

**CASE CHANGE: EXPLORING ERGATIVE RECYCLING IN
EASTERN INDO-ARYAN LANGUAGES**

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EASTERN INDO-ARYAN LANGUAGES**

by

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Submitted

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to the*



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CERTIFICATE

This is to certify that the thesis – **“Case Change: Exploring Ergative Recycling in Eastern Indo-Aryan Languages”** – submitted by Sayantani Banerjee to the Indian Institute of Technology Delhi (IIT Delhi) for the award of the degree of Doctor of Philosophy is a record of bona fide research work carried out by her under my supervision and guidance, and it is in conformity with the rules and regulations of IIT Delhi.

She has fulfilled all the requirements for the submission of this thesis which has, in my opinion, reached the standard of fulfilling the requirements for the degree.

To the best of my knowledge, the material contained in this thesis has not been submitted, in part or in full, to another University or Institute for the award of another degree or diploma.

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ABSTRACT

This thesis focuses on case change, focusing on ergativity loss and its aftereffects in some Eastern Indo-Aryan languages. The present work examines the following overarching theoretical questions. They are - what happens when a system loses its ergativity, and how is the erstwhile ergative marker recycled within the same language? This study aims to show that the ergative marker can be recycled in the extended structure of the lower clause vP in the new nominative-accusative system to show various (extra-)semantic and discourse functions. My empirical focus in investigating these questions is some Eastern Indo-Aryan languages (hereafter EIAL), such as Bangla, Odia, and Assamese, spoken in the eastern part of India. I attempt a meso-level variation study with Kolkata (Standard) variety of Bangla, Bhubaneswar (Standard) variety of Odia and the Guwahati (Standard) variety of Assamese. Additionally, I also attempt a micro-level study of understudied variants with Agartala Bangla, Sambalpuri variant of Odia and Sylheti and Goalpara variants of Assamese. All these varieties have the same source and were diachronically a split-ergative language (Magadhan languages or eastern branch of the New Indo-Aryan languages) in the past with ergative marker \tilde{e} and personless object agreement. However, all of these languages lost the \tilde{e} ergative marker as well as the object agreement in the past. Literature (Bubenik 1989, Sikorsky 2006 a.o.) shows they turned into nominative-accusative languages, rich in subject-controlled person agreement all across tense and aspect. Nonetheless, the contemporary forms of the languages consist of a marker 'e', which apparently looks like the old ergative marker. In other words, the ergative marker persists as the new -e marker. However, there is little discussion about its status in the clause. In this study, I argue that the Voice head and VoiceP, a layer over vP , contribute to the initial changes in the ergative status. It assigns the structural ergative case to the structure in the older period of EIALs. Post ergative loss, this extra layer over vP as the Voice

Remnant head persists even after losing the original system, where the $-\tilde{e}$ marker is recycled. The old ergative marker recycles itself into a semantically vacuous marker in Standard Bangla, an animacy marker in Standard Odia and a volitional marker in Standard Assamese. It also acts as a perspective marker in Agartala Bangla, a plural marker in Sambalpuri and a volitional and focus marker in Sylheti. All these variations seen in the languages mentioned in the thesis can be explained by Maximise Minimal Means (Biberauer, 2019), where an already postulated feature is recycled for feature economy.

केस चेंज : एक्सप्लेनिंग एर्गेटिव रिसाइव्लिंग ऑफ ईस्टर्न इंडो-आर्यन लैंग्वेजेस

सार

यह थीसिस केस लॉस, विशेष रूप से एर्गेटिव लॉस और इसके परिणामों पर केंद्रित है। तात्कालिक कृति में निम्नलिखित व्यापक सैद्धांतिक प्रश्नों का परीक्षण किया गया है। वो इस प्रकार हैं – किसी सिस्टम द्वारा अपना एर्गेटिविटी खो देने पर क्या होता है और पूर्ववर्ती एर्गेटिव मार्कर उसी भाषा में किस प्रकार रिसाइकल होता है? इस अध्ययन का उद्देश्य यह दर्शाना है कि एर्गेटिव मार्कर को विभिन्न सेमांटिक और डिस्कोर्स फंक्शंस को अभिव्यक्त करने के लिए नई नोमिनेटव-एक्यूजेटिव सिस्टम में लोअर क्लॉज़ वीपी की एक्सटेंडेड संरचना में रिसाइकल किया जा सकता है। इन प्रश्नों का परीक्षण करते हुए मेरा एम्पेरिकल फोकस भारत के पूर्वी भाग में बोली जाने वाली कुछ पूर्वी इंडो-आर्यन भाषाओं (इसके बाद ईआईएएल) जैसे कि बांग्ला, उड़िया और असमिया पर केंद्रित है। मैंने बांग्ला की कोलकाता (मानक) बोली, उड़िया की भुवनेश्वर (मानक) बोली और असमिया की गुवाहाटी (मानक) बोली के साथ मीसो-लेवल वैरिएशन स्टडी का प्रयास किया है। इसके अतिरिक्त, मैंने अगरतला की बांग्ला, संबलपुरी की उड़िया बोली और सिलहटी और गोलपाड़ा की असमिया बोली का अल्प अध्ययन की गई बोलियों के सूक्ष्म-स्तरीय अध्ययन का भी प्रयास किया है। इन सभी बोलियों का एक ही स्रोत है और अतीत में एर्गेटिव मार्कर हैं और पर्सनलेस ऑब्जेक्ट एग्रीमेंट के साथ कालक्रमिक रूप से एक स्प्लिट-एर्गेटिव भाषा (मगधी भाषाएँ या नई इंडो-आर्यन भाषाओं की पूर्वी शाखा) थीं। हालाँकि, इन सभी भाषाओं ने अतीत में ऑब्जेक्ट एग्रीमेंट के साथ-साथ हैं एर्गेटिव मार्कर को भी खो दिया है। साहित्य (ब्यूबेनिक 1989, सिकोरस्की 2006 ए.ओ.) से पता चलता है कि इनमें सभी टेंस और ऐस्पेक्ट में सब्जेक्ट-कंट्रोल्ड पर्सन एग्रीमेंट में समृद्ध, नोमिनेटव-एक्यूजेटिव बदलाव आ गया है। बहरहाल, भाषाओं के समकालीन रूप एक मार्कर 'e' से मिलकर बने हैं, जो स्पष्ट रूप से पुराने एर्गेटिव मार्कर जैसा दिखता है। दूसरे शब्दों में, एर्गेटिव मार्कर नए - e मार्कर के रूप में बना रहता है। हालाँकि, क्लॉज़ में इसकी स्थिति को लेकर बहुत कम डिस्कोर्स मिलता है। इस स्टडी में, मेरा तर्क है कि वॉयस हेड और वॉयस पी, वीपी पर एक लेयर, एर्गेटिव स्टेटस में प्रारंभिक परिवर्तनों में योगदान देती है। यह ईआईएएल की पुरानी अवधि में संरचना को स्ट्रक्चरल एर्गेटिव केस देता है। एर्गेटिव लॉस के बाद, वॉयस रेमनेंट हेड के रूप में वीपी पर यह अतिरिक्त लेयर मूल प्रणाली का लॉस हो जाने के बाद भी बनी रही है, जिसमें -हें मार्कर रिसाइकल हो गया है। पुराने एर्गेटिव मार्कर ने अपने आपको मानक बांग्ला में एक सेमांटिक वैकुअस मार्कर, मानक उड़िया में एक एनीमेसी मार्कर और मानक असमिया में एक वोलिशनल मार्कर में रिसाइकल कर लिया है। यह अगरतला की बांग्ला में एक पर्सपेक्टिव मार्कर, संबलपुरी में एक प्लूरल मार्कर और सिलहटी में एक वोलिशनल और फोकस मार्कर के रूप में भी काम करता है।

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ABBREVIATIONS

1	first person	EMPH	emphatic
2	second person	EXT	external
3	third person	F	feminine
ABS	absolutive	GEN	genitive
ADDR	addressee	GER	gerund
ACC	accusative	HAB	habitual
AI	animate transitive	HH	high honorific
ALL	allative	IFR	Inferential evidential
AGT	agentive	INDEF	Indefinite
AN	animate	INS	instrumental
AOR	aorist	INTR	intransitive
ASP	aspect	INTNS	intensifier
CAUS	causative	INF/NF	Infinitive/ Non-finite
CLS	classifier	LAT	lative
COMP	complementizer	LOC	locative
COND	conditional	LV	light verb
COMPARATIVE	comparative	M	masculine
COMPAREE	comparee	MH	mid honorific
DAT	dative	NF	non-finite
DEM	demonstrative	NH	non-honorific
D	definite	NM	Nominalizer
DEM	demonstrative	NEG	negation
D	definite	NOM	nominative
DET	determiner	NPT	non-past
DIR	direct	OBL	oblique

ERG	ergative	OS	opposite sex
PASS	passive		
PFV	perfective		
PL	plural		
PRF	perfect		
PRN	pronoun		
PRS	present		
PROG	progressive		
PTCP	participial		
PN	proper noun		
PST	past		
Q	question		
S	subject		
SENS	Sensory		
SG	singular		
TR	transitive		
TOP	topic		
VOC	vocative		