piece of information.

The next example is in a forum about how to make cheap phone calls from and in the UK:

(14) *Mes   jau   du   metai   taip skambinam*
      1PL.NOM already two.NOM year.NOM.PL so   phone.PRS.1PL
      'Already [for] two years we are making our phone calls like this.'¹⁰

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9. http://www.okaip.lt/sveikata/kaip-greiciau-pastoti.html

10. http://www.anglija.lt/forumas/viewtopic.php?p=22253

The utterer of (14) informs that the way they make their phone calls has been giving effects for *already two years* (NOM). Again, the value of the NomTA is assigned particular significance, since other alternatives (for example, 1 month, 5 months, etc.) might not make sure that this particular way of making phone calls is the most remunerative on a long term. The sentence in (14) begins a new blog post and is followed by a more precise description of the way *they make phone calls in the UK*. Thus, the host sentence introduces the content that will be laid out below. Therefore, this sentence also cannot be said to be an event in a sequence of events; it provides rather the entire or global frame, somewhat similar to a title of a story. Just like the one above, it has thematically somewhat independent status from the surrounding discourse.

In the following example the NomTA *Jau beveik treji metai* 'already almost three years (NOM)' does not introduce but rather summarizes or concludes the previous piece of discourse:

(15)   „*Būtent tada vėl prisiminiau fotografiją. Pradėjau rimtai domėtis ir bandyti*
       suprasti, kaip tokie žmonės kaip, tarkim, Renatas Jakaitis padaro tokias
       nerealias nuotraukas. Ėmiau eksperimentuoti – fotografuoti žiemą po
       vandeniu, bandyti rasti savo kelią. Ir va, sena meilė nerūdija – grįžau pas
       paukščius", *– pasakoja M. Čepulis.*
       Jau   beveik treji   metai   jis
       already almost three.NOM.PL year.NOM.PL 3.NOM.SG.M
       fotografuoja   kiekvieną   laisvą   minutę.
       make.photos.PRS.3   each.ACC.SG   free.ACC.SG   minute.ACC.SG
       Visą savaitę planuoja, stebi orus ir, kai tik pasitaiko proga ir netrukdo darbai, –
       lekia pasėdėti kur į pelkę paniręs iki kaklo vandenyje.[11]
       '"Precisely then I remembered about photographing. I began to be more seriously interested in it and I tried to understand how people like, say, Renatas Jakaitis, make such fantastic pictures. I had to experiment around – photographing the winter in the water, trying to find my way. And yet, old love does not rust and I turned back to birds." – M. Čepulis said. **Already [for] almost three years** (NOM) he has been photographing every free minute. He makes plans during the whole week, observes the weather; and as soon as there is an occasion and other duties do not intervene he rashes into a puddle and sits there in the water up to his neck.'

Note that emphasis is quite different from *mirativity* as defined in DeLancey (1997). Mirativity is primarily associated with a surprise or unexpectedness effect

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11.   http://www.naturephoto.lt/straipsnis/marius_cepulis_ornitologija_ir_gamtos_fotografija_neatsiejama_gyvenimo_dalis. The text partition is original.

that a proposition has for the speaker. Alternatively, the speaker assumes that this proposition will be surprising for the hearer. In contrast, emphasis applies to constituents or their parts. Both concepts are thus similar in that both may imply unexpectedness; indeed, Examples (13) or (17) can be interpreted in terms of surprise or unexpectedness. Nevertheless, mirativity is not found in Example (15) and some others.

The following examples are analogous to the previous ones:

(16)   *Kai pagaliau gavau išsvajotąjį diplomą, mano princas išsivežė mane į tulpių*
       šalį, kur gyvename drauge ir jaučiamės laimingiausiais pasaulio sužadėtiniais.
       *Esame   kartu   **jau   treji   metai.***
       be.PRS.1PL together already three.NOM.PL year.NOM.PL
       Jis vis prisimena …
       'As I finally got my diploma, my prince brought me to the country of tulips,
       where we are living together and feeling like the happiest promised ones. We've
       been a couple (for) **already three years (NOM)**. He always remembers …'

(17)   *Donatas prisipažįsta pats mėgęs vakarėlius ir galėdavęs gerti nors ir tris*
       dienas iš eilės.
       ***Treji   metai** – jis   visiškai ne-be-vartoja*
       three.NOM.PL year.NOM.PL 3.SG.NOM.M at_all   NEG-CNT-use.PRS.3
       alkoholio.
       alcohol.GEN.SG
       „*Vieną dieną supratau, kad alkoholis …*"
       'Donatas admits himself that he loved parties and always could drink [alcohol]
       even three days in a row. For **three years (NOM)** he has not been consuming
       alcohol at all.
       [new paragraph] "One day I realized that alcohol …"'

The NomTA containing sentence stands out in the given discourse chunk by not being a part in the chain of events; instead it provides the time frame for the entire episode. The host sentence in (17) informing that Donatas has not been consuming alcohol for already three years is the main message of this discourse chunk, while the facts reported in the preceding sentences constitute background information against which the value of the time adverbial ('three years') appears to be remarkable for the speaker.

To summarize, the additional meaning conveyed by the NomTAs fits the notion of *emphasis* introduced above. More specifically, the speaker/author ranks the explicit alternative as significant in comparison to some other alternatives potentially compatible with the context; the speaker acknowledges a particular duration as more significant than another for the given situation. Note that these

alternatives are neither pragmatically salient nor presupposed. They constitute the background against which the explicit alternative is particularly ranked by a context-dependent function.

3.3   Operationalizing emphasis

The notion *emphasis* is notoriously somewhat vague. Cross-linguistically, its encoding may appear in different guises and in different domains of grammar such as word order or, most prominently, sentence prosody. In what follows I aim at operationalizing the term *emphasis* to provide a more testable account. I have claimed that the NomTA signals that the speaker assigns a particular significance to the time value that a NomTA encodes against the background of other, potentially available alternative values. The NomTA focus on the situation which holds at the reference point and which is the consequence of the preceding event(s) measured by the time adverbial. In contrast, their accusative counterparts do not have this predisposition towards current relevance. Furthermore, I have argued that the host proposition often stands out in the discourse chunk, not being part of a chain of events in an on-going story. Instead, the hosting proposition tends to have a concluding or introductory flavor, introducing the scene as a whole. This is because the NomTAs typically do not constitute a focus constituent on their own, being part of a larger focus and information unit (mostly predicate focus), which is why their value and the emphasis on this value cannot be properly interpreted without the other information contained in the host VP, cf., for example, the discussion of (13) above. In many respects, the temporal-aspectual interpretation of the predicate comes close to what is generally considered a perfect, such as the hot-news perfect and the current-relevance perfect. However, none of the examples adduced so far contain perfect morphology; the verb is mostly in the simple-present tense.

Yet, what kind of formal indicators may be employed in order to identify an emphasis-containing proposition? I suggest that symptomatic of this special information-structure status of the proposition may be the following shifts with regard to the preceding/following propositions: *tense shift* and *subject* or *topic reference shift* (cf. the Expected Actor Principle in McGregor 1998: 516). These shifts evidently signal discontinuity in the discourse and thereby a special discourse status of the proposition.[12]

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12.   Thus, *tense shift* and *intervening human subject* have been employed as predicting factors in a multivariate analysis to determine the variation between the *pro*-drop *vs.* overt pronoun for the first person singular subject in Spanish in Travis & Cacoullos (2012).

Another property of NomTAs identified above is their tendency to refer to the time period of a larger discourse chunk (henceforth *global time reference*). Thus, NomTAs typically refer to a time period encompassing events coded by several immediately preceding or immediately following clauses, cf. (16). The time reference embraces either (i) the entire discourse segment, cf. Examples (14), (15), (16), or (ii) the entire new situation resulting from the preceding episode, cf. (17). The *global time reference* property is primarily due to the continuative meaning induced by NomTAs, but it also makes the proposition with a NomTA stand out, because it yields contrast between the host proposition and other propositions within a larger story.

Finally, the following two criteria are also indicative of *emphasis* and are not motivated by continuativity: the tendency for *preverbal position*[13] and the co-occurrence with emphasizing *particles* that take scope over the time frame. As regards the *preverbal position* of NomTAs, it obviously overrides the default word order. The word order in Baltic is constrained by information-structure considerations, and the default position of focus and new information constituents is after the verb. Since NomTAs always provide new information, are foci or parts of larger focus units, they are accordingly expected to occur precisely after the verb. Moreover, adverbials in general typically occur postverbally in Lithuanian (Ambrazas 2006: 501, 698). Therefore, the preverbal position of NomTA is not a default but rather a marked option indicative of some pragmatic stress. Finally, the presence of *particles* such as *tik* 'just', *nors* 'though' and most frequently *jau* 'already', etc. (Ambrazas 2006: 135), which provide a subjective evaluation of the time period referred to by the NomTA, is yet another indication of *emphasis*. Notably, these particles even become obligatory without a numeral modifier (Valiulytė 1998: 260), contrast ungrammatical (18) *vs.* regular (19):

(18) **Mėnuo*   *tėvas*   *serga*
       month.NOM.SG father.NOM.SG be.sick.PRS.3
       [Intended meaning] 'It is a month now that father has been sick.'

(19) ***Jau***   ***mėnuo***   *tėvas*   *serga*
       already   month.NOM.SG father.NOM.SG be.sick.PRS.3
       'It is a month now that father has been sick.'

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13. A reviewer points out that the *preverbal position* property should not be taken into account in a synchronic description, because it stems from the originally preceding clause 'It is already three months that XWZ.' The origin from an existential main clause is indeed possible although no evidence has been adduced so far. Having said this, it seems that one should not exclude a property from the synchronic description of a category just with the argument that it is inherited.

Particles such as *tik* 'just, only' are cross-linguistically known to occur with stressed focal referents, and their meaning can be interpreted as adding some contrast or emphasis to a particular member of a set of possible alternatives (cf. König 1991). Also the phasal adverb 'already' is not used here to indicate a change of state (cf. English *he is already awake*) but on its other reading as a temporal focus particle that implicates "that the period in question is longer than one might have expected" as Mosegaard Hansen & Strudsholm (2008: 484) put it with respect to the synonymous particle *déjà* in French. This meaning is fully coherent with the definition of *emphasis* given above, namely, that the speaker ranks a particular alternative as special (here unexpected) according to context-dependent criteria.

In addition, whether the respective time adverbial provides new or old information was also considered. Although the time adverbial may invoke old information already known from the discourse, in the vast majority of instances the NomTAs provide new information. According to the six criteria the following picture for nominative time adverbials emerges:[14]

Table 6. Statistics for the emphasis criteria on the basis of examples obtained with Google[15] search: Nominative Time Adverbials

Tense shift		Subject / Topic shift		Global time reference		Preverbal position		Particles		New information	
yes	no	yes	no	yes	no	yes	no	yes	no	yes	no
38	32	41	36	73	10	47	37	75	18	86	3
54%	46%	**53%**	47%	**88%**	12%	**56%**	44%	**81%**	19%	**97%**	3%

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14. I have checked around 93 examples. All of them were found on Google by searching for the nominative *metai* 'year/years.NOM', which of course yields many irrelevant examples; these were filtered out. These were examples in which the nominative time phrase was a regular subject (e.g. with *praeiti* 'to pass'), exclamations, etc. The first 93 valid examples (that is, examples where *metai* was a nominative time adverbial) were included into the database in order for it to be a random collection of examples. Whenever there was ambiguity, the respective example was not included into the figures (for example for the feature *tense shift:* a sentence containing a finite verb with a marked tense-feature value is followed by a subjunctive which lacks tense-feature value); for the feature *global time reference:* no context was available (e.g. in blogs or titles), etc. Doublets were excluded. Only instances providing non-ambiguous feature values were taken into account. Thus, the highest total number is found with the particles, because there were no ambiguous cases with this feature: the particle is either present or absent.

15. Unfortunately, Lithuanian does not have an annotated corpus that could be used for linguistic research. All examples and statistics are based on the Google search described in the previous footnote.

The same six criteria have been checked with accusative case-marked time adverbials:[16]

Table 7. Statistics for the emphasis criteria on the basis of examples from Google search: Accusative Time Adverbials

Tense shift		Subject / Topic shift		Global time reference		Preverbal position		Particles		New information	
yes	no	yes	no	yes	no	yes	no	yes	no	yes	no
22	77	44	48	30	72	47	56	20	88	97	0
22%	78%	48%	52%	29%	71%	46%	54%	19%	81%	100%	0%

As can be observed from the figures above, the *emphasis* criteria do yield different results with accusative time adverbials as opposed to their nominative counterparts: the "no" hits predominate with accusative time adverbials, while the "yes" hits are higher with the nominative time adverbials along all criteria selected except for *new information*. The latter is nearly the same with both types of time adverbials. Criteria that are only slightly over the 50% margin have revealed themselves despite our intuitive expectations as less significant. The following table provides *p*-values of our criteria:

Table 8. Significance of the emphasis criteria in NOM vs. ACC selection on the basis of examples from Google search

Tense shift	Subject / Topic shift	Global time reference	Preverbal position	Particles	New information
***	–	***	–	***	–
p-value = 3.666e-05	*p*-value = 0.5841	*p*-value = 5.16e-15	*p*-value = 0.2087	*p*-value < 2.2e-16	*p*-value = 0.2148

At this place a caveat is in order. I have shown that there is a pragmatic distinction – in addition to the semantic differences mentioned above – between the nominative and accusative marking of the time adverbials in Baltic.[17] I emphasize that classifying a particular discourse move as emphatic or not is a subjective

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16. Similar search and selection procedures have been applied for collecting examples with accusative-marked time phrases (cf. fn. 14 above). Analogous to the study of the nominative time adverbials, I searched for *metus* 'year(s). ACC', filtering out examples with direct-object accusative time phrases or accusative time phrases governed by prepositions (such as *už* 'for') until I had around 108 examples, i.e. comparable to the number of examples for Table 2. Again, these examples were selected randomly, leaving out some examples with no or too little context or otherwise less suited examples.

17. The discussion is limited to Lithuanian. My intuition is that Latvian NomTAs behave, *mutatis mutandis*, in the same way.

decision that the speaker makes. It is therefore not conditioned by grammaticality judgments and, hence, there are no conditions that would make mandatory the marking of a particular discourse move as emphatic (Hartmann 2008: 406). Crucially for my claim, the tendency to prefer NomTAs over ACC adverbials in the discourse moves defined by three (out of the six) factors as emphatic is statistically significant (Table 8) and, hence, cannot be ruled out as coincidence.

The temporal-aspectual properties of an event described by NomTA often come close to those of a perfect. This is mostly due to the fact that indicating duration up to the reference time unavoidably involves a retrospection effect. The same is true for perfects which encode both the situation (after-effects) at the reference time and, additionally, some retrospection (e.g. a preceding action). Perfects also often express situations which highlight a particular situation as significant at the reference time and are not used to enumerate background events that lead to such a situation. In this respect, perfects are semantically close to predicates modified by NomTAs. However, unlike perfects (except, perhaps, the experiential perfect), NomTAs do not imply any termination of the event time, neither at the reference time nor afterwards. The aspectual value of the predicate they trigger is rather progressive or continuative, as there are no boundaries set, at least not at the right edge of the time scale. This creates input restrictions, providing an important difference also from accusative time adverbials. The latter, in fact, easily combine, for example, with delimitatives (formed by the prefix *pa-*) entailing a temporal boundary at the right edge. Furthermore, the perfect-like semantics results from different semantic compositions of NomTAs, on the one hand, and perfects, on the other: with perfects, the significance effect (appropriately: the *current relevance*) is contained in the fact that there are some contextually-specified after-effects from a preceding action, lasting at the reference time; in turn, with NomTAs, the significance effect is derived from the fact that one and the same state of affairs lasted for already *such a remarkable (e.g. long/short) period of time;* the continuative state of affairs is homogeneous (there is no "before" and "after" as with perfects). Crucially, perfects do not involve emphasis on a particular time frame – a property which is different with NomTAs. Moreover, the continuative meaning with an emphasis on the time duration is contributed by the very nominative marking of the time adverbial and not by some verb form. While this needs further investigation, it has to be noted that aspectual or phasal markers may and do often develop discourse or information-structure related functions, cf., *inter alia*, Mosegaard Hansen (2002) on French *déjà* 'already' and *encore* 'still'. The relationship between perfect-like semantics and the discourse related function of the NomTAs does not come as a surprise. This relation might indeed be diachronically rooted if we are to adhere to the origin of the NomTAs from an existential-like cleft clause (as suggested by Fraenkel 1928: 31 or Jablonskis 1957: 560), because then both the NomTAs and perfects would have partly the same source, namely, the existential verb *to be* in Baltic.

4.   Nominative objects

I turn now to a different syntactic context in which nominative may appear in Baltic, namely, the nominative (direct) object. Nominative objects are widely attested in the East of the Circum-Baltic area (in Finnic languages, various East Slavic dialects, early Latvian and Lithuanian) in nearly parallel constructions, cf. Timberlake (1974), Filin (1972: 495), Lomtev (1941: 290), Danylenko (2003: 224–264) on Belarusian and Ukrainian examples, Ambrazas et al. (2006), Ambrazas (2001), Franks & Lavine (2006) on Lithuanian. In the constructions to be discussed, the nominative objects historically evolved from subjects via a reanalysis of their syntactic role due to various semantic and pragmatic mismatches (Ambrazas 2001). I define *nominative objects* with the following properties (partly drawing on Timberlake 1974; Ambrazas 2001):

Table 9. Properties of nominative objects

a.	*syntactic-semantic property*	core argument
b.	*distributive coding property*	nominative case-marking substitutable by accusative of the locutor pronouns
c.	*coding property*	typically no control over the verbal agreement
d.	*behavioral property*	(if at all) retention of the historically former subject role under special circumstances: if bearing the topic role and being fronted
e.	*behavioral property*	control over the reference of PRO of the object-controlled converb (with perception verbs): the *-Vm,* reflexive *-Vmies* in Latvian (cf. Mathiassen 1996: 150)
f.	*behavioral property*	objecthood tests such as the obligatory change into genitive under negation (Lithuanian only)
g.	*behavioral property*	object of control infinitives (Lithuanian only)
h.	*behavioral property*	occurrence in the linear position of the object: postverbally
i.	*morphosyntactic property*	triggering agreement in case with the second part of the compound reciprocal pronoun[18]
j.	*semantic property*	association with the object of the underlying lexical verb
k.	*information-structure property*	information-structure role: correlation rather with focus than with topic

18. To be precise, this test is not straightforward. Literally it shows the non-subject status of that NP which triggers the agreement in case with the second part of the compound reciprocal pronoun. However, since, for independent reasons, the nominative NP here can be analyzed either as subject or as object (*tertium non datur*), the exclusion of the first necessarily leads to the assumption of the second alternative.

In what follows I discuss nominative objects of Lithuanian (4.1) and nominative objects of Latvian (4.2) separately. Then, after having mentioned the tests that are not applicable to the constructions at issue (4.3) I turn to the conclusion on nominative objects (4.4).

4.1   Nominative objects in Lithuanian

In Lithuanian, nominative objects are typically found in modal constructions such as those based on a modal predicative or defective verb (third person only) as in (20), a gerund or infinitive form with an auxiliary (based on *to be*) encoding *necessity*, as in (21), or the *evidential construction* with a non-canonically realized subject as in the archaic and dialectal East Lithuanian example of (22):

(20)   *Reikia   šienas   grėbti*
        need.PRS.3 hay.NOM.SG.M rake.INF
        'It is necessary to rake the hay.'   (Ambrazas 2001: 391)

(21)   *Tos   bulvės   (yra)   sodinti,   o   anos*
        DEM.NOM.PL.F potato.NOM.PL.F (AUX.PRS.3) plant.INF and DEM.NOM.PL.F
        valgyti
        eat.INF
        'These potatoes are for planting and those ones for eating.'
                                   (Ambrazas 2001: 394)

(22)   *Tėvo   kviečiama   svečiai*
        father.GEN.SG invite.PP.PRS.NA guest.NOM.PL
        'Father is apparently inviting guests.'   (Adapted from Franks & Lavine 2006)

Furthermore, the nominative objects are also found in infinitival complement clauses as the following:

(23)   *Man   yra   nusibodę   vis   tas*
        1SG.DAT AUX.PRS.3 bore.PA.PST.NA[19] always DEM.NOM.SG.M
        pats   laikraštis   skaityti
        same.NOM.SG.M newspaper.NOM.SG.M read.INF
        'I have gotten bored with always reading the same newspaper.'
                                   (Franks & Lavine 2006)

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19. Lithuanian no longer has a grammatical neuter gender. However, adjectives and participles have retained their neuter form in the predicative position. This form is obligatorily used in those constructions in which there is either no agreement controller at all or the controller is not specified for gender (e.g. with infinitive subjects).

Given the difference in the grammaticalization degree of the matrix verb (ranging from a purely lexical one in (23) to a modal in (20)), these constructions should not be treated as equal on the null hypothesis, and, in fact, some of their nominative arguments may reveal themselves rather as syntactic subjects. The "true" nominative objects are a disappearing category in Lithuanian and the whole East of the Circum-Baltic area, Finnic languages being the only conservative branch in this regard. Standard Russian and Latvian have lost nominative objects in their old environments and replaced them throughout with the canonical accusative object marking. In turn, present day Lithuanian has lost constructions with non-agreeing experiencer verbs such as in (23) discussed at length in Franks & Lavine (2006), considerably narrowed down the selectional input restrictions of the modal-infinitive as in (21) (see immediately below) and generalized the genitive object marking instead of the older nominative with the modal defective verb *reikėti* 'have to, need to' as in (20). Therefore, in what follows, I investigate only the modal-infinitive construction of the type in (21) which is still a vital pattern.

4.1.1   *Input restrictions*

The nominative objects are still frequently used within the modal-infinitive construction, cf. (24), mostly restricted to perceptional experience verbs such as *matyti* 'to see', *regėti* 'to see', *girdėti* 'to hear' or *justi* 'to feel', while, for example, such verbs as *užuosti* 'to sniff, to get wind' or *apčiuopti* 'to palpate, to feel' are excluded (K. Lenartaitė, p.c.). Note that this represents a considerable narrowing down of the former input restrictions, cf. other predicates from a more archaic language and dialects in, *inter alia*, Ambrazas (2001).

(24) *Kurį   laiką   pilies   griuvėsiuose*
      some.ACC.SG.M   time. ACC.SG   castle.GEN.SG   ruin.LOC.PL
      *buvę   girdėti   **graudus**   **dainavimas***
      be.PA.PST.NA   hear.INF   moving.NOM.SG.M   singing.NOM.SG.M
      'For some time [they say that] [one could] hear a heart-rending singing in the ruins of the castle.'[20]

The nominative NP *graudus dainavimas* 'a heart-rending singing (NOM)' semantically corresponds to the direct object of the lexical verb *girdėti* 'to hear', which is elsewhere marked by the accusative case (or, rarely, genitive):

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20. http://www.dykai.eu/index.php/skaitiniai-mainmenu-47/domybmainmenu-48/7498-nori-turtu-susidraugauk-su-kauku

(25) *Kurį*   *laiką*   *pilies*   *griuvėsiuose*
      Some. ACC.SG.M time. ACC.SG castle.GEN.SG ruin.LOC.PL
      girdėjo   **graudų**   **dainavimą**
      hear.PST.3   moving.ACC.SG.M   singing.ACC.SG.M
      'For some time [one could] hear a heart-rending singing in the ruins of the
      castle.'   [Constructed example]

The modal semantics of this construction has been discussed at length in, *inter alia*, Holvoet (2007).

4.1.2   *The linear position of the nominative argument in the modal-infinitive construction*

The linear position of the nominative argument in the modal-infinitive construction is typically VO, cf. the ratio on the verbs *matyti* 'to see' and *girdėti* 'to hear' in K. Lenartaitė's database compiled for this study:[21]

Table 10. The linear position of the nominative argument[22]

VO		OV	
Hits	**%**	**Hits**	**%**
465	**81,58%**	105	18,42%

Both the syntactic status of the nominative argument and, primarily, word order is determined by information-structure considerations. I define the notion of *topic* as a pragmatic relation of *aboutness* holding between a particular referent and a proposition (cf. Lambrecht 1994: 118; 2000: 613 following previous research, primarily Gundel 1988). In turn, *focus* is understood here as a pragmatic relation holding between the denotatum of a phrase and the proposition "such that its addition makes the utterance of the sentence a piece of new information" (Lambrecht 1994: 210).

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21. I am extremely thankful to Kristina Lenartaitė who has compiled the database that provided the basis for the figures. She has searched for infinitives *matyti* 'to see', *girdėti* 'to hear', *regėti* 'to see', *justi* 'to feel' as well as their combinations with the third person auxiliary *buvo matyti* 'be. PST.3 see.INF', *bus matyti* 'be.FUT.3 see.INF' in both Google and CCLL.

22. Franks & Lavine (2006) argue that the nominative argument precedes its lexical verb (infinitive). Note that the counts presented here include only examples of the modal-infinitive construction.

The information-structure role of the nominative argument is most typically that of a focus (K. Lenartaitė, p.c.), often within a *presentational sentence* or *sentence-focus type* (as per Lambrecht 2000); only rarely is the pragmatic structure of *topic-comment* (*predicate-focus type* in Lambrecht 2000) found, which is related to the fact that the nominative object only rarely assumes the pragmatic role of *topic*, cf. the figures in the table and the example below:

Table 11. Information Structure Role of the Nominative argument
in the modal-infinitive construction of Lithuanian

Topic				Focus	Unclear
Pronominal topics			*Nouny topics*		
tas 'this (one)'	*tai* 'this'	*kas* 'which'			
2	23	1	42	433	6
	13,41% (68)			**85,40% (433)**	**1,18%** (6)

(26) *susidomėjimas* šia *problematika* *ne-buvo*
interest.NOM.SG DEM.INS.SG set-of-problems.INS.SG NEG-be.PST.3
didelis, **kas** *matyti iš* *straipsnyje* *aptariamų*
big.NOM.SG.M REL.NOM see.INF from article.LOC.SG discuss.PP.PRS.GEN.PL
darbų šia *tematika*
work.GEN.PL DEM.INS.SG.F topic.INS.SG
'The interest in this set of problems wasn't large, which (NOM) can be seen from works discussed in this article on the topic.'

The reason for the correlation with the sentence-focus type might be sought in the semantics of the construction as well as in the very input verbs which also motivate the existential flavor in the output. Indeed, verbs of perception have an existential component in their meanings: *X can be seen / X is visible* entails *X exists.* Existential sentences are most frequently of *sentence-focus type* (cf. Sasse 1987) and, as has been shown by Lambrecht (2000), this type often undergoes "subject-object neutralization". This is exactly what happened with the nominative argument in the Lithuanian construction: the unusual correlation of subject with focus undergoes adjustments towards the typical correlation of object with focus – a process referred to as the grammatical "detopicalization" in Lambrecht (2000: 624, *passim*).

4.1.3   *Genitive-under-negation rule*

This rule entails that the object of a negated verb *must,* but an intransitive unaccusative subject *may,* turn into genitive (Seržant 2013a: 192–3; cf. Aleksandravičiūtė 2013).[23] Thus, the obligatoriness *vs.* optionality provides us with an additional test for objecthood *vs.* (unaccusative) subjecthood in Lithuanian. Consider the following examples: in (27) the genitive replaces the underlying nominative under negation, while (28) exhibits the nominative marking under negation:[24]

(27)   *Tuo   met-u,   kai   **rentgenolog-ini-ų pokyčių***
DEM.INS.SG time-INS.SG when   X-RAY-ADJ-**GEN.PL** change.**GEN.PL**
dar   ne-mat-yti
still NEG-see-INF
'At the time when one still does not observe x-ray related changes.'[25]

(28)   *Laura jas sudygsniavo su siuvimo mašina, o medį ir paukštuką ištepė*
specialiu stiklo efektą priduodančiu skysčiu
*(nuotraukoje   **tas**   ne-matyti).*
picture.LOC.SG DEM.**NOM.SG** NEG-see.INF
'Laura sewed them together on the sewing machine, and she painted the tree and the bird with a special liquid that provided for the glass effect. (On the photo [one] **cannot see it**).'[26]

However, examples such as (28) are quite rare and are typically not accepted by many native speakers whereas (27) is fully felicitous and regular. From this it follows that the nominative argument patterns rather with accusative objects in this respect than with (unaccusative) subjects. In turn, the extremely rare occurrence of the nominative marking under negation must be explained rather as performance errors. I conclude that this test – as the previous one – favors the analysis of the nominative argument as object.

4.1.4   *Reference control over PRO of a non-subject converb*

Another piece of evidence in favor of the object analysis is provided by the following example in which the nominative third-person pronoun *jis* 'he' controls the reference of PRO of the different-subject *-nt-* converb (glossed as DSCVB) – a property that is found only with non-subject participants in Lithuanian:

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23. Note that this test is not applicable for Latvian.

24. Note that this Lithuanian construction does not allow accusative forms of nouns, only nominative can be used here.

25. http://sena.sam.lt/repository/dokumentai/sveikata/sm5(1-78).pdf

26. http://paprastosmamosdienorastis.blogspot.de/2010_10_01_archive.html

(29) *Dar iš   tolo buvo   girdėti   jis   kriokiant.*
     still from far   be.PST.3 hear.INF 3.NOM.SG.M wheeze.DSCVB
     'He could be heard wheezing already from far away.'[27]

This example favours object analysis of the nominative argument. At the same time, some native speakers I have consulted reject this example as infelicitous. However, for these speakers, the alternative same-subject converb in *-dam-* is equally infelicitous. This test is rather inconclusive.

4.1.5   *Agreement*

Historically, the nominative argument was the subject and controlled agreement (Ambrazas 2001). However, the mismatch between the typical information-structure role *focus* of the nominative NP in this construction (cf. 4.1.2) and the verbal agreement that is otherwise related to topichood (if no other means such as prosody, word order, etc. intervene, cf. 5.3) is sometimes abandoned in that the verbal agreement is suspended, cf. Examples (23), (24) above. The loss of subject properties in etymologically cognate modal-infinitive constructions is also found elsewhere and is not unique of Lithuanian only. As a matter of fact, the nominative NP in Old Russian equally lost the ability to control verb agreement in its modal-infinitive construction (Timberlake 1974: 51–52).

Furthermore, one finds a very few examples on the Internet with the accusative marking of the object NP which cannot trigger verbal agreement by definition:

(30) *Kuo toliau, tuo **tave**   buvo   matyti vis*
     how further thus **2SG.ACC** AUX.PST.3 see.INF only
     rečiau   ir rečiau,   elgeisi   panašiai kaip …
     seldom.COMP.ADV and seldom.CMP.ADV behave.PRS.2SG similar as
     'As time went on, one could see **you** more and more rarely; you behaved as …'[28]

Crucially, while nominative full NPs may occasionally lack agreement in Lithuanian, there is no such option for the nominative personal pronouns. The latter are barely felicitous in this construction, but if they do occur they must either trigger agreement and be full-fledged subjects as in (32), or be turned into accusative as in (30) above. Baltic does not allow personal pronouns to be used as nominative objects:

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(31) *Tokie fariziejiški teiginiai skamba ir iš kitų informacijos šaltinių.*
      Jie   *girdėti   ir   dabar, po   masinių   bankų*
      3.NOM.PL.M hear.INF and now   after massive.GEN.PL bank.GEN.PL
      bankrotų,
      bankruptcy.GEN.PL
      kai aišku, kad patirta daugiau kaip 1 mlrd. litų nuostolių
      'This kind of Pharisaical assertions are heard also from other information
      sources.
      One hears **them** even now, after massive bank failures, when it has become
      clear that losses of more than 1 bn. Litas have been incurred.'   (CCLL)

(32) *Viename   iš   Viskončio   filmų […] **buvau**   matyti*
      one.LOC.SG from Visconti.GEN.SG film.GEN.PL be.PST.**1SG** see.INF
      visa,   tačiau kiek   pridengta   medžiagos
      whole.NOM.SG.F though somewhat cover.PPP.NOM.SG.F fabric.GEN.SG
      'In one of Visconti's films, [one] could see **me** completely, although partly
      covered with fabric.'[29]

Except for (30) and (32) no other examples with locutor personal pronouns were
found on the web and in the untagged corpus of Lithuanian (K. Lenartaitė, p.c.[30]).
This is also expected given that personal pronouns are typically topics, while this
construction favors focus interpretation of the nominative NP. Analogically, the
test with reciprocals (property (i) in Table 9 above) is not available in Lithuanian
as well.

        To conclude, the nominative argument of the Lithuanian modal-infinitive
construction does show certain properties of objects as regards verbal agreement,
case-marking and the genitive-under-negation rule (and, of course, with respect
to its semantic and information-structure properties), but its development towards
objecthood is only partial, not allowing us to consider nominative objects full-
fledged direct objects.

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29. http://maga.lt/31193

30. She looked at various personal verb forms such *buvau matyti, buvai / buvome / buvote /
būdavau / būdavai / būdavome / būdavote /būsiu/ būsi/ būsime/ būsite matyti* as well as without
the auxiliry *aš / tu / mes / jūs matyti*. Moreover, she herself as a native speaker is not comfortable
with such examples. The same judgment is valid for the accusative forms.

4.2   Nominative objects in Latvian

The modal-infinitive construction as discussed for Lithuanian has been lost in Modern Latvian altogether, but it did exist in earlier Latvian (Ambrazas 2001). At the same time, a new construction with nominative objects has emerged, namely, the debitive construction with the same, inverted DAT-NOM alignment as in the old modal-infinitive construction (cf. Endzelin 1905: 320; Holvoet 1992, 2001: 32ff; Seržant & Taperte, this volume):

(33)   (Latvian)
   Kāpēc šī   filma   ir   jā-redz?!
   why   DEM.**NOM.SG.F** film.**NOM.SG.F** AUX.PRS.3 DEB-see
   'Why does one have to see this film?!'[31]

Unlike the modal-infinitive construction of Lithuanian, the debitive construction is fully productive in Latvian. Depending on the underlying framework, there are different ways to exactly define the syntactic status of the nominative argument in (33). Thus, Holvoet & Grzybowska (2014) claim that the nominative argument is a *demoted subject* – a notion introduced in Holvoet (2013) in analogy to demoted objects in some ditransitive constructions. They claim that it either fails to show certain syntactic properties of a subject (see below) or exhibits only those syntactic properties of a subject that also the dative argument may exhibit, the entire constellation resulting in "diffuse grammatical relations". For example, the nominative argument may occasionally trigger verbal agreement and pass some syntactic subjecthood tests under special circumstances, namely, in case it is a fronted topic (Holvoet & Grzybowska 2014). The notion of *demoted* and *recoverable subject* invoked by the authors is meant to capture the "dual" status of the nominative argument.

   The tests they apply are the reference control over the possessive reflexive as well as the conjunction reduction test. Both tests can only be viewed in terms of tendencies and not in terms of strict syntactic rules. Thus, the omission of overt subject NPs is indeed facilitated by having a coordinated preceding clause with the same subject referent, but the exact mechanism constraining the NP drop in Baltic is driven solely by the discourse model, the activation degree of introduced referents and the locutors/non-locutors distinction (see 5.3 below); the correlation with subjecthood is thus mediate and is due to the well-known correlation of subjects with "old" referents having a high degree of activation. Similarly, Holvoet

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31. https://twitter.com/nahimovs/status/406310177046921216

(2013: 262) does not consider control over the reflexive anaphor to be an unequivocal test (cf. also Haspelmath 2001: 72f). In sum, Holvoet & Grzybowska (2014) are certainly right in claiming some similarity – to a different extent though – of both the dative and the nominative argument of the Latvian debitive with "true" subjects in Latvian as well as a certain degree of gradience. Having said this, this similarity is quantitatively and syntactically less significant, in my view, than the evidence for the non-subject status/objecthood of the nominative argument, cf. Table 12 below. I claim that the traditional view of the nominative argument as an *object* (*inter alia*, Timberlake 1974) should be maintained.

Holvoet & Grzybowska (2014) correctly point out that the nominative argument cannot be tested for its objecthood by applying such tests as passive, causative or nominalization operations, because these "transformations" are simply not available with the debitive construction. In this respect, the nominative argument thus differs from canonical direct objects in formally transitive (NOM-ACC) constructions. At the same time, the ban on various valence-changing operations is not necessarily the result of the syntactic status of the nominative argument in Latvian, as passivization or causativization of modal predicates is just cross-linguistically extremely rare – if it is attested at all – even in those languages where there is no controversy about the syntactic status of one of the arguments of a modal predicate (such as English or German). The same applies to nominalization.

While the reflexivization-control and conjunction-reduction tests used in Holvoet & Grzybowska (2014) are ambiguous, and transformation tests are assumedly disallowed for independent reasons, there is unequivocal evidence for objecthood: (i) the pervasive lack of agreement (though with some restricted exceptions illustrated in Holvoet & Grzybowska 2014), (ii) the ability to control the subject reference of the converb in *-am,* which is restricted to (matrix) objects only if used with matrix verbs denoting perception, (iii) substitutability of the nominative argument with accusative locutor pronouns which, in turn, are unequivocal objects, (iv) the evidence from the use of the reciprocal compound pronouns which are used differently with the debitive than with lexical DAT-NOM verbs in which the DAT argument is not a non-canonical subjects, and finally (v), the diachronic evidence from word order preferences, pointing to a gradual transition from subject to object with the NOM argument.

i. Somewhat differently from the Lithuanian nominative objects, the nominative argument in the Latvian debitive construction most frequently fails to trigger agreement (Bergmane et al. 1962: 618) which is typical for objects and not for subjects in Baltic. Notice the lack of agreement between the participial form of the auxiliary *bijis* (singular) and the nominative argument *nolikumi* (plural):

(34) (Latvian)

kam   būtu   bijis   jālasa
who.DAT   be.SBJV be.PA.PST.NOM.**SG.M** DEB-read
attiecīgie   nolikumi
respective.NOM.**PL.M**   regulation.NOM.**PL.M**
'Who would have to read the respective regulations.'[32]

(35) (Latvian)

Tad   tos   20 gadus   viņam   arī
then DEM.ACC.PL 20 year.ACC.PL 3.SG.DAT.M also
būtu   bijis   jā-pērk sev   apdrošināšana
be.SBJV be.PA.PST.**NOM.SG.M** DEB-buy REFL.DAT.SG   insurance[**F**].**NOM.SG**
'Then, also during these 20 years he should have purchased insurance.'[33]

Note that the nominative argument *apdrošināšana* 'insurance' has feminine gender and, hence, does not agree with the compound predicate (past subjunctive debitive) containing the masculine form of the participle *bijis* which is also the default or non-agreeing form of the participle in Latvian. In non-compound forms of the debitive, the verb forms are ambiguous, and there is no way to determine whether agreement does take place or not. At the same time, examples with agreement are occasionally found even in contemporary sources, but they are much less frequent than those lacking agreement (Holvoet & Grzybowska 2014:110). While the nominative marking is by no means restricted to subjects in Baltic (recall, e.g., the nominative time adverbials), verbal agreement is the crucial coding property of subjects in Baltic (Section 5).

ii. Moreover, locutor pronouns obligatorily require accusative marking in exactly the same syntactic position – there are no nominative objects with personal pronouns in any of the languages mentioned above:

(36) (Latvian)

*Tev   (ir)   jā-ēd   **mani**   / *es*
2SG.DAT   (AUX.PRS.3) DEB-eat   1SG.ACC   / *1SG.NOM
'You have to eat me.'   [Constructed example]

(37) (Latvian)

*Tev   (ir)   jā-ēd   **viņš**   / (viņu)[34]*
you.DAT   (AUX.PRS.3) DEB-eat   3. NOM.SG / 3.ACC.SG
'You have to eat him.'   [Constructed example]

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32. http://providus.lv/article/kopigs-eksamens-skolai-un-augstskolai

33. http://www.iauto.lv/forums/topic/26304-bonus-malus

34. Only in Colloquial Latvian.

Since Baltic does not provide any evidence for accusative subjects elsewhere, the personal pronouns marked accusative cannot be considered subjects or demoted subjects, neither in terms of case-marking nor in terms of their syntactic behavior – they fail all subjecthood tests and are unequivocal direct objects.

Assuming the nominative-object analysis, the accusative forms of personal pronouns are easily explained: nominative personal pronouns always have to be subjects not only in Baltic but also, e.g., in Finnic languages, which is why they change their case-marking in order to fit the syntactic role of the slot. In turn, nominative nouns are not coupled with subjecthood in such a rigid manner in Baltic: they can be time or distance adverbials (Section 3 above) and precisely objects with no syntactic subjecthood (see Section 6, Table 12 and Table 13 below), and, hence, do not create a structural mismatch in the way the personal pronouns would have done.

iii. There is a syntactic test that provides evidence in favor of a non-subject, in fact object analysis. Latvian has a special converb that is used only with accusative objects of matrix perception verbs such as *dzird-ē-t* 'to hear' (Mathiassen 1997: 150):[35]

(38) (Latvian)
    *Dzird*ēju$_i$ *zagļus*$_j$ Ø$_j$ *ienāk-am*   *mājā*
    hear.PST.1SG thief.ACC.PL PRO enter-OBJCVB home
    'I have heard thieves entering (my) place.'

Yet, the nominative argument of the debitive construction patterns with objects here:

(39) (Latvian)
    Vai tad tev$_i$ *ne-bija*   *jā-dzird zagļi*$_j$
    PTC PTC 2SG.DAT NEG-be.PST.3 DEB-hear thief.NOM.PL.M
    Ø$_j$ *ienāk-am*   *mājā?*
    PRO enter-OBJCVB house.LOC.SG
    'Didn't you have to hear **the thieves entering** the house?'   [Elicited]

The ability of the nominative argument to control the reference of the implicit subject of the *-am-* converb with verbs of perception suggests its object status, because only objects of perception matrix verbs can, while subjects cannot, control the reference of the *-am-* converb's subject.

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35. Note that with other verb classes the co-reference restrictions to objects only do not hold.

iv. Another test involves the reciprocal pronouns. The reciprocal pronoun is always a compound pronoun consisting of two parts iconically rendering the reciprocal meaning. The reciprocal (compound) pronouns may occur in any position in the clause except for the subject slot. Moreover, the reciprocals regularly inflect for case, number and gender. For example, in the direct object position, the reciprocal pronouns have the following form: *cit-s cit-u* [lit.] 'other-NOM other-ACC' or *vien-s otr-u* [lit.] 'one-NOM second-ACC'. I claim that, first (a), the reciprocal pronouns are not possible in the subject position although there is no morphological constraint that would account for this since both types of reciprocals regularly inflect for case and have nominative forms. The reciprocal compound pronouns are, thereby, different from the reflexive pronoun *sev-* which has all case forms but the nominative. Second (b), their cumulative reference (i.e. the total set of referents referred to by each part of the pronoun) is controlled by the subject of the host clause (be it explicit or implicit). Finally, the reciprocal pronouns can be used to fill different non-subject positions in the clause. However, if the reciprocal pronoun underlyingly fills the P valence of the predicate, then, thirdly (c), the second part of the reciprocal will render the object case-marking in the given construction and never the subject case-marking. Thus, if the construction is the regular transitive construction, it will have the accusative marking, but if the clause consists of a nominalized NOM-ACC verb then the second part will have the genitive marking regular for P arguments in nominalizations (cf. Nau, this volume, and examples therein). In turn, if the P valence is coded by a lexical case, such as dative, then the second part will – expectedly – have the lexical marking in dative. The properties (a)–(c) allow determining the object in the debitive:

(40) (Colloquial Latvian, Seržant & Taperte, this volume)
    Komunikācijas procesā pusēm jābūt godīgām, objektīvām …
    nevis   *vien-ai*   *otr-a*   / **vien-a*   **otr-ai*
    and_not RCPR-DAT.SG.F RCPR-NOM.SG.F / *RCPR-NOM.SG.F *RCPR-DAT.SG.F
    jā-nosoda   *un* *jā-apvaino*
    DEB-condemn and DEB-offend
    'Opponents have to be fair and objective in the process of communication, and they should not condemn and offend each (DAT/*NOM) other (*DAT/NOM).'

As can be observed from this example, DAT-NOM is eligible while *NOM-DAT is not. Even though the latter may be occasionally found on the web, all six native speakers I have consulted rejected this option. The coding of the second part of the reciprocal is crucial here: it is regularly coded by the NOM which must be interpreted as saying that the NOM argument and not the DAT argument is the object here according to property (c) established independently above. The following

example with the verb *patikt* 'to like' (DAT-NOM) illustrates that there is a substantial difference between the debitive case frame in DAT-NOM and the DAT-NOM case frame of lexical verbs exemplified by *patikt* 'to like' here:

(41)   (Latvian)
   *Kas   tur   slikts, ja diviem   patīk   vien-am
   what there bad   if two.DAT like.PRS.3 RCPR-DAT.SG.M
   otr-s?
   RCPR-NOM.SG.M
   'What is wrong with this if two people like each other?'

(42)   *Kas   tur   slikts, ja divi   patīk   vien-s*
   what there bad   if two.NOM like.PRS.3 RCPR-NOM.SG.M
   otr-am?
   RCPR-DAT.SG.M
   'What is wrong with this if two like each other?'   [Elicited]

While examples such as (41) can be found on the Internet, six native speakers have rejected this example as infelicitous and corrected it into (42). While the reciprocal pronoun in the debitive in (40) clearly favors DAT-NOM, the same reciprocal pronoun favors NOM-DAT with the lexical verb 'to like'. There is independent evidence that that the lexical DAT-NOM verbs do not provide good evidence for their DAT argument being the subject and their NOM argument being the object (Holvoet 2009, 2013; Seržant 2013b). I interpret this discrepancy between the lexical DAT-NOM and the "grammatical/derivational" debitive DAT-NOM as evidence for the differences in the assignment of syntactic roles (cf. also Seržant 2013c: 345–350). This discrepancy is parallel to the discrepancy in other properties, for example, obligatory vs. optional agreement with the NOM argument: the lexical verbs (such as *patikt*) all require agreement with the NOM argument, while the debitive does not, etc.

v. As regards the word order, Seržant & Taperte (this volume) argue in detail that it is undergoing a shift from the original OV word order in Old Latvian with 92% of OV in the sample to 44% OV in their sample of Contemporary Latvian:

Table 12.   Change in the word order preferences (from Seržant & Taperte, this volume)

	OV	VO	n/a
Old Latvian	**92%** (105)	**8%** (9)	85
Early Modern Latvian	**63%** (250)	**37%** (149)	–
Contemporary Latvian	**44%** (1407)	**56%** (1783)	–

The original OV is rooted in the source construction of the debitive. This shift cannot be just a coincidence but must mirror some underlying reanalysis of the debitive structure which I claim is the development of the nominative argument into direct object.

Finally, a terminological problem for the *demoted subject* analysis is also the situation when one gets two subject-like arguments in the same clause: one is the demoted subject and the other is the subject-like dative argument that also passes some of the controversial subjecthood tests.

4.3 Other tests, not applicable for nominative objects

In this section, I briefly mention other properties or tests that are not applicable for different reasons in both languages. Thus, the control over PRO of the same-subject converb in *-dam-* (glossed as sscvb below) is hardly applicable here, because the latter tends to require agentively acting subject referents in the non-idiomatic uses (A. Kalnača, p.c., on Latvian; R. Mikulskas, p.c., on Lithuanian). I have asked several native speakers to give their judgments about the following examples – one containing a passive subject (43), and one containing the nominative argument at issue (44); Example (44) contains nominative object *Jānis* 'John' governed by the debitive predicate consisting of a copular auxiliary and an infinite form of the verb extended by the debitive prefix *jā-*:

  (43) (Latvian)

      ??*Jānis,*   *būdams*   *labs*   *menedžeris,*

      John.NOM be.SSCVB.SG.M good.NOM.SG.M manager.NOM.SG.M

      tika   *drīz* *pieņemts*   *darbā.*

      AUX.PST.3 soon accept.PP.PST.NOM.SG.M work.LOC.SG

      'John, being a good manager, was soon granted a job.' (3 accepted, 5 rejected)

  (44) (Latvian)

      ??*Jānis,*   *būdams*   *labs*   *menedžeris,*

      John.NOM be.SSCVB good.NOM.SG.M manager.NOM.SG.M

      bija   *jā-pieņem* *darbā.*

      AUX.PST.3 DEB-accept work.LOC.SG

      'John, being a good manager, had to be granted a job.' (1 accepted, 7 rejected)

As can be observed the results are rather inconclusive, both examples are rather rejected with a slight preference to reject the debitive example in (44) which is expected here. The same holds for Lithuanian. The *-dam-*-converb does not sound natural with non-agentive subject referents:

(45) ??*Visa   savaitė*ᵢ,   [Øᵢ]   *būdama   labai*
     whole.NOM.F.SGᵢ week.NOM.F.SGᵢ [PROᵢ] be.SSCVB.F.SG very

     įtempta,   [Ø]   tampa   man   ne-be-ištveriama
     tense.NOM.SG.F [PRO]ᵢ become.PST.3 1SG.DAT NEG-CNT-bearable.F.NOM.SG

     'The whole week, being so tense, became unbearable to me.'
                                        [Constructed example](1 accepted, 2 rejected)

(46) ??[Øᵢ]   *Būdamos   labai ryškios,*
     [PROᵢ] be.SSCVB.F.PL very bright.NOM.F.PL

     *laivo   švies.os*ᵢ   *buvo   matyti iš   toli*
     ship.GEN.SG light.NOM.PL.F be.PST3 see.INF from far

     'One could see the lights of the ship from far away, [them] being very bright.'
                                        [Elicited example] (1 accepted, 1 rejected)

Given the low acceptability rate, it seems likely to assume that the use of the *-dam*-
converb in Baltic is heavily semantically restricted and hence difficult to apply
here.

    Another potential test is the passive transformation. However, the results of
this test cannot be interpreted unequivocally. Consider the following example with
the nominative object *lūgums* 'request', again, in the Latvian debitive construction:

(47) (Latvian)
     Viņam   ir   jā-pamato   lūgums
     3SG.DAT AUX.PRS.3 DEB-motivate request.NOM.M

     'He has to motivate (his) request.'   [Constructed example]

The passive test implies that the NP that is suppressed – the Latvian passive
does not allow the expression of agents – is the former subject, while the NP
that is "promoted" to the position of the former logical subject is the object of
the respective non-derived clause. Indeed, the dative obligee *viņam* 'to him' is
demoted/suppressed in (47), while the nominative NP *lūgums* 'request' acquires
the dative marking when the respective passive debitive construction is produced.
Note that the Latvian passive is formed by means of the auxiliary *tikt* (*jā-tiek* in
the debitive):

(48) (Latvian, from Kalnača & Lokmane 2014: 174)
     Lūgumam   ir   jā-tiek   pamatotam
     request.DAT.SG be.AUX.PRS.3 DEB-AUX support.PP.PST..DAT.SG.M

     ar   medicīnisko   izziņu
     with medical.INS.SG certificate.INS.SG

     'The request must be supported with a doctor's certificate.'

However, (48) is more likely to be analyzed as a passive construction from which
a debitive form is derived and not as a passive of an underlying debitive form

(P. Arkadiev, p.c.). Given the cross-linguistic tendency of modals (confirmed by Baltic) not to form passives this analysis is all the more probable.

Similarly, other valence-changing devices such as causatives or nominalization are not applicable here for both semantic and structural reasons. Still other properties such as the genitive-under-negation test are applicable in Lithuanian only.

4.4   Nominative objects in Baltic: preliminary conclusions

In the following table I summarize the results from 4.1 and 4.2:

Table 13. Properties of the nominative objects in Baltic

		Latvian	Lithuanian
a.	core argument	+	+
b.	nominative case-marking substitutable by accusative with the locutor pronouns	+	– (+)
c.	typically no control over verbal agreement	+ (–)	– (+)
d.	retention of the historically former subject if the nominative argument is fronted and topicalized	–	–
e.	control over the reference of PRO of the "switch-reference-like" matrix-object-controlled converbs	+	– (+)
f.	obligatory change into genitive under negation (Lithuanian only)	n/a	+
g.	object of control infinitives (Lithuanian only)	n/a	– (+)
h.	typically postverbal position	+	+
i.	triggering agreement in case with the second part of reciprocal compound pronoun	+	n/a
j.	association with the object of the underlying lexical verb	+	+
k.	correlation with focus	+	+
	other properties such as control over the reflexive anaphora and conjunction reduction (according to Holvoet & Grzybowska 2014; subsection 4.3)	+/–	+/–

"+"   means the value is typical of objects,
"–"   means the value is typical of subjects,
"()"   means exceptionally,
"n/a" means non-applicable

The minuses provide evidence for the subject analysis while the pluses have to be interpreted as indicating rather the object status of the nominative argument. There are more pluses for Latvian than for Lithuanian, which is more conservative here. I assume that the notion of *nominative objects* is indeed justified for

Latvian, following earlier analyses such as Timberlake's (1974), pace Holvoet & Grzybowska (2014), but less so for Lithuanian (Ambrazas 2001) which shows weaker evidence here.[36]

5.   The nominative case in the subject slot

In this section I address the question of what the meaning and the function of the nominative case are when it marks the *subject* NP. As I mentioned above, the nominative case is highly syntacticized in Baltic. Nevertheless, there are some traces of a meaning even in this context.

5.1   The nominative case as a subject coding property

Generally, a subject is an argument NP that is prioritized with regard to a number of properties (and in comparison with other arguments of the verb). Since Keenan's seminal paper (1976) it is commonly accepted that subject properties are divided into: (i) *coding properties* (the *nominative case* and *verbal agreement* for Baltic, but arguably not *word order*[37]), (ii) behavioral (or syntactic) properties (various kinds

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36. Interestingly, the degree of objectivization of the former subject argument fits the geographical distribution of nominative objects from North to South: it is most object-like and most frequent in Finnic (e.g. Finnish, Estonian), it is object-like but less widespread in North Russian where it tends to be morphologized, and even more restricted (to one construction only) but still object-like in Latvian, and, finally, there is a rather neutral proportion of subject/object properties in Lithuanian.

37. Under special circumstances salient NPs other than the subject may occupy the first position in a clause to yield the unmarked word order in Lithuanian and Latvian, see Seržant (2013b: 202). Holvoet (2013: 266–267; 2014) argues that the nominative stimulus argument of the verb Lith. *patikti*/ Latv. *patikt* 'to like' shows subject behavior only when occurring clause initially, otherwise some subject properties are taken over by the dative experiencer NP. He deals mainly with two properties: control over the reflexive possessive and the coreferential subject omission under coordination. I think these two tests are mainly driven by information-structure roles and not by syntactic roles. Thus, subjects of highly transitive verbs, if demoted into the postverbal position and having the information-structure role of (argument-) focus, would also be less likely to control the reference of a possessive reflexive, cf.^{??}*savo namą nupirkau aš* 'REFL.POSS house.ACC.SG buy.PST.1SG 1SG.NOM.SG' [Intended] 'It was me who bought my house.' As regards the omission of subjects in coordination, I argue (Section 5.3) that this is not a syntactically-driven phenomenon and there is no reference control in coordination in Baltic at all. That is to say, the word order is related to subjecthood via the default assignment of information-structure roles in Baltic but not directly (cf. Holvoet & Nau 2014).

of transformations and control properties available only to subjects) and semantic properties (such as Proto-Agent entailments in terms of Dowty 1991). The idea behind Keenan's (1976) work is that there is no need for all subject properties to occur on the same NP or to occur at all. Most relevant for the present paper is the consequence from this insight that coding properties need not be coupled with the syntactic/behavioral properties.

In recent research, this idea has even been interpreted in such a way that the coding properties have quite often come to be regarded as rather epiphenomenal, functionally empty units of grammar, while the syntactic considerations have been given the absolute priority. There are studies that advocate the view that, if the morphological (coding) and syntactic (behavioral) properties do not converge in one NP, it is the syntactic properties that are most decisive in identifying the subject. Thus, Zaenen, Maling and Thrainsson (1985) were first to suggest non-canonical subject status for a number of Icelandic non-nominative arguments, whereas the nominative arguments are analyzed as objects in these constructions. This view has been accepted in a number of subsequent works. Aikhenvald (2012) provide a typology of these constructions in a great variety of languages.

Now, how should the relation between subjecthood and the nominative case be coherently described for Baltic? In recent research it has been argued that, in Baltic, in contrast to, for example, Icelandic, only nominative arguments behave syntactically as subjects for the simple reason that only these arguments pass unequivocal syntactic subjecthood tests for this language (Holvoet 2013, see also Seržant 2013b). Tests as the following ones are available: the respective NP

i.   is obligatorily replaced with zero (PRO) in infinitival embedded clauses on referential identity with the subject of the matrix verb;
ii. is obligatorily replaced with zero (PRO) in the coreferential-subject-converb (the *-dam*-converb) embedded clauses on referential identity with the subject of the matrix verb (although see Section 4 with semantic restrictions);
iii. in the main clause, it is obligatorily coreferential with the implicit subject (PRO) of the *-dam*-converb (although see Section 4 with semantic restrictions); in turn, if – being in the main clause – it is coreferential with the (implicit or overt) subject of the *-nt*-converb it cannot be the subject (Lithuanian only);
iv. is replaceable with the (genitive) agent phrase in the respective passives (Lithuanian) or is obligatorily suppressed (Latvian);
v.   is obligatorily replaced by the accusative and by the dative in the *accusative-plus-participle construction* (cf. Arkadiev 2012) and *dativus absolutus* construction respectively.

Several other tests, valid for other languages, do not single out only subjects in Baltic, for example, reflexivization or conjunction reduction (see 5.3 below, Holvoet 2013: 262 following Moore and Perlmutter 2000; Haspelmath 2001: 72f). Furthermore, other tests found in the literature on various languages also fail in Baltic. Thus, the first position in the unmarked word order is not unique to subjects only, but is typical, for example, for indirect objects in impersonal constructions as well (Seržant 2013a: 202). (49) represents the unmarked word order with the recipient argument occupying the first position in the sentence; the subject, being indefinite, is dropped:

(49) **Man**   *padovanojo*   *šią*   *knygą*
    1SG.DAT   present.PST.3   DEM.ACC.SG.F   book.ACC.SG
    '[They] presented **me** with this book.'   [Constructed]

Raising tests that have been applied to other languages do not provide any evidence in favor of or against oblique subjects. Thus, phasal verbs – typical candidates for subject raising crosslinguistically – pattern in Lithuanian and Latvian rather as auxiliaries which do not alter the syntactic structure of the lexical verb. Thus, (49) can be paraphrased *mutatis mutandis* into (50) with a phasal verb *nustoti* 'to stop' which yields a grammatical sentence in Lithuanian. Nevertheless, it is clear that the dative *man* is not subject here at all.

(50) **Man**   *nustojo*   *nuolat*   *dovanoti*   *šią*   *knygą*
    1SG.DAT   stop.PST.3   constantly   present.INF   DEM.ACC.SG.F   book.ACC.SG
    '[They] stopped presenting me constantly with this book.'   [Constructed]

Only syntactic tests (i)–(v) consistently single out just one type of constituents, namely subjects, and hence can be regarded as reliable subject tests in Baltic. They reveal that only nominative arguments triggering verbal agreement behave as canonical syntactic subjects. Consider the following example with the verb *pritrūkti* 'to lack, be short of' with a dative-marked experiencer/maleficiary and a genitive-marked theme:

(51) [PRO$_i$] ^{ok}*sudarinėja-nt/*sudarinė-dam-a(-as)*   *programą*,
        ^{ok}compose-DSCVB/*compose-SSCVB-F(-M)   programme.ACC.SG
    man$_{(i)}$ *pritrūko*   *vienos*   *grupės*,   *kuri*
    1SG.DAT   lack.PST.3   one.GEN.SG.F   group.GEN.SG   which.NOM.SG.F
    'While composing the programme I fell short of one group, which …'[38]

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38. http://www.scribd.com/doc/14759998/15min-Kaunas-20080424

The -*nt*-converb can only be used in Lithuanian when its implicit subject should *not* be understood as coreferential with the matrix subject. Yet, this is exactly the converb that renders the intended meaning of co-reference here.

Control verbs are simply incompatible with verbs that require their subjects to be marked by any other case but the nominative, contrast *turėti* 'to have' (NOM-ACC/GEN) and *reikėti* 'to need, be short of' (DAT-GEN):

(52)   *Ne-noriu*$_i$ [PRO$_i$] *turėti*   *pinigų*
      NEG-want.PRS.1SG   have.INF money.GEN.PL
      'I don't want to have/possess money.'   [Constructed]

(53)   **Ne-noriu*$_i$ [PRO$_i$] *reikėti*   *pinigų*
      NEG-want.PRS.1SG   need.INF money.GEN.PL
      [Intended meaning] 'I don't want to be in need of money.'

Baltic has a syntactically prioritized argument that shows unique syntactic behaviour with respect to various operations such as clause chaining, nominalization, passivization, etc., but these operations also require that this argument be endowed with both coding properties: agreement and the nominative case. In languages like Baltic, the morphological coding is therefore crucial for syntax (cf. "unbedingtes Merkmal" in Sasse 1982) and not just a morphological residue of some previous system. On the one hand, Lithuanian and Latvian differ in this respect from the well-known instances of, say, Icelandic (*inter alia*, Sigurðsson 2004) or Hindi/Urdu (*inter alia*, Montaut 2004, 2013), where the correlation between the coding properties and subjecthood is much weaker, given the existence of various non-canonical subjects, i.e. syntactic subjects with no subject coding. On the other hand, Baltic is also different from those languages which do not syntactically prioritize a particular argument at all (e.g. many Daghestanian languages, cf. Ganenkov 2013: 232–233, *inter alia*).

This is, however, not to maintain the assumption that posits a straightforward correlation between the coding properties and subjecthood. There are two aspects that are problematic on this account. First, there is a methodological problem. The claim that every nominative is also the subject in Lithuanian would deprive the category of *subject* of its sense, because, on this approach, one could do away with subjects and just work with nominatives when describing the grammar. Secondly, there is an empirical problem. While all subjects are nominative in Baltic, not all nominatives are subjects as has been demonstrated in Sections 3 and 4 above. Crucially, there are other nominatives that are arguably not subjects, such as predicative nominatives, nominative objects and nominative time and distance adverbials. I conclude that the nominative case-marking is a necessary but not a sufficient condition for subjecthood (conditional relation) in Baltic.

The category of subject in Baltic is just as much syntacticized as in many other European languages but, unlike some other languages, it has not particularly expanded onto other constructions out of its transitive, NOM-ACC home construction, the Latvian debitive being one potential (albeit not complete) exception. As we will see in the next subsection, the semantic shape of the nominative in the subject position is consonant with this view.

5.2   The nominative case and semantic roles

Just like structural cases in other languages, the Baltic nominative case is deprived of any particular semantic role and can encode any of them. Nonetheless, there are certain correlations that cannot be ruled out as accidental. First of all, the semantic role of *agent* can be encoded exclusively by the nominative case in non-derived or basic sentences (in terms of Keenan 1976). While this is not at all unusual in cross-linguistic perspective, in my view, this nevertheless contributes another meaning component that the nominative case may express. There is, hence, a correlation between agents and the nominative.

This is of course not to deny that there are a number of nominative-marked arguments that are not semantically agents in Baltic. However, even at this point, a significantly higher degree of nominative-agent correlation than, for example, in Scandinavian, English or French can be observed. Semantic roles in general play an important role in Baltic, and various cases and sometimes even prepositions are used in order to distinguish between different semantic roles and even between sub-roles such as controlling or responsible experiencer *vs.* non-controlling, patient experiencer. First-argument experiencers (salient experiencers) are more often than not coded by the dative or accusative case, first-argument locations (e.g., in the presentational constructions) are coded by the locative case or a prepositional phrase, etc. (cf. Holvoet & Nau 2014; Wiemer & Bjarnadóttir 2014; Seržant 2015; cf. also Bossong 1998). On the other hand, in Scandinavian, English or French, there is a great degree of versatility of non-canonical objects which may be encoded by different kinds of prepositions motivated by various semantic considerations. However and crucially, there is no such versatility for the subject argument – it must always bear the (zero) nominative case. Thus, while Baltic equilibrates semantic considerations for both logical subjects and objects, the aforementioned languages take semantic considerations into account only when it comes to objects but not to subjects. Thus, the nominative case in a language like Norwegian is used much more frequently with semantic roles other than (voluntary) agents than is observed in Latvian or Lithuanian. This suggests

a much weaker correlation between agenthood and the nominative case in, e.g., Norwegian than Baltic:

(54) a. (Norwegian)
        Jeg   *liker*   *is.*
        1SG.NOM like.PRS ice_cream
        'I like ice-cream.'   [Constructed]

    b. (Lithuanian)
        Man   *patinka*   *ledai.*
        1SG.DAT like.PRS.3 ice_cream.NOM
        'I like ice-cream.'[39]   [Constructed]

(55) a. (Norwegian)
        Jeg   *fikk*   *å*   *vite*
        1SG.NOM get.PST to know
        'I've got to know'   [Constructed]

    b. (Lithuanian)
        Man   *teko*   *sužinoti*
        1SG.DAT get.PST.3 know.INF
        'I've got to know'   [Constructed]

The Norwegian nominative is actually the morphological default form: with nouns, it can be extended by means of prepositions (except for some pronouns) to encode a particular semantic role or a particular semantic aspect. It is iconic that this form is not anyhow specified semantically. This is crucially different from Baltic where the nominative case is morphologically marked (cf. Table 1 above), and as a case form cannot be additionally modified by any of the prepositions, let alone other cases.

To some extent, the Baltic nominative is similar rather to ergatives in sharing the two functions – the semantic and the syntactic one – even more so when the ergative has somewhat extended use including, e.g., the experiencer marking or marking of more agentive S arguments. For example, there are experiencer predicates that require ergative marking on the experiencer argument in Hindi (Mahajan 1990: 87); similarly, in Udi or Dargwa (Nakh-Daghestanian) (Ganenkov 2013) or ergatives that may under specific semantic circumstances code the S argument (in terms of the optional ergative marking, cf. McGregor 2010). Ergatives are generally considered to be semantically non-empty cases, quite strongly related to agenthood (cf. Woolford 2009: 18–20); structural cases may be syntacticized (or

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39. http://mokytojavilma.jimdo.com/m%C5%ABs%C5%B3-k%C5%ABryba/

grammaticalized)[40] to different degrees and need not exhibit uniformly syntactic (or semantic) functions only.

The second aspect of the meaning of the nominative is its compatibility with volitionality or control on the part of the referent. This is an exclusive property of the nominative case, and no other case-marked first argument is capable of entailing volitionality/control on the part of its referent. Of course, there is no obligatory interpretation of events whose main participant is coded by the nominative case as necessarily volitional or controlled. Nonetheless, this option is available and may be activated implicitly or contextually in a pragmatically coherent context, e.g., by means of agentive adverbs such as *on purpose* (Lith. *tyčia, specialiai*). This is crucially different from first participants coded by some other case – here the volitionality/control entailment is not available in any kind of context and the use of agentive adverbs meaning 'on purpose' just yields ungrammatical sentences, cf. the same verb *atšalti* 'to freeze' with nominative experiencer in (56) and dative experiencer in (57) below:

(56) *Aš   netyčia   / tyčia   atšalau*
     1SG.NOM   accidentally.ADV / on_purpose.ADV get_cold.PST.1SG
     rankas
     hand.ACC.PL
     'I've accidentally / on purpose got my hands cold'

(57) *Man   netyčia   / *tyčia   atšalo   rankos*
     1SG.DAT   accidentally.ADV / *on_purpose.ADV get_cold.PST.3 hand.NOM.PL
     'I've accidentally got my hands cold'

Even such verbs as *susirgti* 'to get sick' that are typically construed non-volitionally do not yield ungrammaticality with agentive adverbs in a proper context:

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40. I understand the term *syntacticized* here as the process of bleaching that leads to the full loss of some correlations between a case marking and the semantic, information-structure role of the argument. Thus, in English, basically all first arguments of a verb are nominatives fully regardless of their semantics. The function of the nominative in such a language becomes increasingly related to the syntactic function of encoding a particular grammatical role. In turn, in languages like Baltic, where the more salient arguments tend much more often to be marked by some lexical case, the nominative case "does not need" to mark so many different roles and is thereby more semantically restricted. I emphasize, this is a gradual process and I am not claiming that the Baltic nominative is just a lexical case or that it was a purely lexical case in Proto-Baltic. The claim is that it is somewhat less syntacticized than, say, its English counterpart.

(58) *Vadovė   pamanė,   kad Miki tyčia   susirgo*
      leader.NOM.SG.F think.PST.3 that Miki **on_purpose get_sick**.PST.3
      'The leader thought that Miki had fallen ill on purpose.'[41]

To summarize, the semantic role of agent as well as the control/volitionality entailment is only compatible with the nominative marking in non-derived, basic sentences of Baltic. The fact that the semantic correlation is not bi-conditional is expected given the high degree of grammaticalization (syntactic entrenchment) of the nominative. While this conclusion is in no way surprising, it is nevertheless important for understanding the whole meaning spectrum of the nominative.

5.3   Verbal agreement

In order to exactly establish the function of the nominative marking in the subject position, its function has to be somehow disentangled from the function of verbal agreement, since these two coding markings co-occur on subjects. More specifically, while subjects are often topics, the question relevant here is whether this relation is due to the nominative marking, due to verbal agreement or to both of these. Generally, flagging and indexing need not coincide functionally and may diverge as to the domains they apply in (Croft 1988: 173; 2003: 199). Indeed, the difference in function between the nominative case and agreement is already suggested by their distribution: there are at least two syntactic contexts in which a nominative NP does not control agreement, cf. Sections 3 and 4 above.

In languages such as English, it makes sense to consider verbal agreement (e.g. with the verb *to be*) a grammatical device serving purely syntactic purposes, namely, to highlight the subject argument. Typically for an agreement, it is semantically superfluous here, because it only doubles the reference already provided by the subject NP. In turn, subject drop in coordinated clauses in English is a purely syntactically conditioned phenomenon (cf., *inter plures*, Zaenen et al. 1985). The situation found in Baltic is crucially different from this.

In Baltic, subject pronouns are typically dropped in all persons, conditioned by purely information-structure considerations with no syntactic restrictions. One way to look at agreement in Baltic is – with Corbett (2006: 10) – to assume here a non-canonical agreement pattern with a controller that is not overtly present

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41. http://www.15min.lt/naujiena/kultura/teatras/baleto-meistrai-kyla-pries-vienvaldyste-teatre-283-169613

(the first (non)canonicity factor in Corbett 2006). It seems, however, that this approach – although morphosyntactically coherent – will not be able to capture the functional load associated with the agreement inflection.

As will be demonstrated below, verbal "agreement" affixes have a different function than the respective overt pronouns in Baltic in terms of contrastiveness *vs.* expectedness or focus *vs.* topic oppositions. The verbal affixes cannot, for example, be used to encode argument focus; only personal pronouns or nouns can be used here. I therefore claim that the Baltic verbal "agreement" is a *reduced referential device* (cf. Kibrik 2011:74) that just happens to be restricted to the subject (A/S) slot only – a restriction that is not infrequent cross-linguistically (cf., e.g., Morimoto 2009 on Bantu lgs.; Kibrik 2011). Kibrik (2011) provides three main subtypes of reduced referential devices:

i.   *free pronouns* such as English *he;*
ii. *bound pronouns*: affixes attached to a head constituent (typically the verb), cf. Navajo (Na-Dene, Southwest of the USA) *ʔa-ji-łhosh* PREF-he-sleep.IMPFV 'he was sleeping';
iii. *zero forms*, cf. Japanese *mezame-ta* wake.up-PST '[he] woke up' where, e.g. *he,* does not have any formal realization at all but must be understood due to its high discourse activation status in the context.

According to this classification Baltic is close to developing a locutors *vs.* non-locutors split with respect to the way the reference to the subject participant is provided. The first and second person verbal affixes perfectly fit *bound pronouns* in (ii) under the assumption that a special set of bound pronouns, phonetically distinct from the respective free pronouns, is employed here – again something not infrequent cross-linguistically.[42] The locutor *bound pronouns* (i.e. the verbal affixes) are *tenacious* (in Kibrik 2011's terminology), that is, they cannot be dropped even

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42. Note that *bound pronouns* are understood here as a purely synchronic notion. As regards the origin of the personal verb affixes I cannot subscribe to the view advocated in Kibrik (2011, *passim*, relying on some other works) that Indo-European (and thus also Baltic) verb person affixes historically developed from personal pronouns due to lack of any evidence for this. There is indeed some superficial correspondence between one of the first singular endings *-m* and the oblique (sic!) stem of the free 1st person sg. pronoun, but there is no correspondence for the second sg. (free pronoun **tu(h₁)* vs. verbal affix **-s*), third person pronoun **so* and the verbal affix **-t*, etc. Note also the *m* sound in the first person singular is a more general phenomenon found in Uralic, Turkic, Tungusic, Mongolic, Indo-European, Yukagir, and Kartvelian not related to inheritance but rather to some phonetic universal tendencies (Nichols 2012). The non-relatedness of the free pronouns and the respective verb affixes is also the most widespread view among Indo-Europeanists.

if there is a full NP in the same argument position in the clause; both – i.e. the respective verbal ("agreement") affix and the NP – then refer cumulatively (cf. Kibrik 2011: 96, *passim*).

On the other hand, the third person is somewhat more complicated. It may be analyzed as a *zero form* (iii) when used in the "*pro*-drop manner", because the third-person verb form consistently lacks any (person) marking (except for the suppletive Lith. *yra*/ Latv. *ir* 'be.PRS.3' (both singular and plural) as opposed to Lith. *es-u*/ Latv. *es-mu* 'be.PRS.1SG', Lith./Latv. *es-i* 'be.PRS.2SG'). Morphologically the third-person verb form often represents the base with no overt exponent (cf. Bybee 1985: 53; Siewierska 2013 for parallels), cf. Lithuanian *raš-o-me* 'we write', *raš-o-te* 'you (PL) write', *raš-o* '(s)he writes' vs. Latvian *rakst-ā-m* 'we write', *rakst-ā-t* 'you (PL) write', *rakst-a* '(s)he writes'. Having said this, I am nevertheless inclined to treat this form as a dedicated third-person form, morphologically still having a dedicated third-person zero affix for both singular and plural, and not as lacking any affix. The main motivation for this is paradigmatic: this form is not neutral with respect to person value and is not determined solely by the discourse – it cannot refer to any other referents except for the third-person subjects. It is thus different from the "true" zero forms in (iii) by being confined to the third person only.

In the infrequent instance where the subject referent is not immediately accessible (third person only), an NP must specify it. The affixes alone cannot refer to a referent outside the discourse model. Thus, the answer of B in (b) – although grammatical in a different context – is pragmatically infelicitous in the given context:

(59) A: *O kas vakar naktyje įjungė šviesą mano kambaryje?*

     B: a. ***Jon-as***   *nakvuojo*   *vakar*   *pas tave*

           John-NOM spend.the.night.PST.3 yesterday at   2SG.ACC

        b. **Ø*   *nakvuojo*   *vakar*   *pas tave*

           *pro spend.the.night.PST.3 yesterday at   2SG.ACC

     A: 'Who switched on the light last night in my room?'

     B: 'John stayed overnight at your place.'   [Elicited]

In what follows I present some statistical results. The following table relies on a small collection of Lithuanian texts, and its counts should therefore be considered as preliminary. With this caveat in mind, I claim that verbal agreement is strongly correlated with the anaphoric (third person) and deictic (locutors) function and, by virtue of this, with topichood in Baltic:

Table 14. Overt subject expression vs. *pro*-drop[43]

	Topical subject				Focal subject	
	Continuous topic (excluding conjunction reduction)		Topic shift		Sentence-focus,[44] argument-focus sentences[45]	
nouns	3		4		93	
	overt	*pro*-drop	overt	*pro*-drop	overt	*pro*-drop
3rd SG & PL	**33**	**32**	**33**	3	0	0
2nd SG & PL	0	5	12	15	0	0
1st SG & PL	18	**32**	**56**	42	0	0

The overall ratio of the overt pronoun *vs.* zero subject coded by verbal agreement is 66/35 for the referential third person (the generic third person has been left out of consideration here), 12/20 for the second and 74/74 for the first person, which indicates a different behavior of the third person as opposed to the first and second. The third person "*pro*-drop" is, for example, quite infrequent in the context of topic shift (with only 3 hits from 36), whereas the "*pro*-drop" with topic shift is as regular as the overt expression with the locutor affixes. Given, however, the right pragmatics, e.g. a topic shift between active inanimate and active animate referent, the bare third-person verb form is fully felicitous even in coordinated clauses:

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43. The data stem from the following texts: Juozas Erlickas (Humoreskos ir humoristiniai eilėraščiai iš knygos "KODĖL?" (1979): O lietus vis lijo…; Tas gyvenimas toks…; Pamokanti istorija; Istorija apie Joną, kuris buvo iš visų mūsų jauniausias; Iš ciklo "Nikotinas ir alko-holis ypač kenksmingi jaunam organizmui" downloaded under http://antologija.lt/texts/search/?q=sruoga), Balys Sruoga ("Dievų miškas": VI. Pajūrio kurortas + XVI. Wacek Kozlowski, downloaded under: http://tekstai.lt/component/content/article/196-erlickas-juozas/1054-juozas-erlickas-kodel-1). All these texts contain dialogues, which was one of the crucial criteria for their selection.

44. Other terms: *focus-presupposition, identificational, contrastive typ*e (Lambrecht 1994:124; 2000).

45. Other terms: *all-new, presentational, neutral-description, thetic* type (Lambrecht 1994:124; 2000).

(60) *Jonas ir Akvilija atvažiavo pažiūrėti parduodamo namo, kuris buvo visai*
      netoli nuo miesto.
      Øj *Buvo   labai gražus*
          be.PST.3 very   nice.NOM.SG.M
      ir   (todėl) Øi nusprendė iškart   jį   pirkti.
      and   (therefore) decide.PST.3 promptly 3.ACC.SG.M buy.INF
      'Jonasi and Akvilijai came to see the housej that was on sale which was not far
      from the town. (Itj)Ø was very nice and (theyi)Ø (therefore) promptly decided
      to buy it.'   [Elicited]

Natural examples of lack of control in coordination are frequently found with a
non-third person:

(61) (Latvian)
      Ātrums   bija   labs   un
      speed.NOM.SG.M be.PST.3 good.NOM.SG.M and
      Øj *braucot   jutos   ļoti labi*
          drive.PRS.CVB feel.PRS.1SG very good
      'The speedi was good and (Ij) felt really good while driving.'[46]

Occasionally one also finds coordination examples with two non-coreferential
third person subjects, one of which is omitted but, crucially, not controlled by the
overt one of the preceding clause:

(62) (Latvian)
      Noskaņojumsi   bija   labs,   un Øj patika   visiem.
      mood.NOM.SG.M   be.PST.3 good.NOM.SG.M and   like.PST.3 all.DAT.PL
      [Literally] 'The moodi was good and [itj scil. the event] pleased everyone.'
                                                    (Latvietis Nr. 123, 2010. g. 16. dec.)

From these examples it follows that there is no control over the reference of the
subject left unexpressed in a coordinated clause by the overt subject of the first
clause in Baltic. The examples demonstrate that subject-NP drop is not syntactically
constrained in Baltic, in contrast to, for example, English. In Baltic, the reference of
the implicit subject is determined solely by verbal affixes and information-structure
considerations, among other things by the likelihood of one of the activated refer-
ents being the subject referent in the given situation. Pragmatically, the co-reference
with the subject of the coordinated clause (which is also often the discourse topic) is
likely, and this is the reason why co-reference precisely with the coordinated subject
is often found. This is all the more true of the locutor pronouns.

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46. http://motosport-baltic.eu/andis-valts-par-eiropas-cempionatu-slovakija-1529

The third-person verb form – in contrast to the locutor pronouns – shows indications of incipient "de-emphasizing" and "de-stressing" due to "communicative over-use" (cf. Givón 2001: 421) as Table 14 above indicates. In turn, the over-use of the third-person free pronouns as opposed to the locutor forms is not or not only motivated by the general drift toward "de-marking of independent pronouns" observed cross-linguistically (Givón 2001: 421) but also by the specific situation in Baltic. In these languages, the third-person verb form has a wide variety of compatible interpretations: it may have generic or impersonal reference (comparable, e.g., to the Scandinavian *man* pronoun), it is the default form required with non-canonically marked first arguments, it is not gender or number differentiated. One might therefore even consider it being a default form that does not provide any referential information. This ambiguity of the third-person verb form facilitates the over-use of overt third-person pronouns serving to disambiguate the subject reference.

All new participants (typically associated with the focal position) are coded by full NPs in the nominative case (93, i.e. 100%, in Table 14 above), including focal locutors and third person pronouns (e.g. in the argument-focus sentences). There is thus a strong correlation between the information-structure role of focus and full NPs, which bear the nominative case in this position, whereas topichood correlates with verbal affixes only. Free personal pronouns take an intermediate position here, in that they are obligatory in the focus (e.g. in the corrective focus) but may also be used as topics (e.g. with some emphatic connotation).

To conclude, the Baltic verbal agreement affixes, or rather bound pronouns, are a reduced referential device that is straightforwardly related to topichood (cf. Bresnan & Mchombo 1986; Siewierska 2004: 12–127 on the typology of anaphoric agreements) by virtue of referring to the most activated referents, namely, either discourse topics, locutors, or referents that are already introduced in the same clause by an overt NP (cf. a similar analysis of the verb affixes of Latin in Kibrik 2011: 210–212). The correlation between topichood and verbal person affixes is corroborated additionally by the negative evidence from the existential construction of Lithuanian. This construction induces sentence-focus interpretation and disallows the subject NP to be the topic. Consequently, the subject is case-marked with the partitive genitive in this construction and the verbal agreement is suspended accordingly (Seržant 2014).

6. Gradient correlation between different NP types and subjecthood

The suppletive nominative forms of locutor pronouns have to be analyzed as nominative forms in terms of their morphosyntactic properties, e.g. they take nominative adjectives in the predicative position, are substitutable only by those NPs that bear the dedicated (concatenative) exponent for the nominative case, etc. Nevertheless, there is not just a discrepancy in the morphological device employed to mark the nominative of the locutor pronouns *vs.* other NP types (cf. Table 5 above), there are also distributional differences in syntax: crucially, only the locutor person nominative pronouns cannot occur as *nominative objects* while all nominative nouns and the third person pronouns can. The former have to be marked accusative here (Latvian), cf. (63), or are just highly dispreferred altogether (Lithuanian), cf. the rare instance in (30) repeated as (64) here for convenience:

(63) (Latvian)
    Tev   *(ir)*   *jā-ēd*   ***mani***   / **es*
    2SG.DAT (AUX.PRS.3) DEB-eat 1SG.ACC / *1SG.NOM
    'You have to eat me.'   [Constructed example]

(64) *Kuo toliau, tuo **tave**   buvo   matyti vis rečiau*
    how further thus **2SG.ACC** AUX.PST.3 see.INF only seldom.COMP.ADV
    ir   rečiau,   elgeisi   panašiai kaip …
    and seldom.COMP.ADV behave.PRS.2SG similar   as
    'As time went on, one could see **you** more and more rarely; you behaved as …'[47]

The only difference between Latvian and Lithuanian is the way this gap is filled: while Latvian requires accusative marking here, Lithuanian, as a rule, simply disallows locutor pronouns here altogether. I summarize:

Table 15. Syntactic splits between nouns and 1st & 2nd person pronouns in Baltic

	Subjects	Nominative objects	Objects
1st&2nd p. pronouns	NOM	(ACC $_\text{LATV}$/#$_\text{LITH}$)	ACC
all other NP types	NOM	NOM	ACC

The nominative case is also found with time and distance adverbials in Baltic. The latter are obviously lexically restricted. In total, it follows that the correlation between subjecthood and the nominative case is indeed gradual with different nominative NP types in Baltic, decreasing along the Animacy Scale:

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47. http://las-venturas.lt/forumas/index.php?/topic/57382-buv%C4%99-serverio-direktoriai/

Table 16. Correlations between different NP types in the nominative case with syntactic roles in Baltic

	(CANONICAL) SUBJECTS	(NON-CANONICAL, NOMINATIVE) OBJECTS	PREDICATIVE POSITION	(TIME AND DISTANCE) ADVERBIALS
1&2 person pronouns	NOM	–	–	–
3rd person pronouns	NOM	NOM	–	
animate nouns, most of the **inanimate NPs**	NOM	NOM	NOM	–
some lexically restricted **inanimate nouns**	NOM	NOM	NOM	NOM

As can be observed from Table 5 (Section 2) above and Table 16, the non-concatenative nominative "pattern", namely suppletion, is straightforwardly related to the syntactic role of subject, while the concatenative nominative pattern has no such bi-conditional relation with subjects, only in terms of a significant tendency. Strictly speaking, this leads to the conclusion that the non-concatenative nominative is a different, albeit similar category in Baltic and that it is not just a lexeme-sensitive variant (allomorph) of a major category *nominative case*. Note also that locutors pronouns constitute a natural class.

Note that locutor pronouns employ the most idiosyncratic (in terms of unpredictability) of the non-concatenative strategies to code the nominative case. This is an important point for the functional explanation. The nominative suppletive forms of the locutor pronouns are grammaticalized subjects that enter the system of the nominative case lexically, by virtue of their lexical semantics (mostly agents, topics, etc.). In turn, the concatenative nominative is primarily a case-marker and, hence, quite different in origin. That is to say, the grammaticalization paths of the concatenative nominative and of the pronominal, non-concatenative one are assumedly quite different, and it is just the large functional overlap that made grammarians consider them as instantiations of one case.

Furthermore, in terms of a *system-external explanation* (cf. Haspelmath & Sims 2010: 7–8) the differences in the syntactic distribution and morphological shape do not come as a surprise. Crosslinguistically, personal pronouns tend to yield various sorts of splits in both morphology and syntactic alignment, Baltic not being a special case here. To give just a few examples, the ergative marking in Dyirbal applies to the same NP types as does the Lithuanian concatenative nominative: third person pronouns, proper names and other full NPs, while first and second pronouns lack an ergative exponent, cf. also other languages such as Kham or Nez Perce (Fauconnier 2011: 543). To this extent, the locutor pronouns

of Baltic surprisingly correlate to the well-known asymmetries in A *vs.* P marking motivated by *markedness reversal* (Comrie 1979: 19; Dixon 1994: 85–86; Aissen 2003: 459). According to this principle, locutor pronouns are highly expected in the subject position (due to their semantic properties such as most topicworthy, animate, definite, etc.), while they are unexpected in the object position, hence the morphological coding: those NP types that take no marker in the subject position are the ones that obligatorily take accusative marking in object position. The situation in Baltic is somewhat different from this ideal case of markedness reversal, but it nevertheless partly adheres to it. Thus, although locutor personal pronouns are marked by suppletion in the nominative, object forms require not only suppletion (as in European lgs.) but, in the singular, also additionally a concatenative case marker Lith. *-e,* Latv. *-i.* Thereby Baltic locutor pronouns exhibit a redundantly marked markedness reversal: the locutor objects are double-marked (by suppletion and the dedicated accusative case marking), while the locutor subjects – being in the expected position of locutor pronouns – are marked only once, namely, by suppletion (cf. Section 2, Tables 2, 3 above). Baltic thus shows symmetric flagging for nouns and the asymmetric one for locutor pronouns according to Creissels' (to appear) definitions, i.e. both As and Ps are equally flagged with nouns and unequally flagged with locutor pronouns.

Moreover, by virtue of the nominative objects (to the limited extent that they are found in Baltic), Baltic also adheres to a frequently attested pattern in which only locutors distinguish A and P marking, while other NP types do not. For instance, compare Jingulu (Mirndi, Australia), in which language all pronominal patient-like arguments are marked with the accusative suffix *u*, whereas all nominal patients are in the unmarked nominative case (Pensalfini 1997).

The Baltic nominative is – despite superficial similarities – a quite different phenomenon from the nominative case of the Standard Average European (SAE) languages. In the latter, the nominative forms of pronouns are equally suppletive and equally straightforward indicators of subjecthood, while there are considerable differences with nouns. The noun forms used as "nominative" forms may also occur outside subjects, e.g., in the object position and as the dependent of prepositions, because nouns are not inflected in most of the European languages (except for the genitive, e.g., in German). The Baltic nominative of nouns, on the other hand, is a dedicated case-marked form which may occur in only a very limited number of positions (described above). Thus, the Baltic nominative – even though used for naming things – cannot be used as vocative, which is a morphologically distinct form in Baltic. Moreover, as a case-marked form it is supposed to code certain information and/or to have a particular function/ particular functions, while in SAE, the form of nouns used as "nominative" is just

a morphological and semantic default which is not expected to code information/ functions other than the respective lexical ones; this default form of nouns may occur in quite different positions requiring quite different (underlying) cases.

As regards locutor pronouns, there are also substantial differences with the SAE languages: in Baltic, only the nominative form is morphologically coded by suppletion alone, while all other cases are marked by both suppletion and a dedicated case-marker (in the singular); in the SAE languages, in turn, the system of pronominal case is symmetric in that all case forms of pronouns are marked by suppletion and only by suppletion. The nominative of pronouns of the SAE languages does not stand out in their morphological systems of cases as does the Baltic pronominal nominative of the locutors.

7.   Conclusions

7.1   Morphology and syntax

I have argued that all arguments that syntactically behave as subjects are always coded jointly by the nominative case and verbal agreement in Baltic. As a matter of facts, there are a number of constructions that involve non-canonical encoding of the most salient argument such as dative or accusative experiencers, involuntary agents, etc., but these arguments do not exhibit any solid claim for syntactic subjecthood in Baltic (Holvoet 2009; 2013). The coding properties are thus crucial for defining the category of *subject* for Baltic (in contrast to languages such as Icelandic). I emphasize that this is not a theoretical, *a priori* stand but rather an empirical fact that follows from the data.

While the nominative case is crucial for defining subjecthood in Baltic, it is not to be simply equated to subjecthood. There are unequivocal non-subject nominatives such as nominative objects as well as time and distance adverbials coded by the nominative case (in alternation with the accusative). As regards *nominative objects* of Lithuanian, in contrast to Latvian, the analysis has revealed that this is an extinct category which only limitedly attests object properties. The situation is somewhat different in Latvian. Here, the historically relatively recent debitive construction attests nominative objects as a productive category.

The nominative case is, hence, a necessary but not a sufficient condition for analyzing an NP as subject. Only the combination with the verbal agreement represents a solid argument in favor of subjecthood (though see exceptions in Holvoet 2013). In contrast, the locutor pronouns are always subjects if they have the nominative form. Generally, different NP types in the nominative case correlate with

subjecthood to different degrees according to the Animacy Scale. The correlation is the weakest with the subclass of inanimate NPs, namely with time and distance expressions.

As regards the morphological encoding of the nominative case, there are two general strategies: the non-concatenative one, namely suppletion (with locutor pronouns only), and the affix strategy (all other NP types). Interestingly, this morphological split correlates to syntax: the non-concatenative strategy is a straightforward marker of subjecthood, while the concatenative one is not (only in terms of a significant tendency). One is thus tempted to claim that the two morphological strategies are not just lexeme-sensitive subtypes of the same category but rather two different, albeit similar, categories.

Furthermore, limitedly, Baltic adheres to the *markedness reversal* (Comrie 1979: 19; Dixon 1994: 85–86; Aissen 2003: 459) in its specific manner. First, the locutor pronouns require more morphology (suppletion plus case affix) in the non-subject position – a position they less frequently occupy – than in the subject position (suppletion only). Secondly, with respect to the *nominative-object* constructions, nouns need not be distinguished as objects and can keep carrying the nominative affix, because they are expected (in terms of frequency) to occur in the object position anyway. Moreover, markedness reversal might be one of the reasons why Baltic tolerates the retention of the nominative case in the development from subject to object found in the nominative-object constructions. Not less significantly, of course, this morphological retention is facilitated by the lack of nominative marking on the higher ranked argument, which is typically in the dative case in the constructions involving nominative objects. Thus, the distinguishing or discriminatory function of case, namely to differentiate between two arguments of a bivalent predicate, is obeyed here (cf. Comrie 1989). Having said this, markedness reversal plays only a marginal role in Baltic.

While the nominative case is highly syntacticized in Baltic, it is not a purely syntax-driven case here but also has its semantic or non-structural facets in such domains as information structure and semantics.

7.2   Denotational facets

The nominative case has some denotational facets. First, the nominative case correlates with agenthood. All agents must exclusively be coded by the nominative in basic sentences. Else, additional verb morphology is necessary to make the semantic role of *agent* available for other case-marking strategies (e.g. in the passive). However, the reverse is not true: not all nominatives are agents. The fact

that Baltic has quite a versatile case system and does not preclude oblique cases from the marking of the most salient arguments indirectly confirms the idea that the correlation between the nominative case and the semantic role of agent is somewhat stronger in Baltic than, say, on average in languages such as English or Scandinavian, where only the marking of second arguments (objects) can be sensitive to semantic considerations. Related to this, the nominative case is the only case that potentially allows the interpretation of its referent as having control over the event or over the stage immediately preceding the event referred to by the predicate (volitionality entailment in Dowty 1991).

Secondly, semantically immediately related to the weak correlation with agenthood is the function of *emphasis*, because both express prominence at different levels of interpretation: the agent is the most prominent participant by virtue of its semantic role while emphasis assigns more prominence to a particular expression on the level of information structure. I have argued at length that the nominative case-marked time adverbials imply a certain degree of emphasis and make their hosting sentence stand out in the discourse as opposed to the neutral flavour of the respective accusative-marked adverbials. The emphasis function might be inherited from the source construction of the nominative time adverbials but crucially for our purposes, on the synchronic level, it is just the nominative case that encodes this meaning. This denotational facet of the nominative case is all the more interesting as it is found outside its most grammaticalized function, namely, subject, and is hence established "independently of syntax".

The principle "Avoid Lexical A" predicts that full NPs are typically dispreferred in the subject position with transitive verbs, where most frequently weak referential devices – "*pro*-drop" in case of Baltic – are used (Du Bois 1987; cf. also Lambrecht 1994: 132). The idea that underlies this empirically justified principle is that transitive subjects and also unergative subjects are not employed to introduce new discourse participants but rather refer to already known and activated referents. In turn, full NPs are typically employed to introduce new referents that are not yet activated, because the hearer needs more information about the referent at its first mention (Kibrik 2011). The occurrence of a full NP in the subject of a non-existential verb is therefore unexpected in terms of frequency-based expectations. Following Grossmann (2014) one may thus claim that the nominative case in Baltic marks the "unexpected association of a low-accessibility marker (= lexical NP referring expression) and the discourse profile of the grammatical role A/S, which is typically associated with highly-accessible referents" (cf. also Iemmolo 2010). Grossmann (2014) draws here on the Accessibility Approach (*inter alia*, Lambrecht 1994: 165ff), which assumes that the more highly activated a particular

referent is in the discourse, the more acceptable it will be as the topic. That is, whenever the discourse referent is easily identifiable and/or highly activated, overt NPs, as a tendency, are dispreferred, whereas in contexts which require special attention (new referents, focus, contrastive topic/topic shift, etc.), an NP is necessary (Section 5.3); yet, this NP is marked with the nominative case. Thus, the nominative case is not incompatible with emphasis when it marks subjects. Here, the emphasis consists in ranking a particular referent highest on the background of some contextually given set of potential alternative referents. This is immediately clear with contrastive topics and topic shifts. With focus/new information, in turn, the new referent is not a member of a set of already activated referents and this is exactly what is emphasized: the referent is, contrary to expectations, not from the set of the activated or easily identifiable referents.

Thirdly, I have argued that verbal agreement in Baltic is "a topic related phenomenon" as Givón (1976: 185) puts it. Recall that nominative time adverbials and nominative objects are almost always foci or parts of focus constituents and not topics. From this, it naturally follows that the functions of the nominative case and verbal agreement are quite different in Baltic: the well-known correlation between subjecthood and topichood is due to the verbal agreement only (recall that verbal agreement is crucial for defining subjecthood), while the nominative case is related to emphasis regardless of the narrow information-structure role (focus or topic) of the NP and prominence (more broadly, including semantic roles). This is against the view that the nominative case, especially in Indo-European languages, is related to topichood (cf., *inter alia*, Malchukov & Spencer 2009: 662).

Acknowledgements

Abbreviations

ACC	accusative	LOC	locative
ADJ	adjective	M	masculine
ADV	adverb	N	neuter
AUX	auxiliary	NA	non-agreeing
CMP	comparative	NEG	negation
CNT	continuative	NOM	nominative
CVB	converb	OBJCVB	matrix-object subject converb
DAT	dative	PA	active participle
DEB	debitive	PL	plural
DEM	demonstrative	PP	passive participle
DSCVB	different subject converb	PRS	present
F	feminine	PST	past
FUT	future	PTC	particle
GEN	genitive	RCPR	reciprocal
INDECL	indeclinable	SG	singular
INF	infinitive	SSCVB	same subject converb
INS	instrumental	SUPER	superlative
ITER	iterative		

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