The role of object marking in alignment shift

Pritha Chandra & Roberta D'Alessandro

Lectures on Iranian Linguistics

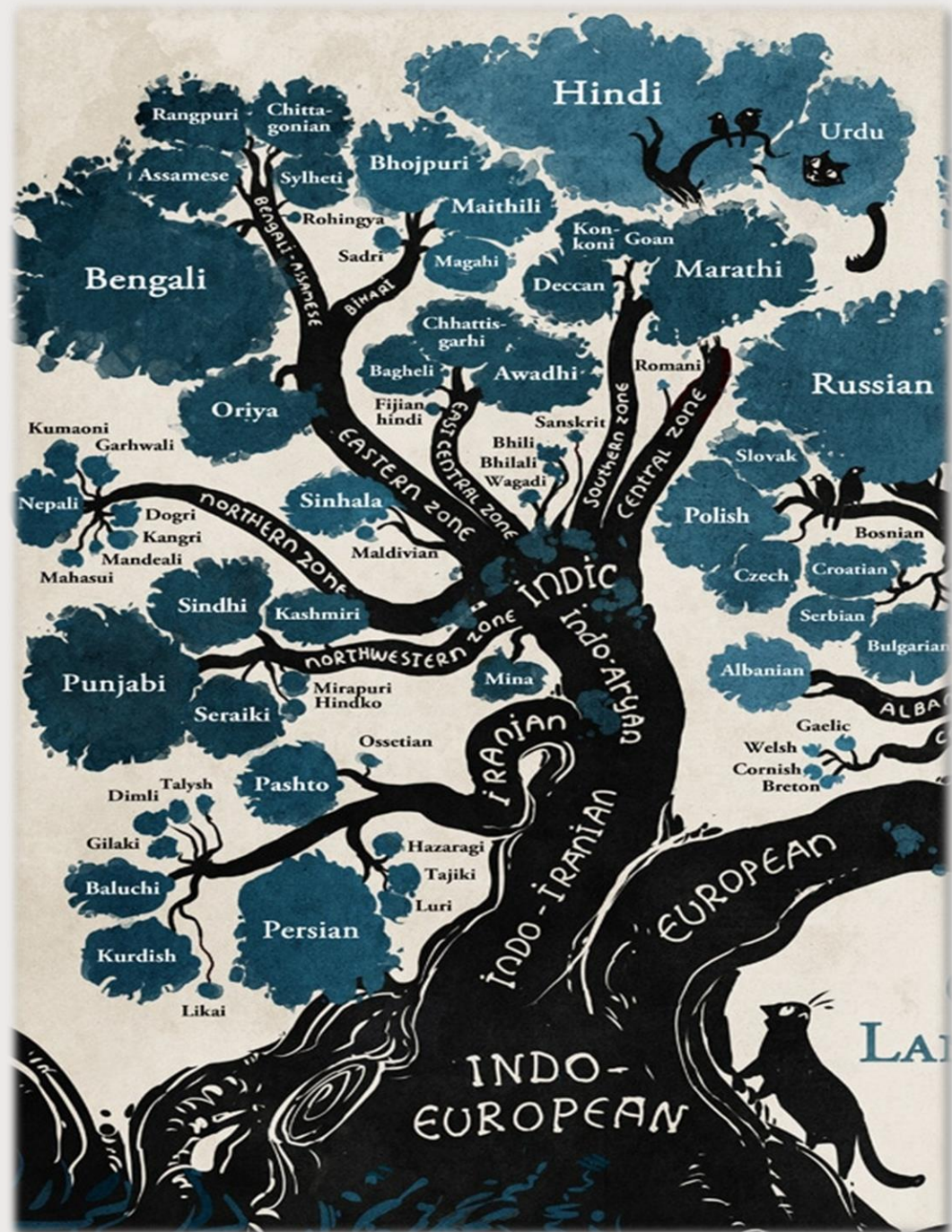*at Arizona*

19 April 2024

Indian Institute of Technology Delhi   Utrecht University
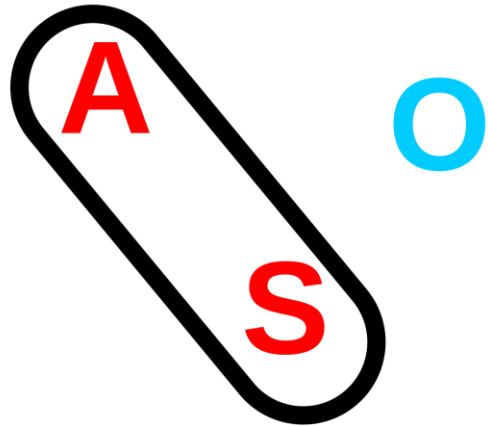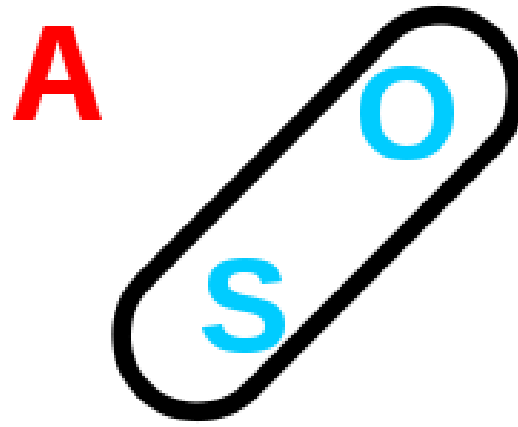

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Roadmap

- Ergativity
- Microvariation in WIA
  - Unstable ergative systems
  - Stable ergative systems
- Some notes on Iranian

Ergativity in short

Nominative-Accusative

Ergative-Absolutive

FOCUS
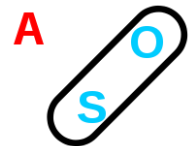
Phi-agreement

Case

Alignment

MICRO-COMPARATIVE ACCOUNT
Aus dem räumlichen Nebeneinander ein zeitliches Nacheinander

Starting from the end

- When V starts agreeing with DOM-marked O, and T starts emerging as a separate head, ergative case marking starts weakening

- Shift in ergative alignment > the language moves towards NOM/ACC (though the final NOM/ACC alignment is not reached yet)

Split ergativity

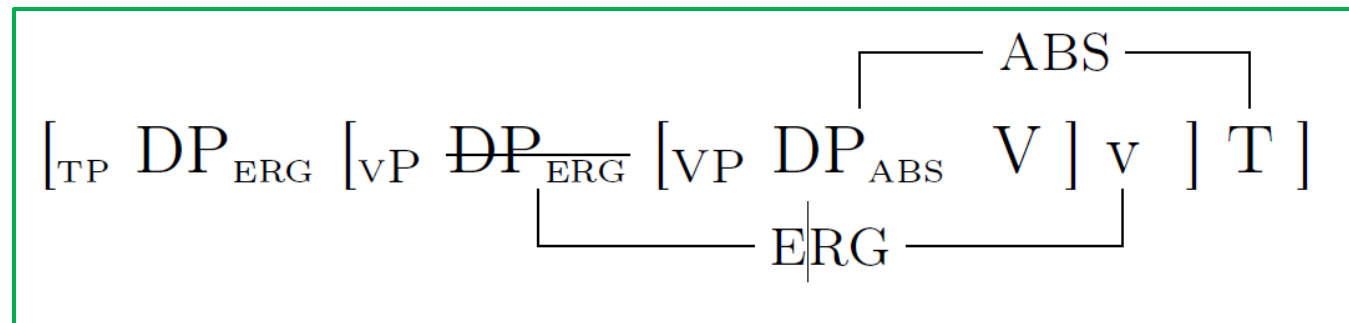- There are no pure ergative languages, with ergativity mainly confined to fixed domains in any given language:

  - Tense-aspect driven split (ergative marking only in the perfective, like in Hindi, or Georgian)

  - Person-driven split (ergative marking only on some pronouns, or on 3rd person, like in Halkomelem or Southern Balochi)

  - Topic/saliency-driven splits (ergative marking on focused DPs or topics like in Tibetan)

Hindi: aspect–based split

(1) a. *laRke-ne   roṭii   khaa-yii*

    boy-ERG   bread.F.ACC   eat-F.PERF

    'The boy had eaten bread'

    b. *laRkaa   rotii   khaa-taa   he*

    boy.NOM bread.F.ACC   eat-3.M.SG   be.3SG.PRES

    'The boy eats bread'

$$[_{TP} \; DP_{ERG} \; [_{vP} \; \cancel{DP_{ERG}} \; [_{VP} \; DP_{ABS} \quad V \;] \; v \;] \; T \;]$$

with ABS spanning from DP_ABS to T, and ERG spanning from the struck-through DP_ERG to v.

Hindi Differential Object Marking (DOM)

(2) *maĩ* **tumko** / **Rām ko** / *apnī* **beṭī** **ko** *dekh* *rahā*
1SG 2.ACC Ram ACC REFL daughter ACC see PROG.M.SG

hũ̃

PRS.1SG

'I am looking at you /Ram / my daughter.'

Montaut (2018: 283)

Hindi agreement

(3) Modern Standard Hindi

a. *merī   sahelī   ne   nayā   naukar   rakhā*
   my   friend.F.SG   ERG   new   servant.M.SG   place.PFV.M.SG
   'My friend took a new servant.'

b. *ve   laṛkā   dekh   rahe   haĩ*
   3PL   boy.M.SG   look   PROG   PRS.3M.PL
   'They are visiting a boy (a suitable groom).'
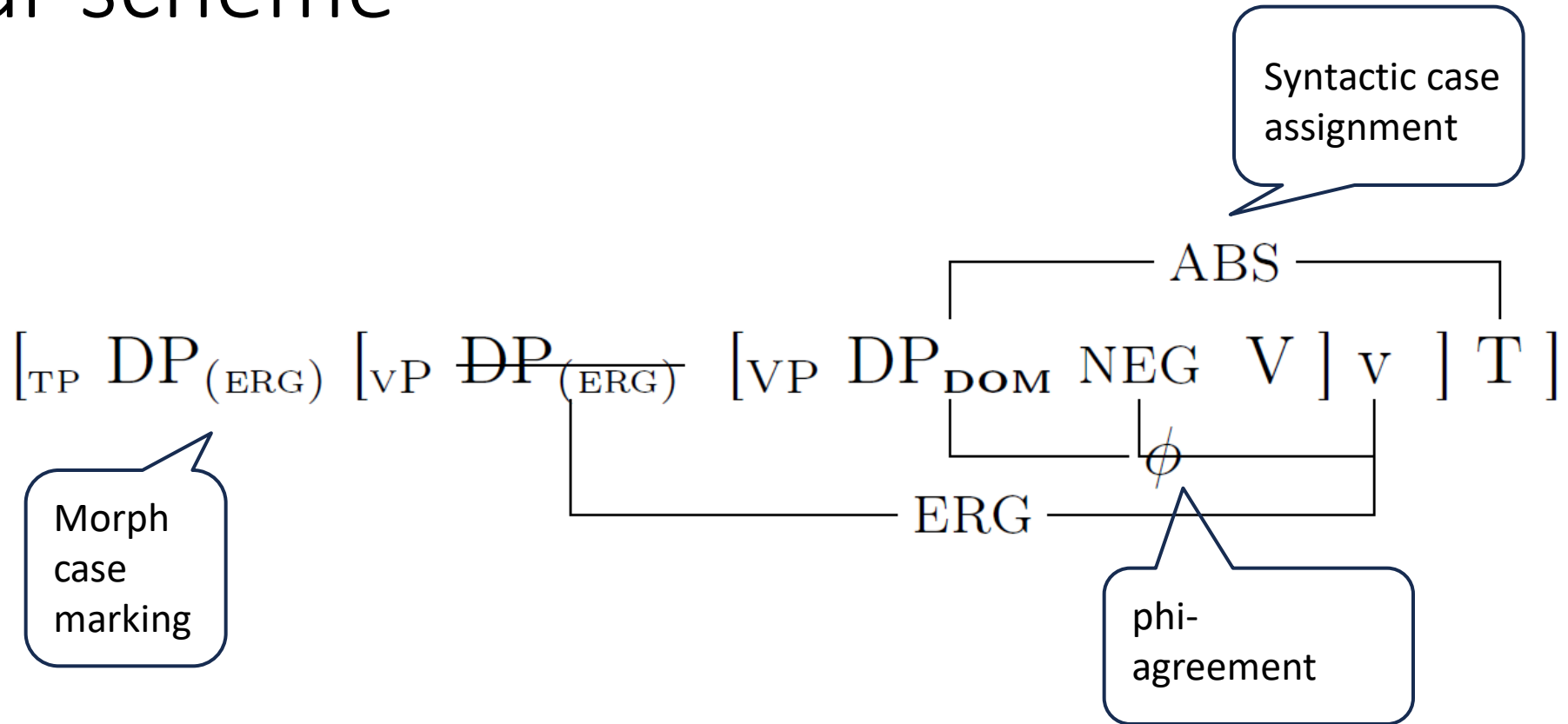
Montaut (2018: 284)

(4) *maĩne   bahut   logõ   ko   dekhā*
    1SG.ERG   many   people.M.PL   ACC   see.PFV.3M.SG
    'I saw many people.'

Our scheme

Questions

Are the WIA patterns simply quirks?

What does DOM-agreement have to do with alignment?

Can micro-comparative studies predict language change, and how?

Varieties examined

Surati Gujarati, Ahmedabad, Vadodara Gujarati, Shekhawati, Bagri, Wagdi, Kutchi, Kutchi Gujarati, Udaipur Marwari, Jaisalmer Marwari, Marwari, Udaipur Mewari, Dhundari, Haryanavi, Kashmiri, Gangoli, Kumaoni, Garhwali

Case, agreement and alignment

Progressing towards the following?

DP-NOM   DP-ACC   V-(obj)   **T-subj**

Let's start with Gujarat and Rajasthan

Unstable ergative systems

- Surati Gujarati
- Ahmedabad, Vadodara Gujarati
- Shekhawati
- Bagri
- Wagdi
- Kutchi
- Kutchi Gujarati
- Udaipur Marwari
- Jaisalmer Marwari

Map legend:
- Surati Gujarati
- Ahmedabad / Vadodara Gujarati
- Kutchi
- Kutchi Gujarati
- Shekhawati
- Bagri
- Jaisalmer Marwari
- Udaipur Marwari
- Wagdi

Unstable ergative systems

- Surati Gujarati
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- Kutchi Gujarati
- Udaipur Marwari
- Jaisalmer Marwari

14
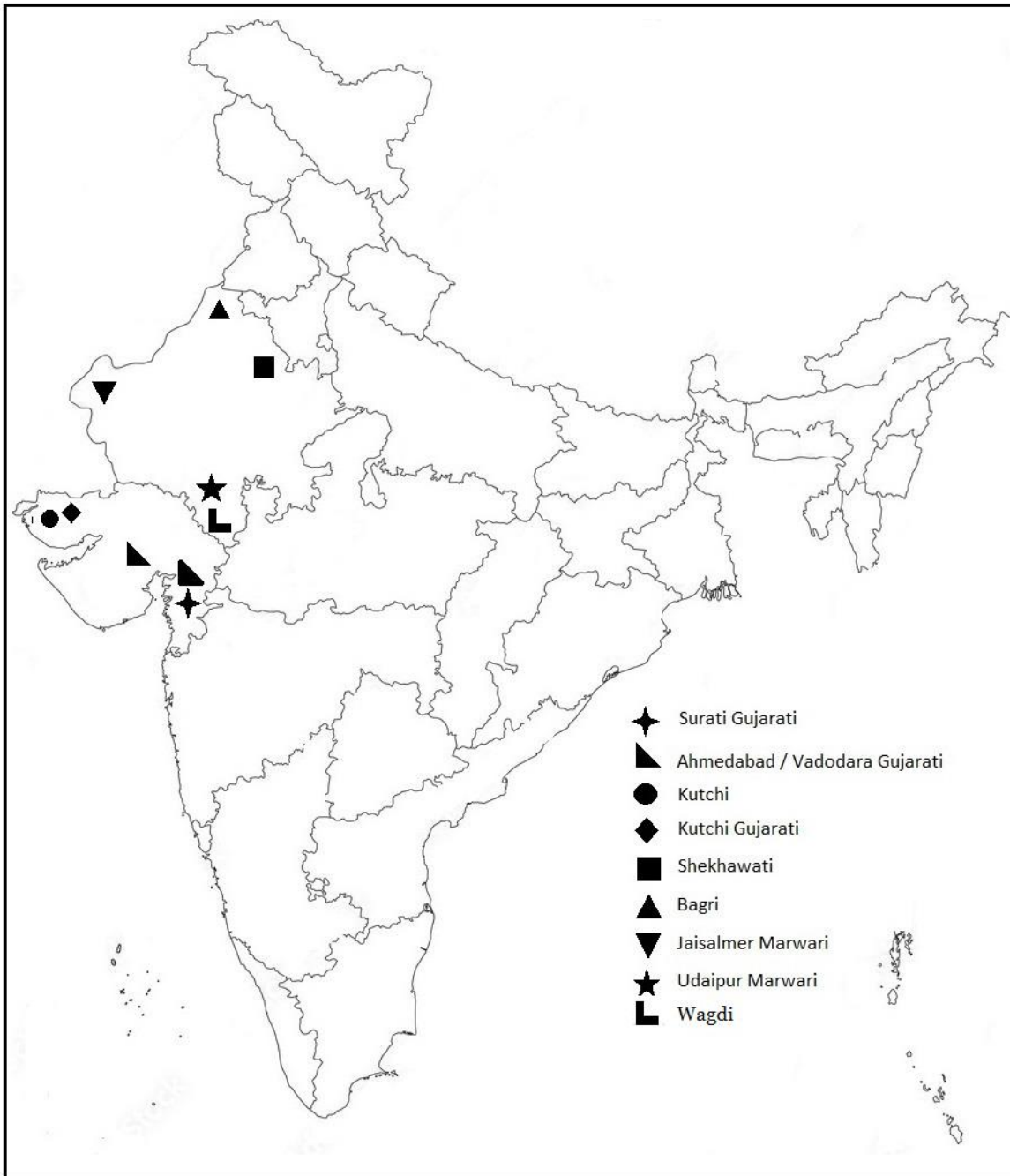
Incipient loss of ergativity

Surati Gujarati

- Almost stable ergative system in the perfective

- NO S-V agreement allowed (no A-V agreement allowed)

- OV agreement

- DOM-triggered agreement

- Ergative attrition in negative constructions in the perfective

(5)   Surati Gujarati Case Patterns with NEG

Option 1: Subject erg, Object agrees with Neg and V
Option 2: Subject null, Subject-v agreement, Object-neg agreement
Option 3: Subject null, Subject-v-neg agreement

Option 1 – full ergativity, V-O-neg agreement

(6) Surati Gujarati (Joshi 2023: 4)

shahrukh-e   gaadi   nho-ti   jo-yi
Shahrukh.M.SG-ERG car.F.SG NEG-PAST.F.SG see-PFV.F.SG

'Shahrukh had not seen the car'

Option 2 – no erg, O-neg agreement, S-V agr

(7) Surati Gujarati (Joshi 2023: 4)

shahrukh gaadi nho-ti laav-yo
Shahrukh.M.SG.NOM car.F.SG NEG-PAST.F.SG bring-PFV.M.SG

'Shahrukh had not bought the car'

(8) Surati Gujarati (Joshi 2021: 1)

shahrukh bakri-ne nho-ti/??nho-to laav-yo
Shahrukh.M.SG.NOM goat.F.SG-DOM neg-F.SG/NEG-M.SG bring-PFV.M.SG

'Shahrukh did not bring the goat (but something else)'

Option 3 – unmarked S, S-V-neg agreement

(9) Surati Gujarati (Joshi 2023: 4)
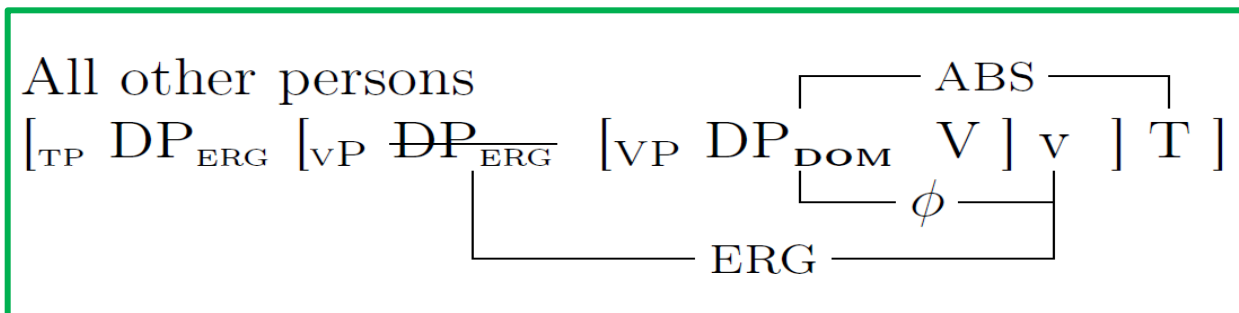
shahrukh   gaadi   nho-to   laav-yo
Shahrukh.M.SG.NOM car.F.SG neg-PAST.M.SG bring-PFV.M.SG

'Shahrukh had not bought the car'

(Standard) Ahmedabad, Vadodara Gujarati

- Ergative marking on 1st person singular and 3rd person (singular/plural) subjects

- bare O and DOM-objects trigger verbal agreement

- Signs of alignment shift in the 1st and 2nd person plural domains

O-V agreement in A/V Gujarati

(10) A/V Gujarati

men   sitaa-ne   jo-yii
I.ERG Sita-F.SG-DOM   see-PAST.F.SG

'I saw Sita'

(11) A/V Gujarati (Mistry 1997; cited in Bhatt 2007: 5)

seeta-e   kagal   vac-yo
sita.F.SG-ERG letter.M.SG read-PST.M.SG

'Sita read the letter'

(12) A/V Gujarati (Mistry 1997; cited in Bhatt 2007: 5)

seeta-e   raj-ne   pajav-yo
sita.F.SG-ERG Raj.M.SG-DOM harass-PST.M.SG

'Sita harassed Raj'

All other persons
$[_{TP} \text{DP}_{ERG} [_{vP} \cancel{\text{DP}_{ERG}} [_{VP} \text{DP}_{DOM} \quad V]_v] T]$
with ABS, ERG, and ϕ linking arrows

21

Alignment shift in 1/2 person

(14) ame   sitaa-ne   jo-yu

We.NOM Sita.F.SG-DOM see-PAST.PL

'We saw Sita'

1/2 plural subject

$$[_{TP} \; DP_{1/2PL} \; [_{vP} \; \cancel{DP_{1/2PL}} \; [_{VP} \; DP_{DOM} \; V \;]_v \;] \; T \;]$$

with ABS, (ERG), and ϕ relations indicated
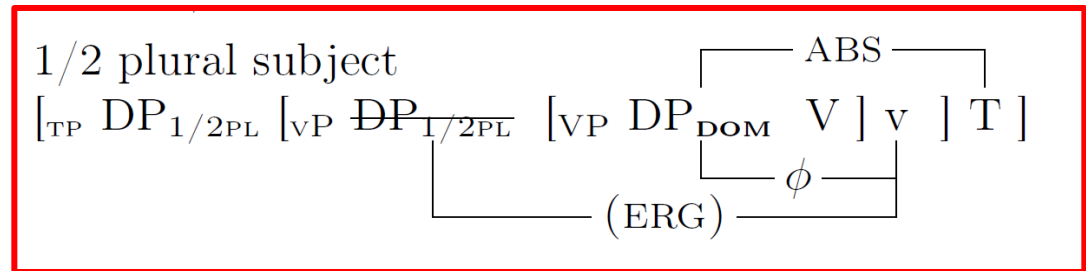
Shekhawati

- Shekhawati exhibits DOM-triggered agreement

- has inconsistent ergative marking

- object always triggers agreement

$$\text{1/2/3 person subject}$$
$$[_{\text{TP}}\ \text{DP}_{\text{1/2/3-(ERG)}}\ [_{\text{vP}}\ \cancel{\text{DP}_{\text{1/2/3-(ERG)}}}\ [_{\text{VP}}\ \text{DP}_{\textbf{DOM}}\ \text{V}\ ]\ \text{v}\ ]\ \text{T}\ ]$$

Shekhawati

(15)   a.   Shekhawati (Stronski 2010a: 241)

me/tu khano   khajo

I/you food.M.SG. eat.PPP.M.SG

'I/you ate'

b.   Shekhawati (Stronski 2010a: 244)

sita mha-ne dekhja

Sita we.DOM see.PPP.M.PL

'Sita saw us'

1/2/3 person subject

$[_{TP} DP_{1/2/3\text{-}(ERG)} [_{vP} \overline{DP_{1/2/3\text{-}(ERG)}} [_{VP} DP_{DOM} V]_v] T]$

ABS

ϕ

(ERG)

Bagri

- Bagri exhibits DOM-triggered agreement

- has no ergative marking on 1/2 person A

- ERG is inconsistent in 3 person

$$1/2 \quad \text{person subject}$$
$$[_{\text{TP}} \ \text{DP}_{1/2/} \qquad [_{\text{vP}} \ \cancel{\text{DP}_{1/2/}} \qquad [_{\text{VP}} \ \text{DP}_{\textbf{DOM}} \ \text{V}] \ \text{v} \ ] \ \text{T}]$$

1/ 2 vs 3

$$\begin{array}{l} 1/2 \quad \text{person subject} \\ [_{\text{TP}} \text{ DP}_{1/2/} \qquad [_{\text{vP}} \text{ \sout{DP}}_{1/2,} \qquad [_{\text{VP}} \text{ DP}_{\text{DOM}} \text{ V }] _{\text{v}}] \text{ T }] \end{array}$$

ABS — φ
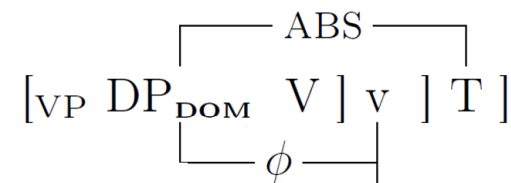
(16) Bagri (Gusain 1999: 112)

me chore-ne lakari syu kut-yo
I boy-DOM stick with beat-PST.M.SG.

'I beat the boy with a stick'

> Wagdi: losing ergativity too – but in which contexts?

    a. Bagri (Gusain 1999: 122)

    ram bi-ne kut-yo
    Ram he-DOM beat-PST.M.SG.

    'Ram beat him'

    b. Bagri (Gusain 1999: 92)

    ban kitab padd-i
    s/he.ERG book.F.SG. read-PST.F.SG.

    'S/he read the book'

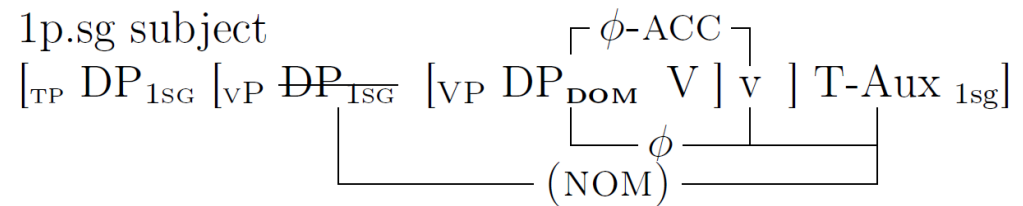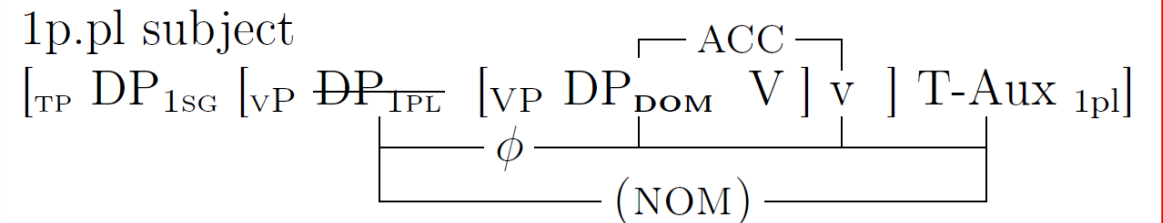# Ergativity is lost, with some remnants

Kutchi

- has lost ergativity
- DOM-triggered agreement
- has some remnants of ergativity in agreement
- with 1PL transitive perfective subject: full Nom/Acc V-DOM, S-Aux
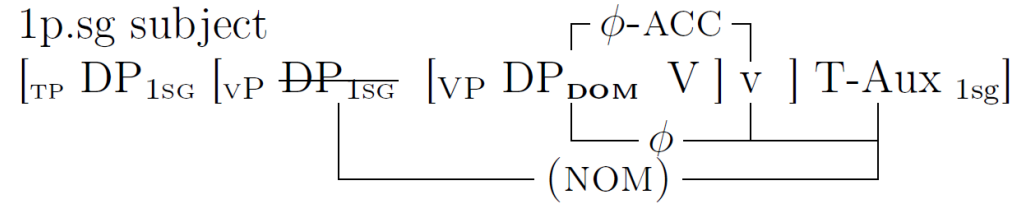- with others: S agrees with Aux and V

Kutchi

1p.sg subject

$$[_{\text{TP}} \text{ DP}_{\text{1SG}} \; [_{\text{vP}} \; \cancel{\text{DP}_{\text{1SG}}} \; [_{\text{VP}} \; \text{DP}_{\text{DOM}} \; \text{V} \;] \; \text{v} \;] \; \text{T-Aux}_{\text{1sg}}]$$

(with ϕ-ACC, ϕ, (NOM) dependency arrows)

(17) Kutchi (Keine, Nissar and Bhatt 2014:253-255)

a:ũ	hu	tṣa:po	vã:tṣ-yo	a:y	/	vo
I	that	newspaper.M	read-PFV.M.SG	be.PRES.SG	/	be.PST.M.SG

'I (masc/fem) have/had read that newspaper'

a.

asĩ	/pa:ṇ	nibandh	/kavita:	lakh-ya:	va:	/
we.EXCL	/we.INCL	essay.M	/poem.F	write-PFV.PL	be.PST.PL	/

aiyũ
be.PRES.1PL

'We have/had written an essay/poem'

1p.pl subject

$$[_{\text{TP}} \text{ DP}_{\text{1SG}} \; [_{\text{vP}} \; \cancel{\text{DP}_{\text{1PL}}} \; [_{\text{vP}} \; \text{DP}_{\text{DOM}} \; \text{V} \;] \; \text{v} \;] \; \text{T-Aux}_{\text{1pl}}]$$

(with ACC, ϕ, (NOM) dependency arrows)

Kutchi Gujarati

- has completed the shift
- Aux/V-fin always agree with A
- some remnant of DOM-agreement

$$[_{\text{TP}} \text{ DP}_{\text{NOM}} \; [_{v\text{P}} \; \cancel{\text{DP}_{\text{NOM}}} \; [_{\text{VP}} \; \text{DP}_{\textbf{DOM}} \overset{\ulcorner \phi\text{-ACC} \urcorner}{\text{V}} \;] \; v \;] \; \text{T-Aux} \;]$$

$$\phi\text{-}(\text{NOM})$$

Kutchi Gujarati

(18) a. Kutchi Gujarati (Patel-Grosz and Grosz 2014: 222-223)
hu chokra-ne jo-y-a   ha-is
I   boys-DOM see-PFV-PL aux-FUT.1SG
'I will have seen the boys'

   b. Kutchi Gujarati (Patel-Grosz and Grosz 2014: 222-223)
hu chokra-ne jo-th-i   ha-is
I   boys-DOM see-IPFV-F.SG aux-FUT.1SG
'I will see the boys.' (speaker is female)

$$[_{TP} \text{ DP}_{NOM} \text{ } [_{vP} \text{ } \overline{\text{DP}_{\overline{NOM}}} \text{ } [_{VP} \text{ DP}_{\textbf{DOM}} \overset{\ulcorner \phi\text{-ACC} \urcorner}{\text{V}}] \text{ v }] \text{ T-Aux }]$$
$$\phi\text{-(NOM)}$$

31

Interim summary – unstable ergativity

Table 1

|		
STAGE 2/A	Surati Gujarati	DOM-ϕ, no Aux, unstable ERG in NEG contexts
STAGE 2/B/I	AV Gujarati	DOM-ϕ, no Aux, ERG absent in 1/2 pl
STAGE 2/B/II	Shekhawati	DOM-ϕ, no Aux, ERG inconsistently used in 1/2/3 p
STAGE 2/B/III	Bagri	DOM-ϕ, no Aux, ERG lost in 1/2, inconsistent in 3p
STAGE 3	Kutchi	DOM-ϕ, Aux, ERG lost but agreement still undecided
STAGE 4	Kutchi Gujarati,	DOM-ϕ, Aux, ERG is lost, Aux agrees with S, V agrees with DOM
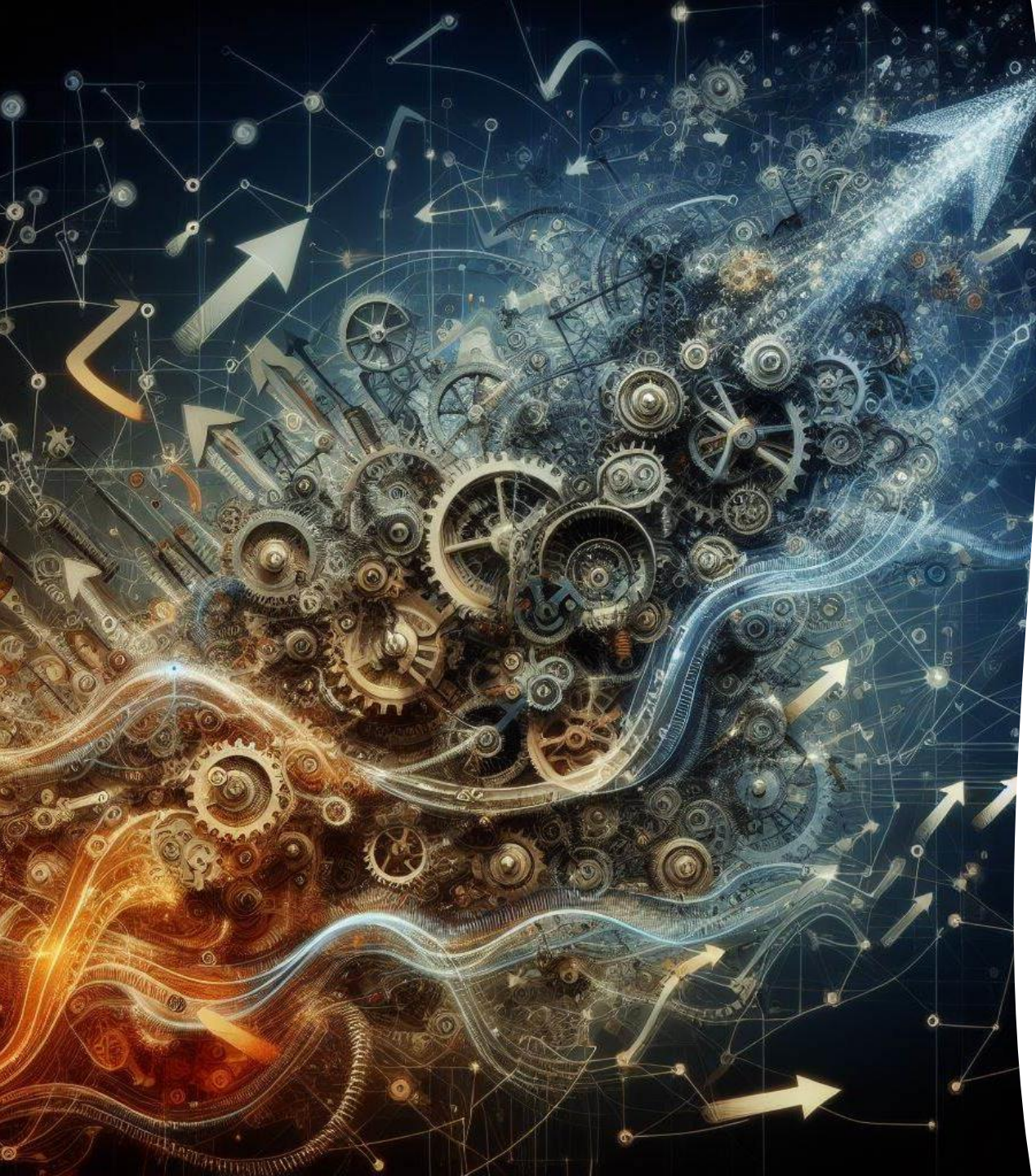
Stable ergative systems

- Marwari
- Udaipur Mewari
- Dhundari
- Haryanavi
- Kashmiri
- Gangoli
- Kumaoni
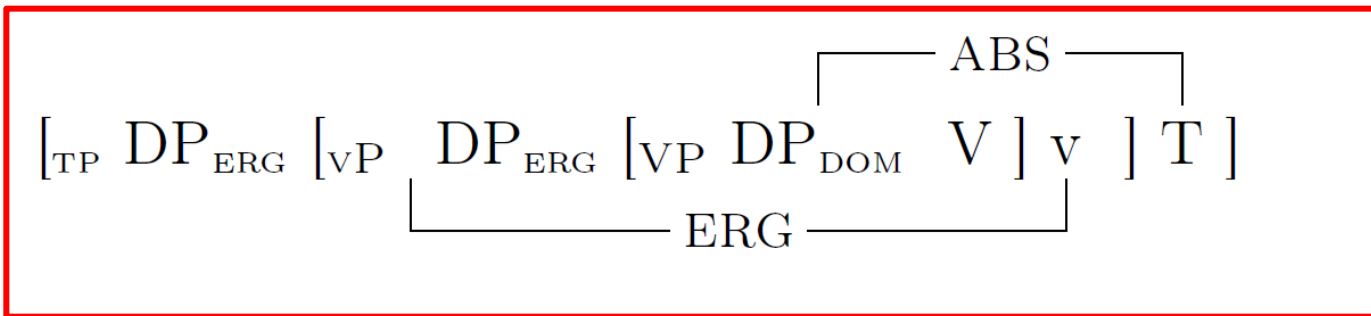- Garhwali

No DOM
agreement

No DOM

	Udaipur Mewari
★	Udaipur Mewari
●	Marwari
◆	Dhundari

	Kashmiri
	Kashmiri
	Pahari
	Haryanavi
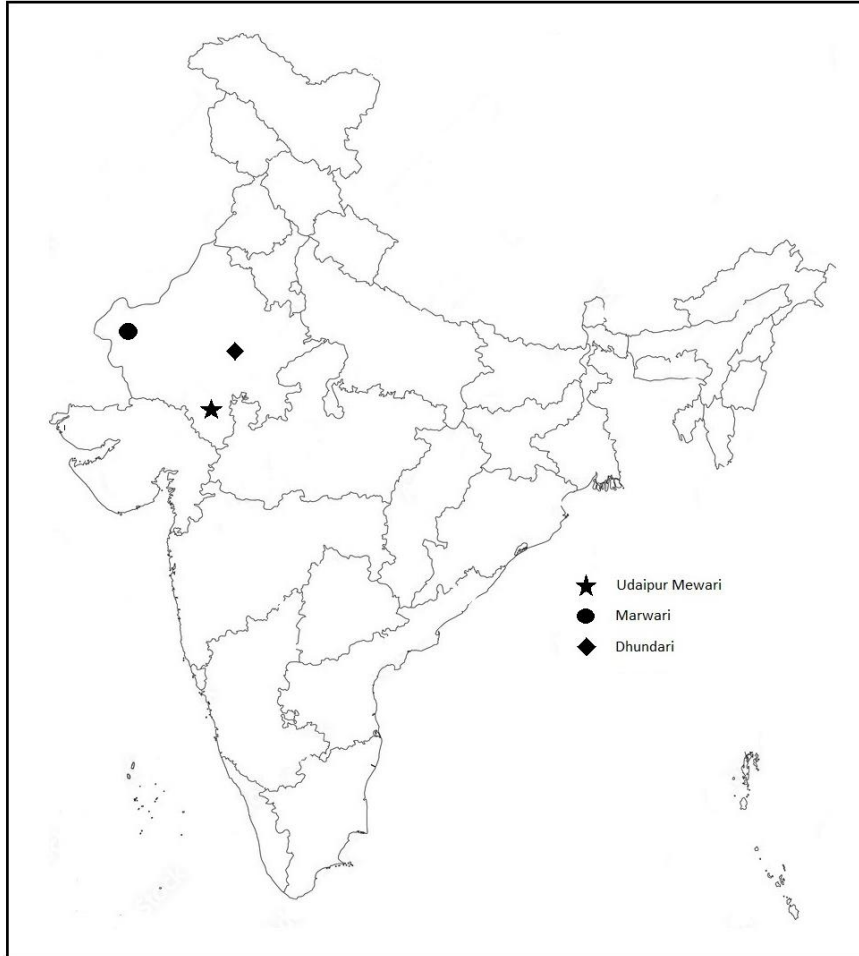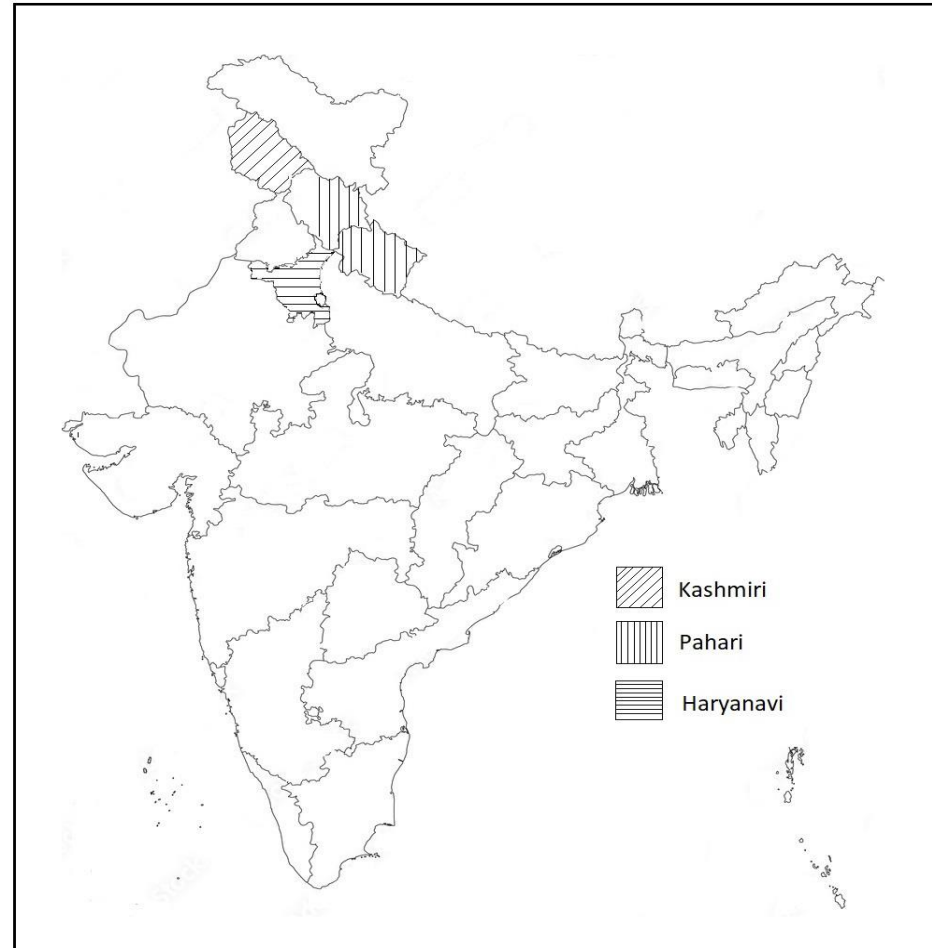
Stable ergativity with no DOM agreement

Udaipur Mewari

- subject is marked with an ergative case
- the animate object is also DOM-marked
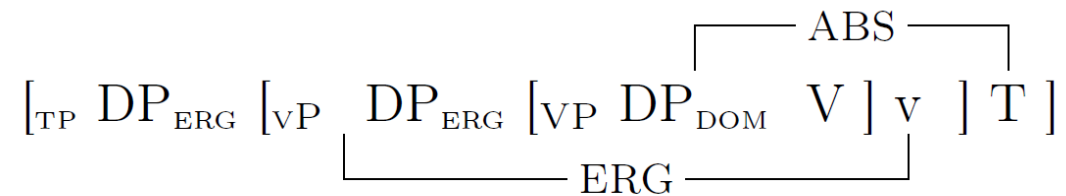- No V-DOM agreement

$$[_{TP} \; DP_{ERG} \; [_{vP} \; DP_{ERG} \; [_{VP} \; DP_{DOM} \; V \,] \; v \,] \; T \,]$$

with ABS extending from DP_{DOM} to T, and ERG extending from the lower DP_{ERG} to v.

Udaipur Mewari: no DOM-V agreement

(19) Udaipur Mewari (Udaar, 2016: 45)

jɔn-nɛ   mɛri-nɛ   hilayo

John-ERG Mary-DOM shake.DEF.PERF

'John shook Mary'

$$[_{TP} \; DP_{ERG} \; [_{vP} \; DP_{ERG} \; [_{VP} \; DP_{DOM} \; V \;] \; v \;] \; T \;]$$

ABS

ERG

Dhundari: no DOM-V agreement

- Perfective transitive subjects are marked with an ergative marker
- the object can be unmarked or marked
- the verb obligatorily carries default agreement.

$$[_{TP} \; DP_{ERG} \; [_{vP} \; DP_{ERG} \; [_{VP} \; DP_{DOM} \; V \;]_{v} \;] \; T \;]$$

with ABS linking DP_DOM to T, and ERG linking DP_ERG to v.
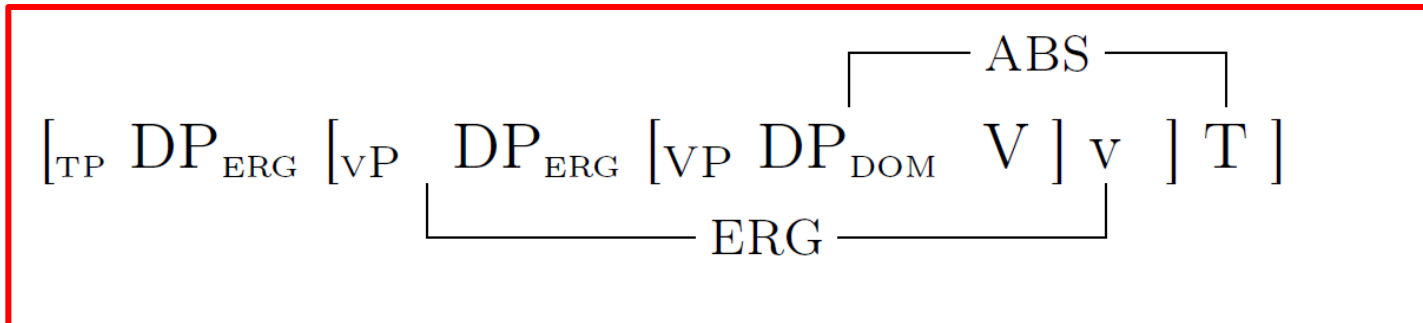
Dhundari

(20) Dhundari

a. kæl   meri-næ   ʤon-kæ   de   pḍi
    yesterday Mary-ERG   John-DOM give hit-DEF.PERF
    'Mary had hit John yesterday'

b. kæl   bin-næ   ʤon-kæ   de   pḍi
    yesterday they-ERG   John-DOM give hit-DEF.PERF
    'They had hit John yesterday'

c. kæl   mænæ ʤon-kæ   de   pḍi
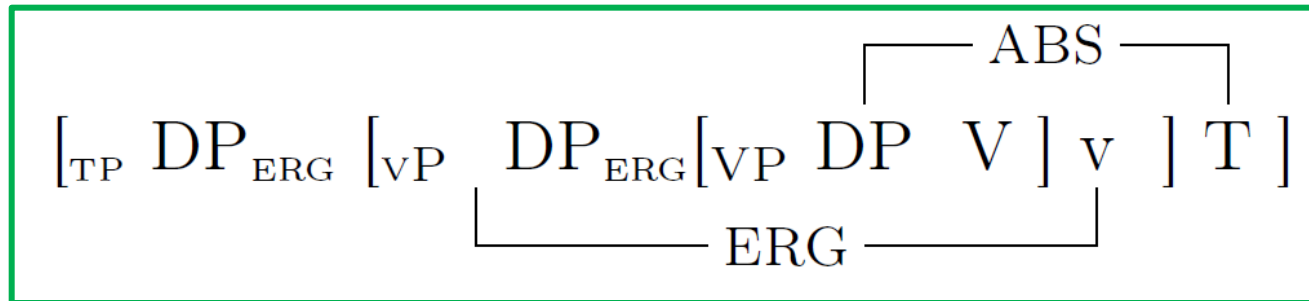   yesterday I-ERG   John-DOM give hit-DEF.PERF
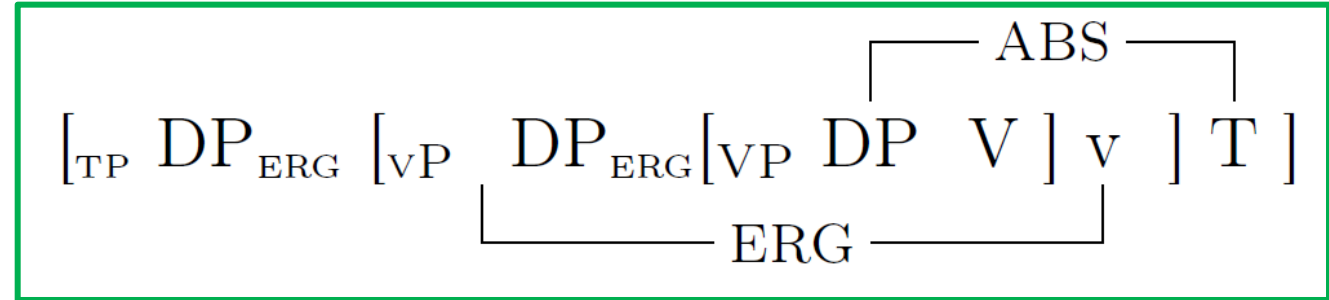   'I had hit John yesterday'

Stable ergativity with no DOM

Haryanavi

- No DOM in the perfective (though allowed in the imperfective)

- V-O agreement in perfective

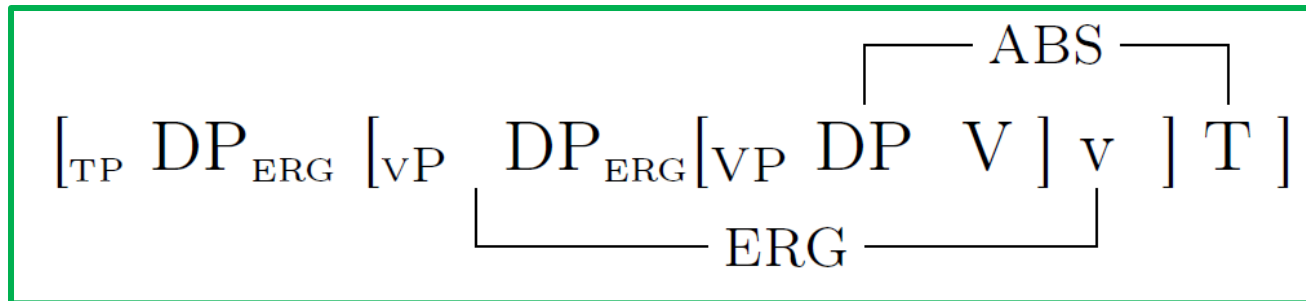- Ergativity is quite robust and patterns closely with Hindi

$$[_{\text{TP}} \; \text{DP}_{\text{ERG}} \; [_{v\text{P}} \; \text{DP}_{\text{ERG}} [_{\text{VP}} \; \text{DP} \; \text{V} \;] \; v \;] \; \text{T} \;]$$

ABS

ERG

Haryanavi

$$[_{TP} \; DP_{ERG} \; [_{vP} \; DP_{ERG} [_{VP} \; DP \; V \;] _{v} \;] \; T \;]$$

(with brackets marked ABS over the inner DP…V and ERG over the DP…V span)

(21)

a.
jɔn	mɛri-nɛ	həlayaə	kərɛ
John.NOM	Mary-DOM	shake	do.M.SG.PRES

'John shakes Mary

b.
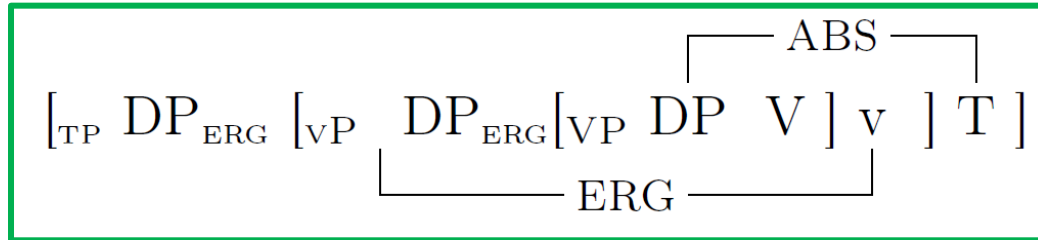| jɔn-nɛ	mɛri	həla-i	thi
John.ERG	Mary-ABS	shake-F.SG.PERF	be.F.SG.PST

'John shook Mary'

Udaar (2016:43)

42

Kashmiri (Dardic sub-family)

- Ergative subject fails to trigger agreement

- Verbal agreement is controlled by the unmarked object

- DOM is mandatorily ruled out in the perfective

$$[_{TP} \ DP_{ERG} \ [_{vP} \ DP_{ERG} [_{VP} \ DP \ V \ ] \ _{v} \ ] \ T \ ]$$

with ABS linking DP to T, and ERG linking DP_ERG to v.

Kashmiri

$$[_{TP} \; DP_{ERG} \; [_{vP} \; DP_{ERG} [_{VP} \; DP \; V \;] \; v \;] \; T \;]$$

with labels: ABS (from DP through to the top), ERG (from the middle DP to v)

(22)

a. tem   chhes bI/*me   vichhmets
   she.ERG has   I-NOM/*I-DOM seen
   'She has seen me'

b. su vuch-i   tse/*tsI
   he see.FUT.3SG you.DOM/you.NOM
   'He will see you'

Gangoli, Kumaoni and Garhwali present the same pattern (with some incipient DOM)

44

Interim summary – stable ergativity

Table 2

STAGE 0	Haryanavi (Kashmiri, Pahari)	no DOM, optional Aux, stable ERG
STAGE 1	Hindi, Marwari, Dhundari, Mewari	DOM but no DOM-ϕ, Aux, stable ERG

Alignment shift

- Stage 0

$$[_{TP} \ DP_{ERG} \ [_{vP} \ DP_{ERG} [_{VP} \ DP \ V \ ] \ _V \ ] \ T \ ]$$

with ABS spanning from DP to V, and ERG spanning from DP_ERG to V

Haryanavi, Kashmiri...

- Stage 1

$$[_{TP} \ DP_{ERG} \ [_{vP} \ DP_{ERG} \ [_{VP} \ DP_{DOM} \ V \ ] \ _V \ ] \ T \ ]$$

with ABS spanning from DP_DOM to V, and ERG spanning from DP_ERG to V
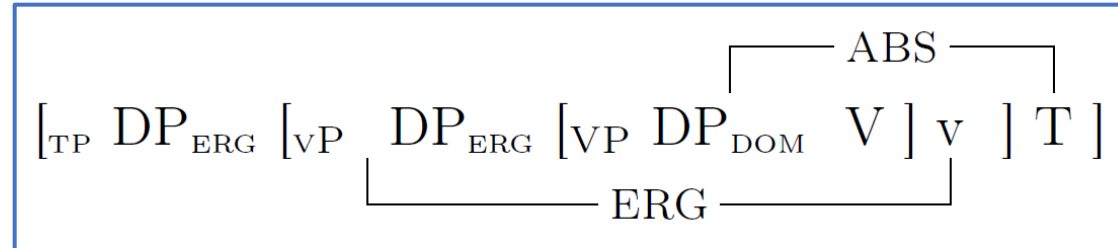
Hindi, Dhundari, Mewari

- Stage 2/A

$$[_{TP} \ DP_{(ERG)} \ [_{vP} \ \text{DP}_{(ERG)} \ [_{VP} \ DP_{DOM} \ NEG \ V \ ] \ _V \ ] \ T \ ]$$

with ABS spanning from DP_DOM to V, NEG with ϕ, and ERG spanning from DP to V

Surati Gujaratati

46

Alignment shift

- Stage 2/B i

1/2 plural subject
$$[_{TP} \text{ DP}_{1/2\text{PL}} \; [_{vP} \; \cancel{\text{DP}_{1/2\text{PL}}} \; [_{VP} \; \text{DP}_{\textbf{DOM}} \quad \text{V} \;] \; v \;] \; T \;]$$
with ABS over V to v, ϕ below DOM, and (ERG) below

A/V Gujarati

- Stage 2/B ii

1/2/3 person subject
$$[_{TP} \text{ DP}_{1/2/3\text{-}(\text{ERG})} \; [_{vP} \; \cancel{\text{DP}_{1/2/3\text{-}(\text{ERG})}} \; [_{VP} \; \text{DP}_{\textbf{DOM}} \quad \text{V} \;] \; v \;] \; T \;]$$
with ABS over V to v, ϕ below DOM, and (ERG) below
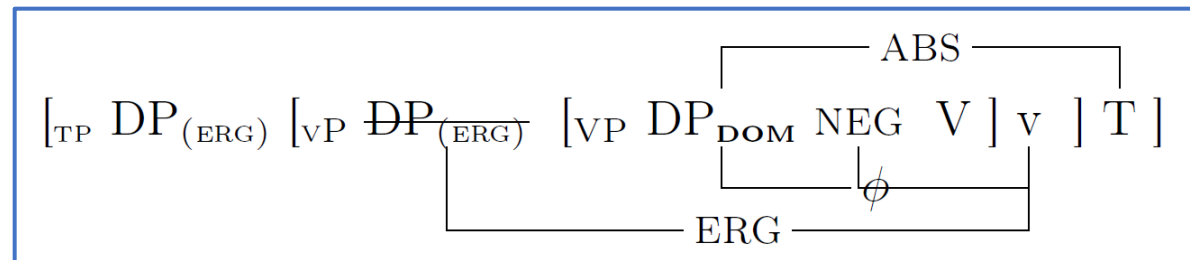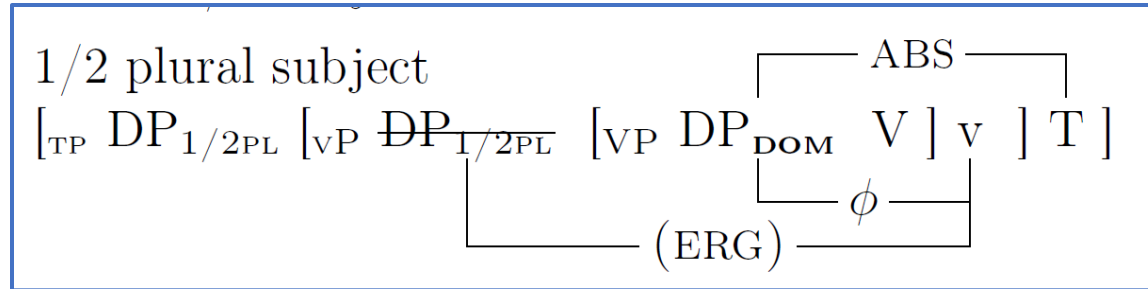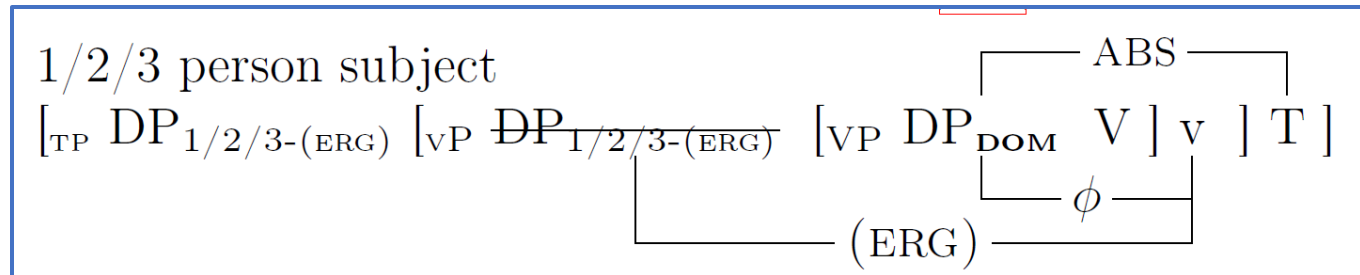
Shekhawati

Alignment shift

- **Stage 3**

$$[_{TP} \text{ DP}_{1SG} \; [_{vP} \; \cancel{\text{DP}_{1SG}} \; [_{VP} \; \text{DP}_{\textbf{DOM}} \; \text{V}] \; v \;] \; \text{T-Aux}_{1sg}]$$

1p.sg subject, with $\phi\text{-ACC}$, ϕ, (NOM)

$$[_{TP} \text{ DP}_{1SG} \; [_{vP} \; \cancel{\text{DP}_{1PL}} \; [_{VP} \; \text{DP}_{\textbf{DOM}} \; \text{V}] \; v \;] \; \text{T-Aux}_{1pl}]$$

1p.pl subject, with ACC, ϕ, (NOM)

Kutchi

- **Stage 4**

$$[_{TP} \text{ DP}_{\text{NOM}} \; [_{vP} \; \cancel{\text{DP}_{\text{NOM}}} \; [_{VP} \; \text{DP}_{\textbf{DOM}} \; \text{V}] \; v \;] \; \text{T-Aux} \;]$$

with $\phi\text{-ACC}$, $\phi\text{-(NOM)}$
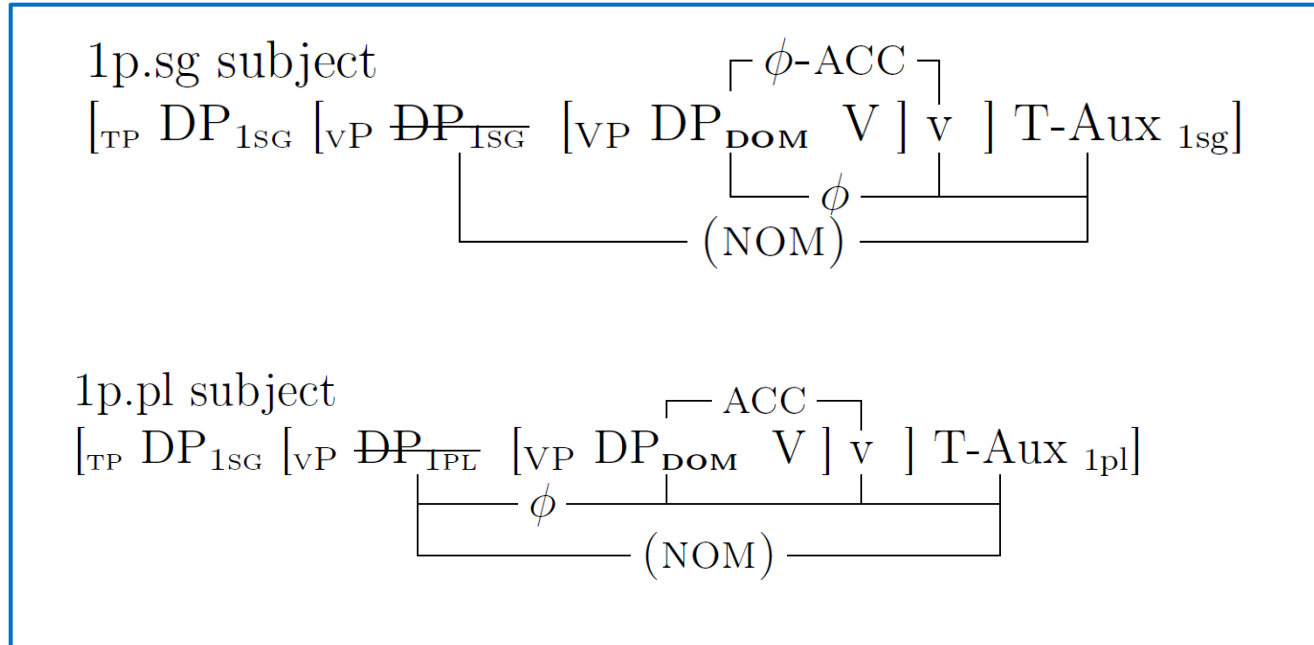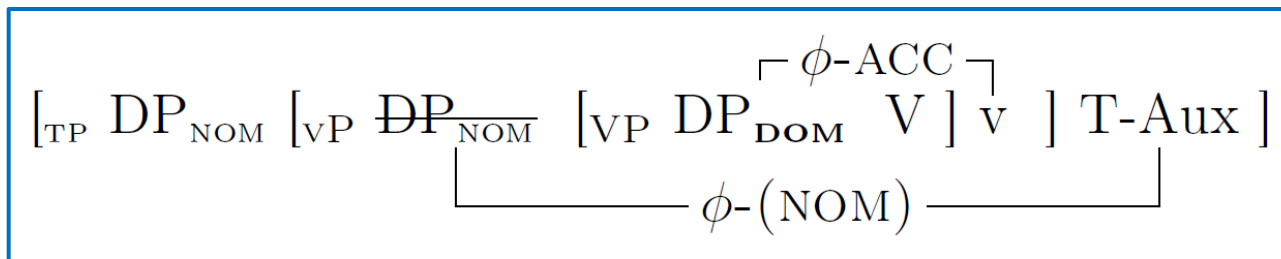
Kutchi Gujarati, Marwari, Udaipur Marwari

Ergativity in Iranian languages

Ergativity in Iranian languages

- Indo-Aryan separated from the Indo-Iranian branch some 4000 years ago (cf. Haig 2015 and references cited therein).

- Iranian languages too display varied case alignments.

- Persian has moved completely to accusative alignment. Kurdish languages, Balochi etc. exhibit ergativity but there are many 'deviant' patterns too.

Stable ergativity with no DOM

Northern Kurdish Ergativity, but DOM?

Table 3

Type of verb	Case of core arguments		Verbal agreement
Present transitive	A-Direct	P-Oblique	With A
Past transitive	A-Oblique	**P-Direct**	With P
Intransitive, all tenses	S-Direct		With S

Canonical Ergativity, Northern Kurdish (Haig 2015: 12)

Stable Ergativity: Adiyaman Kurmanji

- AK also exhibits canonical ergativity (Baker and Atlamaz 2014) but does not exhibit DOM even in the present tense.

DOM of this sort does not happen in AK or standard Kurmanji (Stilo, 2009:62) (or MK), but it is attested in the Turkish-influenced variety studied by Dorleijn (1996:62), and it is a robust property of many other Iranian languages (Bossong, 1985; Haig, 2008; Stilo, 2009; Windfuhr, 2009:33-35).

(Baker and Atlamaz 2014: footnote 38)

Similarities with Haryanavi

- AK has stable ergativity, much like Haryanavi

- It also does not have DOM (in all tenses), very similar to Haryanavi (where DOM is missing from the past perfective)

- The ergative, dative and accusative in AK and Haryanavi are syncretic

Adiyaman Kurmanji and Haryanavi

Adiyaman Kurmanji

(23)

a.
mɪ tɪ di-yi
I.OBL you.DIR see.PST-2SG.
'I saw you'

b. **mɪ** sor-e
I.OBL cold-COP.PRES.3SG.
'I am cold'

c. tɪ **mɪ** dɪ-vun-ê
You.DIR I.OBL impf-see.PRES-COP.2SG
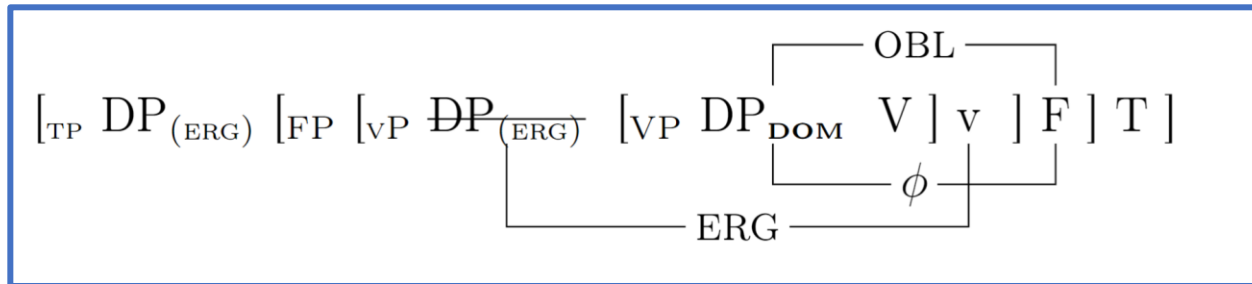'You are seeing me'

(Baker & Atlamaz 2014)

Haryanavi

(24)

a.
jon-nɛ mɛri balaai
John-ERG Mary call.3SG.F.PERF.
'John called Mary'

b. Jon **mɛri-nɛ** sher dikhave
John.NOM. Mary-DAT. lion.ACC. show
thaa
be.3SG.M.PRES.
'John was showing a lion to Mary'

c. John **mɛri-nɛ** balaave thaa
John.NOM. Mary-ACC. call.PROG. Be.3SG.M.PRES.
'John was calling Mary'

(Udaar 2016: 141)

v$_{PAST}$ in Kurmanji

- Baker & Atlamaz (2014): v$_{PAST}$ head is non-phasal
- the object within VP in the same phase as the F case/phi-assigning head (see also Karimi 2010 for v-analysis for Central Kurdish languages)

$$[_{TP} \ DP_{(ERG)} \ [_{FP} \ [_{vP} \ \cancel{DP_{(ERG)}} \ [_{VP} \ DP_{DOM} \ V \ ] \ v \ ] \ F \ ] \ T \ ]$$

with labelled dependencies: OBL, ERG, and ϕ

- v is defective: it does not assign accusative to the DP$_{OBJ}$
- AK retains ergativity because v is not yet phi-complete and ready to participate in case-marking and agreement (DOM)

What will change in v$_{PAST}$ look like?

$$[_{TP} \text{ DP}_{\text{NOM}} [_{vP} \, \cancel{\text{DP}_{\text{NOM}}} \, [_{VP} \text{ DP}_{\textbf{DOM}} \, \overbrace{\text{V} \,] \, \text{v}}^{\phi\text{-ACC}} \,] \, \text{T} \,]$$

$$\underbrace{\qquad\qquad\qquad\qquad}_{\phi\text{-(NOM)}}$$

Prediction: once the featural composition of v changes, O will get accusative case (case marking/DOM) from v, and Swill get nominative case from T

Incipient loss of ergativity?

Balochi, emerging DOM?

	Direct	Oblique	Object
SG	- ∅	-ā	-ārā
PL	- ∅	-ān	-ānā, -ānrā

Table 4: Balochi cases (Korn 2008: 250)

Unmarked A (past) subjects in Balochi

(27) nũ **gwāt-∅** čanḍ-ēnt-ẽ
now wind-NOM. swing-CAUS.PST-3PL
'Now the wind swung them [= the clothes]'

Sarawani Balochi
(Baranzehi 2003: 82)

(28) **mõ-∅** dāt-ẽ ramazān-a ke ra-∅
I-NOM give.PST-3PL PN-OBJ. SUB go.PST-3SG.
'I gave them to Ramazan, who [then] went'

Sarawani Balochi
(Baranzehi 2003: 83)

O-agreement (with missing O) in Balochi

(27) nũ **gwāt-Ø** čanḍ-ēnt-ẽ
now wind-NOM. swing-CAUS.PST-3PL
'Now the wind swung them [= the clothes]'

Sarawani Balochi
(Baranzehi 2003: 82)

(28) **mõ-Ø** dāt-ẽ ramazān-a ke ra-Ø
I-NOM give.PST-3PL PN-OBJ. SUB go.PST-3SG.
'I gave them to Ramazan, who [then] went'

Sarawani Balochi
(Baranzehi 2003: 83)

Disappearing Ergativity?

- The v in Iranian Balochi is undergoing a change

- it is unable to assign ergative to the A anymore

- T continues to case-value and agree with the unmarked O

$$[_{TP} \text{ DP}_{SUB} \; [_{vP} \; \cancel{\text{DP}_{SUB}} \; [_{VP} \; \text{DP}_{OBJ} \overset{\overbrace{\text{OBL}}}{V}] \; v \;] \; T \;]$$
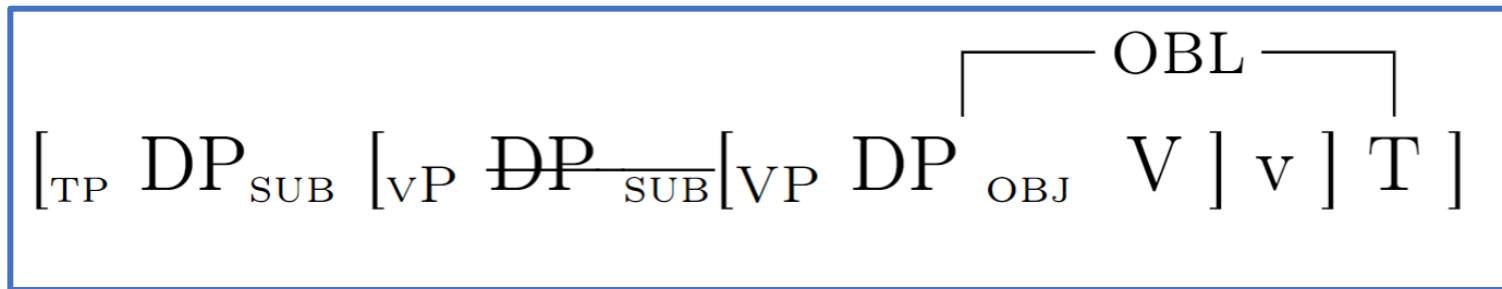
No DOM & no DOM-agreement

(30)

nūn=ẽ   **belett-∅**   **gept**

now=PRON.1PL   ticket-NOM   take.PST

'Now we bought the ticket'

Sarawani Balochi
(Baranzehi 2003: 102)

The same is true also for other Iranian Balochi varieties

(31)   alī-∅   **hasan-∅=ī**   **zat**

     PN-NOM   PN-NOM=PRON.3SG. strike.PST

     'Ali hit Hasan'

Lashari Balochi
(Korn 2008:258)

Emerging DOM in Iranian Balochi?

(32)

ta-∅	be.	čākar-∅	**man-ā̄**	baxšet
you.SG-NOM	to	PN-NOM	I-OBJ	give.PST

'You gave me to Chakar'

Khash Balochi (Jahani 2003: 126)

(33)

man	*ta-ra*	*gɪtt*
1S	2S-INNOBJ	catch:PST

'I caught you'

Southern Balochi
(Farrell 1995: ex.(12), cited in Haig 2008: 186)

(34)

ma	*šUma-ra*	*tacent*
1PL	2S-INNOBJ	chase.off:PST

'We chased you off'

Southern Balochi
(Farrell 1995: ex.(13), cited in Haig 2008: 186)

Emerging DOM in Iranian Balochi?

- Are these instances of DOM in Iranian Balochi evidence of the changing featural composition of v?

- If DOM (ObjO) is a distinct cue for the child, is DOM-agreement a step that the language can forego when moving towards ACC alignment?

Conclusions

- When V starts agreeing with DOM-marked O, and T starts emerging as a separate head, ergative case marking starts weakening

- Shift in ergative alignment > the language moves towards NOM/ACC (though the final NOM/ACC alignment is not reached yet)

- Iranian languages offer a very interesting test-ground for our hypothesis: wanna join? ☺

Thank you!

Merci!

متشکرم

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