Ergative Alignment of Verbal Marking

In an ergative system of verb agreement, features of the more patient-like NP argument of a two-place transitive predicate and features of the core NP argument of a one-place intransitive predicate, are reflected in the same way in verb morphology. A positive value is given if this is the case in any tense-aspect category of the language system. An example is Pashto of Pakistan, in its past tense categories, as seen in (1). In (1a), the verb shows agreement in masculine singular with the core NP of the intransitive clause. In (1b), the verb shows agreement in feminine singular with the core NP of the intransitive clause. In (1c), the verb shows agreement in masculine singular with the direct object NP of the transitive clause. In (1d), the verb shows agreement in feminine singular with the direct object NP of the transitive clause.

1. Pashto, Pakistan [pbu(p)] (Iranian)

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| a. | **alək** | pə | pəʈiː | kiː | χkaːra | ʃ-**oː** |
|  | boy(m) | at | field | in | visible | become.pst.pfv-msg |
|  | **S** |  |  |  |  |  |
|  | ‘The boy appeared on the field.’ (PBUp-Val-KK:081) | | | | | |

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| b. | **χaza** | baːzaːr | ta | laːɽ-**a** |  |
|  | woman(f) | market | to | go.pst.pfv-fsg |  |
|  | **S** |  |  |  |  |
|  | ‘The woman went to the market.’ (PBUp-Val-KK:054) | | | | |

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| c. | dʒineː | χpəleː | nijaː | ta | **gul** | wərkɽ-**oː** |
|  | girl(f).obl | refl | grandmother | to | flower(m) | give.pst.pfv-msg |
|  | A |  |  |  | **P** |  |
|  | ‘The girl sent flowers to her grandmother.’ (PBUp-Val-KK:037) | | | | | |

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| d. | saɽiː | **tʃəʁa** | kɽ-**a** |  |  |
|  | man(m).obl | scream(f) | do.pst.pfv-fsg |  |  |
|  | A | **P** |  |  |  |
|  | ‘The man screamed.’ (PBUp-Val-KK:058) | | | | |

This feature, evidenced in nearly half of the sample, is particularly well-represented in the southern half of the region.

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| Feature value | # of varieties displaying it | % |
| Present | 27 | 46 |
| Absent | 32 | 54 |
| Indeterminate | 0 | 0 |