1  Syntactic Ergativity: What, How, and Why?

1.1  The Ergative Extraction Constraint

- Many ‘ergative’ languages: asymmetry in the A’-domain.
  - For some A’-operations (wh-movement, relativization):
    - The internal argument (int) is accessible, but,
    - The transitive external argument (ext) is not.
- The Ergative Extraction Constraint \(\text{EEC; Aissen 2017}\).
  - Dixon (1979): Syntactic Ergativity \(=\) includes the EEC
  - Polinsky (2017): Syntactic Ergativity \(=\) the EEC
  - Yuan (2018): Syntactic Ergativity \(\text{INT} > \text{EXT}\).

1.2  The Typology of EECs

- The EEC: \textbf{not a unitary thing} (Deal 2015a)
  - The ecosystem of the EEC: substantial variation.
    - Sometimes: the EEC = a single constraint which blocks extraction of the ext and does nothing else (Otsuka 2006)
    - Elsewhere: the EEC = one corner of a broader constraint which blocks extraction of many things: (Aldridge 2004)
- The \textit{repair} to the EEC: even more variation.

1.3  The Sources of EECs

- One view: \textbf{case-discrimination} (Otsuka 2006; Deal 2017)
  - Argument: the EEC iff \(\exists\) overt case-marking (Dixon 1994)
  - Claim: the A’-extraction probe does not target \text{erg}.
- Another view: \textbf{locality} (Campana 1992; Aldridge 2004)
  - Argument: the EEC iff \(\exists\) evidence that (i) absolutive licensing is in \(t^0\) or (ii) the absolutive c-commands the ergative.
  - Claim: \(\lambda\)’-extraction sensitive to locality (Shlonsky 1992)

1.4  Today’s Question: Why Be Intransitive?

- Pattern: extraction of \text{ext} \(\rightarrow\) ‘intransitive’ morphology.
  - Distribution: ‘caseless’ languages (Mayan; Austronesian)
- One view: this avoids a \textbf{locality} violation (Aldridge 2004)
- Another: reflex of \(\lambda\)’-impoverishment (Deal 2017)
- \textbf{Claim}: for Mandar, the first analysis is required.
2 Mandar and the EEC

2.1 Mandar Background

- Mandar: South Sulawesi Subgroup; Austronesian
- Demographic Facts:
  - South Sulawesi = branch of Western Malay-Polynesian
  - Mandar = in the Northern Branch of SSul (Mills 1975)
  - Speakers: 500,000 (Census; 2000)
  - EGIDS level: 6a (Ethnologue)

2.2 Data Collection

- Summer 2018-Present: ongoing work on Mandar + relatives.
  - Some data: from a written corpus; compiled in 2019.
  - The rest: elicited from winter 2018-present.
- Elicitation methodology:
  - Two speakers; university students from West Sulawesi
  - Began working with both in Indonesia; Winter 2018
  - Elicitation now via zoom; in Indonesian and Mandar
- Previous work on South Sulawesi:
  - Language-level descriptions: Campbell 1989; Jukes 2006; Laskowske 2016
  - Historical work: Mills 1975; Sirk 1989

2.3 Mandar Alignment

- Head-marking morphological ergativity.
  - vso/vos order; pro-drop.
  - No morphological case-marking.
  - Ergative prefix on v; absolutive enclitic in \( ^0 \)
- Ergative Prefix/Absolutive Enclitic \( \rightarrow \) Agreement.
  - Mark person; not number (Preminger 2014)
  - Forms vary with finiteness (Nevins 2011)
  - Track non-referential xps (Baker and Kramer 2018)

2.4 Ergative Extraction \( \rightarrow \) Intransitive Prefix

- Extraction of the ext \( \rightarrow \) the quirky intransitive construction.
  1. Ergative prefix \( \rightarrow \) Ø.
  2. Intransitive prefix \( maN- \).
  3. ABS agreement \( \rightarrow \) INT.
- The same construction: Mayan AGENT FOCUS
  - No set.A; intransitive status suffix; AF suffix; set.B \( \rightarrow \) INT
- Surface Form: transitive clause + intransitive prefix.
- Question: does this implicate the EEC?
3 Why Intransitivity?

3.1 The Morphological Approach

- Extraction Morphology (Chung and Georgopoulos 1988)
  - Austronesian: 'special' intransitive morphology; wh-AGR
- Idea: intransitivity = derivational reflex of extraction.
  - A'-extraction triggers impoverishment (Baier 2016)
  - Impoverishment → 'default intransitive' (Newman 2020)
- Result: no special syntax to circumvent the EEC.
  - The ext can extract in a transitive clause.
  - Clauses with 'extraction morphology' show the same syntax as those which lack it (Baier 2016, pace Erlewine 2016)
- Prime candidates: Mandar (and Mayan languages)
  - No morphological case (→ no EEC on some views)
  - ABS agreement → INT: looks like transitive syntax.

3.2 The Syntactic Approach

- Precedent: A'-extraction constrained by locality.
  - Ergative languages: the old story (Campana 1992)
  - Nominative-accusative languages: parallel subject-object asymmetries with resumption (McCloskey 1990; Shlonsky 1992); extractability (Erlewine and Branan 2020).
- Claim: EEC iff the transitive INT c-commands ext.
- Common arguments: INT > EXT in:
  - Anaphor binding: Toba Batak (Cole and Hermon 2008)
  - Variable binding: Malagasy (Pearson 2005)
  - Condition c: Popti’ (Craig 1977), Chuj (Royer 2020)
  - Quantifier float: Tsotsil (Aissen 1984), Salish (Gerds 1988)
  - Scope: Kalaallisut (Bittner 1994), Tagalog (Aldridge 2012)
- Result: ergative extraction iff EXT > INT
- Claim: intransitive morphology allows this to occur.

3.3 Mandar: Locality

- The Quirky Intransitive: implicates distinct syntax.
- Provides a locality-compliant means to extract the EXT.
- Special v^0: shifts & licenses the INT in the VP.
- Result: allows the EXT to move to SPEC,TP; be extracted.
4 Regular Transitive → High Absolutive

4.1 High Absolutive Syntax

- Ergative languages show variation with regard to the position of the absolutive argument (Bittner and Hale 1996a,b)
  - High Abs languages: the abs = highest in its clause
  - Low Abs languages: the abs → no consistent position
- Key Pattern: High Abs → transitive int > ext

4.2 Binding Patterns → High Absolutive Syntax

- Mandar: int consistently binds into ext.
  - Same patterns: many Philippine-type languages
- Claim: Mandar = High Absolutive language
  - Result: locality a plausible source of the eec
- N.b.: no one diagnostic is definitive. It’s the sum total.

4.2.1 Condition A

- Claim: if ∃ ergative anaphor, then int > ext (Anderson 1976)
  - N.b.: this only works in one direction. Ergative anaphors may be independently ruled out for other reasons.
- The condition-A anaphor alawe ‘self’: ok as ext.
- High-Abs Parallel: Toba Batak (Cole and Hermon 2008)

4.2.2 Condition C

- Claim: if int > ext, then it should be impossible for an R-expression in the ext to be coindexed with a pronominal int.
  - English: no ‘Dan,’s mother saw him,
  - Mandar: this constraint holds.
- High-Abs Parallel: Popti’ (Craig 1977), Chuj (Royer 2020)

4.2.3 Condition B

- Claim: if int > ext, then a quantifier in the int should be able to bind a variable in the ext (Rackowski 2002)
- Mandar: possible; quantified int > variable in ext
  - N.b.: does not reflect the absence of weak crossover.
- High-Abs Parallel: Malagasy (Pearson 2005)
5 Quirky Intransitive → Low Absolutive

5.1 Split Predictions

- Split predictions about quirky intransitive syntax.

1. The impoverishment approach: no special syntax.
   - The relative height of the INT & EXT: not relevant.
   - Result: this construction → no change in syntax.

2. The locality approach: special syntax required.
   - The relative height of the INT & EXT: relevant.
   - Result: this construction → ext > int syntax.

5.2 First Clue: Low Absolutive Licensing

- Quirky Intransitive: absolutive agreement → int.
- Question: how high is this agreement?
  - If $\tau^0$: quirky intransitive → regular syntax.
  - If somewhere else: no regular syntax.
- Linear Position → agreement on $v^0$.
  - Transitive INT → agreement in 2p.
  - Quirky intransitive INT → agreement follows $v$
- Claim: this INT does not interact with $\tau^0$.

5.3 Second Clue: Binding Patterns

- Transitive: INT > EXT in binding.
  - INT binds anaphors in the position of EXT.
  - INT induces condition C violation inside EXT.
- Quirky intransitive: EXT > INT.
  - No anaphor binding from INT into EXT.
  - No condition C from INT into EXT.

5.4 Third Clue: Other Privileges

- Quantifier float: another asymmetry.
  - Transitive INT: can float a preverbal quantifier
  - Quirky intransitive INT: cannot
- Conclusion: Special Syntax
  - Transitive: INT > EXT.
  - Quirky intransitive: EXT > INT.

(17) Locality Prediction: EXT > INT

(18) Quirky Intransitive: Low ABS

a. Innai maq-urung-o [int pro]?
   who qr-kiss=2b
   ‘Who kissed you?’

b. Innai indang pura maq-urung-o?
   who not ever qr-kiss=2b
   ‘Who never kissed you?’

c. Indang-o pura na-urung?
   not=2b ever 3a-kiss
   ‘She never kissed you?’

(19) Quirky Intransitive: EXT > INT

a. *Alawe-u maq-ita=aq [int pro].
   self-my qr-see=1b
   ‘Myself saw me.’

b. [ Kindoqna iNina ] maq-ita=i ia.
   the.mom name qr-see=3b her
   ‘Nina,‘s mom saw her.’

(20) Quantifier Float: INT Low

a. Sangning na-ita=o.
   all 3A-see=2b.
   ‘He saw all of you.’

b. *Innai sangning maq-ita=o?
   who all qr-see=2b
   im: ‘Who saw all of you?’
6 The EEC and Locality

6.1 Proposal: Intransitives + Locality

- Mandar: the EEC → Locality.
  - The transitive: INT > EXT
  - Result: EXT cannot be extracted.
- Quirky Intransitive → solution.
  - This construction: EXT > INT
  - Result: EXT free to undergo extraction.
- Claim: deeper than surface morphology.

6.2 The Highest-Only Extraction Constraint

- The EEC → one corner of a broader constraint.
- Mandar: only the absolutive XP can extract.
- Example 1: comitative verbs (si-)
  - EXT → absolutive agreement; extraction
  - INT → no agreement; no extraction
- Example 2: psych predicates
  - EXP → absolutive agreement; extraction
  - SOURCE → no agreement; no extraction
- Example 3: transitives
  - INT → absolutive agreement; extraction
  - EXT → ergative prefix; no extraction
- Claim: ∃ locality constraint on extraction (Keenan 1976)
- Mandar: the quirky intransitive → locality solution.

6.3 Alternative Approaches: Prospectus

- These patterns have been analyzed elsewhere as:
  1. K-Discrimination for covert/abstract K (Drummond 2021)
  2. Covert embedding of non-abs xps in PPs (Polinsky 2017)
  3. Freezing effects linked to predicate fronting (Chung 2005)
- No alternative seems promising in Mandar.
  - 1: locality already works.
  - 2: no evidence for covert PP structure
  - 3: no evidence for PRED-fronting (Little 2020)
- N.b.: Locality required across W.Austronesian.
7 Interlude: Transitive Syntax

7.1 Transitive Voice: Two Heads

- Two-way voice system: antipassive & transitive.
  - Antipassive voice → me-, maN-...
  - Transitive voice → set.a prefix

- Both voices → bimorphemic
  - v₀: pe-, Ø-, paN-...
  - voice₀: m-, set.a...

7.2 voice₀: introduces the EXT

- Verbs with an ext → -um-, m-, or set.a
  1. Unergative v → infix -um-
  2. Unaccusative v: neither

  - Introduce the ext; selects v₀ (Harley 2013)
  - -um- → the m- in antipassive me- (De Guzman 1978)

7.3 v₀: shifts the INT

- Antipassive voice: definiteness effect (Schachter 1996)
  - OK: INT w/ unique but discourse-new referent
  - BAD: INT w/ established referential index

- Claim: definite INT → must leave vp (Diesing 1992)
  - Transitive v₀ (Ø-): triggers movement to SPEC, vp.
  - Antipassive v₀ (pe-): no movement (Aldridge 2004).

7.4 t₀: High-Absolutive Licensing

- The two voices: different licensing schemas.
  - Transitive: ext licensed by voice₀ (set.A → agreement)
  - Intransitive: ext not licensed by voice₀ (-um-; no AGR)
  - Result: ext licensed in voicep iff transitive.

- t₀: licenses the Absolutive.
  - Antipassive: ext needs licensing → EXT
  - Transitive: ext licensed → INT

- Claim: licensing → movement to SPEC, TP.
  - Absolutive XP: binds into other arguments, extracts...
  - Classical view: this XP is high (Campana 1992).

- Austronesian: unremarkable story (Guilfoyle et al. 1992)
8  The Quirky Intransitive \(v^0\)

8.1 Morphological Decomposition

- The prefix \(maN\): bimorphemic.
  1. The 'intransitive' voice \(-um\); introduces Ext
  2. The 'quirky intransitive' \(paN\)
     - The head which hosts low agreement (Brodkin 2021)
     - Proposal: triggers movement of INT to \(\text{spec,VP}\)

8.2 \(\text{INT} \rightarrow \text{spec,VP}\)

- Distribution: \(v^0_q\text{i} \iff \text{INT} = \text{definite} \)
- Incorporation Pattern: QI \(\text{INT} \rightarrow \text{spec,VP}\)
  - \(v\text{p}-\text{internal material}: \text{pseudo-incorporation}\)
    - Prosodically grouped together with the verb
    - Enclitics follow the verb + \(\text{PNI}\) material.
    - Targets: NP objects; locative XPs.
  - Quirky intransitive: no pseudo-incorporation.
- Result: \(v^0_{qi} \rightarrow \text{movement of INT}\)
  - N.b.: \(v^0_{qi} \neq \text{antipassive } v^0\).

8.3 \(\text{INT} \rightarrow \text{Agreement on } v^0\)

- Quirky intransitive \(v^0 paN\rightarrow u\phi\)
- Extraction of ABS + definite \(\text{INT} \rightarrow \text{no Agr} \text{ w/o } paN\).
  1. Other voice frames (comitative; psych v) \(\rightarrow \text{no Agr}\)
  2. Extraction + other 'antipassive' prefixes \(\rightarrow \text{no Agr}\)
- Claim: this agreement \(\rightarrow v^0 (paN^-)\).

8.4 Claim: Low-Absolutive Licensing

- Quirky intransitive \(v^0\): licenses \(\text{INT in spec,VP}\).
  - Only occurs with definite \(\text{INT} \rightarrow \text{forces the shift}\).
  - Hosts agreement \(\rightarrow \text{licenses the INT (Raposo 1987)}\)
- Elsewhere: this pattern is impossible.
  - Mandar = High Abs language; ABS licensing in \(T^0\).
  - Typical case: definite \(\text{INT} \text{ not licensed in } vp\) (Bok-Bennema 1991)
  - Result: transitive \(\text{INT} \rightarrow \text{spec,TP}\).
  - N.b.: typical licensing schema \(\rightarrow \text{locality problem}\).
9 The Quirky Intransitive and Locality of Extraction

9.1 Recap: The Locality-and-Licensing Model

- Transitive clause: INT > EXT
  1. INT binds an anaphor in the position of the EXT
  2. INT induces condition-c violations in the EXT
  3. Quantified INT can bind a variable in the EXT
  4. Absolutive arguments → float quantifiers
  5. Absolutive agreement: sits in τ°
- The eec: locality constraint in the A'-domain (Campana 1992)
  - Cf. s-o asymmetries in resumption (McCloskey 1990; Shlonsky 1992), extractability (Erlewine and Branan 2020)
- Claim: INT > EXT for reasons of licensing.
  - Definite INT → must escape VP
  - Transitive v°: cannot license the INT.
  - Result: INT → SPEC,TP.

9.2 The Quirky Intransitive: Circumventing the Constraint

- The Quirky Intransitive: EXT > INT
  1. INT cannot bind an anaphor in the position of the EXT.
  2. INT cannot induce condition-c violation in the EXT.
  3. INT cannot float a quantifier.
- Proposal: this construction → locality-compliant
  - The INT remains beneath the EXT.
  - Result: extraction of the EXT → respects locality.
- Derivational Mechanics:
  - Quirky intransitive v°: licenses the INT in SPEC, VP.
  - Intransitive voice°: does not license the EXT.
  - Therefore: EXT → SPEC,TP; INT remains low.
- This pattern: not predicted on non-locality accounts.

9.3 Summary: The Quirky Intransitive Recipe

- Extraction of the EXT + definite INT:
  1. No ergative prefix (set.a)
  2. Intransitive voice° + special v°
  3. Absolutive agreement → INT.
  4. Ban on pseudo-incorporation of the INT
- Mandar: quirky intransitive v° paN-.

\[ (34) \text{Transitive: INT} \rightarrow \text{EXT for Licensing} \]

\[ (35) \text{INT licensed Low} \rightarrow \text{EXT can Extract} \]

\[ (36) \text{The Mandar Summary} \quad \text{(Friberg 1996)} \]

a. Innai maq-balq balenga?
   who ANT-sell pot
   'Who is selling pot?'

b. Innai mam-balq=o iqo?
   who qr-sell=2b 2sg
   'Who sold you?'
10 Intransitivity: A Prospectus

10.1 Mandar: Intransitive $\rightarrow$ Locality

- Mandar shows a locality constraint on $a'$-extraction.
  - Transitive clause: $\text{INT} > \text{EXT} \rightarrow \text{EEC}$
- Quirky intransitive construction: locality solution.
  - Visible difference in the position of the INT.
  - Result: distinct locality-compliant syntax.
- This construction does not involve:
  1. Non-local extraction of the EXT (pace me, 2019)
  2. Antiagreement and nothing else (Erlewine 2016)
  3. The reassociation of agreement on $\tau^0$ (Newman 2020)
- Conclusion: intransitivity $\rightarrow$ locality-compliance in Mandar.
- Open Question: what about intransitivity elsewhere?

10.2 Central Indonesia: Parallel Facts

- Subgroups: South Sulawesi, Kaili-Wolio, Bungku-Tolaki
  - Roughly 40 languages; neighbors to Mandar
- Four shared patterns:
  1. No morphological case
  2. Head-marking ergative alignment (set.a/set.b)
  3. Convergent evidence for $\text{INT} > \text{EXT}$ in transitive.
  4. Extraction of EXT + definite INT $\rightarrow$ QI
- Suspicion: the locality-based account is required.

10.3 Mayan: Same Thing

- High-Abs Mayan (Q’anjob’alan, K’ichean, etc)
  1. No morphological case
  2. Head-marking ergative alignment (set.a/set.b)
  3. Convergent evidence for $\text{INT} > \text{EXT}$ in transitive.
  4. Extraction of EXT + definite INT $\rightarrow$ QI
- The Quirky Intransitive "Agent Focus":
  1. No ergative prefix (set.a)
  2. Intransitive voice$^0$ + special $v^0$
  3. Absolutive agreement $\rightarrow$ INT.
- Suspicion: this is the same thing.
- Intuition: locality-based EECs are likely real.

The Mandar EEC: Locality

Quirky Intransitive: Recap

South Sulawesi: Parallels (Friberg 1996)

Chuj (Q’anjob’alan): High-Abs Syntax

Chuj: Quirky Intransitive
11 Conclusion: How Many EECs?

11.1 Locality Exists

- Many languages: like Mandar.
  1. Transitive clause: $\text{INT} > \text{EXT}$
  2. Locality constraint: only extract the highest thing.
- Sometimes: visible ‘ergative’ case-system.
  - Tagalog (Aldridge 2004), Tongan (Otsuka 2006)
  - Inuit (Bittner 1994; Yuan 2018)
- Other times: no morphological case.
  - Mayan (Coon et al. 2014; Royer 2020)
  - W. Indonesia (Guilfoyle et al. 1992)
- These languages $\exists$ locality constraint.
  - "Is this the eec" $\rightarrow$ terminological question
  - cf: the ‘are Philippine languages ergative’ lit.

11.2 Ergative Languages $\rightarrow$ Extremely Diverse

- Other languages $\rightarrow$ not Mandar (Deal 2015a)
  1. $\exists$ languages w/o locality constraints on extraction.
  2. $\exists$ eec + no $\text{INT} > \text{EXT}$ (Legate 2012)
  3. $\exists$ eec + no $\text{INT} > \text{EXT} + \text{no m-case}$ (Drummond 2021)
- Expectation: the eec $\neq$ one thing (cf: diversity of repairs!)

11.3 Open Question: What are all of these EECs?

- Alternative paths to the eec exist.
  1. K-Discrimination for covert/abstract x (Drummond 2021)
  2. Covert embedding of non-abs xps in fps (Polinsky 2017)
  3. Freezing effects linked to predicate fronting (Chung 2005)
- Beyond the pale: some funny correlations
  - High Absolutive syntax $\rightarrow$ Locality Constraint?
  - Verb-initial order $\rightarrow$ ergativity? (Mahajan 1994)
- Conclusion: there is a lot to be understood.

References


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