

21. Ergativity

1. Introduction: three ergativity properties
2. Ways of being ergative
3. Theories of ergativity in case and its relatives
4. Theories of ergativity in \bar{A} -movement
5. Future directions in ergativity studies
6. Abbreviations
7. References (selected)

Abstract

Languages show ergativity when they treat transitive subjects distinctly from intransitive ones, treat objects like intransitive subjects, or treat unaccusative subjects unlike unergative and transitive subjects. Ergativity plays a central role in the study of case, agreement, and non-finite clauses. It casts light in addition on the constraints at play in A' extraction. Across these domains, the investigation of ergativity offers a rich arena of crosslinguistic variation against a backdrop of potential language universals. This chapter surveys both the major proposed universals of ergativity and the variety of theoretical approaches which have been applied to them. A central theme is that ergativity is not one but many phenomena.

1. Introduction: three ergativity properties

The study of ergativity is concerned with ways in which languages show one or more of the following properties:

(1) Ergativity properties

a. *The ergative property*

Subjects of transitive clauses behave differently from subjects of intransitive clauses for some grammatical generalization(s).

b. *The absolutive property*

Objects of transitive clauses and subjects of intransitive clauses behave identically for some grammatical generalization(s).

c. *The argument-structural property*

Subjects of unaccusative verbs behave differently from subjects of unergative and transitive verbs for some grammatical generalization(s).

Ergativity properties have been a subject of intense research for over forty years. During this time, the range of data available to syntacticians concerned with ergativity has grown immensely, with important consequences for the way that ergativity is viewed. It is now uncontroversially clear that there is a great deal of syntactic and morphological diversity among languages to be considered ergative in the broad sense of (1). Theories of ergativity are tasked with handling this diversity in a way that balances predictive power with empirical coverage.

This situation is an interesting one for Minimalism and its antecedents, e.g. Government and Binding Theory, which will be the focus of theoretical attention here. In a sense, these theories predict diversity in ergative languages, in that they offer no possibility of a unified formulation of the properties in (1). It is notable in this connection that very little of the description in (1) corresponds to primitive elements recognized by these frameworks. Subjecthood and transitivity must be cashed out in structural terms. So too must the various grammatical generalizations which conform to the broad ergative mold. In each case there will be some range of choices which could be pursued, with different choices potentially appropriate for different languages. This leads us to expect that the net cast by (1) may well bring in a range of species which are different in various ways. Two languages which pre-theoretically both show the ergative property and the absolutive property, for instance, could nevertheless manifest systematic and far-reaching structural differences.

Indeed one of the major results of generative studies on ergativity has been that exactly this situation does obtain. Bittner and Hale's important work in the 1990s on Warlpiri versus Inuit showed that two languages showing similar morphological (1a)/(1b) *ergative-absolutive* patterns nevertheless differ from one another in a range of syntactic and semantic dimensions (Bittner and Hale 1996a, 1996b). There is not just one ergativity, then, but at least two ergativities, the Warlpiri type and the Inuit type – two ways that languages can fall under the joint umbrella of properties (1a) and (1b). And where there are two ergativities

there might be more than two. Languages described as ergative in view of the argument-structural property (1c) deserve additional attention. So too do languages showing the ergative property (1a) but not the absolutive property (1b).

What accumulates from ergativity studies then is not an overarching theory of ergativity as a single parameter or a primitive. From a theoretical perspective there is no particular reason why this should exist. Primary concerns of theoretical ergativity studies today are questions of diversity – How many ergative grammars are there? – and of formal unity beneath: What sort of theory can predict exactly these ergative types and no others?

This article will survey two ways of seeking answers to these questions. The first, shorter part (section 2) overviews major results of the typological approach to ergativity. The culmination of this section is a list of some proposed universals, which will play an important role in the motivation and evaluation of theoretical points of view. The second part of the article discusses syntactic and morphological theories of ergativity behaviors, first in relation to case, agreement and control (section 3) and then in relation to \bar{A} -movement (section 4).

2. Ways of being ergative

What is the profile of a language demonstrating one or more of the properties in (1)? When a linguist or a child is exposed to certain evidence of ergativity properties in a given language, what else might he or she conclude? Of the dimensions along which languages showing ergativity properties diverge, let me highlight three:

- (2) a. *Variation by ergativity properties*
Which ergativity properties are at play?
- b. *Variation by grammatical manifestation of ergativity*
What type of grammatical generalizations reflect ergativity properties?
- c. *Variation by scope of ergative patterns*
How generalized or restricted are the ergative patterns?

We will first consider the logical relationships among the ergativity properties, and then consider the scale of variation in their grammatical manifestations and the scope of the patterns they define. Against this varied domain we will then consider a set of unifying correlations, drawing together properties, manifestations and scopes of ergative patterns.

2.1. The relationship among the ergativity properties

What is the relationship among the ergativity properties? The ergative property (1a) and the absolutive property (1b) are logically independent of one another, and indeed, natural languages occupy each place in the possibility space these two properties define. If we consider ergativity properties as seen in morphological case-marking, the following languages represent the four possibilities:

(3) Table 21.1. Interactions among (1a) and (1b) (absent [1c])

	Ergative property: yes	Ergative property: no
Absolutive property: yes	Warlpiri	Chinese
Absolutive property: no	Nez Perce	Latin

Warlpiri is a language showing ergativity properties (1a) and (1b). Subjects are marked with a distinct case in transitive clauses – the ergative – while objects appear in a bare form – the “absolutive” – also characteristic of intransitive subjects.

- (4) a. *ngarrka-ngku ka wawirri panti-rni* [Warlpiri]
man-ERG AUX kangaroo spear-NPST
‘The man is spearing the kangaroo.’
b. *kurdu ka wanka-mi*
child AUX speak-NPST
‘The child is speaking.’
c. *kurdu kapi wanti-mi*
child AUX fall-NPST
‘The child will fall.’

These data come from Hale (1983), who provides (4b) and (4c) as evidence that Warlpiri makes no systematic division among intransitives. Warlpiri, that is, does not display property (1c). Parallel facts are found in a host of unrelated and geographically diverse languages, including Inuit languages such as West Greenlandic (Bittner 1994) and Inuktitut (Johns 1992), Austronesian languages such as Niuean (Seiter 1980), Australian languages such as Dyirbal (Dixon 1972), Amazonian languages such as Shipibo (Valenzuela 2010), West Nilotic languages Pāri and Shilluk (König 2008: ch 3) as well as Eastern Basque (Aldai 2009). Languages showing this combination of ergativity properties are called *ergative/absolutive*.

Nez Perce is a language showing the ergative property (1a) but not the absolutive property (1b). Subjects are marked with a special case in transitive clauses (again glossed ERGATIVE), but intransitive subjects and transitive objects also differ for case purposes. The former appears in a bare form (nominative); the latter takes a distinct case marker (objective).

- (5) a. *haacwal-nim pee-p-0-e* *cu'yeem-ne* [Nez Perce]
boy-ERG 3SBJ-eat-P.ASP-REM.PST fish-OBJ
‘The boy ate the fish.’
b. *haacwal hi-êeeleewi-0-ye*
boy.NOM 3SBJ-work-P.ASP-REM.PST
‘The boy worked.’
c. *haacwal hi-peeleeey-n-e*
boy.NOM 3SBJ-get.lost-P.ASP-REM.PST
‘The boy got lost.’

As in Warlpiri, there is no systematic divide among intransitive subjects in Nez Perce. All intransitive subjects appear in the unmarked (nominative) form. Other languages showing this type of pattern include Wangkumara and Pitta-Pitta in Australia (Blake 1987: 22, 59) and Cashinawa in Peru (Montag 1981: 599). Languages showing this type of pattern are sometimes called *three-way ergative* or *tripartite* (Dixon 1994: 39).

This typology of (1a) and (1b) is rounded out by two additional types of languages. Chinese is a language with no morphological case-marking on subjects or objects. The absence of a distinctive mark is (trivially) in common between intransitive subjects and transitive objects, as in Warlpiri, conforming to (1b); but there is no mark on transitive subjects, either, failing (1a). Latin is a language that marks subjects distinct from objects regardless of transitivity, failing both (1a) and (1b). These examples remind us that the ergative property, (1a), and the absolutive property, (1b), are entirely logically distinct.

The relationship of the argument-structural property, (1c), to the ergative property (1a) and the absolutive property (1b) is slightly more complex. The absence of argument-structural effects is compatible with any combination of (1a) and (1b); the four languages just considered all fail to show argument-structural effects in case-marking. On the other hand, the presence of argument-structural ergativity, as applied to particular areas of linguistic generalization (e.g., morphological case), is not compatible with either the ergative property or the absolutive property on a strict interpretation. A system characterized by the ergative property (1a) and/or the absolutive property (1b) treats intransitive subjects as a class, whereas a system characterized by the argument-structural property (1c) bifurcates intransitive subjects. At the same time, whenever argument-structural ergativity obtains, there will necessarily be some intransitive subjects (i.e. subjects of unaccusatives) which behave unlike subjects of transitives, giving a partial case of the ergative property (1a). It can be helpful to think of loose versions of the ergative property (1a) and the absolutive property (1b) as follows:

- (6) (1a) (loose) Subjects of transitive clauses behave differently from some subjects of intransitive clauses for some grammatical generalization(s)
- (1b) (loose) Objects of transitive clauses and subjects of some intransitive clauses behave identically for some grammatical generalization(s)

In contrast to the (1c) - loose (1a) relationship, the relationship between the argument structural property (1c) and the loose version of the absolutive property (1b) is more flexible. It may or may not be the case that some intransitive subjects behave like transitive objects.

- (7) Table 21.2. Given (1c), interactions among (1a)-loose and (1b)-loose

	(1a)-loose yes	(1a)-loose no
(1b)-loose yes	Georgian	impossible by definition
(1b)-loose no	Hindi/Urdu	impossible by definition

In Georgian, transitive subjects in the aorist aspect are marked with a distinct case, called the ergative, while objects appear in a bare form. Harris (1981) calls this form the nominative.

- (8) *glexma datesa simindi* [Georgian]
 farmer.ERG he.sowed.it.II.I corn.NOM
 ‘The farmer sowed corn.’
 (Harris 1981: 147)

Harris shows that the marking of intransitive subjects in Georgian is sensitive to a distinction between unaccusative and unergative predicates. Subjects of unergative verbs mark the ergative case, like subjects of agentive transitives. Subjects of unaccusatives appear in the nominative case, like objects of agentive transitives. Loose versions of both the ergative property (1a) and the absolutive property (1b) are in effect.

- (9) *Ninom daamtknara.* [Georgian]
 Nino.ERG she.yawned.II.I
 ‘Nino yawned.’
 (Harris 1981: 40)
- (10) *Rezo gamoizarda.*
 Rezo.NOM he.grew.up.II.2
 ‘Rezo grew up.’
 (Harris 1982: 293)

The operative distinction in Georgian splits the class of intransitive subjects into two groups. This type of pattern is therefore sometimes called *split S* (Dixon 1979) or *split intransitive* (Merlan 1985); other names include Active-Inactive, following Sapir (1917), Agentive (Mithun 1991), and Semantically Aligned (Donohue and Wichmann 2008). Languages showing such patterns include Udi and Batsbi in the Caucasus (Harris 2010), Pomoan languages of California (Mithun 1991, O’Connor 1992, Deal and O’Connor 2011), and Western Basque (Aldai 2009).

A final combination of ergativity properties is found in Hindi/Urdu. This language marks transitive subjects with the ergative (in the perfective aspect), and marks certain objects with a distinct case-marker, here labeled accusative.

- (11) *yasin-ne kotte-ko dek^h-a* [Hindi/Urdu]
 Yassin.M.SG-ERG dog.M.SG-ACC see-PRF.M.SG
 ‘Yassin saw the dog.’
 (Butt and King 2004: ex 16b)

Intransitives show a split similar to Georgian. Subjects of unergatives may optionally mark the ergative case; unaccusative subjects must appear in a bare, nominative form.

- (12) *yassin(-ne) k^hās-a* [Hindi/Urdu]
 Yassin.M.SG-ERG cough-PRF.M.SG
 ‘Yassin coughed.’
 (Butt 2006: 147)

- (13) *yassin* *gir-a*
Yassin.M.SG.NOM fall-PRF.M.SG
'Yassin fell.'
(Butt 2006: 115)

The optionality of ergative case in (12) presents two ways of approaching the Hindi/Urdu facts. Focusing on the version without the ergative case, we see no argument-structural ergative pattern; case-marking is simply 3-way, as in Nez Perce. Focusing on the version with the ergative case, the pattern is argument-structural, entailing a loose version of (1a). Unlike in Georgian, however, the case possibilities for unaccusative subjects and transitive objects remain distinct. The latter may appear in the accusative case; the former may not. A similar profile (also including merely optional ergative marking of unergative subjects) is found in Semelai, a Mon-Khmer language of the Malay Peninsula (Kruspe 2004).

2.2. The grammatical manifestation of ergativity

Where in the grammar do ergativity properties show up? The most intense study has concentrated on morphosyntactic properties of case and verbal agreement, as well as on more narrowly syntactic properties related to \bar{A} -movement and control.

Agreement. Verbal agreement showing an ergative/absolutive pattern is found in Halkomelem, a Salish language. 3rd person subjects of transitives control a special verbal agreement suffix *əʃ*; subjects of intransitives and objects of transitives control no verbal agreement.

- (14) a. *ni ʔiməš* [Halkomelem]
AUX walk
'He/she/it walked.'
- b. *ni q^wəl-ət-əs*
AUX bake-TR-3ERG
'He/she/it baked it.'
- c. cf. *ni cən q^wəl-ət*
AUX 1SG bake-TR
'I baked it.'
- (Gerds 1988: 47)

The inverse of this pattern is found in Tsez (Polinsky and Potsdam 2001) and a variety of Amazonian languages (Gildea and Castro Alves 2010): subjects of intransitives and objects of transitives control verbal agreement, whereas subjects of transitives do not. In Mayan languages, these patterns overlap (Larsen and Norman 1979): one form of verbal agreement (set B) is controlled by the intransitive subject and transitive object, whereas another is controlled only by the transitive subject (set A). The following examples show this type of agreement in K'ichee.

- (15) a. *x-at-war-ik* [K'ichee]
 COMPLETIVE-2SB-sleep-PHRASE.FINAL
 'You slept.'

- b. *x-at-u-ch'ay-oh*
 COMPLETIVE-2SB-3SA-hit-PHRASE.FINAL
 'He hit you.'
- c. *x-Ø-war-ik*
 COMPLETIVE-3SB-sleep-PHRASE.FINAL
 'He slept.'

(Larsen and Norman 1979: 347-348)

Verbal agreement also may reflect the argument-structural property, (1c), in parallel to the case facts in Georgian and Hindi/Urdu discussed above. Languages with this type of agreement include Karuk and Chimariko in California (Mithun 2008), Chol Mayan (Coon 2010a) and various dialects of Neo-Aramaic (Doron and Khan 2012).

Ā-movement. The case- and agreement-based patterns that we have now seen are morphosyntactic in nature. Other manifestations of ergativity properties occur in syntactic patterns, where they are sometimes discussed under the heading of *syntactic ergativity*. The most famous of these concerns \bar{A} extraction, and ergativity properties (1a) and (1b). A variety of languages possess distinct relativization, focalization and/or interrogation strategies for intransitive subjects and transitive objects on one hand versus transitive subjects on the other. An example of this can be seen in Roviana, an Austronesian language. Roviana relative clauses featuring \bar{A} -movement of intransitive subjects or transitive objects involve the same forms of verbal marking as seen in ordinary matrix clauses (Corston 1996).

- (16) *Hierana sa tie [RC sapu kote taloa]* [Roviana]
 this DEF man REL FUT leave
 'This is the man who is going away.'
- (17) *Hierana sa koreo [RC sapu tupa-i-a e Zone]*
 this DEF boy REL punch-TR-3SG.OBJ ART John
 'This is the boy that John punched.'

Those featuring \bar{A} -movement of transitive subjects, on the other hand, require a specialized form of the verb.

- (18) a. **Hierana sa tie [RC sapu tupa-i-u]* *Normal verb form
 this DEF man REL punch-TR-1SG.OBJ
 'This is the man who punched me.'
- b. *Hierana sa tie [RC sapu tupa-qa rau]* ^{OK}Special verb form
 this DEF man REL punch-1SG.NSUF I
 'This is the man who punched me.'

Many other Austronesian languages show similar patterns (Aldridge 2004), as do Dyirbal (Dixon 1977), Halkomelem Salish (Gerds 1988), Coast Tsimshian (Mulder 1994), Chuckchi (Comrie 1979), Trumai (Guiradello-Damian 2010), Eskimo languages such as Kalaallisut (Bittner 1994), and Mayan languages such as Mam (England 1983), Jacalteco (Craig 1977) and Q'anjobal (Coon, Mateo Pedro, and Preminger 2012).

(19) a. *yabu* *ɲuma-ɲgu* *giga-n* [*PRO* *banaga-ygu*] [Dyirbal]
 mother.ABS father-ERG tell.to.do-NFUT [*PRO* return-PURP]
 ‘Father told mother_i *PRO*_i to return.’
 b. *yabu* *ɲuma-ɲgu* *giga-n* [*gubi-ɲgu* *mawa-li* *PRO*]
 mother.ABS father-ERG tell.to.do-NFUT [doctor-ERG examine-PURP *PRO*]
 ‘Father told mother_i the doctor to examine *PRO*_i.’

Subsequent work on Austronesian has augmented the picture from Dyirbal. Aldridge (2004) reports that for Seediq, property (1a) plays a role without property (1b): only intransitive subjects, not transitive subjects or transitive objects, may be controlled PRO. (Transitivity here must be understood formally, rather than notionally.)

- (20) a. *M-n-osa* [*PRO m-ari patis taihoku*] *ka Ape*. [Seediq]
INTR-PRF-go [PRO INTR-buy book Taipei] ABS Ape
'Ape went to buy books in Taipei.'
- b. **M-n-osa* [*PRO burig-un taihoku ka patis*] *ka Ape*.
INTR-PRF-go [PRO buy-TR Taipei ABS book] ABS Ape
'Ape went to buy books in Taipei.'

(21) a. *Tuli aku* [Sama Southern]
sleep 1SG.ABS
'I will sleep.'

b. *ka-bilahi-an-ku* [*tuli PRO*]
INV-want-P-1SG.ERG [sleep PRO]
'I want PRO to sleep.'

(22) a. *ni-lengan-an akú leh si Ben* [Sama Southern]
AGR-call-P 1SG.ABS ERG PM Ben
'Ben will call me.'

- b. *ka-bilahi-an-ku* [*ni-lengan-an PRO leh si Ben*]
 INV-want-P-1SG.ERG [AGR-call-P PRO ERG PM Ben]
 ‘I want Ben to call PRO.’
- c. * *ka-bilahi-an si Ben* [*ni-lingan-an akú PRO*]
 INV-want-P PM Ben [AGR-call-P 1SG.ABS PRO]
 ‘Ben wants PRO to call me.’

This type of fact will play a crucial role in the discussion in section 3.2.

2.3. The scope of ergative patterns

To what degree do particular “ergative languages” show ergative properties? Moravcsik (1978) observes that every language that shows ergativity properties shows them to a limited degree. There are no languages where *all* grammatical generalizations distinguish transitive from intransitive subject; group intransitive subject and transitive object together; or distinguish among subjects of unaccusative and unergative intransitives. This means that every language showing ergativity properties has what is sometimes called an *ergative split*, or a division among domains in the grammar which do and do not show ergative behaviors.

The most famous such split concerns a distinction between languages which show ergativity properties only in morphological domains such as case-marking and agreement versus those which show ergativity properties in syntactic domains such as control and \bar{A} extraction. Based on the data we have seen above, Roviana and Sama Southern can be classified as “syntactically ergative”. Languages like Warlpiri have been held up as clear exemplars of the contrasting “morphologically ergative” type (Bittner and Hale 1996a). Only subjects may be controlled PRO in this language, regardless of transitivity (Legate 2002).

- (23) *Ngana_j-kurra-npa Jakamarra-kurlangu maliki_i nya-ngu*
 who-OBJC-2SG Jakamarra-POSS dog see-PST
 [*PRO_i t_j paji-rninja-kurra*]? [Warlpiri]
 [bite-INF-OBJC]
 a. ‘Who did you see Jakamarra’s dog_i PRO_i biting *t_{who}*?’
 b. * ‘Who did you see Jakamarra’s dog_i *t_{who}* biting PRO_i?’
- (24) *Ngarrka-ngku_i ka karli jarnti-rni, PRO_i wangka-nja-karra-rlu*
 man-ERG PRS boomerang trim-NPST, PRO speak-INF-SBJ.C-ERG
 ‘The man is trimming a boomerang while speaking.’
 (Legate 2002: 126)

While both Warlpiri and Sama Southern have ergative/absolutive case-systems, only Sama Southern also shows the ergative and absolutive properties in control. Thus the scope of ergative patterns is broader in Sama Southern than it is in Warlpiri. Distinctions of this type will play a central role throughout sections 3 and 4 below.

Additional limitations on the scope of ergative patterns are found in reflection of two other types of distinctions, which, for reasons of space, will play less of a role in the theoretical survey to follow. First, many languages show a division in ergativity properties among different classes of nominals. It is quite common, for instance, to find first and second person pronouns lacking ergative case or agreement forms, in contrast to other nouns. This type of pattern is seen in Nez Perce, a language with a three-way case system for non-pronominals.

- (25) a. *'iin lilooy-ca-Ø* [Nez Perce]
 1SG.NOM be.happy-IPFV-PRS
 'I'm happy.'
- b. *'iin cuy'eem-ne 'aa-p-sa-qa*
 1SG.NOM fish-OBJ 3OBJ-eat-IPFV-REC.PST
 'I was eating the fish.'
- c. *ciq'aamqal-m hi-ke'nip-Ø-e 'iin-e*
 dog-ERG 3SBJ-bite-P-REM.PST 1SG-OBJ
 'The dog bit me.'

Whereas other nominals (including third person pronominals) show distinct ergative, nominative and accusative case forms, first and second person pronouns in this language show only nominative and accusative forms. Silverstein (1976) observes that the reverse of this type of pattern – pronouns, but not common nouns, showing an ergative marking – is not attested. Rather, he posits, types of nominals (pronouns, proper names, animate nouns, etc) are universally organized into an implicational hierarchy with respect to ergative versus nominative case marking. If any nominals lack an ergative form, it will be pronouns; if any nominals possess an ergative form, it will be inanimate nouns. This type of phenomenon is further studied in recent work by Alexiadou and Anagnostopoulou (2006), Merchant (2006), Wiltschko (2006) and Coon and Preminger (2012).

Second, in many languages the distribution of ergative patterns is limited by factors related to clausal properties, in particular viewpoint aspect. This type of pattern is found for instance in Chol Mayan (Coon 2010a). Agreement in this language shows the argument-structural property (1c), but only in the perfective aspect. In non-perfective aspects, for instance the progressive, the same agreement markers are used, but their behavior no longer shows the ergativity properties. All subjects agree using one set of markers (set A), and all objects agree using the other (set B).

- (26) Perfective: Ergative
- a. *Tyi i-jats'-ä-yoñ* [Chol]
 PFV A3-hit-TR-B1
 'She hit me.'
- b. *Tyi majl-i-yoñ*
 PFV go-INTR-B1
 'I went.'

(27) Progressive: Non-ergative

a. *Choñkol i-jats’-oñ*

[Chol]

PROG A3-hit-B1
‘She’s hitting me.’

b. *Choñkol i-majl-el*

PROG A3-go-NMLZ
‘She’s going.’

This type of pattern again reveals an asymmetry which appears to be universal. Where a language shows a split pattern in correlation with viewpoint aspect, it is always the perfective aspect, rather than the imperfective, which shows ergativity properties (Dixon 1994). Recent studies of this type of ergative split may be found in the work of Laka (2006), Ura (2006), Reilly (2007), Salanova (2007), Müller (2009) and Coon (2010b,2012).

2.4. Six potential ergative universals

The wide variation we have just seen is balanced by a number of potentially universal generalizations. Some of these have already come up in discussion of the relationships among ergativity properties and of ergative splits. Further generalizations concern relations between manifestations of ergativity properties, and relations between ergativity properties and other aspects of particular grammars. Six of these are mentioned below.

The discovery of universals related to ergativity properties is a central project for ergativity investigators, and much attention has focused on particular proposed universals from both empirical and theoretical points of view. Some of this work has brought forward what are apparently counterexamples to the generalizations below. The proper treatment of these cases is clearly of the utmost importance to grammatical theories which take the various generalizations as a starting place. For this reason, I have reproduced or referenced data claimed to be problematic in the appropriate places as an indication of the current state of knowledge on these matters.

1. Syntactic ergativity implies morphological ergativity. The languages that show ergativity properties in \bar{A} -movement or control are all languages which show ergativity properties morphologically – in case and/or agreement. This generalization comes from Dixon (1994: 172).

The only potential counterexample of which I am aware comes from Bajau, the issue of which is raised by Donohue and Brown (1999). The status of Bajau as a language with syntactic but not morphological ergativity is deserving of close scrutiny, though, on the basis of its pronominal paradigm: in a language claimed to lack any morphological manifestations of ergativity, it is telling that the form of pronouns in this language suggests a case-system organized on an ergative/absolutive basis. As Miller (2007) shows, intransitive subjects appear in “Set II” forms, as do objects in transitive clauses with certain verbal morphology. Subjects in such sentences appear in a distinct, “Set I” form.

- (28) a. *Ai pungkaw iyo* [Bajau]
 PRF wake.up 3SG.II
 ‘(S)he has awakened/ gotten up.’
 b. *Boi 0-boo=ku iyo pitu.*
 COMPL UV-bring=1S.I 3SG.II to.here
 ‘I brought him/her here.’

If clauses like (28b) are indeed transitive (a question made especially difficult by the voice system of the language), then Bajau is not a language that lacks morphological manifestations of ergativity properties. It is rather a language with both morphological manifestations (in case) and syntactic manifestations (in relativization). The counterexample to Dixon’s generalization is then merely apparent.

As we will see in more depth in section 4, Dixon’s generalization is part of a larger implicational generalization which divides syntactic ergativity into two types. Languages like Dyirbal show ergativity in both control and \bar{A} -movement. Languages like West Greenlandic show ergativity in \bar{A} -movement but not control. There are no languages where ergativity properties are relevant for control but not for \bar{A} -movement. The implicational hierarchy is thus

- (29) Ergativity in control > Ergativity in \bar{A} -movement > Ergativity in case/agreement

where the phenomena to the left entail phenomena to the right.

2. In languages showing ergativity in syntactic patterns, the pattern seen in syntax is ergative/absolutive – not just ergative (showing [1a] but not [1b]), and not argument-structural (1c). Austronesian languages showing syntactic ergativity are of the classic ergative/absolutive morphological type, contrasting transitive subject with intransitive subject/transitive object. It is this pattern which shows up in control (e.g. in Sama Southern) and in \bar{A} extraction: transitive subjects behave one way, and intransitive subjects and transitive objects behave another way. The Mayan family contains both languages showing syntactic ergativity (e.g. Mam, Kaqchikel, Q’anjob’al) and languages showing argument-structural ergativity (e.g. Chol), but the two patterns do not seem to overlap. There are not, for instance, languages in which only unaccusative subjects may be \bar{A} extracted with normal verbal morphology (in which case \bar{A} extraction would show an argument-structural ergativity property); nor are there languages in which intransitive subjects, but neither transitive subjects nor transitive objects, may be \bar{A} extracted with normal verbal morphology (in which case \bar{A} extraction would show the ergative property [1a] but not the absolutive property [1b]). To my knowledge, this generalization has not been noted in previous work.

The only potential exception of which I am aware concerns languages like Seediq, discussed above in connection with control. Aldridge (2004) reports that controlled clauses in Seediq must be formally intransitive. It is as a byproduct of this transitivity restriction that the distribution of PRO in Seediq shows the ergative property (1a); absolutive property (1b), however, is not involved. I am not aware of any potential exceptions to the generalization from syntactic ergativity in \bar{A} extraction.

It is especially interesting that this generalization should hold given that syntactically ergative patterns do crop up in languages which are not strictly ergative/absolutive on a morphological level. Dyirbal, for instance, is argued by Legate (2012) to show a (partially covert) three-way case system of the Nez Perce type. Nevertheless it appears that control and \bar{A} extraction treat intransitive subject and transitive object as a natural class in this language, even where morphology does not.

3. Ergative case is never unmarked. When verbal agreement shows ergativity properties (1a) and (1b), either transitive subject (ergative) or intransitive subject/transitive object (absolutive) may be morphologically marked. Dixon (1994) observes that the same freedom does not hold in the domain of case-marking. While there are many languages with a null or unmarked absolutive morphological case, there are no languages with unmarked ergative morphological case.

The Nias language of Indonesia provides a potential counterexample, as Donohue and Brown (1999) point out. In Nias, absolutive case is marked by an initial mutation. (The character of this morphology is discussed by Anderson et al. 2006.) There is no morphological marking of transitive subjects, however.

- (30) a. *Abe'e sibai g-ehomo n-omo s=e-bua* [Nias]
 STAT.strong INTENS MUT-pillar MUT-house REL=STAT-big
 'The pillars of the big house are very strong.'
 (Anderson et al. 2006)
- b. *I-a m-bavi ama Gumi*
 3SG.REALIS-eat MUT-pig father Gumi
 'Ama Gumi is eating/eats pork.'
 (Donohue and Brown 1999)

Thus the subject of (30a) and the object of (30b) are marked in the same way, in opposition to the subject of (30b), yielding an ergative/absolutive system. However, the subject of (30b) – the argument expected to show the ergative case – is distinguished not by any special marking, but by the absence of the initial mutation marking the absolutive.

4. All ergative languages are verb-peripheral, or have free word order. This generalization was perhaps first noticed by Trask (1979) and subsequently popularized by Mahajan (1994, 1997), after whom it is sometimes called. There are certain well-known exceptions. Mahajan (1997) observes that languages like Kashmiri, which show V2 patterns, show ergativity in case-marking despite a preponderance of SVO clauses. Further counterexamples come from languages like Shilluk (West Nilotic), which has basic OVS and SV patterns without a clear case for Germanic-style V2:

- (31) a. *byél á-'rākk' yī pān dájò* [Shilluk]
 grain.PL PST.EVID-grind.TR.REP ERG person female
 'The woman ground the durra grain.'
- b. *māc á-dùŋ áwālā*
 fire PST.E-smoke.INTR yesterday
 'The fire smoked yesterday.'

(Miller and Gilley 2001: 36-37)

Survey data from Comrie (2008) suggests that some generalization along the Trask/Mahajan line nevertheless holds at least as a statistical trend. Further work is needed to ascertain whether word order correlates with an particular subset of ergativity properties, or particular grammatical manifestations thereof. It remains to be shown, for instance, whether languages showing both (1a) and (1b) are especially likely to obey this generalization, and what the facts are like for languages showing property (1c).

5. Manifestations of ergativity properties never treat derived subjects like basic transitive subjects. This generalization comes from Marantz (1991), a work which focuses primarily on languages showing ergativity property (1c). Marantz's generalization has nevertheless inspired a literature dealing primarily with languages which show ergative/absolutive (1a)/(1b) patterns, e.g. Legate (2008), and so bears discussion in relation to all three properties.

Let us first consider unaccusative subjects, as a prime instance of subjects that are derived. In the simplest cases, the generalization follows by definition. Ergativity property (1c) is manifested where unaccusative subjects are treated unlike transitive and unergative subjects; a process that treated the various subjects the same way would simply not show ergativity property (1c). Ergativity properties (1a) and (1b) call for intransitive subjects to pattern together in a way distinct from transitive subjects, ensuring that the pattern follows in this case, as well.

Things are more interesting when we consider unaccusative predicates made transitive in some way, for instance by addition of an applicative. An apparent counterexample in this domain comes from Shipibo, as Baker (2012) observes. When an applicative is added to an unaccusative Shipibo verb, the subject of the unaccusative verb obligatorily marks the ergative case.

- (32) a. *Kokoti-ra joshin-ke* [Shipibo]
fruit-PRT ripen-PRF
'The fruit ripened.'
- b. *Bimi-n-ra Rosa joshin-xon-ke.*
fruit-ERG-PRT Rosa ripen-APPL-PRF
'The fruit ripened for Rosa.'
- (Baker 2012)

If the subject of (32b) is indeed a derived subject, the presence of ergative here counterexamples Marantz's generalization.

Another potential test comes from passive subjects, in particular passive subjects of ditransitive verbs. Such subjects – for instance *we* in the English example below – are derived subjects; they do not originate as external arguments. At the same time, there is also a natural sense in which they are subjects of verbs which remain transitive (albeit with transitivity reduced by comparison to the active ditransitive form).

- (33) *We were given t this book.*

Manifestations of ergativity properties do not classify such subjects with basic transitive subjects. In Nez Perce, for instance, ditransitive constructions are expressed via double-object constructions, as in English, but the passives of such constructions feature no ergative marking:

- (34) a. *haama-pim cickan pee-'ni-se-ne ki-nye 'aayat-ona* [Nez Perce]
 man-ERG blanket.NOM 3/3-give-IPFV-REM.PST this-OBJ woman-OBJ
 'The man was giving this woman a blanket.'
- b. *kii 'aayat hii-wes 'in-yiin cickan*
 this.NOM woman.NOM 3SBJ-be.PRS give-PASS blanket.NOM
 'This woman was given a blanket (lit. is blanket-given).'

I am not aware of any language showing a passive like (34b) but with ergative marking on the (derived) subject.

Other types of derived subjects – in particular, subjects of raising verbs – have engendered more controversy. These are discussed in section 3.4.

6. If ergativity properties are manifested in verbal agreement, either (i) there is no morphological case-marking, or (ii) case-marking also shows ergativity properties. There is an asymmetry in the scope of ergativity properties in agreement and in case. Languages like Warlpiri show ergative/absolutive patterns in case-marking, but not in verbal agreement. All subjects agree in the same way in this language, e.g. both nominative subject *ngaju* 'I' and its ergative counterpart *ngaju-rlu* control agreement suffix *-rna*:

- (35) a. *Ngaju ka-rna wangka-mi* [Warlpiri]
 I PRS-1SBJ speak-NPST
 'I am speaking.'
- b. *Ngaju-rlu ka-rna-ngku nyuntu nya-nyi*
 I-ERG PRS-1SBJ-2OBJ you see-NPST
 'I see you.'
- (Hale 1983: 18)

Languages like Nez Perce show property (1a) alone in case-marking, but not in verbal agreement. All subjects agree in the same way in this language, too:

- (36) a. *haacwal hi-êeeleewi-0-ye* [Nez Perce]
 boy.NOM 3SBJ-work-P.ASP-REM.PST
 'The boy worked.'
- b. *ciq'aamqal-m hi-ke'nip-0-e 'iin-e*
 dog-ERG 3SBJ-bite-P.ASP-REM.PST 1SG-OBJ
 'The dog bit me.'

Anderson (1977) generalizes that there are no languages showing the reverse pattern: ergativity properties in verbal agreement but not in morphological case (where there is a morphological case system to speak of).

Exceptions to this generalization from the Indo-Aryan family are discussed by Patel (2007). In Kutchi Gujarati past perfectives, verbal agreement is on an ergative/absolutive basis: only intransitive subjects and transitive objects agree. Case-marking, however, treats all subjects identically (leaving them unmarked), and singles out objects of transitive clauses (marking them accusative).

- (37) a. *Reena aav-i* [Kutchi Gujarati]
 Reena.NOM came-F.SG
 ‘Reena came.’
 b. *Reena chokra-ne mar-ya*
 Reena.NOM boys-ACC hit-PFV.M/N.PL
 ‘Reena hit the boys.’
 (Patel 2007)

An additional reported exception is found in connection with pronouns only. As Gildea and Castro Alves (2010) discuss, pronouns in the Jê language Canela show a nominative-accusative case pattern; other nominals in Canela are unmarked. Despite this, verbal agreement in Canela is on an absolutive basis (just as in Kutchi Gujarati), targeting intransitive subjects and transitive objects.

- (38) a. *wa ha i-wrik nare* [Canela]
 1 IRR 1-descend.NF NEG
 ‘I will not descend.’
 b. *wa ha i?-pîr na*
 1 IRR 3-grab.NF NEG
 ‘I will not grab it (e.g., the knife).’

If the prefixes *i-* and *i?-* indeed represent agreement (and not weak pronominals, as in Salanova’s 2007 study of related language Mëbengokre), Canela is an additional example of a language showing an ergative/absolutive agreement system, but nominative-accusative behavior in case-marking. It is striking that such patterns, while extremely rare, are nevertheless apparently found in languages widely separated in genetic and geographical terms.

3. Theories of ergativity in case and its relatives

Moreso than any other manifestation of ergativity, syntacticians concerned with ergative languages have focused on its manifestation in case-marking, agreement and control, a group of phenomena generally held to be closely related. The ideal theory in this domain must face a trio of challenging desiderata. First, it must account for the differences between ergative languages and non-ergative ones. Second, it must allow for differences among ergative languages. Third, it must provide a natural account of universal constraints, to the extent these hold, related to ergativity in case and its relatives. These potentially include the implication from ergativity in agreement to ergativity in case-marking (should there be

adequate treatment available for counterexamples such as Kutchi Gujarati) as well as the implication from ergativity in control to ergativity in case and/or agreement.

In this section I introduce a range of theories responding to ergativity in case and its relatives, sorted into three groups depending on the types of explanatory mechanisms posited. A first group makes use of strictly morphological mechanisms; a second, strictly syntactic mechanisms; and a third makes use of both. For reasons that will become clear, I will discuss the workings of the latter two types of proposals before returning to some critiques which potentially apply to both.

3.1. Morphology-based theories

The description of case in a particular language is traditionally a purely morphological description. Given the weight of morphological facts to be dealt with, various theorists have proposed to deal with case and related morphological phenomena in an autonomous morphological representation. As noted by Bobaljik (2008), these morphological representations are autonomous not in failing to make reference to syntax (which, as we will see, they consistently do), but in failing to effect representational changes which are visible to syntactic rules. Two theories sharing this characteristic will be highlighted here: the case theory of Marantz (1991), and the agreement theory of Bobaljik (2008).

3.1.1. Morphological case hierarchies

The morphological case theory proposed by Marantz (1991) is one of a family of approaches, morphological and syntactic, making use of the idea of *case dependency* (e.g. Yip, Maling, and Jackendoff 1987; Bittner and Hale 1996a,b; Baker and Vinokurova 2010; Baker 2012). Marantz proposes that case assignment falls under the purview of a post-syntactic morphological component, the input to which is syntactic structure. Four types of morphological case are identified, which are realized according to a disjunctive hierarchy:

- (39) Marantz's case hierarchy
 - a. Lexically governed case
 - b. Dependent case (accusative and ergative)
 - c. Unmarked case (environment sensitive)
 - d. Default case

Lexically governed case covers datives and related cases assigned in a way connected to thematic information. In a given clause, if the conditions are met for a lexically governed case, the case algorithm assigns this case first. Subsequently, the algorithm checks whether the conditions are met for dependent case. The relevant condition considers not just a single DP, but the set of DPs present in a given clause: dependent case is assigned to a DP when *a distinct nominal without lexical case is present*. One nominal is distinct from another if the two are not part of a chain. Languages differ in whether the dependent case is assigned “up”, to the subject, or “down”, to the object, or (in an extension of what Marantz proposes)

both. Finally, unmarked and default cases are realized on nominals not already covered by prior parts of the algorithm.

Several types of case systems can be handled in this way. In English, which lacks lexically governed cases, dependent case is assigned to the object when there is another nominal in the clause – the subject. The subject subsequently receives unmarked case. This produces a nominative/accusative case system. An analysis along these lines has been defended for Sakha by Baker and Vinokurova (2010) and Levin and Preminger (2013). A language like Warlpiri assigns dependent ergative to its subject when there is another nominal in the clause – the object. After dependent case is assigned to the subject, unmarked case is available to the object. This produces an ergative/absolutive case system. This type of analysis has been defended for Shipibo by Baker (2012). In Nez Perce, we could plausibly claim that dependent case is assigned both upward to the subject (which depends on the object) and downward to the object (which depends on the subject). Subsequently there remains no nominal in need of realization in an unmarked case. This produces a three-way case system.

This analysis makes a clear prediction for ergative case in clauses where a lexical case is assigned. In a clause with only two distinct DPs, if one of those DPs receives lexical case, the other may not receive a dependent case such as ergative; the conditions for dependent case assignment are not met. While this prediction is often borne out, there are certain well-known problems. One is Warlpiri, which allows ERG-ABS (40), ABS-DAT (41) and crucially also ERG-DAT (42) case arrays (Nash 1980; Simpson 1991).

- (40) *ngajulu-rlu ka-rna nya-nyi kurdu* [Warlpiri]
 1SG-ERG PRS-1SBJ see-NPST child.ABS
 ‘I see the child.’
 (Simpson 1991: 100)
- (41) *Ngarrka ka-rla marlu-ku yura-ka-nyi,*
 man.ABS PRS-3DAT kangaroo-DAT stalk-NPST
marna nga-rninja-kurr-ku
 grass.ABS eat-INF-OBJ.COMP-DAT
 ‘The man is stalking the kangaroo, (while it is) eating grass.’
 (Simpson 1991: 319)
- (42) *ngarrka-ngku ka-rla karli-ki warri-rni*
 man-ERG PRS-3SG.DAT boomerang-DAT look.for-NPST
 ‘A man is looking for a boomerang.’
 (Hale 1982: 248)

Coverage of the Warlpiri facts seems to require that certain lexically case-marked nominals (e.g. the dative in [42]) trigger dependent case for the subject, whereas others do not. In Warlpiri, this is in spite of the fact that the dative arguments in (41) and in (42) behave similarly for a variety of objecthood tests (Simpson 1991). It is notable that this problem does not arise in all ergative languages. It is possible, therefore, that the difference between

a language like Warlpiri, which allows ERG to co-exist with a case other than absolutive, and a language like Greenlandic, which does not, will constitute an important parameter dividing one class of ergative languages from another.

3.1.2. Morphological agreement hierarchies

The theory proposed by Bobaljik (2008) extends Marantz's case theory to the domain of agreement. Bobaljik proposes that control of agreement is determined by the following principle:

- (43) The controller of agreement on the finite verbal complex (Infl+V) is the highest accessible NP in the domain of Infl + V.

Accessibility in turn is crucially defined in terms of morphological cases, which can be classified into unmarked, dependent and lexical/oblique groups (following Marantz). Building from Moravcsik (1974)'s work on implicational universals in agreement systems, Bobaljik proposes an implicational relationship among case types for accessibility to agreement.

- (44) Unmarked < Dependent < Lexical/Oblique

In a particular language, if any of the classes in (44) is accessible to agreement, so too will be all classes to its left. Thus in some languages, only unmarked nominals are accessible; in others both unmarked and dependent nominals are accessible; but in no language are dependent nominals accessible whereas unmarked ones are not.

This theory provides a natural analysis of two types of agreement systems important in connection with ergativity. In one type, only unmarked DPs are accessible to agreement. In a language with ergative case-marking, ergative DPs will bear a dependent case, and thus agreement in a transitive clause will ignore the higher, ergative subject in favor of the lower, unmarked object. This leads to an absolutive pattern in agreement. A language plausibly analyzable in this way is Tsez.

- (45) a. *ziya* *b-ik'i-s* [Tsez]
 cow.III.ABS III-go-PST.EVID
 'The cow left.'
- b. *eniy-ā* *ziya* *b-išer-si*
 mother-ERG cow.III.abs III-feed-PST.EVID
 'The mother fed the cow.'

(Polinsky and Potsdam 2001: 586)

In a second type of language, both unmarked and dependent-marked DPs will be accessible to agreement. In this scenario, control of agreement will be determined on the basis of structural height. Supposing ergative subject DPs occupy structural positions superior to those occupied by absolutive object DPs, the former rather than the latter will control agreement. This gives an analysis of languages showing a split in ergativity between case and agreement. Bobaljik proposes to analyze Nepali in this way. Transitive subjects are

nominative (unmarked) in the imperfective in this language and ergative (dependent) in the perfective. In either situation, the subject and not the object controls agreement.

- (46) a. *ma yas pasal-mā patrikā kin-ch-u.* [Nepali]
 1 SG.NOM DEM.OBL store-LOC newspaper.NOM buy-NPST-1 SG
 ‘I buy the newspaper in this store.’
 b. *maile yas pasal-mā patrikā kin-ē*
 1 SG.ERG DEM.OBL store-LOC newspaper.NOM buy-PST.1 SG
 ‘I bought the newspaper in this store.’
 (Bickel and Yādava 2000: 348)

A nominative pattern of agreement thus emerges in an ergative-case-marking language because both unmarked and dependent-marked nominals are equally accessible to agreement.

Because agreement rules operate on the output of case-marking rules on this theory, what is not expected are languages which show the reverse of the Nepali pattern: ergativity properties in agreement but nominative-accusative orientation in case-marking. This captures one of the universals proposed above. The challenges to that universal from Kutchi Gujarati and Canela are therefore challenges to the Bobaljik proposal; these are each reportedly languages with a nominative-accusative case system but an absolutive agreement system. Challenging too are the agreement facts from languages like Halkomelem, which shows agreement only with ergative DPs, rather than absolutive ones. This pattern is not straightforwardly describable if agreement with ergative DPs can arise only in languages where unmarked DPs (such as intransitive subjects) may also control agreement.

For Halkomelem in particular, a potential way out is suggested by work by Wiltschko (2006). Wiltschko analyzes agreement in that language as relating to three distinct syntactic loci – C, I, and *v* – and analyzes ergative agreement in particular as relating to *v*. If we understand Bobaljik’s proposal as strictly concerning agreement in I, Halkomelem is then no longer a counterexample. It remains to be seen how the agreement pattern of the language can be handled within the general outlines of the agreement-hierarchical view, once a distinction is recognized between agreement in I and agreement in *v*.

3.1.3. General discussion

The scope of the theories just reviewed is by necessity limited to ergativity behaviors in morphological domains. On each proposal, a constrained range of syntactic facts constitutes the input to a morphological algorithm. The algorithm determines case or agreement behaviors in morphology alone. What these theories by their nature do not do is handle syntactic patterns of ergativity. Other things being equal, this deficit does not speak against the mechanisms just discussed *qua* analyses of the morphological facts; separate principles could be responsible for ergativity in syntax.

It seems quite clear on a cross-linguistic basis that other things are not equal, however. Ergativity in syntactic patterns is only found in languages that show ergativity in morphological patterns as well. For both of the theories reviewed above, this generalization is

unexpected. Morphological factors *ex hypothesi* do not influence syntactic rules, and therefore the mechanisms for morphological ergativity cannot by themselves be implicated in syntactic ergativity. There must, rather, be some aspect of the syntax of syntactically ergative languages which requires morphological case and/or agreement mechanisms to kick in. Further development of morphology-based theories is required to elucidate what this connection might be.

3.2. Syntax-based theories

A second group of theories addressing ergativity in case and its relatives seeks to capture these patterns via fully syntactic means. There are two families of approaches in this vein: one which treats ergative marking as reflective of an adpositional structure, and one which treats ergative as a syntactically active feature or feature combination, assigned based on structural relationships between nominals and particular heads.

3.2.1. Ergative as an adposition

In classic instances of an ergative/absolutive case pattern, the ergative subject is marked overtly whereas the transitive object and the intransitive subject remain unmarked. A number of authors have proposed to handle this asymmetry by treating the ergative nominal as structurally larger than the absolutive nominal. In the theory of Bittner and Hale (1996a,b), the additional structure is a KP; other authors proposing additional structure for the ergative have identified this structure as a PP. Notably, the PP analysis immediately makes for a similarity between ergative clauses and passives. Both are syntactic encodings of semantically transitive clauses which involve the realization of the external argument in a prepositional adjunct. Indeed passive clauses are a major source of ergative constructions diachronically (Dixon 1994).

The general outline of this view is lent plausibility by patterns in nominalizations. In languages like Greek, as Alexiadou (2001) shows, adpositional structures are required for transitive subjects only.

- (47) a. *i katastrofi tis polis* (*apo tus Italus*)
 the destruction the city.GEN by the Italians
 ‘the destruction of the city by the Italians’
 b. *i afiksi tu Jani*
 the arrival the John.GEN
 ‘the arrival of John’

(Alexiadou 2001)

This makes Greek nominalizations a particularly revealing example of an ergative pattern on the adpositional view. The transitive subject requires a PP structure, whereas other arguments do not.

Mahajan (1997) extends this type of analysis to ergative arguments in Hindi/Urdu, a language where adpositional status is harder to ascertain. He points out that the Hindi/Urdu

ergative marker is P-like in occurring outside of coordinated subjects—a fact that is handled straightforwardly if ergative marking sits above the DP level. Note that parallel facts obtain in Nez Perce.

- (48) a. *Raam or siitaa-ne* [Hindi]
 Ram and Sita-ERG
 ‘Ram and Sita’ (ergative)
 b. *Matt kaa George-nim* [Nez Perce]
 Matt and George-ERG
 ‘Matt and George’ (ergative)

On the strongest version of the adpositional analysis, one might expect this behavior to obtain for the ergative case-marker only. In this respect Nez Perce coordinations involving objective case markers prove problematic. Here, too, the case-marker follows the entire coordination.

- (49) *Matt kaa George-na* [Nez Perce]
 Matt and George-OBJ
 ‘Matt and George’ (objective)

This complicates the assimilation of the Nez Perce pattern to the pattern of Greek nominalizations. If coordinations of this type provide a diagnostic for adpositions, then it is sometimes the case in ergative languages that all arguments, not just the ergative, are adpositional. If natural languages contain covert adpositions, such an analysis could in principle hold for a language like Hindi/Urdu, where objects may be unmarked. The ability of the adpositional analysis to account for the ways in which ergative is marked vis-à-vis other arguments thus seems to depend on a theory of covertness in adpositional structure.

An argument for the adpositional analysis from a rather different direction is provided by Stepanov (2004), who also draws evidence from Hindi/Urdu. In ergative constructions in Hindi/Urdu, agreement targets the object, rather than the ergative subject.

- (50) *raam-ne roTii khaayii thii* [Hindi/Urdu]
 Ram.M-ERG bread.F.ABS eat.PRF.F be.PST.F
 ‘Ram had eaten bread.’

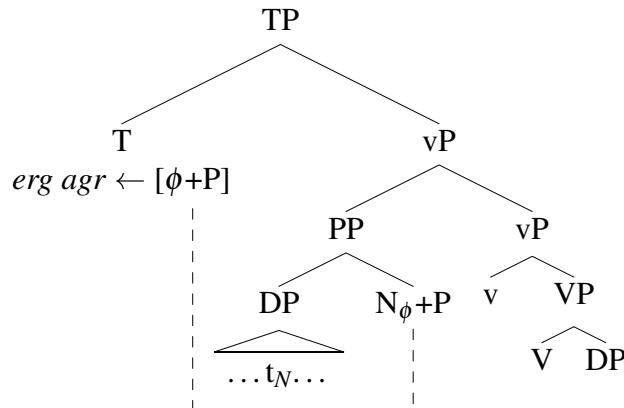
Assuming that this agreement reflects the contribution of a T head, the question arises as to why the higher, ergative subject should be skipped over in favor of the lower, unmarked object. Stepanov proposes that the minimality problem is only apparent: ergative subjects are PP adjuncts adjoined late in the derivation, after agreement between T and the object has taken place. English PP adjuncts fail to intervene in raising constructions in a similar way.

- (51) *Mary_i seems [to Sue] t_i to be smart.*

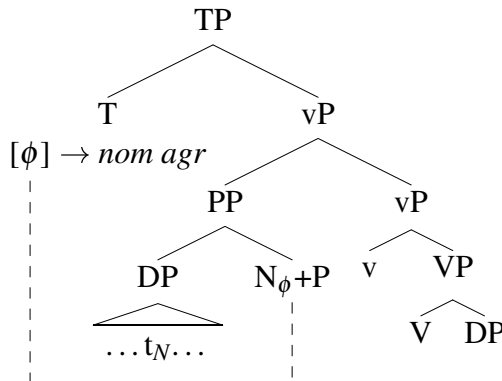
As late-adjoined adjuncts, Stepanov proposes that ergative PPs cannot undergo cyclic syntactic rules. This provides an explanation for the absence of ergative on derived subjects, a proposed universal. The challenges to that universal from applicatives of Shipibo unaccusatives and from raising constructions (section 3.4) are therefore challenges to the Stepanov proposal. Further challenges come from languages where ergative subjects do in fact agree. These subjects would presumably need to be adjoined earlier in the derivation in order to be visible to agreement.

Some of these challenges are taken up by Markman and Grashchenkov (2012) in work on ergative agreement. These authors propose that ergative PPs may enter into agreement relationships with clausal heads just as ordinary DPs may (a view which entails that PPs are not always merged late in Stepanov's sense). The form of agreement that results will depend on two factors: whether the noun head of the ergative DP incorporates into the ergative P, and whether special realizations are possible for agreement with PP elements. Ergative agreement, which we see for instance in Halkomelem, comes about when the head N of the ergative nominal incorporates into P, and T agrees with the N-P complex in both ϕ -features and P category, (52a). Nominative-accusative agreement surfaces in connection with ergative case when N incorporates into P, but agreement of the N-P complex with T reflects only ϕ -features, not P category, as in (52b). Markman and Grashchenkov propose this type of analysis for Warlpiri.

(52) a.



b.



Finally, for languages in which N does not incorporate into ergative P, they propose that

agreement with the ergative PP is simply not possible. This is the pattern that we see in Tsez, where only absolutes agree (45a)–(45b). Given that “ergative agreement” requires the presence of the ergative P on this view, we are close to an alternative explanation of the fact that ergative agreement systems are almost entirely absent from nominative-accusative case systems. To derive this effect, we will need a better understanding of covertness in ergative P heads, accusative case-marking, and the interaction between these two.

If the presence of a P head is the major distinguishing property of an ergative case system, ergative patterns in \bar{A} -movement and control must also be able to take account of the P head’s presence. Further exploration is required to probe whether the adpositional analysis lends itself to insightful approaches to these effects.

3.2.2. Ergative as a case

The remaining group of theories under the syntax-based umbrella treat ergative marking as realizing a feature assigned by a head. Contemporary work tends to identify the heads which are involved in case assignment as functional ones, and to connect the assignment of case to a nominal with a relationship, sometimes purely abstract, of agreement between the head and the nominal. Theories differ on the particulars of the heads they posit and the relationships that the posited heads enter into. An excellent summary of the different positions authors have taken in this domain through the end of the 1990s is provided by Johns (2000).

An important theme running through this literature is the connection between case-assignment and movement. For languages like English, it is now generally assumed that the subject is both assigned case by T and moves to the specifier of the TP projection. The object, by contrast, is assigned case in situ by a functional head v . Parameterization of both pieces of this picture have been proposed in connection with morphological ergativity. Three positions can be discerned on what it is that makes ergative languages special:

1. Subjects and objects receive case ex situ from T.
2. Subjects and objects receive case in situ from v .
3. Subjects receive case in situ from v ; objects receive case ex situ from T.

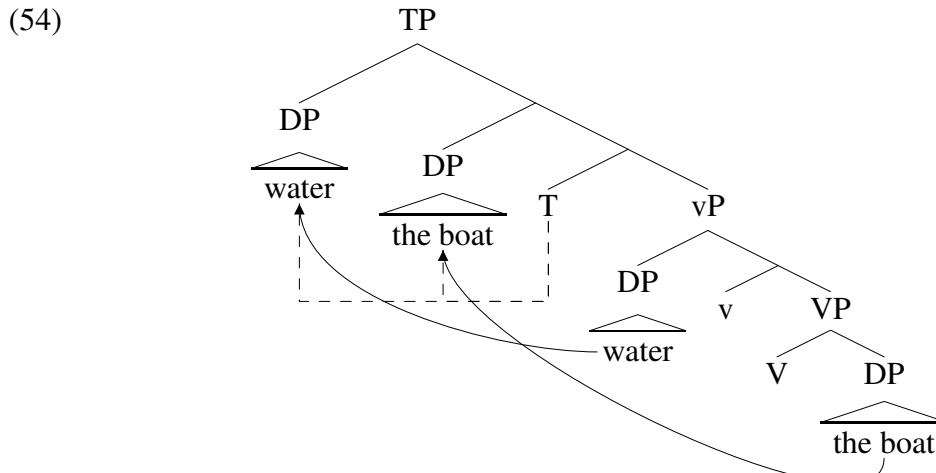
The latter two of these have received the lion’s share of attention in recent work, and various authors have proposed that both are indeed correct, for distinct groups of languages. In this section, I present exemplars of all three theories individually, noting in particular their predictions for control. After a discussion of jointly morphology- and syntax-based theories in section 3.3, I return to discuss certain critiques of the shared innovation of theories 2 and 3, namely the mechanism of in-situ case assignment to the subject, in section 3.4.

3.2.3. Subject receives case ex situ, object receives case ex situ

Bok-Bennema (1991) proposes that ergative languages are special in failing to assign case in situ to the object. This means that the object must receive case from another case assigning head, presumably the one which is also involved in assigning case to the subject. In

order to receive this case, Bok-Bennema and others propose that the object must undergo movement in ergative languages. A recent exemplar of this type of approach is Bobaljik and Branigan (2006). These authors propose that in Chukchi, both subject and object move to specifiers of a TP projection. Case assignment in the tree below is indicated with dotted lines.

- (53) *əʔtvʔet jərʔen-nin mimt-e* [Chukchi]
 boat.ABS fill-3SG/3SG water-ERG
 ‘Water filled the boat.’



In support of this derivation, Bobaljik and Branigan note that verbal agreement takes portmanteau forms in Chukchi. The portmanteau forms, they propose, realize the features of the two nominals to which T has assigned case.

The derivation just sketched raises the question of how distinct cases can be provided for the subject and the object. Crucial for Bobaljik and Branigan is the order in which these nominals move to TP. The subject is the closest nominal to TP and is therefore, they propose, attracted to TP first. The object is subsequently moved and tucks in below the outer specifier occupied by the subject. Bobaljik and Branigan propose that this type of multiple case assignment by a single head is subject to a markedness constraint. It is always the nominal whose case is assigned first which receives the more marked case, where markedness is to be understood in at least largely morphological terms. Recall that ergative is nearly universally marked overtly when absolutive is also marked. The nominal whose case is assigned second receives the less marked case, which could be identified with nominative.

If the identification of absolutive with nominative is correct – both, on this proposal, would be unmarked cases assigned by T – predictions follow for the treatment of non-finite clauses. A loss of finiteness in TP is associated with the loss of nominative case. Indeed, it is absolutive nominals in opposition to ergative ones which are lost in Dyirbal in purposive control complements, as we saw above.

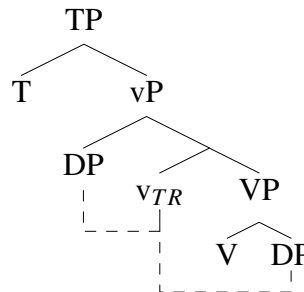
- (55) *yabu ŋuma-ŋgu giga-n* [*PRO* *banaga-ygu*] [Dyirbal]
 mother.ABS father-ERG tell.to.do-NFUT [*PRO* return-PURP]

(56) *yabu* *ɲuma-ɲgu* *giga-n* [*gubi-ɲgu* *mawa-li* *PRO*]
 mother.ABS father-ERG tell.to.do-NFUT [doctor-ERG examine-PURP PRO]
 ‘Father told mother_i the doctor to examine PRO_i.’

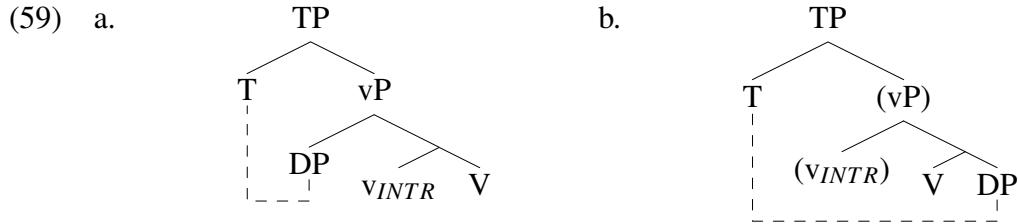
(57) *Ngarrka-patu-rlu ka-lu-jana puluku turnu-ma-ni,*
 man-PAUC-ERG PRS.IPFV-3PL.SBJ-3PL.OBJ bullock.ABS group-CAUS-NPST
[karnta-patu-ku/karnta-patu-rlu miyi purra-nja-puru]. [Warlpiri]
 [woman-PAUC-DAT/woman-PAUC-ERG food.ABS cook-INF-TEMP.C]
 ‘The men are mustering cattle while the women are cooking the food.’

3.2.4. Subject receives case in situ, object receives case in situ

(58)



Whereas in a transitive clause v assigns case both to the subject and to the object, leaving T with no case-assignment duties, intransitive clauses feature either (i) no v head, or (ii) a v which assigns no case at all. In either situation, T steps in to assign case to the subject.



A central feature of this view is that objects and intransitive subjects, despite their similarity in surface case, receive their case features from different grammatical loci. Absolutive on objects reflects case assignment by v and not by T. It is therefore expected to persist in non-finite environments; this accounts for Warlpiri examples like (57). Absolutive on subjects reflects case assignment by T, however, and is thus expected to be impossible in non-finite environments. Legate (2008) shows that this is indeed so; a grammatical absolutive non-finite object in (57) contrasts with an ungrammatical absolutive non-finite subject in (60).

- (60) * *Ngarrka-patu-rlu ka-lu-jana puluku turnu-ma-ni*
 man-PAUC-ERG PRS.IPFV-3PL.SBJ-3PL.OBJ bullock.ABS group-CAUS-NPST
[kurdu parnka-nja-rlarni]. [Warlpiri]
 [child.ABS run-INF-OBV.C]
 ‘The men are mustering cattle while the children are running.’

This pattern is different from the Dyirbal pattern discussed above, and indeed both Aldridge and Legate propose a distinct analysis for languages of the Dyirbal type. This proposal is discussed in section 3.2.5.

Legate (2008) discusses an extension to this view to cover languages like Georgian or Western Basque which show argument-structural ergativity. Whereas Warlpiri differs from English in the ability of v_{TR} to assign ergative case, Legate suggests that languages showing property (1c) are systems where all v heads, both in transitive and in unergative clauses, assign ergative to their specifiers (2008: 58). Three groups of languages may thus be discerned:

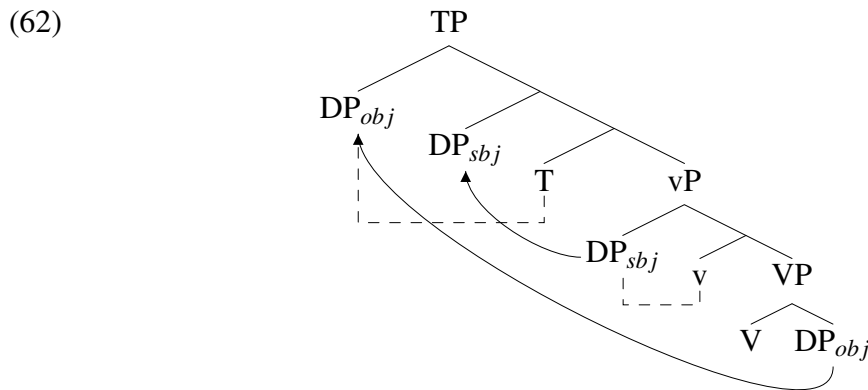
- (61) v assigns ergative to its specifier
 a. Never: English
 b. Only when it also assigns case to the object: Warlpiri
 c. Always: Western Basque

The treatment of ergative as a case assigned to the subject in situ, along with in-situ mechanisms for object case, thus are able to account for a broad range of morphological patterns of ergativity, as well as a distinction between absolutive subjects and absolutive objects in non-finite contexts in Warlpiri.

3.2.5. Subject receives case in situ, object receives case ex situ

A final combination of subject and object case assignment mechanisms involves subject case assignment in situ in vP and ex situ case assignment to the object. This type of proposal is advanced by Ura (2001) as a general treatment of ergative case-marking; a close cousin of that view is proposed by Müller (2009). Similar ideas are advanced by Bittner and Hale (1996a), Aldridge (2004) and Legate (2008) specifically in light of manifestations of ergativity properties in syntax.

On Ura's proposal, v may only assign one case. As on the Marantz 1991 view, this assignment may look either up (to the subject) or down (to the object); ergative case is the name for what v assigns to the subject, and accusative case for what it assigns to the object. Assignment of v 's sole case to the subject leads to a lack of vP -internal case assignment possibilities for the object, as on the Bok-Bennema (1991) and Bobaljik and Branigan (2006) views. The object must therefore move close to the nominative-assigning T head. Ura proposes that the subject moves into an inner specifier of T, receiving no additional case, and that the object receives nominative case in an outer specifier of T.



A closely related analysis is proposed by Müller (2009). The subject receives case from v in an ergative language, and the object receives case from T, but the case-assignment relation between the object and T need not result in movement. Whether the v head assigns case to the subject (resulting in ergativity) or to the object (resulting in accusativity) comes down to the order in which the v head participates in Merge and Agree. If Agree comes first, that operation will take place as soon as v is merged. Its specifier has not yet been merged, and so v must agree with the internal argument. This results in v assigning case to the internal argument; this is the source of accusative. If v participates in Merge before Agree, the next step after Merge of v itself will be Merge of its specifier DP. When v subsequently participates in Agree, it agrees with its specifier DP, the external argument; this is the source of ergative. Müller proposes that v must agree with the external argument rather than the internal argument in this case because a specifier of a head is closer to that head than is material contained in the head's complement.

Ura's and Müller's proposals make predictions for non-finite clauses which parallel those of the Bobaljik and Branigan view. Since T is the source of absolutive case for the object, absolutive case should be uniformly lost in non-finite environments. This prediction

is appropriate for the Dyirbal facts, as we've seen, but not for the facts of other languages such as Warlpiri. For this reason, Aldridge (2004) and Legate (2008) propose derivations similar to (62) only for languages showing loss of absolutive arguments in non-finite contexts. Languages like Warlpiri are to be handled with in situ case assignment mechanisms for both subject and object according to these authors.

3.3. Jointly morphology- and syntax-based theories

A final group of theories makes use of both syntactic and morphological means to capture ergativity in case and agreement. One of these is the theory of Legate (2002, 2006, 2008), discussed above in connection with syntactic approaches. Beyond the syntactic means of case feature assignment, an essential piece of Legate's proposal involves the interface between morphology and syntax. Case distinctions present in syntax in virtue of syntactic configurations can be lost or obscured by morphological impoverishment. This is generally the situation, Legate proposes, in ergative/absolutive languages showing only morphological ergativity. For Warlpiri (63a), for instance, she proposes that the *v* head assigns accusative case to the object *wawirri* 'kangaroo', and ergative case to the subject *ngarraka* 'man'. In intransitive (63b), the *v* head assigns no case, and the subject is assigned nominative by T.

- (63) a. *ngarrka-ngku ka wawirri-∅ panti-rni* [Warlpiri]
 man-ERG AUX kangaroo-ACC spear-NPST
 'The man is spearing the kangaroo.'
- b. *kurdu-∅ ka wanka-mi*
 child-NOM AUX speak-NPST
 'The child is speaking.'

Case assignment in Warlpiri is then entirely parallel to what we see in a three-way case-marking system like Nez Perce. There is no syntactic category of absolutive that is assigned sometimes by T and sometimes by *v* (cf. Aldridge 2004). Why does the transitive object share the surface realization of the intransitive subject? The key lies in the way that syntactic case features are mapped to phonological realizations. Legate proposes the following list of syntax/phonology pairings for the Warlpiri case system:

- (64) Warlpiri case morphemes (partial list)
 [ERG] ↔ -rlu/-ngku
 [DAT] ↔ -ku
 [CASE] ↔ ∅ (=“absolutive”)

This list does not provide special exponents for [NOM] and [ACC] cases. These cases, then, have recourse to a default case form. It is their shared realization through default case morphology that leads to the conflation of [NOM] and [ACC] in an 'absolutive' category in Warlpiri.

Evidence for this proposal comes from mismatches in case-marking within a single DP. An interesting example of this is seen in Djapu, a Pama-Nyungan language. Case-marking in this language is generally on a three-way basis, like in Nez Perce.

- (65) a. *Mak rlinygu-n galka-y' ba:pa-'ngali-n dharpu-ngal.* [Djapu]
 maybe already-IM sorcerer-ERG father-KIN.PROP-ACC spear-PRF
 'Maybe a sorcerer has already speared your father.'
 (Morphy 1983:111)
- b. *Ngarritj nha:-ma wa:yin-gu.*
 Ngarritj.NOM see-UNM animal-DAT
 'Ngarritj is looking for animal(s).'

(Morphy 1983:38)

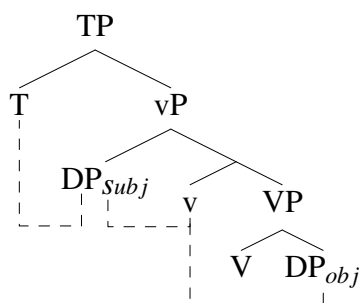
However, whereas common nouns show specialized accusative case forms, demonstratives lack any accusative morphology. When a demonstrative forms a DP with an accusative noun, the demonstrative appears in the unmarked, default case – a seeming partial emergence of a morphological absolutive.

- (66) *Wungay' marrtji-nya ngunhi-ny-dhi yolngu-n*
 honey.ABS go-PST.NONINDIC that.ABS-PRO-ANAPH person-ACC
- wapirti-warrtju-na-puyngu-nha-ny weka-nha.* [Djapu]
 stingray-spear.PL-NMLZR-INHAB-ACC-PRO give-PST.NONINDIC
 'We would go and give honey to those stingray-spearing people.'
 (Morphy 1983)

Such mismatches are elegantly accounted for via the distinction between syntactic and morphological case permitted by Legate's system. The overall DP 'those stingray-spearing people' is assigned [ACC] by v , but the component pieces of the DP present different possibilities for inflection. Nouns which have specialized accusative forms adopt those forms, but demonstratives, lacking any such forms, appear in an unmarked, default morphological case. This default is a constrained example of a pattern that happens on a larger scale in a language like Warlpiri.

A somewhat different example of a mixed syntax- and morphology-based theory is provided by Deal (2010a,b). As on the proposals by Legate and Aldridge discussed above, Deal proposes that v enters into a syntactic relationship both with the subject in SpecvP and with the object inside VP. These relationships, however, are understood to be agreement relationships which transfer only ϕ -features; there are no case features in the syntax per se. Deal also proposes that T enters into an agreement relationship with the subject; in languages like Nez Perce, this additional agreement is realized as a subject agreement affix on the verb. It is agreement relationships, rather than syntactic case assignment, that are indicated via dotted lines in the tree below.

(67)



One nominal, then, agrees with two functional heads, in virtue of being closest to T within its c-command domain (agreement down) and being in the specifier of vP (agreement up). Deal proposes that this syntactic configuration is interpreted morphologically as ergative case. Morphological interpretation of agreement dependencies first copies the features of the object onto the *v* head and of the subject onto the T head. It then interprets the spec-head agreement relationship between *v* and the subject by sharing the subject's features and *v*'s agreement features, which have been obtained from the object. The subject DP thus ends up endowed with two sets of ϕ -features, its own and those of the object. The morphological exponent of this complex feature bundle is what we recognize as the ergative case.

(68) Nez Perce case morphemes (partial list)

$[\phi-T, \phi-v, D] \leftrightarrow -nim$

$[\phi-v, D] \leftrightarrow -ne$

This type of approach provides a natural treatment of languages like Sahaptin, a Penutian language, where the appearance of ergative on the subject is conditioned by the person of the object. Ergative case is only expressed on a 3rd person singular subject in the presence of a 1st or 2nd person object.

(69) a. *iwínš-nim=naš i-q'ínun-a.* [Sahaptin]

man-ERG=1 SG 3 SBJ-see-PST
'The man saw me.'

b. *iwínš i-q'ínun-a miyánaš-na.*

man 3 SBJ-see-PST child-ACC
'The man saw the child.'

c. *i-wiyánawi-ya iwínš.*

3 SBJ-arrive-PST man
'The man arrived.'

(Rude 1997)

Because the ergative case marker realizes, in part, the features of the object, it is possible for the marker to be different or to be zero only where the object has a certain featural profile.

3.4. Challenges for ergative in situ

Several of the theories considered above have in common the treatment of the ergative case as assigned in situ to the specifier of ν P. This approach has been quite influential in the recent literature, as witnessed by the papers in Johns, Massam, and Ndayiragije (2006), and work by Woolford (2006), Aissen (2010), Coon (2010a), Coon et al. (2012), and Mahajan (2012). For this reason it is especially important to consider the types of examples that have been raised as possible challenges to it. These concern the correlation between ergativity and thematic role; the absence of ergative case on certain nominals occupying Spec ν P; and the possibility of raising to ergative.

First, insofar as the ν head assigning ergative case is connected with agency per se, the proposal makes the prediction that ergative case should not be available on non-agent subjects. There are many languages showing ergativity properties in case and agreement for which this prediction is not accurate (Comrie 1978; Bobaljik and Branigan 2006; Otsuka 2006; Bruening 2007; Deal 2010a; Preminger 2012; Baker 2012). Examples below from Chukchi and Nez Perce underline this point.

- (70) *əʔtvʔet jərʔen-nin mimt-e* [Chuckchi]
 boat.ABS fill-3SG/3SG water-ERG
 ‘Water filled the boat.’
- (71) *piswe-m ’inii-ne pee-tqe-likeece-Ø-ye.* [Nez Perce]
 rock-ERG house-OBJ 3/3-suddenly-on.top-P.ASP-REM.PST
 ‘A rock fell on the house.’

The standard way to reconcile such data with the ν P proposal is to weaken the connection between ν and an agent θ -role. The ν head may assign a broader class of external or “causer” θ -roles, for instance, including whatever roles are appropriately assigned to the ergative nominals in the examples above (e.g. Monró 2007; Legate 2012). In this sense the original proposal that ergative is a θ -linked case is crucially modified to highlight the structure in which various roles are assigned, rather than the roles themselves. What is central to the proposal is that ergative is assigned in situ to the specifier of ν P; a full account of examples like those above is left to await a proper theory of the mapping between this type of structural configuration and observable semantic consequences.

A second challenge concerns whether occupying the Spec ν P position is sufficient for ergative case-marking. Arguments that it is not come from Basque and from Nez Perce. Between them, Basque dialects and Nez Perce cover three major types of ergativity: ergative/absolutive (eastern Basque), three-way (Nez Perce), and argument-structural (western Basque).

Basque dialects converge on the marking of transitive and unaccusative clauses. Transitive objects and unaccusative subjects appear in an unmarked absolutive case; transitive subjects take a special marker, the ergative.

- (72) a. *Nekane-k Miren eta Jon ikusi ditu.* [Basque]
 Nekane-ERG Miren.ABS and Jon.ABS seen AUX.3PL_ABS.3SG_ERG

‘Nekane saw Miren and Jon.’

b. *Miren eta Jon etorri dira.*

Miren.ABS and Jon.ABS come AUX.3PL_ABS

‘Miren and Jon came.’

For the question of the sufficiency of SpecvP position for ergative marking, the relevant examples in Basque involve gerundive complements of perception verbs, which contrast with full clausal complements (Rezac, Albizu, and Etxepare 2010). In full clausal complements, such as the bracketed constituent below, transitive subjects must be marked ergative.

(73) [*Katu-ek/*ak sagu-ak harrapatu* [Basque]
 [cat-DEF.PL.ERG/*DEF.PL.ABS mouse-DEF.PL.ABS catch
dituzte-la] *ikusi dut*
 AUX.3PL_ABS.3PL_ERG-that] seen AUX.1SG_ERG
 ‘I saw that the cats caught / were catching the mice.’

If ergative is assigned in situ in vP, the possibility of ergative assignment to the subject is expected to persist in gerundive complements, which possess a reduced clausal structure. This, however, is not the case: gerundive complements show absolutive subjects, rather than ergative ones. (See Rezac et al. 2010 for arguments for the constituency represented here.)

(74) [*Katu-ak/*-ek sagu-ak harrapa-tzen*] [Basque]
 [cat-DEF.PL.ABS/*DEF.PL.ERG mouse-DEF.PL.ABS catch-ing]
ikusi ditut
 seen AUX.3PL_ABS.1SG_ERG
 ‘I saw the cats catching the mice.’

On the basis of these facts, Rezac et al. (2010) argue that position in SpecvP alone is not sufficient to condition ergative case assignment in Basque. The involvement of the TP system is required. This conclusion is especially telling to the degree that the contrast above holds across a dialect continuum in Basque, including both dialects showing ergative/absolutive case (where *v_{TRANS}* would be implicated in case assignment to the subject) and those showing argument-structural ergativity in case (where *v* would always be implicated in case assignment to the subject).

Related arguments from Nez Perce concern reduced clausal structures appearing in the causative. In a full clause in Nez Perce, subjects are marked ergative and objects are marked objective (accusative).

(75) *Annie-nim paa-’yaŋ-n-a ciq’aamqal-na* [Nez Perce]
 Annie-ERG 3/3-find-P.ASP-REM.PST dog-OBJ
 ‘Annie found the dog.’

In a causativized form of (75), however, ergative case on the subject disappears in favor of objective:

- (76) *Meeli-nm Annie-ne/*nim paa-sapa- 'yaâ-n-a ciq'aamqal-na* [Nez
 Mary-ERG Annie-OBJ/*ERG 3/3-CAUS-find-P.ASP-REM.PST dog-OBJ
 Perce]
 'Mary made Annie find the dog.'

Deal (2010b) argues that the structure of (76) involves a single TP in which the ν P found in (75) is embedded under a higher, causative ν P. Just as in the Basque example, when a ν P whose subject would normally bear the ergative case is not in a local relationship with a T head, ergative case on the subject disappears. This provides another argument that Spec ν P position is not sufficient for ergative case assignment.

A final challenge to the ergative in situ analysis concerns whether Spec ν P position is even necessary for ergative case assignment. This question must be handled with some care in view of analyses in which in situ assignment by ν is in fact definitional of ergative case (e.g. Legate 2002: 143, 2012). The questions that can be addressed empirically are (i) how closely this definition corresponds to the pretheoretical ergative class, and (ii) in cases in which the definition makes distinctions among elements in that class, whether these distinctions in fact track linguistic differences in a useful way. With these questions in mind, let us examine a potential argument for ergative assignment independent of Spec ν P. This argument comes again from work on Basque.

Basque shows certain raising constructions which result in the assignment of the ergative case to the DP which moves. This holds even in cases when the base position of that DP is not one in which ergative case is assigned. The examples below come from Rezac et al. (2010), who provide several arguments to show that the structures involve raising (see also Artiagoitia 2001; Preminger 2012). In (77), *Jon eta Miren* raises from the specifier position of a transitive ν P, in which ergative could be assigned on the in-situ proposal. This provides a possible explanation for the presence of ergative in the matrix clause.

- (77) *Jon-ek eta Miren-ek_k [t_k lagunei_j liburuak_i bidali]* [Basque]
 Jon-ERG and Miren-ERG [friends.DAT books.ABS send]
behar di-zkii-ej-tek.
 must AUX-3PL_ABS_i-3PL_DAT_j-3P_ERG_k.
 'Jon and Miren must send friends books.'

In (78), on the other hand, *Jon eta Miren* raises from a position in the projection of unaccusative 'come', in which ergative case is *not* assigned. The ergative case appearing on *Jon eta Miren* in its derived position must therefore be the result of raising.

- (78) *Jon-ek eta Miren-ek_k [t_k etorri] behar du-te.* [Basque]
 Jon-ERG and Miren-ERG [come] must AUX-3PE
 'Jon and Miren must come.'

This appears to counterexemplify the proposed universal that ergative does not appear on derived subjects.

If ergative is by definition a case that is assigned to DPs in Spec ν P in virtue of their base-generation in that position, two main avenues remain open to deal with the Basque

facts. First, we might treat the case similarity between the raised subject in (78) and the ordinary transitive subject in (72a) as an instance of homophony. The ordinary transitive subject in (72a) indeed receives the ergative case in virtue of its base position, but the raised subject in (78) receives some other case, which happens to be realized in a way identical to the ergative. Just as for the two types of absolutive in Warlpiri discussed above, what must be shown is a distinction in syntactic or morphological behavior between these two case categories in support of the postulated difference. The alternative avenue is simply to deny that Basque makes use of an ergative case. This in turn requires identifying an alternative means of case-assignment for Basque and distinguishing this route from the ergative one by independent means.

4. Theories of ergativity in \bar{A} -movement

We now turn to the manifestation of ergativity properties in the grammar of \bar{A} dependencies. The core phenomenon in this domain concerns a difference in the way that \bar{A} movement is encoded when transitive subjects are extracted versus when other constituents are extracted. Roviana data showed us this pattern above. Object and intransitive subject relativization in Roviana makes use of ordinary verb forms in the embedded clause. Transitive subject relativization makes use of a special nominalized form.

- (79) *Hierana sa tie [RC sapu kote taloa]* [Roviana]
 this DEF man REL FUT leave
 ‘This is the man who is going away.’
- (80) *Hierana sa koreo [RC sapu tupa-i-a e Zone]*
 this DEF boy REL punch-TR-3SG.OBJ ART John
 ‘This is the boy that John punched.’
- (81) a. **Hierana sa tie [RC sapu tupa-i-u]* *Normal verb form
 this DEF man REL punch-TR-1SG.OBJ
 ‘This is the man who punched me.’
- b. *Hierana sa tie [RC sapu tupa-qa rau]* ^{OK}Special verb form
 this DEF man REL punch-1SG.NSUF I
 ‘This is the man who punched me.’

Corston (1996) reports that the type of verbal morphology seen in (81b) cannot be used in object extraction, and suggests that it cannot be used in intransitive subject extraction either. This suggests that verbal morphology is strictly correlated with whether an ergative or a non-ergative is extracted. The literature on ergativity in \bar{A} extraction explores both morphological and syntactic explanations for this type of correlation.

4.1. A morphology-based theory

An example of a purely morphological approach is provided by Stiebels (2006)’s study of \bar{A} extraction in Mayan. Across a range of Mayan languages, a special verb form appears

when transitive subjects are \bar{A} extracted. This form is called the “agent focus” (AF) in the Mayanist literature. The AF form does not appear when intransitive subjects or transitive objects are extracted. An example from Q’eqchi is given below.

- (82) a. *x-at-in-sak’* [Q’eqchi]
 REC.PST-2SG.ABS-1SG.ERG-hit
 ‘I hit you.’
 b. *ani x-Ø-a-sak’*
 who REC.PST-3SG.ABS-2SG.ERG-hit
 ‘Who did you hit?’
 c. *ani x-sak’-□-k* *aw-e*
 who REC.PST-hit-AF-NFUT.INTR 2SG.E-DAT
 ‘Who hit you?’
 (Dayley 1981)

Working in lexical decomposition grammar, Stiebels analyzes the special verbal morphology in (82c) as akin to a form of agreement. Agreement in Mayan languages is generally on an ergative-absolutive basis. The AF morphology is like other ergative agreement markers, Stiebels proposes, but with an additional focus feature (triggering \bar{A} -movement) and impoverished ϕ -features. When the subject is ergative and has a focus feature, use of AF agreement is obligatory; this is simply because failure to use the correct agreement form generally leads to ungrammaticality. When the subject has a focus feature but is not ergative, use of AF is not possible for these same reasons. Together with additional machinery regulating the form of agreement with objects in AF clauses, this proposal is able to account for a wide range of data from diverse Mayan languages.

The agreement-based proposal, as Stiebels notes, is to a certain degree reminiscent of patterns of agreement in \bar{A} -movement in Austronesian languages like Chamorro. Declarative clauses in Chamorro contain subject agreement in person and number. Note that, according to Chung (1998), Chamorro is not an ergative language.

- (83) *Pära bai u-agang pro hämyu un pupuengi* [Chamorro]
 FUT.IRR 1SG.IRR-call you.PL one evening
 ‘I was going to call you one evening.’
 (Chung 1998: 35)

When there is \bar{A} extraction, however, the form of agreement changes, and the change is determined by the case of the \bar{A} -moving element. When a nominative is \bar{A} moved, the infix *um* is inserted; when an accusative is A' moved, the infix *in* is inserted (Chung 1982, 1998).

- (84) a. *Hayi f<um>a’gasi t i kareta?* [Chamorro]
 who <WH.NOM>wash the car
 ‘Who washed the car?’
 b. *Hafa k<in>annono’-mu t ?*
 what <WH.OBJ>-eat.PROG-AGR
 ‘What are you eating?’

(Chung 1998: 236-7)

As analyzed by Stiebels, the Mayan AF form is essentially a form of *wh*-agreement in an ergative language. Agreement in Mayan, as in Chamorro, reflects both case and extraction. Extracted ergatives trigger a special overt form of *wh*-agreement, namely the AF suffix, and other instances of agreement with *wh*-phrases are syncretic with ordinary agreement. Now, the Chamorro forms demonstrate the possibility of *wh*-agreement both with subjects and with objects, with roughly equal morphological complexity in the two cases. One might expect to find, then, an ergative language showing special forms of verbal morphology of equal complexity in both ergative \bar{A} -movement and in absolutive \bar{A} -movement. It is striking that such a language appears to be unattested. The generalization seems to be:

- (85) When verbal morphology is affected by \bar{A} extraction of arguments in an ergative language, the forms used for \bar{A} extraction of ergatives are always more complex than those used for non-ergatives.

The challenge for the morphological account is to provide a natural account of this type of generalization.

4.2. Syntax-based theories

In contrast to the morphological view, various researchers have posited a structural difference between clauses where ergatives are extracted and those where non-ergatives are. On this view, the standard clausal syntax of some ergative languages makes it impossible to \bar{A} move the subject. Two major threads connect the theories in this domain. The first concerns the involvement of object movement. This movement is frequently, though not always, connected to a second common thread: the idea that the object receives case from T or I. The structure resulting from the object's movement is one in which the subject cannot undergo \bar{A} -movement; or, alternatively, the structure in which the subject \bar{A} -moves is one in which the object cannot be assigned case in the typical way.

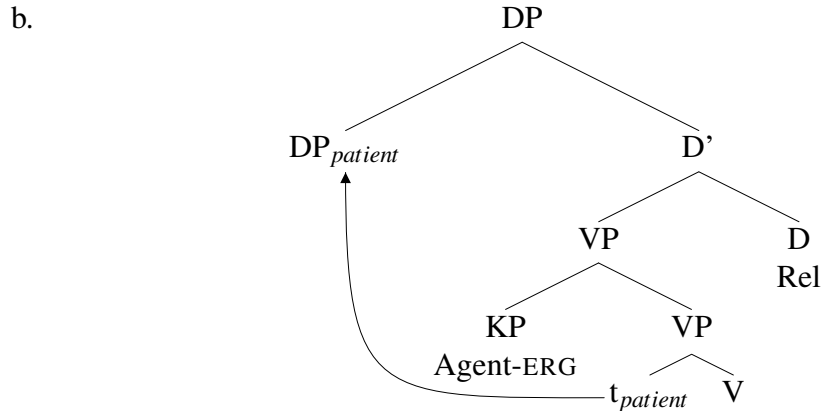
4.2.1. The problem is object \bar{A} -movement

A first set of analyses identifies syntactically ergative languages as languages in which objects must undergo \bar{A} -movement in ordinary transitive clauses. This leads to problems in \bar{A} extraction of subjects in transitive clauses. Theories along these lines are proposed by Bittner (1994), Bittner and Hale (1996a) and Campana (1992).

For Bittner and Hale, objects move to an \bar{A} position for reasons of case in a syntactically ergative language. SpecIP, the nominative case-checking position, is to be considered \bar{A} ; in ordinary transitive clauses, it is to SpecIP that objects raise. Case-driven object movement interacts with other types of \bar{A} -movement when a limited number of \bar{A} positions are available. This is the situation Bittner and Hale find in Inuit relative clauses, which they propose are formed via nominalization of VP. To fulfill its case needs, the object of a transitive must raise to SpecDP, the closest \bar{A} position. The subject receives ergative case in

situ in virtue of case competition with the object. (Details of this are discussed by Bittner and Hale 1996b.)

- (86) a. *miiqqa-t* [__ *Juuna-p paari-sa-i*] [West
child-PL [__ Juuna-ERG look.after-REL[+TR]-3SG.PL]
Greenlandic]
'the children that Juuna is looking after'
(Bittner 1994: 55)

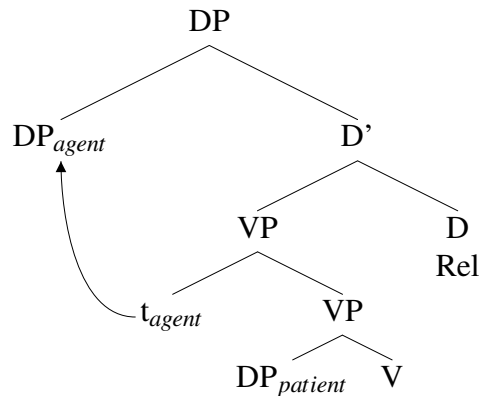


Subject relativization is dependent on transitivity. When an object is not present, the subject may raise to SpecDP for case reasons, (87a). A transitive subject may not do so, however, (87b).

- (87) a. *miiqqa-t* [__ *sila-mi pinnguar-tu-t*] [West Greenlandic]
child-PL [__ outdoors-LOC play-REL[-TR]-PL]
'the children who are playing outdoors'
- b. * *angut* [__ *aallaat tigu-sima-sa-a*]
man [__ gun take-PRF-REL[+TR]-3SG.SG]
'the man who took the gun'
(Bittner 1994)

As Bittner (1994: 58) discusses, the problem with (87b) concerns the case filter. When the subject raises to the only available \bar{A} position, the object is left without a source of case. No case is available to it VP-internally.

(88) Structure of *(87b): no case for the object



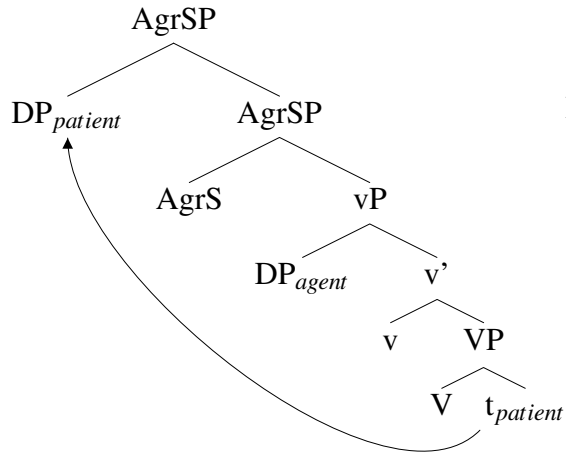
Special morphology reflects a structure in which the object's case-needs have found a different means of satisfaction. In this structure – the antipassive – the object is able to receive case VP internally, freeing the subject to occupy the sole \bar{A} position available in the relativization structure.

- (89) *angut* [__ *aallaam-mik tigu-si-sima-su-q*] [West Greenlandic]
 man [__ gun-INS take-ANTIP-PRF-REL[-TR]-SG]
 'the man who took the gun'
 (Bittner 1994: 58)

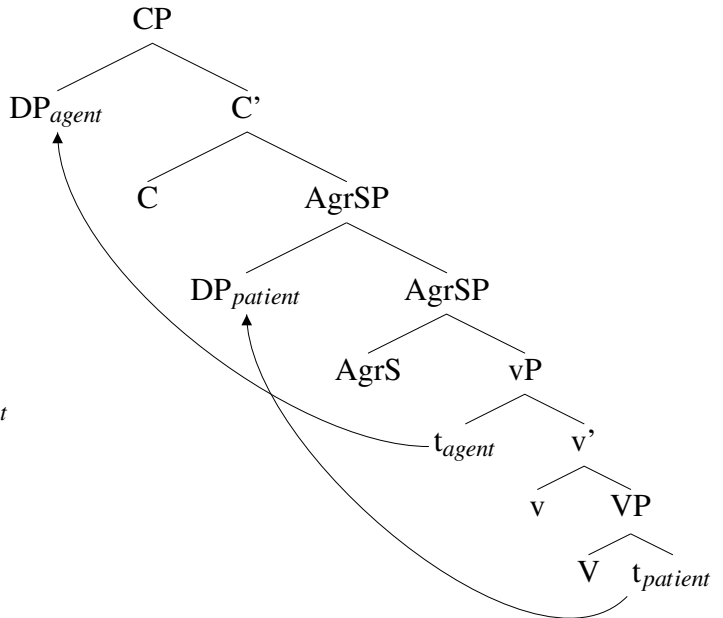
Additional machinery is required to extend this proposal to ergativity in \bar{A} -movement in full clausal domains, such as relative clauses in Roviana or matrix questions in Q'eqchi. Here, object movement to SpecIP should be possible, fulfilling the case needs of the object; the remaining difficulty in subject \bar{A} -movement to SpecCP remains to be accounted for.

The proposal by Campana (1992) allows for these further examples while carrying over various features of the Bittner and Hale approach. Like Bittner and Hale, Campana proposes that objects must raise for case reasons to an \bar{A} position in ordinary transitive clauses in syntactically ergative languages. He identifies this position as an adjunct position in Agr,SP. Subjects receive case below AgrSP. (I show this position, anachronistically, as SpecvP in the trees below.) \bar{A} -movement of a transitive subject therefore creates a second \bar{A} -dependency which crosses over the first:

(90) a. Ordinary transitive clause



b. Transitive subject extraction



Campana proposes that structure (90b) is ill-formed due to the ECP, a principle requiring the trace of the subject in SpecvP and its co-indexed antecedent (the subject DP itself) to be sufficiently close together. In (90b) the \bar{A} position occupied by the object intervenes between the subject's trace and its landing site, disrupting this locality and producing deviance. Just as on the Bittner and Hale proposal, circumventing this deviance requires finding some way to assign case to the object without \bar{A} moving it. Campana discusses the use of passive and antipassive strategies that achieve this result.

The ECP-based explanation makes for a natural parallel between syntactic ergativity in \bar{A} -movement and the *that*-trace phenomenon. Examples like (91b) are handled on the standard GB approach (Chomsky 1986) in much the same way as Campana treats instances of ergative extraction such as (87b): something intervenes between a trace of the moving subject and its next highest antecedent. In structures like (90b), this is the object DP; in (91b), it is the complementizer *that*.

- (91) a. *Who_i do you think [_{CP} t_i [_{IP} t_i won the game]] ?*
 b. * *Who_i do you think [_{CP} t_i that [_{IP} t_i won the game]] ?*

A major prediction of both Campana's and Bittner and Hale's theories concerns non-finite clauses – a challenge which will come up repeatedly throughout this section. Transitive subject movement on these theories is complicated by movement of the object, and object movement is driven by a need to receive case *ex situ*. The object's case, received from T and its analogues, is the nominative. In non-finite clauses, nominative is expected to become unavailable. This means that languages with ergativity in \bar{A} -movement should be languages where overt objects, modulo some special means of case-assignment, are impossible in non-finite clauses. Structures which are plausibly non-finite in West Greenlandic appear challenging from this perspective.

- (92) *Miiqqat [PRO Juuna ikiu-ssa-llu-gu] niriursui-pp-u-t* [West
children.ABS [PRO Juuna.ABS help-FUT-INF-3SG] promise-IND-INTR-3PL
Greenlandic]
'The children promised to help Juuna.'
(Manning 1994: 113)

Bittner (1994) proposes to handle such non-finite clauses with mechanisms very similar to those used in finite clauses; nominative-assignment possibilities are dissociated from finiteness. It remains to be seen how a broader range of non-finite clauses, including those of the English and Dyirbal types, can be accounted for under this proposal.

An additional prediction of the Campana theory in particular concerns \bar{A} movement of adjuncts and indirect objects. Movement of such elements out of ν P is expected to induce an ECP violation parallel to that shown in (90b). Yet languages showing ergativity in \bar{A} movement do not typically show parallel effects in adjunct or indirect object extraction. In Kaqchikel (Mayan), for instance, transitive subjects may not extract when the verb bears ordinary morphology; an AF marker is required.

- (93) a. *n-Ø-u-löq'* *jun sik'iwuj ri a Carlos* [Kaqchikel]
INCOMPL-3SG.ABS-3SG.ERG-buy INDF book DET CL Carlos
'Carlos buys a book.'
- b. **achike n-Ø-u-löq'* *jun sik'iwuj*
who INCOMPL-3SG.ABS-3SG.ERG-buy INDF book
'Who buys a book?'
- (Assmann et al. 2012)

Extraction of low adjuncts and indirect objects imposes no parallel condition. These elements freely extract in clauses with ordinary verbal morphology.

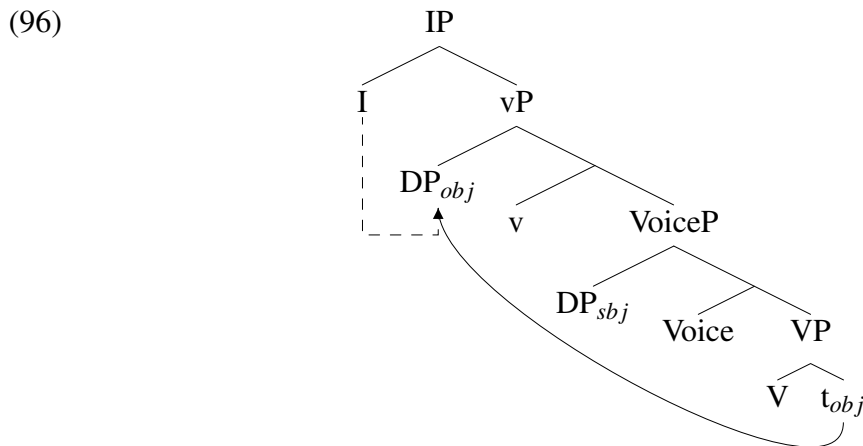
- (94) *achoq r-ik'in n-Ø-u-sël* [Kaqchikel]
what 3SG-POSS-INS INCOMPL-3SG.ABS-3SG.ERG-cut
ri ti'ij ri a Carlos?
DET food DET CL Carlos
'With what does Carlos cut the meat?'
- (95) *achoq chi re n-Ø-u-ya'* *a Carlos jun sik'wuj*
who PREP DET INCOMPL-3SG.ABS-3SG.ERG-give CL Carlos INDF book
'To whom does Carlos give a book?'

These data come from Assmann et al. (2012), who observe that this type of theory in effect predicts an "absolute island" effect in clauses with ordinary verbal morphology. The prediction is contravened by low adjunct movement past an absolutive in (94) and indirect object movement past an absolutive in (95).

4.2.2. The problem is locality

A second set of analyses identifies syntactically ergative languages as those in which transitive subject movement is barred by a principle of locality. Different types of locality conditions are invoked in this literature.

Coon et al. (2012) propose that the relevant principle is one of absolute locality: the Phase Impenetrability Condition (Chomsky 2001). Like Campana and Bittner and Hale, Coon et al. propose that there is no source for object case in VP in the syntactically ergative languages they discuss. Objects must therefore receive case *ex situ* from IP. IP, however, lies on the opposite side of a phase boundary from the object's base position. The object is therefore required to move into the specifier position of the phase head, which Coon et al. identify as a *vP* above the base position of the subject in VoiceP. Once moved to Spec*vP*, the object may enter into a local agreement relationship with *I* and receive case.



Movement of the object through the specifier of *vP* also comes with consequences for the subject. \bar{A} -movement to SpecCP requires the subject to cross the *vP* phase boundary. However, the object is required to occupy the only specifier position available in *vP*. \bar{A} -movement of the subject is thus ruled out in virtue of the PIC.

Special morphology appearing in \bar{A} -movement of ergatives is again connected to an alternative means of case-assignment for the object – one which operates strictly within the lower phase. One might then expect that this means of case-assignment would appear in other environments in which objects have case-needs that cannot be met in IP; for instance, it might appear in non-finite clauses. Coon et al. discuss evidence from Q'anjob'al showing exactly this type of convergence. The Q'anjob'al suffix *-on* appears in embedded non-finite clauses (97) and in contexts of transitive subject movement (98).

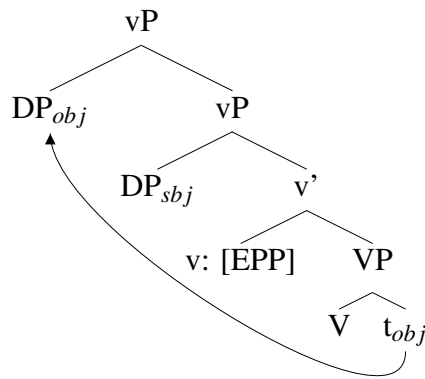
- (97) *Chi uj [hin y-il-on[-i] ix Malin].* [Q'anjob'al]
 ASP be.able.to [ABS.1 GEN.3-see-AF-INTR CL Maria]
 'Maria can see me.'
- (98) *Maktxel max-ach il-on-i.*
 who ASP-ABS.2 see-AF-INTR
 'Who saw you?'

Coon et al. propose that the *-on* ("agent focus") suffix is a special Voice head which assigns case to the object in situ. This obviates the dependence of the object on I, and thus makes an overt object possible in a non-finite context in (97). It also obviates the need for object movement through SpecvP, and thus opens the way for subject extraction in (98). The view presents a straightforward approach to the fact that the forms used for \bar{A} extraction of ergatives are morphologically more complex than those for extraction of non-ergatives. The Voice head is more syntactically complex under ergative extraction than it would normally be; only in this case does it bear a case feature.

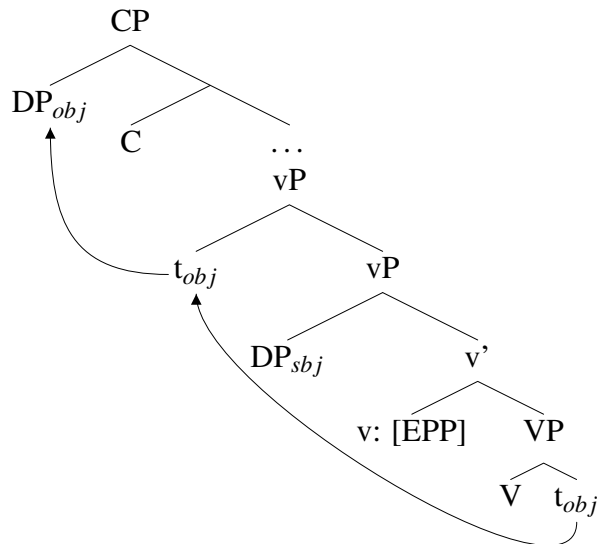
The challenges for this view are similar to those facing Campana's view. Here, too, it remains to be seen how \bar{A} extraction asymmetries can be handled in languages like West Greenlandic, where objects do not seem to depend on IP for case. This raises the question of why objects would have to raise to vP in such languages, blocking subject movement. The challenge of adjunct extraction and indirect object extraction also is applicable to this view. The vP escape hatch must be unavailable to subjects when an object occupies SpecvP, but it must be open to adjuncts and indirect objects.

Aldridge (2004, 2008, 2012) proposes an alternative locality-based account according to which the relevant principle is one of relative locality: Attract Closest. Syntactically ergative languages, she proposes, are those in which transitive *v* possesses an [EPP] feature which triggers raising of the object to vP's outer specifier. \bar{A} -movement to SpecCP is likewise triggered by an [EPP] feature which attracts the closest DP. \bar{A} -movement of objects and intransitive subjects therefore proceeds straightforwardly; these are the highest DPs in their respective vPs.

(99) a. Basic vP structure

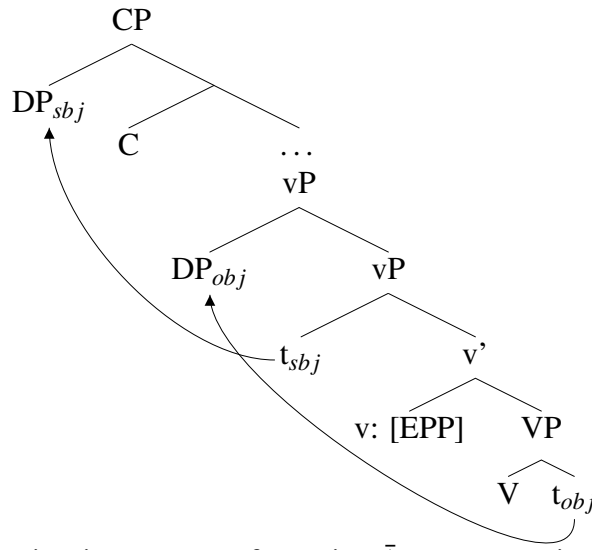


b. Object \bar{A} -movement



\bar{A} -movement of transitive subjects to SpecCP is forbidden because relative to the object, the subject is not local to C. Only the highest DP in vP can \bar{A} move.

(100) *Transitive subject movement: a violation of Attract Closest



Special morphology appearing in contexts of ergative \bar{A} -movement is connected to a difference in the syntax of the object. Aldridge proposes that antipassive clauses (e.g. [89]) contain a v head which does not carry an [EPP] feature triggering object movement. The subject remains the highest DP, and is able to \bar{A} move.

This approach faces a mix of the challenges applying to Stiebel's account and those applying to Campana's and Coon et al.'s. First, like on the Stiebels approach, it remains unexpected why the forms used for \bar{A} extraction of ergatives should be morphologically more complex than those for extraction of non-ergatives. We must somehow assure that transitive v is not realized overtly unless antipassive v also is. Transitive v is furthermore potentially more syntactically complex than antipassive v – it contains an [EPP] feature. One might expect, then, that ergative extraction would feature reduced complexity in verbal morphology, contrary to fact. Second, to the extent that adjuncts and indirect objects behave like DPs in their interaction with [EPP], facts like those in (94) and (95) are also unexpected. Like Campana's and Coon et al.'s proposal, Aldridge's leads us to expect some version of an absolutive island. It remains to be clarified why adjuncts, which are typically less mobile than arguments, are able to extract in cases where subject arguments are not.

A distinctive aspect of this proposal lies in the connection between object movement and object case. Unlike in the other views reviewed here, the connection between these two is only indirect. For languages like Tagalog and West Greenlandic, Aldridge proposes that movement of the object to the outer specifier of vP takes place even though there is a source for object case vP internally. Ergativity in \bar{A} -movement is therefore possible even when absolutive case (being assigned at the vP -level) remains available to objects in non-finite clauses, as we saw for West Greenlandic in (92). The reverse, however, is not possible. In a language where absolutive objects are not possible in non-finite clauses, objects receive their case from T; T, like C, must attract the closest DP. In order for it to be the object that is attracted, the object must first shift past the subject at the vP level. Aldridge proposes that a language showing this profile is Seediq. Crucially, there is no language where absolutive objects are impossible in non-finite clauses (as in Seediq) but

there is no \bar{A} extraction restriction.

(101) Aldridge's generalization

If a language does not provide a source for absolutive case in a non-finite clause, then it does not allow transitive subjects in normal clausal structures to be \bar{A} extracted.

The innovation of Aldridge's proposal is that it allows this generalization to be derived as a one-way implication, rather than a biconditional.

Notably, this analysis requires \bar{A} -movement in syntactically ergative languages to work slightly differently than does its counterpart in English. Either subject or object may \bar{A} move in English, despite the fact that the former is systematically closer to C than the latter. The English facts are typically handled by positing that an [EPP] feature on C attracts not just the closest DP, but the closest constituent with a *wh*-feature. This provides a ready account of superiority effects, as in (102c–d).

(102) English: C attracts the closest *wh*-feature

- a. *Who ate the pizza?*
- b. *What did Susan eat?*
- c. *Who ate what?*
- d. **What did who eat?*

To produce a syntactically ergative language, then, two independent pieces must come together. First, objects must move to a position above that occupied by subjects. This type of idea is widely explored in the literature on Germanic object shift (e.g. Collins and Thráinsson 1996). Second, triggers of \bar{A} -movement must attract the closest DP without regard to its featural specification. This type of parameter could potentially be useful in dealing with Keenan and Comrie (1977)'s observations regarding languages where only subjects may relativize. Such languages may be examples of closest-DP attraction by a relative C independent of the object shift that Aldridge posits for syntactic ergativity.

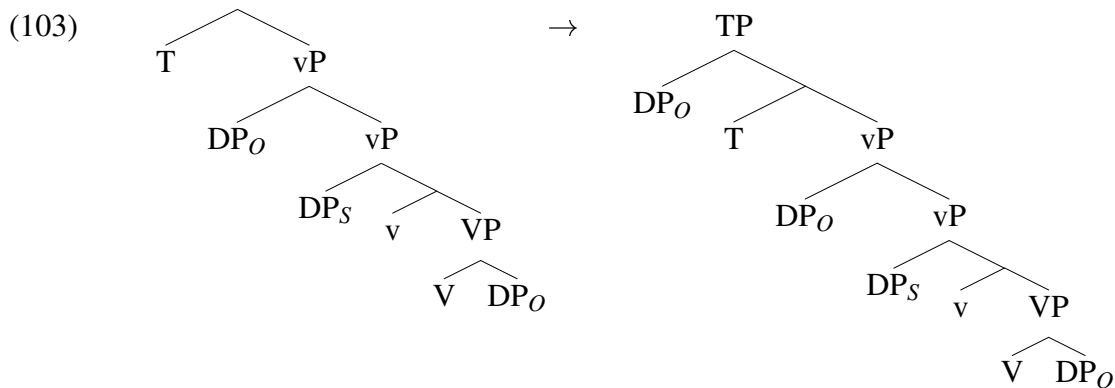
4.2.3. The problem is rule ordering

A final type of syntactic approach shares with Bittner and Hale, Campana and Coon et al. the core idea that case assignment to the object is blocked by \bar{A} movement of an ergative DP. Assmann et al. (2012) propose an implementation of this idea that comes out of the ordering between the operations Merge and Agree.

Assmann et al. adopt Müller (2009)'s approach to ergative case, reviewed in section 3.2.5. Structural case across languages is connected to two loci, *v* and T. Ergativity results when *v* must participate in Merge before it participates in Agree; this has the effect that *v* agrees with the DP in its specifier position and assigns it ergative case. In this scenario the object is assigned case by T. Ergative extraction restrictions arise, Assmann et al. propose, because \bar{A} movement to the left periphery necessarily stops in the SpecTP position (an idea

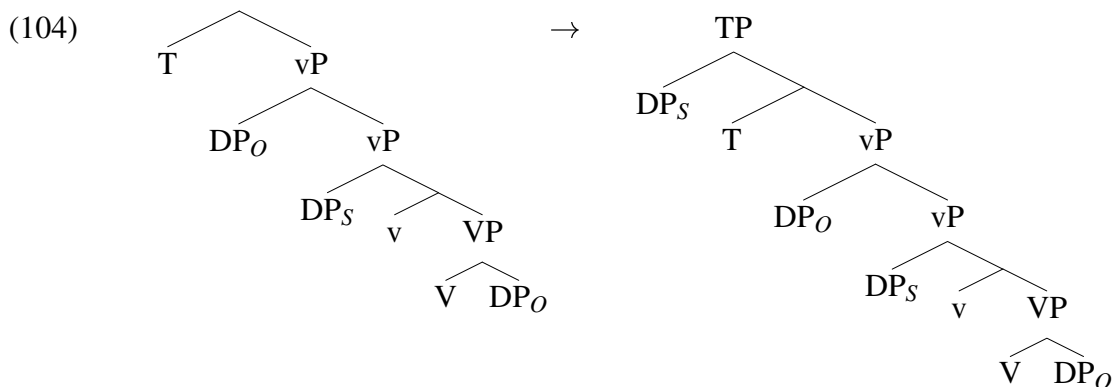
they connect to the proposal that TP is a phase). This means that T, like *v*, participates in both Agree (i.e. case-assignment) and Merge (i.e. attraction of a DP to its Spec). Crucially, if a language requires Merge before Agree at the *v*P level – resulting in ergative case – it also requires Merge before Agree at the TP level. This has the effect of allowing object extraction but not transitive subject extraction to proceed straightforwardly in an ergative language.

Object extraction proceeds as follows. Immediately after T is merged, a DP must move to its specifier position. When it is the object that moves, the structure is altered by Merge as shown in (103). The object, having previously moved to the edge of the *v*P phase, moves to SpecTP. (Note that this tree reflects a copy theory of movement.)



The next step triggered by T is Agree, and this targets the DP in T's specifier. This DP (the object) is thus assigned case. If C is merged, the object can proceed to move to SpecCP. This produces object \bar{A} -movement.

Matters are different when a subject is extracted. Suppose that the initial structure in (103) serves as the input to an alternative, equally available application of Merge. It is the subject DP that moves to SpecTP.



Once again, the next step will be Agree between T and the DP in its specifier position. This DP has already received case from *v*, but it remains a legitimate goal for Agree with T. Agreement of T with its DP specifier, however, prohibits T from engaging in any further agreement with other DPs in its domain. In particular, it may not subsequently agree with

the object DP inside its sister ν P. That object is thus unable to receive case, and the derivation crashes. The requirement that all movement to SpecCP proceed through SpecTP thus interacts with the order of Merge and Agree to produce a prohibition on ergative extraction.

Special morphology appearing in \bar{A} -movement of ergatives is again connected to an alternative, “marked” means of object case-assignment. Assmann et al. analyze agent focus clauses (e.g. [98]) as featuring an additional case-assigning feature, attached to V. As on the Coon et al. approach, this means that contexts of ergative extraction feature more syntactic complexity than those with object extraction. This helps explain the increased morphological complexity of ergative extraction verbs.

A prediction of this approach concerns environments in which both subject and object are \bar{A} extracted. In this case, both DPs move to SpecTP, and the object DP may receive case from T appropriately. Both DPs subsequently raise to SpecCP. No special mechanism of case assignment at the VP level is needed, and thus no special morphology of ergative extraction is expected. This prediction is confirmed by Kaqchikel double questions like (105a) and combined question/focus sentences like (105b).

- (105) a. *atux achike n- \emptyset -u-löq'* [Kaqchikel]
 what who INCOMPL-3SG.ABS-3SG.ERG-buy
 ‘Who buys what?’
 b. *achike ja ri jun sik'iwuj n- \emptyset -u-löq'*
 who FOC DET INDF book INCOMPL-3SG.ABS-3SG.ERG-buy
 ‘Who buys a BOOK?’
 (Assmann et al. 2012)

What is notable about these examples is that transitive subject DPs are extracted with no special verbal morphology.

In tying ergative extraction asymmetries to object case, the Assmann et al. view inherits the challenge of languages like West Greenlandic (as do all views reviewed here, with the exception of Aldridge’s). Given that objects do not clearly receive case from T in such languages, it remains to be seen what precise obstacle is encountered in completing a derivation like (104). It is in addition an open question how the view is properly expanded to deal with languages that do not show syntactic ergativity in the first place, like Warlpiri. If ergativity in morphological case uniformly arises when Merge precedes Agree at the ν P level, as Müller (2009) proposes, and if the order of operations at TP always mirrors the order at ν P, merely morphologically ergative languages are a surprising exception. Finally, like all of the other approaches reviewed in this section, the Assmann et al. proposal leaves it unclear why indirect object DPs and adjunct DPs should be extractable with ordinary verbal morphology. Movement of an indirect object DP through SpecTP is expected to bleed case assignment to the object in a way precisely parallel to what happens with subjects.

5. Future directions in ergativity studies

It should be clear from the foregoing that ergativity studies offer a great number of leads on the shape of the human language faculty as it relates to syntax and to morphology. The various theoretical approaches surveyed here present different ways of contextualizing the result of ergativity studies in the theory of grammar. Ergativity may be valuable as a source of insight into post-syntactic morphological computation; into the mapping between verbal argument structure and syntactic categories; into the nature of case features in syntax and their distribution across clausal heads; into the shape of \bar{A} dependencies and the distribution of escape hatches in syntax. Most likely ergativity as a broad phenomenon will bear on more than one of these components, given both the diversity of ergative languages and their systematicity in discrete domains.

Future work on ergativity is urgently needed in several areas. A high priority should be accorded to the proper treatment of the proposed ergative universals and especially their apparent counterexamples. Further work is also required to elucidate crucial questions on which turn promising ideas in the treatment of case and its relatives. Of particular concern is the ergative-in-situ hypothesis and its associated challenges related to raising-to-ergative and the absence of ergative on certain in-situ subjects. Finally, many of the analyses we have seen suggest interesting future work to be done on questions of covertness in ergative languages. If languages may not have the underlying syntax of ergativity without showing it overtly, why should this be? What sort of cues must be overt in the input in order for ergative languages to be learned?

6. Abbreviations

AF	agent focus
ASP	aspect
CL	clitic
EVID	evidential
IM	immediacy clitic (Djapu)
INCOMPL	incompletive
INTENS	intensive
INV	involuntary
KIN.PROP	kinship propriative (Djapu)
MUT	mutation
NSUF	noun suffix (Roviana; see Corston 1996)
OBJC	complementizer indicating control by matrix object (Warlpiri)
OBV.C	obviative complementizer (Warlpiri)
P.ASP	P aspect (Nez Perce; see Deal 2010a: ch 2)
PAUC	paucal

PM	personal marker
PREP	preposition
PRT	second position particle (Shipibo; see Baker 2012)
REALIS	realis mood
REC.PST	recent past
REM.PST	remote past
REP	repeated action
RN	relational noun
STAT	stative
SUBJC	complementizer indicating control by matrix subject (Warlpiri)
TEMP.C	temporal complementizer
UNM	unmarked inflection (Djapu)
UV	undergoer voice (Bajau; see Miller 2007)

Acknowledgments

Thanks to Artemis Alexiadou, Jessica Coon and Jason Merchant for helpful comments.

7. References (selected)

- Aissen, Judith 2010 On the syntax of agent focus in K'ichee'. In: *Proceedings of FAMLi I*. MITWPL.
- Aldai, Gontzal 2009 Is Basque morphologically ergative? Western Basque versus eastern Basque. *Studies in Language* 33:783–831.
- Aldridge, Edith 2004 Ergativity and word order in Austronesian languages. Doctoral Dissertation, Cornell.
- Aldridge, Edith 2008 Minimalist analysis of ergativity. *Sophia Linguistica* 55:12–142.
- Aldridge, Edith 2012 Antipassive and ergativity in Tagalog. *Lingua* 122:192–203.
- Alexiadou, Artemis 2001 *Functional structure in nominals: nominalization and ergativity*. John Benjamins.
- Alexiadou, Artemis, and Elena Anagnostopoulou 2006 From hierarchies to features: person splits and direct-inverse alternations. In: Cedric Boeckx (ed.), *Agreement systems*. John Benjamins.
- Anderson, Stephen 1977 On the mechanisms by which languages become ergative. In: Charles Li (ed.), *Mechanisms of syntactic change*. University of Texas Press.

- Anderson, Stephen R., Lea Brown, Alice Gaby, and Jacqueline Lecarme 2006
Life on the edge: there's morphology there after all! *Lingue e Linguaggio* 5:1–16.
- Artiagoitia, Xabier 2001 Seemingly ergative and ergatively seeming. In: J Herschensohn et al (ed.), *Features and interfaces in Romance*. John Benjamins.
- Assmann, Anke, Doreen Georgi, Fabian Heck, Gereon Müller, and Philipp Weisser 2012 Ergatives move too early. Ms, University of Leipzig.
- Baker, Mark, and Nadezhda Vinokurova 2010 Two modalities of case assignment in Sakha. *Natural Language and Linguistic Theory* 28:593–642.
- Baker, Mark C. 2012 On dependent ergative case (in Shipibo) and its derivation by phase. Ms, Rutgers.
- Bickel, Balthasar, and Yogendra Yāda 2000 A fresh look at grammatical relations in Indo-Aryan. *Lingua* 110:343–373.
- Bittner, Maria 1994 *Case, scope and binding*. Dordrecht: Kluwer.
- Bittner, Maria, and Ken Hale 1996a Ergativity: Toward a theory of a heterogeneous class. *Linguistic Inquiry* 27:531–604.
- Bittner, Maria, and Ken Hale 1996b The structural determination of case and agreement. *Linguistic Inquiry* 27:1–68.
- Blake, Barry J. 1987 *Australian aboriginal grammar*. London: Croom Helm.
- Bobaljik, Jonathan, and Philip Branigan 2006 Eccentric agreement and multiple case-checking. In: *Ergativity: emerging issues*.
- Bobaljik, Jonathan David 2008 Where's Phi? Agreement as a postsyntactic operation. In: Daniel Harbour, David Adger, and Susana Béjar (eds.), *Phi theory*, 295–328. Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Bok-Bennema, Reineke 1991 *Case and agreement in Inuit*. Foris.
- Bruening, Benjamin 2007 On the diagnostics of structural case and the nature of ergative case: a reply to Woolford 2006. University of Delaware.
- Butt, Miriam 2006 *Theories of case*. Cambridge University Press.
- Butt, Miriam, and Tracy Holloway King 2004 The status of case. In: Veneeta Dayal and Anoop Mahajan (eds.), *Clause structure in South Asian languages*. Kluwer.
- Campana, Mark 1992 A movement theory of ergativity. Doctoral Dissertation, McGill University.

- Chomsky, Noam 1986 *Barriers*. Cambridge, Mass: MIT Press.
- Chomsky, Noam 2001 Derivation by phase. In: Michael Kenstowicz (ed.), *Ken Hale: A Life in Language*, 1–52. Cambridge, Mass: MIT Press.
- Chung, Sandra 1982 Unbounded dependencies in Chamorro grammar. *Linguistic Inquiry* 13:39–77.
- Chung, Sandra 1998 *The design of agreement: evidence from Chamorro*. University of Chicago Press.
- Collins, Chris, and Höskuldur Thraínsson 1996 VP-internal structure and object shift in Icelandic. *Linguistic Inquiry* 27:391–444.
- Comrie, Bernard 1978 Ergativity. In: W. P. Lehman (ed.), *Syntactic typology: studies in the phenomenology of language*, 329–394. University of Texas Press.
- Comrie, Bernard 1979 Degrees of ergativity: some Chukchee evidence. In: Frans Plank (ed.), *Ergativity*. Academic Press.
- Comrie, Bernard 2008 Alignment of case marking of full noun phrases. In: David Gil and Bernard Comrie (eds.), *The World Atlas of Linguistic Structures*.
- Coon, Jessica 2010a Complementation in Chol (Mayan): a theory of split ergativity. Doctoral Dissertation, MIT.
- Coon, Jessica 2010b Rethinking split ergativity in Chol. *International Journal of American Linguistics* 76:207–253.
- Coon, Jessica 2012 Split ergativity and transitivity in Chol. *Lingua* 122:241–256.
- Coon, Jessica, Pedro Mateo Pedro, and Omer Preminger 2012 The role of Case in A-bar extraction asymmetries: evidence from Mayan. Ms., Harvard.
- Coon, Jessica, and Omer Preminger 2012 Toward a unified account of person splits. In: *Proceedings of WCCFL 29*.
- Corston, S H 1996 *Ergativity in Roviana, Solomon Islands*. Pacific Linguistics Series B: Monographs.
- Craig, Colette 1977 *The structure of Jacalteco*. University of Texas Press.
- Dayley, Jon P 1981 Voice and ergativity in Mayan languages. *Journal of Mayan Linguistics* 2:3–82.
- Deal, Amy Rose 2010a Ergative case and the transitive subject: a view from Nez Perce. *Natural Language and Linguistic Theory* 28:73–120.

- Deal, Amy Rose 2010b Topics in the Nez Perce verb. Doctoral Dissertation, University of Massachusetts Amherst.
- Deal, Amy Rose, and M.C. O'Connor 2011 The perspectival basis of fluid-S case-marking in Northern Pomo. In: Suzi Lima (ed.), *Proceedings of SULA 5*, 173–188. GLSA.
- Dixon, R. M. W. 1972 *The Dyirbal Language of North Queensland*. Cambridge University Press.
- Dixon, R.M.W. 1977 *A Grammar of Yidin*. Cambridge University Press.
- Dixon, R.M.W. 1979 Ergativity. *Language* 55:59–138.
- Dixon, R.M.W. 1994 *Ergativity*. Number 69 in Cambridge Studies in Linguistics. Cambridge University Press.
- Donohue, Mark, and Lea Brown 1999 Ergativity: some additions from Indonesia. *Australian Journal of Linguistics* 19:57–76.
- Donohue, Mark, and Søren Wichmann, (eds.) 2008 *The typology of semantic alignment*. Oxford University Press.
- Doron, Edit, and G Khan 2012 The typology of morphological ergativity in Neo-Aramaic. *Lingua* 122:225–240.
- England, Nora 1983 *A grammar of Mam, a Mayan language*. University of Texas Press.
- Gerdts, Donna 1988 *Object and absolutive in Halkomelem Salish*. Garland.
- Gildea, Spike, and Flávia de Castro Alves 2010 Nominative absolutive: counter-universal split ergativity in Jê and Cariban. In: Spike Gildea and Francesc Queixalos (eds.), *Ergativity in Amazonia*.
- Guiradello-Damian, Raquel 2010 Ergativity in Trumai. In: Spike Gildea and Francesc Queixalos (eds.), *Ergativity in Amazonia*. John Benjamins Publishing Company.
- Hale, Ken 1983 Warlpiri and the grammar of non-configurational languages. *Natural Language and Linguistic Theory* 1:5–48.
- Hale, Kenneth 1982 Some essential features of Warlpiri main clauses. In: S. Swartz (ed.), *Work papers of SIL-AAB, Papers in Warlpiri Grammar in memory of Lothar Jagst*, Series A, Volume 6, 217–315. Darwin: Summer Institute of Linguistics.
- Harris, Alice C 1981 *Georgian syntax*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

- Harris, Alice C 1982 Georgian and the unaccusative hypothesis. *Language* 58:290–306.
- Harris, Alice C 2010 Origins of differential unaccusative/unergative case marking: implications for innateness. In: Donna B. Gerdts, John Moore, and Maria Polinsky (eds.), *Hypothesis A/Hypothesis B: linguistic explorations in honor of David M. Permuter*. MIT Press.
- Johns, Alana 1992 Deriving ergativity. *Linguistic Inquiry* 23:57–88.
- Johns, Alana 2000 Ergativity: a perspective on recent work. In: Lisa L.-S. Cheng and Rint Sybesma (eds.), *The first Glot International state-of-the-article book*, 47–73. New York: Mouton de Gruyter.
- Johns, Alana, Diane Massam, and Juvenal Ndayiragije, (eds.) 2006 *Ergativity: emerging issues*. Springer.
- Keenan, Edward L., and Bernard Comrie 1977 Noun phrase accessibility and universal grammar. *Linguistic Inquiry* 8:63–99.
- König, Christa 2008 *Case in Africa*. Oxford University Press.
- Kratzer, Angelika 1996 Severing the external argument from its verb. In: Johan Rooryck and Laurie Zaring (eds.), *Phrase structure and the lexicon*, 109–137. Dordrecht, The Netherlands: Kluwer Academic Publishers.
- Kruspe, Nicole 2004 *A Grammar of Semelai*. Cambridge University Press.
- Laka, Itziar 2006 Deriving split ergativity in the progressive: the case of Basque. In: Alana Johns, Diane Massam, and Juvenal Ndayiragije (eds.), *Ergativity: emerging issues*.
- Larsen, Thomas, and William Norman 1979 Correlates of ergativity in Mayan grammar. In: Frans Plank (ed.), *Ergativity: Towards a Theory of Grammatical Relations*. Academic Press.
- Legate, Julie Anne 2002 Warlpiri: theoretical implications. Doctoral Dissertation, MIT.
- Legate, Julie Anne 2006 Split absolutive. In: Alana Johns, Diane Massam, and Juvenal Ndayiragije (eds.), *Ergativity: emerging issues*, 143–172.
- Legate, Julie Anne 2008 Morphological and abstract case. *Linguistic Inquiry* 39:55–101.
- Legate, Julie Anne 2012 Types of ergativity. *Lingua* 122:181–191.

- Levin, Theodore, and Omer Preminger 2013 Case in Sakha: Are two modalities really necessary? MS, MIT and Syracuse University.
- Mahajan, Anoop 1994 The ergativity parameter: *have-be* alternation. In: Mercè González (ed.), *Proceedings of NELS 24*, 317–331.
- Mahajan, Anoop 1997 Rightward scrambling. In: Dorothee Beerman, David LeBlanc, and Henk van Riemsdijk (eds.), *Rightward movement*, 185–213. Amsterdam: John Benjamins Publishing Company.
- Mahajan, Anoop 2012 Ergatives, antipassives and the overt light v in Hindi. *Lingua* 122:204–214.
- Manning, Christopher 1994 Ergativity: argument structure and grammatical relations. Doctoral Dissertation, Stanford.
- Marantz, Alec 1991 Case and licensing. In: Germán Westphal, Benjamin Ao, and Hee-Rahk Chae (eds.), *Eastern States Conference on Linguistics*, 234–253. Cornell University, Ithaca, NY: Cornell Linguistics Club.
- Markman, Vita, and Pavel Grashchenkov 2012 On the adpositional nature of ergative subjects. *Lingua* 122:257–266.
- Merchant, Jason 2006 Polyvalent case, geometric hierarchies and split ergativity. In: *Proceedings of the 42nd Annual Meeting of the Chicago Linguistics Society*. CLS.
- Merlan, F 1985 Split intransitivity: functional oppositions in intransitive inflection. In: Johanna Nichols and Anthony C. Woodbury (eds.), *Grammar inside and outside the clause*. Cambridge University Press.
- Miller, Cynthia L, and Leoma G Gilley 2001 Evidence for ergativity in Shilluk. *Journal of African languages and linguistics* 22:33–68.
- Miller, Mark T 2007 A grammar of West Coast Bajau. Doctoral Dissertation, University of Texas at Austin.
- Mithun, Marianne 1991 Active/agentive case marking and its motivations. *Language* 67:510–546.
- Mithun, Marianne 2008 The extension of dependency beyond the sentence. *Language* 84:69–119.
- Monrós, Eva 2007 A neglected foundation for the distinction between inherent and structural case: ergative as an inherent case. *Snippets* 16.

- Montag, Susan 1981 *Diccionario Cashinahua*. Number 9 in Serie Lingüística peruana. Instituto Lingüístico de Verano.
- Moravcsik, Edith A 1974 Object-verb agreement. *Working Papers on Language Universals* 15.
- Moravcsik, Edith A 1978 On the distribution of ergative and accusative patterns. *Lingua* 45:233–279.
- Mulder, Jean Gail 1994 *Ergativity in Coast Tsimshian (Sm'algyax)*. University of California Press.
- Müller, Gereon 2009 Ergativity, accusativity, and the order of Merge and Agree. In: Kleanthes K. Grohmann (ed.), *Explorations of phase theory: features and arguments*, 269–308. Mouton de Gruyter.
- Nash, David 1980 Topics in Warlpiri grammar. Doctoral Dissertation, MIT.
- Nash, Léa 1996 The internal ergative subject hypothesis. In: Kiyomi Kusumoto (ed.), *Proceedings of North East Linguistic Society*, 195–210. Amherst: Graduate Linguistic Student Association.
- O'Connor, M.C. 1992 *Topics in Northern Pomo Grammar*. Outstanding dissertations in linguistics. Garland.
- Otsuka, Yuko 2006 Syntactic ergativity in Tongan: resumptive pronouns revisited. In: Alana Johns, Diane Massam, and Juvenal Ndayiragije (eds.), *Ergativity: emerging issues*. Springer.
- Patel, Pritty 2007 Split ergativity and the nature of agreement. Master's thesis, University College London.
- Polinsky, Maria, and Eric Potsdam 2001 Long-distance agreement and topic in Tsez. *Natural Language and Linguistic Theory* 19:583–646.
- Preminger, Omer 2012 The absence of an implicit object in unergatives: new and old evidence from Basque. *Lingua* 122:278–288.
- Reilly, Ehren 2007 Morphological and phonological sources of split ergative agreement. *Lingua* 117:1566–1590.
- Rezac, Milan, Pablo Albizu, and Ricardo Etxepare 2010 The structural ergative of Basque and the theory of Case. Ms, CNRS.
- Rude, Noel 1997 On the history of nominal case in Sahaptian. *International Journal of American Linguistics* 63:113–143.

- Salanova, Andrés Pablo 2007 Nominalizations and aspect. Doctoral Dissertation, MIT.
- Sapir, Edward 1917 Review of Het passieve karakter van het verbum transitivum of van het verbum actionis in talen van Noord-Amerika [The passive character of the transitive verb or of the active verb in languages of North America] by C. C. Uhlenbeck. *International Journal of American Linguistics* 1:82–86.
- Seiter, William 1980 *Studies in Niuean syntax*. New York: Garland Publishing.
- Silverstein, Michael 1976 Hierarchy of features and ergativity. In: RMW Dixon (ed.), *Grammatical categories in Australian languages*. Canberra: Australian Institute of Aboriginal Studies. [Reprinted 1986 in P. Muysken and H. van Riemsdijk (eds.), *Features and Projections*, Dordrecht: Foris].
- Simpson, Jane 1991 *Walpiri morpho-syntax: a lexicalist approach*. Studies in Natural Language and Linguistic Theory. Kluwer.
- Stepanov, Arthur 2004 Ergativity, case and the minimal link condition. In: *Minimality Effects in Syntax*. Mouton de Gruyter.
- Stiebels, Barbara 2006 Agent focus in Mayan languages. *Natural Language and Linguistic Theory* 24:501–570.
- Trask, Larry 1979 On the origins of ergativity. In: Winfred Lehmann (ed.), *Syntactic Typology: Studies in the Phenomenology of Language*.
- Trick, Douglas 2006 Ergative control of syntactic processes in Sama Southern. In: *10th International Conference on Austronesian Linguistics*. URL <http://www.sil.org/asia/philippines/ical/papers.html>.
- Ura, Hiroyuki 2001 Case. In: Mark Baltin and Chris Collins (eds.), *The handbook of contemporary syntactic theory*. Blackwell Publishers.
- Ura, Hiroyuki 2006 A parametric syntax of aspectually conditioned split ergativity. In: Alana Johns, Diane Massam, and Juvenal Ndayiragije (eds.), *Ergativity: emerging issues*.
- Valenzuela, Pilar M 2010 Ergativity in Shipibo-Konibo, a Panoan language of the Ucayali. In: Spike Gildea and Francesc Queixalos (eds.), *Ergativity in Amazonia*, 65–96. John Benjamins.
- Wiltschko, Martina 2006 On “ergativity” in Halkomelem Salish (and how to split and derive it). In: A. Johns, D. Massam, and J. Ndayiragije (eds.), *Ergativity*. Springer.

- Woolford, Ellen 1997 Four-way case systems: Ergative, nominative, objective and accusative. *Natural Language and Linguistic Theory* 15:181–227.
- Woolford, Ellen 2006 Lexical case, inherent case, and argument structure. *Linguistic Inquiry* 37:111–130.
- Yip, Moira, Joan Maling, and Ray Jackendoff 1987 Case in tiers. *Language* 63:217–250.

Amy Rose Deal, Santa Cruz, CA (USA)