An Investigation of Ergative Construction in Targhy Accent of Rajy Dialect from Distributed Morphology Viewpoint

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1. INTRODUCTION

Ergative construction (EC) as a subtle characteristic of Iranian languages and dialects has massively fostered a large body of research in the literature over previous decades. In this regard, the current study focuses on the *morphotactics* of the verb construction and the manner through which ergative alignment is formed in Targhy accent of Rajy dialect of which description and explanation of language behavior in the area in question have been entirely overlooked from distributed morphology (DM) viewpoint. Generally speaking, EC, according to Karimi's (2012a) generalization, in all Iranian and dialects can be classified into two categories. In the first group including North Kurdish and Baluchi, there is an agreement relation between the direct object and the T head represented by a verbal agreement (VA) at the end of the verb. In his proposal, in the EC of the second class including Central Kurdish and Larestani, which based on the current article, Traghy is of their pattern as well, however, there is no agreement in that oblique pronominal clitics (PCLs), which enter as a big DP form in the syntactic derivation, function as interveners, blocking any conceivable agreement between T head and a direct object altogether. Plus, there exists a complementary distribution between Vas and oblique PCLs, Karimi (ibid) says. He asserts, without any agreement relation with T, oblique PCLs just double φ-features of the subject, and the PCLs function as a repair strategy in response to the loss of oblique (here ERG) case marker, whereas EC still exists dynamically. Nonetheless, this article, based on both empirical and theoretical evidence, argues that contra to Karimi's (2012a) generalization it seems fair to suggest at least in EC of Targhy, which in turn bears the pattern of the second category, there is a genuinely fullfledged agreement in place, while agreement exponents, be it VAs or agreement clitics (ACLs) have no complementary distribution with their oblique PCL counterparts whatsoever.

2. MATERIALS AND METHODS

To meet the above-mentioned challenges, this study whose materials have been collected through the field and library methods considers two fundamental

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questions:

i) How to analyze the *morphotactics* of agreement exponents in Targhy?

ii) How to explain the ergative pattern in Targhy from both agreement and case system?

To address the questions, utilizing DM framework, and three syntactic arguments in favor of this article's hypotheses, the analyses could be as follows:

With regard to the agreement system, having considered some theoretical instructions associated with the last versions of DM, following Arregi and Nevins's (2012) view, we took *multiple agreements* to be responsible for creating the ergative pattern in Targhy. By *multiple agreements*, the head of the tense phrase (T) can enter into agreement with more than one goal simultaneously which in our case constitutes both subject and direct object. Owing to the relation between T head and object, ergative alignment is fed and the direct outcome of this computation is that the ergative pattern tends to emerge. This pattern, however, fails to completely arise because the second step of agreement, namely *agree-copy, is not* computed in the post-syntax. Instead, just two characteristics of the ergative pattern are represented in terms of determining the default 3rd singular person on the verb as morpho-syntactic features (not as a *vocabulary item inserted*) and *cliticization* (not choosing hosts) both of which are computed within syntax adequately. On top of that, the clitic formed in this way is syncretized with its oblique PCL to apply the ergative pattern in the case system. It is to be noted that we follow Karimi's constructive speculation (2012b) about the function of oblique PCL in the case system. It means we accept that there would exist some exponent around to respond to the loss of oblique case markers as a repair strategy; however, as opposed to his hypothesis, we assert that this exponent is ACL. The ACL per se is formed as a result of *syncretism* with its oblique PCL counterpart in virtue of which it aims to represent ERG-ABS in choosing hosts with *metathesis (morphological scrambling)* representing default 3rd singular person at the end of the verb; while at the same time tends to cross-reference with a subject like what happens in a NOM-ACC alignment too. More fully, because of split alignment in Targhy, the head of T bears a sub-bundle of features namely ACL and VA. The former contains D category and ERG features in its feature geometry, whereas the latter lacks the two features in question and thus serves as more unmarked than its ACL counterpart. Therefore, as long as ERG-ABS alignment is a winner of the agreement computation, it is ACLs that are inserted thanks to their *more specification* over VAs. It is to be noted that VAs also are merged due to the *subset principle* and *elsewhere as* an unmarked option in NOM-ACC alignment. Also, the operations under discussion account for serial verb constructions in which there is no complementary distribution between ACLs, VAs as well as PCLs.

Regarding the case system, in line with Legate (2017), Kalin and Atlamaz (2018), Atlamaz and Baker (2018), and Akkuş (2019), we propose the locus of little v as a domain where ergative case is computed. In this view, following Haig (2008 & 2017) and Shafai and Dabirmoghaddam's (2019) proposal for other Iranian languages and dialects, we posit that, in Targhy, it is the stem that triggers ergative pattern and split alignment rather than tense or even aspect of the verb. Thus, along with Akkuş (2019) – in line with Chomsky (1993) in assuming a complex head as a licenser- we assume as long as ERG-ABS is going to be applied, following Fernández-Salgueiro (200b; 2011) – the computation of case assignment can occur after agreement takes place; if so, the chain <v/voice + Stem> is formed and this is

exactly the time when ACL enters into derivation ending up on its host under *metathesis* (*morphological scrambling*). In NOM-ACC alignment, however, projecting the given chain is not required after all.

3. RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS
Although pieces of empirical and theoretical evidence have been examined, it still remains to find whether the analysis proposed here holds in much of the rest of the languages or dialects whose category has parity with Targhy.

4. CONCLUSIONS
Overall, with regard to modular locus of case and agreement, we posit that the computation of these two operations in question seems to be initiated in syntax proper and then, under post-syntactic operations, finishes in the post-syntax domain as proposed by Arregi and Nevins (2012). Secondly, based on their proposal, the number of findings in Targhy suggests the more we are to the *externalization* stage and spell-out domain in post-syntax proper, the more language, dialect, or sub-dialect/accent-specific variations are expected to take place.