CHAPTER 34

ERGATIVITY IN INUKTITUT

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34.1 INTRODUCTION

THIS chapter examines the phenomenon of ergativity in Inuktitut, with particular focus on the manifestations of ergativity in the case system and the agreement morphology of the language. While the ergative-absolutive case alignment in Inuktitut is often presented in the literature in the classic frame of an ergative-marked agent and absolutive-marked patient, data from ditransitives and causatives are used to highlight the structural nature of absolutive case assignment. Further indicative of the syntactic nature of ergativity, the agreement morphology in the language is shown to follow an ergative pattern insofar as the exponents of patient φ-features in transitives also index the subjects of intransitives. The use of the antipassive construction as a type of differential object marking for indefiniteness is also discussed.

The rest of the chapter is organized as follows. Section 34.2 provides a brief overview of Inuktitut syntax. In section 34.3 I present the ways in which ergativity in Inuktitut is manifested in the language in terms of case marking and verbal agreement. Next, section 34.4 presents properties of the antipassive construction, including work by Johns (2001a, 2006) on dialectal variation in the use of the antipassive and Spreng's (2012) proposal for a unified analysis of the antipassive and inceptive markers. I conclude in section 34.5.

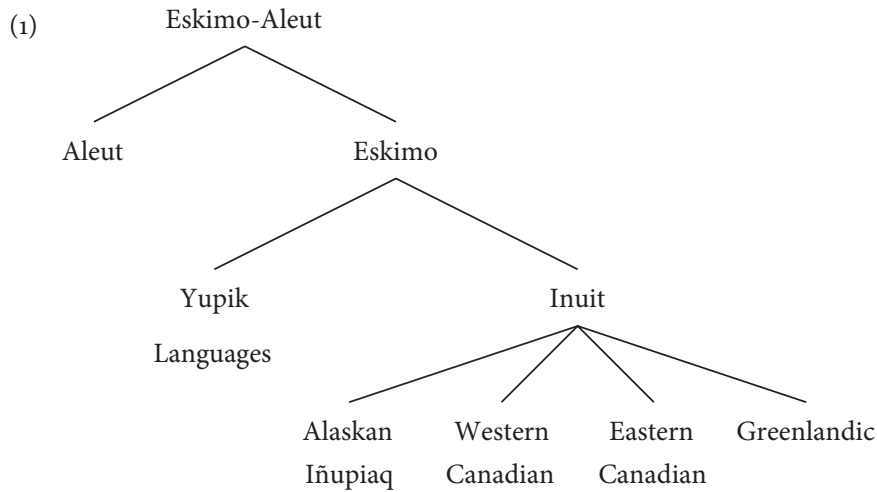## 34.2 BACKGROUND ON INUKTITUT

Inuktitut is part of the Eskimo-Aleut language family, whose two main branches include Aleut, spoken on the Aleutian islands in Alaska, and the Eskimoan branch, which includes the Yupik and Inuit subbranches. While Yupik languages are spoken in Alaska

and Russia, Inuit forms a dialect continuum from Alaska, across the Canadian Arctic, to Greenland. Inuktitut typically refers to the Eastern Canadian portion of this Inuit dialect continuum:[1]

(1)

Eskimo-Aleut

Aleut   Eskimo

Yupik   Inuit

Languages

Alaskan   Western   Eastern   Greenlandic

Iñupiaq   Canadian   Canadian

Inuktitut, like all of Inuit, is highly polysynthetic. A number of verbs trigger obligatory noun incorporation of their objects, a closed class of modifiers appear only inside nominal and verbal complexes, as do restructuring verbs, there is rich agreement, and virtually all grammatical markers (e.g. negation, modals, tense, aspect, passive, causative) are found only word-internally. The polysynthetic character of the language is exemplified by the following single-word utterance from the South Baffin dialect:[2]

(2)   Iqalliariaqtuqattalauqsimagaluarivungattauq.
       iqalliaq-riaq-tu-qattaq-lauq-sima-galuaq-gi-vu-nga=ttauq
       to.fish-go.to.V-very-regularly-DIST.PAST-PERF-although-also-INDIC.INTR-1SG=too
       'Although I also used to go fishing a lot too.'

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[1] English and French speakers in Canada often refer to any Canadian dialect in the continuum as Inuktitut, while the speakers of Western dialects typically use the names of their dialects or dialect groups (e.g. Inuinnaqtun). Similarly, the term Inuit is most frequently used to refer to the people. However, a number of researchers (Dorais 2003; Fortescue, Jacobson, & Kaplan 2010; MacLean 2014) as well as the government of Nunavut also use Inuit to refer to the dialect continuum as a language.

[2] The literature of Eskimoan generally considers only the last element in this word to be an enclitic, as evidenced by the fact that it, and other enclitics, are always at the right edge of words and are flexible with respect to the category of the constituent to which they attach.

The language is both head-marking and dependent-marking. For instance, possession is marked by ergative case on the possessor as well as obligatory possessor agreement on the possessee indicating the number and person of the possessor:[3]

(3)   Jaani-up   ataata-nga
      John-ERG.SG   father-POSS.3SG(ABS.SG)
      'John's father'

Similarly, as we will see in the next section, the language indicates grammatical relations simultaneous on heads and dependents by marking agreement with both ergative and absolutive arguments on verbs as well as employing case marking on nouns.

The language exhibits what has been 'radical pro-drop' in the literature (e.g., Neeleman and Szendrői 2007). Pronouns are often avoided when their referents are recoverable from agreement or context, as in (4) where both subject and object pronouns are omitted.

(4)   Taku-va-git
      see-INDIC.TR-1SG.2SG
      'I see you.'

Furthermore, there are no dedicated third person pronouns, with demonstratives being used instead.

Word order in the language is highly variable, to the point where one might consider Inuktitut to be a discourse configurational language. For instance, Gillon (1999: 20) notes that all of the six logically possible orders of the following sentence are possible.[4]

(5)   WORD ORDER   (North Baffin)
      a.   Suusan   Taivit-mik   nagligusuk-pu-q.
           Susan(ABS.SG)   David-INSTR.SG   love-INDIC.INTR-3SG
           'Susan loves David.'

      b.   Taivit-mik Suusan nagligusuk-puq

      c.   Taivit-mik nagligusuk-puq Suusan

      d.   nagligusuk-puq Taivit-mik Suusan

      e.   nagligusuk-puq Suusan Taivit-mik

      f.   Suusan nagligusuk-puq Taivit-mik

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[3]   Unless otherwise indicated, examples are the South Baffin subdialect of Inuktitut and were elicited by the author.

[4]   Glossing has been modified to match the conventions herein.

However, as demonstrated in the examples throughout, there is a significant tendency towards SOV and SVO word orders (see also Sherkina-Lieber 2004 on word order in wh-questions in Inuktitut).

In the next section I present the ways in which ergativity is manifested in the language, first in the case-marking patterns found in the language, and then in terms of verbal agreement morphology.

34.3 The Exponence of Ergativity

34.3.1 Case marking

Inuktitut exhibits an ergative-absolutive case alignment, with agents (A) of transitive verbs bearing ergative case and both patients of transitives (P) and also subjects of intransitives (S) taking absolute case, which is null for singular unpossessed arguments.[5]

(6) TRANSITIVE
a. Arna-up   niri-ja-nga   aapu.
    woman-ERG.SG   eat-DECL.TR-3SG.3SG   apple(ABS.SG)
    'The woman is eating the/an apple.'

b. Kina   Jaani-up   taku-lauq-pau?
    who(ABS.SG)   John-ERG.SG   see-DIST.PAST-INTERR.TR.3SG.3SG
    'Who did John see?'

(7) INTRANSITIVE
a. Arnaq   pisuk-tu-q.
    woman(ABS.SG)   walk-DECL.INTR-3SG
    'The woman is walking.'

b. Qimmi-kka   ani-qqau-ju-it.
    dog-POSS.1SG.ABS.PL   go.out-REC.PAST-DECL.INTR-3PL
    'My dogs went out.'

As illustrated in (6), the agent in a transitive clause (excluding the antipassive, which discussed section 34.3) always bears ergative case. The subject of an intransitive, as in (7), always bears absolute case, regardless of the status of the verb as unergative or

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[5] While singular unpossessed ergative is marked with -*up* and the absolutive singular is null, the unpossessed dual and plural forms do not distinguish between the ergative and absolutive. However, almost all of possessed forms distinguish between ergative and absolutive across all numbers.

unaccusative.[6] For instance, in (8) the subject of the intransitive verb *innginguaq* 'sing' must be in the absolute, with ergative case on the subject being ungrammatical, unless the verbal morphology is changed to make it transitive. In this case a specific referential patient is interpreted, as shown by the transitive form of the mood marker and the object agreement in (8-c).

(8)   Unergative   (Nunavik)
    a.   Arnaq   innginguaq-tu-q
        woman(Abs.sg)   sing-decl.intr-3sg
        'The woman is singing.'

    b. *Arna-up   innginguaq-tu-q
        woman-erg.sg   sing-decl.intr-3sg
        Intended: 'The woman is singing.'

    c.   Arna-up   innginguaq-ta-nga
        woman-erg.sg   sing-decl.tr-3sg.3sg
        'The woman is singing it.'[7]

As expected given the non-agentive nature of the subject of unaccusative verbs, their subject must also be in the absolute, as illustrated with the verb *tikit* 'arrive' in (10).[8]

(10)   Unaccusative   (Nunavik)
    a.   Qangattajuuk   tiki-kainna-tu-q
        airplane(Abs.sg)   arrive-rec.past-decl.intr-3sg
        'The plane arrived.'

    b. *Qangattajuu-p   tiki-kainna-tu-q
        airplane-erg.sg   arrive-rec.past-decl.intr-3sg
        Intended: 'The airplane arrived.'

   In simple monotransitives, the patient always bears absolutive case. However, if we expand our view to include ditransitives and causatives, we find that patients do not

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[6] As noted by Allen (1996: 15), there is no language-internal test for the unergative/unaccusative distinction. However, Spreng (2012: 23) proposes that verbs whose sole argument in the intransitive is semantically an agent and which do not require the antipassive marker in the antipassive construction are unergatives.

[7] A speaker offered this sentence as a repair to the ungrammatical example 8b and said that this could be used as an answer to whether the woman was singing a particular song.

[8] In response to the ungrammatical example in (10) where the subject bears ergative case, a speaker offered the following repair in which the unacceptable ergative-marked argument was transformed into an oblique and the subject was interpreted as pro-dropped:

  (9) Qangattajuu-kkut   tiki-kainna-tu-q
       airplane-vialis.sg   arrive-rec.past-decl.intr-3sg
       'It arrived by plane.'

always receive absolute, with either goal or causee arguments appearing in it instead. For instance, and as observed by Creider (1978) for the Kivallirmiut dialect, while the patient in the ditransitive in (11-a) bears absolutive case, absolutive can instead by assigned to the goal argument, as in (11-b), with the patient instead receiving an oblique case.[9] However, both may not bear absolutive simultaneously, as shown in (11-c).

(11) Ditransitive
a. Jaani-up   aapu   tuni-ja-nga   Miali-mut.
    John-ERG.SG   apple(ABS.SG)   give-DECL.TR.3SG.3SG   Mary-ALLAT.SG
    'John gave the apple to Mary.'

b. Jaani-up   tuni-ja-nga   Miali   aapu-mit.
    John-ERG.SG   give-DECL.TR.3SG.3SG   Mary(ABS.SG)   apple-OBL.SG
    'John gave Mary the apple.'

c. *Jaani-up   tuni-ja-nga   Miali   aapu.
    John-ERG.SG   give-DECL.TR.3SG.3SG   Mary(ABS.SG)   apple(ABS.SG)
    Intended: 'John gave Mary the apple.'

Similarly, in the causativized version of an intransitive or antipassive, it is the causee argument that takes absolutive case, even when both patient and goal arguments are also present, as in (12-b):

(12) Causative of intransitive or antipassive
a. Ani-ti-qqau-ja-ra   angunasukti.
    go.out-CAUSE-REC.PAST-DECL.TR-1SG.3SG   hunter(ABS.SG)
    'I made the hunter leave.'

b. Angunasukti   tuni-si-ti-qqau-ja-ra   uqalimaagar-nit
    hunter(ABS.SG) give-AP-CAUSE-REC.PAST-DECL.TR-1SG.3SG   book-OBL.PL
    arnar-nut.
    woman-ALLAT.PL
    'I made the hunter give books to the women.'

While some dialects only permit intransitive and antipassive forms to be causativized (see Smith 1982b on Labrador Inuttut), other dialects also permit causatives of transitive stems (Johns 2001b). In these varieties the patient argument may take absolutive case and participate in object agreement, with the causee taking allative case, as shown in the following examples from Johns (1987: 13) and Jenson and Johns (1989: 211), respectively.

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[9] While many dialects preserve the contrast between ablative case and instrumental cases, e.g. ABL. SG *-mit* and INSTR.SG *-mik*, the dialect of the speaker from South Baffin collapses the two. I use the label OBL(IQUE) for this neutralized case.

(13) Causative of transitive
    a. Jaaani-up   Miuri-mut   ipuittuq   angmaq-ti-ta-a
       John-ERG.SG Mary-ALLAT.SG can(ABS.SG) open-CAUSE-DECL.TR.3SG.3SG
       'John made Mary open the can.'

    b. Nutara-up   arna-mut   angut   aktuq-ti-taa
       child-ERG.SG woman-ALLAT.SG man(ABS.SG) touch-CAUSE-DECL.TR.3SG.3SG
       'The child made a woman touch the man.'

To summarize the distribution of absolutive case, absolutive is assigned once and only once in every clause. It is only when another clause is added that an additional absolutive argument is possible, either overtly as in (14), or as a pro-dropped argument as in (15).[10]

(14) Jaani   uqa-qqau-ju-q   Miali
      John(ABS.SG) say-REC.PAST-DECL.INTR-3SG Mary(ABS.SG)
      tuktu-viniq-tu-qqau-mmat.
      caribou-former-consume-REC.PAST-because.INTR.DS.3SG
      'John said (earlier today) that Mary was eating caribou meat (earlier today).'

(15) Pisu-raja-qati-gi-ɬuniuk
      walk-go.for-partner-have.as-CONTEMP.SS.3SG.3SG
      tuki-qqau-ja-nga.
      kick-REC.PAST-DECL.TR.3SG.3SG
      'While she was walking it, she kicked it (earlier today).'

It is worth noting that while it has been proposed that absolutive is assigned by T (e.g. Bok-Bennema 1991, Campana 1992, Murasugi 1992, and Ura 2001), polysynthetic verbal complexes which appear to contain an embedded TP cannot license additional absolutive arguments. For instance, we can contrast (14) with (16), in which the TP-incorporating restructuring verb *niraq* 'say' is marked as recent past, while the embedded and incorporated verb *niri* 'eat' is marked as near future.[11] And yet, among the three arguments of these two verbs, only one may be absolutive.

[10] That absolutive has been assigned to the unpronounced patient arguments of both verbs in (15) is supported by the concomitant object agreement, as will be shown in the next section.
[11] While West Greenlandic has been argued to lack tense, and while this also appears to hold of Western Canadian Inuit dialects such as Kangiryuarmiut (at least for the past/nonpast distinction), Hayashi (2011) demonstrates that South Baffin Inuktitut has an obligatory (and rather complex) system of tense distinctions. My experience with the North Baffin, Nunavik, and Aivilik dialects leads to be believe that this claim extends to Eastern Canadian Inuit generally, although to my knowledge no one has tested this in each dialect subgroup.

(16) Saila-up   niri-niar-niraq-qqau-ja-nga   Alana
      Saila-ERG.SG   eat-NEAR.FUT-say-REC.PAST-DECL.TR-3SG.3SG   Alana(ABS.SG)
      tuktu-viniq-mit
      caribou-former-OBL.SG
      'Saila said (earlier today) that Alana will be eating caribou meat (later today).'

The contrast between (14) in which there are two sets of agreement morphemes—one on each verb—and (16) in which there is a single agreement morpheme, while nevertheless maintaining two instances of tense, is particularly revealing. Instead of there being a one-to-one correlation between tense-marking (which is assumed to be a manifestation of the T head) and absolutive case, the correlation in Inuktitut appears to be with verbal agreement. Each verbal complex (or each CP as argued by Compton & Pittman 2010) licenses a single absolutive argument. This is further exemplified by the fact that clauses bearing certain dependent moods, such as the contemporative mood of the first cause in (15), lack the ability to mark tense (and are thus similar to non-finites), but can nevertheless license an absolutive argument through agreement.

The obligatory presence of absolutive case in every (full CP) clause in Inuktitut coincides with analyses in the literature that absolutive is an obligatory structural case (Bittner and Hale 1996a,b; Bobaljik 1993a; Legate 2008).

An analysis of ergativity specifically addressing case-assignment in the closely related dialect of West Greenlandic is proposed by Bittner and Hale (1996a,b).[12] Working in the Government and Binding framework, they propose that case is assigned in a structural configuration cross-linguistically, with both ergative and accusative cases being assigned in the presence of a "case-competitor" within the same government domain. Nominative (which for them subsumes absolutive), on the other hand, is treated as a caseless DP or NP, lacking the KP layer of overtly-marked cases. The difference, then, between ergative-absolutive languages such as Inuit and nominative-accusative ones, is that the latter have an adjoined D in the VP which acts as a case-competitor, licensing accusative on the patient, while preventing the patient from serving as a case-competitor for the agent, thus blocking the assignment of ergative. In their system, ergative is assigned in a structural configuration relative to INFL and nominative (caselessness) is licensed by C, although they are careful to separate the assignment of case from agreement on functional heads, proposing that the two operate independently.

To support their analysis, Bittner and Hale point to the relative order of agreement affixes in subordinate moods in West Greenlandic (in cases where these are not fused), showing that the exponence of subject agreement is internal to that of object agreement, as expected given the Mirror Principle assumption that INFL is closer to the verb than C (see Baker 1985). For instance, they give the following pair of examples showing the relative order of agreement markers in the becausative mood (which they gloss as dependent past).

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[12]   The label "Inuit" used by Bittner and Hale is somewhat unfortunate since they are specifically dealing with data from West Greenlandic and the details of case-marking—as well as those of agreement and scope which they use as evidence in support of their analysis—actually vary across the dialect continuum. In many respects, West Greenlandic is an outlier within Inuit and should not be taken to be representative of the continuum.

(17)   WEST GREENLANDIC (Bittner and Hale 1996a: 18, original glossing)
   a. Juuna   nuannaar-a-*mi*   __   miiqqat
       [Juuna(NOM)i happy-DPST-3SG.PROXi] pro(ERG)i children(NOM)j
       kunip-p-a-i.
       kiss-IND-[+TR]-3SGi.3PLj
       'Because Juuna$i$ was happy, he$i$ kissed the children.'

   b. Juuna-p   miiqqat   taku-ga-*mi-git*   __
       [Juuna-ERGi children(NOM)j see-DPST-3SG.PROXi-3PLj] pro(NOM)i
       nuannaar-p-u-q.
       happy-IND-[−TR]-3SGi
       'Because Juuna$i$ has seen the children, he$i$'s happy.'

As well, they point to the presence of object agreement and the lack of subject agreement in nonfinite clauses, which nevertheless project a full clause, since they bear mood, as further suggestive that object agreement is on C.[13]

Bittner and Hale's (1996a) analysis also extends to the nominal domain, proposing that D, the parallel of INFL in the extended projection of nouns, is responsible for assigning ergative case to possessors. Their later (1996b) paper goes further, tying their proposal to data from scope, agreement, and switch-reference marking in West Greenlandic.

While a full treatment of the analyses proposed by Bittner and Hale (1996a,b) is beyond the scope of this work, several points in their analyses as applied to Inuktitut are problematic. While West Greenlandic has been argued to lack tense, Hayashi and Spreng (2005) and Hayashi (2011) show that Inuktitut, in contrast, has genuine tense. Crucially, tense intervenes between the verb and its agreement morphology in Inuktitut (along with negation and aspect), suggesting that agreement morphology may not be on INFL, as they propose, unless separate INFL and T heads are assumed. A related issue involves the fact that the exponence of both subject and object agreement frequently co-vary with mood, but not tense, again suggesting that agreement and case-assignment higher in the clausal structure than they predict.

The scope facts used by Bittner and Hale (1996b) as support for their analysis are also distinct in Inuktitut. In their analysis the ergative-marked argument remains low inside the VP and is assigned case by INFL, and this low position is supported by the availability a narrow scope reading with respect to negation (although they propose it moves at PF to derive the default SOV word order). However, unlike in West Greenlandic, Wharram (2003) shows that in Inuktitut an ergative-marked agent always takes wide scope with respect to negation, again suggesting it occupies a higher position.

In the next subsection I present how ergativity is manifested in the verbal agreement morphology of the language.

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[13] However, Dorais (1988: 95-96) presents alternative forms in the Nunavik dialect of Inuktitut that do in fact agree with both the subject and the object, thus calling into question the analysis of such forms by Bittner and Hale as being nonfinite.

34.3.2 Agreement

In addition to an ergative pattern of case marking, the language also displays an erga-tive alignment in its verbal agreement morphology. In a transitive sentence such as (18), the ergative-absolutive case alignment must co-occur with both the transitive form of the mood marker and agreement morphology that is conditioned by the φ-features of both the agent and the patient. Neither the intransitive form of the mood marker, nor an intransitive form of agreement indexing only the subject are possible.

(18) TRANSITIVE AGREEMENT
    a.   Arna-up   niri-ja-nga   aapu.
        woman-ERG.SG   eat-DECL.TR-3SG.3SG   apple(ABS.SG)
        'The woman is eating the/an apple.'

    b.   *Arna-up   niri-ja-q   aapu.
         woman-ERG.SG   eat-DECL.TR-3SG apple(ABS.SG)

    c.   *Arna-up   niri-ju-nga   aapu.
         woman-ERG.SG   eat-DECL.INTR-3SG.3SG apple(ABS.SG)

    d.   *Arna-up   niri-ju-q   aapu.
        woman-ERG.SG   eat-DECL.INTR-3SG   apple(ABS.SG)

Conversely, the form of agreement on an intransitive verb depends on the φ-features of the subject, as illustrated in (19) where the agreement covaries with the number of the subject.

(19) INTRANSITIVE AGREEMENT
    a. Angutik   palla-tu-q.
       man(ABS.SG)   trip-DECL.INTR-3SG
       'The man tripped.'

    b. Qimmi-kka   ani-qqau-ju-it.
       dog-1SG.POSS.ABS.PL go.out-REC.PAST-DECL.INTR-3PL
       'My dogs went out.'

The ergative nature of this conditioning is illustrated in Table 34.1, which summa-rizes the forms of agreement in the declarative mood in the Nunavik dialect of Inuktitut (adapted from Dorais 1988).[14] Forms are presented in a phonemic IPA transcription.[15]

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[14] In the literature of Eskimoan languages this mood is often called PARTICIPIAL, since it can serve a nominalizing function. In West Greenlandic verbs in this mood cannot stand as the main predicate in a clause, but in Canadian dialects it functions as the default DECLARATIVE mood.
[15] While the normal orthography is quite close to a phonemic transcription, I use the IPA here to avoid any possible confusion that may result from the <ng> [ŋ] digraph.

Table 34.1 Agreement in declarative mood, Nunavik dialect

Transitive	Patient								
Agent	1SG	1DU	1PL	2SG	2DU	2PL	3SG	3DU	3PL
1SG	—	—	—	ɣit	ttik	tsi	ʁa	akka	kka
1DU	—	—	—	ttiɣit	ttik	tsi	vuk	avuk	vuk
1PL	—	—	—	ttiɣit	ttik	tsi	vut	avut	vut
2SG	ʁma	ttiɣuk	ttiɣut	—	—	—	it	akkik	tit
2DU	ttiŋa	ttiɣuk	ttiɣut	—	—	—	tik	atik	tik
2PL	tsiŋa	ttiɣuk	ttiɣut	—	—	—	si	asi	si
3SG	aŋa	atiɣuk	atiɣut	atit	atik	asi	ŋa	aŋik	ŋit
3DU	aŋa	atiɣuk	atiɣut	atit	atik	asi	ŋak	aŋik	ŋit
3PL	aŋa	atiɣuk	atiɣut	atit	atik	asi	ŋat	aŋik	ŋit
Intransitive subject	ŋa	ɣuk	ɣut	tit	tik	si	q	uk	t

While a number of the transitive agreement forms appear to contain within them the intransitive agreement forms, it is notable that the similarities tend to correlate with the patient φ-features of the transitive forms. For instance, the transitive 2 {SG/DU/PL}.1DU form [ttiɣuk] and the 3 {SG/DU/PL}.1DU form [atiɣuk] both contain a string identical to the intransitive subject agreement 1DU form [ɣuk]. This pattern, which holds for most of the transitive forms with first and second person patients, is crucially an ergative patterning: the same exponent that indexes the patient argument of transitives indexes the subjects of intransitives.

Furthermore, insofar as the portions of the agreement forms that are not shared between the transitive and intransitive appear only in the presence of an ergative agent, these also constitute an ergative agreement pattern. For instance, transitive forms indexing a third person agent (and first or second person patient) all begin with [a].

The transitive forms indexing a third person patient are distinct in that they do not seem to bear the same resemblance to the intransitive forms that was observed for the first and second person patient forms discussed above. This is due to the fact that third person patient forms in the declarative mood were originally (abso-lutive) possessor agreement forms occurring obligatorily on possessed nouns. For instance, in his grammar of the phonologically conservative Kangiryuarmiut dia-lect of Inuinnaqtun (Western Canadian Inuit), Lowe (1985: 111) presents the one-to-one match of the possessor agreement that obligatorily appear on possessees and the transitive agreement forms with third person patients, as summarized in Table 34.2.

Table 34.2 Sample comparison of possessor marking and third person patient forms in the Kangiryuarmiut Inuinnaqtun dialect of Western Canadian Inuit

Possessive suffixes		Transitive agreement	
qaja-ʁa	my canoe	taku-ja-ʁa	I saw him/her
qaja-kka	my two canoes	taku-ja-kka	I saw them (DU)
qaja-tka	my canoes (PL)	taku-ja-tka	I saw them (PL)
qaja-n	your (SG) canoe	taku-ja-n	you (SG) saw him/her
qaja-kkin	your (SG) two canoes	taku-ja-kkin	you (SG) saw them (DU)
qaja-tin	your (SG) canoes (PL)	taku-ja-tin	you (SG) saw them (PL)
qaja-a	his/her canoe	taku-ja-a	he/she saw him/her
qaja-ik	his/her two canoes	taku-ja-ik	he/she saw them (DU)
qaja-it	his/her canoes (PL)	taku-ja-it	he/she saw them (PL)

This pattern continues for plural possessors, showing that the third person patient agreement forms in the declarative mood have a distinct diachronic source from the rest of the paradigm. However, the distribution of these forms also constitutes in an ergative pattern insofar as they are reserved (in their use as verbal agreement markers) for clauses with an ergative-absolutive case configuration.

Thus, except for the forms originally repurposed from the possessor agreement paradigm, we observe an ergative patterning in the exponence of verbal agreement in Inuktitut. This ergativity is manifested in three ways. First, the agreement for intransitives matches the portion of the transitive forms that are (mostly) consistent across patients with corresponding φ-features. Second, the beginning portions of the transitive forms (as well as fused strings such as 2SG.1SG [ʁma]) occur only in the presence of an agent. Third, the system as a whole, including the forms derived from possessor agreement, only employs the transitive agreement paradigm in the ergative-absolutive case alignment, and not with intransitives (or with antipassives as discussed in 34.4).

In addition to ergativity being reflected in the agreement morphology of the language, the form of mood markers is also conditioned by case-alignment insofar as only transitive clauses trigger the transitive forms of mood markers. For instance, in the above examples the transitive form of the declarative mood marker is *ta* or *ja*, after a consonant or vowel respectively, but the intransitive form is *tu* or *ju*. While at first this may seem to be purely a function of the transitivity of the verb, as we will see in the next section, semantically transitive verbs such as eat take the intransitive forms of mood markers in the antipassive construction.

For further background on the exponence and historical evolution of ergativity in Eskimo-Aleut, see Fortescue (1995). In the next section I examine the properties of the antipassive construction in Inuktitut.

34.4 THE ANTIPASSIVE

In addition to transitive clauses exhibiting an ergative-absolutive alignment, Inuktitut possesses a second bivalent construction: the antipassive. In an antipassive clause the case on the subject and the form of both mood-marking and agreement morphology pattern with the intransitives presented above, and yet a (semantic) patient bearing oblique case is licensed. Some verbs, such as *niri* 'eat' in (20-a) may be used in the antipassive without any special marking other than the intransitive mood and agreement forms, while others, such as *kii* 'bite' in (20-b), require the overt antipassive marker *si* after the verbal root.

(20) ANTIPASSIVE
 a. Arnaq   niri-ju-q   aapu-mit.
     woman(ABS.SG)   eat-DECL.INTR-3SG   apple-OBL.SG
     'The woman is eating an apple.'

 b. Qimmiq   uvannit   kii-si-ju-q.
     dog(ABS.SG)   1.OBL.SG   bite-AP-DECL.INTR-3SG
     'The dog bit me.'

Spreng (2012) argues that the appearance of overt antipassive marking on some verbs and not others is due to their argument structure. She shows that verbs that take require overt marking in the antipassive are either obligatorily transitive, such as *quqiq* 'shoot' in (22), or can alternate between being unaccusative and monotransitive, like *surak* 'break' in (23)—in other words verbs whose (semantic) patient must always be expressed.[16]

(22) OBLIGATORILY TRANSITIVE   (South Baffin, Spreng 2012: 20, modified)
 a. Piita   nanur-mit   quqir-*(si)-ju-q
     Peter(ABS.SG)   polar-bear-OBL.SG   shoot-*(AP)-DECL.INTR-3SG
     'Peter is shooting a polar bear.'

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[16] A possible exception to Spreng's generalization that "verbs that have an obligatory internal argument require the AP marker" (p. 204) are the closed class of obligatory noun-incorporation verbs in the language. Given that these verbs must incorporate their semantic patient, we might predict them to take the AP marker, and yet they do not:

(21) Maqaitti   illu-liu-lauq-tuq.
      hunter(abs.sg)   house-make-dist.past-decl.intr-3sg
      'The hunter made a house.'

For a comprehensive account of noun incorporation in Inuktitut see Johns (2007b) and references therein.

(23) UNACCUSATIVE/TRANSITIVE   (North Baffin, Spreng 2012: 22, modified)
    a. Anautaq   surak-tu-q
       stick(ABS.SG)   break-DECL.INTR-3SG
       'The stick broke.'

    b. arnaq   surak-*(si)-ju-q   anautar-mik.
       woman(ABS.SG)   break-*(AP)-DECL.INTR-3SG   stick-INSTR.SG
       'The woman is breaking a stick.'

Conversely, she also shows that the verbs that do not require antipassive marking are unergatives which can optionally become transitive, like *miqsuq* 'sew' in (24)—thus, verbs whose agents must always be expressed.

(24) UNERGATIVE/TRANSITIVE   (North Baffin, Spreng 2012: 23, modified)
    a. Arnaq   miqsuq-tu-q.
       woman(ABS.SG)   sew-DECL.INTR-3SG
       'the woman is sewing'

    b. Arnaq   miqsuq-(*si)-tu-q   qarling-nit.
       woman(ABS.SG)   sew-(*AP)-DECL.INTR-3SG   pant-OBL.DU
       'The woman is sewing a pair of pants.'

As has been observed by Johns (2001a, 2006), the semantic effects of the antipassive vary across the Inuit dialect continuum. For instance, in the following antipassive and corresponding transitive examples from the Nunavik dialect, the translations provided by the speaker appear to correlate the antipassive with an indefinite interpretation of the object:

(25) DEFINITENESS/SPECIFICITY OF THE OBJECT   (Nunavik)
    a. Annuraa-nik   uvva-tu-nga.
       clothing-INSTR.SG   wash-DECL.INTR-1SG
       'I am washing clothes.'

    b. Annuraa-t   uvva-ta-kka.
       clothing-ABS.PL   wash-DECL.TR-1SG.3PL
       'I am washing the clothes.'

Such data suggest that the antipassive serves a differential-object marking function, indicating that a patient is indefinite or perhaps non-specific (see Aissen 2003, de Swart 2007, references therein, and Johns and Kučerová, Chapter 17, this volume). However, as demonstrated by Johns, this phenomenon appears to vary across the dialect continuum. She observes that in Western dialects, names cannot appear as

the oblique-marked patient in an antipassive construction, or yield an unexpected reading, presumably due to a clash between the inherent definiteness of proper names and a strong indefinite character of the either the oblique case in the antipassive construction.[17]

(27) WESTERN DIALECTS: AP INCOMPATIBLE WITH PROPER NAMES
   a. *John   tautuk-tu-q   Mary-mik.
        John(ABS.SG)   see-DECL.INTR-3SG   Mary-INSTR.SG
        Intended: 'John sees Mary.'   (Iñupiaq, Manning 1996: 95)

   b. ?Alana-mik
        Alana-INSTR.SG
        'someone dressed up as Alana'   (Inuvialuktun, Johns 2001a: 133)

Notably, examples from Johns suggest that this definiteness is not an inherent property of the case marker itself (i.e. it does not appear that this case morpheme is simultaneously encoding an indefinite feature) since proper names with their expected definite interpretations can take the instrumental case in these dialects when serving as genuine instruments, as illustrated with the following example from Lowe (1985).

(28) Ilruq   niuvvaavi-lia-rami   Uvvayua-mik
        Ilruq(ABS.SG)   store-travel-BECAUSE.SS.3SG   Uvvayua-INSTR.SG
        uqaqsiq-tua-q
        interpret-DECL.INTR-3SG
        'when Ilruq went to the store, she used Uvvayuaq as an interpreter'
                                                          (lit. she interpreted with Uvvayuaq)

Conversely, despite the indefinite interpretation for common nouns illustrated in (25), Eastern dialects allow oblique-marked names in the antipassive, as in (29).[18]

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[17]   While Johns's claim appears true for a number of Western dialects, at least one dialect, Kangiryuarmiut Inuinnaqtun, appears to be an exception. A speaker judged both the transitive and antipassive versions of the following sentence to be acceptable with a proper name as the internal argument:

(26) AN EXCEPTION TO AP PATIENT INDEFINITENESS IN A WESTERN DIALECT   (Kangiryuarmiut)

   a. Emili-up   Richard   taku-ya-a.
        Emily-ERG.SG   Richard(ABS.SG)   see-DECL.TR-3SG.3SG
        'Emily saw Richard.'

   b. Emily   Richard-mik   taku-yu-q.
        Emily(ABS.SG)   Richard-INSTR.SG   see-decl.INTR-3SG
        'Emily saw Richard.'

[18]   Note that in the Labrador orthography uppercase <K> is used to represent [q] and velars and uvulars are neutralized in coda position.

(29) EASTERN DIALECTS: AP COMPATIBLE WITH PROPER NAMES

a. Margarita   Kuinatsa-i-ju-k   Ritsati-mik.
    Margarita(ABS.SG)   tickle-AP-DECL.INTR-3SG   Richard-INSTR.SG
    'Margarita is tickling Richard.'   (Labrador Inuttut, Johns 2006: 295)

b. Jaani   taku-gunnaq-paa   Miali-mit
    John(ABS.SG)   see-can-INTERR.INTR.3SG   Mary-OBL.SG
    'Can John see Mary?'   (South Baffin)

Johns (2006) argues that this variation across dialects is due to Western dialects maintaining a more prototypical ergative-absolutive alignment, while Eastern dialects are underling a typological shift towards a more nominative-accusative alignment.

While the use of the antipassive in other languages is often connected to an aspectual split (see Coon 2013a and references therein), aspect is somewhat orthogonal to the antipassive in Inuktitut in that it is not the use of the transitive or antipassive construction that yields a perfective or progressive interpretation, but rather the aspectual properties of the verb itself, as observed by Hayashi & Spreng (2005). They observe and Hayashi (2011) further elaborates that durative verbs without tense marking receive a progressive interpretation, while punctual verbs receive a perfective interpretation.

For instance, in the following examples, it is the verbal root that determines the aspectual interpretation, cutting across both constructions. In (30) the durative verb *niri* 'eat' yields a default progressive interpretation, while in (31) *kii* 'bite' yields a default recent past interpretation, regardless of whether the antipassive is used.

(30) DURATIVE = PROGRESSIVE

a. arna-up   niri-ja-nga   aapu
    woman-ERG.SG   eat-DECL.TR-3SG.3SG   apple(ABS.SG)
    'The woman is eating the apple.'

b. arnaq   niri-ju-q   aapu-mit
    woman(ABS.SG)   eat-DECL.INTR-3SG   apple-OBL.SG
    'The woman is eating an apple.'

(31) PUNCTUAL = PERFECTIVE

a. qimmi-up   kii-ja-anga
    dog-ERG.SG   bite-DECL.TR-3SG.1SG
    'The dog bit me.'

b. qimmiq   uvannit   kii-si-ju-q
    dog(ABS.SG)   1.OBL.SG   bite-AP-DECL.INTR-3SG
    'The dog bit me.'

However, Hayashi & Spreng (2005) and later Spreng (2012) also attribute an imperfective aspectual contribution to the antipassive marker, arguing that both it and a

homophonous morpheme that has typically been glossed as inceptive in the literature should receive a unified analysis. For instance, in the following example the contribution of *si* does not add the possibility of an oblique-marked patient, but rather yields a present/progressive interpretation to a punctual verb that would otherwise receive a perfective or immediate past interpretation in the absence of an overt tense-marker.

(32)   Ani-si-ju-q   taku-ga-viuk.
       go.out-INCEPT-DECL.INTR-3SG   see-because-2SG.3SG
       'He is leaving because/since you saw him.'

While Spreng (2012) argues extensively for the antipassive marker being an aspectual morpheme, she also notes that only the inceptive version deletes a preceding consonant in North Baffin (p. 22). Furthermore, Spreng notes that both antipassive and inceptive *si* can occur simultaneously in a single verbal complex, as in (33) (p. 23).

(33)   Anguti   kunik-si-si-vuq   arna-mik.
       man(ABS.SG)   kiss-AP-INCEPT-INDIC.INTR-3SG   woman-INSTR.SG
       'The man starts to kiss a woman.'

While her account treats such cases as the result of vocabulary insertion of the same morpheme into two distinct positions, a lower position for the antipassive and a higher aspectual head, using a Distributed Morphology approach, such data also seem compatible with an analysis in which the forms are merely homophonous, and perhaps share the same diachronic source. Given the extremely small phoneme inventory for Inuit of only three vowels and between thirteen and fourteen consonants—roughly half the number of phonemes in English—and given the frequent homophony of other grammatical morphemes in the language, the chances of a two-phoneme-long string being homophonous seem quite high. In addition, examples from Allen (1996) show that the Tarramiut Nunavik dialect possesses distinct forms for the two uses: *tsi* for the antipassive and *si* for what she glosses as present. For a more complete picture of her proposal and her arguments for treating the AP marker as an aspectual morpheme, I refer the reader to Spreng (2012).

To summarize, the use of the antipassive construction Inuktitut serves as a form of differential object marking, with common noun oblique-marked patients in the antipassive receiving an indefinite interpretation (cf. Spreng 2012).

34.5 Conclusion

This chapter has presented the various ways in which ergativity is manifested in the nominal case marking and verbal agreement morphology of Inuktitut. In particular,

the one-to-one correspondence between agreement on a verbal complex and the presence of a (sometimes pro-dropped) absolutive argument, along with the impossibility of additional absolutive arguments when additional tense heads are present in a verbal complex, was taken to show that it is agreement, not tense, that licenses absolutive case in Inuktitut. This is further highlighted by the fact that clauses in subordinate moods that lack the ability to mark tense, and may thus be thought to a type of non-finite, nevertheless license absolutive arguments because they bear agreement.

The ergative nature of agreement morphology in Inuktitut was also highlighted. For a large portion of the declarative (and also indicative) paradigm, exponents of agreement indexing intransitive subjects also index patients of transitive clauses. Furthermore, a number of the exponents of verbal agreement are only present with the ergative-absolutive alignment, disappearing with intransitive verbs.

Taken together, the ban against multiple absolutive arguments in a single clause, the possibility of non-patient arguments receiving absolutive in ditransitive clauses, and the one-to-one relationship between verbal agreement and the presence of an absolutive argument point to an analysis of the absolutive as a structural case (as opposed to the morphological default of two structural case, as proposed by Legate 2008 for a subset of ergative languages).

An analysis of absolutive as a single structural case and not a morphological default of distinct structural cases, in the sense of Legate's (2008) ABS = DEF languages, further coincides with the observations by Creider (1978) and Johns (1987) showing that relativization also treats absolutive arguments as a syntactic class. The gap in such constructions is always in an absolutive case position, as illustrated in the following contrasting examples:

(34) Angum-mik   [arna-mik   taku-ju-mik]   taku-vu-nga
      man-INSTR.SG [woman-INSTR.SG see-DECL.INTR-INSTR.SG] see-INDIC.INTR-1SG
      'I saw the man who saw the woman.'   (Kivallirmiut, Creider 1978: 100)

(35) *Angut(-up)   [nanuq   kapi-ja-a]   ani-ju-q.
       man(-ERG.SG) polar.bear(ABS.SG) stab-DECL.TR-3SG.3SG go.out-DECL.INTR-3SG
       Intended: 'The man who stabbed the polar bear went out.'   (S. Baffin, Johns 2007a)

However, a lingering problem in analyzing the restriction on relativization to absolutive arguments as the result of syntactic ergativity is that the declarative/participial mood used in these constructions is also used to nominalize verbs. For instance, the verb *ani-juq* 'he/she went out' in (35) can also mean 'the one who went,' as illustrated in (36).

(36) Ani-ju-up   niri-ja-nga   aapu.
      go.out-DECL.INTR-ERG.SG   eat-DECL.TR-3SG.3SG   apple(ABS.SG)
      'The one who went out is eating the apple.'

Given the ability of verbal complexes in declarative/participial mood to act as nominals, this calls into question whether they are in fact relative clauses, or whether they could be nominalizations in apposition with the nouns they modify, as suggested by the speaker's spontaneous translation for the following example:

(37) Ani-ju-up   arna-up   niri-ja-nga   aapu
      go.out-DECL.INTR-ERG.SG woman-ERG.SG eat-DECL.TR-3SG.3SG apple(ABS.SG)
      'The woman who went out is eating the apple.'
                        (Speaker: "The one who went out, the girl, is eating the apple.")

As such, it is not clear whether the restrictions on relative clauses are the result of ergativity at the level of the clause or an ergative pattern of nominalization.

Finally, this chapter briefly outlined the functioning of the antipassive in Inuktitut. While typically described in the literature as marking an object as indefinite or nonspecific, Spreng's (2012) proposal to treat the AP marker as an aspectual morpheme is particularly interesting given the growing body of work connecting case alignment splits in ergative languages to aspect (e.g. Polinsky 2008, Coon 2013a).

Acknowledgments

Abbreviations

1, first person; 2, second person; 3, third person; A, agent; ABS, absolutive case; ALLAT, allative; AP, antipassive; BECAUSE, becausative mood; C, complementizer; CAUSE, causative; CONTEMP, contemporative mood; D, determiner; CP, complementizer phrase; DIST.PAST, distant past; DP, determiner phrase; DECL, declarative mood; DPAST, dependent past (becausative mood); DU, dual; ERG, ergative case; INCEPT, inceptive; IND(IC), indicative mood; INFL, inflection; INSTR, instrumental case; INTERR, interrogative mood; INTR, intransitive; KP, case phrase; NEAR.FUT, near future; NOM, nominative; NP, noun phrase; O, object; OBL, oblique case; P, patient; PERF, perfect; PL, plural; PF, phonetic form; POSS, possessive; PROX, proximate; REC.PAST, recent past; S, subject; SG, singular; SS, same subject; T, tense; TP, tense phrase; TR, transitive; V, verb; VIALIS, vialis case.