

- ▣ how many cracks can two systems sustain and still remain each other's mirror type? (DeLancey 2005, Verbeke and Willems 2012)

2. A taste of the problem

- ▣ Paumarí looks ergative

(8) *Dono-a bi-ko'diraha-'a-ha ada isai hoariha*
 Dono-ERG 3SG.TR-pinch-ASP-THEME:MASC DEM:MASC child other
 'Dono pinched the other boy.' (Paumarí, Chapman and Derbyshire 1991:164)

(9) *soko-a-ki hida mamai*
 wash-DETRANS-NONTHEME DEM:FEM mother
 'Mother is washing.' (Paumarí, Chapman and Derbyshire 1991:163)

- ▣ but in marked word orders, it does not

(10) *bano pa'isi o-sa'a-ra anani-hi*
 piranha small 1SG-finger-OBJ bite-THEME
 'A small piranha bit my finger.' (Paumarí, Chapman and Derbyshire 1991:197)

(11) *Morosi va-a-kaira-ha-'a-ha*
 Morosi 3PL-verb-guava-PRT-ASP-THEME
 'Morosi c.s. went to get guava.' (Paumarí, Chapman and Derbyshire 1991:197)

- ▣ Rule: case marked only in preverbal slot > tripartite system

- ▣ Agreement: i) only with subjects (*bi-* in (8))
 ii) special marker *voor* 3SG in transitive clauses, but elsewhere no transitivity sensitivity (e.g. 3PL *va-* in (11) and (12))

(12) *ija'ari va-ipohi-ki-a va-ka-abada-bada-risaha-khama-ha*
 people 3PL-many-DESCR-ERG 3PL-TRANS.DISTR-touch-REDUP-ITER-DIST-THEME
 'Each of the many people was in turn touching him.'
 (Paumarí, Chapman and Derbyshire 1991:281)

- ▣ Agreement is accusative (A/S : O), with some transitivity sensitivity (A ≠ S)
- ▣ Grammatical relation vs. the realization of that relation

3. A descriptive framework

- ▣ Questions to ask i) does a grammatical relation apply to all of { A, S, O } ?
 ii) is the relation realized identically in those of { A, S, O } to which it applies ?

- ▣ Ad i) > complete / incomplete / neutral

3.1 Complete types

- (13) a. A = S = O **identical**
 b. A = S ≠ O **accusative**
 c. A ≠ S = O **ergative**
 d. A = O ≠ S **intransitive**
 e. A ≠ S ≠ O **tripartite**

- ☐ The names of the types (13b-d) are derived from the case that would normally mark the single element.

3.2 Incomplete types

- (14) a. only A/S **anti-accusative > subjective**
 b. only S/O **anti-ergative > absolutive**
 c. only A/O **anti-intransitive > transitive**
 d. only O **narrow accusative > objective**
 e. only A **narrow ergative (> syntactic ergative?)**
 f. only S **narrow intransitive**
- (15) *subjective*
 a. A = S **subjective**
 b. A ≠ S **transitive/intransitive subjective**
- (16) *absolutive*
 a. S = O **absolutive**
 b. S ≠ O **intransitive/transitive absolutive**
- (17) *transitive*
 a. A = O **transitive**
 b. A ≠ O **subjective/objective transitive**

4. Some applications

LANGUAGE	ISO 639-3 CODE	CASE		AGREEMENT
		NP	pronoun	
Lak	LAK	ergative	neutral	ergative
Yup'ik, C	YPK	ergative	neutral	ergative
Suena	SUE	ergative	neutral	accusative
Tsimshian, Coast	TSI	ergative	neutral	split
Hunzib	HZB	ergative	neutral	accusative
Greenlandic, W	GRW	ergative	neutral	accusative
Wambaya	WAM	ergative	accusative	split
Pitjantjatjara	PIT	ergative	accusative	accusative
Yidiny	YID	ergative	accusative	neutral
Paumarí	PAU	ergative	accusative	split
Ngiyambaa	NGI	ergative	accusative	split
Marathi	MHI	tripartite	accusative	split
Georgian	GEO	active	neutral	accusative
Chamorro	CHA	neutral	ergative	ergative

Table 1: split ergativity data WALS (Comrie 2013a,b; Siewierska 2013)

4.1 Paumarí

(18) *Paumarí, case (noun phrase, preverbal position)*

A	-a
S	-∅
O	-ra

- ▣ **tripartite** (in preverbal position)
neutral (elsewhere)
- ▣ Pronouns: only O case-marked (always preverbal) > **objective**
- ▣ Agreement: **subjective** or (3SG subject) **transitive subjective**

On balance, Paumarí is much less ergative than it might seem at first sight; no evidence for an ergative *system*.

4.2 Coast Tsimshian

(19) *Predicate connectives (noun phrases and free pronouns) cf. (2)*

A	-da
S	-a
O	-a

- ▣ is **ergative**
- ▣ refinements: i) past tense -da > -a = **identical**
ii) with names A/S = -as vs. O = -at, **accusative**
except in the present/imperfective A -as > -dit = **tripartite**

▣ bound pronouns (clitics) are taken from one of three series, and the choice shows ergativity

- (20) a. ada wil **m** way=**u**
and then 2SG.SUBJ find=1SG.OBJ
'Then you found me.' (Coast Tsimshian, Mulder 1994:52 from Boas 1911:384)
- b. la wila diduuls=**u**
IMPERF be alive=1SG.OBJ
'I am still alive.' (Coast Tsimshian, Mulder 1994:51)

▣ but there are complications in the indicative mood, having to do with animacy

- (21) a. **n** siipn=**sm** (Coast Tsimshian, Mulder 1994:57)
1SG.SUBJ love=2PL.OBJ
'I love you (pl.).'
- b. dm k'yeexg=**a'nu** (Coast Tsimshian, Mulder 1994:57)
FUT run.away=1SG.DEFOBJ
'I am going to run away.'
(tripartite)

(22) *noun phrase marking in Coast Tsimshian*

CASE		
TENSE	NP, free pronoun	name
<i>past</i>	identical	accusative
<i>else</i>	ergative	
<i>imperfect/present</i>		

CLITIC SERIES		
RANKING	<i>indicative</i>	<i>subjunctive</i>
O > A	ergative	ergative
A = O	tripartite	
A > O ₃	intransitive	
A > O _{1,2}	tripartite	

▣ Number agreement: pluractionality (only S/O) = **absolutive** (universal)

- (23) a. ta miig-a magooxs (Coast Tsimshian, Mulder 1994:74)
 about ripe-ABS salmonberry
 ‘the salmonberries are about ripe’
 b. ta **mik**-miig-a magooxs di-t maayi
 about RED-ripe-ABS salmonberry CONJ-3 huckleberry
 ‘the salmonberries and huckleberries are about ripe’

▣ Person agreement: only transitive 3SG subject = **narrow ergative**

- (24) a. yagwa-t dzap-dit Rita waas (Coast Tsimshian, Mulder 1994:68)
 PRES-3SG.SUBJ make-ERG Rita blanket
 ‘Rita is making a blanket.’
 b. yagwa yawxg-as Ami
 PRES eat-NOM Ami
 ‘Ami is eating.’

▣ But not in the past > **neutral**

- (25) **nah** dzab-as Dzon waap das Helen
 PAST make-NOM John house PREP Helen
 ‘John made a house for Helen.’ (Coast Tsimshian, Mulder 1994:69)

▣ And also with names (where case-marking is not ergative)

- (26) yagwa-t sigwaan Meli anaay
 PRES-3SG.SUBJ bake Mary bread
 ‘Mary is baking some bread.’ (Coast Tsimshian, Mulder 1994:88)

4.3 Wambaya

- ▣ special case for transitive subject, but is it *complete* ? (S/O = zero or absent)

(27) darrangu-**ni** ngiyi-ng-a irrijabi
 stick:IV-LOC 3SG.NONMASC.SU-1OB-PAST scratch
 'The stick scratched me.'

- ▣ gender markers are organized in absolutive and nonabsolutive series > **ergative**

(28) a. yanga-**ji**-∅ b. yanga-**di**-**ni** (Wambaya, Nordlinger 1993:66)
 meat-I.ABS-ABS meat-I.NONABS-LOC

(29) Wambaya pronouns: **identical** (SG) and **accusative** (DU/PL)

NUMBER	SUBJECT	OBJECT	OTHER
SG	A		B
NONSG	A	B	

- ▣ Agreement: i) marked on auxiliary (cf. (27))
 ii) subject agreement with all persons, object agreement only with 1/2 (third person object agreement not zero but absent, cf. (31))
 iii) transitivity sensitivity only with 3SG (3PL A = S)

(30) Wambaya agreement (singular only) > **accusative, (transitive) subjective**

	TR.SUBJECT	INTR.SUBJECT	OBJECT
1SG	<i>ngi-</i>		<i>-ng-</i>
2SG	<i>nyi-</i>		<i>-ny-</i>
3SG.MASC	<i>gini-</i>	<i>gi-</i>	
3SG.NONMASC	<i>ngiyi-</i>		

(31) Wambaya auxiliaries: third person object patterns with intransitive (Nordlinger)

SUBJECT	OBJECT	PAST	PRESENT	FUTURE
<i>any</i>	1/2	-a		-u
SG	3	-a	-∅	-u
	<i>none</i>	-a	-∅	-u
NONSG	3	-a	-∅	
	<i>none</i>	-a	-∅	

- ▣ ergative case and subjective agreement go together

(32) Narunguji-**ni** **irri**-ng-a-n ngurra banymanyimi
 car_{IV}:NONABS-LOC 3PL.SU-1OB-NONFEM-PROG 1PLINC.ACC pass.by:REDUP
 'Cars were passing us (all night).' (Wambaya, Nordlinger 1993:73)

- (33) murgun-balarna- \emptyset **irri-n** mirra ngarli-ni
 three-PL.II-NOM 3PL.SU-PROG sit talk-LOC
 ‘The three women are sitting talking.’ (Wambaya, Nordlinger 1993:77)

▣ case-agreement pattern in Wambaya.

CONTROLLER		CASE	AGREEMENT
SG	pronoun	first/second person	identical
		third person	n/a
	full noun phrase		ergative
DU	pronoun	first/second person	accusative
		third person	accusative
	full noun phrase		ergative
PL	pronoun	first/second person	accusative
		third person	accusative
	full noun phrase		ergative

Table 2, Case-agreement patterns in Wambaya

▣ agreement in (27) is not ergative, at most tripartite ($A \neq S \neq O$) cf.

- (34) bardbi **ngi**- \emptyset (Wambaya, Nordlinger 1993:143)
 run 1SG.SU-AUX:PRES
 ‘I run.’

4.4 Marathi

▣ traditional: **ergative** in the past (‘perfect’), elsewhere **accusative**

- (35) a. mulī gānī mhaṅtāt (Marathi, Pandharipande 1997:284)
 girl:PL song:3PL.N sing:PRES.3PL.F
 ‘The girls sing songs.’
 b. mulī-**ne** gānī mhaṭlī
 girl:PL-ERG song:3PL.N sing:PAST.3PL.N
 ‘The girls sang songs.’

▣ but there is object case-marking, too > **tripartite**

- (36) a. mī bāī pāhīlī (Marathi, Pandharipande 1997:446)
 1SG:NOM woman_F see:PAST.3SG.F
 ‘I saw a woman.’
 b. mī bāī-**lā** pāhīla (Marathi, Pandharipande 1997:135)
 1SG:NOM woman_F-ACC see:PAST.3SG.N
 ‘I saw a woman.’

▣ and only third person pronouns take **-ne** (cf. (36)), so 1/2 = **accusative**

- (37) tyā-ne gānī mhaṭlī
 3SG.M-ERG song:3PL.N sing:PAST.3PL.N
 ‘He sang songs.’

- ▣ In the optative/obligative, all subjects (A/S) take *-ne*
- (38) a. Rām-ne patra lihīlī pāhid3e-t
 Ram-ERG letter:3PL.N write:PAST.3PL.N should-PL
 ‘Ram should write letters.’ (Marathi, Pandharipande 1997:50)
- b. Rām-ne gharī gela-∅ pāhid3e-∅
 Ram-ERG home go:PAST.3SG.N should-SG
 ‘Ram should go home.’

▣ Rule: oblique marked noun does not control agreement

- (39) *Agreement hierarchy* > essentially **accusative**
 subject > object > default

Dialect variation: subject agreement with 2SG in addition to object agreement

- (40) tū kām kela-s (Marathi, Bloch 1970:262)
 2SG.NOM work_N do:PAST.3SG.N-2SG
 ‘You did the work.’

- (41) mhai sītā-ne dekh-ī h-ū (Marwari, Magier 1983:250)
 1SG.MASC Sita-ACC see-PERF.FEM.SG be-PRES.1SG
 ‘I have seen Sita.’

4.5 Recapitulation

LANGUAGE	ISO 639-3 CODE	CASE		AGREEMENT
		NP	pronoun	
Tsimshian, Coast	TSI	ergative, identical, accusative, tripartite	ergative, tripartite, intransitive	narrow ergative, neutral
Wambaya	WAM	ergative	accusative, identical	accusative, subjective, transitive subjective
Paumarí	PAU	tripartite	objective	subjective, transitive subjective
Marathi	MHI	accusative, ergative, tripartite	accusative	accusative

Table 3 (fragment of Table 1 revised)

5. Is there a system?

- (42) a. *complete*
identical
accusative
ergative
intransitive
tripartite
- b. *incomplete*
subjective
 (transitive/intransitive)
absolute
 (intransitive/transitive)
transitive
 (subjective/objective)
objective
narrow ergative
narrow intransitive
neutral

LANGUAGE	ISO 639-3 CODE	CASE		AGREEMENT
		NP	pronoun	
Tsimshian, Coast	TSI	ergative , <i>identical</i> , <i>accusative</i> , <i>tripartite</i>	ergative , <i>tripartite</i> , <i>intransitive</i>	narrow ergative , <i>neutral</i>
Wambaya	WAM	ergative	<i>accusative</i> , <i>identical</i>	<i>accusative</i> , <i>subjective</i> , <i>transitive subjective</i>
Paumarí	PAU	<i>tripartite</i>	<i>objective</i>	<i>subjective</i> , <i>transitive subjective</i>
Marathi	MHI	<i>accusative</i> , ergative , <i>tripartite</i>	<i>accusative</i>	<i>accusative</i>

Table 4 (Table 3 color coded)

- ▣ no clear ergative *system* here
 - > even Tsimshian agreement ('narrow ergative') could be just transitivity marking
- ▣ agreement pattern not determined by case pattern
 - > does not covary with the NP-pronoun case distinctions
 - > shows sensitivity to the GF 'subject'

6. Some consequences

1. A/S/O as primitives

The discourse in ergativity studies takes for granted that A/S/O are primitives, and that a language needs to distinguish A from O, while S is a 'free agent' that can be aligned with either.

Alternatively: the GF 'subject' (and by derivation 'object') is a primitive, and you get ergativity when you present the subject (of a transitive clause) in a particular way.

Leads to the question: why is transitivity relevant? (Possibly because it is a more structured event representation)

2. Definition of ergativity

Deal (2012) gives as one definition of ergativity: special behavior of the transitive subject. But this can be a subcase of subjectivity, too (e.g. Paumarí case).

- > A language can look ergative without being ergative.

This leads to the question whether there are any languages with a veritable ergative system.

- > Lots of good candidates.
- > Strongest candidates: syntactic ergative languages (Dyirbal, Mayan, Tagalog??)

For this we would have to find out to what extent claimed syntactic ergativity is ergativity (i.e. something happening to A/S/O, but in a special way to A, e.g. A'-movement in Q'anjob'al, Coon et al 2011) or narrow ergativity (happening only to A, e.g. relativization in Austronesian).

3. Definition of cases in terms of dependency

Tradition goes back to Jakobson (1935)

- > ACC signals: there is a higher GF
- NOM signals nothing

Marantz 1991 (also Blake 2001, Bobaljik 2008, Queixalós 2013): ERG is dependent case

- > nom/abs > acc/erg > obl

But ERG is not obviously dependent in the same way that ACC is (in Jakobsonian terms).

- > technical proposals enough (e.g. little v not assigning case to object but to subject)
- > but ERG is never \neq ACC, but is always oblique (LOC/INST/POSS)(Palancar 2009)

It rather looks like the ergative is a typical subject case, presenting the subject in a particular light, specifying a particular relation between the subject and the (rest of the) proposition.

4. Bobaljik (2008) on the case-agreement relation

NPs have to be made accessible by case in order to control agreement

- > agreement controller hierarchy = case hierarchy
NOM > ACC > OBL
ABS > ERG > OBL => DEF > DEP > OBL

- > predicts the absence of the **subjective** agreement pattern with ergative case (as found in Wambaya, but also outside the sample e.g. Warlpiri)

Alternative: agreement controlled via GF-hierarchy SUBJ > OBJ > OBL

- > predicts the absence of the **absolute** agreement pattern with accusative case (correctly, as far as I know)
- > does not predict the presence of the **narrow ergative** and **intransitive** agreement pattern (but these might occur for independent reasons, although I don't know any)

www.let.rug.nl/zwart • c.j.w.zwart@rug.nl

Faculty of Arts, University of Groningen, PO Box 716, NL9700 AS Groningen

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