Internal arguments disguised as external arguments
Lessons from an active alignment system

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Languages have different alignment systems.

(1) Languages have different alignment systems.

(1) S = intransitive subject
    A = transitive subject
    P = transitive object

(Diagram from Comrie 1978)

(2) Canonical nominative case system

   a. She helped her.
   b. She worked.
Ergative alignment

(3) $S$ = intransitive subject
$A$ = transitive subject
$P$ = transitive object

(4) **Canonical ergative case system**

   kangaroo-**ERG** PRES man.**ABS** see-**NPAST**
   ‘The kangaroo sees the man.’

b. Ngarrka ka wangka-mi.
   man.**ABS** PRES speak-**NPAST**
   ‘The man is speaking.’

(Warlpiri, Levin 1983:140–141)
Many reported ergative systems are in fact **active** (Woolford 2015):
- A.k.a. active-stative, split-S, split-intransitive, semantic, agent-patient, extended ergative...

\[ S_A = \text{intransitive subject (‘agent-like’)} \]
\[ S_P = \text{intransitive subject (‘patient-like’)} \]

(5) **Active case system**

a. Gizon-a-k exte saldu du.
   man-DEF-**ERG** house.**ABS** sold has
   ‘The man has sold the house.’

b. Gizon-a-k ikasi du.
   man-DEF-**ERG** studied has
   ‘The man has studied.’

c. Gizon-a etorri da.
   man-DEF.**ABS** came is
   ‘The man has come.’

(Western Basque, J. Baker 2018:87)
A question

- How does active alignment correspond to syntactic structure?
- Today: I bring novel data from Choctaw to bear on this question.

→ Choctaw is instructive because of pervasive exceptions in the mapping from syntactic structure to alignment.
Agents in syntax

- Typological research on active alignment: the $S_A/S_P$ split is based in something like **agenthood**.

- Syntactic theory: intransitive subjects are not syntactically uniform.
  - ‘Agents’ are introduced by a dedicated head: $v$ (Chomsky 1995); **Voice** (Kratzer 1996).

(7) **Agentive verb**

```
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>VoiceP</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>NP_{Agent}</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>VP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Voice</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
```

(8) **Agentless verb**

```
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>VoiceP</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>VP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Voice</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
```
Analyzing active alignment

- Plausible analysis: ERG/ABS-marking ‘reads off’ syntactic position:

(9) VoiceP
    \[\text{NP}_{\text{Agent}} \rightarrow \text{VP} \rightarrow \text{Voice}\]

(10) VoiceP
     \[\text{VP} \rightarrow \text{Voice} \rightarrow \text{NP}_{\text{Non-agent}}\]

- Plausible implementation as case-assignment:\(^1\)
  Voice\[+\text{Spec}\] ERG to Spec-VoiceP.
  Voice\[-\text{Spec}\] does nothing.

- Easy... right?

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Variation and arbitrariness in active alignment


(11) **E.g. Change-of-location verbs**

a. Ish- la-tok.
   2SG.ERG-arrive-PST
   ‘You arrived.’

   (Choctaw)

b. Gizon-a iritsi da.
   man-DEF.ABS arrived is.
   ‘The man arrived.’

   (Basque, J. Baker 2018:164)

- Another old observation: Class membership is often arbitrary.

(12) **Another Basque change-of-location verb**

Txistularie-k bederatzietan urtengo dute.
txistu.player-ERG nine.at leave have
‘Txistu players will leave at 9.’

   (Albizu & Fernández 2006)
Equivalent semantics through different syntactic structures:

(13) **Choctaw**

```
VoiceP
    NP
    VP
    Voice
    V
```

arrive

(14) **Basque**

```
VoiceP
    VP
    Voice
    NP
    V
```

arrive

Will this let us account for *all* arbitrariness in active alignment systems?
→ I argue: **No**.
Today

- Claim #1: For some Choctaw verbs, ERG-marking is dissociated from the external argument position:

\[
\text{VoiceP} \\
\text{VP} \quad \text{Voice} \\
\text{[NP}_{\text{[ERG]}} \quad \text{V} \quad \text{[ERG]}
\]

- Claim #2: ERG-marking reflects a syntactic dependency with Voice\(^0\).
  \[\rightarrow\] Formalized here as assignment of [ERG] case.\(^2\)

---

2. Alternatively: forming an Agree relation — point at hand is not affected.
In light of this structure...

(16)  

\[
\begin{array}{c}
\text{VoiceP} \\
\text{VP} \quad \text{Voice} \\
\text{NP}_{\text{[ERG]}} \quad \text{V} \quad \text{[ERG]} \\
\end{array}
\]

Q: How does active alignment correspond to syntactic structure?

→ It’s not about arguments’ syntactic positions.
→ It’s about which Fnc\(^0\)s (e.g. Voice\(^0\)) the arguments can form syntactic relations with.

Q: How should we analyze default and exceptional alignment behavior within a language?

→ Fnc\(^0\)s (e.g. Voice\(^0\)) can show default and exceptional syntactic behavior.
Introduction

Choctaw

Some ERG-marked arguments are internal
- Test #1: Auxiliary selection
- Test #2: Compatibility with DAT subject
- Test #3: Causative alternation
- Test #4: Pluractional allomorphy

ERG-marking results from a syntactic relation with Voice$^0$
- Dative intervention prevents [ERG]-assignment to I.A.
- Replacing Voice$^0$ head prevents [ERG]-assignment to I.A.

Towards a theory of exceptions
- Two kinds of exceptional behavior in active alignment systems
- The default and contextual behavior of Voice

Conclusions
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Choctaw

- Muskogean language
- Spoken in Mississippi (>5000 speakers) and Oklahoma (<200)
- All data is from my fieldwork in Pearl River and Bogue Chitto, MS, 2016-2019.
- Known among linguists for:
  - Iambic lengthening (Buckley 1998)
  - Prosodic morphology (Lombardi & McCarthy 1991)
  - Switch-reference (Broadwell 1997)
  - Agreement (Davies 1986)

https://gssei.wordpress.com/2016/09/06/__trashed-3/
Basic properties

- Example sentence

(17) [ Alla-yat  im-abooshi  pashpoli-t  tahli-hm-at  ]  im-achokma-tok.
    child-NOM  POSS-room  clean-PTCP  finish-when-SS  DAT-happy-PST

‘When the child had cleaned her room, she was happy.’

- Underlined vowels (a, i, o) are nasalized
- Basic SOV order
- NOMinative-(Accusative) case-marking
- Pervasive argument drop
- Switch-reference on embedded clauses
Active agreement for 1st/2nd-person arguments

(18) Active agreement for 1st/2nd-person arguments

a. Ish- hapi- apiil-aachi-h-o?
   2SG.ERG-1PL.ABS-help-FUT-TNS-Q
   ‘Will you help us?’

b. Ish- tøksal-aachi-h-o?
   2SG.ERG-work-FUT-TNS-Q
   ‘Will you work?’

c. Chi- ttol-aachi-h-o?
   2SG.ABS-fall-FUT-TNS-Q
   ‘Will you fall?’

No agreement for 3rd-person arguments:

(19) Ohooyo-m-at pro₃ Ø- Ø- apiil-aachi-h-o?
    woman-DEM-NOM 3.ERG-3.ABS-help-FUT-TNS-Q
    ‘Will that woman help her/him?’
DATive agreement

- DATive agreement for all persons:

(20) Sa-shki ǐ- pilaa-li-tok.
my-mother 3.DAT-send-1SG.ERG-PST
'I sent it to my mother.'

- N.B. Agreement is mismatched with adnominal case-marking:

(21) a. Chishnak-oosh ish-baliili-h
you.FOC-NOM 2SG.ERG-run-TNS
'YOU run.'

b. Chishnak-oosh chi-nokháklo-h.
you.FOC-NOM 2SG.ABS-sad-TNS
'YOU are sad.'

c. Chishnak-oosh chi-polla-h.
you.FOC-NOM 2SG.DAT-skilled-TNS
'YOU are skilled.'
The semantic basis of the ERG/ABS split

- Categories based on the *Auxiliary Selection Hierarchy* (Sorace 2000):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ERG-subject intransitives</th>
<th>ABS-subject intransitives</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Controlled process ('agentive')</td>
<td>Uncontrolled process (non-body)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>toksali</em> ‘work’</td>
<td><em>ittola</em> ‘fall’, <em>shalalli</em> ‘slip/slide’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Motion</td>
<td>Stative</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>ala</em> ‘arrive’, <em>baliili</em> ‘run’</td>
<td><em>abiika</em> ‘be sick’, <em>chaaha</em> ‘be tall’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Uncontrolled process (body)</td>
<td>Change of state</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><em>habishko</em> ‘sneeze’</td>
<td><em>illi</em> ‘die’, <em>assano</em> ‘grow’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>‘Lexical passive’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><em>boowa</em> ‘get beaten up’</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Psych</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td><em>nokshoopa</em> ‘be scared’</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


→ *But*, shortcomings of this approach have long been known (Munro & Gordon 1982).
Some ERG-marked arguments are internal

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ERG-marking results from a syntactic relation with Voice

- Dative intervention prevents [ERG]-assignment to I.A.
- Replacing Voice head prevents [ERG]-assignment to I.A.

Towards a theory of exceptions

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Conclusions
# Section plan

1. **I identify four** tests for internal-argument-hood, other than agreement.
2. **I show that there is a set of ERG-subject verbs which (mostly) pass the tests.**

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<td>Y</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Y</td>
<td>Y</td>
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<td>N</td>
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<tr>
<td>ishahli ‘exceed’</td>
<td>ERG</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>(Y)</td>
<td>N</td>
</tr>
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<td>N</td>
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<tr>
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The unexpected ERG-subject verbs

(22) **Positional verbs**
li- binohmáya-h.  
1PL.ERG-sit.PL.PROG-TNS  
‘We’re sitting.’

(23) **Quantifier verbs**
li- lawa-h.  
1PL.ERG-be.many-TNS  
‘There are a lot of us.’

(24) **j-shahli ‘exceed’** (used to form comparatives)
Chaaha-k-at chi-shahli -li-h.  
tall-COMP-ss 2SG.DAT-exceed-1SG.ERG-TNS  
‘I am taller than you.’ (lit. ‘I exceed you in being tall.’)

(25) **Transitive psych verbs**
lš- sa-nokshoopa-h.  
2SG.ERG-1SG.DAT-scared-TNS  
‘You are scared of me.’

(26) **Motion verbs**
Kátit il- oona-tok?  
how 1PL.ERG-get.there-PST  
‘How did we get there?’
Tests for internal-argument-hood

- (ERG vs. ABS agreement)

- Four other tests:
  
  #1 Auxiliary selection:
  Verb rejects perfect auxiliary *tahli* → subject is I.A.

  #2 Compatibility with DAT subject:
  Verb accepts DAT subject → (old) subject is I.A.

  #3 Causative alternation:
  Verb has a causative alternant → (old) subject is I.A.

  #4 Pluractional allomorphy:
  Verb shows pluractional allomorphy → subject is I.A.
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Conclusions
Test #1: Auxiliary selection

- When *tahli* and *taha* (‘finish’) take a participle complement, they add perfect semantics.

(27) **Canonical ERG-subject verbs combine with *tahli***:

a. Taloowa-li-tok.
   sing -1SG.ERG-TNS
   ‘I sang.’

b. Suzie-at taloowa-t *tahli*-h.
   Suzie-NOM sing-PTCP finish-TNS
   ‘Suzie’s done singing.’

(28) **Canonical ABS-subject verbs reject *tahli***:

a. Si- assan-aachi-h.
   1SG.ABS-grow-FUT-TNS
   ‘I will grow.’

b. Káti-km-ak-o chi-assano-t { *tahl-aachi-h / tah-aachi-h }?
   when.FUT-FOC-ACC 2SG.ABS-grow-PTCP finish-FUT-TNS finish-FUT-TNS
   ‘When will you be grown up?’

- Test: Verb rejects perfect auxiliary *tahli* → subject is I.A.
Test #1: Auxiliary selection — Application

Test: Verb rejects perfect auxiliary *tahlî → subject is I.A.

(29)  a. **Positional**

Talohmáya-t taha-h / *tahlî-h.
lie.PL.PROG-PTCP finish-TNS finish-TNS
‘They are all there.’

b. **Quantifier**

okla ii-lawa-t taha-h / *tahlî-h.
PL 1PL.ERG-many-PTCP finish-TNS finish-TNS
‘There are (already) a lot of us.’

c. **íshahlî ‘exceed’**

Chaaha-k-at ísha-t taha-h / *tahlî-h.
tall-C-SS exceed-PTCP finish-TNS finish-TNS
‘It’s got taller.’

d. **Transitive psych**

Mary ish-i-nokshoopa-t taha-h / *tahlî-h.
Mary 2SG.ERG-DAT-scare.ΝΑCT-PTCP finish-TNS finish-TNS
‘You’re terrified of Mary.’
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</table>

(30) **Motion verbs accept tahli**

Balii-t taha-h / tahli-h.
run-PTCP finish-TNS finish-TNS

‘He’s finished running.’

→ Though see Broadwell (1998, 2006).
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Choctaw

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Conclusions
Test #2: Compatibility with DAT subject

(31) Canonical **ABS**-subject verb accepts higher **DAT** argument

a. VoiceP
   
   VP
   Voice

   Subject → NP V

⇒ c.

VoiceP
   
   ApplP
   Voice

   Subject → NP[^DAT] V

b. *Chī-holisso-at* ittola-tok.
   your-book-nom fall-pst
   ‘Your book fell down.’

d. *pro$_{1SG}$ Chī-holisso am-ittola-tok.*
   your-book 1sg.DAT-fall-pst
   ‘I dropped your book.’
Test #2: Compatibility with DAT subject (II)

(32) **Canonical ERG-subject verb does *not* accept higher DAT argument**

a. VoiceP  
   Subject → NP  
   VP  
   Voice

b. Hoshi-t taloowa-tok.  
   bird-nom sing-pst  
   ‘The bird sang.’

c. VoiceP  
   Subject → NP  
   ApplP  
   NP_{[DAT]}  
   VP  
   Voice

d. Hoshi-t pro_{1SG} a-taloowa-tok.  
   bird-nom 1sg.DAT-sing-pst  
   ‘The bird sang for me.’

e. *pro_{1SG} Hoshi a-taloowa-tok.  
   bird 1sg.DAT-sing-pst  
   (‘I had a bird sing.’/ ‘My bird sang.’)
Test #2: Compatibility with DAT subject — Application

Positional and quantifier verbs

- **Test:** Verb accepts DAT subject $\rightarrow$ subject is I.A.
  - Cf. Hebrew possessive datives (Borer & Grodzinsky 1986), Spanish dative subjects (Cuervo 2003), a.m.o.

(33) **Positional verbs**

a. Ofi-yat oklah kahmáya-h.
   dog-NOM _PL lie.PL.PROG-TNS
   ‘The dogs are lying around.’

b. **Alíkchi-yat** ofi _i-kahmáya-h.
   doctor-NOM dog DAT-lie.PL.PROG-TNS
   ‘The doctor has some dogs.’

(34) **Quantifier verbs**

a. Alla-yat lawa-tok.
   child-NOM many-PST
   ‘There were a lot of kids.’

b. **pro**$_{1}$SG Alla a-lawa-h.
   child 1SG.DAT-many-TNS
   ‘I have a lot of kids.’
Test #2: Compatibility with DAT subject — Application

_Isshahi_ ‘exceed’ and motion verbs

- Test: Verb accepts DAT subject → subject is I.A.

(35) _ishshahi_ ‘exceed’

a. Oka yap-p-at kapassa-k-at chaffa-p-a _ishshahi-h._
   water this-NOM cold-c-ss other-this-ACC exceed-TNS
   ‘This water is colder than the other one.’
   (lit. ‘This water exceeds the other one in being cold.’)

b. pro$_{1SG}$ Oka-p-ak-o _am_ -ishshahi-h.
   water-this-FOC-ACC 1SG.DAT-exceed-TNS
   ‘I prefer THIS water.’

(36) Motion verbs

a. Kátos-at _baliili-h._
   Pam-NOM run-TNS
   ‘The cat is running.’

b. %Pam-at katos-at _i_-baliili-h.
   Pam-NOM cat-NOM DAT-run-TNS
   ‘Pam’s cat is running.’

(Broadwell 2006:307)
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(37) **Psych verbs are not compatible with a DAT subject**

*Anaak-oosh ofi a-nokshooapa-h.*

1.FOC-NOM dog 1SG.DAT-scared-TNS

(‘I had a dog be scared.’/‘My dog is scared.’)
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**Towards a theory of exceptions**

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**Conclusions**
Test #3: Causative alternation

- Many **ABS**-subject intransitives have transitive, **ERG**-subject counterparts.

(38)  

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>a.</th>
<th>VoiceP</th>
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<tr>
<td>VP</td>
<td>Voice[-Spec]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>-a/ -li</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NP</td>
<td>V</td>
</tr>
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<td>√ROOT</td>
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<thead>
<tr>
<th>b.</th>
<th>sa-boow -a</th>
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<tr>
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<th>c.</th>
<th>sa-shalal-li</th>
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<th>d.</th>
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<tr>
<td>VP</td>
<td>Voice[+Spec]</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>-li/ -chi</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NP</td>
<td>V</td>
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<tr>
<th>e.</th>
<th>is-sa-boo -li</th>
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<th>f.</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2SG.ERG-1SG.ABS-√SLIP-TR</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

‘You dragged me.’

Test #3: Causative alternation (II)

- Canonical **ERG**-subject intransitives don’t participate in the causative alternation.

- Test: Verb has a transitive alternant $^3 \rightarrow$ subject is I.A.

- Complication: **all verbs** can form syntactic causatives with -chi.

(39) hopooni ‘he cooked’
    hopooni-chi ‘she made him cook’

- It *is* possible to distinguish lexical and syntactic causatives (Tyler in-progress, following Miyagawa 1984, Harley 2008)... But for now we can use a heuristic:

  If causativization *replaces* rather than *augsments* stem Voice morphology $\rightarrow$
  causative is a *lexical* causative.

3. ...which is not a syntactic causative.
Test #3: Causative alternation — Application
Positional and quantifier verbs

Test: Verb has a transitive alternant → subject is I.A.

(40) All positional verbs have transitive alternants. E.g.

a. Ofi nósi pisaa-sh [biní -li -li-h.]
dog sleep.NMLZ see-PTCP √SIT-INTR-1SG.ERG-TNS
‘I’m sitting watching the sleeping dogs.’

b. Chi-ppókni tíkba okl= ii- [binii-ch-aachi-h.]
your-grandmother front PL= 1PL.ERG-√SIT-TR-FUT-TNS
‘We will seat your grandmother at the front.’

(41) All quantifier verbs have transitive alternants. E.g.

a. Okl= ii- [móm-a -t taha-h.]
PL= 1PL.ERG-√ALL-INTR-PTCP finish-TNS
‘That’s all of us.’

b. Alíkchi-yat alla [momí-chi-t masaalichi-tok.]
doctor-NOM child √ALL-TR-PTCP heal-TNS
‘The doctor cured all the kids.’
(lit. ‘The doctor cured the kids, doing it to all of them.’)
Test #3: Causative alternation — Application

-ishali ‘exceed’, psych and motion verbs

- Test: Verb has a transitive alternant → subject is I.A.

(42) -ishali ‘exceed’ has a causative alternant (though transitivity unaffected)
Taloowa-k-at chi- shahli-chii -li-tok.
sing-c-ss 2SG.DAT-exceed-CAUS-1SG.ERG-PST
‘I sang more than you.’

(43) Some psych verbs have causative alternants. E.g.

a. Nokshoop-a -tok.  
   √SCARE -INTR-PST
   ‘She/he was scared.’

b. Shokka anópa-m-at sa- nokshob-li -tok.
   pig word-DEM-NOM 1SG.ABS-√SCARE -TR-PST
   ‘The story scared me.’

(44) A couple of motion verbs have causative alternants. E.g.

a. Okl= ii- yilhiip -a -tok.  
   PL= 1PL.ERG-√ROUT.PL-INTR-PST
   ‘We ran off.’

   people√ROUT.PL-TR-1SG.ERG-PST
   ‘I ran them off.’
## Interim Summary

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>verb type</th>
<th>Agr.</th>
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<th>Test #4 (Plurational allomorphy?)</th>
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<td>ABS</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>Y</td>
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<td>positional</td>
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<td>Y</td>
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<td>Y</td>
<td>(Y)</td>
<td>N</td>
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<tr>
<td><em>ishahlī</em> ‘exceed’</td>
<td>ERG</td>
<td>Y</td>
<td>(Y)</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>N</td>
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<td>transitive psych</td>
<td>ABS/ERG</td>
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<td>(Y)</td>
<td>N</td>
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<td>(motion)</td>
<td>ERG</td>
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<td>%</td>
<td>((Y))</td>
<td>(Y)</td>
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<tr>
<td>canonical ERG</td>
<td>ERG</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>N</td>
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Introduction

Choctaw

Some ERG-marked arguments are internal
- Test #1: Auxiliary selection
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Towards a theory of exceptions
- Two kinds of exceptional behavior in active alignment systems
- The default and contextual behavior of Voice

Conclusions
Many change-of-state intransitives show **pluractional** allomorphy

(45)  

a. kalaa-*fa*  
kala-*hli*  
   ‘it got scratched’  
   ‘they got scratched’/‘it got scratched up’

b. bokaa-*fa*  
boka-*hli*  
   ‘it popped’  
   ‘they popped’/‘it crackled’

Canonical **ERG**-subject intransitives do not show pluractional allomorphy.


Test: Verb (intransitive) shows pluractional allomorphy → subject is I.A.
Test #4: Pluractional allomorphy — Application

- Test: Verb (intransitive) shows pluractional allomorphy $\rightarrow$ subject is I.A.

(46) Almost all positional verbs show pluractional allomorphy

a. binii-li
   chiiya
   bin-ohmaya

b. takaa-li
   tak-ooha
   tak-ohmaya-h

(47) Many motion verbs show pluractional allomorphy

a. iya
   itt-iyya-chi
   ilhkooli

b. ala
   itt-alaa-chi
   aay-ala

4. Apparently — though see appendix.
## Interim Summary

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<td>N</td>
<td>(Y)</td>
<td>N</td>
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<td>canonical ERG</td>
<td>ERG</td>
<td>N</td>
<td>%</td>
<td>((Y))</td>
<td>(Y)</td>
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</table>

- Conclusion: There are several classes of **ERG**-subject verbs that behave like **ABS**-subject verbs.

\[(48)\]

\[
\begin{array}{c}
\text{VoiceP} \\
\text{VP} \\
\text{Voice} \\
\text{NP}_{[ERG]} \\
V
\end{array}
\]
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<td>N</td>
<td>N</td>
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- Should we be worried about **exceptions**?
  - Plurational allomorphy: The ‘N’s can be attributed to lexical gaps.
  - Psych verbs: **ERG** agreement only emerges when the verb takes an object—scrambles the ‘DAT subject’ test.
  - Motion verbs: Possible generational shift to canonical-ERG class.
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Towards a theory of exceptions
- Two kinds of exceptional behavior in active alignment systems
- The default and contextual behavior of Voice

Conclusions
ERG-marking results from a syntactic relation with Voice$^0$

(49) **Canonical ERG-subject verb**

(50) **Canonical ABS-subject verb**

(51) **‘Low’ ERG-subject verb**
Evidence

- **Argument: #1: DATive intervention prevents [ERG]-assignment to I.A.**

(52) a. \[\text{VoiceP} \Rightarrow \text{b. VoiceP}\]

\[\text{VP} \quad \text{Voice} \quad \text{NP}_{[\text{ERG}]} \quad \text{V} \quad [\text{ERG}]\]

\[\text{VP} \quad \text{ApplP} \quad \text{Voice} \quad \text{NP}_{[\text{DAT}]} \quad \text{VP} \quad \text{Appl} \quad \text{NP} \quad \text{V}\]

- **Argument #2: Replacing Voice\(^0\) head prevents [ERG]-assignment to I.A.**

(53) a. \[\text{VoiceP} \Rightarrow \text{b. VoiceP}\]

\[\text{VP} \quad \text{Voice}_{[-\text{Spec}]} \quad \text{NP}_{[\text{ERG}]} \quad \text{V} \quad [\text{ERG}]\]

\[\text{NP} \quad \text{V} \quad \text{NP}_{[\text{ERG}]} \quad \text{V}\]

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Introduction

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Conclusions
Dative intervention prevents [ERG]-assignment to I.A.

- **On dative intervention:** Chomsky (2001), Holmberg & Hróarsdóttir (2003), Hiraiwa (2005), Preminger (2009).

\[(54)\]

\begin{align*}
\text{a. } & \text{VoiceP} \\
& \text{VP} \quad \text{Voice} \\
& \text{NP} \quad \text{V} \quad \text{[ERG]} \\
& \text{VoiceP} \\
\end{align*}

\[\Rightarrow \]

\begin{align*}
\text{c. } & \text{VoiceP} \\
& \text{ApplP} \quad \text{Voice} \\
& \text{NP} \quad \text{[ERG]} \\
& \text{VP} \quad \text{Appl} \\
& \text{NP} \quad \text{V} \\
\end{align*}

\[\times\]

b. **Alla-yat** oklah máya-móma-h.  
child-NOM PL be.PL.PROG-still-T  
‘The kids are still here.’

d. \textit{pro}_{2SG} Alla chi-máya-h-o?  
child 2SG.DAT-be.PL.PROG-TNS-Q  
‘Do you have kids?’

- **Problem:** 3rd-person argument makes the \textit{ERG}→\textit{ABS} switch \textit{unobservable}.
Dative intervention prevents [ERG]-assignment to I.A. (II)

- How can we tell the underlying ERG/ABS value of the theme in (55)?

(55) $\text{pro}_{2SG}$ Alla Alla Alla oklah $\emptyset$- chi-máya-h-o?

child PL 3.ABS-3.ERG-2SG.DAT-be.PL.PROG-TNS-Q

‘Do you have kids?’

- Answer: Agreement co-occurrence restrictions (Tyler 2019).
  - If ABS + DAT $\rightarrow$ ABS argument must be 3rd-person.
  - If ERG + DAT $\rightarrow$ ERG argument can be any person.

- Result: 1st/2nd-person themes are impossible:

(56) *ish-im-áttá-h

2SG.ERG-DAT-be.PROG-TNS

(‘She has you.’/‘You are hers.’)


$\rightarrow$ I.A. depends on Voice for its [ERG]-marking.
Introduction

Choctaw

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ERG-marking results from a syntactic relation with Voice⁰
- Dative intervention prevents [ERG]-assignment to I.A.
- Replacing Voice⁰ head prevents [ERG]-assignment to I.A.

Towards a theory of exceptions
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Conclusions
Switching out the Voice\(^0\) head

- Replacing Voice\(^0\)\([-\text{Spec}]\) with Voice\(^0\)\([+\text{Spec}]\) prevents [ERG]-assignment to I.A.

\[(57)\]

\(\text{a.}\)

\[
\begin{array}{c}
\text{VoiceP} \\
\downarrow \\
\text{VP} \\
\downarrow \\
\text{Voice}_{[-\text{Spec}]} \\
\downarrow \\
\text{NP}_{[\text{ERG}]} \\
\text{V} \\
\end{array}
\]

\[
(\text{MOMI})
\]

\[
(\text{ERG})
\]

\(\Rightarrow\)

\(\text{c.}\)

\[
\begin{array}{c}
\text{VoiceP} \\
\downarrow \\
\text{NP} \\
\downarrow \\
\text{VP} \\
\downarrow \\
\text{Voice}_{[+\text{Spec}]} \\
\downarrow \\
\text{NP} \\
\text{V} \\
\end{array}
\]

\[
(\text{MOMI})
\]

\[
(\text{ERG})
\]

\(\text{b.}\)

\[
\text{Okl} = \text{ii- móm-a -t \ il-ip-aachi-h.}
\]

\[
\text{PL} = \text{1PL.ERG-√ALL-INTR-PTCP 1PL.ERG-eat-FUT-T}
\]

\(\text{‘We will all eat.’}\)

\(\text{d.}\)

\[
\text{Hapi- momí-chi-t \ at hapi-písa-tok.}
\]

\[
\text{1PL.ABS-√ALL-TR-PTCP \ go 1PL.ABS-see.PROG-PST}
\]

\(\text{‘She went and visited all of us.’}\)
Switching out the Voice⁰ head (II)

• Compare with DAT I.A.s — DAT survives transitivization:

(58) a. VoiceP
    VP
    Voice[-Spec]
    V
    √PITIIP
    NP
    [DAT]

    ⇒
    c. VoiceP
    NP
    VP
    Voice[+Spec]
    -li
    V
    √PITIIP
    NP
    [DAT]

b. pro₁SG a- pitiip -a-tok.
   1SG.DAT-√WORSEN-INTR
   ‘I got worse.’

d. Okkish-at pro₁SG a- pitiib -li-tok.
   medicine-NOM 1SG.DAT-√WORSEN-TR-PST
   ‘The medicine made me worse.’

→ DAT survives transitivization because [DAT] is not dependent on Voice⁰.
ERG as a syntactic relation with Voice: summary

(59) [ERG] is associated with Voice$^0$

- a. VoiceP
  - NP ➔ [ERG]
  - VP ➔ Voice

- b. VoiceP
  - VP ➔ Voice
  - NP ➔ V ➔ [ERG]

- Two arguments for (59b):
  - [ERG]-assignment to I.A. is blocked by dative intervention.
  - [ERG]-assignment to I.A. doesn’t survive a change in Voice$^0$ head.

- Next: With the E.A.-[ERG] link severed, how should we understand the relation between syntactic structure and morphological alignment?
Introduction

Choctaw

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  - Dative intervention prevents [ERG]-assignment to I.A.
  - Replacing Voice.0 head prevents [ERG]-assignment to I.A.

Towards a theory of exceptions
  - Two kinds of exceptional behavior in active alignment systems
  - The default and contextual behavior of Voice

Conclusions
Taking stock

- Simple analysis of active alignment:

\[(60) \quad \text{VoiceP} \]
\[\quad \text{NP}_{\text{ERG}} \]
\[\quad \text{VP} \quad \text{Voice} \]

\[(61) \quad \text{VoiceP} \]
\[\quad \text{VP} \quad \text{Voice} \]
\[\quad \text{NP}_{\text{ABS}} \]

- Today: the analysis is not right:
  - Internal arguments can be \([\text{ERG}]\).
- ...but it is not entirely wrong:
  - \text{ERG}-marking requires a relation with \text{Voice}.

- This section:
  - Filling out the typology of exceptional behaviors.
  - A theory of the syntactic behavior of \text{Voice}^0.
Introduction

Choctaw

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Conclusions
Filling out the typology of exceptions

**Default**

a. VoiceP
   - NP
   - VP
   - Voice

b. VoiceP
   - VP
   - Voice

**Exceptional**

C. VoiceP
   - NP
   - (not \text{/e.sc/r.sc/g.sc})
   - VP
   - Voice

D. VoiceP
   - VP
   - Voice
   - NP
   - V
   - [ERG]

- Does structure (c) exist (in Choctaw or any other active alignment system)?
- \textit{N.B.} I abstract away from ‘split’ active alignment, where ERG also requires certain T/M/A values.
ERGless external arguments?

(62) VoiceP
   NP_(not ERG)_
   VP
   Voice

(63) Promising possibilities from other languages with active alignment

a. \textbf{bii-} wíisshi-k
   \texttt{1SG.ABS-tell.lie-DECL}
   ‘I lie.’

   (Crow, Ko 2019)

b. \textbf{wakyó?te?}
   ‘I (PATIENT CASE) work.’

   (Mohawk, Mithun 1991:535)

“\textit{It would seem that no one is more agentive semantically than a worker.”}

   (Mithun 1991:535)
Agentive transitives with **ABS** subjects

a. ye**wak**átyeˈs
   ‘I (PATIENT CASE) throw (it).’
   (Mohawk, Mithun 1991:534)

b. Kabir-(*ne) vo kitaab laay-aa/*ii
   Kabir.m-(***ERG**) that book.f bring.PERF-m/*f
   ‘Kabir brought that book’
   (Hindi-Urdu, Mahajan 2012:208)

c. Jinta-kari ka-rla ngirrily-ngirrily-wangka
   one-other.abs pres.impf-3dat aggressive-aggressive-speak.nonpast
   jinta-kari-ki, kulu-kungarnti.
   one-other-dat fight-in.preparation.for
   ‘One is provoking the other to fight.’
   (Warlpiri, Legate 2012:187)

‘Semantic eyeballing’ doesn’t replace the need for language-specific diagnostics for external-argument-hood.

→ *But* these verbs have often been argued to be ‘exceptional’ (Oyharçabal 1992, Mahajan 2012, Aldai 2009, Berro 2010, Legate 2012).
Causativization strips embedded agents of their ERG case.

See Nie (2019) for Voice-over-Voice causatives.

(65)  
\[
\begin{align*}
\text{(a)} & \quad \text{VoiceP} \\
& \quad \text{NP} \leftarrow \text{VP} \\
& \quad \text{Voice} -\text{li} \\
& \quad \text{chicken} \sqrt{\text{FRY}} \\
& \Rightarrow \\
\text{(c)} & \quad \text{VoiceP} \\
& \quad \text{NP} \leftarrow \text{VoiceP} \\
& \quad \text{Voice} -\text{chi} \\
& \quad \text{chicken} \sqrt{\text{FRY}} \\
\end{align*}
\]

b. Akaka ish- awash-li-tok.  
chicken 2SG.ERG-\sqrt{\text{FRY}} -TR-PST  
‘You fried the chicken.’

chicken 2SG.ABS-\sqrt{\text{FRY}} -TR-CAUS-1SG.ERG-PST  
‘I made you fry the chicken.’

→ Here, Choctaw Voice\textsuperscript{0}_{[+Spec]} fails to assign \text{[ERG]}.
Mismatches in active alignment systems

Default

a. VoiceP

\[ \begin{array}{c}
NP \\
\text{VP} \\
\text{Voice}
\end{array} \]

b. VoiceP

\[ \begin{array}{c}
\text{VP} \\
\text{Voice}
\end{array} \]

Exceptional

c. VoiceP

\[ \begin{array}{c}
NP_{(\text{not \, ERG})} \\
\text{VP} \\
\text{Voice}
\end{array} \]

d. VoiceP

\[ \begin{array}{c}
\text{VP} \\
\text{Voice}
\end{array} \]

Recall our simple case-assignment rules:

Voice\text{[+Spec]} assigns \[\text{ERG}\] to Spec-VoiceP.
Voice\text{[+Spec]} assigns \[\text{ERG}\] to Spec-VoiceP.
Voice\text{[-Spec]} does nothing.
Voice\text{[-Spec]} does nothing.

→ Do we give in to chaos!?
Towards a theory of exceptions

Introduction

Choctaw

Some ERG-marked arguments are internal
- Test #1: Auxiliary selection
- Test #2: Compatibility with DAT subject
- Test #3: Causative alternation
- Test #4: Pluractional allomorphy

ERG-marking results from a syntactic relation with Voice$^0$
- Dative intervention prevents [ERG]-assignment to I.A.
- Replacing Voice$^0$ head prevents [ERG]-assignment to I.A.

Towards a theory of exceptions
- Two kinds of exceptional behavior in active alignment systems
- The default and contextual behavior of Voice

Conclusions
The default and contextual behavior of Voice

I’ve argued for this:

(66) Fnc\(^0\): Voice\(_{-\text{Spec}}\) Voice\(_{+\text{Spec}}\)

Case/agr: [ERG] Ø (conditioned) default

→ Proposal: Voice\(^0\) heads have default and contextually-conditioned case/agreement properties.
Conditions on exceptional ERG assignment

(67) ‘Low’ ERG-subject verb

```
VoiceP
  VP  Voice
    NP  V [ERG]
```

- Exceptional [ERG]-assignment to I.A. occurs in the context of:
  - Particular syntactic configurations:

(68) Adding stimulus object to psych verb (a.k.a. ‘Absolutive promotion’, Tyler 2019)

a. Chi- nokshoopa-h.  
   2SG.ABS-scared-TNS  
   ‘You’re scared’

b. Is- sa- nokshoopa-h.  
   2SG.ERG- 1SG.DAT-scared-TNS  
   ‘You’re scared of me.’
Conditions on exceptional non-ERG assignment

(69) **ERG-less agentive verb**

```
VoiceP
  NP (not ERG)
    VP Voice
```

- Exceptional non-[ERG]-assignment occurs in the context of:
  - Particular **roots** (perhaps not in Choctaw).
  - Particular **syntactic configurations**:

(70) **Syntactic causativization**

a. Ish-awashli-h.  
   2SG.ERG-fry.TR-TNS  
   ‘You fried it’

b. Chi-awashli-chi-h.  
   2SG.ABS-fry.TR-CAUS-TNS  
   ‘She made you fry it.’
Syntactic rules

(71) Case-assignment rules for Voice$_0^{[-\text{Spec}]}$:  
   a. $\emptyset$ / Elsewhere  
   b. Assign $\text{[ERG]}$ / $\{\sqrt{\text{POS}}, \sqrt{\text{QUANT}}, \sqrt{\text{EXCEED}}, \ldots\}$  
   c. Assign $\text{[ERG]}$ / NP$_{[\text{DAT}]}$ + $\{\sqrt{\text{PSYCH}}\}$ (syntactic configuration)

(72) Case-assignment rules for Voice$_0^{ [+\text{Spec}]}$:  
   a. Assign $\text{[ERG]}$ / Elsewhere  
   b. $\emptyset$ / $\{\sqrt{1}, \sqrt{2}, \sqrt{3} , \ldots\}$  
   c. $\emptyset$ / _ Voice$_0^{0}$ (syntactic configuration)
Introduction

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Conclusions
**Some answers**

- **Q:** How does **active alignment** correspond to **syntactic structure**?

  → Some NPs form a **syntactic relations** with **Voice**.

(73)  

```
(73)    a. VoiceP
       /   \
      /     \
     [ERG]
NP ←-----→ VP
       /   \
      /     \
     Voice
```

  → Syntactic position is **important** in determining which arguments form these relations, but **is not the sole determinant**.

- **Q:** How should we analyze **default** and **exceptional** alignment behavior within a language?

  → Functional heads (e.g. Voice) have **default** and **contextual** syntactic behavior.
I have argued that case/agreement properties of a Fnc$^0$ can be contextual. ...just like morphological properties:

(74)  **English past tense**

a.  $T^0_{[Past]} \leftrightarrow -d / \text{Elsewhere}$

b.  $T^0_{[Past]} \leftrightarrow -t / \{\sqrt{\text{BEND}}, \sqrt{\text{MEAN}}, \sqrt{\text{DREAM}}, ...\}$

c.  $T^0_{[Past]} \leftrightarrow -\emptyset / \{\sqrt{\text{RUN}}, \sqrt{\text{SINK}}, \sqrt{\text{READ}}, ...\}$

...and semantic properties (Marantz 2013 et seq., Wood & Marantz 2017, a.m.o.):

(75)  **English plural**

a.  $\text{Num}^0_{[Pl]} \leftrightarrow \lambda P.\text{Plural}(P) / \text{Elsewhere}$

b.  $\text{Num}^0_{[Pl]} \leftrightarrow \emptyset / \{\sqrt{\text{SCALE}}, \sqrt{\text{ODD}}, \sqrt{\text{DIG}}\}$

→ Allomorphy and allosemy allow us to minimize the number of Fnc$^0$s we need to posit.
Conclusions

Final thought: Contextual syntax beyond Voice

- Contextually-conditioned **case**:
  - E.g. V conditions variation in case-assignment by P (Sigurðsson 2012):

    (76) a. tala við einhvern
        talk with someone.<acc>
        ‘talk with someone’
    b. hafa við einhverjum
        have with someone.<dat>
        ‘keep up with someone’ (Icelandic)

- E.g. V conditions variation in Neg$^0$’s ability to assign GEN (Harves 2013):

    (77) a. otvet-(a) ne priš-el/lo
        answer-(gen) not came
        ‘No answer came.’
    b. vod-a/*y ne kipel-a/*o
        water-nom/*gen not boil
        ‘Water didn’t boil.’ (Russian)

- E.g. ‘Repair’ by exceptional case-assignment? (Rezac 2010)

- Contextually-conditioned **agreement**:
  - Root-conditioned variation in the presence of V/Adj agreement? (Matasović 2014)

→ The contextual approach lets us reduce redundancy in the functional domain.
Thanks!

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References I


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References II


References III


Extra: Choctaw ERG is not dependent on Fin/T/Mod/Asp

- Choctaw ERG agreement survives any clausal truncation (except causativization—cf. (65)).

   cow meat PL= 1.PL.ERG-cook.LG-and.ss 1PL.ERG-eat-PST
   ‘We cooked the steak and ate it.’
   (adjoined ‘and’-clause)

b. [Okl=ii-baliili-t] tahli-h.
   PL=1PL.ERG-run-PTCP finish.ACT-TNS
   ‘We finished running.’
   (complement t-participial clause)

c. [Kánimma il-ilhkooli-t] okl= il-ishtáya-tok.
   INDEF.where 1PL.ERG-go.PL-PTCP PL= 1PL.ERG-drive-PST
   ‘We drove everywhere.’
   (adjoined t-participial clause)

   DEM-FOC.NOM stick take.LG-1SG.ERG-PTCP walk-1SG.ERG-FUT-TNS-DS 1SG.ABS-fix-PST
   ‘He’s the one who fixed me so I have to walk with a stick.’
   (adjoined sh-participial clause)

e. [Chahta annópa ish-ikkana-yo] sa-nna-h.
   Choctaw language 2SG.ERG-learn-ACC/DS 1SG.ABS-want-TNS
   ‘I want you to study Choctaw.’
   (complement NMLZ clause)
Western Basque has \texttt{erg}-marked internal arguments:

- ...with particular \textbf{roots}:

  \begin{align*}
  (79) \quad \text{Ur-ak} & \quad \text{irakin} & \quad \text{du} \\
  \text{water-DEF} & \quad \text{ERG} & \quad \text{boil} & \quad \text{has} \\
  & \quad \text{‘The water has boiled.’} \quad \text{\textcopyright{} Holguín 2007:5}
  \end{align*}

- ...with particular \textbf{syntactic configurations}:

  \begin{align*}
  (80) \quad \textbf{Psych verb with stimulus argument in PCC context} \\
  \hspace{1cm} \text{a.} \quad \text{Itxaso-ri} & \quad \text{hura} & \quad \text{gustatzen} & \quad \text{zaio.} \\
  \text{Itxaso-DAT} & \quad \text{him.ABS} & \quad \text{liking} & \quad \text{has} \\
  & \quad \text{‘Itxaso likes him.’} \\
  \hspace{1cm} \text{b.} \quad \text{Itxaso-ri} & \quad \text{zu-k} & \quad \text{gustatzen} & \quad \text{diozu.} \\
  \text{Itxaso-DAT} & \quad \text{you-ERG} & \quad \text{liking} & \quad \text{is} \\
  & \quad \text{‘Itxaso likes you.’} \quad \text{\textcopyright{} Rezac 2008:81}
  \end{align*}
Internal arguments lose ERG under the same circumstances as in Choctaw.

- Via the causative alternation:

\[(81) \text{Errege-ak ur-a irakin du} \]
\[
\text{king-DEF.ERG water-DEF.ABS boiled has}
\]
\[
\text{‘The king boiled the water.’} \quad \text{(J. Baker 2018:192)}
\]

- When there is an intervening dative argument:

\[(82) \begin{align*}
\text{a. } & \text{Olatz-ek pozik dirudi.} \\
& \text{Olatz-ERG happy seems} \\
& \text{‘Olatz seems happy.’}
\end{align*} \]
\[(82) \begin{align*}
\text{b. } & \text{Miren-i Olatz pozik iruditzen zaio.} \\
& \text{Miren-DAT Olatz.ABS happy seem.IMPF is} \\
& \text{‘Olatz seems happy to Miren.’} \quad \text{(Arregi 2018:11)}
\end{align*} \]

Extra: The in-between status of motion verbs

- Auxiliary *tahli* preferred by contemporary speakers (*contra* Broadwell 1988).
- *Dialectal* acceptance of DAT subjects.
- Small # of causative alternants (one?).
- Forms linked by pluractional ‘allomorphy’ are not necessarily in complementary distribution:

(83) a. Tamaaha kil-**iya**-h!
    town       1PL.IRR-go.SG-TNS
    ‘Lets’ go to town.’

    (Broadwell 2006:148)

b. Tamaaha kil-ilhkooli-h!
    town       1PL.IRR-go.PL-TNS
    ‘Lets’ go to town.’