

Clause structure changes in history of Western New Indo-Aryan languages

It has been shown by many scholars that Indo-Aryan languages represent rather rare type of typological evolution moving first from nominative-accusative towards ergative (Anderson 1977, 1988), (Butt 2001), (Klaiman 1978, 1987), (Peterson 1998) (Stroński 2011, (Zakharyin 1979) and then back towards accusative alignment (Stump 1983), (Khokhlova 2016). Historical evolution of Western Indo-Aryan languages has been traditionally demonstrated by the development of case marking and verbal agreement systems. The rules of clause combination and co-referential deletion have not been discussed by scholars dealing with Indo-Aryan ergativity. In this paper I will try to analyze the impact of ergative alignment on the historical changes in clause structure of Western Indo-Aryan languages.

The data analyzed here were obtained from prose texts written by Jain authors in Old Rajasthani and Old Gujarati available from early 14-th century, and texts in Old Punjabi (Janam Sakhi) belonging to 17-th – 18-th centuries.

An ideal ergative pattern developed in perfective domain of Apabhramsha when Nominative vs. Accusative distinction was destroyed by sound changes. Since that time the case marking and verbal agreement in constructions with reflexes of the historical *ta*-participle structures were maximally ergative (Bubenik 1998: 65-87, 142 – 43). It will be shown in my paper that the ergative type of noun declension and verbal agreement was followed in Apabhramsha by deviations from accusative pattern of clause combinations. In (1) below the patient of the first clause is co-referential with the omitted agent of the second one:

(1) <i>rā-em...</i> (A1)	<i>pes-iy-a</i>	<i>kiṃkar-a</i> (O)	<i>pur-e</i>
king-INSTR	send-PP-M.PL	servant-M.PL	city-LOC
<i>ghar-e</i>	(A2=O) <i>avalo-i-u</i>	<i>uvavan-e</i>	
house-LOC	search-PP-M.SG	park-LOC	

‘The king sent the servants [and they] searched in the city in every house and in the park.’ (Puṣpadanta’s *Harivamśapurāṇa* 83. 6.6-7, quoted from Bubenik (1998:158).

The O/A pivot illustrated in (1) is not typical either for consistently accusative languages with A/S pivot or for consistently ergative languages with O/S pivot (Dixon 1994:143-81). It is believed that languages with split ergativity are usually syntactically accusative, but NIA history demonstrates that along with A/S pivot that did not correspond to any consistent syntactic pattern, Apabhramsha and early NIA prose texts allowed co-referential omissions based on both the nominative-accusative A/S (2) and the ergative O/S pattern (3).

(2) <i>ti sarve tiṇi</i> (A)	<i>jit-ā</i>	<i>rājpurī āṇ-ī</i>	<i>kar</i>	(S=A) <i>baiṭh-au</i>
they all he.INSTR	defeat-AOR.M.PL	Rajpuri	own-F	make-ABS sit- AOR.M.SG

‘They all are defeated by him (He has defeated them all), having appropriated Rajpuri, [he] sat [on the throne]’ [RG: 6].

(3) <i>śrenik sīhāsaṇ-i</i>	<i>baiṭh-au</i>	<i>vidyā</i> (O)	<i>paṛh-ai</i>	<i>ghaṇī</i>
Shrenik throne-LOC	sit-PP.M.SG	knowledge. F.NOM.	learn-PRES.3.SG	many
<i>vāri mātāg-ī</i>	<i>vidyā</i>	<i>kah-ī</i>	<i>puṇ</i> (S=O) <i>āv-ai</i>	<i>nahī</i>
time outcast	knowledge.F.NOM	tell-AOR.F	but	come-PRES.3.SG
				NEG

‘Raja Shrenik takes in knowledge (learns mantra) while sitting on the throne. The outcast repeated mantra many times, but it is not remembered’. [RG: 15]

On its way towards nominative-accusative syntax the co-referential deletion based on the O/A pivot has stopped to exist. In modern Western NIA languages constructions of type (1) will be interpreted according to the A/S pivot - compare Hindi (4) below:

(4) <i>rājā</i> (A)	<i>ne</i>	<i>nauk^r-ō</i>	<i>ko</i>	<i>śahar</i>	<i>bhej-ā</i>	<i>(har)</i>
king	ERG	servant-OBL.PL	ACC	city	send-AOR.M.SG	(every)
<i>ghar</i>	<i>mē</i>	<i>dekh-ā</i>	<i>aur</i>	<i>udyān</i>	<i>mē</i>	
house	LOC	see-AOR.M.SG	and	park	LOC	

‘The king sent the servants [and he, not the servants] searched in the city in every house and in the park.’

Constructions similar to (2) with A/S pivot and (3) with O/S pivot are possible in modern Western NIA, but (3) necessarily demands the recipient (co-referential with the agent of the first clause).

The other important impact of MIA and NIA syntactic development was the marginality of ergative agent. The latter in the ‘originally’ ergative languages usually occupies marginal position in a sentence and can easily be omitted. According to Dixon (1994: 218), the majority of the ergative languages of Australia freely allow the A-NP to be omitted from any transitive clause. Kibrik (1992) provides similar data from Caucasian languages. In later MIA and in earlier NIA constructions with perfective participles of transitive verbs freely allowed the omission of the Agent.

It is important to underline the difference between the elliptical agent omission and the agent’s marginal role in a sentence. In Sanskrit and MIA any constituent recoverable from the text can be freely omitted, and agent in *ta*-participle construction had no privilege compared to any other NP. When examining convergent syntactic behavior of the gerundive, passive and *ta*-participle clauses in Classical Sanskrit text (Jambhaladatta’s *Vetālapaⁿcaviṃśati*) Wallace (1984: 167–87) came to the conclusion that *ta*-participle with its demoted agent match more closely the pragmatic conventions of direct speech. Unlike OIA where A-deletion was elliptical and could be easily recovered from the text, the same phenomena in MIA and early NIA might denote events with unknown or unimportant agent:

(5) <i>mujh</i>	<i>nai</i>	<i>okhad</i>	<i>dīdh-au</i>	<i>jinī</i>
I.OBL	DAT	medicine.M.SG	give-PP.M.SG	by which
<i>jarā</i>	<i>jā-i</i>	<i>yauwan</i>	<i>āw-ai</i>	
old age	go-PRES.3.SG	youth	come-PRES.3.SG	

‘I was given a medicine by which old age goes and youth comes’

Constructions of type (5) resemble the demotional passives, but they are ergative with demoted agents. At the climactic point of ergative development passives stopped being used in ergative domain. With the decline of ergative syntax in the 17-th century the new passives got formed in Western NIA. It will be shown in my paper that at present ergative constructions with demoted agent exist only in Rajasthani where they are used interchangeably with demotional passive constructions.

One more problem to be discussed in my paper is the decrease of subject prominence in history of Western NIA. It has been shown by a number of scholars that Hindi is far less subject prominent than was Sanskrit. It may be described as the ‘separatist’ subjectless language which strictly encodes semantic roles (Montaut 2004). The same is also true for other Western NIA. Controlling subject properties acquired in NIA syntactic history by agent, experience, recipient and other semantic roles have been discussed by many authors (Davison 2000), (Harbert & Dayal 1994), (Hook & Koul 1992), (Kachru et al.1976), (Klaiman 1979), (Montaut 1994), (Mistry 2004), (Subbarao 1971) et al. In this paper I will show some rare cases of possessor control over absolutes.

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