

## Evolution of ergativity in the Western Hindi

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The early stage of the Western Hindi vernaculars demonstrates two types of typology competing with each other – Nominative typology and Split Ergative typology. Ergative typology includes a number of ergative strategies existing in different vernaculars and in the one and the same vernacular as well. In the course of standardization of Modern Standard Hindi (MSH) Split Ergative Typology wins. The main features of Old Hindi case system are: 1) Old Hindi demonstrates the same, dative case marking both for Subject (Agent) and Object (Patient), whereas MSH has differentiated these case markers, 2) Old Hindi has two types of agreement – (a) only with unmarked S/O and (b) both with unmarked and marked S/O, while MSH allows only the first one.

**Keywords:** ergativity, Split ergativity, nominative case, dative case, Western Hindi, Early Hindi

### 1. Introduction

Before proceeding to the evolution of ergativity in the Western Hindi I'll try to define what Nominative and Ergative strategies are as applied to the Western Hindi. In MSH ergative strategy includes [+ perfective, + transitive] domain with *ne*-marked ergative subject; and nominative strategy covers everything else. Nominative subject controls verb agreement, while *ne*-marked ergative doesn't control agreement because subject is blocked by monofunctional postpositional clitic *ne*. Function of agreement controller transfers to direct object if it is unmarked (inanimate, indefinite, unspecified), otherwise if direct object is marked by *ko* postpositional clitic (animate, definite, specified), agreement is default (MSG).

But historically the situation is more complicated. In early Hindi ergative and nominative strategies were developing simultaneously. The latter existed in old, inflectional form and was developing a new, postpositional clitic based, upgraded form. In the early Hindi the Nominative is unmarked, non-gradual as in MSH, while the ergative strategy, contrastingly, is marked and gradual. There is a set of parameters and a scale of ergativity. This scale represents a variety of ergative strategies from minimal to maximum manifestation of ergativity. A boundary between nominativity and ergativity is not obvious in early Hindi. Graduality and scalarity of the ergative domain is discussed below.

Inventory of the main participants – S and O – markers in Early Hindi includes the following items: Nominative, Oblique or Objective (inflected Dative) case of pronouns, *ko*-Dative, *ne*-Dative. All of them are capable to mark both S and O participants and besides subject of deontic modal constructions.

Ergative domain in early Hindi is not standardized as in MSH and highly variable. Both Ergative and Nominative share two parameters: subject encoding and agreement. Nominative strategy involves zero subject encoding and subject-predicate agreement the same as in the Nominative strategy in MSH. Ergative strategy in early Hindi differs from those in MSH. Parameters are the same: argument encoding and agreement, but their manifestation differs. Subject may be zero marked, dative marked, oblique marked or ergative (originally dative) marked, object may be unmarked or marked by dative (*ko* or *ne* postposition or inflectional dative of pronouns) or oblique. Agreement may be not only between object and verb, but between subject and verb as well. Agreement may be transboundary when predicate agrees with subject marked by postposition or non-nominative case inflection.

Thus each item of ergative manifestation inventory may mark both subject and object. Actually vernaculars try to escape such an ambiguity.

Ergativity as a scale of parameters supposes minimum and maximum of ergativity. Below I'll try to determine what is a minimal ergative construction opposed to Nominative one and where is the point dividing ergative and nominative strategies. These questions are relevant for early, pre-MSH Hindi. Division between ergative and nominative strategies in MSH are quite distinct.

In what follows I describe different strategies or syntactic techniques existed in the Hindi area. Method is descriptive, empirical and comparative.

## 2. Nominative strategy

Through the whole second millennium both Nominative and Split Ergative syntax developed simultaneously in different vernaculars both constructions randomly scattered through different texts.

The following examples taken from Dakhini and Braj demonstrate typical nominative constructions in perfective domain – perfect (1) and preterit (2-4): nominative subject and subject-predicate agreement. In sentence (1) with covert subject 1 SG and covert object (*taarikh* F) finite verb agrees with subject in M 1 PL. In sentences (2-3) objects (Patients) are feminine nouns, verbs in Preterit agree with subject in gender (M) and number (SG in 2 and PL in 3 and 4). Sentential object in (4) is omitted here.

### *Dakhini*

Nominative strategy is the most frequently used in Dakhini. As known Dakhini was transplanted to the South India (Deccan) from the Northern India (Delhi region) in the 14th century. Developing in isolation from the Northern Hindi Dakhini has conserved a lot of archaic features including parallel development of nominative and ergative strategies. Usually Dakhini is considered as an example of “extreme convergence” (Subbarao & Arora 1988). Surrounded by non-ergative Dravidian languages Dakhini was exposed to their influence. But the general trend in the evolution of the Western Hindi vernaculars also should be taken into consideration. Attrition of inflectional cases induced two mutually contradictory pro-

cesses: evolving of nominativity and evolving of new ergativity due to upgrading of the case system. The former trend dominated in the Eastern Indo-Aryan languages, and the latter won in the Western Hindi. But the tendency towards nominativity is traced in all pre-MSH vernaculars. So influence of the non-ergative languages met the stage set for.

- (1) aalam ko faaydaa hone ke vaaste dakhnii zabaan se  
 people DAT benefit be for dakhini language INSTR  
 banaayaa huuN  
 made am PRF M 1 SG  
 ‘... for the sake of the people [I] have made [it – tafsiiir F SG “commentary”] in  
 Dakhini language’  
 Abdussamad (1659); in Śarmaa (1954: 418).
- (2) alla taalaa inkii duaa qabuul kiya  
 allah M SG his GEN F SG prey F SG confessed PRET M SG  
 ‘Allah admitted his prey’  
 Ibid.: 419
- (3) aur har do raajaa aapas meN  
 And each two rajas NOM M PL between themselves  
 mulaaqaat kiye  
 meeting ACCunsp F SG made PRET M PL  
 ‘And each of the two rajas met each other’  
 Taariqh shree raNgpaTTan (1802); in Śarmaa (1954: 432).

### **Braj**

Ergative strategy is predominant in Braj, while nominative constructions are much rarer than those in Dakhini.

- (4) tab vaa gopaal soN suurdaas jii kahe...  
 Then that gopal with surdas NOM M PL HON said PRET M PL  
 ‘Then Surdas said to that Gopal...’  
 Gokulnaath, Hariraay. *Suurdaas* (84 vaṣṇavan kii vaartaa, XVI- XVII A.D.); in  
 Snell 1991: 74

## **3. Ergative strategy**

As mentioned above a variety of ergative constructions is available in Early Hindi. Historically primary ergative constructions are those with inflected non-nominative subject marked by Oblique or Objective (Dative) case of pronouns, and zero-marked subjects represented by nouns lost their inflections. The only feature which distinguishes between Ergative and Nominative in this situation is object-predicate agreement (syntactic ergativity). It works only if gender and number of subject and object are different (according to Elizarenkova 1967: 116 gender is one of the obligatory conditions of ergative construction).

### 3.1. Ergative construction with unmarked subject

Hypothetically subject is unmarked due to attrition of inflection.

The following sentences (5), (6) and (7) represent three different options. In (5) the strategy is ergative because here we see object, not subject agreement. Unmarked subject formally is nominative, but object agreement indicates that the subject is rather covert ergative, or more specific of ergative origin. The phrase (6) may be treated both as Nominative and as Ergative as well due to the fact that the subject and object are of the same, masculine gender and of the same, singular number. These syntactic roles, S and O, differ by word order – SOV and by animateness (S) / inanimateness (O), but not by agreement. Ergative reading is possible only when compared with sentence (5). The sentence (7) (the Bundeli example) also as in the Braj example (5) demonstrates object agreement. Both arguments, S and O, are unmarked, S is masculine and O is feminine noun controlling agreement with the verb.

Sentences (5), (6), and (7) display a minimal ergative strategy No 1. Here objective, not subjective agreement in gender and number is the only feature which distinguishes Ergative construction from the Nominative one. Ergative reading of sentence (6) is possible due to (5) and (7) type of sentences of explicit ergativity.

The only manifestation of ergativity here is object-predicate agreement, and ergativity is syntactic.

#### *Braj*

- (5)      pratham kariī            hari                            maakhan      corii  
 first made PRET F SG    hari (God) NOM M SG    butter NOM    theft M SG NOM F SG  
 ‘Hari made his first butter-theft’  
 Suurdaas (1478-1581). Suur-saagar, in Snell (1991: 91-92)
- (6)      maiyaa                            maiN nahiN      maakhan                    khaayau  
 Mother ACC UNSP 1 SG    not                            butter ACC UNSP M SG    eaten PRET M SG  
 ‘Mother, I didn’t eat the butter!’  
 Ibid: 96-97

#### *Bundeli*

- (7)      angrez                            kumuk                            kariī  
 The English NOM M PL    aid ACC UNSP F SG    made PRET F SG  
 ‘The English fortified their position’  
 Paariichat kau kaTak, 1915, in S. Gupta (2000: 302)

### 3.2. Oblique case marked Subject

Since the oblique case remained only in pronouns, subjects of this type of ergative constructions may be represented only by pronouns. Here two features of ergativity are involved: non-nominative subject, and agreement – objective agreement in (8) and (10), and subjective agreement in (9). In other words ergativity is combined, morphosyntactic. In the Braj example (9) subject-predicate agreement takes place despite non-nominative, oblique marking (blocking) of the subject. In this case “strengthening” of the subject (Masica 1993: 343) takes place, subject-verb agreement gets the highest priority against case marking and

non-nominative, oblique case marking don't block agreement. The only parameter of ergativity in such a case remains ergative marked subject. So it may be called a minimal ergative construction No 2. Ergativeness of the minimal construction No1 depends on objective agreement. If agreement were subjective, construction would be nominative. Whereas ergativeness of construction No2 is supported by ergative marking of subject, otherwise it would be nominative.

Object-verb agreement in (8) and (10) means low priority of agreement against case marking hierarchy. So in this type of ergative strategy the syntactic pivot may be either object (patient) or oblique marked subject (agent).

### *Old Rajasthani*

- (8)           jihi                    race                    surag bhū satta paataal  
Who OBL SG   made PRET M PL   heaven, earth, the seven hells  
'Who made heaven, earth, the seven hells'  
Cand Bardaaii, in Beams (1966/1872-1879, V.II, 267)

### *Braj*

- (9)           uni                        vaiNse hii kari  
She 3 OBL PL HON   exactly so did PRET F SG  
'She did exactly so'  
Lalluulal (1763-1825), Raaj-niiti, in Snell (1991: 69)
- (10)       caTTaa-n                raajaa kii            beTii  
Thieves OBL M PL   raja GEN F SG   daughter ACC UNSP F SG  
mandir meN    jaaikēN            dhari daii  
temple in LOC   going CONV   kept PRET F SG  
'The thieves kept the daughter of the raja into the temple'  
Braj kii lok-kahaaniyaaN, in Liperovski (1988: 40)

## 3.3. Objective (Dative) case marked subject

### *Dakhini*

The abovesaid about Oblique case as ergative subject marker pertains equally to Objective case. Objective case is an inflected case of pronouns only, and both subject-predicate and object-predicate agreement is possible. In (11) object – predicate agreement and in (12) subject – predicate agreement is presented.

- (11)       jinekuchh                samajhyaa  
whom DAT PL HON   something understood PRET M SG  
'Those won understand something'  
Saksena 1952: 50
- (12)       tumen        mere                    soN                    vaadaa        made  
2 PL DAT   my 1SG POSS ABL   promice M SG NOM   PRET M PL   kiye  
'You promised me'  
Makdum Shaah Husenii, 1819, in Śarmaa (1954: 433)

### 3.4. Postposition-marked ergatives

#### 3.4.1. *ne*-marked Ergative with subject, not object agreement

##### *Dakhini*

- (13) aarif-aaN ne kabuul kiye haiN  
 Sufies M PL ERG agreed PERF M PL  
 ‘Sufies agreed’  
 Vajahii (1636), in Śarmaa (1954: 414)
- (14) khudaa ke dost-aaN ne bole haiN  
 Lord GEN OBL M PL friends OBL M PL ERG said are PERF 3 M PL  
 ‘The friends of the Lord said’  
 Saksena (1952: 47)

#### 3.4.2. *ne*-marked Ergative with *ko* marked object (ACC SP) agreement

Direct object marked by postpositional clitic *ko* indicates specificity / animacy (Bhatt & Anagnostopoulou 1996).

##### *Braj*

- (15) unhoNne ... mokuuN khuub maarii, main dukhiyaarii  
 he 3 PL ERG ... me 1 SG DAT awfully beaten, 1 SG, poor  
 raat bhar rotii rahii  
 woman, all night long kept weeping DUR PRET F SG  
 ‘He awfully beaten me. I, poor woman, kept weeping all night’  
 Braj kii lok kahaaniyaaN, in Liperovskiy (1988: 200)

#### 3.4.3. *ne*-marked ergative with unmarked object (ACC UNSP) agreement

Such constructions have been presented in examples (5)-(8) and (10)-13). Here a peculiar Patient – predicate agreement in Braj will be discussed. Patient, a personal pronoun marked by Nominative, agrees with predicate in gender, number and person. MSH allows only dative marked personal pronoun as a Patient. “In Braj (unlike in Hindi), the direct form of personal pronouns (and of demonstrative pronouns used for the third person) in the capacity of P [Patient] can be cooccurrent with the perfective verb form” (Liperovsky 2007: 150). The same type of pronominal O – V agreement in person, number and gender exists in Pahari (Stroński 2010b: 240; 2011).

##### *Braj*

- (16) tai neN tiin jaghai main kaal pai te bacaayau uuN  
 2 SG ERG three places me 1 SG NOM death from saved PRF M SG 1 SG  
 ‘You have saved me from death in three places’  
 Braj kii lok kahaaniyaaN, in Liperovsky (1988: 199)
- (17) tum raajaa saab ne yaad kiye hau  
 You 3 PL raajaa saab ERG remembered PRF 3 PL M  
 ‘The king has remembered you’  
 Braj kii lok kahaaniyaaN, in Liperovsky (2007: 151)

#### 4. Multifunctional Instrumental *lai*

The only vernaculars of the Western Hindi with instrumental ergative subject are Pahari dialects Kumauni and Garhwali. The following examples are from Kumauni. Postposition *lai* has two functions: 1) marker of ergative subject (18) and 2) instrumental (19).

##### *Kumauni*

##### **Ergative**

- (18) sab bhaaiN le ijaa bulauNaa kii ray dii  
 All brothers ERG mother invite GEN F opinion NOM F SG gave PRET F SG  
 ‘All brothers suggested to invite the mother’  
 Varmaa (1959: 56)

##### **Instrumental**

- (19) jab bhuukh lai peT meN huRkiyaaN naacNaa lagaa...  
 When hunger INSTR belly in drum NOM M SG dance begun...  
 ‘When due to hunger drums begun to dance in the belly...’  
 Ibid.

#### 5. Ergative in non-perfective domains

In early texts the Ergative strategy occurs in the domains now in the MSH replaced with the Nominative strategy. In the following examples (20), (21) and (23) ergative encoding of subject combines with Present of the finite verbs. Dakhini examples (20), (21) show Object or Dative case marking of subject as ergative in Present, while in Bangru *ne*-marked ergative subject is represented combined with Present predicate.

##### *Dakhini*

- (20) jinoN samajte haiN...  
 Who OBL PL understand are IMPR F 3 M PL  
 ‘Who understand...’  
 Saksena (1952: 50)
- (21) tumen muje dekhte naiiN  
 you 2 PL DAT me 1 SG DAT see PRES M PL no  
 ‘you don’t see me’  
 Bandaa Navaaz (1388-1423), Śarmaa (1954: 394)

Hypothetically this sentence may be mapped in another way, as a comitative. It may be supported by the following example:

- (22) is zamiin aur aasmaan ke darmiyaan jo ciiz nahiiN hai  
 This earth and sky between which thing NOM F SG no is 3 SG  
 us nahiiN meN hameN tumen calte-pherite haiN  
 that no in we 1 PL you 2 PL walk-wander IMPRF M PL 1, 3 PL  
 ‘Which thing doesn’t exist between earth and sky in this no-thing we and you wander’  
 Makdum Šaah Husenii (1819), *ibid.*: 434

**Bangru**

- (23) baahmaN-aaN ne ekaa makaa sione (sonaa) kaa de sai (detaa hai)  
 Brahman OBL M PL ERG a grain of gold gives PRES 3 SG  
 ‘Brahman gives a grain of gold’  
 Varmaa (1959: 31)

**6. Multifunctionality of the *ne* postpositional clitic**

Functions of *ne* postposition in early Hindi are: Ergative subject (Agent), Direct Object (Patient), and Dative subject of deontic modal constructions. Ergative marking of subject has been presented above. In this section Patient (ACC SP) and Dative subject of deontic modal constructions will be discussed.

**6.1. Object (Patient) marking****6.1.1. *ne*-marked direct object****Old Rajasthani**

As known postposition *ne* in *Prithviraj Raso* marks Objective case and never ergative (Beams 1872-1879, II: 261) as ACC SP as in example (24). About the same *ne*-marking of Agent and Patient in contemporary Rajasthani dialects see Stroński 2010a: 85.

- (24) pRthiraaj suni kuNar naiN // aap bullae hit  
 Prithiraaj NOM hearing prince ACC SP self invited PRET 3 PL kindly  
 ‘Hearing it, Prithiraj // himself invited the prince kindly’  
 Beams 1872-1879, II: 261

**Hariani / Bangru** (transliteration is original)

- (25) karz ne náṭeá banyá  
 advance ACC SP refused PRET M SG banya NOM M SG  
 ‘the banya [merchant] refused an advance’  
 Joseph 1986 (1910): 33
- (26) pán kí phík ne dúr kare  
 Betel GEN F spitting F SG ACC SP away throw  
 ‘Throw away the betel spittings’  
 Ibid: 46

**Dakhini**

In the nominative construction with Perfect of transitive verb O is marked with postpositional clitic *ne*, and agreement is S – V. Rajasthani demonstrates O – V agreement in the same type of construction (Khokhlova 2006: 3).

- (27) main to yo baat naiN kiyaa huuN  
 1SG this ACC SP made am PRF M SG 1 SG  
 ‘I have done it’  
 Saksena 1952: 56



Direct object (patient) is marked not only by *ne* postpositional clitic, but by *ko* postpositional clitic as well in Bangru as in (28). So animate, definite, specified accusative in Bangru has two dative markers – *ne* (as in the examples 25 and 26) and *ko*.

- (28) nar ko dená már, nári ko chaukás rakhná  
 man ACC SP give a stroke, woman ACC SP keep watch  
 ‘Kill the lover. And keep thy wife safe’  
 (A riddle – lock (nar) and key (nári) – lock the lock and keep the key secret; tálá márná is to lock a lock)  
 Joseph 1986 (1910): 53

### 6.1.2. Oblique case marked direct object

#### *Dakhini*

In the sentence (29) and in the main clause of (31) oblique marked direct object is included in dependent non-finite clause: infinitive clause in (29) and converb clause in (31).

- (29) is kitaab lazzat paane aalam sab mohtaaj  
 DEM SG OBL book ACC UNSP deliciousness to get world all needy  
 ‘All the world is eager to get this delicious book’  
 Vajahii, Sabras (1636), in Śarmaa 1954: 406
- (30) agar koi nekii kiyaa  
 If someone SG NOM something good ACC UNSP F SG did PRET M SG  
 to √vudaae taalaa un nekii  
 Lord NOM M SG that DEM OBL PL good ACC UNSP F SG  
 badal gunaaha-aN kuuN duur rakhtaa hai IMPRF  
 turn CONV sins OBL PL ACC SP removes  
 ‘If somebody did something good The Lord absolves sins turning them into good’  
 maulaa abdullaa (1623), ibid: 401

This example contains two direct objects, one of them in Oblique case, another marked with *kuuN* accusative postpositional clitic (ACC SP). Conditional clause with *agar* ‘if’ uses nominative strategy in perfective domain, it is not marked direct object, but subject expressed by indefinite pronoun *koi* ‘somebody’ is the pivot of the clause.

It seems to be that two forms of Accusative – Nominative unspecified and Dative or Oblique specified exist in early Hindi both in imperfective and perfective domains from the very beginning. According to Khokhlova in the West Indo-Aryan languages (Punjabi, Gujarati, Rajasthani) Accusative marked with dative postposition or ACC-DAT appears first in imperfect forms and later they spread into perfective domain (Khokhlova 1993: 47; 2007: 167).

### 6.2. Deontic modal constructions

Dative subject in deontic modal constructions in MSH is marked by dative postposition *ko*, but in the colloquial Hindi *ne* marked subject is also possible.

*Dakhini***Inflectional Dative marked pronominal subject**

- (31) jine sunyaa une ghaayal honaa hai  
 whom DAT PL heard PRET M SG those DAT PL wounded be is INF M PL is 3 M PL  
 ‘those who heard are to be wounded (injured)’  
 Saksena (1952: 50)

***ne*-marked dative subject**

- (32) aurat ne mard kii bahut minnat karnaa  
 woman DAT man GEN F SG much pray F SG NOM to do  
 ‘A woman should please a man’  
 Vajahii. Sabras, in Shamatov (1974: 233)

**7. Ergative: active or passive?**

Ergative constructions of the perfective-transitive domain are incorporated along with nominative constructions into the Active voice verb paradigms as active forms opposed to passive paradigm. But etymologically ergative construction is a type of possessive construction, for instant, Trask 1976 (a possessive perfect) when a possessor gets a result of his action. Hindi as a “to be”, not “to have” language has developed local or spatial type of possessive perfect which denote an action and its result being done by a subject as situated near / by its doer (predication of localization, Montaut 2004; 2007; 2009; about dative or locative, spatial meaning of *ne* in Butt & Ahmed 2010). Another approach to the ergativity in Indo-Aryan is that it originates in passive construction (passive-to-ergative shift), the recent review of the approaches to ergativity is Stroński 2009. Some papers in Russian supporting possessive origin of ergative constructions can be added: Maslov 1949 (2004), Sakhokiya 1985, Edelman 2002: 115-124.

In Russian ergative (33) the verb is passive.

*Russian*

- (33) u menja vse veshchi sobrany  
 By me 1 SG GEN all things ACC INAN PL packed PL  
 ‘I have packed everything’

With subject deleted ergative construction becomes passive. Below different types of passive perfective constructions with transitive verbs without subject are given. In (34) verb is in Pluperfect, in (36) and (37) verbs are in Perfect, while in Braj example (35) the verb is Preterit.

Such “perfective A-demotional construction” are considered to be common at the earlier stage of ergativity when Agent played a marginal role that is a necessary feature of “originally” ergative languages (Khoklova 2001: 180).

*Dakhini*

- (34) aur aisaa us farmaan meN likhaa thaa ke...  
 and thus that edict in LOC written is PLPRF M SG that...

‘And thus in that edict is written that...’

Taariqh šrii raNgpaTTan (1802), in Śarmaa (1954: 431)

### *Braj*

#### **Indefinite-personal sentences without subject**

- (35) sab kuuN alag-alag kaam sauNp diye  
 All DAT separate work ACC UNSP gave M PL  
 ‘separate tasks were given to everybody’  
 SaraNbihaarī Gosvaamī, in Liperovski (1988: 200)

### *Old Hindi*

- (36) Strīi ko kahaa hai ki ... kaisaahī pati ho par  
 Woman DAT said is PRF M SG that ... whatever husband be but  
 ise uskīi sevaa karnīi jog hai  
 her his GEN F service NOM F SG do due to is  
 ‘a woman is said to serve her husband whatever he is’  
 Lalluu Laal. Premsaagar (1953: 91)

### *MSH*

- (37) saNgam par ek rel pul banaayaa hai,  
 Sangam LOC one railway bridge M SG built is PRF 3 M SG  
 Jo briTiš kaal kaa hai  
 which the British times GEN M SG is 3 SG  
 ‘a rail bridge is built over sangam which is of the British times’  
 www.bundelkhanddarshan.com/bundelkhand-district/78.html (22.03.11)

## **8. Ergative intransitives?**

A stumbling-block in the Indo-Aryan ergativity concerns “intransitive ergatives”. I argue that there are no intransitive ergative verbs in Hindi at all. There is a class of verbs of mental and physical or bodily activities which behave in three ways: 1) as intransitive verbs, 2) as transitive verbs, and 3) may combine in their syntactic behavior intransitive and transitive strategies.

When these verbs behave as intransitive verbs they agree with nominative subject and combine with intransitive vector verbs, some of them may have an internal object of the same stem. Transitive strategy includes ergative marking of subject and co-occurrence with transitive vector verbs. Generally they have no direct object, or to put it differently, a covert or latent object may be postulated here. But some verbs used as transitive have an overt internal, same root object (48). Mixed intransitive-transitive behavior means nominative subject, subject-predicate agreement (intransitivity parameters), and transitive vector verbs (transitivity parameter).

I illustrate this with verbs haNsnaa “to laugh”, “to make fun” and nahaanaa “to bathe”. All examples are from MSH.

**haNsnaa as an intransitive verb**

The following sentence structures are represented with: one-participant (S) verb structure (38), two-participant (S and internal object) verb structure (39), the same structure with intransitive vector verb (40), and S V structure with intransitive vector verb (41).

- (38) kabhee khud pe haNsaa main  
Sometimes myself upon laughed PRET M SG I 1 SG  
'Sometimes I laughed at myself'  
<http://umennet.wordpress.com/2008/07/30/कभी-खुद-पे-हंसा-मैं-और-कभी/>
- (39) khaufnaak haNsii haNsaa thaa vah  
terrible laughter NOM F SG laughed was PLPRF M SG he 3 SG  
'He had laughed a horrible laughter'  
<http://kolkata16.sulekha.com/blog/post/2010/05/vo-tasveer.htm>
- (40) vah bhii ek pal ke lie vo puraani Thahaake maarne vaalii  
he 3 SG too one moment for those old roaring  
haNsii haNs gayaa thaa bola kuchh nahiiN  
laughter NOM F SG laughed PLPRF M SG old M SG something no  
'He too had laughed with those old roaring laughter, and nothing told'  
<http://gurugodiyal.blog.co.in/2009/01/15/सुहाग-का-पहला-तोहफा/>
- (41) yaar, kal maiN ek pahalvaan ko dekhkar haNs paRaa thaa  
lad, yesterday 1 SG one wrestler ACC SP seeing after burst out laughing PIPerf m sg  
'Lad, yesterday I saw a wrestler and burst out laughing'  
<http://navbharattimes.indiatimes.com/articleshow/1383196.cms> (23.01.06)

**haNsnaa as an transitive verb**

The sentence structure is S ERG V with transitive vector verb.

- (42) naujavaan ne ... zoroN se haNs diyaa  
boy ERG ... burst out laughing  
'The boy ... burst out laughing'  
<http://hindizen.com/2010/10/08/broken-hearts>

**nahaanaa as an intransitive verb (S NOM V)**

- (43) maiN caar dinoN tak nahaayaa nahiiN thaa aur maiNne  
1 SG four days bathed no PLPRF M SG and 1 SG ERG  
apne kapRe ek hafte tak nahiiN dhoe the  
my cloths ACC UNDP M PL one week no washed PLPRF M SG  
'I had not bathed four days and I had not washed my clothe for a week'  
[www.bbc.co.uk/hindi/regionalnews/story/2008/02/080228\\_harry\\_taleban.shtml](http://www.bbc.co.uk/hindi/regionalnews/story/2008/02/080228_harry_taleban.shtml)

**nahaanaa as a transitive verb (S ERG V with transitive vector verb)**

- (44) usne tiirth nahaa liyaa  
3 SG ERG a place of pilgrimage OBL-LOC bathed PRET M SG  
'He bathed in the place of pilgrimige'  
<http://aajtalak.wordpress.com/2010/02/20/श्रीगुरुग्रंथ-साहबि-परम/>

### Some others verbs

#### The verb *muskaranaa* “to smile”

Sentence structures are S NOM V with transitive vector verb (45) and S ERG V with transitive vector verb.

- (45) main muskuraa diyaa  
 1 SG smiled PRET M SG  
 ‘I smiled’  
[www.facebook.com/permalink.php?story\\_fbid=191062344282780&id=179510342104647](http://www.facebook.com/permalink.php?story_fbid=191062344282780&id=179510342104647) (July 2011)
- (46) usne muskuraa diyaa  
 she 3 SG ERG smiled PRET M SG  
 ‘she smiled’  
[www.writerscatalog.com/?p=268](http://www.writerscatalog.com/?p=268) (July 4th, 2011)

#### The verb *ronaa* “to cry”

Sentence structures are one-participant (S) V with transitive vector verb and ergative construction with internal object (48).

- (47) ro diyaa bachchaa aur haar gaii maaN  
 Cried PRET M SG child NOM M SG and failed PRET F SG motherNOM F SG  
 ‘Cried out the child and failed’  
<http://article.wn.com/view/WNATf0f6a119749a9acb73f11f6837a0514b>  
 (2008-05-2)
- (48) vijender ne suvidhaaN ke abhaao kaa ronaa royaa  
 Vijender ERG comfort GEN OBL lack GEN M SG cry NOM M SG cried PRET M SG  
 ‘Vijender cried a cry of the lack of benefits’  
<http://pathey.blogspot.com> (Friday, October 29, 2010)

According to a widespread opinion about ergativity of some intransitive verbs in Hindi-Urdu ergative usage involves volitional, intentional, purposeful reading, conscious control of the agent over action (Butt 2006; Butt & King 1993; Butt & Ahmed 2011; Joël 2010; Khan & Sarfraz 2009). But it doesn’t seem to be convincing. Usage of these verbs indicates that transitive-ergative and intransitive strategies don’t exhibit any semantic distinctions. Both express volitional and unintentional actions.

The same may be said about notions of telicity / inherent end-point and boundedness / intended end-point (Chakraborty 2009). The given examples don’t show any correlations between ergativeness and the abovementioned notions.

The following examples with the verb *khaaNsnaa* “to cough” are given to illustrate this idea that ergative and nominative strategies of intransitive-transitive verbs don’t involve distinction between volitional and involitional actions. The verb *khaaNsnaa* “to cough” in the sentences (1) and (2) denotes volitional, intentional actions, but syntactic constructions are different: ergative in the sentence (49) and nominative in the sentence (50), while nominative construction in the sentence (51) denotes involitional, unintentional action.

- (49) ... navaab kii praarthanaa sunte hii peR par baiThe  
 ... Nawab GEN F prayer ACC UNSP F SG hearing tree LOC sitting

phakiir ne jor se khaaN s diyaa

fakir ERG loudly coughed PRF M SG

‘... as soon as he heard the Nawab’s prayer sitting on the tree fakir loudly coughed’

[http://gaurtalab.blogspot.com/2008/06/blog-post\\_13.html](http://gaurtalab.blogspot.com/2008/06/blog-post_13.html)

(50)

reNu bhii so gaii thii, maiN

Renu NOM F SG also fell asleep PRET F SG, 1 NOM SG

khaaN s aa lekin vah nahiiN uThii.

coughed PRET M SG but 3 NOM F SG didn’t get up PRET F SG.

main fir se jor se khaaN s aa to uskii

NOM SG again loudly coughed PRET M SG, so 3 GEN SG

niiNd khul gaii

sleep NOM F SG opened PRET F SG

‘Renu also fell asleep, I made a cough but she didn’t wake up. I coughed again loudly so she got up’

[www.bharatdot.com/index.php/uncategorized/नेपालन-घरेलूकामवाली/](http://www.bharatdot.com/index.php/uncategorized/नेपालन-घरेलूकामवाली/) (18 June 2009)

(51)

mariiz ke saath aae yuvak ne DaakTar ...

patient with came PRF PTCP OBL youth ERG doctor

ke muNh ke saamne khaNs diyaa. ChiiN Te muNh

GEN face in front of coughed PRET M SG. Drops NOM M PL face

par pahuN chne se DaakTar naaraaz ho gae

upon fall because of doctor NOM M PL HON became angry PRET M PL HON

‘A youth who came with the patient gave a cough in front of the doctor’s face. A drop fell upon the face and the doctor became angry’

[www.amarujala.com/city/Kannauj/Kannauj-8376-35.html](http://www.amarujala.com/city/Kannauj/Kannauj-8376-35.html) (13 November 2011).

## 9. Expansion of ergativity in MSH: Irregular verbs become regular

Some “irregular” verbs in MSH as *bolnaa* “to talk” and *laanaa* “to bring” which being transitive have nominative subject in perfective TAM forms are being increasingly used in MSH as regular verbs with *ne*-marked subjects in the perfective domain.

### *laanaa* as ergative verb

(52)

jab kutte ne laaii videšii sailaaniyoN kii šaamat

when dog ERG brought PRET F SG foreign tourists GEN F SG ill-luck F SG

‘When a dog brought an ill-luck to the foreign tourists’

[www.livehindustan.com/news/desh/national/article1-Dog-bites-foreign-travelers-in-Agra-39-39-163664.html](http://www.livehindustan.com/news/desh/national/article1-Dog-bites-foreign-travelers-in-Agra-39-39-163664.html) (24-03-11)

### *bolnaa* as ergative verb

Traditionally the verb *bolnaa* considered to be transitive if a direct object is present, like in (53), if not, it is considered to be intransitive and is not used in ergative construction,

like in (54). But now *bolnaa* is used as regular ergative verb as in (55) and as it was used in Dakhini (14).

- (53) Bahuune ne bola jhuThh  
 Daughter in-law ERG said PRET M SG a lie M SG  
 'Daughter in-law said a lie'  
<http://navbharattimes.indiatimes.com/articleshow/3482537.cms> (14.09.08)
- (54) naukar bola – samjhaa bhii nahiiN paauuNгаа  
 Servant NOM M SG said – understand too no can FUT M SG  
 'Servant said I too can't understand'  
<http://kaushal.jagranjunction.com/2010/05/03/मैं-तूफान-में-भी-चैन-से-सोत/>
- (55) Baapuu ne ghar meN bhii sabko bol rakhaa hai ki...  
 Father ERG M SG home in LOC too everybody DAT said is PERF M SG 3 SG that...  
 'Father to everybody at home too said that...'

## 10. The main features of case system of Old Hindi

Case system of Old Hindi (pre MSH) significantly differs from those in MSH. The main features of the Old Hindi case system are:

Case markers of Subject (Agent) and Object in Old Hindi – nominative, inflectional markers of pronouns – oblique, objective (dative), postpositional clitic *ne* – are common (shared) to both of these roles and marks both subjects and objects. As for another dative postpositional clitic *ko*, it is a synonym of *ne* in all dative functions but apparently it doesn't mark ergative subjects. Obviously it was the main reason of redistribution of functions between *ne* and *ko* postpositions in MSH as a result of which postposition *ne* lost its dative functions and the function of ergative marker became the only function of *ne* postpositional clitic.

Actually markers of subjects and objects differ from each other. Even when they are the same, subjects and objects differs by syntactic position – the first position for subjects and the second position in a sentence for objects, and by their semantic properties – animate and inanimate etc. One and the same case marker usually doesn't mark both arguments. Differential case marking operates but not distinctly enough. In other words, subject and object are marked in the same manner.

Another parameter is agreement. In perfective domain agreement may be between subject and predicate or between object and predicate. Besides, agreement may be only between nominative marked (unmarked) subject or object with predicate, or controller of agreement may be marked by some non-nominative inflection or by *ne* or *ko* postposition which in such a case lose their agreement blocking force. Such "transboundary" agreement ("absence of agreement blocking" in Stroński 2010b: 242) means that agreement is considered as a higher priority than case marking and vice versa if agreement is blocked by non-nominative case markers priority is given to nominative marked subject or object.

MSH has developed a different model. Different case marking is evolved. A special monofunctional Ergative case marked by postpositional clitic *ne* is elaborated. Oblique inflected forms of pronouns were strengthened with postpositions; independent usage of

oblique case is limited to adverbial collocations. Objective case is used parallel with dative postpositional groups (OBL + P). Subject and object are marked differently with Agentive and Accusative megacases. Though both roles share unmarked nominative form, these shared forms combine with different counterparts – ergative and dative (Sigorskiy 2007). Postpositions *ne* as dative and *ko* are no more synonyms. There is no transboundary agreement in MSH.

Case system in MSH is heterogeneous and is compiled of two different systems: 1) old, inflectional system of two cases – Direct and Oblique, and Object (the latter only of pronouns) plus Vocative, and 2) new, cliticised postposition based case system in which the first one is included: Nominative, Ergative (*ne*), Agentive (NOM, ERG), Dative (*ko*), Accusative (NOM, DAT), Genitive (*kaa*), Instrumental-Ablative (*se*), Locative (*par*, *meN*) and Vocative.

Two case systems are essentially different from each other. Both of the two inflectional cases – Nominative and Oblique – distinguish gender – masculine and feminine, and number – singular and plural. Postpositional clitics are just case markers. While *ne* postpositional clitic is a structural case marker originally of spatial semantics the other case markers retain more or less their spatial semantics.

OBL may be dependant and independent. Dependant OBL is governed by a postposition; independent has local meaning and is used in word-formation as adverbs and as a converb builder. Direct case (Nominative in new case system) also is used in formation of adverbs (*achaa* “good”).

Compound postpositions are being drawn into the case system especially those semantically close to simple postpositional clitics: *ke dvaaraa* “by”, *ke liye* “for”, *ke saath* “with” etc. The case system in Hindi could be defined as a fuzzy structure with vague limits.

Case inflections and postpositional clitics (simple postpositions) share a function of case markers, but differ principally in their syntactic behavior (some of the differences are discussed in Anand & Nevins 2006). Here I touch one more peculiarity of postpositional clitic case marker. Inflected cases – NOM, OBL and OBJ – as subject markers can be only heads of noun phrase whereas cliticised postpositions can be heads of sentential subject group or syntactic period as well. Case ending marked noun involves just left branching while postposition allows not only left-branching of, but right branching of dependent NP, insertion of a clause between dependent NP and postposition as well. For example a long period from a Hindi newspaper is given (inserted clause is enclosed into square brackets):

- (56)       Lekin uske taaje khulaase, [arthaat 22 julaaii 2008 meN saNsad meN višvaas mat meN jiiṭne ke lie raaṣṭriiy lok dal ke caar saaNsadoN ko 10-10 kroR dekar khariidaa gayaa], *ne* sarkaar ke liye jiiṅvan-maraN ke praṣṅn sii kaThinaaii khaRii kar dii hai

But his latest exposes, [namely that on 22 July 2008 four MPs of the National People’s Party were paid Rs 10 crores to each them and so purchased (bribed) in order to win the trust vote in Parliament], created difficulties equal to life and death problem for the Government. [www.deshbandhu.co.in/newsdetail/824/6/0](http://www.deshbandhu.co.in/newsdetail/824/6/0) (18 March 2011).

Many features, models of ergativity of the Old Western Hindi lost in MSH are presented in different modern Indo-Aryan languages as described in Klaiman 1987, Masica 1991: 341-345, Deo & Sharma 2006, Stroński 2010b.



## Abbreviations

ACC – accusative, ACC INAN – accusative inanimate, ACC SP – accusative specified, ACC UNSP – accusative unspecified, CONV – converb, DAT – dative, DEM – demonstrative, DUR PRET – durative preterit, ERG – ergative, F – feminine, GEN – genitive, HON – honorific, IMP – imperfect, INF – infinitive, INSTR – instrumental, LOC – locative, M – masculine, MSH – modern standard Hindi, NOM – nominative, O – object, O INT – internal object, OBL – oblique, P – postposition, PLPRF – pluperfect, PRES – present, PRET – preterit, PRF – perfect, PL – plural, SG – singular, TAM – tense-aspect-modality

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