

## Peripheral extraction in Tagalog: implications for syntactic ergativity

**INTRODUCTION** In a subset of ergative languages, certain syntactic processes (e.g., relativization, *wh*-interrogation) privilege absolutive arguments to the exclusion of ergative ones – so-called syntactic ergativity. Tagalog (Austronesian) has been argued to exhibit this behavior (Aldridge 2004), and the examples below show that absolutives may undergo *wh*-movement (2, 4), whereas ergatives may not (5). Instead, questioning transitive agents requires a different verbal form (6).

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| (1) Tumakbo si Gina.<br>ran.INTR ABS Gina<br>'Gina ran.' | (3) Kinain ni Fe ang isda.<br>ate.TR ERG Fe ABS fish<br>'Fe ate the fish.' | (5)* Sino ang kinain ang isda?<br>who ABS ate.TR ABS fish<br>Int.: 'Who ate the fish?'    |
| (2) Sino ang tumakbo?<br>who ABS ran.INTR<br>'Who ran?'  | (4) Ano ang kinain ni Fe?<br>what ABS ate.TR ERG Fe<br>'What did Fe eat?'  | (6) Sino ang <u>kumain</u> ng isda?<br>who ABS ate.INTR OBL fish<br>'Who ate (the) fish?' |

In contrast to the behavior just outlined for argument DPs, clausal dependents in Tagalog that are in some sense peripheral exhibit no restriction on extraction. This paper argues that the behavior of these peripheral elements poses general problems for current approaches to syntactic ergativity.

**BACKGROUND** Broadly speaking, current accounts of syntactic ergativity employ one of two approaches to explain the ill-formedness of ergative extraction. One kind of approach argues that the problem is structural in nature: absolutive objects must move to a position higher than ergatives (e.g., for case) in a way that prevents movement of the now lower ergative (e.g., due to a phase boundary). Recent analyses include Aldridge 2004 and Coon et al. 2014. The other kind argues that properties of the ergative itself prevent its extraction, for example, due to case-discriminating movement probes regulated by a universal case hierarchy (Deal 2016) or an adpositional source for ergative at odds with general restrictions on PP-extraction in a language (Polinsky 2016).

**PERIPHERAL EXTRACTION** Extraction of peripheral clausal elements in Tagalog differs from argument DP extraction in two ways. As shown below for *wh*-questions of temporal adjuncts (7-8) and locative goals (9-10), this kind of extraction (i) does not require specific verb forms (cf. (5-6)) and (ii) is structurally distinct (Aldridge 2002) (note *ang* is missing after the *wh*-element below).

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| (7) Kailan ininom ni Juan ang gatas <del>kanina</del> ?<br>when drank.TR ERG Juan ABS milk earlier<br>'When did Juan drink the milk?' | (9) Saan nilagay ni Fe ang asin sa tasa?<br>where put.TR ERG Fe ABS salt LOC cup<br>'Where did Fe put the salt?'     |
| (8) Kailan uminom si Juan ng gatas <del>kanina</del> ?<br>when drank.INTR ABS Juan OBL milk earlier<br>'When did Juan drink milk?'    | (10) Saan naglagay si Fe ng asin sa tasa?<br>where put.INTR ABS Fe OBL salt LOC cup<br>'Where did Fe put some salt?' |

This paper argues that despite the structural differences, peripheral extraction in Tagalog is true extraction, and is therefore problematic for both major types of approaches to syntactic ergativity. For the structural approaches, this is because the absolutive movement that blocks ergative extraction must rely on general mechanisms predicting that even lower elements (such as locative goals) should also be blocked from extracting. For the approaches relying on properties of the ergative, this is because the properties appealed to are expected to generalize to at least some of the elements that may in fact extract (i.e., elements that are lower on the case hierarchy, clear cases of PPs).

## SELECTED REFERENCES

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