CASE, SPLIT NOMINATIVITY, SPLIT ERGATIVITY, AND SPLIT ACCUSATIVITY IN HINDI: A HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE

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Abstract

Evolution of nominativity, ergativity and accusativity from the period of early Hindi up to modern Hindi is traced. Three types of ergative strategies (ES) succeeded each other during the evolution of Hindi: 1) inflectional ES; 2) syntactical ES, and 3) postposition-marked ES, or morphosyntactical ES. There were mixed types of ES also. The evolution of ES is related to the evolution of the case system, or more specifically, to the breaking down of the inflectional case system and the emerging of the postposition-marked case relation system. The evolution of split accusativity in Hindi follows mainly the pattern of the evolution of ergativity with some peculiarities of its own.

Hindi is considered in the broad sense, as standard Hindi with its dialects, or language-dialects, former (literary) languages. Linguistic data from Nepali and Panjabi are also used.

Key words: accusativity, ergativity, nominativity, passive.

1. EC already existed in OIA and MIA languages: in Sanskrit [Ivanov, Toporov 1960: 124-125; Elizarenkova 1967: 124-125]; in Prakrits [Vertogradova 1978/2002: 92-93]; in Pali [Peterson 1996. Abstract in SASSN 1996, 5.2]; in Apabhramsha (Old Western Rajasthani) [Tessitori 1914-1916/1958]. The history of ES in IA languages is similar to its history in Iranian languages [Pireiko 1979]. ES was triggered by introduction of perfect participle forms into the finite verb system. It seems to be an active, not a passive, strategy from the very beginning. There are two major arguments in favor of such an explanation of ES. First, being a part of the finite verb system, ES involves paradigmatic relations with nominative strategy (NS) sentences and so there is syntactic equivalence between them as sentences of active, not passive strategy. Both of them, NS and ES are counterparts of active strategy (AS) opposed to passive strategy (PS). Second, there was a
passive voice in OIA languages. Two passives in one and the same language are too much for its grammar.

The emergence of ES within passive constructions in MIA languages has been traced by P. L. Andersen [1986: 83]; cited and developed in [Bubenik 1996: 172]. The interface between ES and PS (the old inflectional passive) according to both authors is communicative strategy: while an ergative subject conveys old information, a passive subject conveys new information. The only qualification to this very interesting and promising idea is that EC existed already in OIA alongside with PC.

Investigation of grammatical relations in Pali [Peterson 1998; cited from 2001: 207] supports a more traditional point of view. That is "the emergence of an ergative construction in the perfect in Middle Indo-Aryan from an originally resultative construction, noting similarities to the more familiar development of perfect constructions in many West European languages from originally possessive constructions."

It may be considered as a generally recognized fact that the Ergative construction (EC) in Indo-Iranian languages is similar to the periphrastic possessive perfect (have-perfect etc) in other Indo-European languages. This differentiation of Indo-European languages between possessive perfect type and possessive EC type is coincident roughly with differentiation between have-languages and be-languages.

According to Yu. S. Maslov, as early as in the 19th century the similarity between the two types of possessive constructions—in West-European languages and in Russian—has been recognized: Ich habe das buch – U menya yest' kniga; Ich habe das buch gelesen – U menya kniga prochitana [Maslov 1948/1984: 224-248].

The problem of the active or passive meaning of EC has been a matter of discussion for a long time. But the idea of the passive meaning of EC is passé. Maslov has treated Russian EC (or syntactic constructions of an ergative type) as active. The idea of possessiveness is reanalyzed and agent does not denote possessor but performer of an action. Thus in the following utterance:

(1) Na kuhne nel 'zya ni na minuku ostavit' nichevo:
At kitchen [one] can't not for a minute leave nothing:

u koshki uzhe stachchina rybina (e.g. koshka stashchila rybu)
at cat already stolen fish (e.g. cat stole fish).

'One can't leave anything at the kitchen just for a moment: a fish has been stolen by the cat.' (= The cat has stolen a fish / The cat has a stolen fish)

2. Discussions of the passive or active character of the Ergative in
Hindi have been summarized in Ilieva [1997]. According to Ullsiferov [1993: 281-282], The Hindi EC is lexically passive but grammatically active. However this is rather a historical reconstruction because such an ambiguity of EC in Hindi can't be traced even in the earliest stages of Hindi. Nevertheless there remains the problem of the passive nature of the perfect participle. But this problem itself needs more investigation.

Marginal usage of EC with some non-transitive verbs or incompatibility of EC and some transitive verbs have been hypothetically interpreted as remnants of a former active stage (in the IA languages [Zakharyin 1977; 1987: 119-120; Volkhonskiy 1987], in the Iranian languages [Edelman 2001: 141-144]. Lists of such "irregular" verbs in both language families are very similar.

Interrelations of ES, NS and PS in the NIA languages may be presented historically as an opposition of neutral, centripetal and centrifugal strategies, or synchronically as opposition of active (imperfect active and perfect active) and passive strategies.

3. The date of 1000 AD is commonly accepted as the starting point of Hindi; (although some say it is VI-VIII AD). In any case this is a conventional boundary between Apabhramsha and Hindi, or more exactly between the prehistoric and historic periods in the development of Hindi, and the beginning of written texts in early Hindi. At the start of this period the case system is already represented in reduced form. In fact in early Hindi we have already the case system of modern Hindi reduced to DIR and OBL cases plus vocative. But the functions of the cases as well as their endings in early Hindi are not the same as in modern Hindi. The case functions in modern Hindi are even more reduced.

There are at least two more theories of case in Hindi. One is that Hindi basically has reconstructed the OIA system of eight cases. The reconstructed cases are marked by simple postpositions. Close to this is the point of view developed in the case clitic marker theory [Butt, King 1999, 2001; Sharma Devyani 1999]. Case clitics, that is cliticized simple postpositions, are morphologic case markers, or the last step to them. The second theory does not recognize any morphologic cases in Hindi at all, just syntactical case relations [Ullsiferov 1995]. Both theories have one thing in common: they reject the reduced two case system. Hereafter I assume an inflectional two-case system alongside of morphosyntactic cases: NOM, ERG, ACC, DAT, LOC, GEN.

From the historical point of view there are traces of the previous case system in modern Hindi, and simple postpositions retain their syntactic properties, e. g. they govern Oblique case of noun or pronoun including some special "ergative oblique" forms of some pronouns.

One of the functions of the Oblique case of nouns and pronouns as well as Object case of pronouns in early and middle Hindi is that of
Ergative marker. In modern Hindi this function is performed by the postposition ne. In early Hindi the postposition ne is used randomly.

4.1. I begin my analysis of ES and EC with examples from Dakhkhini and Awadhi. For one thing, they demonstrate opposite tendencies of evolution, but another reason is that both of them have been described uniformly by Baburam Saksena [1937/1972; 1952]. Saksena argues that in Dakhkhini and Awadhi Direct case and Oblique case as well as Object case of pronouns are not distinguished. All of them are used in the same positions without change of meaning. A. N. Shamatov [1974] follows this point of view (objections in [Zakharyin 1978: 107-109]).

My analysis of materials of the above-mentioned authors as well as of the text corpora of Dakhkhini [Shri Ram Sharma 1954] indicates that in both languages these three cases are arranged in complementary distribution: Direct case marks Nominative subject, Oblique and Object cases mark Ergative subject.

Dakhkhini

Examples are taken from the above-mentioned anthology of Shri Ram Sharma. In brackets after the translation author, dates of life or manuscript and page are given.

(1) (a) vo meharbaan divaa jnaan baalak kua. He NOM mercy gave knowledge boy ACCsp.

‘He mercifully gave knowledge to the boy.’ (Gonda, around 1300-1351, 45)

(b) aalaa taalaa kuraan me’ farmaayaa hai. Allah NOM Koran insaid is.

‘Allah has said in the Koran’ (Bandanavaz Gaisudaraz. 1388-1423, 394);

(c) agar [bandaa]kooi nekii kiyaa ... If [devotee-NOM] something (someone) good made...

‘If a [devotee] made something good...’ (Or: ‘If somebody made something good...’) (Maula Abdulla, 1623, 401);
A peculiarity of Dakhkhini is that subject Ergative marking by OBL, OBJ or postposition *ne* does not block its agreement with the predicate. So an Ergative marked subject remains controller of agreement:

(d) *duniyaa me*  *une*  *naam*  *Dubayya*

‘He stained his good name in the world.’ (Gonda, 45);

(e) *hamne*  *kiyaa hai*  *tuphaan*

‘I made a storm.’ (Gonda, 49)

This feature of Dakhkhini is not unique. In modern Hindi the postposition *ko* (the historical synonym of *ne*) behaves itself in the same way in participle clauses:

(i) *uske baad maarkaaTo ne*  *Dillii ko*  *liye*

‘After this Delhi was taken over by slaughters.’ (Mir Asgarali Kazi, 1861, 445)

This complex sentence consists of two clauses: *tuu samajhtaa hai* “You think” and *mai' badlii ‘I changed”. Embedding of the second clause into the first one triggers raising of its subject to the position of direct object of the matrix clause and the predicate of the embedded clause raises to the position of complement (predicative attribute) of the predicate of the main clause. But the trace of the former subject remains. It explains agreement between specific *ko*-marked / object case marked direct object and predicative attribute as a trace of subject-predicate relations. Sentences (2 i) and (3) have one thing in common, namely, transparency in agreement between the subject and the verb, in sentence (3) it is a subject of participle clause.

Hypothetically, Dakhkhini conserved the mechanism of the archaic stage of the Ergative when EC preserved its inner form of a possessive construction derived from NC. Subsequently EC became a purely structural phenomenon. Isolated from the mainstream of Northern Hindi,
Dakkhini conserved some archaic features.

The same phenomena — agreement control under postposition or oblique case marking of the head group in some Indian languages — Maithili, Marathi, Nepali and in some Tibeto-Burman languages — have been described in Subbarao 1998: 6-16, also in Oriya [Patnaik 1995].

Awadhi (examples are taken from [Baburam Saksena 1937/1972].

EC: (4) (a) muninaha
Sages OBL-ERG
kiirati gauii
fame sang.

‘The sages sang [his] glory.’ (Tulsi Das, 1532-1623 [Saksena 1972: 123])

(According to Kellogg the –nha ending is common for both Direct and Oblique cases [Kellogg 1875/1955: 124, Table VI].)

(b) rekhaa tinha
Line they OBL-ERG
khaa‘cii
draw.

‘They draw a line.’ (ibid., 172)

(According to Kellogg tinha is Accusative-Dative as well as Agentive, that is Ergative [ibid.: 196-197, Table XII].)

NC: (c) jo
hamaara don haatha banaawaa
Who NOM my/our both hands made.

‘Who made both my hands.’ (Nur Muhammad, 1757 [ibid.: 161])

OBL is used for the subject of a transitive predicate [Liperovskiy 1997: 55], but both authors reject ERG in such cases seeing here fusion of case functions. OBL marks the subject not only of perfect participle predicates but of personal verb predicates as well:

(d) gaiyaan khuaihii
Cows OBL-ERG will eat (subjunctive in modern Hindi).


The idea of B. R. Saksena, A. N. Shamatov and V. P. Liperovskiy that DIR and OBL cases are not distinguished in Dakhkhini and Awadhi
reflects the fact that NS and ES do not imply any semantic difference, which in Dakhini is emphasized by agreement of the ergative subject with the predicate. Nevertheless, the formal opposition of NS and ES is obvious.

Similarity of Dakhini and Awadhi concerning ergativity exists in the early and middle stages. In the newer period ergativity in Awadhi as well as in other Eastern Hindi languages exists only as remnants of the previous stage. In literary Dakhini the postpositional, morphological ERG is being strengthened under influence of the emerging standard Hindi. But modern colloquial Dakhini retains free NS/ES alternation:

**NS:**

(e) Tu tera moo kholo tou gadian ati.

You NOM your mouth opened so curses come.

(The feminine perfect participle is not marked by number).

‘[Once] you open your mouth curses come.’ [Goka 2000, original transcription];

**ES:**

(f) sarkaar ne isma’iil ko bulaa’yaq.

Lord ERG Ismail ACCsp called.

‘The Lord called Ismail’ (I. B. Padyanaman. 1951. in [Shri Ram Sharma 1954: 462]).

(g) une jaisa bolii vaisaa kartuu’

She OBJ-ERG as said so [I] shall do.

‘I’ll do as she said.’ [ibid.: 461]

(The finite verb kartuu’ is a fusion of perfect participle karat with Aux 1sg hu’. Only 1sg forms are marked in Dakhini.)

4.2. The situation in early Hindi and Braj is the same as in Dakhini and Awadhi. The breaking down of the case system decreased the distinctiveness of NS and ES or sometimes eliminated it. Given the fuzziness of case marking, the NS/ES option is determined by contrast of subject and direct object in gender and/or number. If the direct object is marked by the postposition ko, the NS/ES option is determined only by the form of the subject and/or its agreement with the predicate.
Khari Boli.

NC: (5)(a) jab yaar dekhaa naa n bhar ...
   When friend NOM looked eyes just ...
   ‘When the friend just looked in [his] eyes…’ (Amir Khusro, cited from [Tivari 1966: 133])

The language of Amir Khusro (1253-1325) is usually considered non-authentic. Recently discovered new riddles of Amir Khusro [‘Khusro’ Pradip Sharma 2002: 11-13] linguistically do not change anything because the manuscript is of the 18th century AD. An attempt at linguistic reconstruction of the language of that epoch [Shamatov 1978] argues the identity of Khusro’s language with the language of his times.)

EC: (b) logan pahine moTe vastra.
   People OBL-ERG worn coarse clothing.
   ‘People have worn coarse clothing.’ (Banarasidas. 1586-1643, cited from [Malaya 1997])

Unlike Dakhkini the “transparency” of ERG-marked subject for agreement with predicate is not characteristic of Khari Boli so there is object-predicate agreement, not subject-predicate agreement. Free alternation (optionality) of NS and ES is observed also in early Braj.

(6)(a) raajaa snaaun kiiyo, saavaNT ne snaaun kiiyo.
   Raja NOM ablution made, servant ERG ablution made.
   ‘The Raja performed his ablutions, the servant made his ablutions.’
(Candbardai, before 1550 AD, cited from [Sinh 1958: 372]).

(b) gvaal kahaa
   Shepherd NOM said.
   ‘The shepherd said.’ (Kaviindraacaarya Sarasvatii, karuNabharaN naatTak, 1617-1659, cited from [Gupta 1958: 122]);

(c) un kahii
   He OBL-ERG said
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(\textit{agreement with the zero/elliptical direct object hvaat} ṭ. \textit{“word”, “speech”).

'He said.' (ibid.)

(d) riSilogan \hspace{0.5cm} shor macaayo.
Sages OBL-ERG noise made.

'The sages made noise.' (\textit{shakuntalaa upaakhaan}, 1680, [Gupta 1958: 136])

5. There are thus 3 types of ERG in the history of Hindi: 1) inflectional, 2) purely syntactical without any inflectional marking, and 3) morphosyntactical, marked by the postposition/clitic \textit{ne}. There are mixed types also. The first type is the most ancient, the successor of the OIA and MIA languages. The second one is an intermediate type. The facts of Dakkhini where the Oblique and Object cases equally mark ERG indicate that ERG in the early and middle Hindi languages is genetically not instrumental, but dative or genitive-dative. The postpositional \textit{ne}-construction which functions at first parallel to the old inflectional ERG and then begins to supplant it, favors this suggestion, because the postposition \textit{ne} is the synonym of the dative-directive postposition \textit{ko}.

Free NS/ES alternation in early and middle Hindi subject ERG marking appeared as a result of elimination of case inflections and it did not result in any semantic changes. This fact argues that EC, historically a possessive construction, was active from the very beginning. The NS > ES switch is purely formal and not semantic (ERG as a structural, not as a lexical case [Davison 2001]). But the configuration:

$$PS$$
$$NS = ES$$

is not so simple as it seems to be, and needs a special exploration, especially taking into consideration the syntactic behavior of nominative and ergative subjects being transformed not only into passive constructions but indefinite, participle, and converb clauses with both active and passive predicates.

Split ergativity has always existed in the Hindi area: no purely nominative or purely ergative language or dialect is known in the early and middle stages of Hindi. But reduction of the case system resulted in loss of distinctiveness: ‘...a progressive loss of ergative marking has occurred in varying degrees diachronically in different systems. This process is manifested in two distinct strategies of markedness reduction:
loss of overt subject marking in the nominal domain and loss of marked agreement in the verbal domain" [Deo, Sharma 2002]. A similar situation is observed in one of the modern Iranian languages – Kurdish (Kurmanji) [Pireikö 1963]. The situation that emerged gave scope for two possibilities: 1) transformation into a purely nominative language; 2) strengthening the split ergativity (of the nominative-ergative type) on a new basis. Eastern Hindi chose the first way, but inconsistently. Western Hindi chose the second. The process of the strengthening of ES went hand in hand with the formation of standard Hindi. Transition of the Eastern IA languages into a nominative type of language has not been completed and rudiments of ergativeness have remained [Prokofyeva 1987; Amritavalli, Sarma 2002]. According to the Sarma, Assamese is an isolated Nominative-Ergative (purely ergative, not split)-Accusative NIA language among the Eastern NIA languages.

Actually there was no transition from an ergative strategy to a nominative one in the Hindi area languages. Disintegration of the case system has resulted in the two of them coinciding in some cases. Hindi, Dakhini, Braj, and other Western dialects have restored lost distinctiveness of argument marking by introducing postpositional clitics as case markers. The Eastern dialects, on the other hand, have conserved the previous system with the nominative/ergative strategy almost lost and thus have ended up with some nominative features.

The linguistic material confirms Hoernle’s reconstruction that originally ERG had inflectional case marking [Hoernle 1888: 217-218, § 371], that ergative subject was marked by some oblique case.

Origin of the postposition ne remains an enigma. New etymologies have been suggested in [Khokhlíova 1987; Butt, King 1999, 2001]. But it seems obvious that its source was the area around Delhi, Punjab, the Braj area, Rajasthan and Gujarat. The synonymy of the dative postpositions ne and ko suggests same origin for both of them. An originally dative meaning of the ne postposition is evident from its usage as a synonym of postposition ko in old Hindi (up to the 19th century) and its language-dialects, e.g., in Hariani/Bangaru [Sigorski 2000]. Here is an example of the dative usage of ne in old Hindi correspondence:

(7) *'It troubled him / It was a trouble to him.' (Gupta 1993: 26)

(This letter was written in Kishangarh, now in Jaisalmer district of Rajasthan, in 1825; the language of the letters compiled by the author is according to him a mixture of Khari Boli, Marwari and Braj.)
6. Two ancient types of ERG – 1) dative-possessive, and 2) instrumental – observed as early as in Sanskrit, appear in “greater Hindi”. The first type – dative-possessive _ne_-ERG is found in Western Hindi, including “Southern” Hindi – Dakhini and in Rajasthani dialects. The second type – instrumental ERG marked by the postposition _le_ is found in Pahari dialects and Nepali. Both Ergatives are split. Pahari (Kumayuni) examples are given from [Pant 1993].

(8) (a) Daanju-1 _ bhaat _ khaa
       Danju-ERG _ rice _ eaten.

   ‘Danju has eaten rice.’ [40]

   Instrumental, not ergative usage of _le_ is presented in the following utterance:

   (b) _mai^cashma^ _ caaNauchi^
       I _ glasses-by was seeing.

   ‘I was seeing through the glasses.’ [ibid.]

Double case marking:

(c) _diidi^ _ haate^ _ divo [ibid.]
    Didi-ERG _ hand-by _ given

   ‘The elder sister has given [it] with [her] hand.’

   Similar double marking (_ne_-marking) of subject and indirect object is observed in a Western Hindi dialect, Ahirvati:

(9) (a) _ma^nai^ _ saab-na^i^ _ maaryo. [Yaadav: 208]
    1 ERG _ mister DAT _ beaten.

   ‘I have beaten the Saheb/I have been beaten by the Saheb.’
   (both translations are possible).

   Another variant is also possible, where no ambiguity remains:

   (b) _mai^saab-na^i^ _ maaryo [ibid.]
    I mister-ERG _ beaten.

   ‘I have been beaten by the Saheb.’
(For more detailed discussion of the ne postposition in some Hindi dialects see Sigorskiy 2000.)

The situation in Nepali is identical to that in the Pahari dialects. There also exists the split ergativity with ergative subject marked by instrumental postposition le “by”, which marks an instrumental as well:

(10) (a) haami-le plilim henyau
    We ERG film seen.

‘We watched a film.’ [Hutt: Subedi 1999/2003: 119]

Instrumental use of preposition le can be seen in the following utterance:

(b) haamii kaan-le sunchau
    We ear-INSTR hear.

‘We hear with (our) ears.’ [Ibid.: 120]

According to S. H. Kellogg, the pattern of subject-predicate agreement in Nepali combines the features of Eastern Hindi dialects, namely, agreement of predicate with subject, and the features of Western Hindi dialects, namely, postpositional marking of subject [1875/1955: 309, § 526]. It means that Nepali is similar in this respect to Dakhkini. In both of them the ergative marker does not block subject-predicate agreement, but while in Nepali such transparency of postposition is regular, in Dakhkini it is an irregular feature (2i) which occurs also in Hindi (3).

In Nepali, the ergative marker le is used not only with Perfect forms, but also with the Habitual Past tense. A third type of usage is semantically induced: its function is to emphasize the subject of a transitive verb in the Habitual Present tense, i.e.:

(1) “If the sentence says that a it is a part of the natural order of things for the subject to perform the verb, and therefore states that this is a role that is specific to the subject” [Ibid.]

(c) baagh-le baakhaa khaancha
    Tiger ERG goats eats.

‘The tiger eats goats.’ [ibid.]

(2) “If the sentence is a question asking who or what is the subject of a transitive verb”:
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(d) *aaj* kas-le ciyaa banau’cha?
    Today who ERG tea will make?

‘Who will make the tea today?’ [ibid.]

(3) “If the sentence is a response to a question such as those in (2) above, or focuses in any way upon the subject of the verb”:

(e) *aaj* bhaai-le ciyaa banau’cha
    Today younger brother ERG tea will make.

‘Today younger brother will make the tea.’ [ibid.]

Old Nepali:

(f) *kaaski laaii cho Di* gorkaa-le kaahaa jaanu cha.
    Kaski for left (converb = without) Gorkha ERG where go is.

Gorkhalaii choDi kaaski-le kani kahaa jaanu cha.
    Gorkha for left/without Kaski ERG where go is.

‘Where will Kaski go without Gorkha? Where will Gorkha go without Kaski?’ (rhetoric question).

[Narharinath: 2022/1964: Friendly letter from Gorkha to Kaski. 1747. (The book and the Russian translations of some documents have been kindly given to me by Alexander A. Ledkov.)]

This peculiarity of Nepali seems important, but due to random and occasional occurrence of ergative subject markers with intransitive or imperfect verbs in Old Hindi dialects and to the scarcity of the material available it has till now no rational explanation.

The following Dakkhini example from Vajahi's “Sabras” seems to confirm Hutt-Subedi’s rules:

(11) *jahaa’ Gamza kare Gamze vahaa’ aashiq ne kvaa karna’?
    Where the flirt does flirtings there lover- ERG what to do?

‘If a coquette begins to cast amorous glances. what is a lover to do?’
[Shamatov 1974: 169.] (Again a rhetorical question).

But this utterance may have another explanation, i.e. a formal contamination of Ergative and Dative case markers in a semantically
modal dative clause like in 12 (a and b), and the NP aashiq ne is not an Ergative subject but a Dative one in a sentence of obligation modality.

There might have existed some pattern of ES with intransitive/imperfect finite verbs in Early and Middle Hindi dialects like the one presented or conserved in modern Nepali. This would mean that there might have been some semantically triggered ergativity "fluid ergativity") in Hindi dialects as there is in modern Gujarati and Kashmiri [Hook, Modi; Hook, Koul 1998].

Nepali demonstrates a very different pattern of evolution of ergativity. The split ergativity of the early and middle periods demonstrates a tendency to develop into full, non-split ergativity — through expansion of ERG into non-Perfect forms—in modern Nepali [the history of Ergative in Nepali is scrutinized in Aryal 1987]), while the Hindi languages perfected their split ergativity. This peculiarity brings Nepali close to Assamese.

7. The pattern of development of split accusativity is the same as that of the ergative. In early Hindi it is represented by direct case marking for unspecified/indefinite object vs. an inflected form of the noun for specified/definite object. Split accusativity existed in Hindi from the very beginning, at the earliest stage.

Old Hindi.
Unmarked Dir. O.

(12) (a) ek purukh  ham dekhaa
    A man ACC-unsp we seen.

    ['I saw a man.' [Tiivaarii 1985, Amir Khusro riddle 93. p. 85]

Dakkhini.

(b) ab  mard suii"tuj  milaattu".
    Now man with you ACC-sp introduce.

    'Now I'll introduce you to a man.' (Gavasii. 17th AD.
    [Sharmaa 1954: 91].)

Braj.

(c) tacch\n huii dacchin disi.  laccha-hi    nahi"paavhii
    At that moment became south direction, goal ACCsp no find.

    'Right at that moment the southern direction became [covered up (by the monkeys)]' (they] do not find [their] goal. [Chandola 1987: 34.
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Kesavadasa, 16th century AD (text), 77 (translation).

Classical Awadhi.
Marked DIR. O.

(d) \textit{piyo-hii} \textit{rijhaai}.
Beloved ACCsp having pleased.

‘Having pleased the beloved.’ [Saksena 1972: 122]

In Tulsidas’ Ramayana (\textit{raamacaritamaanasa}), the definite direct object (i.e. pronouns, proper names, and definite common nouns) is marked with \textit{hi/hi}:

(e) \textit{tin-hi} \textit{dekihi}
him-ACCsp having-seen

‘Having seen him.’ [Tulsidas 1985: 480]

(f) \textit{raam-hi} \textit{viloki}
Ram-ACCsp having-seen

‘Having seen Ram.’ [ibid. 482]

(g) \textit{varhi} \textit{viloki}
bride having-seen

‘Having seen the bride.’ [ibid. 502]

The marked direct object (ACCsp) is much less common in Tulsidas’ Ramayana than in MSH. An unmarked direct object in that text is often translated into MSH by a marked direct object, e.g.:

(h) \textit{sataanand tab saciv bulaaye}
Satanand then minister(s) invited(Mp1)

‘Then Satanand invited the ministers’ [ibid: 479]
[= Hindi tr.‘tab sataanand ne mantriyo’ ko bulaayaa’]

In contrast to the Ergative subject – predicate group Modern Awadhi has developed the common postpositional type of Definite/Specific Accusative:
But by that time the prince has lifted the canes.  [Liperovskiy 1997: 211]

Brāj gives unusual examples of object–predicate agreement (this phenomena is described in the works of V. P. Liperovskiy. Here I cite his example):

(i) lekin tab tak raajkumaar lakaRiyān kaa uThaay cukaa rahai
    but by that time prince canes ACCsp lift finished.

But by that time the prince has lifted the canes.  [Liperovskiy 1997: 211]

(j) tai ne" tīn jaghai mai" kaaal pai te bacayau uu".
    You ERG thrice I death on from saved am.

Thrice you have saved me from death.  [Liperovskiy 1988: 199; 2003].

Pronominal Direct Object—predicate agreement in person could be explained historically. Mai originally is an Oblique form, so it may imply definiteness/specificity marked by Oblique case. But synchronically, in classical Brāj mai functions as Nominative alongside the original Nominative hau". It is very difficult to suggest any reasonable explanation because of the scarcity of linguistic material of such a type. A similar occurrence of a non-marked 1st sg pronoun direct object is found in Ahirvati example (8b).

Inflectional markers of Accusative, Ergative and Dative in the Early and Middle stages are the same. Distinctiveness has been achieved in the same way as in the case of ergativity, e.g. through introduction of a cliticized marker ko (in different phonetic variants) as a marker of definiteness/specificity of the direct object.

Evolution of ergativity and accusativity in “greater” Hindi (strengthening of ergativity in Western Hindi and its remnant status in Eastern Hindi) may be explained by internal factors mainly. But not only are some neighboring IA languages also ergative but some neighboring Iranian languages – Pashto, Balochi, etc—are ergative as well. There is obviously “an ergative linguistic area” present here.

The main difference between the Indo-Aryan and the Iranian ergative constructions lies in the fact that the latter have a split on tense (ergative implying Past tense), rather than on aspect (with ergative implying Perfect aspect). The only exception is Pashto: the “Pashto ergative split is more intricate than has been noted. being determined by both tense and aspect.” It is closer to Proto-Iranian than other Iranian languages [Taylor 2001].

“Secondary” ergativity in some NIA languages is explained by
Zakharyin [1978: 107-108] and Khokhlova [1987] as influence of Dardic and Tibeto-Burman languages. But their influence was most likely just a stimulus for conserving split ergativity and preventing transformation into a nominative type in some neighboring IA languages. The same could be said about the accusativity. Internal factors played the main role in that case also.

8. Two notions of subject – canonic (Nominaive case and subject-predicate agreement) and non-canonic (multifactoral definition of subject) present two different syntactic models. Thus two interpretations of ES (and not only ES) are equally possible. 1) NS/ES shift involves role shift. Direct object of NC becomes cyclic subject of EC if it is non-marked, otherwise, if marked, a sentence has no subject at all. Such an approach on the basis of relational grammar is developed in Ultsiferov 1993 [op.cit.]. 2) Subject and direct object in both types of constructions remain the same. The NS/ES shift is a shift from unmarked to marked subject. The first approach implicates some uncertainties: a role of former subject and a role of marked, specific direct object is not clear. Assigning to them a role of indirect object seems unnatural.

The two types of subjects may be reduced to a formal subject system vs. a semantic-role subject system.

Hindi has developed an economic and elegant system of coding the two privileged positions of subject and direct object. Historical synonymy of postpositions ne and ko, still existing in Hariani/Bangaru and some other dialects, is removed. But there is an important difference between the two postpositions. Ne implies special forms of some pronouns: oblique case is equal to direct case of: 1st (maɾ-ne) and 2nd sg (tu-ne) personal pronouns and there is a special, ergative oblique case of demonstrative/personal pronouns 3rd pl (inho~ne, unho~ne). The ko postposition on the other hand is always regular in that it takes the regular oblique case of pronouns, but in contrast to ne it alternates with inflectional object case (us-ko/use; ham-ko/hame~). These special syntactic properties of ne and ko set them apart from other postpositions as markers of privileged actants. But this is true only for Modern Standard Hindi (MSH). In old Hindi the compatibility of pronouns with pronouns is not so unified. The forms tainen (2 sg) and ummen (3 pl.) are common not only in old but in modern Braj. In Dakhini we find the forms uno~kuu~OBL + DAT, uno~me~OBL + LOC, etc.

The NS/ES shift being obligatory is syntactic while definite/indefinite or specific/non-specific object shift is arbitrary and depends on speaker’s intention and so is semantic. Argumentation in favor of the second point of view was advanced in Baganz 1983; Mahmood 1985; Zakharyin 1989: 50-51; Ilieva 1997.

I can add some more arguments. Subject/object-predicate agreement
in ergative languages is a function of NOM and not an attribute of the predicative relation. In the NC we have a two-way relation between subject and predicate (government and agreement) and a one-way relation in the EC (government only: the predicate demands an ergative-marked subject and does not agree with it). In Dakhkhini the subject-predicate relation is a two-way relation in both cases.

Elimination of subject in NC or EC converts these active constructions into passive ones:

(13) (a) _he bhagyaan,vah mere gale me~ kyaa baa^dh diyaa hai!_ 
My God, it my throat in what stuck is!

`My God, what is stuck in my throat!' [Raajendra Yaadav 1985: 27].

(b) _... lekin yaar ek cheez hum understand nahin kar paye, yeh itta barka barka speed breaker kahe ko bana diya hai_ (he couldn’t figure out what is a flyover).

But lad, one thing understand no do could. such a big big speed breaker for what sake built given.

`... but lad I can’t get one thing, for what purpose such a big speed breaker is built.' [Bihari Babu – Regional Jokes 1997-2000]

The four Hindi idioms – Khari Boli, Dakhini, Braj, and Awadhi analyzed here demonstrate some principle differences. (1) Khari Boli, Dakhini and Braj have developed a new type of ES marked by the postposition ne, while Awadhi has conserved the old type of split NS/ES where attrition of case endings seems like transition into a nominative type. It may be explained by the fact that there was no analog to the ne postposition in Eastern dialects, or by the fact that Hindi and Braj (with Dakhini or Southern Hindi under impact of the Northern Hindi) were included in a broader ergative area. (2) Braj and Awadhi in early and middle stages preserve old case endings –hi, etc, while Khari Boli (Old Hindi) and Dakhini seems to have lost these endings in the Apabhramsa period. (3) Hindi (Khari Boli, Dakhini, Braj and Awadhi) has developed a new type of Accusative, marked by postposition ko and its variants.

The evolution of Hindi, particularly of subject – object – predicate structure, demonstrates a cyclic pattern. Morphosyntactic tools being worn out are restored on a new basis. Constants – the domain of semantics, signified, in this case, by split nominativity, split ergativity, and split accusativity—remain as they are, while variables – their
material signifiers—are restored in new forms.

Ergativity in Hindi seems to be just a formal, empty morphosyntactic category with no implications for semantics, except for the fact that perfectivity implies ergativity and vice versa. The exception is the intransitive or semi-intransitive verbs of "bodily emissions" [Hoop, Narasimhan, 2003]. Ergative properties of that set of verbs can be explained by a general prototypical implicature of ES: the Actor is considered a possessor of his action, with its results being "moved" in relation to him.

Contrary to ES split accusativeness is a semantic category related to definiteness/indefiniteness or specificity/unspecificity. Split ergativity is an automatic, formal category. But involvement of ES into communicative strategy of a sentence (specific ergative subject opposed to nonspecific as well as specific nominative subject) may be seen in non-trivial usage of ES beyond the Perfective domain.

This last detail is more specific for Urdu (and Hindi of Delhi) than for Hindi generally. I am referring to an alternation of ne/ko subject marking in modal infinitival clauses. D. Wunderlich [2000: 8] (following argumentation of M. Butt) considers here willingness and obligation respectively:

(14) (a) anjum-ne xat likhnaa hai
    Anjum ERG/DAT letter NOM write is.

    'Anjum wants to write a letter.'

(b) anjum-kO xat likhnaa hai
    Anjum DAT letter NOM write is.

    'Anjum should write a letter.'

First of all, the ne postposition as a subject marker in infinitival modal constructions is obviously an impact of Punjabi (where ne is a subject marker of modal constructions with obligation modality [Zograf 1990: 47]. In another version: the subject marker in infinitival modal constructions is not the ERG postposition ne; it is the DAT/ACC postposition nuu" [Tolstaya 1960: 45]. So here a contamination of two types of dative construction is present. The same subject marking in the same syntactic constructions is a parametric characteristic in vernaculars surrounding Delhi (where ne is a polysemic postposition). Convergence of the two (Hindi-Punjabi) codes resulted in two parallel dative syntactic constructions with modal meaning of obligation (a case of syntactic synonymy). Subsequently differentiation (obligation vs. willingness)
developed in their semantics.

There are different types of ERG in Greater Hindi that may be combined in some dialects according their parameter feature:

1. **dative-possessive vs. instrumental.** (The latter type occurs only in Pahari dialects and in their neighbor Nepali.)

2. **syntactic or morphosyntactic vs morphologic.** (The latter type is limited to Bihari dialects.)

3. **innovated vs archaic.** (This is an opposition of Western and Eastern dialects.)

4. **transparency vs. opacity of subject-predicate agreement under ergative subject marking.** (Dakhini – in the period its autonomous development – and Nepali constitute the former type, while the latter type includes the rest.)

5. **split ergativity vs. unsplit ergativity.** (The latter group is represented by Nepali. Its ergativity history shows expansion of ES towards all the verbal forms. The first group includes the remaining languages, although with sporadic exceptions and violations of split ergativity. But these exceptions may just seem sporadic due to inadequate investigation.)

6. Nominative and Ergative subjects are not the only subjects in Hindi languages. In addition there are Dative, Ablative, Locative and Possessive subjects.

(15) (a) Dative subject (Dakhini):

\[... \text{un } \text{kuk}^n \text{ khabar pahu}^n \text{ cii ke } \text{yah buzurg } \text{ko...}\]

You to (DAT) news came that this old man to (DAT)

\[kuch khazaanaa milyaa hai.\]

some treasure obtained is.

‘He gained news that this old man has obtained some treasure.’
[Sharmaa 1954, 449 (Gausii Dakhii, dates unknown)].

(b) Ablative (Source) subject in mediopassive and passive clauses (Dakhini):

\[... \text{us } \text{te}^n \text{ nahii}^n \text{ raha gayaa, kuch kahaa gayaa.}\]

him from not was borne, something was said.

‘He couldn’t bear it, [and] said something.’ [Sharmaa 1954, 405]
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(Vajahii, Sabras, 1636)

(c) Locative subject (Braj):

"Yaahi dekh~ yaa shankaa mere man me" aavai hai
This seeing this doubt my mind in comes.

‘On seeing this, this doubt comes into my mind.’ [Gupta 1958: 159 (aanand raghanandan naaTak, 1651-1740)]

(d) Possessive subject (Dakkhini).

khudaa kaa hone  mangtaa  hai...
Lord’s being demands...

‘It requires the Lord’s existence...’ [Sharmaa 1954, 412 (Vajahii, Sabras, 1636)].

The question is this: are all these subject types are basic subjects or are there basic and derived subjects? A basic subject is the subject of a basic or prototypical clause, while a derived subject is a subject of a clause derived from the basic one. The last example 14 (d) is by no means a basic syntactic construction. Basic possessive constructions are simple clauses (with ke paas, kaa, ke possessive subjects).

Nominative and Ergative constructions might be considered basic (Nominative as more simple/primitive/prototypical) and derivative (Ergative as more complicated) respectively. But this solution implies that perfect aspect is derived from imperfect aspect, which is not natural or reasonable.

Mediopassive and passive (ablative = with se-marked subject) sentences are transformed from nominative/ergative sentences by some rules and so are not basic, but derivative. They are more complicated both syntactically and morphologically.

Dative subject is derivative in 13(a) and (b) but basic in 14 (a). In other words the situation is the same as with possessive sentences.

This is also the case with Locative sentences. They are basic only in some types of constructions depending on lexical entries. A basic locative subject is [+animate]; otherwise it would be just a local modifier.

Thus there are constraints on Dative, Ablative, Locative and Possessive subjects as basic. Nominative (naturally in the position of subject) and Ergative subjects are basic subjects without any constraints. In addition, Nominative/Ergative subject (and definite/indefinite direct objects) are indicated by two alternative case forms. These two subject
variables – Nominative and Ergative – might be considered as Agent case with two variants. In the same way the two forms of direct object might be taken as two variants of Accusative case.

Agent case is a purely structural case, while other cases exhibit different degrees of semantic properties. The semantic character is minimized with dative and possessive markers and maximized with ablative and local case markers.

Agent case: (1) NOM [+imperfect/non-perfect, -perfect]; (2) ERG [+perfect, -imperfect]; Accusative case: (1) NOM in the function of unspecified ACC; (2) DAT in the function of specified ACC. None of the other cases (syntactic or morphosyntactic, that is; morphological cases are Direct and Oblique + Vocative) combine two alternative forms. All of them are represented by one postposition.

Agent and Accusative cases may be identified as Mega or Hyper cases that are a combination of two simple cases. I define Megacase as a case that combines at least two simple cases, in a relation of complementary distribution. Agent (NOM/ERG) is a structural case, ACC (bare ACC and ko-marked) is a structural-semantic case (zero/ko-marking is determined semantically if it denotes indefiniteness/definiteness etc but sometimes it is determined by syntactic structure – e.g., the presence of a ko-marked dative argument which necessitates elimination of ko-marking of the direct object. All other cases or case relations are semantic.

Ergativity in NIA languages in general has a set of parameters, different for different languages. They are: (1) ergative / non-ergative (some eastern NIA languages); (2) split ergativity / non-split ergativity (Assami, Kurmali); (3) aspect / tense determined ergativity (some Eastern NIA languages, Kurmali, for instance, [Davison 2002], as well as ergative Iranian languages); (4) subject / object agreement (this parameter is realized in a variety of ways); (5) structural / semantic ergativity (Nepali – in the imperfect domain); (6) dative / instrumental (Nepali): (7) inflectional / morphosyntactic.

Modern standard Hindi is a language that is a first member of oppositions 1, 2, 3, 5, 6 and 7, and the both first and second member of opposition 4: ergative > split (split ergative and split accusative) > aspect-determined or more exactly, transitivity and aspect determined > subject-marked (morphosyntactic type) > object agreement / neutral agreement when object is blocked by postposition ko > structural > historically dative. Opposition 4 is manifested by subject-blocked and split object agreement variant. Historically as well as from the point of view of areal distribution in dialects Hindi shows semantic ergativity, in intransitive/imperfect domain, and subject agreement (with ergative marked subject). The first member of the opposition 7 is represented in
Old Hindi while the second one is a parameter of Modern Hindi.

Exceptions to this model – some transitive and intransitive verbs, deviations in behavior of some Aktionsart forms (e.g. iterative aspect “perf. part. + karna”) is non-ergative in spite of the transitivity of the modifier or light verb) – need a special examination. They should be examined together with exceptional usage of ergative in imperfect and future tensed utterances in dialects. ES in these environments may be induced by semantic factors or for historical reasons.

In conclusion I will suggest a definition of split ergative strategy (ES) in Hindi. This definition takes into consideration historical perspective and regional peculiarities of Greater Hindi:

1. ES is a tripartite syntactic structure “subject – direct object – finite transitive verb predicate”.
2. VP includes the perfect participle of a transitive verb.
3. The verb agrees with the direct object, or does not agree with any argument if the direct object is marked by a postposition.
4. Subject – verb agreement is an exception represented only in Dakhini.
5. Subject marking is not relevant: it may be inflectional, postpositional or zero marking (bare nominative).
6. ES is a structural variant in the Perfect domain of NS in the Non-Perfect domain.

\[
\text{S} \quad \text{O} \quad \_ \quad \text{V} \quad [+\text{transitive}, +\text{perfect}] \\
\text{AGR}
\]

Dakhini case:

\[
\text{S} \quad \text{O} \quad \_ \quad \text{V} \quad [+\text{transitive}, +\text{perfect}] \\
\text{AGR}
\]

Summary

At the end of the MIA stage as result of breaking down of the case system, EC in the Hindi languages assumed the form “Subject in Oblique or Object case + Perfective transitive verb”. Such an EC is common not only in some Northern NIA languages but also in some Iranian languages. But Oblique case is not always distinct from NOM, so ES came to be mixed up with NS. Two ways were open to Hindi languages: (1) transition into a nominative type of language, (2) restoration of ES/NS distinctiveness. Eastern Hindi has chosen the first way, retaining the older NS/ES system, while Western Hindi preferred the second. Inflectional ergative marking has been changed into postpositional
marking. ES became the norm in standard Hindi as well as in Western Hindi dialects. The new type of ES is a differentiating peculiarity not only of Western Hindi, but also of Western and Southern NIA languages.

The same pattern of evolution is traced in direct object marking. Inflectional marking of definite/specific direct object has given way to postpositional (syntactic) marking. A cyclic evolution pattern is traced in the historical development of Hindi. A category of Megacase or Hypercase has developed. There are two megacases/hypercases in Hindi: AGENT (NOM and ERG as two aspectually distributed cases of agent-subject), and ACC (NOM as a indefinite or unspecified direct object and DAT in the function of ACC marking of definite or specified direct object). Both of them mark the privileged arguments: No 1 – agent-subject and No 2 – direct object.

This paper suggests a typology of ergativity in NIA languages as well as in Hindi. A process of optimization of EC in “Greater” Hindi during the course of evolution is considered. A notion of “megacase” is introduced. A new definition of ergativity in Hindi is given.

Abbreviations

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<tr>
<th>Abbreviation</th>
<th>Meaning</th>
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<tr>
<td>ACC</td>
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<td>AGR</td>
<td>agreement</td>
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