

Investigating Tada's Generalization

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Huastec

- ❖Erg/Abs-V: only one preverbal cross-reference slot, indexing the argument highest on person/animate hierarchy (probably influence from Mixe-Zoque). If equal, ergative argument is indexed. (Muñoz 2014:48-49)
- ❖No dedicated agent focus construction. Antipassive (similar to other Maya) topicalizes V (Muñoz 2014:150)
- ❖basic word order VSO, but „highlighting“ constructions with SOV or OSV (McQuown 1984:140)

(1) hitama:ʔ t=i kon-tsiʔ-Ø ti bakan
 quién OPAH=ABS2 pedir-APL-CP PREP tortilla
 „Quién te pidió tortillas?“ (Meléndez Guadarrama 2017:108)

(2) haha:ʔ t=in kon-tsiʔ-Ø ti bakan
 3S OPAH=ABS1S pedir-APL-CP PREP tortilla
 „Ella me pidió tortillas.“ (Meléndez Guadarrama 2017:107)

Absolutive: high
 EEC: no

Tsotsil

- ❖Set B-marker pre-V if there is aspectual marker. If bare V, Set B post-V (Aissen 1987:44)
- ❖Coon et al. (2021) assume that pre-V is basic, because Abs-indexing does not occur in non-finite clauses
- ❖Ergative extraction is possible, unless it would necessarily result in an unintended reading. Only in these cases the AF construction is used. AF strategy is an alternative if the ergative argument is not higher in the nominal hierarchy (Aissen 2017: 745-746)

(3) buch'u i-s-kolta li tseb-e
 who CP-A3-help DET girl-ENC
 „Who helped the girl?“ or „Who did the girl help?“ (Aissen 2017: 745)

(4) k'usuk nox tij-on-uk li j-malal-e
 whatever just awaken-AF-IRR DET A1-husband-ENC
 „Just anything wakes my husband.“ (Aissen 2017: 746)

Absolutive: high/low
 EEC: subordinate

Mocho'

- ❖Set B-marker are suffixes (Perez Gonzalez 2021:4)
- ❖Agent focus/reverse morphology is used when A is focussed, but also if it is inanimate and the O is animate (Perez Gonzalez 2021:93-94)
- ❖Agents can be focused by a marker in situ (VOA), in this case the verb doesn't get an AF-marker

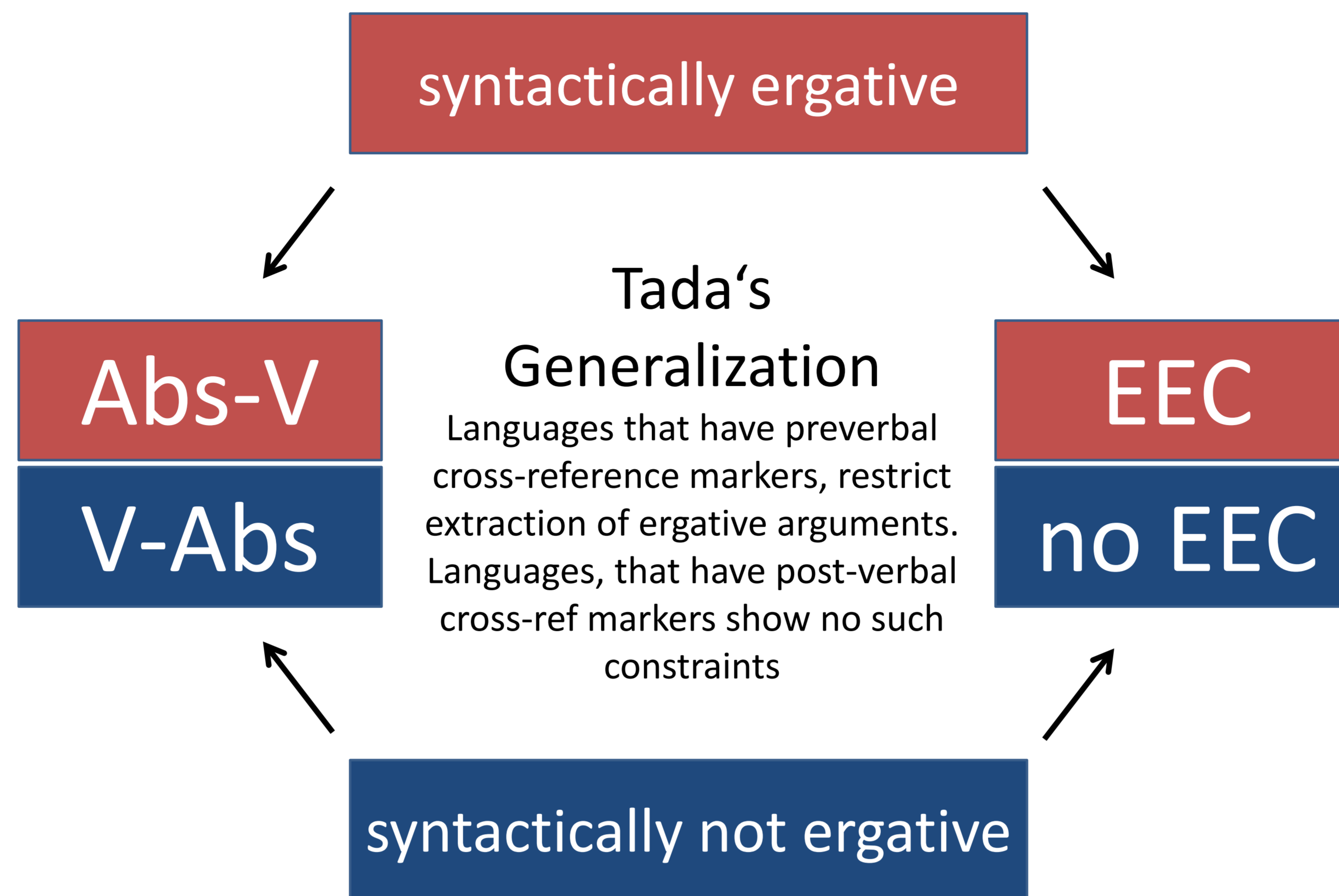
(5) x-pa'-a-Ø kene tee'
 A3-abandon-TV-B3 DIR:stay tree
 „He abandoned the tree“ (Perez Gonzalez 2021:264)

(6) ya mooncho=ni tee' pa'-oon-Ø ta'in
 because NEG:EXIST=already tree give-REV-B3 money
 „Because the tree no longer gave him money“ (Perez Gonzalez 2021:264)

(7) muun=ni ch-aq'-a-Ø ta'in
 NEG=already ICPLA3-give-TV-B3 money
 „It was no longer producing money.“ (Perez Gonzalez 2021:264)

Absolutive: low
 EEC: yes

syntactically ergative



Ch'orti'

- ❖Set B marker always suffixes (Bequey 2014:334)
- ❖V-initial word order is impossible (or at least unattested). Basic is AVO; OVA marks object focus (Bequey 2014:260)
- ❖„To focus the ergative subject of a transitive verb, the verb must be detransitivized through affixation, turning the direct object into the possessor of a relational noun“ (Sterniolo 2008:28) -> Antipassive

(8) e b'ahram war u-pohro-Ø e t'ur
 DET jaguar PROG 3A-chercher-3B DET lapin
 „Le jaguar est en train de chercher le lapin.[The jaguar is looking for the rabbit.]“ (Bequey 2014:260)

Absolutive: low
 EEC: ?

Approach I: high vs low absolutes

In Abs-V languages absolutive case is assigned higher than ergative -> only absolutive NP accessible for further movement, resulting in EEC
 Problems: If high Abs and EEC don't coincide, complicated work-around explanations have to be found

(Coon et al. 2021)

Approach II: AF as disambiguation device

Some languages have grammaticalised a dedicated construction for focusing agents as opposed to obj-FOC and agent-TOP. this AF is not used if disambiguation is unnecessary
 Problem: The strong correlation between position of Abs and EEC has to be declared a historical contingency

(Aissen 2017)

	EEC does apply	EEC does not apply
high Abs	Q'anjobal, Akaktek, Popti, ' Chuj, Q'eqchi, ' Uspantek, K'iche, ' Poqomam, Poqomchi, ' Kaqchikel, Tz'utujil, Sakapultek, Sipakapense Mam, Awakatek, Achi, Tektitek, Tsotsil	Huastec
low Abs	Yucatec, Ixil, Mocho'	Lacandon, Mopan, Itzaj, Ch'ol, Chontal, Tzeltal, Tojolab'al, Ch'orti'

Table taken from Aissen 2017:750

Discussion

Among the six languages surveyed four align with Tada's Generalization. Achi behaves expectedly like the related K'iche', but circumvents the EEC by using the normal antipassive instead of a core AF. So does Tektitek, which is probably no different from Mam. Tsotsils ambiguity in the position of the Abs and it's „weak“ EEC pose a problem for Appr. I, as discussed in Aissen (2017) and Coon et. al (2021). For Ch'orti', the strict word order constraints make it hard to assess if there is an EEC. Until proven guilty, it probably aligns with the rest of Ch'olan. Mocho' obeys not only the EEC, but seemingly other constraints as well. Mocho' and Huastec (already noticed by Tada) constitute clear outliers to the correlation. In defense of Appr. I one could point to the SetC markers in Mocho' and to the strong non-Mayan influence on Huastec

Achi

- ❖Set B-marker always pre-V (López & Sis Iboy 1998: 76)
- ❖Focused constituent is marked by e, the EEC applies and is circumvented by using antipassive voice (López & Sis Iboy 1998: 156)
- ❖oblique AF as described for Mam and Q'eqchi' by Aissen 2017

(9) ri koj x-Ø-u-kam-isa-j ri keej
 DET lion ASP-B3-A3-kill-?-? DET deer
 „El león mató al venado.“ [The lion killed the deer] (López & Sis Iboy 1998: 155) [Glossing by me]

(10) e ri koj x-Ø-kam-isa-n re ri keej
 FOC DET lion ASP-B3-kill-?-ANTIPASS PREP DET deer
 „Es el león que mató al venado.“ [It's the lion, who killed the deer] (López & Sis Iboy 1998: 156) [Glossing by me]

Absolutive: high
 EEC: yes

Tektitek

- ❖Set B-marker always pre-V (XX)
- ❖Focused constituent is marked by particle (a) te and fronting. Ergative argument can only be focused if verb in the antipassive (Tuyuc Sucuc 2001:126)
- ❖If the patient is reintroduced as possessor of -i'j (= antipassive), the verb itself is focussed. If not, the Agent is focussed (Stevenson 1987:73)

(11) pwes cy-e xjal n cye 'itz'le-n aw-i'j
 pues A3Pl-Id person ASP 3BPl velar-AF A2Sg-TEMA
 „Pues la gente te está velando.“ [Well, the people are watching over you] (Stevenson 1987: 73) [Glossing adjusted by me]

(12) i qanq q-tax n Ø tza iq'i-n t-e
 and maybe A1Pl-father ASP B3Sg come carry-AF A3Sg-Id
 „Quizá nuestro papá está acarreado leña para tí.“ [Maybe our dad is hauling firewood for you] (Stevenson 1987: 73) [Glossing adjusted by me]

Absolutive: high
 EEC: yes

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