



Ergativity in Northern Kurmanji

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Abstract

The current paper is concerned with the phenomenon of ergativity in Northern Kurmanji dialect that is particularly used in Duhok city (henceforth NK). Ergativity is a case system in which the subject of an intransitive clause (S) is treated in the same way as the object of the transitive clause (O), and differently from transitive subject (A).

Kurdish, like all the ergative languages of the world, is an ergative language. Kurdish, which has an Agent-Object-Verb (AOV) possibility of word order, is a morphologically ergative language in which pieces of morphology serve to mark the ergative pattern.

The study tackles the problem of split ergativity phenomenon in NK as we find two case patterns, nominative-accusative and ergative-absolutive, depending on the tense of the verb.

The NK dialect is morphologically ergative where ergativity is reflected in morphology (markings on nouns) rather than in syntax.

The data chosen for analysis are taken from spoken language and written texts, which are from NK. The data, following the Latin alphabet symbols, are used to symbolize Kurdish clauses.

1.1. Introductory Remarks:

Ergativity is a morphosyntactic phenomenon. In general, the ergative case system (or ergative-absolutive) has a case pattern that groups the subject of an intransitive verb (S) and the object of a transitive verb (O) together, marking them with one single case known as absolutive, whereas the subject of a transitive verb (A)gent is marked differently with ergative case (Dixon 1994: 1). The ergative case pattern operates on three levels: morphological, syntactic and split.

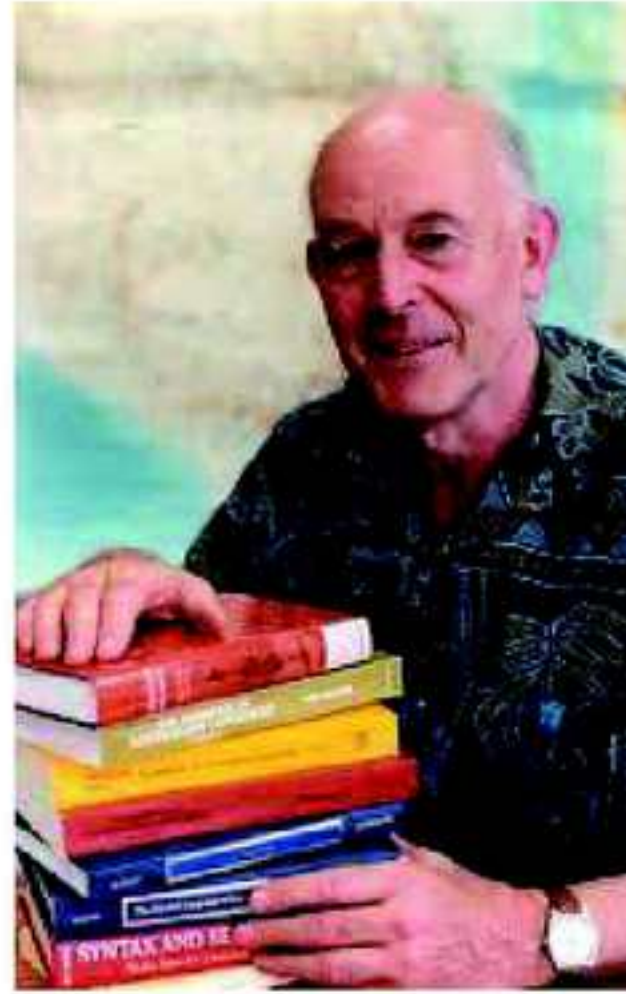
Morphological ergativity is very common among the ergative languages of the world. It comprises marking the core arguments, i.e. S, O and A, with different case endings. Here, the ergative languages vary in the case endings they have. In other words, both S and O have the absolutive case, i.e. they are unmarked; whereas the

A argument is marked with the ergative case in most languages and with the oblique case in Kurdish.

Syntactic ergativity deals with some syntactic constraints on the deletion of coreferential constituents in clause combinations, that is, coordination. In other words, syntactic ergativity demonstrates a syntactic behavior in that it follows nominative-accusative syntax.

Finally, split ergativity is a pattern in which there is a shift between the two main case systems, ergativity and accusativity, depending on tense and aspect factors. When the stem of verb is in the past, the case system is said to be ergative; whereas, if the stem of verb is in the present, the case system is said to be accusative.

As for Kurdish, it is a morphological ergative language; however, it shows some syntactic ergative behavior.



1.2. Statement of the Problem:

Ergativity is a significant morphosyntactic phenomenon in many ergative languages all over the world. Although ergative characteristics are apparent in a number of languages such as Caucasian, Indo-Aryan, Australian, Tibeto-Burman languages, and others, yet, it is rarely given attention and interest in the morphosyntactic Kurdish studies. That is why; the ergative case must be accounted for due to the fact that Kurdish is an ergative language.

1.3. Aims of the Study:

The main aim of the present study is to analyze the various case patterns found in the Kurdish dialect known as the Northern Kurmanji dialect. Hence, the phenomenon of split ergativity in NK is taken into consideration.

1.4. Hypotheses:

The study assumes that:

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1. NK is a morphologically ergative language.
2. NK has a split-ergative case system as it displays ergativity in some cases, and shows accusativity in other cases.

1.5. Limits of the Study:

The current study is limited to the areas where the NK dialect is used. The study, comparing with a corpus of examples taken from some other languages like English, Latin, and the like, focuses on the split-ergative system that is reflected in the NK dialect.

What is more, a theoretical background of the term case will be made firstly because it is very significant for describing the ergative case system of NK.

1.6. Value of the Study:

NK is an ergative language. Linguistic studies should not deprive Kurdish of ergativity research. It is important for the readers of this paper to differentiate between the subject (S) and object (O) on one hand, and agent (A) on the other hand. Besides, to the best of our knowledge, the subject has not been tackled before, which gives me a chance to make some contribution to this field of study, that is, ergativity. We need to study the ergative case system in NK.

1.7. Analysis of the Data:

The present study deals with the morphosyntactic term ergativity in NK. Generally, NK is used in the mass media, press, administration, education, and at home as well. In this way, we will use examples from the everyday spoken NK dialect, written texts and grammar texts. Also, we will use the Latin alphabet symbols to represent the Kurdish clauses used throughout the study.

1.8. Outline:

The study consists of three chapters. The first chapter is made up of an introduction, statement of the problem, aims of the study, hypotheses, limits of the study, methods of analyzing the data, value of the study and an outline of the paper.

Chapter two presents the phenomenon of ergativity in the NK dialect. The main case systems found in Kurdish are studied in this chapter. Here, the phenomenon of split ergativity is focused on.

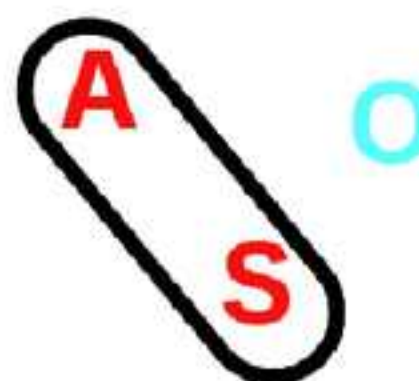
Chapter three summarizes the main findings arrived at throughout the study, and it presents recommendations and suggestions for fur-

Further Research.



2.1. Ergativity in Northern Kurmanji: Introduction:

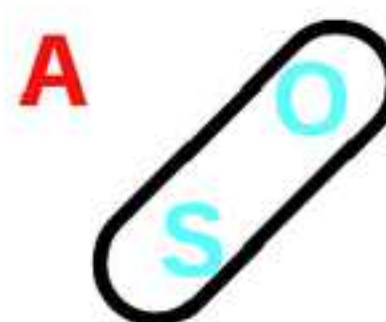
It seems that the ergative system can appear in different parts of grammar; "a fact that [it] is masked by the loose use of the term ergative" (Blake 1975: 281). Here, ergativity as a morphosyntactic term is defined in different ways by different linguists and syntacticians. Then, two types of ergativity, morphological and syntactic, are classified depending on whether S, O and A are morphologically coded and realized or they are syntactically coded to form a natural class. Split-ergativity is a nice flavor to be added to the ergative construction of NK. Kurdish, among at least twenty per cent of the world's languages, is a split-ergative language.



2.2. Definitions of Ergativity:

The term "ergative" came from the Greek word ergates which means "the doer of an action" (Bozarslan, 2003: 5). That is, it connects together the subject of an utterance and its verb. Here, ergativity is applied to transitive clauses only, excluding intransitive clauses. Ergativity as a morphosyntactic system has been defined by different scholars, linguists and syntacticians in various perspectives. In the past, while studying some South-Asian languages, ergativity was considered to be an alternative to the syntactic phenomenon passivization (Dik, 1980: 115-117). However, this view soon became a minority view because ergativity is but a system wherein subjects of active sentences, not passive sentences, are marked and focused upon (Butt and Doe 2001: 6). According to Crystal (1991: 124-125) and Mathews (1997: 117), while arguing that the concept of ergativity has been applied to many languages including English even though it is an accusative language, the following sentences are analyzed ergatively:

- (1) The window (S) broke.
- (2) The boy (A) broke the window (O).



In the above examples, the subject (i.e. the window) is used in the same way as its object, and the agent is said to appear as the ergative subject. Verbs which are used in such a way are said to be ergative. However, such an approach is a minor view that cannot be applied to accusative languages like English. Focusing on the term

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of ergativity, it is defined as a morphosyntactic system which classifies S together with O, distinguishing them from A.

However, among the various ergative languages (like Kurdish), a distinction is drawn between those that are morphologically and syntactically ergative languages. Thus there should be some mechanisms to distinguish S, O and A, whether by case marking or by some syntactic operations and constraints of the language. This idea is discussed in the following sub-section.

2.3. Types of Ergativity:

Dixon (1987: 3-4 and 1994: 39) argues that the three basic core grammatical arguments S, O and A are found in every language. That is why, to be more precise, the function of a noun phrase in a clause may be shown by any of the mechanisms: (1) case marking (e.g. Basque, Eskimo, Latin, Greek, Turkish, Russian, Warlpiri, Dyirbal, some of the Indo-Arian languages like Pashto, Kurdish, and so forth), and (2) word order (e.g. English). Only the mechanism of case marking is taken into consideration for the purpose of our study here. Marking S, O and A with special case-markers is but a system referred to as ergativity, since this is generally shown by case inflections. The ergative pattern can be exhibited on three levels:

- Morphological ergativity which deals with the application of cases to the core arguments of a predicate within a simple clause. This morphological ergativity relates to the marking of syntactic relations in derived structure.
- Syntactic ergativity which deals with ergatively motivated syntactic constraints on clause combination and on the omission of coreferential constituents in clause combinations.
- Split ergativity in which many languages are classified as ergative, but in fact they are split-ergative whereby syntactic and/or morphological ergative patterns are conditioned by some part of the grammatical context, e.g. person distinction, tense, or aspect of the verb.

2.3.1 Morphological Ergativity:

In a "pure" ergative system, the A argument of a predicate is marked with the ergative case while the S and O arguments take the absolutive case. In a "pure" accusative system the O argument takes the accusative case while the A and S arguments take the nominative case (Blake, 1976: 280-287; Dixon, 1994: Ch. 3; Palmer, 1971: 55-58; Van Valin, 2001: 77-79; among others). This is the basic understanding of the morphological ergativity now. In accusative lan-

guages such as English, both S and A are alike:

- (3) She (S) runs.
(4) She (A) kicked the ball.



The above two examples show that their subjects are morphologically alike because English is an accusative language, which depends on word order, not case marking. On the other hand, the ergative languages (e.g. Basque, Eskimo, Latin, Greek, Turkish, and the like) mostly employ morphological realization (i.e. case marking) on nominals as well as pronominals. For instance, a large majority of Australian languages follow such a pattern. The following examples are taken from NK:

- (5) se- \emptyset rev-î (Nominals)
dog-ABS ran-past
"A dog ran."

- (6) se-yî ez- \emptyset leqda-m (Nominals)
dog-ERG I-ABS bite- ISG
"A dog bit me."

- (7) ez- \emptyset rev-î -m (Pronominals)
I run - past - ISG
"I ran."

Dixon (1987: 3-4 and 1994: 56-69) and Levin (1987: 23-25) discuss the idea of markedness claiming that it plays a significant role in the ergative and accusative case systems. In a nominative-accusative language (SA/O), the nominative is generally the unmarked (default) case, i.e., it has \emptyset realization; whereas the accusative has a special marking.

In an ergative-absolutive language (SO/A), the absolutive is generally the unmarked (default) case, that is, it has \emptyset realization; whereas the ergative has a special marking.

Kurdish, like all the ergative languages of the world, is an ergative

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language. Kurdish, which has an Agent-Object-Verb (AOV) possibility of word order, is a morphologically ergative language in which pieces of the morphology serve to mark the ergative pattern.

The core arguments of a Kurdish clause S, O and A display an ergative-absolutive pattern of case on the past stem of the verb: S and O are in the absolutive case whereas A is in the oblique case (Farudi and Toosarvandani, 2003: 1-2).

To illustrate the ergative case system in NK, the following examples are taken from everyday sentences:

(8) Azad-Ø çû-Ø (Intransitive)
Azad-ABS went-Ø
"Azad went."

(9) Azad-î wêne-k-Ø girt-Ø (Transitive)
Azad-OBL picture-INDEF-Ø took-past
"Azad took a picture."

The standard understanding of the ergative system in NK is illustrated in the above two sentences: S (i.e. Azad) in (8) and O (i.e. wêne) in (9) are in the absolutive case while A (i.e. Azad) in the transitive clause is in the oblique case taking the ergative case marker -î.

Now, the ergative construction in NK is restricted to the past stem of the verb only; and the restriction in addition to the simple past tense covers the past imperfect aspect, the present perfect aspect, the pluperfect aspect, and the perfect subjunctive. Applied to both nominals and pronominals, the transitive clauses cited below show the ergative system in NK:

-The past imperfect aspect

(10) Azad-Ø di-çû-Ø (Intransitive nominal)
Azad-ABS PROG-go
"Azad was going."

(11) Azad-î hûzan-ek-Ø di-xand-Ø (Transitive nominal)



Azad-OBL poem-INDEF-ABS IMPERF-read

"Azad was reading a poem."



(12) tu-Ø di-rev-î (Intransitive pronominal)

you-ABS PROG-escape-past

"You were escaping."

(13) me xanî-Ø bûyax-di-kir-Ø (Transitive pronominal)

we-OBL house-ABS paint-IMPERF-do-past-3SG

We were painting the house."

-The present perfect aspect

(14) Sîpan-Ø hat-iy-e (Intransitive nominal)

Sîpan-ABS come-PERF-be

"Sîpan has come?"

(15) Sîpan-î ez-Ø ne dît-î-m-e (Transitive nominal)

Sîpan-OBL I-ABS NEG saw-PERF-1SG-be

"Sîpan has not seen me."

(16) hîn-Ø hat-î-n-e (Intransitive pronominal)

you-ABS came-PERF-2PL-be

"You have come."

(17) min pertûk-ek-Ø xand-iy-e (Transitive pronominal)

ISG-OBL book-INDEF-ABS read-PERF-be

"I have read a book."

-The pluperfect aspect

(18) qûtabî-Ø hemî derket-bû-n (Intransitive nominal)

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students-ABS all went (out)-be past-3PL

"All the students had gone out."

(19) heval-a em-Ø hêla-bû-n (Transitive nominal)

friend-PL OBL us-ABS left-be past-3PL

"The friends had left us."

(20) ez-Ø cû-bû-m (Intransitive pronominal)

I-ABS went-be past-1SG

"I had gone."

(21) me filim-Ø dît-bû (Transitive pronominal)

we-OBL film-ABS saw-be past

"We had seen the film."

-The perfect subjunctive

(22) eger kiçik-Ø zîtir gehîst-ba-Ø gîrû ne-di-bû (Intransitive nominal)

if 3SG girl-ABS earlier arrived-PERF SJTV late NEG-would-be

"If the girl had come earlier, (she) wouldn't have been late."

(23) pêtivî-bû Şeng-ê gul-Ø cand-ba-n (Transitive nominal)

necessary-was Şeng-OBL flowers-ABS plant-PERF SJTV-3PL

"(It) was necessary that Şeng had planted the flowers."

(24) heke ez-Ø cû-ba-m gelek ya baş-bû (Intransitive pronominal)

if I-ABS went-PERF SJTV-1SG very was good-be past

"It was very good if I had gone."

(25) baştir-bû min tu-Ø dît-ba-yî (Transitive pronominal)

better-was I-OBL you-ABS saw-PERF SJTV-2SG
 “(It) was better if I had seen you.”



The ergative-absolutive pattern in NK is found in transitive clauses that are restricted to tenses based on the past stem of the verb. This is very clear from the above cited examples: ergativity is exhibited from both case marking and verb agreement.

According to case marking, whether on nominals or pronominals, S and O form a natural class because they are in the absolutive case, while A is in the oblique case. The same natural class is also found for verb agreement in which the verbs in the above examples agree with S in intransitive clause and with O in transitive clauses, but never agree with A.

Now, with respect to NK pronouns, they are in the absolutive case and occur as S in intransitive clauses and O in transitive ones; the pronouns in the oblique case occur as A in transitive ergative clauses (Amedi, 1987: 223; Rizgar, 1993: 1; Bozarlan, 2003: 6-10 and Barwary, 2003: 90).

The nominative-accusative pattern in NK, on the other hand, is found in clauses which have the present stem of verb (Barwary, 2004: 92 and Durroei, 2004: 1). The present stem occurs in simple present indicative (26, 27, 28 and 29), present imperfect (30, 31, 32 and 33) and the future tense (34, 35, 36 and 37). The following examples illustrate the nominative-accusative pattern in NK:

-The simple present indicative

(26) Jûtyar-Ø di-çi-t (Intransitive nominal)
 farmer-ABS INDIC-go-3SG
 “The farmer goes.”

(27) masîvan masi-ya di-xo-t (Transitive nominal)
 fisherman fish-PL INDIC-eat-3SG
 “The fisherman eats the fish.”

(28) ew-Ø di-axiv-it (Intransitive pronominal)
 he/she/it-ABS INDIC-speak-3SG
 “He/she/it speaks.”

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(29) ez te di-niyas-im (Transitive pronominal)
 ISG-ABS you-OBL INDIC-know- ISG
 "I know you?"

-The present imperfect

(30) befir-Ø y-a di-hêl-it (Intransitive nominal)
 snow-ABS be-fem IMPERF-melt-3SG
 "The snow is melting."

(31) aševan-Ø y-ê genim-î di-hêr-it (Transitive nominal)
 miller-ABS be-masc wheat-OBL IMPERF-mill-3SG
 "The miller is milling the wheat."

(32) ez-Ø y-ê gêj-di-b-im (Intransitive pronominal)
 ISG-ABS be-masc dizzy-IMPERF-get-1SG
 "I am getting dizzy."

(33) ew-Ø y-a cîruk-ek-ê di-xwîn-i (Transitive pronominal)
 she-ABS be-fem story-INDEF-OBL IMPERF-read-3SG
 "She is reading a story."

-The future time

(34) Melevan-Ø dê niv-it (Intransitive nominal)
 Melevan-ABS FUT sleep-3SG
 "Melevan will sleep."

(35) Mêhvan-Ø dê tombêl-ek-ê kir-it (Transitive nominal)
 Mêhvan-ABS FUT car-INDEF-OBL buy-3SG





“Mehvan will buy a car.”

(36) hîn-Ø dê pald-in (Intransitive pronominal)
 you-ABS FUT rest-2PL
 “You will rest.”

(37) tu-Ø dê cîruk-ek-ê nivês-î (Transi
 tive pronominal)
 you-ABS FUT story-INDEF-OBL write-2-1SG
 “You will write a story.”

The examples (26-37) above show that the present tense system in NK demands accusativity. In other words, both S and A form a natural class of the absolutive case pattern, while O is in the oblique case. Again accusativity is reflected clearly in the verb agreement where the verb agrees with S and A, but not with O.

2.3.2 Syntactic Ergativity:

Syntactic ergativity is a curious phenomenon in the following respects. There is apparently some correlation between morphological and syntactic ergativity: no language with accusative morphology shows syntactic ergativity. On the other hand, some morphologically ergative languages do not show syntactic ergativity (e.g., Warlpiri).

If a language treats S and O in the same way (or forms a natural class of S and A) with respect to their case morphology as well as the syntactic operations and constraints of the language, the language is said to be syntactically ergative (Blake, 1976: 288-300; Dixon, 1987: 4-5; Ura, 2000: 9, 212-216; Gritchka, 2001: 1-2; Van Valin, 2001: 73-79, 213-214; Butt and Doe, 2003: 2-3; among others).

Dixon (1987: 4) states that “English operates with an S/A syntactic pivot”: the omitted NP (S) in the second clause of the sentence John saw Mary and sat down is to be the same as the subject (A) of saw. In other words, English allows the omission of an NP in a clause if it is identical with the NP in the previous conjoined clause and the two NPs must be in S or A function.

Blake (1976: 288) clarifies that the most obvious syntactic feature is “free word order”. Here, a number of different orderings (i.e. un-

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marked orderings) are referred to: (1) Agent Object Verb (AOV) as in most Australian languages, (2) Agent Verb Object (AVO) as in some Queensland languages, and (3) Object Agent Verb (OAV) as in Dyirbal.

It is very important to say that Kurdish is considered to be from the first type of word order, that is, AOV.

Butt and Deo (2003: 3) claim that “none of the Indo-Aryan languages exhibit syntactic ergativity”. Thus, the fact that Kurdish is an Indo-Aryan language, the ergative pattern in NK is morphological, not syntactic. Now, in the NK clauses, whether transitive or intransitive, follow an ergative-absolutive morphology as S and O behave in a way that differs from A with respect to case marking on the arguments and agreement on the verb, but not with respect to syntax. However, there is evidence that the NK clauses may follow a nominative-accusative pattern with respect to their syntactic behavior. For instance, the coordinated clauses in NK, whether transitive or intransitive, follow a nominative-accusative pattern where S and A, but not O, can control the missing arguments in the second clause:

(38) Azad-Øi cû di jûr-ve u [-----i nivis-t]
Azad-ABSi went into room-LOC and [-----i slept-3SG]
“Azad went into the room and slept.”

(39) zarûk-îi pencer-Ø şkand u [-----i rev-î]
child-OBLi window-ABS broke and [-----i escape-past]
“The child broke the window and escaped.”

The first clause in (38) is intransitive and it is coordinated with another intransitive clause; here, the subject of the second clause is deleted and the only possibility of such an argument-omission is that the S of the matrix clause controls the missing argument of the second clause. In (39) the first clause of coordination is transitive, but the A argument, not O, again controls the missing argument in the second clause.

Also, the evidence from the application of relative-clause tests indicate nominative/accusative syntax for NK, since in the process of subordination, embedded-clause subjects and agents may be deleted, but embedded-clause objects may not. In the following examples both S and A, but not O, behave as to be the same argument:





- (40) ew zarûk-ê nivist-î şîr ne-xar
 that child-masc slept-3SG milk NEG-ate
 "The child that did not have milk slept."

Friend (1985: 9) argues that, in Kurdish, syntactic ergativity is also found in what is so-called Equi-NP deletion. In a finite subjunctive form the Equi-NP deletion is shown on person and number clearly:

- (41) wîi divî-ya [-----i zarûk-î bi-hilgir-it]
 3SGOBL want-past [-----i child-OBL SJTV-carry-3SG]
 "He wanted to carry the child."

The above example indicates that the missing transitive argument, which is the nominative ez (I), in the second subjunctive clause is treated the same as the transitive oblique form wî because ez is controlled by wî. In other words, the evidence from Equi-NP deletion seems to indicate nominative-accusative syntax rather than ergative-absolutive morphology since S and A, but not O, may be deleted.

Finally, quoted from Barwary (2004: 92), the nominative-accusative pattern is applied to reflexive pronouns in NK. In the following two examples both S and A, but not O, appear to have the same class, i.e. they are syntactically treated to be one argument:

- (42) ez-Øi bu xoi gir-îm
 1SG-ABS for self cry past-1SG
 "I cried for myself."

- (43) Azad-îi xoi di av-ê da dît
 Azad-OBLi self through water-masc LOC saw
 "Azad saw himself through the water."

2.3.3 Split Ergativity:

Dixon (1987: 3-4 and 1994: 95-97) argues that the ergative languag-



es split (or shift) between the major case systems, ergativity and accusativity. Thus, a given language may display a certain amount of ergative behavior in some respect, and of accusative behavior in another respect. This phenomenon is called split-ergativity (Van Valin and Lapolla, 1997: 363-370; Van Valin, 2001: 77, 79; Legate, 2002: 1-5; Siegel, 2004: 6-7; among others). There is overlap between the two major case systems depending on tense and aspect. The following Kurdish examples survey the tense-aspect type of split system:

(44) Azad-Ø di-niv-it (Imperfective/Nominative)
Azad-NOM PRES-sleep-3SG
"Azad sleeps."

(45) Azad-Ø kitêb-ê-Ø di-xwin-it (Imperfective/Accusative)
Azad-NOM book-FEM-ACC PRES-read-3SG
"Azad reads the book."

(46) Azad -Ø nivist (Perfective/Absolutive)
Azad -ABS slept-Ø
"Azad slept."

(47) Azad -î kitêb-Ø xand (Perfective/Ergative)
Azad -ERG book-ABS read-Ø
"Azad read the book."

In the imperfective examples there is no case marking on any of the NPs, and the verb agrees with S or A. In contrast, in perfective examples, Azad is marked with the ergative case-marker - î and the verb does not agree with it. That is to say, there is an accusative pattern in the imperfective but an ergative pattern in the perfective.

Tense-aspect split ergativity is very important for the purpose of our study because it is found in Indo-Iranian languages including Kurdish. Dixon (1994: 99) claims that the ergative marking is always found either in past tense or perfective aspect, whereas the accusative marking is found either in non-past tense or imperfective aspect



(split ergativity in Kurdish is dealt with in the following sub-sections).

Split ergativity is a morphosyntactic phenomenon that is found in the ergative languages such as Kurdish. In Kurdish there is always an overlap between the two major case systems, ergativity and accusativity. Such an overlap or coexistence relies upon tense and/or aspect (Durroei, 2004: 1 and Barwary, 2003: 88). The Kurdish examples that are mentioned in this chapter show that the NK dialect reflects a split system, depending on tense and aspect. It takes the following form: in the past-stem-based clauses the ergative-absolutive pattern is followed while in the present-stem-based clauses the nominative-accusative pattern is used. The following examples add more flavor to the idea of split ergativity in NK:

- (48) ez-Ø hat-im (Intransitive)
1SG-ABS came-1SG
"I came."
- (49) wî ez-Ø dît-im (Transitive)
3SGOBL 1SG-ABS saw-1SG
"He/it saw me."
- (50) ew-Ø y-ê di-ê-t (Intransitive)
3SG-ABS be-masc IMPERF-come-3SG
"I am coming."
- (51) ew-Ø y-ê min di-bîn-it (Transitive)
3SG be-masc 1SGOBL IMPERF-see-3SG
"He/it sees me."

The subject in (48) and the object in (49), excluding A, are treated alike forming the same natural class. Hence, A is case-marked structurally because the verb is in the past stem. In (50) and (51), the verb stem is changed or split to present, that is; the ergative-absolutive pattern is used no more. Both subjects, whether intransitive or transitive, form the same natural class, while O is in the oblique case.

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3.1. Conclusions:

The following remarks are the main conclusions that are arrived throughout the research:

1. It is found that Kurdish is a morphological ergative language, that is, Kurdish (or more specifically the NK) has an ergative case system.
2. The NK dialect has a split ergative system. That is, it may display a certain amount of ergative behavior in some respect (i.e. when the stem of the verb is in the past tense), and show the accusative behavior in another respect (i.e. when the stem of the verb is in the present tense).
3. Split ergativity is a pattern in which there is a shift between the two main case systems, accusativity and ergativity, depending on tense and aspect factors. In other words, the NK clauses which use the present stem of verb are said to be accusative, whereas, the NK clauses which are based on the past stem of verb are said to be ergative.
4. Kurdish is different from the accusative languages (like English) where there is an SA/O relation. Kurdish, as an ergative language, has an SO/A case relation.

3.2. Recommendations:

On the basis of the above conclusions, some recommendations may be given. Ergativity needs to be given attention and interest in the linguistic studies concerning Kurdish because Kurdish is an ergative language.

3.3. Suggestions for Further Research:

The study suggests the following points to be tackled for further research:

1. There is an urgent need for more studies in the field of linguistics, morphology and syntax to explore the nature of the ergative case pattern in Kurdish.
2. There is a need to explore how the NK dialect splits or shifts

between the two main case systems, accusativity and ergativity. Thus, according to the most recent theories and analytical devices, researches may be made to prove that the NK dialect has a split-ergative system.



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