

Workshop: Biabsolutive Challenges

BIABSOLUTIVES IN ARCHI

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1 Introduction

BIABSOLUTIVE CONSTRUCTION IN ARCHI:

- case and agreement different from the construction with distinct argument marking:
 - two absolutive-marked arguments
 - two agreement controllers
- no restrictions on case frames (ergative- and dative-subject predicates equally participate in the biabsolutive construction)
- two non-finite verb forms: *-ši* (biabsolutive optional, alternative with distinct agreement marking) and *-mat* (biabsolutive obligatory)

BIABSOLUTIVE CONSTRUCTION OUTSIDE ARCHI: all other Dagestanian languages (cf. Forker 2012 and references therein); Basque (Laka 2006); Ch'ol (Coon 2013), Polynesian (Massam 2001, Ball 2008)

GOALS OF THE TALK:

- present two main approaches to biabsolutives proposed in the literature
- test the proposals with respect to Archi biabsolutive data
- propose an alternative account of the biabsolutive construction

OUTLINE OF THE TALK:

- existing approaches: pseudo-noun incorporation and separate clausal domains
- testing these approaches in Archi
- a new analysis of the biabsolutive construction in Archi

2 Previous accounts of biabsolutives

TWO MAIN LINES OF ANALYSIS:

- pseudo-noun incorporation
- separate clausal domains, with case and agreement licensing in each

2.1 Pseudo-Noun Incorporation (PNI)

Theme and lexical verb form a unit, without overt morphophonological effects of incorporation (cf. Massam 2001 for Niuean)

Adopted by Forker (2012) as a general analysis of biabsolutives in Nakh-Dagestanian

- (1) PNI PREDICTIONS:
- a. Durative/progressive/frequentative meaning
 - b. Productive with an open class of verb
 - c. No lexical material should intervene between NP and V, and the order of object and verb must be fixed
 - d. The incorporated theme is nonspecific/non-referential
 - e. The incorporated theme is not specified for number
 - f. The incorporated theme cannot undergo A'-movement

2.2 Separate clausal domains

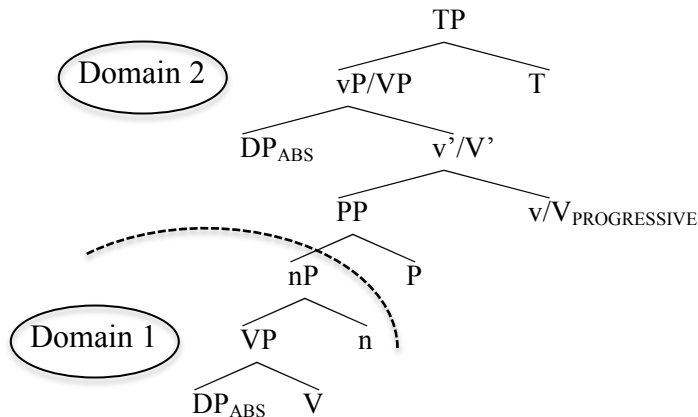
- (2) MAIN INGREDIENTS OF THE ANALYSIS:
- a. there are two clausal domains
 - b. each clause is intransitive, hence one absolutive argument per clause

Agent is not encoded by the ergative case, hence the association between biabsolutives and split ergativity

Laka (2006) for Basque; Coon (2010; 2013) for Chol (Mayan):

- biclausal progressive constructions with a light verb and a PP complement
- PP contains a nominalized verbal structure
- the appearance of split ergativity follows from constructions with a light verb and a DP complement

- (3) a. emakume-a-∅ [ogi-a-∅ ja-te-n] Basque
 woman-DET-ABS bread-DET-ABS eat-NMLZ-LOC
 ari da
 PROGR AUX
 ‘The woman is eating bread.’
 b.



Gagliardi et al. (2013) for Tsez:

- biabsolutives are constructions with a light verb and a PP complement
- PP contains a nominalized verbal structure, and this structure is a syntactic island

- (4) PREDICTIONS OF THE BICLAUSAL ANALYSIS:
 restrictions on A'-movement of the lower absolutive argument

2.3 Summary

TABLE 1: PREDICTIONS MADE BY TWO ANALYSES

	PNI	Biclausal
Two ABS-marked DPs	√	√
Lexical verb agrees with theme	√	√
Aux verb agrees with agent	√	√
Theme DP can undergo A'-movement	*	*
Theme can be referential/specific	*	√
Lexical material between DP theme and verb	*	√
Progressive/durative reading	(√)	√

3 Archi biabsolutives: A look into the data

3.1 Do the data match the analyses?

- (5) Summary of the data
 a. two ABS-marked DPs
 b. lexical verb agrees with theme
 c. Aux verb agrees with agent
 d. progressive/habitual reading

specific/definite DP in the theme position

- (6) a. Pat'i ja-b gyziyt
 Pati.II.SG.ABS this-III.SG newspaper.III.SG.ABS
 b-ɔ(r)klin-ši d-i
 III.SG-⟨IPFV⟩read-CVB II.SG-be.PRS
 ‘Pati is reading this newspaper.’
 b. Pat'i ja-b gyziyt
 Pati.II.SG.ABS this-III.SG newspaper.III.SG.ABS
 b-ɔ(r)klim-mat d-i
 III.SG-⟨IPFV⟩read-CVB II.SG-be.PRS
 ‘Pati is still reading this newspaper.’

pronoun in the theme position

- (7) a. Pat'i ja-b b-o(r)klin-ši d-i
 Pati.II.SG.ABS this-III.SG III.SG-⟨IPFV⟩read-CVB II.SG-be.PRS
 'Pati is reading it.'
- b. Pat'i ja-b b-o(r)klim-mat d-i
 Pati.II.SG.ABS this-III.SG III.SG-⟨IPFV⟩read-CVB II.SG-be.PRS
 'Pati is reading it.'

intervening lexical material between the theme and verb possible

- (8) a. Pat'i q^wib o:kurši
 Pati.II.SG.ABS potato.III.SG.ABS slowly
 b-o(r)klin-ši d-i
 III.SG-⟨IPFV⟩dig-CVB II.SG-be.PRS
 'Pati is digging potatoes slowly.'
- b. Pat'i q^wib o:kurši
 Pati.II.SG.ABS potato.III.SG.ABS slowly
 b-o(r)klim-mat d-i
 III.SG-⟨IPFV⟩dig-CVB II.SG-be.PRS
 'Pati is digging potatoes slowly.'

Nakh-Dagestanian restrictions on scrambling and A'-movement:
 no long distance dislocations (Polinsky and Potsdam 2001)

theme DP can scramble locally

- (9) a. [ja-b _____ gyzijt]_i Pat'i-wu e_i
 this-III.SG newspaper.III.SG.ABS Pati.II.SG.ABS-and
 b-o(r)klin-ši d-i
 III.SG-read⟨IPFV⟩-CVB II.SG-be.PRS
 'Pati is also reading this newspaper.'
- b. [ja-b _____ gyzijt]_i Pat'i-wu e_i
 this-III.SG newspaper.III.SG.ABS Pati.II.SG.ABS-and
 b-o(r)klim-mat d-i
 III.SG-read⟨IPFV⟩-CVB II.SG-be.PRS
 'Pati is also reading this newspaper.'

theme DP can undergo wh-fronting

- (10) han_i Pat'i t_i o(r)klin-ši
 what.IV.SG.ABS Pati.II.SG.ABS IV.SG-⟨IPFV⟩read-CVB
 d-i?
 II.SG-be.PRS
 'What is Pati reading?'
- (11) han_i gudu t_i mu a-r-mat
 what.IV.SG.ABS that.I.SG.ABS be.good IV.SG.do-IPFV-CVB
 w-i?
 I.SG-be.PRS
 'What is he fixing?'

theme DP can undergo topicalization

- (12) χ^walli-č_i buwa t_i b-a-r-ši
 bread.III.SG.ABS-PRT mother.II.SG.ABS III.SG-do-IPFV-CVB
 d-i goro'rči li u-qi?
 II.SG-be.PRS porridge.IV.SG.ABS who.ERG IV.SG.do-FUT
 'The bread, mother is making it, who will make the porridge?'
- (13) mišin-č_i But:a t_i mu
 car.IV.SG.ABS-PRT Butta.II.SG.ABS be.good
 a-r-mat w-i, televizor li
 IV.SG.do-IPFV-CVB I.SG-be.PRS TV.IV.SG.ABS who.ERG
 mu au-qi?
 be.good ⟨III.SG⟩do-FUT
 'The car, Butta is fixing, who will fix the TV?'

theme DP cannot undergo relativization

- (14) *[buwa b-a-r-ši d-i-t:u-b]
 mother.II.SG.ABS III.SG-make-IPFV-CVB II.SG-be.PRS-ATTR-III.SG
 χ^oošon b-ez kɫ'an
 dress.III.SG.ABS III.SG-1.DAT like
 ('I like the dress mother is making.')
- (15) *[Pat'i e(r)lar-ši d-i-t:u-t]
 Pati.II.SG.ABS IV.SG-⟨IPFV⟩lay-CVB II.SG-be.PRS-ATTR-IV.SG
 uχ č'em et:i-li aq:'a-s
 field.IV.SG.ABS time.IV.SG.ABS IV.SG.come.PFV-EVID IV.SG.dry-FIN
 ('It is time to dry the hay on the field which Pat'i is still mowing.')

- (16) *[pat'i e(ɾ)ɭa-r-mat d-i-t:u-t]
 Pati.II.SG.ABS IV.SG.<IPFV>lay-CVB II.SG-be.PRS-ATTR-IV.SG
 uɣ ɳini jat:i-k i
 field.IV.SG.ABS there up-LAT IV.SG.be.PRS
 ('The field which Pati is still cutting is up there.')
- (17) *[tuw ez mu a-r-mat
 that-I.SG.ABS IV.SG.1DAT be.good IV.SG.do.IPFV-CVB
 w-i-t:u-t] mišin
 I.SG-be.PRS-ATTR-IV.SG car.IV.SG.ABS
 olo-ma i
 IV.SG.1PL.EXCL.GEN-HUM.LOC IV.SG.be.PRS
 ('The car which he is still repairing for me is at our place.')

3.2 Summary

Table 2: ARCHI AND THE TWO ANALYSES OF BIABSOLUTIVES

	PNI	Biclausal	Archi
Two ABS-marked DPs	√	√	√
Lexical verb agrees with Theme	√	√	√
Aux verb agrees with Agent	√	√	√
Theme can be referential/specific	*	√	√
Lexical material between Theme and verb possible	*	√	√
Progressive/durative reading	(√)	√	√
Theme undergoes A'-movement: Wh-movement in questions and topicalization	*	*	√
Theme cannot undergo relativization	*	*	*

INTERIM CONCLUSION

The existing analyses cannot account for the Archi data; a different analysis is necessary

4 Archi biabsolutives: A monoclausal approach

PROPOSAL IN A NUTSHELL:

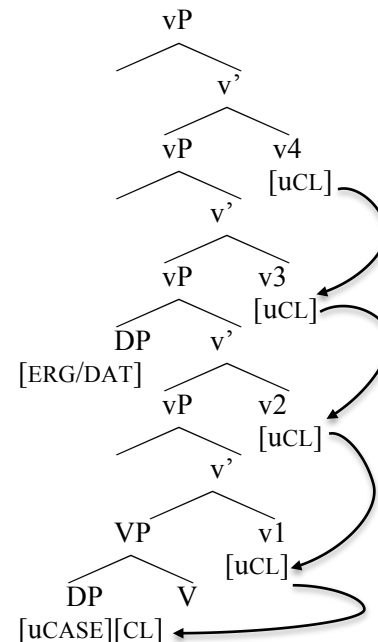
- Archi has an articulated vP structure
- Case, agreement, and interpretation in the biabsolutive construction are due the presence of an additional v head with aspectual meaning

4.1 Archi vP

(18) Main ingredients of the analysis:

- Archi has articulated vP structure (Radkevich and Polinsky 2013)
- auxiliaries are light verbs (v's)
- v heads can be null
- each v has an unvalued class feature [uCL]
- [uCL] can be valued either by an internal argument (DPABS) or by v with valued class features (Collins 2003; Baker and Willie 2010)
- some v's have Case features
- some v's have aspectual features
- a single v available with the progressive aspectual feature (no other progressive constructions found in Archi)

(19)

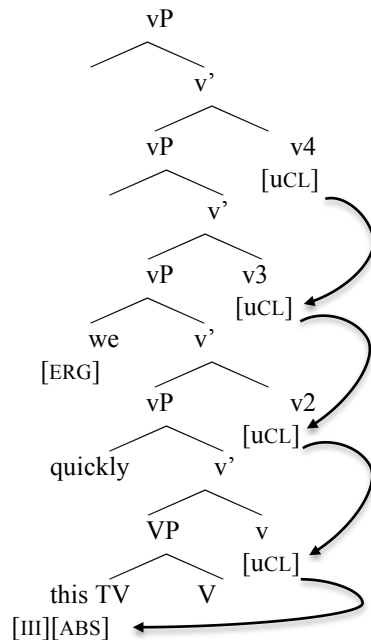


Evidence for (19):

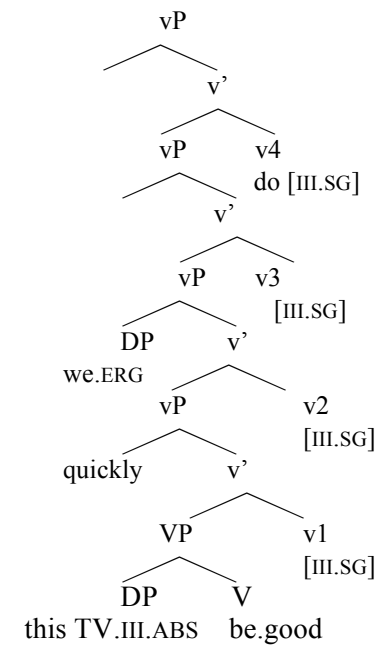
- multiple agreement exponents
- the presence of a functional head (*v*) has morphological reflexes

(20) Nenau b-is televizor
 1PL.EXCL.ERG<III.SG> III.SG-1.SG.GEN TV.III.ABS
 dit:au mu au.
 quickly<III.SG> be.good do-PFV<III.SG>
 ‘We fixed this TV quickly.’

(21)a. syntax



b. PF



- (22) LOCAL DISLOCATION (LD) IN ARCHI:
- class exponents need a phonologically overt host
 - local dislocation (lowering to the closest specifier)
 - pre-vocabulary insertion and pre-linearization (cf. Embick & Noyer 2001, Embick 2007)
- (23) DETAILS OF ARCHI LD:
- v1 [IIIICL] +V → ∅
 - v2[IIIICL] +Adverb
 - v3[IIIICL] +DPERG
 - v4 [IIIICL] +do

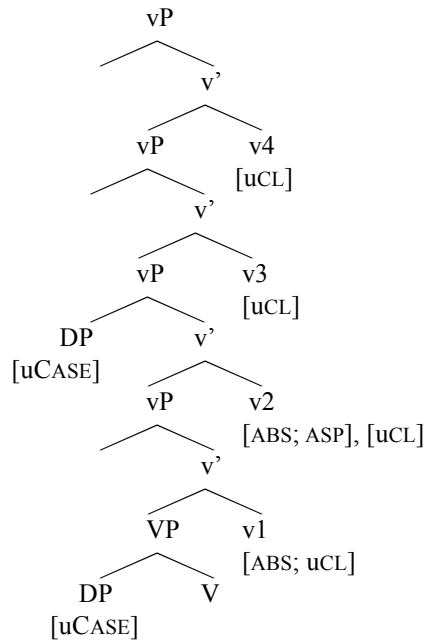
4.2 Monoclausal biabsolutives

PROPOSAL:

- vP has several *v* heads
- v1 always has the [ABS] feature

- biabsolutives always have progressive durative interpretation, and their v2 has [ABS] and [ASP] features

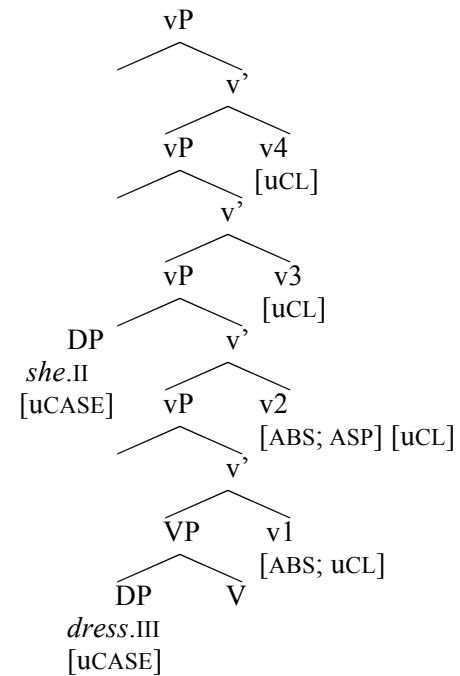
(24)



(25)

to-r	χ ^s ošon	b-a-r-ši
that-II.SG.ABS	dress.III.SG.ABS	III.SG-make-IPFV-CVB
d-i		
II.SG-be.PRS		
‘She is making a dress.’		

(26)



(27)

a. CASE CHECKING

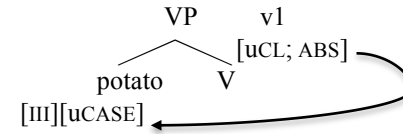
- v1 ⇔ DP_{THEME}
- v2 ⇔ DP_{AGENT}

b. CLASS AGREEMENT

- v1 ⇔ DP_{THEME}
- v2 ⇔ DP_{AGENT}
- v3 ⇔ v2
- v4 ⇔ v3

Further evidence in support of monoclausal structure: single sentential negation (on the auxiliary)

- (28) pat'i k'ob o<r>c'u-r-ši
 Pati.II.SG.ABS clothes.IV.SG.ABS IV.SG.<IPFV>wash-IPFV-CVB
 d-i-t'u
 II.SG-be.PRS-NEG
 'Pati is not ironing clothes.'
- (29) pat'i q^wib b-o<r>klim-mat
 Pati.II.SG.ABS potatoes.III.SG.ABS III.SG.<IPFV>dig-IPFV-CVB
 d-i-t'u
 II.SG-be.PRS-NEG
 'Pati is not digging out potatoes.'



b. PF

- v1 [III] + V
- v2 [III] + Adverb
- v3 [II] + DPAGENT → ∅
- v4 [II] + Aux

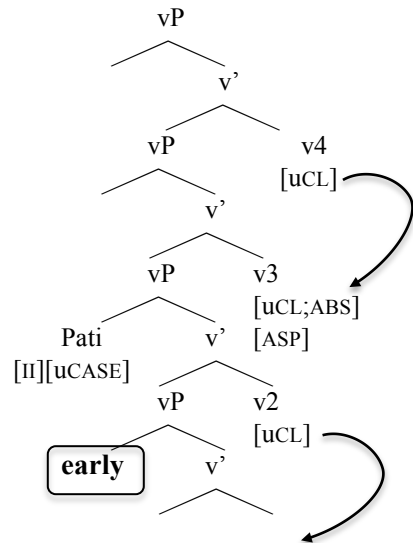
4.3 Multiple agreement exponents in biabsolutives

'EXUBERANT' AGREEMENT (HARRIS 2009) IN BIABSOLUTIVES:

- agreement exponents can appear on non-verbal elements
- adverbs can either agree with DP_{THEME} or DP_{AGENT}
- two different meanings ⇔ two different adjunction sites

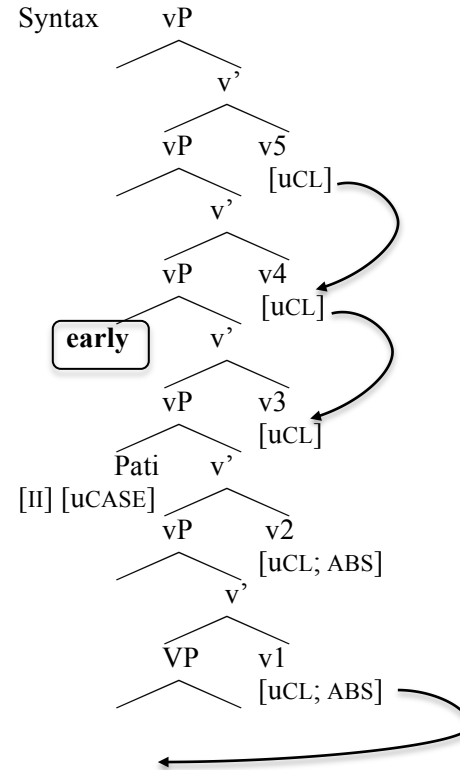
- (30) pat'i dit:au q^wib
 pati.II.SG.ABS early<III.SG> potato.III.SG.ABS
 b-o<r>klin-ši d-i
 III.SG-<IPFV>dig-IPFV-CVB II.SG-be.PRS
 'Pati is digging the potatoes out early.'
 (It is too early for the potatoes to be harvested)

(31) a. Syntax



- (32) pat'i dit:a<r>u q^wib
 pati.II.SG.ABS early<II.SG> potato.III.SG.ABS
 b-o<r>klin-ši d-i
 III.SG-<IPFV>dig-IPFV-CVB II.SG-be.PRS
 'Pati is digging the potatoes out early.' (Pati got up early)

(33) a. Syntax



potato V
[III][uCASE]

mother.II.SG.ABS make.IPFV.CVB be.PRS.ATTR.III.SG dress.
(‘the dress that is making the mother’)

b. PF

- v1 [III] +V
- v2 [III] → ∅ (no overt host)
- v3 [II] +DPAGENT → ∅
- v4 [II] + adverb
- v5 [II] +Aux

5 Accounting for relativization facts

Theme DP can undergo A'-movement in questions and topicalizations but does not relativize

(34) *[buwa b-a-r-ši d-i-t:u-b]
mother.II.SG.ABS III.SG-make-IPFV-CVB II.SG-be.PRS-ATTR-III.SG
χ^oošon b-ez kɫ'an
dress.III.SG.ABS III.SG-1.DAT like
(‘I like the dress mother is making.’)

Agent DP can relativize:

(35) [χ^oošon b-a-r-ši d-i-t:u-r]
dress.III.SG.ABS III.SG-make-IPFV-CVB II.SG-be.PRS-ATTR-II.SG
buwa
mother.II.SG.ABS
(‘the mother that is making a dress’)

all other constituents can relativize

(36) [pat'i maq'al ši-b-a-r-ši
pati.II.SG.ABS article.III.SG.ABS write-III.SG-do-IPFV-CVB
ε(ɾ)di-t:u-t] biq'^w
(II.SG)be.PST-ATTR-IV.SG place.IV.SG.ABS
(‘the place where Pati was writing an article’)

The sole absolutive DP inside a relative clause is obligatorily interpreted as object; examples like (34) are rejected for interpretive reasons

(37) #[buwa barši dit:ub] χ^oošon

6 Conclusions

- Superficially similar structures may receive different analyses, therefore, a detailed examination of biabsolutives in individual languages is necessary
- The range of analyses for biabsolutive constructions:
Pseudo Noun Incorporation: Polynesian
Separate clausal domains: Mayan, Basque, Tsez
Restructuring: Archi; Lak (Gagliardi et al. 2013)

	PNI	Separate clausal domains	Restructuring with an Aspectual head
Two ABS-marked DPs	√	√	√
Lexical verb agrees with Theme	√	√	√
Aux verb agrees with Agent	√	√	√
Theme can be referential/specific	*	√	√
Lexical material between Theme and verb possible	*	√	√
Progressive/durative reading	(√)	√	√
Theme undergoes A'-movement	*	*	√

- Outstanding questions

General: parametrization of the analyses
Can a specific analysis of the biabsolutive construction (PNI, separate clausal domains, restructuring) be correlated with particular properties of a given language?

Archi-specific: What are the differences between optional and obligatory biabsolutives?

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