Remarks on split intransitivity

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1. Introduction

A variety of terms have been used with reference to the questions addressed in this talk: *split intransitivity, split S, unaccusativity, agentive alignment, active-stative alignment, semantic alignment.*

1.1. Split intransitivity

Split intransitivity[1] is retained as the most general, neutral and non-committal term transparently referring to situations in which verbs occurring in intransitive constructions divide into two classes characterized by a contrast in the way their single core argument S is aligned with the two core terms of the transitive construction, A and P. In order to avoid terminological problems with terms variously used in different traditions, intransitive verbs whose S argument is aligned with A and intransitive verbs whose S arguments is aligned with P will be designated as S_A *verbs* and S_P *verbs* respectively.[2]

For example, in the Papuan language Galela, transitive verbs have two distinct sets of prefixes cross-referencing A and P respectively – ex. (1a-b), whereas intransitive verbs divide into a subclass whose sole argument S_A is indexed via the same paradigm used to index the A argument of transitive verbs – ex. (1c), and a subclass whose sole argument S_P is indexed via the same paradigm used to index the P argument of transitive verbs – ex. (1d).

(1)   *Galela* (Holton Forthcoming)

   a. *No-wi-doto*
      A2SG-P3SGM-teach
      'You teach him'

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b. *Wo-ni-doto*
   A3SGM-P2SG-teach
   'He teaches you'

c. *No-tagi*
   A2SG-go
   'You are going'

d. *Ni-kiolo*
   P2SG-be asleep
   'You are asleep'

1.2. TAM-driven alignment variations

Split intransitivity in the sense given here to this term refers to alignment properties involving a contrast between two subclasses of intransitive verbs, and therefore must not be confused with alignment variations conditioned by verbal inflection (commonly termed *split ergativity* by typologists). For example, in the Kurmanji variety of Kurdish, the S argument of intransitive verbs is uniformly in the nominative, and the verb uniformly agrees with it, whereas A and P show variations in case marking and indexation conditioned by the TAM value of the verb: in some tenses, A in the nominative contrasts with P in the oblique case, and verb agreement is governed by A (hence accusative alignment: S = A ≠ P) – ex. (2a-d), whereas in some others, A in the oblique case contrasts with P in the nominative, and verb agreement is governed by P (hence ergative alignment: S = P ≠ A) – ex. (2e-h)).

(2)   *Kurmanji*

a. *Ez   dikev-im*
   1SG   fall.PRS-1SG
   'I am falling'

b. *Mirov   dikev-e*
   man   fall.PRS-3SG
   'The man is falling'

c. *Ez   mirov-î   dibîn-im*
   1SG   man-OBL.SGM   see.PRS-1SG
   'I see the man'

d. *Mirov   min   dibîn-e*
   man   1SG.OBL   see.PRS-3SG
   'The man sees me'

e. *Ez   ket-im*
   1SG   fall.PFV-1SG
   'I fell'

f. *Mirov   ket-Ø*

    man   fall.PFV-3SG

    'The man fell'

g. *Min   mirov   dît-Ø*

    1SG.OBL   man   see.PFV-3SG

    'I saw the man'

h. *Mirov-î   ez   dît-im*

    man-OBL.SGM   1SG   see.PFV-1SG

    'The man saw me'

The distinction between split intransitivity proper and TAM-driven alignment variations may however be difficult to draw in systems in which both types of alignment variations interfere in a complex way, and historical shifts are possible – see section 5.3.

1.3. *Split* intransitivity and *fluid* intransitivity

In *fluid S systems* as defined by Dixon (Dixon 1994:78-83), the semantic nature of the verb conditions the choice of S alignment without however determining it entirely: intransitive verbs (or at least an important proportion of them) allow for variations in S alignment correlated to the degree to which the referent of the S NP controls the activity in the particular event referred to. Acehnese, a western Austronesian language from Sumatra, is one of the best-known and most cited cases of fluid intransitivity – Durie 1985.

Many unclear points in discussions about split intransitivity or unaccusativity result from lack of acknowledgement of the distinction between split intransitivity and fluid intransitivity.

In particular, I will argue in section 3.2 that some of the phenomena discussed in the generative literature as possible unaccusativity diagnostics are not manifestations of split intransitivity, and must be analyzed in terms of fluid intransitivity, but of a type different from that commonly mentioned in the literature on alignment typology, in which the fluctuations in the alignment of S have nothing to do with control, and are determined by pragmatic factors interfering with verbal lexical semantics.[3]

1.4. The Unaccusative Hypothesis

Unaccusativity primarily refers to a possible syntactic explanation of split intransitivity within the frame of multistratal theories of syntax, according to which "the single argument or unaccusative verbs is an underlying object, and thus displays many syntactic properties of direct objects of transitive verbs", whereas "the single argument of unergative verbs is a

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[3] Note however that the distinction between split intransitive and fluid intransitive systems is not always easy to establish, since even the most typical split intransitive languages commonly have a handful of intransitive verbs whose behavior shows fluctuations, and languages in which a significant proportion of intransitive verbs allows for fluidity in S alignment may also have verbs rigidly classified as S_A or S_P verbs – on this latter point, see for example Durie 1985 on Acehnese.

subject at all levels of representation, and thus displays the same syntactic behavior as the subject of transitive verbs" – Sorace 2004. Consequently, the use of the same term to simply describe the phenomena that the Unaccusative Hypothesis aims at explaining can only lead to confusions.

1.5. The Unaccusative Hypothesis, unaccusativity diagnostics and unaccusative syntax

Another problem with the notion of unaccusativity is that it has been extended to variable properties of intransitive verbs whose relation to the original definition of unaccusativity is at best indirect: several 'unaccusativity diagnostics' (for example, auxiliary selection – see section 3.1) have no obvious formulation in terms of split intransitivity (i.e., in terms of S alignment with respect to a contrasting property of the two core arguments of the transitive construction).

Another extension of this notion, which has a clear connection with S alignment but no necessary connection with split intransitivity as defined above, emerges from recent generative studies: constructions in which S is aligned with A are commonly said to have *unaccusative syntax*, irrespective of the fact that they involve or not a contrast between two classes of intransitive verbs. For example, recent studies of the impersonal construction of French intransitive verbs have concluded that this construction has unaccusative syntax, but does not involve a division of intransitive verbs into two classes – see in particular Cummins 2000. Some aspects of this question will be developed in section 3.2.

1.6. Agentive / active-stative / semantic alignment

The inconvenience of terms such as *agentive alignment* or *active-stative alignment* is that they refer to possible semantic correlates of split intransitivity, and therefore imply an a priori decision with respect to what constitutes a controversial question in the study of split intransitivity and related phenomena. Even the term *semantic alignment* recently proposed by S. Wichmann (Donohue & Wichmann (eds.) Forthcoming) can be criticized from this point of view, since it excludes the very possibility of purely lexical (i.e., semantically arbitrary) intransitivity splits – see section 4.3.

1.7. Split intransitivity in the typological tradition

Split intransitivity has attracted the attention of linguists working within very different theoretical frameworks.

Sapir 1917 initiated a tradition with a marked typological orientation, which concentrates on cases of *overt* split intransitivity, i.e., split intransitivity apparent in the coding characteristics of S (case marking and/or verb agreement), and tends to neglect *covert* split intransitivity, i.e., split intransitivity manifested in some aspects of the behavior of S in languages in which the coding characteristics of S do not depend on the choice of a particular intransitive verb.

Some decades ago, Klimov put forward the hypothesis of an 'active' language type, on a par with the accusative and the ergative types, defined by a bundle of correlations between split intransitivity and other typological features such as head marking, or the expression of alienability – Klimov 1977. This idea has been severely criticized, and is now considered

unfounded, but typologists have never ceased gathering data on split intransitivity and investigating the syntactic manifestations and semantic correlates of split intransitivity. In recent years there has appeared a growing interest in the diachronic study of split intransitivity among typologists – see in particular Donohue & Wichmann (eds.) Forthcoming.

1.8. Split intransitivity in generative syntax

The generative tradition, initiated by Pearlmutter 1978 within the framework of relational grammar and Burzio 1986 within the GB paradigm, started by investigating cases of *covert* split intransitivity in languages in which the coding characteristics of S consistently follow accusative alignment (S = A ≠ P). At its beginning, it was mainly concerned with the discussion of the *Unaccusative Hypothesis* according to which intransitive subjects that have the same coding characteristics as transitive subjects but are aligned with objects in some aspects of their behavior are objects at some level of representation.

However, as already mentioned above, discussions of the Unaccusative Hypothesis have integrated phenomena (such as auxiliary selection in Romance and Germanic languages, or the impersonal construction of French intransitive verbs) whose relation with split intransitivity proper is questionable. Not surprisingly, a thorough examination of 'unaccusativity mismatches' has resulted in that a growing proportion of studies devoted to phenomena considered as possible manifestations of unaccusativity have started expressing doubts about the possibility to explain this rather heterogeneous set of variable properties of intransitive verbs within the frame of the Unaccusative Hypothesis as it was initially formulated. Recent generative studies of unaccusativity tend to focus rather on the representation of unaccusative syntax (i.e., on the underlying configurations likely to account for constructions in which the subject of intransitive verbs shows properties typical of objects), without necessarily postulating that unaccusative syntax should be reserved to a subclass of 'unaccusative' intransitive verbs. We will return to this question in section 3.

1.9. The organization of this paper

In section 2, I review manifestations of split intransitivity, in the coding properties of core arguments (section 2.1) and in their behavioral properties (section 2.2). I conclude this section by some remarks on multiple intransitivity splits (section 2.3), inconsistencies in the recognition of intransitivity splits (section 2.4), and variations in the relative importance of subclasses of intransitive verbs.

In section 3, I examine some phenomena commonly mentioned as 'unaccusativity diagnostics' that however cannot be described in terms of alignment variations (section 3.1), or involve fluid intransitivity rather than split intransitivity (section 3.2).

In section 4, I discuss the question of the semantic correlates of split intransitivity.

Section 5 is devoted to the diachrony of split intransitivity. Three evolutions already identified as possible sources of split intransitivity are presented: the evolution of 'transimpersonal' constructions (section 5.1), the evolution of light verb compounds (section 5.2), and the grammaticalization of aspectual periphrases (section 5.3).

In section 6, I use data from my field work on the Nakh-Daghestanian language Akhwakh to illustrate some of the points addressed in the preceding sections. In particular, I argue that

the intransitivity split of Akhvakh results from an abrupt change of a type not identified so far, by which a tense distinction has been reanalyzed as encoding a particular alignment of speech act roles with argumental roles.

2. Overt and covert split intransitivity

For each property marking a contrast between the two core arguments A and P of the prototypical transitive construction, it may happen that the behavior of the single core argument of intransitive verbs uniformly coincides with the behavior of A (accusative alignment), or with the behavior of P (ergative alignment), but it may also happen that the behavior of S with respect to the property in question coincides with that of A for some intransitive verbs, and with that of P for some others. In other words, any contrasting property of the two core arguments of the prototypical transitive construction may be involved in an intransitivity split.

Intransitivity splits may involve coding characteristics of core arguments (*overt* split intransitivity), or their behavior in various syntactic mechanisms (*covert* split intransitivity).

2.1. Overt split intransitivity

The coding characteristics of NPs fulfilling core syntactic roles may involve contrasts in case marking, argument indexation, and constituent order.

2.1.1. Split intransitivity in argument indexation

Most languages in which overt split intransitivity has been reported are predominantly head-marking languages in which argument indexation shows a split intransitive pattern.

The Papuan language Galela – ex. (1) above – provides a typical illustration.

Boas 1909 is among the first language descriptions in which an indexation system of this kind is clearly identified. Dakota (Van Valin 1977) and Guaraní (Gregores & Suarez 1967) are among the best-known examples of split intransitivity manifested in argument indexation.[4]

2.1.2. Split intransitivity in case marking

Split intransitivity in case marking can be illustrated by Georgian. In this language, verb tenses divide into 3 groups with respect to the coding characteristics of NPs fulfilling core syntactic roles, and intransitive verbs divide into three classes: a subclass whose S argument is always encoded in the same way as the A argument of transitive verbs, a subclass whose S argument shows coding characteristics different from those of A in the 2nd and 3rd groups of tenses, and a subclass whose S argument shows coding characteristics different from those of A in the 1st and 2nd groups of tenses (Van Valin 1990, Lazard 1995). In particular, in the tense traditionally (and somewhat misleadingly) called aorist, the S argument of 'hide' and

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[4] More complex indexation patterns, with three indexation possibilities for S arguments and variations in the indexation of A and O that complicate the identification of alignment patterns, have also been reported. See a.o. Heath 1977 on Choctaw, Donohue 2001 on Saweru.

'cry' is cross-referenced via the same person markers as A, but these two verbs do not assign the same case to S: with 'cry', S is in the same ergative case as the A argument of transitive verbs, whereas with 'hide', S is in the same nominative case as the P argument of transitive verbs – ex. (3).

(3)   *Georgian*

a. *bič'-ma   gat'exa   žam-i*
   boy-ERG   break.AOR.A3SG.P3SG   bowl-NOM
   'The boy broke the bowl'

b. *bič'-i   daimala*
   boy-NOM   hide(intr).AOR.A3SG
   'The boy hid (himself)'

c. *bič'-ma   it'ira*
   boy-ERG   cry.AOR.A3SG
   'The boy cried'

Li 2007 describes split intransitivity manifested in case marking in Nepali.

2.1.3. Split intransitivity in constituent order

In languages with a rigid AVP or PVA constituent order in the transitive construction, the choice between SV and VS may constitute a manifestation of split intransitivity, as claimed in Donohue Forthcoming for Ambonese Malay – ex. (4).

(4)   *Ambonese Malay* (Donohue Forthcoming)

a. *Dorang cari   betang konco*
   3PL   search for   my   friend
   'They are looking for my friend'

b. *Betang konco   su-bajaang*
   my   friend   PFV-walk
   'My friend walked away'

c. *Su-jato betang konco*
   PFV-fall   my   friend
   'My friend has fallen over'

Note however that SV ~ VS alternations are rarely rigidly determined by the choice of individual intransitive verbs, and more commonly involve pragmatically governed fluid intransitivity – see section 3.2.

2.2. Covert split intransitivity

In principle, any syntactic mechanism involving a contrast in the behavior of the two core arguments of transitive verbs can be involved in an intransitivity split. The enumeration given here is not exhaustive. After reminding some of the well-known manifestations of covert split-intransitivity, I give some examples of less-known phenomena that may involve variations in the alignment of the sole argument of an intransitive verb.

Several phenomena currently mentioned as possible 'unaccusativity diagnostics' do NOT figure in this enumeration, either because they cannot be straightforwardly formulated as a contrast between S alignment with A and S alignment with P, or because it has been shown that they involve *fluid* intransitivity rather than *split* intransitivity. We will return to them in section 3.

Note that, in the particular case of French, this decision fully concords with the position defended by Legendre & Sorace 2003, according to which participial constructions provide the best unaccusative diagnostic for French, whereas the impersonal construction of intransitive verbs, *en*-cliticization, so-called 'unaccusative inversion', and auxiliary selection, are not reliable unaccusativity diagnostics.

2.2.1. Impersonal passives

In languages in which passive morphology can be used to block the expression of the A argument of transitive verbs without affecting the expression of the P argument, the same operation may apply to the S argument of a subclass of intransitive verbs (Perlmutter 1978). The possibility to passivize 'unergative' intransitive verbs but not 'unaccusatives' has been noted a.o. by Rice 1991 for the Athapaskan language Slave.

Note however that the existence of such a split is not a general property of languages having impersonal passives: in Tswana, any intransitive verb can occur in an impersonal passive construction.

2.2.2. The syntax of resultatives

In English and some other languages, a resultative phrase can be predicated of the P argument of transitive verbs, or of the S argument of a subclass of intransitive verbs, but cannot be predicated, either of the A argument of transitive verbs, or of the S argument of another subclass of intransitive verbs (Levin & Rappaport Hovav 1995).

2.2.3. The attributive use of past participles

In several Germanic and Romance languages, past participles of transitive verbs can modify a head noun semantically identified to the P argument (as in English *uneaten food* vs. **uneaten man*). The past participle of a subclass of intransitive verbs can combine in the same way with a head noun identified to the S argument (*unfallen leaves*), whereas with another

subclass of intransitive verbs, the attributive use of the past participle is impossible (*_unrun jogger_) – Levin & Rappaport 1986.

A similar split, involving the attributive use of verb forms including aspectual suffixes, has been described in Japanese – Kishimoto 1996.

2.2.4. Russian bare po-_phrases_

In Russian, with transitive verbs, distributive bare _po_-phrases can occur only in P role, and intransitive verbs divide into a subclass that accepts distributive _po_-phrases in S role, and a subclass that does not accept them (Pesetsky 1982, Schoorlemmer 2004) – ex. (5).

(5)   _Russian_ (Schoorlemmer 2004)

    a. _Každyj rebënok   polučil   po   knige_
        every.SG child.SG   receive.PST.SGM DISTR book.SG.DAT
        'Every child received a book'

    b. _V každom   gorške   roslo   po   cvetočku_
        in every.SG.LOC   pot.SG.LOC   grow.PST.SGM   DISTR flower.SG.DAT
        'In each pot grew a flower'

    c. *_Na každoj   ploščadke   begalo   po sobačke_
        on every.SG.LOC   playground.SG.LOC run.PST.SGM DISTR dog.SG.DAT
        intended: 'A dog was running on each playground'

2.2.5. German split phrases

According to Grewendorf 1989, in German, NPs where the head and its dependents are separated are allowed in P role – (6a), and also in S role with a subclass of intransitive verbs – (6d), but they are not allowed, either in A role – (6b), or in S role with another subclass of intransitive verbs – (6c).

(6)   _German_ (Grewendorf 1989)

    a. <u>_Kleider_</u> _hat_   _er   immer_ <u>_dreckige_</u> _an_
        cloth.PL have.PRS.A3SG 3SGM always   dirty.PL   on
        'As for clothes, he always wear dirty ones'

    b. *<u>_Studenten_</u>   _haben_   <u>_fleißige_</u>   _das   Seminar   besucht_
        student.PL   AUX.PRS.A3PL   hard-working DEF.SGN seminar.SG   visit.PTCP

    c. *<u>_Studenten_</u>   _haben_   <u>_fleißige_</u>   _telefoniert_
        student.PL   AUX.PRS.A3PL   hard-working   call.PTCP

d. _Fehler_ _sind_ _dem_ _Hans_ _vermeidbare_ _unterlaufen_

mistake.PL   AUX.PRS.A3SG   DEF.SGM.DAT   Hans   avoidable.PL   occur.PTCP

'As for mistakes, some avoidable ones have occurred to Hans'

2.2.6. Germanic 'what-for' split

According to Grewendorf 1989, in German, the 'what-for' construction is possible with nouns in P role – (7a), and also in S role with a subclass of intransitive verbs – (7d), but not with nouns in A role – (7b), or in S role with another subclass of intransitive verbs – (7c). Similar observations have been made on other Germanic languages (Dutch, Swedish).

(7)   _German_ (Grewendorf 1989)

a. _Was_ _hast_ _du_ _für_ _Bücher_ _gekauft?_

what   have.PRS.A2SG   2SG   for   book.PL   buy.PTCP

'What kind of books have you bought?'

b. * _Was_ _haben_ _für_ _Studenten_ _Bücher_ _gelesen?_

what   have.PRS.A3PL   for   student.PL   book.PL   read.PTCP

c. * _Was_ _haben_ _für_ _Leute_ _getanzt?_

what   have.PRS.A3PL   for   people.PL   dance.PTCP

d. _Was_ _sind_ _für_ _Bücher_ _erschienen?_

what   be.PRS.A3PL   for   book.PL   appear.PTCP

'What kind of books appeared?'

2.2.7. Possessor raising

In some languages in which an external possessor can refer to the P argument of a transitive verb, it has been claimed that intransitive verbs divide into two subclasses according to the possibility to be constructed with an external possessor referring to their S argument – see in particular Borer & Grodzinky 1986 on Hebrew.

2.2.8. Noun incorporation

In languages having a productive mechanism of noun incorporation, transitive verbs can incorporate their P argument, but not their A argument, and intransitive verbs may divide into a subclass whose S argument can be incorporated in the same way as P, and another subclass with which S incorporation is impossible – Baker 1988; see also Rice 1991 on the Athapaskan language Slave.

2.2.9. Nahuatl impersonalization

Nahuatl has no case contrast between A and P, and uniformly uses the same prefixes to index the A argument of transitive verbs and the sole argument or intransitive verbs, but shows an intransitivity split in the way the sole argument of intransitive verbs can impersonalize. Nahuatl has two distinct morphological devices to encode unspecific agents (passivization by means of the suffix *-lo*) and unspecific patients ('introversion' by means of the so-called indefinite object prefixes *tla-* and *tē-*), and shows a tripartite split with respect to the morphological operations used to impersonalize the S argument of intransitives: (a) with some intransitive verbs, unspecific S is encoded via the same passive suffix *-lo* as A – ex. (8), (b) with some others, unspecific S is encoded via the same 'introversive' prefix *tla-* as an inanimate P – ex. (9), (c) a third group of intransitive verbs uses a special impersonal suffix *-hua* – ex. (10) (Launey 1981, Launey 1994).

(8)   *Nahuatl* (Launey 1981)

    a. *Mayāna   in   pilli*
       A3SG.be hungry.PRS DEF   child
       'The child is hungry'

    b. *Mayāna-lo*
       A3SG.be hungry-PASS.PRS
       'People are hungry'

(9)   *Nahuatl* (Launey 1981)

    a. *Popōca   in   tepetl*
       A3SG.smoke.PRS DEF   mountain
       'The mountain is smoking'

    b. *Tla-popōca*
       A3SG.INTRV-smoke.PRS
       'Something is smoking'

(10)   *Nahuatl* (Launey 1981)

    a. *Tzàtzi   in   pilli*
       A3SG.scream.PRS   DEF   child
       'The child is screaming'

    b. *Tzàtzī-hua*
       A3SG.be hungry-IMPERS.PRS
       'Somebody is screaming'

Note that, in Nahuatl, intransitives derived from transitives via either reflexivization or introversion uniformly use passive morphology to impersonalize their S argument – ex. (11) & (12).

(11) *Nahuatl* (Launey 1981)

   a. *Ni-c-tlātia*   *in*   *tomin*
      A1SG-P3SG-hide.PRS DEF   money
      'I am hiding the money'

   b. *Ni-no-tlātia*
      A1SG-REFL-hide.PRS
      'I am hiding (myself)'

   c. *Ne-tlātī-lo*
      A3SG.REFL-eat.PASS.PRS
      'People are hiding'

(12) *Nahuatl* (Launey 1981)

   a. *Ni-c-cua*   *in*   *nacatl*
      A1SG-P3SG-eat.PRS DEF   meat
      'I am eating the meat'

   b. *Ni-tla-cua*
      A1SG-INTRV-eat.PRS
      'I am eating'

   c. *Tla-cuā-lo*
      A3SG.INTRV-eat-PASS.PRS
      'People are eating'

2.2.10. Northern Mande nominalization

Several Northern Mande languages distinguish two types of genitival construction: the inalienable genitival construction, which involves mere juxtaposition of the genitival modifier to its head, and the alienable genitival construction, in which the genitival modifier combines with a genitival postposition. When transitive verbs are nominalized, A is transposed as an alienable genitival modifier, whereas P is transposed as an inalienable genitival modifier, and in at least some Northern Mande languages, the S argument of some intransitive verbs is treated in nominalization in the same way as A, whereas with other intransitive verbs, the behavior of S in nominalization aligns on that of P – see in particular Lüpke 2005:327-47 on Jalonke.

(13) *Jalonke* (Lüpke 2005)

a. [*N   ma   banxi-fal-aa*] *n   na-tagan-xi   nde*
   1SG   GEN   house-build-DEF 1SG CAUS-be tired-PFV INACT
   'My house-building (i.e. my building of a house) tired me'

b. [*Banx-ɛɛ   fal-aa*],   *tɔɔrɔ-na   a   xɔn*
   house-DEF   build-DEF 1SG   suffer-DEF   3SG   at
   'The building of a house means suffering'

c. [*N   ma   dagalan*]   *nan n   na-bira-xi*
   1SG   GEN   stumble   FOC   1SG   CAUS-fall-PFV
   'My stumbling has made me fall'

d. [*N   ɲin-nee   bɔr-ɔɔ*]   *n   tɔɔrɔ-xi   nde*
   1SG   tooth-DEF.PL be rotten-DEF   1SG   suffer-PFV   INACT
   'The rotting of my teeth had made me suffer'

2.2.11. Halkomelem Salish desideratives

According to Gerdts 1992, Halkomelem Salish has a desiderative derivation that modifies the semantic role of the A argument of transitive verbs in the same way as the *want to V* construction of English. The same derivation is possible for a subclass of intransitive verbs but is impossible for others, even in cases in which the *want to V* construction would be fully acceptable in English (for example, Halkomelem Salish uses the desiderative derivation to express 'I want to go', but cannot use it to express 'I don't want to get lost' – Gerdts 1991:236-7).

2.3. Languages with multiple intransitivity splits

In a given language, it may happen that intransitive verbs do not group in the same way with respect to various manifestations of split intransitivity. This constitutes a serious challenge for theories postulating that split intransitivity as a whole reflects a binary choice between two possible types of underlying configurations for the core terms of intransitive clauses, and consequently, the question has been widely debated in the unaccusativity literature. We will return to this question in section 3, because it can be argued that a possible cause of some alleged 'unaccusativity mismatches' is simply that some phenomena commonly considered as providing unaccusativity tests have no direct link to split intransitivity and unaccusativity as they are currently defined.

For the moment, I will limit myself to underscore that, contrary to the generally received opinion (included among typologists), overt split intransitivity is not only attested in more or less 'exotic' languages, and multiple intransitivity splits should not be considered exceptional. In particular, a thorough examination of exceptional valency patterns found in languages such as Latin, German or Russian leads to the conclusion that, in addition to the covert intransitivity splits discussed in the literature on unaccusativity, they have minor classes of

intransitive verbs whose construction does not conform to the predominant rule of accusative alignment, and must therefore be viewed as instances of overt split intransitivity.

For example, in addition to covert split intransitivity manifested in at least the construction mentioned in section 2.2.4 above, Russian has a class of verbs occurring in a construction that includes an accusative NP representing an experiencer, but in which no argument encoded by a nominative NP governing verb agreement can be present, and the verb shows default 3rd sing. / neuter sing. agreement.   Some of these verbs have no other possible construction, for example *tošnit'* 'feel nauseous' – ex. (14).

(14) *Russian*

    Menja   tošnit
    1SG.ACC   feel nauseous.PRS.A3SG
    'I feel nauseous'

Even in Romance, exceptional valency patterns including an argument fully aligned with P but no argument aligned with A (and therefore analyzable as instances of overt split alignment) are not totally unknown. In French, *falloir* 'need' cannot occur in a canonical construction with a subject NP and does not inflect for person. Note that, contrary to French verbs occasionally occurring in an impersonal construction, *falloir* accepts object clitics without any restriction. Historically, this verb had a behavior similar to that of *manquer* 'lack' illustrated by (15d-e), but the impersonal construction has become its only possible construction.

(15) *French*

    a. *Il   me   faut   ces   livres*
       A3SGM   D1SG need.PRS DEM.PL   book.PL
       'I need these books'

    b. *Ces   livres, il   me   les faut*
       DEM.PL   book.PL A3SGM   D1SG P3PL need.PRS
       'These books, I need them'

    c. **Ces   livres   me   ?fallent*
       DEM.PL book.PL D1SG   need.PRS.A3PL

    d. *Il   me   manque   ces   livres*
       A3SGM   D1SG lack.PRS.A3SG   DEM.PL   book.PL
       'I lack these books'

    e. *Ces   livres   me   manquent*
       DEM.PL   book.PL D1SG   lack.PRS.A3PL
       'I lack these books'

Occitan *caler* 'need' (cognate with Old French *chaloir*) shows the same behavior: it does not inflect for person, and its construction includes an NP fully aligned on P and a dative NP. The difference with French is that the impersonal constructions of Occitan do not involve dummy pronouns – ex. (16).

(16) *Occitan*

Li	cal	de	bonas	cambas	per	pujar	tan	naut
D3SG	need.PRS	INDEF	good.PLF	leg.PL	to	climb.INF	so	high

'He needs good legs to climb so high'

Whatever the analysis of dummies and default verb agreement (i.e., even if one accepts the hypothesis of invisible dummies having some of the syntactic properties that in canonical constructions attach to subject NPs), the absence of an argument aligned with A and the presence of an argument fully aligned with P make these constructions similar to the constructions involving an S argument aligned on P in languages in which overt split intransitivity is traditionally recognized.

2.4. Inconsistencies in the recognition of intransitivity splits

In this connection, it is important to emphasize that the typological and generative traditions share the same bias in the way they deal with predominantly ergative and predominantly accusative languages. In predominantly ergative languages having a minor class of verbs whose construction involves an argument having the coding characteristics of A but no argument with the coding characteristics of P (which is for example the case of Basque), no typologist hesitates to recognize an intransitivity split with a minor class of intransitive verbs following accusative alignment, and generativists immediately identify a subclass of 'unergative' verbs. But when the symmetrical situation is found in predominantly accusative languages (for example, in languages like Latin, German or Russian that have a minor class of 'impersonal' constructions involving an accusative NP but no nominative NP – see ex. (14) in section 2.3), the possibility to analyze it in terms of split intransitivity or unaccusativity is generally neglected. There are however some notable exceptions, in particular Moravcsik 1978.[5]

Ex. (17) illustrates monovalent verbs of Basque whose sole argument is encoded like the A argument of a transitive verb, and therefore constitute exceptions to the general rule of ergative alignment.

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[5] In this article, devoted to manifestations of ergativity in predominantly accusative languages, E. Moravcsik recognizes "accusatively marked intransitive subjects" (and consequently, ergative alignment) in constructions including an experiencer in the accusative such as Old English *Mec longade*, 'I longed' (lit. 'Me longed'), Latin *Pudet me* 'I am ashamed' (lit. 'Shames me'), or German *Es friert mich* 'I am cold' (lit. 'It freezes me').

(17) *Basque*

a. *Urak   irakin   du*
   water.SG.ERG   boil.PFV AUX.PRS.P3SG.A3SG
   'The water has boiled'

b. *Telebistak   ez   du   funtzionatzen*
   television.SG.ERG   NEG   AUX.PRS.P3SG.A3SG work.IPFV
   'The TV doesn't work'

These verbs are currently termed 'unergatives' by generativists, which suggests that they constitute the mirror image of the unaccusative verbs found in the other European languages. But this label is quite misleading. In fact, they constitute the exact mirror image of the Russian (or Latin, German, etc.) impersonal verbs with a unique argument represented by an accusative NP, which are never mentioned in discussions of unaccusativity.

In the typological tradition, it is commonly admitted that this subclass of Basque intransitive verbs constitutes an instance of split intransitivity; at the same time, many a typologist would probably disagree with the proposal to analyze in the same way the Russian construction illustrated in (14), because the verb shows what could be the trace of 3rd person singular A argument. But accepting this objection implies putting dummies and default agreement marks on a par with NPs or bound pronouns representing arguments in the definition of alignment types, and the same line of argument should be applied to the S_A verbs of Basque. The construction of these verbs includes the transitive auxiliary in the form that normally implies a 3rd person singular P argument, and therefore can be viewed as an exception to the ergative alignment rule only if dummies and default agreement marks are distinguished from referential NPs and bound pronouns in the identification of alignment patterns. Recognizing *overt* split intransitivity in Basque but not in Russian (or German, or Latin) is therefore totally inconsistent.

2.5. Cross-linguistic divergences in the size and productivity of subclasses of intransitive verbs

As mentioned in Merlan 1985, in languages having split intransitive systems, the size of the two subclasses of intransitive verbs varies a good deal. There are also variations in their productivity that do not necessarily coincide with differences in size (there may exist productive processes for deriving new members of a relatively small class).

Some languages (for example, Basque) have a small class of S_A verbs and a large class of S_P verbs, others (for example, the Saharan language Beria – Jakobi & Crass 2004) have a small class of S_P verbs and a large class of S_A verbs, and in other languages (for example, the Nakh-Daghestanian language Akhvakh – see section 6), both classes are numerically important.

French and Occitan, with a unique verb occurring in a construction with an argument fully aligned with P but no argument aligned with A (section 2.3), illustrate the borderline case of languages in which a class of verbs characterized by exceptional alignment properties includes just one member.

3. Split intransitivity, fluid intransitivity and unaccusativity tests

A crucial aspect of the generative approach to split intransitivity is that it considers relevant to this question not only phenomena straightforwardly definable in terms of alignment variations (S = A ≠ P *vs.* S = P ≠ A), but also variable properties of intransitive constructions that cannot be defined in terms of alignment of S either with A or P – section 3.1. In addition to that, some of the 'unaccusativity diagnostics' that clearly imply alignment variations do not involve split intransitivity proper, but rather fluid intransitivity – section 3.2.

3.1. 'Unaccusativity diagnostics' that are not straightforwardly interpretable in terms of alignment variations

3.1.1. Auxiliary selection

Auxiliary selection in Germanic and Romance languages[6] is one of the most popular unaccusativity diagnostics. However, in spite of several proposals to establish a connection, many authors acknowledge that it remains unclear why auxiliary selection should be sensitive to a distinction between intransitive verbs whose S argument is an underlying A and intransitive verbs whose S argument is an underlying P (se a.o. Levin & Rappaport Hovav 1995).

In the languages in question, the perfect auxiliary in transitive constructions is invariably *have*, and it would simply be nonsensical to try to describe auxiliary selection as based on a contrast between A triggering the choice of *have* and P triggering the choice of *be*, with extension to S along a split intransitive pattern. Therefore, whatever the possibility to establish a connection between unaccusative syntax and the selection of *be*, it should be clear that auxiliary selection cannot be described as a contrast between S_A verbs and S_P verbs. Consequently, there is no a priori reason to expect that subclasses of intransitive verbs established on the basis of auxiliary selection should coincide with subclasses of intransitive verbs established on the basis of distinctions straightforwardly involving intransitivity splits.

For detailed analyses and discussions, see Legendre & Sorace 2003, Sorace 2004, Bentley 2006:29-91, Aranovich 2007, and references therein.

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[6] Contrary to what is stated in several works on unaccusativity, it is not correct to quote Basque as another case of a language having a mechanism of auxiliary selection comparable to that found in Romance and Germanic languages. In Romance and Germanic languages, there is no obvious connection between auxiliary selection and uncontroversial manifestations of split intransitivity, whereas auxiliary selection in Basque clearly correlates with *overt* split intransitivity: *have* is selected by a minor subclass of intransitive verbs whose S argument is assigned ergative case and triggers the same agreement marks as the A argument of transitive verbs, whereas *be* is selected by intransitive verbs conforming to the general rule of ergative alignment in the coding properties of S. In addition to that, many a Basque scholar would probably argue that Basque ignores auxiliary selection proper, and that the forms taken as two different auxiliaries by analogy with Romance constitute in fact forms of the same auxiliary differing only in that they include agreement with one argument only (the intransitive auxiliary) or with two arguments (the transitive auxiliary, selected also – with default 3rd person P agreement – by a subclass of intransitive verbs whose S argument has the same coding characteristics as A).

3.1.2. Inflectional classes of intransitive verbs

Some languages have an inflectional class of stative verbs, and this has sometimes been proposed as an unaccusativity diagnostic (see Kroeger 1990 on the Philippine-type language Kimarangang Dusun). However, if the inflectional distinction does not correlate with a variation in the way S is aligned with A or P, it cannot be described as a contrast between S_A verbs and S_P verbs.

3.1.3. Variations in the transitivization properties of intransitive verbs

The same criticism can be addressed to unaccusativity diagnostics based on the possibility to use intransitive verbs in a transitive construction, or to derive transitive verbs from them.

For example, English causative alternation, in which the same verb can be used transitively and intransitively with the meaning equivalence V(x,y) = Caus(x, V(y)), has been claimed to be an unaccusativity diagnostic (se a.o. Levin & Rappaport Hovav 1995:79-178).

According to Rice 1991, Athapaskan languages have a causative derivation that can apply to any intransitive verb in some Athapaskan languages (for example, Navajo), whereas in some others (for example, Slave), its occurrence is limited to a subclass of intransitive verbs.

A variant of this situation is found in languages such as Fijian (Dixon 1988), in which the general rule is that transitive verbs are overtly derived from intransitive ones by the addition of a transitivizing suffix, and intransitive verbs divide into two classes with respect to the effect of the morphological operation of transitivization on argument structure: either A bears the same semantic role as S, and an additional P argument is introduced (applicativization, as in ex. (18a-b)), or P bears the same semantic role as S, and a causer is introduced in A role (causativization, as in ex. (18c-d)).

(18) *Boumaa Fijian* (Dixon 1988)

   a. *e-la'o   a   gone*
      A3S-go   DEF   child
      'The child (S) is going away'

   b. *e-la'o-va   a   suka a   gone*
      A3S-go-TR   DEF   sugar DEF   child
      'The child (A) is going for sugar (P)' (tr. A = intr. S)

   c. *e-lo'i   a   kaukamea*
      A3S-twist   DEF   iron
      'The iron (S) has got twisted'

   d. *e-lo'i-a   a   kaukamea a   gone*
      A3S-twist-TR DEF   iron   DEF   child
      'The child (A) is twisting the iron (P)' (tr. P = intr. S)

Austin 1997 discusses similar situations in several Australian aboriginal languages.

With the exception of Mopan, to which we will return in section 5.3, the languages of the Yucatecan branch of the Mayan family (Yucatec, Lacandon, and Itzaj) have three classes of intransitive verbs distinct from each other both in TAM morphology and transitivizing morphology, but this distinction involves no intransitivity split in the sense given to this term here – Danziger 1996.

As explicitly stated by E. Danziger for Yucatecan languagues, such splits may be motivated by the same distinctions in lexical aspect or argument structure that condition intransitivity splits in other languages, and it is reasonable to imagine possible connections with the behavior of intransitive verbs in constructions characterized by 'unaccusative syntax'. However, the ability of the S argument of an intransitive verb to be converted into the A or P argument of a transitive verb is a derivational property of intransitive verbs, not a property manifested within the frame of the intransitive construction, and it cannot be compared with similar derivational properties of the core arguments of the transitive construction, since by definition, transitivization cannot apply to transitive constructions. Such splits cannot therefore be formulated in terms of alignment of the intransitive construction with the transitive construction.

3.2. Fluid intransitivity and presentational focus

3.2.1. The impersonal construction of French intransitive verbs:
French as a 'fluid-S' language

French intransitive verbs have an impersonal construction of a type which is found in Northern Italian dialects (Saccon 1993), but has no exact equivalent in most other Romance languages. In this construction, illustrated by ex. (19),the S argument appears in post-verbal position (i.e., in the canonical P position), but does not govern verb agreement, and more generally shows no evidence of having A-like properties.

(19) *French*

    a. *Une*   *femme*   *viendra*
        INDEF.SGF   woman.SG   come.FUT.A3SG
        'A woman will come'

    b. *Il*   *viendra*   *une*   *femme*
        A3SGM   come.FUT.3SG   INDEF.SGF   woman.SG
        lit. 'It will come a woman', same denotative meaning as (a), but with a different perspective (something like 'There will be a woman coming')

As illustrated by ex. (20) to (22), in this construction, the post-verbal NP representing the subject argument of an intransitive verb patterns with transitive objects with respect to a range of properties that are not shared by transitive subjects: *en*-cliticization – ex. (20), combinability with restrictive *que* – ex. (21), possibility to take the determiner *de* in negative environments – ex. (22), etc.

(20) *French*

   a. *Le*   *garçon*   *a*   *mangé*   *trois* **pommes**
       DEF.SG.MASC   boy.SG   AUX.PRS.A3SG   eat.PTCP three apple.PL
      'The boy ate three apples'

        → *Le garçon* **en** *a mangé trois*
          'The boy ate three of them'

   b. *Trois*   **garçons** *ont*   *vu*   *ce*   *film*
      three   boy.SG   AUX.PRS.A3PL   see.PTCP DEM.SGM film.SG
      'Three boys have seen this film'

        → ** Trois* **en** *ont vu ce film*
          intended: 'Three of them have seen this film' (OK: *Trois ont vu ce film*, or *Il y en a trois qui ont vu ce film*)

   c. *Trois*   **garçons**   *sont*   *entrés*
      three   boy.SG   AUX.PRS.A3PL   enter.PTCP.PLM
      'Three boys entered'

        → ** Trois* **en** *sont entrés*
          intended: 'Three of them entered' (OK: *Trois sont entrés*, or *Il y en a trois qui sont entrés*)

   d. *Il*   *est*   *entré*   *trois* **garçons**
      A3SGM   AUX.PRS.A3SG   enter.PTCP.SGM three boy.PL
      'Three boys entered'

        → *Il* **en** *est entré trois*
          'Three of them entered'

(21) *French*

   a. *Jean n'a*   *invité*   *que*   *Marie*
      Jean   NEG-AUX.PRS.A3SG invite.PTCP   RESTR   Marie
      'Jean invited only Mary'

   b. ** Que*   *Jean n'a*   *invité*   *Marie*
       RESTR   Jean NEG-AUX.PRS.A3SG invite.PTCP   Marie
      intended: Only Jean invited Mary (OK: Il n'y a que Jean qui a invité Marie)

   c. ** Que*   *Jean n'est*   *venu*
       RESTR   Jean NEG-AUX.PRS.A3SG come.PTCP.SGM
      intended: 'Only Jean came' (OK: Il n'y a que Jean qui est venu)

    d. *Il   n'est   venu   que Jean*
        A3SGM   NEG-AUX.PRS.A3SG come.PTCP   RESTR Jean
        'Only Jean came'

(22) *French*

    a. *Jean n'a   pas mangé   de   pommes*
       Jean NEG-AUX.PRS.A3SG NEG come.PTCP   *DE*   apple.PL
       'Jean did not eat apples'

    b. **De garçons n'ont   pas vu   ce   film*
       DE   boy.PL   NEG-AUX.PRS.A3PL NEG see.PTCP DEM.SGM film.SG
       intended: 'No boy saw this film' (OK: Il n'y a pas de garçon qui ait vu ce film)

    c. **De garçons ne   sont   pas entrés*
       DE   boy.PL   NEG AUX.PRS.A3PL NEG see.PTCP;PLM
       intended: 'No boy entered (OK: Il n'y a pas de garçon qui soit entré)

    d. *Il   n'est   pas entré   de   garçons*
       A3SGM   NEG-AUX.PRS.A3SG NEG enter.PTCP   *DE*   boy.PL
       'No boy entered'

The only evidence against identifying the post-verbal NP as fulfilling the object role is that it cannot be represented by an object clitic pronoun. But this is not really a problem, since the post-verbal NP in this construction cannot be represented by clitic pronouns at all, and this can be viewed as a mere consequence of the 'thetic' (or 'existential', 'presentational') meaning of the construction. This pragmatic function, repeatedly underscored in the literature (whatever the terms used to characterize it) is sufficient to explain both the fact that some intransitive verbs have a particular affinity with this construction, and the impossibility to cliticize the post-verbal NP, since cliticization is incompatible with the introduction of a new referent. There is to my knowledge no convincing evidence against the analysis according to which the post-verbal NP fulfills the same *syntactic* role as the post-verbal patient NP in the prototypical transitive construction.

The theory according to which the post-verbal NP in the French impersonal construction of intransitive verbs fulfills the *syntactic* role of object, in spite of being assigned the same *semantic* role as the subject of the same verb in a canonical predicative construction, is not new in French syntax: it was already proposed by the French grammarians Damourette & Pichon eighty years ago. But it is interesting to observe that it has been recently re-discovered by formal syntacticians, for example S. Cummins (Cummins 2000), who concludes her analysis of this construction by stating that French has "two basic types of intransitive clauses: subject-verb and verb-object". Although she does not state it explicitly, this implies that the notion of ergativity is relevant to the analysis of the impersonal construction of French intransitive verbs.

In addition to that, contrary to an opinion popularized by early studies within the frame of the Unaccusative Hypothesis, this construction is not restricted to a limited subset of 'unaccusative' intransitive verbs. As shown a.o. by Cummins 2000 on the basis of the corpus

provided by Hériau 1980, the list of the 50 most frequent verbs in this construction also includes several typically 'unergative' verbs, and no semantic subclass of intransitive verbs can be considered as absolutely excluded from this construction. The fact that some intransitive verbs (including 'unergative' ones) occur with a particular frequency can be satisfactorily explained by the mere fact that their lexical meaning is "highly compatible with the 'presentational' value of the I[personal] C[onstruction], expressing appearance or existence at location" (Cummins 2000:239), and with intransitive verbs of other semantic classes, whose compatibility with this construction may at first sight seem questionable, the presence of a locative complement improves the acceptability of the impersonal construction.

In other words, if one accepts this analysis of the impersonal construction of French intransitive verbs with a post-verbal NP representing the subject argument, from a typological point of view, the only possible conclusion is that French is a *fluid-S* language (Dixon 1994:78-83), since intransitive verbs have an optional construction in which S is aligned with P. The only difference with the fluid-S type as defined by Dixon is that, in French, the choice of ergative alignment is not based on the semantic feature of control, but rather has the pragmatic function to express a 'presentational' (or 'thetic', 'existential') organization of predication. Note that the recognition of *focus-oriented split intransitivity* has recently been proposed by E. Maslova (Maslova 2006) on the basis of Dogon and Tundra Yukaghir data.

The functional motivation of the French type of fluid intransitivity can be analyzed as follows: in the transitive construction, A is typically more topical than P, and new referents are typically introduced in P position; consequently, in a language in which accusative alignment predominates, it is natural to de-topicalize S by means of a construction in which S is aligned with P. According to Lambrecht,

> "S[entence] F[ocus] marking involves cancellation of those prosodic and/or morphosyntactic subject properties which are associated with the role of subjects as topic expressions in P[redicate] F[ocus] sentences … One natural way of achieving non-topic construal (though not the only logically possible one) is to endow the subject constituent with grammatical properties which are conventionally associated with FOCUS arguments. Since in a P[redicate] F[ocus] construction the unmarked focus argument is the OBJECT, topic construal can be cancelled by coding the subject with grammatical features normally found on the object of a P[redicate] F[ocus] sentence." (Lambrecht 2000:624-5)

Tswana intransitive verbs have an impersonal construction that lends itself to the same analysis, with the only difference that the impersonal construction of intransitive verbs is much more frequent in Tswana than in French, due to constraints on the topicality of NPs in subject role particularly strict in Tswana.[7]

In contrast, this kind of construction is not common among European languages. Presentational constructions of intransitive verbs have been described in many other European languages – see section 3.2.3,[8] but they are rather *covert* impersonal constructions in which the subject argument occurs in post-verbal position and is aligned with P with respect

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[7] For example, in Tswana, negative or interrogative pronouns cannot occur in A/S$_A$ role. With transitive verbs, passivization is the strategy commonly used to avoid A NPs that would not meet the topicality requirements imposed by the system of Tswana, and with intransitive verbs, the impersonal construction provides a possible strategy to encode S arguments that do not meet the conditions to occur in a construction in which S is aligned with A.

[8] English Locative Inversion and there-insertion are other cases in point – see a.o. Levin & Rappaport Hovav 1995:215-277.

to some other properties, but remains aligned with A as regards the control of verb agreement. Languages in which such constructions are found can still be characterized as having pragmatically driven fluid-S systems, but their fluidity involves an alternation between accusative and *mixed* alignment (and not between accusative and *ergative* alignment, as in the case of French).

The same analysis can be applied to the contrast found in the Mayan language Ch'orti' between fixed alignment with respect to indexation and fluid alignment in constituent order (Quizar 1994).

The SV ~ VS alternation of Mandarin Chinese (Li & Thompson 1981:501-19) is another case in point, with however the particularity that Chinese simply cannot have mismatches between constituent order and other coding characteristics of core syntactic terms, due to the total absence of case marking and argument indexation.

3.2.2. Russian genitive of negation

According to Pesetsky 1982, in Russian, as illustrated by ex. (23), objects of transitive verbs, but not subjects, can appear in the genitive case when the clause contains negation, and this property is shared by the subjects of a subclass of intransitive verbs.

(23) *Russian*

    a. *Mal'čiki   ne   polučili   nikakix   pisem*

          boy.PL   NEG   receive.PST.PL   any.PL.GEN   letter.PL.GEN

          'The boys didn't receive any letters'

    b. *Nikakix   mal'čikov   ne   polučilo   pis'ma*

          any.PL.GEN boy.PL.GEN NEG   receive.PST.SGN letter.PL

          intended: 'No boys received letters'

    c. *Ne   prišlo   ni   odnogo   mal'čika*

          NEG   come.PST.SGN not even one.SG.GEN boy.SG.GEN

          'Not a single boy came'

    d. *Ne   tancevalo   ni   odnogo   mal'čika*

          NEG   dance.PST.SGN not even one.SG.GEN boy.SG.GEN

          intended: 'Not a single boy danced'

However, Babby 2001 observes that 'unergative' intransitives are not disallowed from occurring in this construction, provided a locative preposition phrase precedes the verb – ex. (24).

(24) *Russian*

    a. *Meždu brevnami   ne   skryvalos' tarakanov*
       between   beam.PL.INSTR   NEG   hide.PST.SGN cockroach.PL.GEN
       'There were no cockroaches hiding among the beams'

    b. *Tam bol'še   ne   igraet   nikakix   detej*
       there more   NEG   play.PRS.A3SG   any.PL.GEN   child.PL.GEN
       'There are no longer any children playing there'

Consequently, the genitive of negation of Russian cannot be analyzed as an instance of split intransitivity, and constitutes rather another example of pragmatically driven fluid intransitivity.

3.2.3. Partial fluid intransitivity

In languages in which the basic constituent order of the transitive construction is AVP, it has often been observed that intransitive subjects in post-verbal position may show alignment with P with respect to some other properties, without however losing the control of verb agreement.

A crucial characteristic of the constructions in question is that the possibility to show ergative alignment in some behavioral properties is limited to post-verbal S arguments, i.e. to S arguments overtly aligned with P with respect to constituent order, and disappears when the S argument of the same intransitive verbs occupies the canonical A/S position to the left of the verb.

In the literature on unaccusativity, partial alignment with P limited to post-verbal S NPs in languages having SV ~ VS alternations has been characterized as *surface unaccusativity*, in order to distinguish it from *deep accusativity* manifested irrespective of the position of the argument (Levin and Rappaport Hovav 1995:17-21). The tendency in recent works is clearly to question the status of such alignment variations as unaccusativity diagnostics, and to emphasize the relation with presentational focus (see a.o. Lambrecht 2000, Alexiadou 2007).

Using the notions of alignment typology, the crucial point is that 'surface unaccusativity' is an instance of *fluid* intransitivity rather than *split* intransitivity, since it involves the possibility for (at least a subclass of) intransitive verbs to have two constructions differing in the alignment properties of S. The difference with the case of French or Tswana is that, in the cases considered in this section, the alignment variation affects some characteristics of S only, and in particular does not affect its status as the controller of verb agreement.

This applies in particular to Italian *ne*-cliticization. According to Burzio 1986, in Italian, *ne* can represent the head of an NP in P role, or of an NP encoding the S argument of a subclass of intransitive verbs, but cannot represent, either the head of an NP in A role, or of an NP encoding the S argument of another subclass of intransitive verbs. Crucially, *ne* can represent the head of post-verbal S NPs only – ex. (25).

(25) *Italian* (Burzio 1986)

a. *Molti   esperti arriveranno*
    many.PLM   expert.PL arrive.FUT.A3PL
    'Many experts will arrive'

b. *Arriveranno   molti   esperti*
    arrive.FUT.A3PL many.PLM   expert.PL
    'Many experts will arrive'

c. *Ne   arriveranno   molti*
    of them   arrive.FUT.A3PL many.PLM
    'Many of them will arrive'

d. **Molti   ne   arriveranno*
    many.PLM   of them   arrive.FUT.A3PL

Several studies have shown that the division of Italian intransitive verbs into two classes according to this criterion is questionable (Lonzi 1986), and have pointed to a relation with sentence focus (Bentley 2004).

Another unaccusativity diagnostic proposed for a number of languages (see a.o. Torrego 1989 for Spanish, Alexiadou 1996 for Greek) is that, in languages in which bare nouns can occur in P role but not in A role, bare nouns in S role are possible with a subclass of intransitive verbs only – ex. (26). But here again, this possibility is limited to post-verbal S NPs, and the division of intransitive verbs into two classes according to this criterion is not so clear-cut as it may seem at first sight. 'Unergative' predicates may become acceptable when a locative adverbial phrase is added, which suggests a parallel with locative inversion and points to a pragmatic conditioning in terms of presentational focus (Ortega-Santos 2005, Alexiadou 2007).

(26) *Spanish* (Ortega-Santos 2005)

a. *Llegaron   libros*
    arrive.PFV.A3PL book.PL
    'Some books arrived'

b. ??*Corren   chicos*
    run.PRS.A3PL boy.PL
    'Boys run'

c. *Aquí   corren   chicos*
    here   run.PRS.A3PL boy.PL
    'Boys run here'

3.3 A remark on 'unaccusativity mismatches'

After this enumeration of syntactic phenomena in which intransitive verbs show a variable behavior that however cannot be straightforwardly described in terms of alignment split, it is interesting to observe that many 'unaccusativity mismatches' discussed in the literature involve phenomena that do not have the same status with respect to split intransitivity in the strict sense of this term.

For exemple, Gerdts 1991 describes a mismatch between the classification of the intransitive verbs of Halkomelem Salish according to their behavior in the formation of causatives and desideratives. But, as argued above (sections 2.2.11 & 3.1.3), the formation of desideratives as described in Gerdts 1991 is an uncontroversial case of split intransitivity, whereas the variable behavior of intransitive verbs in causativization cannot be described as an alignment split.

4. The semantic correlates of split intransitivity

Both typological and generative studies of split intransitivity have been concerned with the semantic correlates of split intransitivity.

Leaving apart the pragmatic conditioning characteristic of situations involving *fluid* intransitivity rather than *split* intransitivity (section 3.2), two types of semantic features have been put forward as semantic correlates of split intransitivity: agentivity and verbal lexical aspect (Aktionsart).

4.1. Semantically motivated intransitivity splits

Agentivity is a complex notion, and languages in which it is relevant to the distinction between S_A and S_P verbs may be sensitive to various aspects of this notion. For example, verbs expressing non-volitional bodily processes allowing for some degree of control (such as 'cry')[9] belong to the S_A class in some languages, and to the S_P class in some others.

Verbal lexical semantics has been reported to condition split intransitivity in three possible ways, which according to the Dowty/Vendler classification of verbs can be defined as follows:

(a) states vs. activities ~ achievements ~ accomplishments (or [±stative]);
(b) states ~ activities vs. achievements ~ accomplishments (or [±telic]);
(c) activities vs. states ~ achievements ~ accomplishments.

The 3rd possibility has been advocated by Van Valin as an explanation of auxiliary selection in Italian, but also of the intransitivity split of Georgian – Van Valin 1990, and the 2nd possibility can be illustrated by auxiliary selection in Dutch – see a.o. van Hout 2004. In other words, if one accepts the distinction put forward here between split intransitivity proper and variations in the behavior of intransitive verbs that cannot be straightforwardly

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[9] The ambiguous status of such verbs from the point of view of agentivity is apparent in the fact that, out of context, their imperative positive (e.g., *Cry!*) sounds somewhat strange, whereas their imperative negative (e.g., *Don't cry!* or *Stop crying!*) sounds perfectly normal. By contrast, *Sweat!* and *Stop sweating!* are equally anomalous. Another possible criterions is that *feign to be crying* is semantically perfectly normal, whereas for example *feign to be sweating* is semantically problematic.

formulated in terms of alignment variation, these two possibilities are rather marginal as possible explanations of split intransitivity proper. Uncontroversial cases of semantically motivated split intransitivity are regularly conditioned, either by the [±agentive] distinction in argument structure, or by the [±stative] distinction in lexical aspect.[10]

Mithun 1991 analyzes the semantic basis of split intransitivity in Guaraní, Lakhota (a dialect of Dakota), Central Pomo (from the Pomoan family), Caddo (from the Caddoan family), and Mohawk (from the Iroquoian family), and the wider sample of Northern Amerindian languages she takes into consideration in Mithun Forthcoming confirms the validitity of the hypotheses put forward in the former study.[11]

Concerning Guaraní, Mithun concludes that S_A verbs denote events (activities, accomplishments, and achievements), whereas S_P verbs denote states, and that consequently this system, "based primarily on a distinction of lexical aspect, could thus be accurately identified as active-stative".

In the case of Lakhota, Mithun shows that the [±stative] distinction plays no role in the intransitivity split, and that S arguments aligned with A typically perform, effect, instigate and control events, while S arguments aligned with P are typically affected. Central Pomo and Caddo are similar, with however differences in the particular aspects of agentivity (volitionality, control, affectedness, …) relevant to the classification of intransitive verbs into S_A verbs and S_P verbs. Mohawk can also be described as having an intransitivity split whose semantic correlate is agentivity, but in which this original motivation has been somewhat blurred by processes of grammaticalization and lexicalization.

An important aspect of Mithun's study is that she shows how the semantic parameters underlying split intransitivity may evolve, giving raise to apparent exceptions to the predominant regularity.

Recent studies have considerably enlarged the documentation on split intransitivity (in particular among the languages of the Pacific). They have revealed additional cases of split intransitivity conditioned by the [±stative] feature (for example, the Papuan language Galela – Holton Forthcoming), but on the whole they suggest a preponderance of agentivity in the semantic conditioning of intransitivity splits. For example, Klamer Forthcoming provides an overview of split intransitivity in ten languages from Indonesia, from which it follows that semantic features of the arguments are relevant in all languages of the sample, whereas verbal aspect plays a role in two of them only. We will see in section 6 that Akhvakh fully confirms this generalization.

More or less complex cases of interaction of agentivity and lexical aspect have been reported too. For example, Li 2007 argues that the intransitivity split of Nepali follows from the interaction of agentivity and telicity.

4.3. Semantically arbitrary intransitivity splits

The semantic motivation of intransitivity splits may be less transparent than in the cases mentioned in the preceding section. Some languages seem to have a relatively homogeneous

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[10] I am aware of only two cases of overt split intransitivity that have been claimed to be conditioned by telicity: Georgian and Nepali.
[11] On the semantic basis of split intransitivity in Northern Amerindian languages, see also Hardy & Davis 1993 on the Muskogean language Alabama.

small class contrasting with a large class semantically heterogeneous (see for example Michailovsky 1997 on Limbu, a Tibeto-Burmese language spoken in Nepal).

On the question of the relative size of the subclasses of intransitive verbs involved in an intransitivity split, R. Pustet rightly observes that "this aspect of the structure of split-S systems has been widely neglected" (Pustet 2002:383), and argues that this parameter is crucial in the semantic analysis of intransitivity splits. She shows that the two related languages Lakota and Osage, in spite of having intransitivity splits based on the same semantic feature of agentivity, greatly differ in the relative size of the two subclasses of intransitive verbs: Osage has much more S_A verbs and much less S_P verbs than Lakota, and many cognate verb stems are categorized as S_P verbs in Lakota, but as S_A verbs in Osage, for example Lakota *cącą́* vs. Osage *çǫçǫ́* 'tremble'. The explanation proposed is that "multifactor concepts like agency are per se scalar concepts", and that consequently, vacillations in the categorization of S arguments of intransitive verbs as [+agentive] are normal. One of the two subclasses of S_A verbs and S_P verbs can therefore behave as a default class grouping all intransitive verbs that do not assign prototypical agentivity or prototypical patienthood to their S argument.

The possibility of purely lexical intransitivity splits (i.e., intransitivity splits devoid of any semantic consistency) should be considered at least in cases of splits involving two subsets of intransitive verbs of a very unequal numerical importance. In particular, Trask explicitly argued that the subclass of Basque S_A verbs is "semantically arbitrary" (Trask 1997:111), and constitutes nothing more than a collection of isolated historical accidents without any connection between themselves. Doubts about the possibility to find a semantic motivation of an intransitivity split have also been expressed for Kali'na, a Cariban language of French Guyana (Renault-Lescure 2001-2002).

Semantically arbitrary intransitivity splits involving a minor subclass of intransitive verbs with an exceptional alignment pattern may result from the decay of previously semantically motivated intransitivity splits, with a limited subclass of intransitive verbs constituting vestiges of a type of behavior formerly productive, but that the evolution tends to eliminate. An alternative explanation is the emergence of a split alignment pattern due to the accumulation of isolated evolutions affecting individual intransitive verbs but having in common that they create exceptions to the predominant alignment pattern. For example, it is clear that the exceptional alignment pattern of the French verb *falloir* 'need' is not a vestige of a formerly productive alignment split, since it appeared during the documented history of French as the result of an evolution (the loss of the canonical construction of a verb originally involved in the alignment alternation analyzed in section 3.2.1) that affected no other French verb.

In this connection, it is important to observe that, among the possible historical scenarios responsible for the emergence of split intransitivity, some at least involve no semantic conditioning, and consequently can result in semantically arbitrary intransitivity splits – see section 5 below.

5. The diachrony of split intransitivity

Two particularly plausible scenarios that may be responsible for the gradual emergence of split intransitive systems have been identified in a number of languages each: in predominantly accusative languages, transitive constructions with an arbitrary A

('transimpersonal constructions') can be reanalyzed as intransitive constructions whose sole argument is aligned with P – section 5.1, and in predominantly ergative languages, the coalescence of light verb compounds may result in the reanalysis of transitive constructions as intransitive constructions whose sole argument is aligned with A – section 5.2. The grammaticalization of aspectual periphrases has also been reported as a possible source of split intransitivity – section 5.3.

This is however not the end of the story, and the example of Akhvakh, presented in section 6, shows that there are certainly other possible scenarios, and in particular, that split intransitivity does not necessarily result from a gradual increase of the number of intransitive verbs whose alignment properties depart from the originally predominant pattern, and may result from an abrupt change simultaneously affecting all members of a semantic subclass of intransitive verbs.

5.1. The evolution of 'transimpersonal' constructions

As discussed in Holton, Malchukov and Mithun's papers included in Donohue & Wichmann (eds.) Forthcoming, in predominantly accusative languages, split intransitivity may develop as the result of the reanalysis of 'transimpersonal'[12] constructions, i.e., of constructions involving an dummy subject or default subject agreement and a referential term encoded like the P argument of prototypical action verbs.

However, the following point remains open to discussion: at which stage in the evolution of such constructions is it justified to consider that they have been reanalyzed as ergatively aligned intransitive constructions? The aforementioned authors seem to consider that, so long as the formal trace of a possible A argument is maintained, they cannot be analyzed as intransitive constructions. However, it seems to me that the crucial point in this evolution is not the total disappearance of the frozen trace of a possible A argument, but rather the loss of the possibility to re-establish a canonical A term.

I illustrate this point by the comparison of Amharic and Russian impersonal constructions that can be viewed as representing different stages in the evolution of transimpersonal constructions towards intransitive constructions with an exceptional alignment pattern.

Amharic is a predominantly accusative language in which constructions with a verb marked for 3rd person A agreement and no corresponding NP normally have an anaphoric interpretation. But Amharic also has constructions in which the absence of an NP in A role exceptionally triggers an indeterminate rather than anaphoric interpretation.

For example, the state of being hungry, without any hint about a possible external cause, is rendered in Amharic by a verb showing an A marker of 3rd person singular masculine that does not refer to any specific entity, and a P marker representing the person or animal being hungry – ex. (27a). But the same verb occurs in a canonical transitive construction in which A and P are respectively assigned the roles of stimulus and experiencer – ex. (27b).

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[12] According to Malchukov Forthcoming, this term was coined by Mary Haas (Haas 1941).

(27) *Amharic*

    a. *rabä-ñ*
        hunger.PFV.A3SGM-P1SG
        'I am hungry', lit. 'It hungered me'

    b. *ïnjära   rabä-ñ*
        bread   hunger.PFV.A3SGM-P1SG
        'I am hungry for bread', lit. 'Bread hungered me'

Consequently, (27a) is just a transitive construction with a missing A argument triggering an arbitrary reading, which does not contradict the predominant accusative pattern of alignment. But one can easily imagine evolutions that would make this analysis impossible – for example the loss of the construction illustrated by ex. (27b).

The impersonal construction of the Russian verb *trjasti* 'shake' results from an evolution of this type. This verb occurs in a canonical transitive construction – ex. (28a-b), but also in the impersonal construction illustrated by ex. (28c-d), in which the only core term is an experiencer in the accusative case, and the expression of an external cause by means of a preposition phrase in oblique role blocks the possibility to add a nominative NP.

(28) *Russian*

    a. *Ja   trjasu   kovër*
        1SG   shake.PRS.A1SG carpet.SG.ACC
        'I am shaking the carpet'

    b. *Menja   trjasët   lixoradka*
        1SG.ACC shake.PRS.A3SG fever.SG
        'Fever shakes me'

    c. *Menja   trjasët   ot   lixoradki*
        1SG.ACC shake.PRS.A3SG from fever.SG.GEN
        'I am shaking with fever', lit. 'It shakes me from fever'

    d. *V poezde   trjasët*
        in train.SG.LOC shake.PRS.A3SG
        'One gets shaken in the train', lit. 'It shakes in the train'

It seems reasonable to assume that the impersonal construction developed from the reanalysis of a null-subject construction with an arbitrary reading: '[An unspecified cause] shakes me'. But the fact that the cause is encoded as an oblique introduced by the ablative preposition *ot* proves that, in the present state of Russian, this construction is no longer an elliptical variant of the transitive construction. It has been reanalyzed as a distinct construction, and consequently can be viewed as an exceptional case of an ergatively aligned intransitive construction in a predominantly accusative language.

A semantic specialization of the impersonal construction may subsequently blur the relationship between the impersonal construction and the canonical construction from which it originates, as in the case of *rvat'* 'pull out', used in the same type of impersonal construction as *trjasti* with the meaning 'vomit' – ex. (29). Another possibility is that a verb loses the possibility to occur in a canonical construction and subsists only in an affective impersonal construction with the experiencer in the accusative case and default 3rd sing./neuter verb agreement, as in the case of *tošnit'* 'feel nauseous' – ex. (14) above, repeated here as (30).

(30) *Russian*

    a. *Menja   rvët*
        1SG.ACC   vomit.PRS.A3SG
        'I am vomiting'

    b. x_{NOM} *rvët* y_{ACC} = '*x* tears *y*'

(...) *Russian*

    a. *Menja   tošnit*
        1SG.ACC   feel nauseous.PRS.A3SG
        'I feel nauseous'

    b. *x_{NOM} *tošnit* y_{ACC}

5.2. The evolution of light verb compounds

Malchukov Forthcoming rightly points out that the same types of evolutions may occur in predominantly accusative and predominantly ergative languages with however very different consequences for the alignment patterns. For example, the reinterpretation of transitive constructions with an arbitrary interpretation of the A argument as intransitive constructions has no consequence on alignment patterns in predominantly ergative languages (as in the Iwaidjan languages discussed by Evans 2004), whereas the same reanalysis may yield a split intransitive pattern when it occurs in predominantly accusative languages.

Conversely, the coalescence of light verb compounds involving a noun in P role is an evolution that has no consequence on the alignment patterns of predominantly accusative languages, whereas in predominantly ergative languages, it may creates intransitive verbs whose sole argument is aligned with A.

As in other cases of compounding, the two elements of light verb compounds tend to coalesce in some way or another, which results in re-establishing the canonical situation in which the main verb of a clause encodes the type of event to which the clause refers. In languages making extensive use of light verbs, this process may result in the massive creation of new verbal lexemes. If this evolution occurs in constructions that have the appearance of regular transitive constructions in which the noun that forms a compound with the light verb fulfils the P role, it results in constructions including a term showing the coding characteristics of A, but no term showing the coding characteristics of P.

In predominantly accusative languages, this process has no incidence on alignment patterns. By contrast, in languages in which ergative alignment predominates, if no readjustment occurs in the coding characteristics of the remaining terms, it creates constructions departing from the predominant alignment pattern.

For example, in Lezgian (Haspelmath 1993), the single argument of the verb *k'walaxun* 'work' is in the ergative case, like A in the prototypical transitive construction. The construction of this verb includes no term with the coding characteristics of P, and therefore exhibits accusative alignment. But 'work' as a noun is in Lezgian *k'walax*, and the verb *k'walaxun* is synonymous with the phrase *k'walax awun* (lit. 'do work', taking *work* as a noun) – ex. (31).

(31) *Lezgian* (Haspelmath 1993)

    a. *Ada*   *k'walax iji-zwa*
        DEM.SG.ERG work.ABS do-IPFV
        '(S)he is doing work'

    b. *Ada*   *k'walax-zawa*
        DEM.SG.ERG work-IPFV
        '(S)he is doing work'

According to Haspelmath's analysis (Haspelmath 1993:178-80), *k'walaxun* is the reduced form of the verbal compound *k'walax awun*. Within the frame of ergative alignment, it is perfectly normal for the NP representing the worker in the construction of *k'walax awun* 'work' to stand in the ergative case, since the construction involves a noun (*k'walax*) in P role. It seems therefore reasonable to suppose that the conversion of a transitive light verb construction into an intransitive verb (described by Haspelmath as *Absolutive absorption*), not followed by a readjustment in the treatment of the remaining core term, is responsible for the exceptional construction of the intransitive verb *k'walaxun*.

The Mayan languages Chol and Chontal are another case in point. Vázquez 2002, Gutiérrez 2004 and Zavala & Gutiérrez 2005 describe an intransitivity split in S indexation with S_A verbs morphologically distinct from S_P verbs in that they show an analytical inflection, whereas S_P verbs are inflected via affixes. They clearly acknowledge that this situation results from the grammaticalization of light verb constructions, and that the agreement mark of S_A verbs originates from A agreement in a transitive construction. It remains however unclear whether the grammaticalization process can be considered as completed, or is still in progress, as discussed in Montgomery-Anderson 2006.

Note that the recognition of this kind of evolution as a possible source of split intransitivity illustrates the necessity to treat the question of possible semantic generalizations about intransitivity splits with the greatest caution. The point is that there is no limit to the semantic roles that can be assigned to the A term of light verb constructions formally aligned on the prototypical transitive construction. In particular, the use of *do* as a light verb is commonly observed in constructions in which the participant encoded as the A argument of *do* has very few agentive features (see for example Basque *lo egin* 'sleep', *ñirñir egin* 'shine', or Turkish *vefat etmek* 'die'). This implies that, in predominantly ergative languages, no semantic

coherence must be expected in the argument structure of S_A verbs originating from the coalescence of such compounds.

5.3. The grammaticalization of aspectual periphrases

As mentioned in section 3.1.3 above, three of the four languages constituting the Yucatecan branch of the Mayan family have inflectional classes of intransitive verbs, but no intransitivity split: two of the three classes (the 'mutative' and 'active' classes) show the same TAM-driven alignment variation, and the fact that the 3rd class (the 'stative' class) does not show the same alignment variation can be explained by the mere fact that the verbs of this class are defective verbs devoid of TAM inflection. But in Mopan, the class termed 'active' in Danziger 1996 has undergone a change in completive aspect resulting in a change in the alignment pattern. For example, 'I fought' in Mopan results from the grammaticalization of the periphrasis 'My fighting occurred' – Danziger 1996:395, and consequently active verbs in this aspect, which previously showed agreement marks of the P paradigm, now agree via markers that are etymologically possessive markers. Since in Mayan languages, A agreement markers and possessive markers are identical, the renewal of completive aspect marking in the inflection of intransitive verbs of the active subclass has induced an intransitivity split, since this change has not affected the intransitive verbs of the 'mutative' subclass.

6. An illustration: split intransitivity in Akhvakh

Akhvakh (*ašoλi mic'i*, Russian *axvaxskij jazyk*, Azerbaijani *axax dili*) is a North-East Caucasian (or Nakh-Daghestanian) language belonging to the Andic branch of the Avar-Andic-Tsezic family, spoken in the western part of Daghestan and in the village of Axaxdərə (*ašoλi hani*) near Zaqatala (Azerbaijan). This section is based on my field work in Axaxdərə.

6.1. General remarks on Akhvakh morphosyntax

Akhvakh clause structure is characterized by flexible constituent order.

Three genders are distinguished in the singular: human masculine (SGM), human feminine (SGF), and non-human (SGN). In the plural, the distinction *masculine* vs. *feminine* is neutralized, resulting in a binary opposition *human plural (PLH)* vs. *non-human plural (PLN)*.

Noun morphology involves number inflection and case inflection. Except for 1st and 2nd person singular pronouns, whose absolute form is characterized by a non-void ending *-ne*, the absolutive form of nominals (used in the extra-syntactic function of quotation or designation and in S o r P roles) has no overt mark. Case suffixes may attach to a stem identical with the absolutive form, or to a special *oblique stem*. The formation of the oblique stem may involve changes in the last vowel (indicated in the gloss as '.O'), or the addition of a formative *-su-* (SGM) / *-λi-* (SGF/N) / *-lo-* (PLH) / *-le-* (PLN).

Independent verb forms are inflected for TAM, polarity and gender-number agreement; person agreement is morphologically distinct from gender-number agreement and occurs in one tense only.

Case marking and gender-number agreement between the verb and its core arguments are consistently ergative. In contrast, person agreement follows a split intransitive pattern, and constitutes therefore the main topic of this section.

6.2. Gender-number agreement of verbs

Gender-number agreement of verbs involves both prefixes and suffixes, with two different kinds of conditioning:

– The presence of gender-number *prefixes* in verb forms involves no grammatical conditioning. Verbs divide into two semantically arbitrary morphological classes, those having an initial slot for gender-number concord, and those devoid of it. The verbs belonging to the 1st subset always begin with a gender-number prefix referring to the S or P argument (i.e., to the argument encoded by an NP in the absolutive case), those belonging to the 2nd one never take such a prefix. The two classes are roughly of equal importance, and there seems to be no evidence of a historical explanation of this situation, which is found in the other Andic languages too.

– By contrast, the presence of gender-number *suffixes* referring to the same S or P argument is conditioned by the grammatical nature of the verb form. The rules governing the presence of gender-number suffixes in verb forms are complex. In some verb forms, they do not occur at all; in others, they are obligatory; in a third group of verb forms, gender-number suffixes are optional, and when they are present they may appear as distinct segments, or merge with other formatives.

Ex. (32) and (33) illustrate gender-number agreement with intransitive and transitive verbs in a tense ignoring person agreement. The verbs appearing in these examples obligatorily bear one of the gender-number prefixes *w-* (SGM) / *j-* (SGF) / *b-* (SGN) / *b(a)-* (PLH) / *r-* (PLN), and they are in a tense (the perfective negative) in which an optional gender-number marker *-we* (SGM) / *-je* (SGF) / *-be* (SGN) / *-ji* (PLH) / *-re* (PLN) may follow the TAM suffix *-iλa*, or merge with it.

(32) *Akhvakh*

  a. *ek'wa / de-ne / me-ne w-oq'-iλo*
     man   1SG-ABS   2SG-ABS   SGM-come-PFV.NEG.SGM
     'The man / I (masc.) / You (sing.masc.) did not come'

  b. *ak'i   / de-ne / me-ne j-eq'-iλe*
     woman   1SG-ABS   2SG-ABS   SGF-come-PFV.NEG.SGF
     'The woman / I (fem.) / You (sing.fem.) did not come'

  c. *χwe / mašina b-eq'-iλe*
     dog   car   SGN-come-PFV.NEG.SGN
     'The dog / The car did not come'

  d. *mik'eli / iχi / isi / ušti b-eq'-iλi*
     child.PL   1PLI   1PLE   2PL   PLH-come-PFV.NEG.PLH
     'The children / We (incl.) / We (excl.) / You (pl.) did not come'

e. *χwadi / mašinadi r-eq'-iλe*
   dog.PL   car.PL   PLN-come-PFV.NEG.PLN
   'The dogs / The cars did not come'

(33) *Akhvakh*

   a. *ek'wa-sw-e jaše j-ič-iλe*
      man-O$_M$-ERG   girl SGF-push-PFV.NEG.SGF
      'The man did not push the girl'

   b. *ek'wa-sw-e mašina b-ič-iλe*
      man-O$_M$-ERG   car   SGN-push-PFV.NEG.SGN
      'The man did not push the car'

   c. *jašo-de ek'wa w-uč-iλo*
      girl.O-ERG   man   SGM-push-PFV.NEG.SGM
      'The girl did not push the man'

   d. *de-de me-ne j-ič-iλe*
      1SG-ERG 2SG-ABS SGF-push-PFV.NEG.SGF
      'I (masc. or fem.) did not push you (fem.)'

The same mechanism of gender-number agreement operates in all tenses. The variations concern the possibility to have gender-number prefixes or suffixes, depending on lexical and grammatical factors, but not the rule of agreement itself: when gender-number marks are present in a verb form, their value is always determined by the argument in S or P role, represented by an NP in the absolutive case.

6.3. Person agreement

The perfective positive is the only tense in which, in addition to gender-number agreement with the argument in S or P role, verbs show variations reflecting person distinctions. There are two possible endings for this tense: *-ada* (glossed PFV.1D/2Q) and *-ari* (glossed PFV). Each of them has variants due to morphophonological interaction with the verbal stem.

Person agreement involves a *1st person* (*-ada*) vs. *2nd/3rd person* (*-ari*) contrast in declarative clauses, but *2nd person* (*-ada*) vs. *1st/3rd person* (*-ari*) contrast in questions, and follows a split intransitive pattern: as schematized in the following chart, transitive verbs invariably show person agreement with A (*-ada* with 1st person A and *-ari* with 2nd/3rd person A in declarative clauses, *-ada* with 2nd person A and *-ari* with 1st/3rd person A in questions), whereas intransitive verbs divide into two semantically motivated classes: S$_A$ verbs agree with S in the same way as transitive verbs with A (accusative alignment), whereas S$_P$ verbs do not agree, and invariably show the ending *-ari* (ergative alignment).

	declarative clauses	questions
1st person A / S$_A$	**-ada**	-ari
2nd person A / S$_A$	-ari	**-ada**
3rd person A / S$_A$	-ari	-ari
no A / S$_A$	-ari	-ari

Ex. (34a-d) illustrate the choice between *-ari* and *-ada* in declarative and interrogative transitive clauses in which A is a speech act participant, and ex. (34e) shows that *-ari* is invariably selected (in declarative clauses as well as in questions) if A is not a speech act participant.

(34) *Akhvakh*

a. <u>eX'-ada</u>   "di-λa   q'abuλ-ere goλa",   me-de-la <u>eX'-ari</u> "di-λa-la"
   say-PFV.1D/2Q 1SG-DAT   agree-CVB   COP.NEG.SGN 2SG-ERG-and say-PFV   1SG-DAT-and
   '<u>I said</u> "I don't agree", and <u>you said</u> "me too"'

b. *de-de   čūda   <u>eX'-ari</u>   ha-be?*
   2SG-ERG when?   say-PFV DEM-SGN
   'When <u>did I say</u> that?'

c. *me-de   čugu <u>eX'-ada</u>   ha-be?*
   2SG-ERG why? say-PFV.1D/2Q   DEM-SGN
   'Why <u>did you say</u> that?'

d. *me-de   čūda <u>b-eχ-ada</u>   hu šāX'e? –šuni   <u>b-eχ-ada</u>*
   2SG-ERG when? SGN-buy-PFV.1D/2Q DEM dress   yesterday SGN-buy-PFV.1D/2Q
   'When <u>did you buy</u> this dress? –<u>I bought</u> it yesterday'

e. *hu-sw-e   čūda   <u>b-eχ-ari</u>   hu mašina? –šuni   <u>b-eχ-ari</u>*
   DEM-O$_M$-ERG when?   N-buy-PF   DEM dress   yesterday N-buy-PF
   'When <u>did he buy</u> this car? –<u>He bought</u> it yesterday'

Ex. (35) illustrates the behavior of an intransitive verb agreeing with S in the same way as a transitive verb with A, whereas (36) illustrates the case of an intransitive verb invariably taking the ending *-ari*, irrespective of the person of S.

(35) *Akhvakh*

a. *me-ne   čūda   <u>w-ošq-ada?</u>   –šuni   <u>w-ošq-ada</u>*
   2SG-ABS when?   SGM-work-PFV.1D/2Q   yesterday SGM-work-PFV.1D/2Q
   'When <u>did you work</u>? –<u>I worked</u> yesterday'

e. *hu-we   čūda   <u>w-ošq-ari?</u>   –šuni   <u>w-ošq-ari</u>*
   DEM-SGM when?   SGM-work-PFV   yesterday SGN-buy-PFV.1D/2Q
   'When <u>did he work</u>? –<u>He worked</u> yesterday'

(36) *Akhvakh*

a. *me-ne   čūda   <u>h-ēni?</u>   –šuni   <u>h-ēni</u>* [13]
   2SG-ABS   when?   recover-PFV   yesterday   recover-PFV
   'When <u>did you recover</u>? –<u>I recovered</u> yesterday'

e. *hu-we   čūda   <u>h-ēni?</u>   –šuni   <u>h-ēni</u>*
   DEM-SGM   when?   recover-PFV   yesterday   recover-PFV
   'When <u>did he recover</u>? –<u>He recovered</u> yesterday'

6.4. S_A verbs and S_P verbs

The division of Akhvakh intransitive verbs into two classes according to person agreement in the perfective positive transparently reflects the degree of control of the participant encoded as S. The sample of intransitive verbs given in (37) shows that intransitive verbs with S representing a relatively active participant agree in person with S in the same way as transitive verbs do with A, whereas those with a clearly passive S argument do not show person agreement. Note that, among the components of the notion of prototypical agentivity, control is more important here than volition, since verbs describing involuntary bodily processes that however allow for some degree of control (such as *hīk'unuʌa* 'hiccup' or *ʕōruʌa* 'cry' – see footnote 6) are S_A verbs.

(37) *Akhvakh*

a. S_A verbs: *badaʌuruʌa* 'laugh', *baχwaduruʌa* 'play', *baʔuruʌa* 'speak', *beq'uruʌa* 'come', *beʁuruʌa* 'stand up', *bešquruʌa* 'work', *beturuʌa* 'run', *bišuruʌa* 'win', *bišuruʌa* 'gather', *boχuruʌa* 'walk', *buquruʌa* 'fight', *bužuruʌa* 'believe', *c'iriʌilōruʌa* 'get vexed', *čak'uruʌa* 'urinate', *čōruʌa* 'wash', *damaʌilōruʌa* 'wonder', *(ʁa)duk'uruʌa* 'sit down', *hīk'unuʌa* 'hiccup', *ħečuruʌa* 'sneeze', *ħulōruʌa* 'scream', *ič'eχ'uruʌa* 'dress', *kasuruʌa* 'jump', *kočilōruʌa* 'move', *k'ōnuʌa* 'lie down', *k'usuruʌa* 'squat down', *ʕōruʌa* 'cry', etc.

b. S_P verbs: *āχaχuruʌa* 'perspire', *āq'ažuruʌa* 'be thirsty', *aq'usuruʌa* 'suffocate', *bač'aq'uruʌa* 'to be late', *baχ'araʌuruʌa* 'to lose weight', *baqwaroʌuruʌa* 'become old', *baχiʌilōruʌa* 'get jealous', *baχuruʌa* 'be surprised', *becoʌuruʌa* 'get blind', *beguʌuruʌa* 'get drunk', *beχuruʌa* 'be glad', *biχ'uruʌa* 'die', *buxuruʌa* 'fall down', *buχuruʌa* 'feel cold', *čakōnuʌa* 'get sick', *čaraʌuruʌa* 'get fat', *č'aʕinōruʌa* 'be bored', *goč'uruʌa* 'wake', *hunuʌa* 'recover', *ʌuruʌa* 'be afraid', *makwačuruʌa* 'be hungry', etc.

The few cases of hesitation or fluctuation I have observed confirm the semantic motivation of these two classes of intransitive verbs. For example, according to the judgment of my main informant, *χ'ūk'unuʌa* 'sleep' may take the ending *-ada*, but *dene χ'ūk'ada* (with person agreement) tends to be interpreted as 'I lay down in order to sleep', whereas *dene χ'ūk'ani* (without person agreement) must be used if the intended meaning is 'I dozed off unwillingly'.

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[13] *h-ēni* is the realization of the underlying form | *hī(j)-ari* |.

6.5. The functional basis of the *-ada* vs. *-ari* contrast

The statement that *-ada* marks agreement with a 1st person A or S_A argument in declarative clauses, and with a 2nd person A or S_A argument in interrogative clauses, describes the distribution of the two verbal endings encoding the TAM-polarity value 'perfective positive' correctly, but does not explain it. It is however not difficult to imagine a functional explanation: in declarative speech acts, the speech act participant in charge of the assertion is the speaker, whereas in questions, the speech act participant in charge of the assertion is the addressee. In other words, the choice between *-ada* and *-ari* encodes that the A or S_A argument is identical or not with the speech act participant in charge of the assertion.

Consequently, this mechanism is not really person agreement in the strictest sense of this term. It has in common with person agreement proper that it encodes a particular alignment of argument roles with speech act roles, but the relevant distinction at the level of speech act roles cannot be formulated in terms of person only.

In some sense, marking the identity between an A or S_A argument and the speech act participant in charge of the assertion can be viewed as the grammaticalization of a particular type of evidentiality, since *-ada* encodes that the speech act participant in charge of the assertion has a direct knowledge of the event by having played an active role in it.[14]

6.6. The origin of split intransitivity in Akhvakh

Gender-number agreement is common in North-East Caucasian languages, and is considered an ancient feature of this language family. The affixes involved in gender-number agreement in Akhvakh are quite obviously cognate with functionally similar affixes, not only in the other Andic languages, but also in languages belonging to various branches of North-East Caucasian. By contrast, person agreement is not common in North-East Caucasian languages, and is considered a recent and isolated innovation of the few languages that have it (Helmbrecht 1996, Hewitt 2004, van den Berg 2005).

In particular, Akhvakh is the only Andic language having an agreement pattern involving person distinctions. As already mentioned in footnote 14, an agreement pattern similar to that of Akhvakh (i.e., with an inversion of person marking between declarative and interrogative clauses) has so far been signaled in the Mehweb dialect of Dargwa only, and there is no evidence that there could be any historical connection between Akhvakh and Mehweb Dargwa person marking.

In languages already having person agreement, the development or renewal of person agreement morphology can be the result of various reanalysis processes (Siewierska 2004:246-281). However, regarding the emergence of person agreement in languages previously devoid

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[14] Agreement patterns involving a binary choice with a 1 vs. 2/3 contrast in assertions and a 2 vs. 1/3 person in questions have been labeled *conjunct/disjunct systems* by Hale 1980. They have been first described for Tibetan, Newari, and a few other Tibeto-Burmese languages (Hale 1980, DeLancey 1986, DeLancey 1990, DeLancey 1992, Hargreaves 2005, Tournadre Forthcoming). Agreement patterns of this type have also been found in Awa Pit, a Barbacoan language spoken in Colombia and Ecuador (Curnow 2002), and in the Papuan language Oksapmin (Loughnane 2007). Among Caucasian languages, such an agreement pattern has so far been recognized only in the Mehweb dialect of Dargwa (Sumbatova Ms, Bickel Forthcoming(b)).

of it, it is commonly assumed that the grammaticalization of bound pronouns is the only possible evolution by which languages can acquire person agreement.

In some of the East Caucasian languages that have person agreement, we find the situation expected in languages in which such an evolution took place in the relatively recent past, with a multivalued feature of verbal person closely reflecting the person-number distinctions expressed by independent pronouns, and person markers still recognizable as cognate with the corresponding independent pronouns.

The situation in Akhvakh is strikingly different: in this language, the morphological distinction that at first sight looks like person marking involves a binary choice and does not interfere with number (whereas plural pronouns have forms entirely different from those of singular pronouns). Moreover, all Akhvakh personal pronouns have a formal distinction between absolutive and ergative cases, but the same suffixes are used to mark person agreement of intransitive verbs with S (in the absolutive case), and of transitive verbs with A (in the ergative case). And finally, the hypothesis of a pronominal origin of this agreement pattern is hardly compatible with the fact that the same couple of suffixes encode 1st person vs. 2nd/3rd person in declarative clauses and 2nd person vs. 1st/3rd person in questions.

If one accepts the idea that this agreement pattern is a recent innovation of Akhvakh (and it is reasonable to accept it, given that no traces of a similar mechanism have been recognized in any other Andic language), the only possible conclusion is that it cannot result from the grammaticalization of pronominal clitics, and must have another explanation.

In Creissels 2007, I analyze the morphological evidence on the basis of which the evolution that resulted in this rare type of agreement pattern can be reconstructed, and I show that a plausible hypothesis can be elaborated on the basis of a comparison of the two endings of the perfective positive with identical or partially identical endings found in other verb forms in which they are not involved in person distinctions. This comparison suggests that, prior to the evolution that resulted in the present distribution of these two suffixes, the choice between *-ada* and *-ari* expressed a tense distinction, probably *perfect* vs. *narrative past*, and that this system was destabilized by the grammaticalization of the analytic form that, in present-day Akhvakh, expresses the meaning of perfect (*perfective converb + copula*). The development of the analytic perfect resulted in blurring the TAM distinction originally expressed by the choice between *-ari* and *-ada*, but did not lead to the elimination of one of the two competing forms. The formal distinction was maintained, but with a new function: in present-day Akhvakh, *-ari* and *-ada* do not differ in their TAM value, but *-ada*, whose original function was probably the expression of perfect, was retained in clauses involving an agentive core argument (A or S_A) identical with the speech act participant in charge of the assertion, whereas *-ari*, whose original function was probably the expression of narrative past, was retained in clauses involving an agentive core argument different from the speech act participant in charge of the assertion, and in clauses involving no agentive core argument.

If this hypothesis is correct, split intransitivity does not necessarily result from a change gradually spreading through the lexicon: it may also involve an abrupt change resulting from the reanalysis of an inflectional distinction. Another interesting corollary of this hypothesis is that the semantic feature of control, which has been recognized as the most widespread semantic correlate of split intransitivity in the languages of the world, can condition the reanalysis of a TAM distinction as an evidentiality distinction implying a distinction between S_A verbs and S_P verbs that did not exist before.

7. Conclusion

In this paper, I have tried to show that,

(a) not all variable properties of intransitive verbs can be described in terms of alignment variations, and in particular, several phenomena currently mentioned as 'unaccusativity diagnostics' are not so straightforwardly related to split intransitivity as could be expected from the definition of unaccusativity as it is currently formulated;

(b) the distinction between split intransitivity proper and fluid intransitivity is crucial in the evaluation of the precise status of variations in the alignment properties of intransitive verbs;

(c) overt split intransitivity is a more widespread phenomenon than assumed by most typologists, and should in particular be recognized in a number of predominantly accusative languages in which current practice tends to occult the existence of a minor class of intransitive verbs whose coding properties show ergative alignment;

(d) a thorough analysis of constructions such as the impersonal construction of French or Tswana intransitive verbs leads to recognize a type of alignment variation not recognized in classical works on alignment typology, namely pragmatically driven fluid intransitivity;

(e) although current hypotheses about the semantic correlates of split intransitivity seem to be basically correct, the possibility of semantically arbitrary intransitivity split should not be totally discarded;

(f) although several recurrent historical scenarios responsible for the development of split intransitivity have already been identified, the analysis of the intransitivity split recently discovered in Akhvakh suggests that grammaticalization paths not identified so far still remain to be discovered.

Abbreviations

In glosses of Bantu examples, numbers at the beginning of nominal forms, or after '3:', indicate noun classes (3:1 = 3rd person class 1, etc.). Otherwise, numbers indicate persons

1PLE: 1st person plural exclusive
1PLI: 1st person plural inclusive

A: person mark referring to the agent of prototypical action verbs
ABL: ablative
ABS: absolutive
ACC: accusative
ADES: adessive
AOR: aorist
AUX: auxiliary
CL: noun class marker
COP: copula
CVB: converb
D: person mark referring to a participant represented by a dative NP
DAT: dative
DEF: definite

DEM: demonstrative
DESID: desiderative
ERG: ergative
ESS: essive
F: feminine
FIN: final (in descriptions of Bantu languages, 'final' designates an inflectional ending of verbs that does not carry a meaning by itself, but contributes to the identification of tense)
FUT: future
GEN: genitive
IMPERS: impersonal
INACT: inactual
INDEF: indefinite
INF: infinitive
INSTR: instrumental
INT: interrogative
INTRV: introversive (blocking of undergoer argument)
IPFV: imperfective
IPRF: imperfect
LAT: lative
LOC: locative

M: masculine
MID: middle voice
N: neuter
NEG: negation
NOM: nominative
O: (Akhvakh)oblique stem formative
O_M: (Akhvakh)oblique stem formative, singular
   masculine
OBL: (Kurmanji) oblique case
P: person mark referring to the patient of
   prototypical action verbs
PART: partitive
PASS: passive
PFV: perfective
PL: plural
PLF: plural feminine
PLH: plural human
PLM: plural masculine

PLN: plural neuter
PRF: perfect
PRS: present
PST: past
PTCP: participle
REFL: reflexive
S : single argument of monovalent verbs
SG: singular
SGF: singular feminine
SGM: singular masculine
SGN: singular neuter
SBJV: subjunctive
SFP: sentence final particle
TNS: tense
TOP: topic
TR: transitivizer
TRAN: translative
VAL: (quechua) validator

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