Язык. Константы. Переменные

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Настоящая книга представляет собой сборник научных статей, посвящённых памяти замечательного российского ученого и организатора науки, крупнейшего полевого лингвиста и оригинального теоретика, члена-корреспондента РАН Александра Евгеньевича Кибрика (1939−2012). Представленные в книге статьи затрагивают актуальные вопросы теории языка и методологии лингвистических исследований, лингвистической типологии, описания русского языка и других языков мира (особенно языков Дагестана). Ряд статей содержит мемуарные фрагменты. Для широкого круга лингвистов.

В оформлении обложки использована картина матери А. Е. Кибрика
художницы Лидии Тимошенко «Портрет сына» (1962)

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SYNTACTIC SUBJECT: SYNTACTIC RELATIONS, ONCE AGAIN

To the fond memory of Sasha Kibrik (1939.03.26 — 2012.10.31)

Linguistics owes him a lot; several languages that he helped to save from oblivion owe him a lot; his students, many of whom are professors now, owe him a lot; I, his friend, owe him a lot. And these debts will never be paid back.

1. THE PROBLEM STATED

Syntactic Subject (as well as Syntactic Object) has always been and still is a popular topic in linguistics, especially in typology: it suffices to indicate, for instance, such studies as Keenan 1976, Foley & Van Valin 1977, Van Valin 1981, Kozinskij 1983, Lazard 1994, Palmer 1994, Givón 1995, Kibrik 1997 and 2001, Testelec 2001: 317–359, Farrell 2005, Falk 2006, Bickel 2011, Zimmerling 2012, etc., as well as the collections Li, ed. 1976, Cole & Sadock, eds. 1977, Yaguello, ed. 1994, Burgess *et al*., eds. 1995, Aikhenvald *et al*., eds. 2001, Davies & Dubinsky, eds. 2001, Bhaskararao & Subbarao, eds. 2004, and Suihkonen *et al*., eds. 2012. The notion of Syntactic Subject and that of Syntactic Object are known in modern linguistic literature as Grammatical Relations, and they continue to generate controversy, especially, the notion *grammatical subject* — a highly contentious topic since the time the term *subject* was introduced into the linguist's toolbox.[1] For instance, some linguistic theories claim that all clauses must have a grammatical subject no matter what language is being described, while other theories claim there is no such category consistent for all languages. As is typical of the science of language, the problem resides in the absence of a rigorously defined notion of subject — that is, for the *n*-th time, we are dealing with a notional/terminological problem. (In the two-volume collection Bhaskararao & Subbarao, eds. 2004 we find 28 papers on subjects and subjecthood, but not one definition — or even an attempt at a definition — of Syntactic Subject.)

The same things can be said about the Direct Object; however, this latter notion is, in a sense, "derived" from that of Subject, so that in what follows I will focus exclusively on the Subject in order to say a few words about the Direct Object at the end (Section **7**).

The goal of this paper is thus to propose rigorous definitions for both above notions, the Syntactic Subject [= SyntSubj] and the Direct Object [= DirO], and discuss, in sufficient detail, several complex cases involving the SyntSubj.

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[1] Somewhere in the early Middle Ages, seemingly by Boethius: "In Boethius (5th–6th c.) we find 'subiectum' and 'praedicatum', but these are terms which belong to logic rather than to grammar" (Lepschy 1994: 278). As one can see, the term *subject* was originally meant to designate a logical notion.

The problem of the definition of SyntSubj and DirO is very complicated: it involves the representation of syntactic structure of sentences (surface and deep), the actants, the diathesis and grammatical voices, transitivity, ergativity, agreement and government, zero lexemes, and what not. As a consequence, I am forced to limit myself to approximate and sketchy characterization of many relevant notions — otherwise, I would have to write several volumes. At the same time, I have to analyze facts of different languages, which of course, I do not know as a native, so that factual mistakes are probable. This is, however, not that dangerous: the main thrust of this paper is not in communicating new linguistic facts, but in showing the logical links between facts (in case they are correct) and corresponding abstract statements.

2. CONCEPTUAL PRELIMINARIES

2.1. *~~Grammatical~~ Relations ⇒ Syntactic Relations

First things first: in language, there is no such thing as *grammatical relations*: the relations that are under discussion are **syntactic**. Generally speaking, the relations between lexical units in a sentence include relations of semantic, syntactic, and morphological dependency. (I will ignore here the relation of coreference as being of a completely different nature.) Therefore, the only term allowed from now on is syntactic relations. The present discussion is based on the following two postulates:

1. In any language, an utterance is represented at the syntactic level by its syntactic structure.
2. Since we are interested in syntactic relations, the syntactic structure must be a dependency structure: only this type of structure represents syntactic relations directly and explicitly.

It is embarrassing to insist on such trivial statements, but it is absolutely necessary in order to clean up the logical mess, in which the discussion around the Syntactic Subjects and Syntactic Objects finds itself.

As soon as we agree on these postulates, no more discussion is possible as to whether syntactic relations as such are universal: of course they are, and that, in the strongest sense possible — namely, syntactic relations are necessary in any multilexemic utterance of any language, and they always form a connected structure, since all words of a sentence are syntactically linked between themselves. (Strange as it may seem, you can easily find in the literature statements to the effect that "Grammatical Relations" are not language-universal. Would their proponents say that syntactic relations are not universal? I did not think so and frankly believed that just replacing "grammatical" by "syntactic" would already move us in the right direction. However, I have discovered that some linguists speak quite seriously about languages without syntactic relations… I keep silent, in conformity with L. Wittgenstein's Major Proposition 7.[2])

Now, from what was just said it does not, of course, follow that any **particular** syntactic relation — in our case, **subjectival** (and also **direct-objectival**) syntactic relation — is

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[2] "Wovon man nicht sprechen kann, darüber muss man schweigen" ['Whereof one cannot speak, thereof one must be silent'] (Wittgenstein 1922: 162).

universal; that is what has to be explored. (The **subjectival** syntactic relation seems to be cross-linguistically universal, as I hope to show; but the **direct-objectival** syntactic relation is not universal: it is absent from ergative languages, see below, **2.4**.)

2.2. Syntactic Relations are Syntactic Dependency Relations

Our discussion of the SyntSubj is thus based on a dependency representation of the syntactic structure of sentences. It is impossible to present here all necessary notions; I will limit myself to three references (Mel'čuk 1988, 2004 and 2009) and an approximate characterization of the notion of actant (since SyntSubjs and SyntObjs are actants):

> A syntactic actant of the lexical unit L is, roughly speaking, an immediate syntactic dependent of L which is required by the meaning of L — that is, which expresses a semantic actant of L.

Similarly, I cannot dwell here on the notion of diathesis and that of grammatical voice (Mel'čuk 2006: 181–262), which are essentially exploited in what follows; again, I will only offer an approximate characterization:

> 1. The diathesis of L is a correspondence between semantic and (deep-)syntactic actants of L.
> 2. Voice is an inflectional category whose values, or grammemes, express different diatheses of L.

A syntactic dependency relation [= SyntRel] **r** represents a family of syntactic constructions — that is, a set of syntactically similar phrases. Thus, the expression "L_1–**r**→L_2" describes all phrases (of language **L**) that can be produced out of two lexemes L_1 and L_2, if L_2 depends on L_1 via SyntRel **r**. To illustrate, three SyntRels will be described: the **prepositional** SyntRels of English and of Mandarin and the **postpositional** SyntRel of Hungarian.

English **prepositional** SyntRel

It subordinates a noun to a preposition (more complex cases in which the dependent element is not a noun/a pronoun are ignored); cf.:

FOR_{L1}————**prepos**→JOHN_{L2} (*for John*)
ON_{L1}–[*the*]——**prepos**→BENCH_{L2} (*on the bench*)
WITHOUT_{L1}—**prepos**→$\text{HE}_{L2\text{-OBL}}$ (*without him*)

What does the name of this SyntRel — **prepositional** — stand for? In English, it carries three types of information:

— Linear position of L_2 with respect to L_1: 1) L_2 follows L_1; 2) only some types of dependents of L_2 are allowed to be placed between L_2 and L_1 (an exhaustive description of these dependents is needed, of course).
— Inflection of L_1 as a function of L_2 (= agreement): none.
— Inflection of L_2 as a function of L_1 (= government): none, if L_2 is a noun; OBL(ique case), if L_2 is a personal pronoun or the interrogative/relative pronoun WHO.

The linear position of L_2 with respect to L_1 plus the full specification of lexical units that can appear between L_1 and L_2, as well as the possible inflection (or the absence thereof) of both $L1$ and $L2$ are, generally speaking, necessary definitial properties of any SyntRel.

Other languages may manifest different formal techniques to implement the same or a similar SyntRel.

Mandarin Chinese **prepositional** SyntRel

A Mandarin preposition also precedes its governed noun and Mandarin has no inflection; the Mandarin **prepositional** SyntRel requires the following description:

— Linear position of L_2 with respect to L_1: 1) L_2 follows L_1; 2) only some types of dependents of L_2 are allowed to be placed between L_2 and L_1.
— Inflection of L_1 as a function of L_2 (= agreement): none.
— Inflection of L_2 as a function of L_1 (= government): none.

(1) Mandarin

$gēn_{L1}$	$tā_{L2}$	$gēn_{L1}$	$tā\text{-}de$	$yìsi_{L2}$	$zhìyu_{L1}$	$zhèi$	$tā\text{-}de$	$yìsi_{L2}$
with	he/she	**with**	his/her	idea	**as.for**	this	his/her	idea

Hungarian **postpositional** SyntRel

Hungarian has only **post**positions, which play the same syntactic role as our prepositions; a postposition subordinates its noun by the **postpositional** SyntRel, which is specified as follows: [3]

— Linear position of L_2 with respect to L_1: L_2 immediately precedes L_1; only elements coordinated with L_2 are allowed between L_2 and L_1.
— Inflection of L_1 as a function of L_2 (= agreement): if L_2 is a noun, there is then no agreement of L_1; if L_2 is a personal pronoun, then L_1 agrees with L_2 in the morphological category of possession — that is, L_1 receives the corresponding possessive form — and L_2 itself is deleted (e.g., the meaning 'with you' is expressed literally as 'your with').
— Inflection of L_2 as a function of L_1 (government): L_2 receives the case governed by L_1.

(2) Hungarian

az	$új$	$ház_{L2NOM}$	$mellett_{L1}$		$mellett_{L1}\text{+}em$ ($\Leftarrow$ *$én_{L2}$ 'I' $mellett_{L1}$)
the	new	house	**close.to**		**close.to** 1SG = 'close to me'
		az	$új$	$ház\text{+}on_{L2SUPERESS}$	$kivül_{L1}$
		the	new	house	**outside**

2.3. Syntactic Subject as the Dependent Member
of the Subjectival SyntRel

Remember that what being considered here is the *syntactic subject* — SyntSubj, *Rus. podleža-ščee*, a **syntactic** sentence element which is logically independent of semantic and communicative roles (i.e., **not** a logical subject and **not** the discourse topic or something of the kind). Thus, in conformity with Subsection **2.2**, talking about SyntSubjs actually means talking about the **subjectival** SyntRel, of which the SyntSubj is the dependent member.

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[3] It is necessary to distinguish a **prepositional** and a **postpositional** SyntRels, since they can coexist in a language. Thus, English has a **postpositional** SyntRel for such postpositions as AGO, BACK (*three years and a half **back***) and NOTWITHSTANDING; they cannot be lumped together with prepositions, since their behavior is too different.

Since the classic paper Keenan 1976, the SyntSubj has been understood as a cluster concept defined inductively. Thus, in Keenan's view, the notion of SyntSubj is based on 1) some intuitively clear cases in the simplest sentences possible — canonical SyntSubjs, and on 2) a list of cross-linguistically universal syntactically relevant properties of sentence elements. Different Synt-elements are compared to canonical SyntSubjs according to these properties; those Synt-elements that are similar enough to the canonical SyntSubjs are also recognized as SyntSubjs. Keenan supplied a detailed checklist of syntactically relevant properties — some 30 plus of them (I am using this list, developed and complemented since; for instance, Iordanskaja & Mel'čuk 2009, where the syntactic properties of sentence elements are discussed for French).

I follow Keenan's approach, defining SyntSubj as the most privileged clause element, which is an actant of the Main Verb. In other words, the SyntSubj is the most privileged Synt-element in language **L** in the sense that it has more of Keenan's properties than any other Synt-element. However, the years that have passed since the publication of Keenan 1976 make it possible to introduce some refinement — namely, the following four guiding principles:

— Definitorial and characterizing properties of the SyntSubj must be strictly distinguished.
— Definitorial properties of the SyntSubj of the language **L** are established based on the description of the corresponding SyntRel in **L**.
— Definitorial properties of SyntSubjs are language-specific.
— "Violations" of SyntSubjs' definitorial properties caused by known factors must be allowed for.

In point of fact, these principles are valid for characterizing any sentence element — that is, Direct Object, Indirect Object, Oblique Object, etc., but here I will concentrate on SyntSubjs.

Let there be, in **L**, the syntactic configuration "MV–**r**→L", where MV is the Main Verb (the finite verb ≈ Synt-predicate) and L is a lexeme being checked for Synt-subjecthood; **r** is, of course, a SyntRel being checked for the status of the **subjectival** SyntRel.

1. **The definitorial properties *vs.* the characterizing properties of the SyntSubj.** Not all the properties on Keenan's Synt-property checklist have the same weight in establishing the SyntSubj in a particular **L**. Some of these properties are definitorial; these are coding properties of SyntSubj, which specify the way the **subjectival** SyntRel is realized in texts — roughly, these are linear placement and inflection of both members of the **subjectival** SyntRel (including modifications of the MV that change its syntactic valence and government). If and only if at least some of these properties are satisfied, the element under consideration is the SyntSubj.

Other properties listed by Keenan and added to his list since its appearance are characterizing; these are behavioral properties of Synt-elements that accrue to prototypical, or canonical, SyntSubjs of **L**, but not necessarily to all **L**'s SyntSubjs and not necessarily only to SyntSubjs: a language can have non-canonical SyntSubjs, and a sentence element can "masquerade" as a SyntSubj — that is, feature some of syntactic properties that, as rule, accrue to SyntSubjs. Therefore (Iordanskaja & Mel'čuk 2009):

A Synt-relation — in particular, the **subjectival** SyntRel — must be defined only by its definitorial (= coding) properties, strictly separated from the characterizing properties of its dependent member — that is, the corresponding sentence element (Iordanskaja & Mel'čuk 2009: 159–160).

Cf. the following relevant remark in Croft 1994: 30: "I wish to invert the usual priority in syntactic theory of behavioral over coding properties of subjects."

Characterizing properties of SyntSubjs describe their normal (= typical, standard) behavior, but by no means define them. Each property of SyntSubjs in **L** must be carefully vetted for being really definitorial rather than characterizing, and characterizing a syntactic rather than a semantic or communicative entity.

Syntactic behavior properties are defined on syntactic structures for syntactic elements; therefore, these elements, which constitute the syntactic structures, must be defined prior to and independently from their syntactic behavior.

The viewpoint proposed here can be illustrated with a simple comparison. What is a woman? The only defining property of a woman is her sexual physiology, allowing for childbirth. Nothing in the physical appearance, social standing or behavior defines a woman as such; no matter whether she looks and dresses like a man, whether she has full civic rights or none whatsoever, she remains a woman: her unique defining "privilege" is the potential capacity of bringing children into the world. The same can be said about SyntSubjs: a SyntSubj's definitorial properties make it what it is, while its behavioral (= characterizing) properties may vary without changing its fundamental nature. Thus:

> As a particular sentence element, the SyntSubj must be defined exclusively by its unique coding properties, which specify its relationship with the syntactic head of the clause — that is, the syntactic predicate (≈ Main Verb [= MV]).

Once defined, the SyntSubj of language **L** must, of course, be characterized by its syntactic behavior in larger formations: for instance, its ability to relativize, its control of deverbal adverbials and/or of reflexives, its control of deletions under coreference, etc. This can throw an interesting light on it, as well on some other sentence elements — yet this behavior can by no means define it. For instance, in Ilocano, the noun in the role of SyntSubj can be only definite, so that to express the meaning 'A man can kiss the woman', a passive must be used — in order to demote 'a man' to the Agentive Complement [= AgCo]:

(3)   Ilocano (Malayo-Polynesian branch of the Austronesian family; Schwartz 1976)

    a.   ***Maka** +bisito **ti** lalaki **iti** babay*
        can-ACT kiss **the** man **a** woman
        'The man can kiss a woman'.

    b.   ****Maka** +bisito **iti** lalaki **ti** babay*
        can-ACT kiss **a** man **the** woman
        'A man can kiss the woman'.

    c.   ***Ma** +bisito **ti** babay iti lalaki*
        can-PASS kiss **the** woman **a** man
        'The woman can be kissed by a man'.

The obligatory definiteness is an important property of the SyntSubj in Ilocano, but it by no means defines it: its linear position does (in Ilocano, the SyntSubj is the phrase that follows the MV and is closest to it).

However, if, for a given language **L**, the definitorial properties prove not convincing enough, characterizing properties could be used, but *cum grano salis*. For instance, the most syntactic among the characterizing properties of subjecthood is what Keenan called "control of coreferential deletion" (1976: 315): in ***John***i *was sick and he̶i spent a week in the hospital*,

the SyntSubj JOHN exerts control over a near-obligatory deletion of HE. However, the verification of this property can be complicated by various factors: the presence of PRO-Dropping in **L** (cf. *Sp. Me*ᵢ *gusta esta novela y* ~~*yo*ᵢ~~ *voy a terminarla* lit. 'To.me pleases this novel and am.going to finish it', where the deletion of YO is near-obligatory irrespective of coreference); special constraints on coordination in **L** (for instance, the impossibility of coordinating morphologically different wordforms even if they fulfill the same syntactic role); etc. The same is true of other characterizing properties.

It seems that the root of disagreement between linguists with respect to the identification of SyntSubjs and SyntObj lies in the adopted principle for defining them: either solely by their coding properties or by their syntactic behavior — that is, their participation in syntactic processes, with or without coding properties. In my approach, the choice is clear-cut: SyntSubj and SyntObj must be defined exclusively by their coding properties and then characterized by their behavior.

This applies, of course, to all sentence elements, not only SyntSubjs. However, in what follows the exposition concentrates exclusively on SyntSubjs.

2. **The definitorial properties of SyntSubjs**. The SyntSubj L is the dependent member of a particular SyntRel, which is naturally called **subjectival**: MV–**subjectival**→L. Therefore, SyntSubj's definitorial properties are parameters allowing one to specify conditions under which the subjectival SyntRel can appear in the Synt-structure and its implementation in the Morphological Structure of the clause. There are seven such parameters, and they are, as an inventory, cross-linguistically universal — in the sense that they are potentially applicable to all languages; however, which property of subjecthood is actually relevant or definitorial in any given language is language-specific. Here they are:

Table 1: Defining Parameters of the Syntactic Subject

1) L's immediate dependence exclusively on the MV as its actant (L cannot depend on any other clause element).
2) L's omissibility/non-omissibility from the syntactic structure of the clause.
3) L's particular linear position with respect to the MV and/or with respect to other clause elements.
4) L's morphological impact on the MV (the MV's personal-numeral agreement):
$$L–\textbf{agreement}→MV$$
5) The MV's morphological impact on L (the SyntSubj's case marking):
$$L←\textbf{government}–MV$$
6) The MV's inflection that affects morphological links between the MV and L.
7) L's pronominalization that affects morphological links between the MV and L.

Comments

— The SyntSubj's definitorial parameters must be tested in the simplest clauses of **L**; in the examples in this paper only simplest clauses are presented. The MV must be taken in its least marked form: in the present tense of the indicative, in the imperfective (if **L** has aspects), in the active (if **L** has voices), without negation, etc.

— Parameter 2 is aimed at omissibility of a sentence element from the syntactic structure of the sentence, not simply from the sentence itself (in point of fact this element is omissible from the starting Semantic Structure). In a Pro-Drop language, the Syntactic Subject, if it is a pronoun, can or must be omitted from the sentence, while it (or its source) is still present in the sentence's syntactic structure; this is known as ellipsis (one can see it, for instance, in Spanish: a sentence such as *Desapareció detrás de la esquina* lit. 'Disappeared

behind the corner' actually means '**He/She** disappeared…', where the SyntSubj **él/ella** 'he/
she' is obligatorily omitted from the sentence in the absence of particular communicative
factors, such as contrast, emphasis or the like). Consider an example of ellipsis from Navajo
(Athabaskan family):

(4)   Navajo (Foley & Van Valin 1977: 300–301)
       a.   i.   *'Ashkii 'at'ééd yi+ztał*
                   lit. 'Boy girl kicked'. = 'The boy kicked the girl'.

             and
             ii   *'At'ééd yi+ztał*
                   lit. '**He** girl kicked'. = '**He/she** kicked the girl'.

       vs.
       b.   i   *'At'ééd 'ashkii bi+ztał*
                   lit. 'Girl boy was.kicked'. = 'The girl was.kicked by the boy'.

             and
             ii   *'At'ééd bi+ztał*
                   lit. '**He** girl was.kicked'. = '**He/she** was.kicked by the girl'.

       Here none of the actants is omissible from the sentence Synt-structure: its physical
absence in the sentence signals its pronominalization with the subsequent Pro-Dropping.
(However, in an English sentence such as *The bridge was destroyed* the Synt-actant ex-
pressing the Agent is not present in the Synt-structure: the sentence does not mean '… de-
stroyed by HIM/HER/THEM'. In other words, the agent need not be recoverable from dis-
course (and so it is not amenable to pronominalization); it need not be known or knowable
to the speaker.
       — Parameter 3 presupposes a preferred word order in a clause without any communi-
cative effects.
       — Parameter 6 covers actant-manipulating inflection of the MV — i.e., grammatical
voices, including reflexives, and (in)transitivization (= changes that affect the MV's syntactic
valence, but not its semantic valence).
       — Parameter 7 requires taking into account the pronominalization of L, since pronouns
often behave differently from nouns.
       3. **Subjecthood properties are language specific.** A general checklist of subjecthood
properties is a necessary research tool: any student of SyntSubj problems has to consult it.
However, in each particular case, a particular list of relevant properties — or, to be more
precise, parameters — should be established specifically for **L**. Thus, **L** may have no agree-
ment of the MV, it may lack case government of the actants, and its word order may be too
flexible to be relevant. Therefore:

       The list of definitorial and characterizing parameters of the SyntSubj in **L** is spe-
       cific for **L**.

       In addition to all or some of the seven universal SyntSubj coding parameters and the
standard inventory of characterizing parameters, a language may have its own specific chara-
cterizing properties, which should be, of course, taken into account. Since these properties
are language-specific, it is only possible to give examples. For instance:
       — In Dyirbal, only the SyntSubj can be the semantic target of the frequentative verbal
suffix **-ḍay**, which expresses a large quantity of referent(s) of the SyntSubj:

(5)   Dyirbal (Australian family; Dixon 1972: 250)
   a.   *Bayi   yaṛa+Ø   ɲinan +ḍa +ɲu*
        the-NOM   man   NOM   sit.down FREQ PRES/PAST

        '**Many** men sat down'.

   b.   i   *Balam   miraɲ   +Ø   baŋgul yaṛa+ŋgu gundal   +ḍa +n*
           the-NOM   black.bean NOM   the-INSTR man   INSTR get.collected FREQ PRES/PAST

           '**Many** black beans got collected by the man'.

        vs.

        ii *Bayi   yaṛa+Ø   gundal   +ŋa +ḍa +ɲu   bagum miraɲ   +gu*
           the-NOM   man   NOM   get.collected PASS[4] FREQ PRES/PAST the-DAT   black.bean DAT

           '**Many** men collected black beans'.

— In Malagasy, the interrogative particle VE, which marks a general question, can be linearly placed only before the SyntSubj:

(6)   Malagasy (Malayo-Polynesian branch of the Austronesian family)
     *N +anome vola   an-dRabe **ve**   ianao?*
     PAST give   money   to Rabe   INTERR   you$_{SG}$

     'Did you give money to Rabe?'

4. **The "violation" of subjecthood properties**. A definitorial property of SyntSubjs valid for **L** may seem to be "violated" on several — sometimes even very frequent — occasions. Yet if a given "violation" is triggered by a clearly statable factor (that is, it happens always and only in its presence), it is irrelevant. Therefore:

> The situation where a definitorial property is not satisfied under precisely stated conditions can be safely ignored — as if it were satisfied.

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[4] **The passive in Dyirbal**. Dixon 1972: 65–67 speaks simply of the **-ŋay** form and the **-ŋay** construction: 40 years ago, no theoretical tools were available to properly describe the phenomenon. But here are his own examples (the SyntSubj, called "pivot" by Dixon, is boxed):

(i) a. $\boxed{Bayi\ bargan+Ø}_{X⇔I}$ *baŋgul   yaṛa+ŋgu$_{Y⇔II}$ ḍurga+**Ø** +n*
        the   wallaby   NOM   the   man   INSTR   spear   ACT PRES/PAST
        'The man is spearing the wallaby'.

     b. $\boxed{Bayi\ yaṛa+Ø}_{Y⇔I}$ (*baŋun   bargan+du$_{X⇔II}$*)   *ḍurga+**ŋa**+ɲu*
        the   man   NOM   the   wallaby   DAT   spear   PASS PRES/PAST
        'The man is spearing (at the wallaby)'.

This is an obvious diathesis modification marked on the verb — that is, a voice. True, terminologically it is not OK to call it "passive" — because of semantic connotations of the term *passive*, since in this diathesis the verb aquires an "active" meaning; many linguists, A.E. Kibrik among them, call it "antipassive." Formally, this voice marks the following diathetic modification:

X	Y		X	Y
---	---	⇒	---	---
I	II		II	I
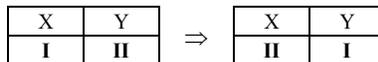
It also turns a transitive verb into an intransitive one: in (i-**a**), the tense suffix **-n** is that of transitive verbs, while in (i-**b**), its counterpart, **-ɲu**, is used only with intransitives.

This is, of course, a classic passive schema, not some "antipassive." What is "anti-" here is Dyirbal itself: being ergative, it is "anti-nominative," in that all its verbs are semantically oriented in a way that is a mirror image of our verbs. 'X spears Y' corresponds in Dyirbal to 'Y undergoes spearing (by X)'. Since the term *passive* jars as applied to (i-**b**), the terms *direct voice* and *converse voice* could be used; in nominative languages, they appear as *active* vs. *passive*. (For a review of "antipassive" constructions in various language types, see Cooreman 1994.)

Thus, in Finnish, the SyntSubj is defined as marked by the nominative; however, if the referent of a non-pronominal SyntSubj is indefinite, the SyntSubj is in the PART(itive):

(7)   Finnish
       Lapse+t   leikk+i +vät ulkona
       child   PL.**NOM**   play PAST **3PL** outside
       'The children played outside'.
       VS.
       Laps+i +a   leikk+i +Ø   ulkona
       child PL **PART** play PAST **3SG** outside
       '(Some) children played outside'.

This "violation" — i.e., PARTITIVE instead of NOMINATIVE — can be safely ignored, since it has an obvious semantic motivation, unrelated to the syntactic role of the SyntSubj.

Summing up, the SyntSubj is to be defined, in language **L**, by using at least some of the seven language-universal SyntSubj's definitorial properties (see above). These seven properties constitute the maximal set of universal coding properties according to which the SyntSubj must be defined in any **L**. Two important provisos are in order:

First, some of the universal definitorial subjecthood parameters may, of course, be invalid in a particular **L**; these parameters are universal only in the sense that they are sufficient for defining the SyntSubj in any **L**, rather than being valid in any **L**.

Second, the privileged character accrues not to the parameter itself, but to its concrete value; and which value is privileged in **L** must be established by a detailed examination of the facts of **L**. Thus, take the linear position of the SyntSubj with respect to the MV. The fact that a particular clause element occupies a fixed position with respect to the MV is in itself not a privilege. In English, the subjecthood privilege is to be linearly placed before the MV and all its other actants, which follow the MV, because in the simplest clause featuring the MV and only one actant L, this L precedes MV. In Ilocano (see (3) above, in **2.3**), the linear privilege of the SyntSubj is the closest position after the MV, but before all the other actants. And in Malagasy, the Synt-subjecthood privilege is to be placed after the MV and its other actants. Similarly, the control of the MV's agreement is in itself a privilege in English, Russian or French, because only one clause element can control the personal-number agreement of the MV. But in Acehnese, where both the SyntSubj and the DirO impose the agreement on the MV and the only actant of the MV can be either SyntSubj or the DirO (see **4.3**, **3b**, (34), p. 203), the control of the MV's agreement as such is not a privilege. Here, the privilege is to impose the agreement by a prefix, which is obligatory and cannot be linearly separated from the verb, while the agreement suffix is not obligatory and can migrate from the verb to the last word of the verb phrase. Non-omissibility is a subjecthood privilege in English, French, etc., because only the SyntSubj is not omissible in these languages, but not in Tagalog, where any actant of the MV is omissible, including the SyntSubj: *May dumating* lit. 'There.is having.arrived'. = 'Someone or something has arrived'.

2.4. Syntactic Subject and "Ergativity"

Most cases of problematic SyntSubjs come from languages with "ergativity." But what exactly is ergativity? This term is too vague; it does not correspond to a clearly defined notion. If we consider the adjective *ergative*, it is much easier to make its meaning more precise: it is applicable to at least three different nouns — *language*, *construction* and *case* — and has accordingly three different interpretations (Mel'čuk 1988: 251).

— **Ergative language** is a language in which a bi-actantial verb semantically corresponding to a transitive verb in a non-ergative language has as the generic component of its meaning the semantic expression 'X <u>undergoes</u> a change, caused by an action of Y on X' (in a non-ergative language the corresponding meaning is converse: 'Y, by an action on X, <u>causes</u> that X changes'). As a result, a verb in an ergative language cannot, generally speaking, have a DirO; since a transitive verb is a verb that allows a DirO, an ergative language does not have "basic" transitive verbs (it can have transitive verbs produced by diathetic modifications; see Note 15, p. 195). As the counterpart of transitive verbs, an ergative language features agentive verbs, which require an agentive complement.

   Ergative languages include, for instance, Dyirbal, as well as Lezgian, Avar and Archi, see below. This is what could be called deep, or semantic, ergativity. (The current term is syntactically ergative languages.)

— **Ergative construction** is a construction SyntSubj←**subj**–MV where the SyntSubj is marked by some other case than the nominative, something like 'By.me am.reading a.book'. This construction is found, for instance, in Georgian, Hindi, Chukchi, Inuktitut and Warlpiri; the presence of an ergative construction characterizes surface, or syntactic, ergativity. (The current term is morphologically ergative languages.) Note that an ergative language cannot have an ergative construction.

— **Ergative case** is a case that exclusively marks certain SyntSubjs — namely, a "transitive" or an "active" SyntSubj. The ergative case is found, for instance, in Lezgian, Georgian and Basque; two dead languages of Asia Minor, Urartean and Hurrian, also had an ergative case. The ergative case implies the existence of an ergative construction, while the inverse is not true: an ergative construction can exist without ergative case. (See the remarks on the necessity of distinguishing ergative construction and ergative case in Tchekhoff 1979: 28–29.) The ergative as a typical case of certain SyntSubjs in certain languages is opposed to the nominative, which is also typical of certain SyntSubjs in certain languages. The nominative, however, is defined not by its syntactic functions, but by the fact that it is the case of nomination: the least marked grammatical case of nouns, appearing, in the first place, when a noun is used to designate an entity (Mel'čuk 1988: 208). For other grammatical cases that mark SyntSubjs, see Subsection **4.1**, p. 185.

3. SYNTACTIC SUBJECT: AN ATTEMPT AT A DEFINITION

I begin with a universal definition of SyntSubj, applicable to any language.

Definition 1: Syntactic Subject

  The SyntSubj is the **most privileged Synt-actant** of the syntactic predicate (≈ Main Verb) in **L**; what exactly are syntactic privileges in **L** has to be indicated by a specific list of SyntSubj privileges elaborated for **L**.

Comments

— The syntactic privileges of the SyntSubj in a given **L** are, as a general rule, the values of all or at least of some of the seven universal definitorial parameters indicated in Table 1 plus perhaps some other definitorial parameters specific to **L**.

— Definition 1 entails the existence of SyntSubj in any **L**, because a language necessarily has the most privileged actant of the MV. It is logically possible for two actants to share

the same privileges, but practically, the actants of an MV must be distinguishable one way or another, and one of them, most probably, stands out.

       — Definition 1 does not entail the existence of SyntSubj in any clause of any **L**: subject-less sentences are quite common (first, "degenerate clauses" without a finite MV: *What a beautiful day!*, *Ouch!*, *Never in my life*, etc.; second, full-blown clauses with a finite MV, but without a SyntSubj — in languages that allow for such a state of affairs, such as Lezgian).

       — Definition 1 is in full agreement with the hierarchy of clause element types stated in Keenan & Comrie 1977: $\boxed{\text{SyntSubj} > \text{DirO} > \text{IndirO} > \text{Obl(ique)O}}$. This hierarchy is based on the diminishing accessibility of noun phrases for relativization; later it was shown that it also covers many other syntactic operations.

     Since the proposed definition does not mention any particular properties of any particular language, it makes the SyntSubj cross-linguistically universal. However, in a different sense, the SyntSubj is at the same time language-specific in so far as syntactic privileges are different in different languages: thus, in many Indo-European languages the main privilege of a clause element is to impose agreement on the Main Verb, while in Malagasy it is to occupy the clause-final position.

     The general notion of SyntSubj can be well illustrated with Russian data, because in Russian it is straightforward; the same state of affairs is observed in many other languages — Slavic and, more generally, Indo-European languages.

     In Russian, the **subjectival** SyntRel and, consequently, the SyntSubj (boxed in the examples), is defined by the following properties. (For simplicity's sake, I consider only nominal SyntSubjs.)

     1. The SyntSubj L_2 depends only on the head L_1 of the clause, be it a finite verb or any other element (an infinitive, an interjection, a special $V_{IMPER.2SG}$ form, etc.; the head of the clause — the Synt-predicate — is boldfaced):

(8)   Russian

    a. $\boxed{Ivan}$ ***spit*** ‹***spal***›
        'Ivan is sleeping ‹was sleeping›'.

    b.   *A* $\boxed{Ivan}$ *– nu* ***orat´*** *i vyskočil iz komnaty*
        lit. 'And Ivan — NU to.yell and ran.out of.the room'. = 'And Ivan yelled and ran out of the room'.

    c. $\boxed{Ivan}$ ***bac*** *Petru po morde i vyskočil iz komnaty*
        lit. 'Ivan smack! to.Peter on [his] mug [= 'smacked Peter's mug'] and ran out of the room'.

    d.   ***Pridi*** $\boxed{Ivan}$ *vo-vremja, vsë bylo by v porjadke*
        lit. 'Come$_{IMPER}$ Ivan on.time [= Had Ivan come on time], everything would.have been in order'.

     2. In Russian, the SyntSubj L_2 is non-omissible from the Synt-structure of the clause whose head is a finite verb, since the form of this verb is controlled by the SyntSubj (= the finite verb agrees with the SyntSubj). The sentences in (9) include zero subjects — lexemes having empty signifiers and perceptible only due to their syntactics (a dummy $\emptyset_{(neu, 3sg)}$, similar to *Eng*. IT and *Fr*. IL; the indefinite personal $\emptyset_{(3pl)}^{«PEOPLE»}$, similar to *Fr*. ON and *Ger*. MAN; and the impersonal $\emptyset_{(neu, 3sg)}^{«ELEMENTS»}$).[5]

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     [5] Recall that a language zero is simply a meaningful absence; see Mel'čuk 2006: 469–516.

(9) Russian

    a.   *Menja*$_{ACC}$ $\boxed{\emptyset_{\text{(neu, 3sg)}}}$ ***tošn*+*it*$_{3SG}$**
        'It nauseates me'.

    b.   *Mne*$_{DAT}$ $\boxed{\emptyset_{\text{(neu, 3sg)}}}$ ***byl*+*o*$_{NEU, 3SG}$** *prijatno*
        lit. 'It was pleasant to.me'. ≈ 'I felt good'.

    c.   *Mne*$_{DAT}$ $\boxed{\emptyset_{\text{(neu, 3sg)}}}$ ***povezl*+*o*$_{NEU, 3SG}$**
        lit. 'It favored to.me'. ≈ 'I was lucky'.

    d.   *Menja*$_{ACC}$ $\boxed{\emptyset_{\text{(3pl)}}^{\text{«PEOPLE»}}}$ *xorošo* ***prinjal*+*i*$_{PL}$**
        lit. '«They» received me well'. ≈ 'I was well received'.

    e.   (i)   *Most*$_{ACC}$ $\boxed{\emptyset_{\text{(3pl)}}^{\text{«PEOPLE»}}}$ ***snesl*+*i*$_{PL}$**
             lit. '«They» demolished the.bridge'.

       (ii)   *Most*$_{ACC}$ $\boxed{\emptyset_{\text{(3pl)}}^{\text{«PEOPLE»}}}$ ***snesl*+*o*$_{NEU, 3SG}$**
             lit. '«It» destroyed the.bridge' [e.g., a flood or a hurricane].

3. In a declarative sentence, the SyntSubj L_2 normally linearly precedes its governor L_1, although in several cases L_2 may follow L_1 (as determined by a number of particular factors, mainly communicative ones; a list of these is, of course, necessary).

4. The Synt-head of the clause L_1 agrees with the SyntSubj L_2 and only with it (in person, number and gender)—of course, if L_1 is a finite verb capable of agreement: thus, in examples (8b–d), the boldfaced L_1 is invariant and does not show agreement.

Agreement of the MV with the SyntSubj

Speaking of MV agreement, three possible complications should be kept in mind.

— The notion of agreement is complex, and no rigorous definition can be given here (see, e.g., Mel'čuk 2006: 58*ff*); an intuitive understanding seems to be sufficient. But it must be emphasized that

‖ "the LU **A** agrees with the LU **B**" does not mean that **A** faithfully copies some features of **B**; this only means that **B** controls the morphological form of **A** in a particular way.

Thus, the Russian MV agrees with a prepositional phrase PO + NP ≈ 'NP each …' in 3SG, NEUTER: *Prixodil*+*o* [NEU.3SG] ***po pjat´ posetitelej v čas*** lit. 'Came **each** five visitors in hour'. = 'Each hour five visitors came'. Similarly, in Arabic, the MV agrees with the SyntSubj, although the rules of this agreement are by no means straightforward:

If the SyntSubj denotes humans:
- • If MV precedes the SyntSubj, then, whatever the grammatical number of the SyntSubj:
  - • if the SyntSubj denotes male humans, then the MV must be in the singular masculine;
  - • if the SyntSubj denotes female humans, then the MV must be in the singular feminine.
- • If the MV follows the SyntSubj, then it agrees with the SyntSubj in gender and number.

If the SyntSubj does not denote humans, then the MV must be in the singular feminine, whatever the gender and the number of the SyntSubj.

— We must make sure that in **L** the agreement of the MV is indeed controlled by a syntactically determined unit rather than by a semantic factor, for instance, a grammatical person hierarchy "1 > 2 > 3" or an animacy/agentivity/voluntariness/etc. hierarchy. An example for Awa Pit (Columbia; Kibrik 2003: 158–160):

(10) a. i   ***Na*+Ø**   *pjan*+*ni* +***s***
                  I   NOM   hit   FUT 1SG
          '**I** will hit you_{SG}/you_{PL}/him/them'.

      and
      ii   ***Na*+*wa***   *pjan*+*ni* +***s***
                  I   ACC   hit   FUT 1SG
          'You_{SG}/You_{PL}/He/They will hit **me**'.

      b. i   ***Nu*+Ø** /***Us*+Ø**   *pjan*+*ni* +***zi***
                  you_{SG} NOM /**he** NOM hit   FUT 2/3SG
          '**You**_{SG}/**He** will hit him/them'.

      and
      ii   ***Nu*+*wa*** /***Us*+*a***   *pjan*+*ni* +***zi***
                  you_{SG} ACC /**he** ACC hit   FUT 2/3SG
          'He/They will hit **you**_{SG}/**him**'.

In Awa Pit, the MV agrees with the actant higher on the person hierarchy, whatever its syntactic role. For such a language, the agreement of the MV is not relevant for establishing the SyntSubj.

— The MV often agrees with a zero dummy SyntSubj, as, for instance, in Zoščenko's sentence [*Nadkus sdelan, i*] *pal´cem **smjato*** lit. '[A bite is done, and] with.finger [it is] crumpled'. When the MV has the "unmarked/neutral/default form" (3SG, etc.) in the absence of an overt SyntSubj, this can mean that there is a zero-lexeme SyntSubj Ø$_{(3sg)}$, which imposes this agreement (Mel'čuk 2006, Ch. 9, especially p. 475). The failure to have recourse to a zero SyntSubj leads to bizarre results, such as treating a normal DirO as a "derived subject";[6] see below, **4.2.1**.

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[6] Consider the example (26b) from Biblical Hebrew in Keenan 1976: 325:

(i)   *Bĕ-γɔrɔl   yeḥoleq*   ´εθ   hɔ-´ɔrεʂ
      by lottery   divide-PASS.IND.PAST.3SG.MASC   ACC   **the land**
      'By.lots [**it**] was.divided the land'.

The phrase 'the land' is not a "derived" SyntSubj; it is marked as a DirO and it is a DirO. The SyntSubj here is a dummy zero, corresponding to the English IT; this is an impersonal construction.

Of course, a zero dummy SyntSubj must be postulated with caution:
— It should not be introduced if the MV does not show agreement at all (e.g., Lezgian).
— It should not be introduced for the only reason that the MV is in the least marked form, as, e.g., in the Hindi sentence (ii-a), where the MV is MASC.3SG:

(ii) a. *Rītā*+*ne   laṛkī*+Ø+*ko dekh*+Ø   +*ā   hai*
        Rita   INSTR   girl_{(fem)} SG DAT see   PERF.PART **MASC.SG** be-PRES.**3SG**
        'Rita has seen the girl'.

Here the the past participle DEKHĀ agrees with LAṚKĪ (recall that agreement does not necessarily mean the identity of features); to see this, it suffices to replace LAṚKĪ with an inanimate noun that appears in the nominative, and the MV reacts to this modification:

5. In Russian, the SyntSubj L_2 is marked by the nominative, except for two cases:

— if L_2 is not a nominal and cannot have cases (e.g., the infinitive in (11a), the finite verb as the head of a subordinate subject clause in (11b) and the conjunction ČTO in (11c));

— if an over-riding factor intervenes — for example, if L_2 subordinates a numeral (11d), or if L_1 is negated (11e–f), or else the MV L_1 is a verb that allows for the SyntSubj in the genitive.

The nominative is — in any language that has grammatical cases — the case of nomination; in other words, when something is named in a language by a noun, this noun is in the nominative. The nominative is therefore a privileged case, and it is generally expected expected that the SyntSubj be marked by the nominative.

(11) Russian

    a.   *Idti* **bylo** *trudno*
        'To.walk was difficult'.

    b.   *Čego on* *xočet*, **bylo** *nejasno*
        'What he wanted was unclear'.

    c.   *Čto* *on bolen*, **bylo** *očevidno*
        'That he [was] sick was obvious'.

    d.   *Ix*$_{\text{GEN}}$ **bylo** *pjatero*
        'They were five'.

    e.   *Pis'ma*$_{\text{PL.NOM}}$ *ne* **prišli**
        'The.letters did not arrive'. ~

        Pisem$_{\text{PL.GEN}}$ *ne* **prišlo**
        'No letter arrived'.

    f.   *Ivan*$_{\text{SG.NOM}}$ *ne* **byl** *na beregu*
        'Ivan wasn't on the beach'. ~

        Ivana$_{\text{SG.GEN}}$ *ne* **bylo** *na beregu*.
        'There was no Ivan on the beach'.

6. In Russian, the SyntSubj is involved in passivization: it gets demoted, and its syntactic position goes to the former DirO; cf.:

(12) a.   *Ivan*$_{\text{NOM-SyntSubj}}$ *pokupaet dom*$_{\text{ACC-DirO}}$
        'Ivan is buying the house'. ~

        Dom$_{\text{NOM-SyntSubj}}$ *pokupaetsja Ivanom*$_{\text{INSTR-AgCo}}$
        'The house is being bought by Ivan'.

     b.   *Ivan*$_{\text{NOM-SyntSubj}}$ *kupil dom*$_{\text{ACC-DirO}}$
        'Ivan bought the house'. ~

        Dom$_{\text{NOM-SyntSubj}}$ *byl kuplen Ivanom*$_{\text{INSTR-AgCo}}$
        'The house was bought by Ivan'.

(ii) b. *Rītā+ne   kamr +ā /e+Ø   dekh+Ø   +ā   /+e hai   /haĩ.*
    Rita INSTR room$_{(masc)}$ SG /PL NOM see   PERF.PART **MASC.SG**/ **PL** be-PRES.**3SG**/be-PRES.**3PL**
    'Rita has seen the room'.

    c. *Rītā+ne   čiṭṭʰī +Ø+Ø /+yã+Ø dekh+Ø   +ī̄ /+ī̃̄ hai   /haĩ.*
    Rita INSTR letter$_{(fem)}$ SG NOM / PL NOM see   PERF.PART **FEM.SG**/ **PL** be-PRES.**3SG**/be-PRES.**3PL**
    'Rita has seen the letter/s'.

7. Pronominalization does not affect the Russian SyntSubj's properties in any special way.

All other Synt-subjecthood properties on the Keenan's checklist concern not so much the syntactically defined clause elements, but some semantic or communicative entities; I will give three examples.

— The control of the coreferential Actor in a phrase of the form ČTOBY + V$_{INF}$ 'in.order.to V' belongs in Russian to the semantic Actor rather than to the SyntSubj (*pace* Kozinskij 1983: 18–19); or, to put it differently, the possibility of using such a phrase depends on the coreference not with the SyntSubj as such, but with the semantic Actor (the person or body that fired employees in (13)):

(13) Russian

    Mnogie ⟨sotrudniki⟩ *byli uvoleny* ‹*lišilis´ raboty›,   *čtoby sokratit´ štaty*

    'Many employees were fired   ‹*lost [their] jobs› in.order.to reduce [the] staff'.

The choice of the ČTOBY + V$_{INF}$ construction happens during the SemS ⇔ DSyntS transition, and it is only natural that the conditions for this choice are semantic (i.e., unrelated specifically to SyntSubj).

— In a similar vein, Nichols *et al.* 1980: 376–377 demonstrate that, on the one hand, the control of deverbal adverbials in Russian, traditionally ascribed to the SyntSubj, can depend on its Thematicity (= Topicality):

(14) Russian

    a.   The SyntSubj is thematic:

        Pereexav v Moskvu, ⟨Ivan$_{THEME}$⟩ *ustroilsja na ètot post*

        'Having moved to Moscow, Ivan obtained this position'.

    vs.

    b.   The SyntSubj is rhematic:

        **Pereexav v Moskvu, na ètot post ustroilsja* ⟨Ivan$_{RHEM.FOCUS}$⟩

        'Having moved to Moscow, it was Ivan who obtained this position'.

On the other hand, the authors aptly note (pp. 383–384) that the control of deverbal adverbials by a dative IndirObj with psychological predicates (*Uznav ob ètom,* **mne**$_{DAT}$ *zaxotelos´ poznakomit´sja s nim* lit. 'Having.learned this, the.desire.came to.me to.meet him') does not constitute an argument in favor of its subjecthood: its control capacity — to the extent that such sentences are accepted by speakers — is explained by its semantic and pragmatic roles (it denotes the Experiencer and is thematic).

— The control of the coreference with the understood "subject" of an infinitive is not an exclusive syntactic property of SyntSubj, either. For instance, in (15), such control belongs to an obvious oblique object *dlja Ivana* 'for Ivan', which is coreferential with the "subject" of the infinitive (it is Ivan who will be going to London):

(15) *Dlja Ivana važno poexat´ v London*

    'For Ivan [it is] important to go to London'.

This property accrues to a semantic role (the Experiencer, in this sentence — Ivan, for whom it is important) rather than to a syntactic entity. (For a detailed review of characterizing, or functional, properties of the Russian SyntSubj, see Testelec 2001: 317–359.)

Thus, in Russian, the SyntSubj can be defined clearly and robustly since it is specified by the positive values of all definitorial parameters of SyntSubjs: it depends only on the MV;

it is non-omissible; in a declarative sentence, it precedes the MV (if communicative factors do not require inversion, which constitutes an explicable "violation"); it is the only actant of the MV that controls the MV's agreement; it is marked by the nominative case; its role is targeted by the passive; and its pronominalization does not affect its status in any way.[7] However, the theoretical debate over SyntSubjs (and DirOs) started not with Russian, but with other languages, where this notion is not so straightforward. Therefore, I will discuss the notion of SyntSubj in some languages considered problematic in this respect.

4. ESTABLISHING THE SYNTACTIC SUBJECT IN A LANGUAGE

The most "material," easily observable properties of the SyntSubj is agreement of the MV and the case marking of the SyntSubj itself; so let us begin with agreement. Based on the agreement properties of the MV, three major different types of languages must be examined: in the sentences of **L**, the MV either does not agree with its actants at all (= no agreement of the MV): **4.1**; or the MV agrees just with one actant (= monopersonal agreement of the MV): **4.2**; or else the MV agrees with more than one actant (= polypersonal agreement of the MV): **4.3**.

Recall that agreement must be considered in the simplest clause possible, with the least marked form of the MV (since in a more complex form of the MV the agreement with the SyntSubj might be different).

4.1. No Agreement of the Main Verb

Language type 1: If in language **L** the MV does not agree with any of its actants, then we have two situations**: L** either has nominal cases, or it does not.

Subtype 1a. In **L** the MV does not agree with its actants, but actants are case-marked for their syntactic role.

The SyntSubj is the actant L that is marked, generally speaking, by one of four cases:

either 1) by the nominative (= the least marked case, that of nomination);

or 2) by a special case called the subjective (the case used to mark all and only SyntSubjs, including the only actant of an intransitive verb; the best known subjective is found in Japanese: the case in **-ga**);

or else 3) by another special case, the absolutive (the case used to mark intransitive SyntSubjs and DirOs; we find it, for instance, in Tongan);

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[7] Of course, Russian also has, of course, some "problematic" SyntSubjs, for instance:

— In *Èto*$_{SG}$ *byli*$_{PL}$ *moi druz'ja*$_{PL}$ 'This were my friends' the copula agrees not with the SyntSubj ÈTO 'this', but with the nominal attribute.

— The sentence *Mne*$_{DAT}$ *xočetsja pokoj+a*$_{GEN}$ ≈ 'I want some peace' = lit. '[It] wants.itself to.me of.peace' does not have an overt SyntSubj, but manifests a dummy zero; the same is true for *Im*$_{DAT}$ *èt+ogo*$_{GEN}$ *xvataet* lit. '[It] suffices to.them of.this'. = 'This is sufficient for them'.

— A number of verbs (usually with the prefix NA-) admit the SyntSubj in the genitive:

(i)   *Naexali sjuda* vsjakie$_{NOM}$ lit. 'Came here anybodys'. = 'God knows who came here en masse'. ~

    Naexalo sjuda vsjakix$_{GEN}$ [*idem*, but more colloquial and more depreciative with respect to the Actor].

On the SyntSubj in Russian bi-nominative sentences (of the type *Direktor laboratorii — Ivan* ≈ 'It is Ivan who is the lab director'), see Mel'čuk 2012.

or, finally, 4) the SyntSubj can be in a different case, but only exceptionally — with some lexically marked verbs and under special conditions.

A good example of Subtype **1a** language is Lezgian.

Lezgian. The Lezgian verb does not agree with its actants (no person-number or class inflection of the verb); there is no voice nor any other voice-like category. The actants of a verb are distinguished solely by case markings: the only actant of a monoactantial MV is in the nominative, as in (16a), while with a biactantial MV the actant that expresses the Agent is in the special ergative case in **-di**, and the other one that expresses the Patient is in the nominative, see (16c):

(16)   Lezgian (Daghestanian family; Mel'čuk 1988: 207–249)

    a. $\boxed{\textit{Gada+Ø/jar+Ø \quad /Gada+jar+Ø}}$ *χta +na*
        boy   SG/PL   NOM /boy   PL   NOM return AOR
        '[The] boy/s returned'.

    b.   **χta+na*
        return AOR

        'There.was.returning'.

    c.   *Buba+Ø+di* $\boxed{\textit{gada+Ø/jar+Ø}}$ *gatʰa+na*
        father SG ERG boy   SG/PL   NOM beat   AOR
        'Father beat.up [the] boy/s'. = lit. 'By.Father [the] boy/s got.a.beating'.

    d. $\boxed{\textit{Gada+Ø/jar+Ø}}$ *gatʰa+na*
        boy   SG/PL   NOM beat   AOR
        '[The] boy/s got.a.beating'.

    e.   **Buba+Ø+di gatʰa+na*
        father   SG ERG beat   AOR
        lit. 'By.Father [somebody] got.a.beating'.

    f.   *Buba+Ø+di*   *čʰukur+izva*
        father SG ERG run   PRES
        'Father is running'. = lit. 'By.Father there.is.running'.

    g.   *Čʰukur+izva*
        run   PRES
        'There.is.running'.

    h.   *Gišin+da*
        hungry PRES
        'There.is.hunger'.

The actant in the ergative is always omissible, as in (16c) *vs.* (16d), even if it is the only actant explicitly present in the clause, as in (16f) *vs.* (16g). The actant in the nominative is, on the contrary, not omissible, cf. (16b) and (16e). Crucially, (16d) is an absolutely normal, context-independent, current type of sentence. If both actants are present with a transitive MV, the N_{NOM} is positioned closer to the MV. Now, some sentences, such as (16f–g), might give the impression that the nominative actant is absent, yet it is not the case: the verb ČʰUKUR+UN '[to] run' is, in point of fact, a contraction of the phrase ČʰUKUR AV+UN 'running do', so that the noun ČʰUKUR, not used as such in Lezgian anymore, plays the role of SyntSubj. Sentences of the type of (16f–g) can be produced only with such "contracted" verbs (which are rather numerous in Lezgian). Genuine subjectless sentences are possible only with semantically spe-

cific — for instance, meteorological — verbs: *Meq'ida* '[It] is. cold', *Mič'ida* '[It] is.dark', etc. The corresponding Indo-European sentences have either an explicit dummy SyntSubj — *Eng*. IT, *Fr*. IL, *Ger*. ES — or a zero lexeme SyntSubj Ø₃SG, which imposes the 3SG/NEU form on the verb: *Rus*. *Xolodn+o₃SG.NEU* 'It is cold' or *Sp. Hac+e₃SG frío* lit. 'It does cold'. But Lezgian meteorological sentences have no zero dummy SyntSubj, since the verb knows no number-person agreement; (16h) is a really subjectless sentence, of the only possible kind in Lezgian.

    Without going into more details (see *op. cit.* for additional arguments), I can conclude that the SyntSubj in Lezgian is the actant marked by the nominative, because it has four out of seven SyntSubj's privileges: 1) the exclusive dependence on the MV, 2) non-omissibility from the syntactic structure, 3) the preferred linear position immediately before the MV and 4) the nominative marking. The Lezgian SyntSubj possesses also an additional, language-specific privilege: it controls the agreement in number of the participle in a construction with the copula (Mel'čuk 1988: 221), as seen in (17)

(17) a.   *Zun /Gada+Ø+Ø   k'elaj+di+Ø   ja*
           I-NOM /boy   SG NOM educated SG NOM   be-PRES
           'I/[The] boy am/is educated'. ~

      b.   *Čʰun /Gada+jar+Ø k'elaj+bur+Ø   ja*
           we-NOM /boy   PL   NOM educated PL   NOM be-PRES
           'We/Boys are educated'.

    Thus, Lezgian does not have an ergative construction, because its SyntSubj is always in the nominative; however, it does have an ergative case: the agentive complement is necessarily in this case, which is not used for anything else. And most importantly, Lezgian is an ergative language — in the sense that its transitive verbs have a diathesis inverse with respect to that of the transitive verbs in SAE languages (or, for that matter, in Hindi). The English verb 'X beats up Y' corresponds in Lezgian to a verb meaning 'Y gets a beating from X'; 'X sees Y' is Lezgian 'Y is.visible to X'; etc.[8]

    As a language with the SyntSubj marked by the subjective case, I will consider Tagalog.[9]

(18) Tagalog (the marker of the oblique case **ng** is pronounced /naŋ/; voice markers are infixes)
    a.   *D +um +ating   **ang aking apó***
         come PERF.ACT come   SUBJ   my   grandson
         'My grandson came'.

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    [8] M. Haspelmath's detailed grammar of Lezgian proposes a different description of Lezgian predicative construction (Haspelmath 1993: 287–298), in which the NERG is considered the Synt-Subj and the ergativity of Lezgian as a language is rejected; see also Haspelmath 1991.

    [9] The Tagalog case expressed by **ang** is not the nominative: it is not used for nomination. The nominative in Tagalog has a zero marker — as a well-behaved nominative should — and is used for nomination, as well as in several syntactic constructions: as the marker of an address (*Oy, lalake*NOM*!* 'Hey, man!'), of a nominal attribute (*Aking apó*NOM *si*SUBJ *Ramon* 'Ramon [is] my grandson'), of the complement of a measure noun (*dakot na bigas*NOM 'handful [of] rice', where **na** is a linker — marker of syntactic dependency, similar to the idafa marker in Persian), of a nominal modifier (*bahay na mambubukid*NOM 'peasant house', etc., wherever the noun is not referential or indefinite (e.g., *Siyá'y nagsalitáng parang batà*NOM 'He speaks like [a] child' or *May libro*NOM *sa mesa* 'There.is [a] book on.the table'). The nominative is also used for the SyntSubj — in an alternation with the subjective (under specific conditions): *Kumain na si*SUBJ *nanay* lit. 'Has-eaten already Mother'. ~ *Kumain na nanay*NOM; *Napakatamad ang*SUBJ *batang ito* lit. 'Very.lazy.is child this' ~ *Napakatamad batang*NOM *ito* 'this child is very lazy'; *Napakatamad ang*SUBJ *lahat ng anak niya* lit. 'Very.lazy.are all children his'. ~ *Napakatamad lahat ng anak*NOM *niya*'; etc.

(18) b. *May   d   +um   +ating*
          exist come PERF.ACT come
          'There.is having.come'. = 'Somebody came'.

   c. *S +um +ulat ang aking apó   ng liham sa   titser*
       write PERF.ACT write **SUBJ** my   grandson OBL letter LATIVE teacher
       'My grandson wrote the teacher the/a letter with a pencil'.

   d. *S +in +ulat+Ø   ng aking apó   ang liham sa   titser*
       write PERF write PASS-DIR OBL my   grandson **SUBJ** letter DAT teacher
       'The letter was.written by my grandson to the teacher'.

   e. *Sulat+an   ng aking apó   ng liham ang titser*
       write PASS-INDIR.PAST OBL my   grandson OBL letter **SUBJ** teacher
       lit. 'The teacher was.written.to the letter by my grandson with a pencil'.

   Summing up, the SyntSubj's privileges in Tagalog are four: 1) it depends only on the MV, 2) it imposes optional plural agreement of the MV (Kroeger 1993: 24–25), 3) it is marked by the subjective case, and 4) it is buttressed by a rich system of passives—among them, a direct and an indirect, or locative, passive, which are shown in (18d–e) and which promote other sentence elements to SyntSubj status.[10]

   Tongan, while being genetically related to Tagalog (also Malayo-Polynesian branch of Austronesian family), is structurally rather different. As in Tagalog, the Tongan verb has no number-personal agreement, and the linear placement of actants does not give a clue as to their syntactic role, since it is relatively flexible. Again as Tagalog, Tongan has cases, also expressed analytically, among which I will indicate the nominative (unmarked, i.e., having a zero marker **-Ø**), the absolutive case marked by **'a**,[11] the ergative with the marker **'e**, and the dative with the marker **ki**.

(19) Tongan (Tchekhoff 1979, Otsuka 2000 and 2010)
   a. *'Oku 'alu   'a Sione*
       PRES leave, go ABS John
       'John is leaving'.

   b. *'Oku 'alu*
       PRES leave, go
       'He/She [mentioned in the preceding text] is leaving'.

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   [10] The Tagalog SyntSubj has several typical behavioral characteristics of SyntSubjs: only it can launch a floating quantifier 'all', only it can relativize, only it controls coreferential deletability, etc. (Kroeger 1993: 19–36). However, the history of ideas surrounding the subjecthood in Tagalog is quite interesting; I learned it from Kroeger 1993: 19–20 and 2007, and I feel it is worth telling here in a few words. The founders of Tagalog studies (beginning with L. Bloomfield in 1917) had no problem with the Tagalog SyntSubj — they identified it exactly as it is done in the present paper. But then in 1958 an eminent American specialist in Austronersian languages, Howard McKaughan, for several FALSE reasons changed the terminoglogy and proposed to call the SyntSubj in Tagalog and structurally similar languages "the Topic." Unfortunately, the idea caught. Later McKaughan realized how wrong he had been and wrote in a 1973 paper: "Please, reader, forgive me for confusing the issue by calling these subjects the 'topic' of the sentence" (a rare example of real scientific honesty and sincerity). However, inexplicably, his incorrect proposal was accepted by acclamation and still persists, while his strong retraction was practically paid no attention at all…

   [11] The name of the Tongan absolutive should not be confounded with the name "absolutive" often given to the nominative case in languages with the ergative construction: the Tongan absolutive is formally different from the nominative. Note, however, that this absolutive optionally alternates with the nominative in full referential NPs:

(i) *'Oku 'alu 'a*ABS *e tamasi. ~ 'Oku 'alu e tamasi*
     lit. 'Is leaving the boy'.

Unlike Tagalog, where the SyntSubj is omissible, cf. (18b), in Tongan the SyntSubj is not omissible: in (19b), it is present in the Synt-structure, but is elided from the sentence (not from its structure!) by a Pro-Drop rule.

(19) c. *'Oku sio+Ø* 　　 ⎡*'a Sione*⎤
　　　 PRES see NEUTR ABS John
　　　 'John sees'. = 'John is not blind'.

　 d. *'Oku sio+Ø* 　 ⎡*'a Sione*⎤ *ki Mele*
　　　 PRES see NEUTR ABS John DAT Mary
　　　 'John sees Mary'.

　 e. *'Oku sio+'i* 　 *'a Mele* ⎡*'e Sione*⎤
　　　 PRES see TRANS ABS Mary ERG John
　　　 'John stares at Mary'.

　 f. *'Oku sio+'i* 　 *'a Sione*
　　　 PRES see TRANS ABS John
　　　 'He/She [mentioned in the preceding text] stares at John'.

　 g. *'Oku sio+'i* 　 ⎡*'e Sione*⎤
　　　 PRES see TRANS ERG John
　　　 'John stares at him/her [mentioned in the preceding text]'.

However, the case marking does not allow us to decide which of the two actants of a transitive MV in (19e) is more privileged. Their omissibility is practically the same (cf. (19f–g)), and, in sharp contrast with Tagalog, Tongan has no voice-like (= actant-shuffling) verbal alternations. Yet there are two phenomena that are helpful: cliticization and transitivization with the suffix **-'i** (19e–g)**.**

Cliticization: personal pronominal clitics (of the three numbers — singular, dual and plural, of the three persons, and in addition exclusive *vs.* inclusive), which are the only signs[12] allowed between the tense marker and the MV, correspond to the single actant of a $V_{(intrans)}$ and to the ergative-marked actant of a $V_{(trans)}$; the clitics replacing the N_{ABS} and the N_{ERG} are homophonous:

(20) a. *'Oku* ⎡*ne /ou*⎤ *'alu*
　　　 PRES he-ABS/I-ABS leave
　　　 'He is leaving'./'I am leaving'.

　 b. *'Oku* ⎡*ne /ou*⎤ *sio+Ø*
　　　 PRES he-ABS/I-ABS see NEUTR
　　　 'He sees'./'I see'.

　 c. *'Oku* ⎡*ne /ou*⎤ *sio +'i* 　 *'a Sioné*
　　　 PRES he-ERG/I-ERG stare at TRANS ABS John
　　　 'He stares at John'./'I stare at John'.

　 d. *'Oku* ⎡*ne /ou*⎤ *sio+'i*
　　　 PRES he-ERG/I-ERG see TRANS
　　　 'He stares at him./I stare at him'.

　 e. **'Oku ne /ou sio+'i* 　 ⎡*'e Sione*⎤
　　　 PRES he-ABS/I-ABS see TRANS ERG John
　　　 'John stares at him [⇔ *ne*] / me [⇔ *ou*]'.

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12 With the exception of a handful of adverbs, such as 'often' and 'again'.

Examples in (20) show that clitics correspond either to the N$_{ABS}$ with a V$_{(intrans)}$, as in (20a), or to the N$_{ERG}$ with a V$_{(trans)}$, as in (20b–d), but not to the N$_{ABS}$ with a V$_{(trans)}$, as in (20e); one can conclude that an N$_{ABS}$ with a V$_{(intrans)}$ and an N$_{ERG}$ with a V$_{(trans)}$ are SyntSubjs, as shown by boxing in (20).

<u>Transitivization</u>: the suffix **-'i** attached to a semantically bi-actantial V$_{(intrans)}$ turns it into a V$_{(trans)}$, without affecting its semantic valence; the verb V+**'i** requires that its second semantic actant be explicitly expressed as a DirO, i.e., as an N$_{ABS}$. (NEUTR(al) and TRANS(itivizer) are grammemes of the inflectional category of transitivization, see Note 21, p. 201.) Cf. (20c–d) and (21b), which also identify N$_{ERG}$ as the SyntSubj:

(21) a. *'Oku 'uma+Ø*   ⌐*'a Sione*¬ *mo Mele*
          PRES kiss NEUTRAL ABS John   and Mary
          lit. 'John kisses with/at Mary'.

     b. *'Oku 'uma+'i*   *'a 'Mele* ⌐*'e Sione*¬
          PRES kiss TRANS ABS Mary ERG John
          'John kisses Mary'.

The SyntSubj's privileges in Tongan then are as follows: 1) it depends only on the MV, 2) it is the only sentence element expressible by a preverbal pronominal clitic and 3) its case is affected by transitivization (the absolute is replaced by the ergative).

Unlike Tagalog, Tongan does have an ergative case and an ergative construction, but it is — like Tagalog — a non-ergative language; in this respect it resembles Georgian, Basque and Hindi and contrasts with Lezgian and Archi.

However, the description of Tongan subjectival constructions proposed here faces a problem: the absolutive case. The existence of this case — different from the nominative — in other languages is an open question (as far as I know, other Polynesian languages do not have it), and as such, it weakens my proposal: typological plausibility is required.

Subtype 1b. In **L** the MV does not agree with its actants and the actants are not case-marked for their syntactic role; the MV is not inflected at all.[13]

In such a language, the SyntSubj is the actant L that occupies a special linear position in the sentence. Vietnamese and Mandarin Chinese are good examples: here, the SyntSubj immediately precedes the MV (as before, in the examples the SyntSubj is boxed, and the MV boldfaced).

(22) Vietnamese (Trương 1970)
     a. ⌐*Tôi/Giáp*¬ **đã về**
          lit. 'I/Giap PAST come.back'.   = 'I/Giap returned'.
     b. ⌐*Tôi/Giáp*¬ **đã đọc** *quyển sách*
          lit. 'I/Giap PAST read book'.   = 'I/Giap read [the] book'.

Vietnamese has no voice, so the dependence on the MV and the preverbal linear position are the only privileges of the SyntSubj here. (I do not know about additional definitorial properties of the SyntSubj specific to Vietnamese.) However, to prevent possible misunderstandings, let me indicate that a preverbal noun in Vietnamese can also be a prolepsis that expresses the Theme of the sentence:

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[13] In a language without grammatical cases where the verb does not agree with its actants, but has voices, the SyntSubj will be identifiable by the passive permutation (plus, of course, linear position). Such languages are, for instance, Malagasy and Malay/Indonesian.

(22) c. *Giáp,* n̄ó́ *đã   đọc* *quyển sách*
          lit. 'Giap, he PAST read book'.   = 'As for Giap, he read [the] book'.

A sentence of the type of (22d) shows a DirO turned into a prolepsis (Trương 1970: 105):

(22) d. *Quyển sách, đã đọc*
          lit. 'Book, read'. = 'The book, somebody read it'.

The SyntSubj is absent from the SyntS (and the SemS) of sentence (22d).

In Mandarin Chinese a preverbal noun is necessarily either a SyntSubj, or a prolepsis that expresses the Theme of the sentence; thus we have:

(23) Mandarin Chinese (Li & Thompson 1994: 234–242)
      a. Z̄eī *kai -le   men le*
          thief   open PERF   door   CRS [= particle signaling a Currently Relevant State of affairs]
          'Thieves opened the door'.

      b. M̄en *kai -le*
          door   open PERF/CRS
          'The door opened'.

      c. *Mén̂ || z̄eī   kai -le*
          door   thief   open PERF/CRS
          lit. 'Door thieves opened [it]'. = 'As for the door, the thieves opened it'.

      d. *Mén̂ || kai -le*
          door   open PERF/CRS
          'The door, someone opened [it]'.

In (23a–b) we see two different lexemes of the vocable KAI, just like the English verb OPEN: a transitive and an intransitive one (such verbs are known as *labile*). (23c–d) show MEN 'door' in the syntactic role of a prolepsis (it is marked by a pause and a mounting contour); in (23c) the DirO of the verb KAI and in (23d), both the SyntSubj and the DirO are not expressed on the surface.

(23d) shows that in Mandarin the SyntSubj is omissible; here is another couple of examples:

(23) e. — *Zuo sheme?*   — *Chi zhe*
          lit. 'Do what?'   lit. ≈ 'Eating be'.

This exchange is possible in any circumstances when the question is put to somebody about himself or about any third party ('What is/are he/you/they doing?' – 'He/I/They is/am/are eating'.)

(23) f. *Diu-le   yi kuai biao*
          lose PERF one CLASS watch
          lit. '[Somebody] lost a watch'. = 'A watch was lost'.

The same state of affairs is characteristic of many other languages that lack inflectional morphology.

4.2. Monopersonal Agreement of the Main Verb

Language type 2: If in **L** any MV, intransitive or transitive, agrees with only one of its actants, then this actant is the SyntSubj.

This must be true at least for the basic (= least marked) forms of the MV, for instance, the imperfective stem; with the perfective stem, the transitive MV may agree with the DirO.

The simplest case of Type 2 language known to me is the New Guinea language Enga, which, as far as the SyntSubj is concerned, presents a very clear picture: its MV has strictly monopersonal agreement (in all forms), and this identifies the SyntSubj uniquely.

(24) Enga (Van Valin 1981: 367–371)

    a.   <u>*Nambá+Ø*</u>   *p+é*   *+ó*
           I   NOM   go PAST 1SG
           'I went'.

    b.   <u>*Nambá+mé*</u>   *mená+Ø*   *dóko*   *p+í*   *+ó*
           I   ERG   pig   NOM   the   hit PAST 1SG
           'I hit [= killed] the pig'.

Like Hindi and Georgian (see below), Enga has the ergative construction, but without split — it is used in all tenses; unlike Hindi, but like Georgian, it has a special ergative case. Enga is, of course, not an ergative language.

Hindi. The situation in Hindi is more complex. Here a perfective transitive MV controls an ergative construction (with the SyntSubj in the instrumental; see (25c)):

(25) Hindi (*ai* = /ɛ/)

    a.   <u>*Maĩ*</u>   *ā +Ø*   *+ā [ā+ā ⇒ āyā]*   *hū̃*
           I-NOM [male]   come PERF.PART   MASC.SG   be-PRES.1SG
           'I [a man] have come'.

           <u>*Maĩ*</u>   *ā +Ø*   *+ī*   *hū̃*
           I-NOM [female]   come PERF.PART   FEM.SG   be-PRES.1SG
           'I [a woman] have come'.

           <u>*Ve*</u>   *ā +Ø*   *+e*   *haĩ*
           they-NOM [males]   come PERF.PART   MASC.PL   be-PRES.3PL
           'They [men] have come'.

           <u>*Ve*</u>   *ā +Ø*   *+ī*   *haĩ*
           they-NOM [females] come PERF.PART FEM.PL   be-PRES.3PL
           'They [women] have come'.

    b.   i   <u>*Maĩ*</u>   *čiṭṭʰī +Ø*   */+yã*   *likʰ+Ø*   *rah +Ø*   *+ā*   *hū̃*
              I-NOM [male]   letter(fem) SG.NOM/ PL.NOM write CONV remain PERF.PART MASC.SG be-PRES.1SG
              lit. 'I [a man] letter/s writing am'. = 'I am writing a letter/letters'.

       ii   <u>*Ham*</u>   *čiṭṭʰī +Ø*   */+yã*   *likʰ+Ø*   *rah +Ø*   *+e*   *haĩ*
              we-NOM [males] letter(fem) SG.NOM/ PL.NOM write CONV remain PERF.PART MASC.SG be-PRES.1PL
              lit. 'We [men] letter/s writing are'. = 'We are writing a letter/letters'.

    vs.

       i   <u>*Tū*</u>   *čiṭṭʰī +Ø*   */+yã*   *likʰ+Ø*   *rah +Ø*   *+ā*   *hū̃*
              you_SG-NOM [female] letter(fem) SG.NOM/ PL.NOM write CONV remain PERF.PART MASC.SG be-PRES.1SG
              lit. 'You [a woman] letter/s writing are'. = 'You are writing a letter/letters'.

       ii   <u>*Tum*</u>   *čiṭṭʰī +Ø*   */+yã*   *likʰ+Ø*   *rah +Ø*   *+e*   *haĩ*
              you_PL-NOM [female] letter(fem) SG.NOM/ PL.NOM write CONV remain PRES.PART MASC.SG be-PRES.1PL
              lit. 'You [women] letter/s writing are'. = 'You are writing a letter/letters'.

(25) c. $\overline{Ma\tilde{\imath} +ne}$ čiṭṭʰī   +Ø   /+yã   likh +Ø   +ī   /+ī̃

I   INSTR [male] letter(fem) SG.NOM/ PL.NOM write PERF.PART FEM.SG/ PL

hai /haĩ

be-PRES.3SG/be-PRES.3PL

lit. 'By.me [a man] letter/s written is/are'. = 'I have written a letter/letters'.

vs.

$\overline{T\bar{u} +ne}$ čiṭṭʰī   +Ø   /+yã   likh +Ø   +ī   /+ī̃

you_SG INSTR [female] letter(fem) SG.NOM/ PL.NOM write PERF.PART FEM.SG/ PL

hai /haĩ

be-PRES.3SG/be-PRES.3PL

lit. 'By.you [a woman] letter/s written is/are'. = 'You [a woman] have written a letter/letters'.

We can be sure, however, that in (25c) the noun ČIṬṬʰĪ(YĀ) 'letter(s)' is a DirO — thanks to the passive, which — as shown in (25d) — promotes this noun to the SyntSubj, demoting the former SyntSubj to an Ag(entive) Co(mplement), which is dispreferred in Hindi (ǯĀ 'go' is the auxiliary of the passive; here it is in the form of converb ≈ gerund; RAHĀ 'remain' is the progressive auxiliary, which takes the converb ≈ gerund of the lexical verb):[14]

(25) d. $\overline{Čiṭṭʰī +Ø}$ likʰ +Ø   +ī   ǯā+Ø   rah +Ø   +ī   hai

letter(fem) SG.NOM write PERF.PART FEM.SG go CONV remain PERF.PART FEM.SG be-PRES.3SG

'The letter is being written'.

and

$\overline{Čiṭṭʰī +yã}$ likʰ +Ø   +ī̃   ǯā+Ø   rah +Ø   +ī̃   haĩ

letter(fem) PL.NOM write PERF.PART FEM.PL go CONV remain PERF.PART FEM.PL be-PRES.3PL

'The letters are being written'.

Hindi is thus a non-ergative language: its transitive verb admits a DirO and the meaning of a Hindi transitive verb typically has 'cause' as the generic component. Hindi has no special ergative case, either, but it does have an ergative construction — with a transitive MV in a perfective form and the SyntSubj in the instrumental. With an imperfective MV, Hindi uses a nominative construction, and the verb agrees then with the SyntSubj. (In other words, Hindi manifests what is known as **split ergativity**: the ergative construction appears under special conditions — in this case, with perfective series tense forms; elsewhere we have the nominative construction.) In a perfective form, the MV agrees only with the DirO.

Thus, the SyntSubj's privileges in Hindi are 1) the dependence on the MV, 2) non-omissibility, 3) the linear position before the MV and other actants, 4) the control of agreement of the MV (in an imperfective form), 5) the nominative case (again, with an imperfective MV) and 6) the "passivizability" (that is, SyntSubj role being the target of promotion by the passive).

Archi. The things are substantially different in Archi, a North-Caucasian (Daghestanian) language. Just like Hindi, Archi has a monopersonal agreement — if the MV is in the one of the least marked synthetic forms, see in (26)). But the single actant of the MV that controls its noun-

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[14] The AgCo is only used in Hindi either in administrative/legal register (with the postposition DVARA 'through/by') or in non-assertive sentences, which express the ability of the Agent to perform the action (in the ablative in **-se**); see Kachru 2006: 204–205.

class agreement is itself — in sharp contrast to Hindi — always in the nominative; it is not omissible and its syntactic position is targeted by an actant-manipulating voice-like transformation (as before, this actant is boxed in the examples; it is the SyntSubj, as will be shown).

(26) Archi (Kibrik 1977, 2003: 332–368; Roman numbers stand for noun classes)

a. $\boxed{Buwa\ +\varnothing\ +\varnothing}$ *da +qʻa*
mother_(II)   SG   NOM   **II**   come-PERF
'Mother came'.

b. *Dija +∅ +mu* $\boxed{buwa\ +\varnothing\ +\varnothing}$ *χir   a+r+u*
father_(I)   SG   INSTR   mother_(II)   SG   NOM   behind   do.**II**. do-PERF
lit. 'By.Father Mother behind did' ["behind do" is an idiom meaning 'bring with oneself']. = 'Father brought Mother with him'.

c. *Dija +∅ +mu* $\boxed{dos\ +\varnothing\ +\varnothing}$ *χir   a+w+u* [⇒ *aw*]
father_(I)   SG   INSTR   friend_(I)   SG   NOM   behind   do.**I**. do-PERF
'Father brought a friend with him'.

d. *Dija +∅ +mu* $\boxed{dos\ +til +\varnothing}$ *χir   a+b+u*
father_(I)   SG   INSTR   friend_(I)   PL   NOM   behind   do.**III**.do-PERF
'Father brought friends with him'.

All plural Archi nouns belong to the noun class III; the verb AS 'do' shows class III agreement with the plural *dostil* 'friends'.

(26) e. *Dija +∅ +n   buwa +∅ +ɫu* $\boxed{an\chi\quad +\varnothing\ +\varnothing}$ *a+∅+w*
father_(I)   SG   GEN   mother_(II)   SG   COMIT   fight_(Noun, IV)   SG   NOM   do. **IV**. do-PERF
lit. 'Father's with.Mother fight was.done'. = 'Father fought with Mother'.

f. i $\boxed{Balah+\varnothing+\varnothing}$ *dita+**b**+u   **b**+erχin*
trouble_(III) SG NOM   soon.**III**.soon   **III**   forget-IMPERF
'Trouble gets forgotten quickly'.

ii   *Arša   horōk   ej+**b**+u* $\boxed{i\check{s}kul\quad +\varnothing\ +\varnothing}$ *da +**b**+l   +u*
Archi-INESS   long.ago   very.**III**.very   school_(III)   SG   NOM   open.**III**. open   PERF
'A school opened in Archi very long time ago'.

iii   ***D**+ez* $\boxed{un}$ *malgan*
II   I-DAT   you_{SG(II)-NOM}   be.dear
'You [singular female] are dear to me'. = 'I love you'.

The SyntSubj in Archi has six privileges:
1) It depends only on the MV.
2) The SyntSubj is non-omissible, while all other actants of the MV can be absent from the sentence (and from its Synt- and Sem-structure); this is true even for causative sentences:

(27) a. i   *Zari* $\boxed{nok\ell\textquoteright\ +\varnothing\ +\varnothing}$ *ek\ell\textquoteright +\varnothing+u*
I-INSTR   room_(IV)   SG   NOM   sweep. IV. sweep-PERF
lit. 'By.me room underwent.sweeping'. = 'I swept [the] room'.

   and

ii $\boxed{Nok\ell\textquoteright+\varnothing\ +\varnothing}$ *ek\ell\textquoteright +\varnothing+u*
room_(IV)   SG   NOM   sweep. IV. sweep-PERF
lit. 'Room underwent.sweeping'.

vs.

(27) b. i *Dija +Ø +mu zari* $\boxed{nokł'+Ø+Ø}$ *ekł' +Ø+a +s a+Ø+w*

father₍ᵢ₎ SG INSTR I-INSTR room₍ᵢᵥ₎ SG NOM sweep. IV. sweep INF do. IV. do-PERF

lit. 'Room by.Father underwent.causation by.me undergo.sweeping'. = 'Father made me sweep the room'.

and

ii *Zari* $\boxed{nokł' +Ø +Ø}$ *ekł' +Ø+a +s a+Ø+w*

I-INSTR room₍ᵢᵥ₎ SG NOM sweep. IV. sweep INF do. IV. do-PERF

lit. 'By.me room undergo.sweeping underwent.causation'. = 'I was made to sweep the room'.

and

iii $\boxed{Nokł'+Ø+Ø}$ *ekł' +Ø+a +s a+Ø+w*

room₍ᵢᵥ₎ SG NOM sweep. IV. sweep INF do. IV. do-PERF

lit. 'Room undergo.sweeping underwent.causation'. = 'The room was made to be swept'.

3) The SyntSubj is positioned immediately before the MV after all its other actants.

4) The SyntSubj controls — almost exclusively — the noun-class agreement not only of the MV, as seen in (26)–(27), but also of circumstantials and even of certain actants, as in (26f), where the adverb *ditabu* 'soon', the particle *ejbu* 'very' and the IndirO **dez** 'to.me' agree in noun class with the SyntSubj.

5) The SyntSubj is always marked by the nominative.

6) Archi has a "converse" voice[15] that promotes the AgCo to the SyntSubj, while demoting the former SyntSubj to the DirO (and turning the verb into a transitive one):

(28) a. *Buwa+Ø +mu* $\boxed{\chi^walli +Ø+Ø}$ *b+a+r +ši b+i*

mother₍ᵢᵢ₎ SG INSTR bread₍ᵢᵢᵢ₎ SG NOM III do IMPF CONV III be-PRES

lit. 'By.mother_AgCo bread_SyntSubj doing is'. = 'Mother is baking bread'.

vs.

b. $\boxed{Buwa+Ø +Ø}$ *χ^walli +Ø+Ø b+a+r +ši d+i*

mother₍ᵢᵢ₎ SG NOM bread₍ᵢᵢᵢ₎ SG NOM III do IMPF CONV II be-PRES

lit. 'Mother_SyntSubj bread_DirO doing is'. = 'Mother is baking bread'.

NB: The two sentences in (28) contrast in that (28a) answers the question "What is happening?", while (28b) constitutes an answer to the question "What about Mother?": in a sentence of this type, the SyntSubj must be thematic.

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[15] **The "passive" in Archi**. It is to some extent similar to the "passive" of Dyirbal, see Note 4, p. 177. On voice in Archi, see Kibrik 1975 and 2003: 352–354 (however, Kibrik himself does not treat this transformation as voice; he speaks simply of a binominative construction). Testelec 1979 was probably the first to explicitly insist on the voice-like character of this verbal "alternation" in Daghestanian languages and draw a parallel with Dyirbal.

The passive, or converse, voice in Archi has two characteristic properties:

— As in several other Daghestanian languages (Avar, Bezhta, Gunzib, Tsez), this voice is possible only in the imperfective — durative, habitual, progressive or frequentative — aspect.

— In this voice, the Archi MV receives a DirO in the nominative, which is a kind of anathema for an ergative language; moreover, the MV agrees with this DirO — along with the SyntSubj, so that the MV becomes bipersonal.

To sum up: Archi does not have an ergative construction, since its SyntSubj is always in the nominative; it does not have an ergative case, either: its AgCo is in the instrumental. But like Lezgian, Archi is an ergative language.

4.3. Polypersonal Agreement of the Main Verb

Language type 3: In language **L**, the MV agrees simultaneously with (at least) two actants, using two sets of agreement markers. In some Type **3** languages, the MV can simultaneously agree with three or even four actants. However, in order to simplify, I consider here the MV's agreement just with two actants — L_1 and L_2, one of which is thus the SyntSubj and the other one, the DirO. This introduces into our inquiry an additional dimension: the necessity to distinguish between SyntSubjs and DirOs.

For a Type **3** language **L**, two situations must be considered: either a monoactantial MV in **L** uses exclusively one set of agreement markers, or it uses alternatively both (as a function of the lexical unit playing the role of MV).

Subtype 3a. In **L** the MV agrees simultaneously with two actants, but an intransitive (≈ monoactantial) MV features only one type of agreement.[16]

In this case, the only actant of an intransitive MV is the SyntSubj in **L**, so that the researcher has only to decide between two actants of a transitive biactantial MV. Such a situation is found in many languages; I select Georgian and Basque for an examination.

Georgian. In contrast to Lezgian and Archi, a transitive Georgian MV agrees — in person and number — simultaneously with two of its actants, which are, therefore, the SyntSubj and the DirO.[17] We have to settle the accounts between these two: which one is the boss, i.e. the SyntSubj? A transitive verb has two sets of agreement markers: Sets I and II, and only the markers of set I are exclusively used for the actant of a monoactantial MV, which stands in most cases in the nominative, cf. (29a); as I just said, it is the SyntSubj. But this fact by itself is not sufficient to consider the set I markers as exclusively subject markers, since on a transitive verb, they can in principle cross-reference the DirO: exactly this, as we will see, happens in Basque. One has to compare both these actants of a transitive MV as to their case-marking and mutual linear order. In the least marked transitive clause, with the MV in a tense of the present series, the actant cross-referenced by the set I markers is in the nominative and precedes the MV, just as the SyntSubj of an intransitive MV precedes it. The other actant, which is in the dative, in a communicatively neutral sentence either follows the MV, or precedes it, while following the nominative actant. Therefore, the first — nominative — actant is the SyntSubj of the transitive MV, so that the set I markers must be considered to be subject markers. As a result, the SyntSubj in a Georgian clause is the element cross-referenced by subject markers; it is boxed in the examples of (29), and the subject markers on the MV are boldfaced:

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[16] In a given **L**, an intransitive verb can feature one of the two agreement scenarios:

— V_{intr} has the same set of SyntSubj-agreement markers as one of the two agreement marker sets of Vtrans (e.g., Georgian and Basque, see below);

— V_{intr} has a special set of SyntSubj-agreement markers, as in Yimas, which has three different agreement marker sets: for an intransitive SyntSubj, for a transitive SyntSubj, and for a DirO (Foley 1987: 9). Cf.:

(i)   ***Ama*+*wa***   ~ *Pu* +***ka*** +*tay*   ~ *Pu* +***ŋa*** +*tay*
        1SG_SUB go   3PL_OBJ 1SG_SUB see   3PL_SUB 1SG_OBJ see
        '[I] go'.   '[I] see [them]'.   '[They] see [me]'.

[17] I leave out the agreement with the IndirO (rather than with the DirO), possible with some verbs.

(29) Georgian

a. $\boxed{K'ac+\emptyset+i}$ *muša+ob +s*
    man   SG NOM   work   PRES **3SG**_{SUB}

'[The] man works'. ~

$\boxed{K'ac+eb+i}$ *muša+ob +**en***
    man   PL NOM   work   PRES **3PL**_{SUB}

'[The] men work'.

b. $\boxed{Me}$ ***v**+muša+ob+**Ø***
    I-NOM   **1**_{SUB} work   PRES **SG**_{SUB}

'I work'. ~

$\boxed{Čven}$ *v+muša+ob +t*
    we-NOM   **1**_{SUB} work   PRES **PL**_{SUB}

'We work'.

c. $\boxed{K'ac+\emptyset+i}$ *m*   *+xat'+av +**s***   *me*
    man   SG NOM   **1SG**_{OBJ} draw PRES **3SG**_{SUB}   I-DAT

          ~g   *+xat'+av+**s***   *šen*
          2_{OBJ}   you_{SG}-DAT

             *~xat'+av+**s***   *mas* / *mat*
             he-DAT / they-DAT

'[The] man draws me ~ you_{SG} ~ him/them'.

d. $\boxed{K'ac+eb+i}$ *m*   *+xat'+av +**en***   *me*
    man   PL NOM   **1SG**_{OBJ} draw PRES **3PL**_{SUB}   I-DAT

          ~g   *+xat'+av +**en***   *šen*
          2_{OBJ}   you_{SG}-DAT

             *~xat'+av +**en***   *mas* / *mat*
             he-DAT / they-DAT

'[The] men draw me ~ you_{SG} ~ him/them'.

e. $\boxed{K'ac+\emptyset+ma}$ *da +m*   *+xat'+**a***   *me*
    man   SG ERG   PERF **1SG**_{OBJ} draw AOR.**3SG**_{SUB}   I-DAT

          ~da+g   *+xat'+**a***   *šen*
              2_{OBJ}   you_{SG}-DAT

          ~da   *+xat'+**a***   *is* / *isini*
              he-NOM / they-NOM

'[The] man drew me ~ you_{SG} ~ him/them'.

f. $\boxed{K'ac+eb+ma}$ *da +m*   *+xat'+**es***   *me*
    man   PL ERG   PERF **1SG**_{OBJ} draw AOR.**3PL**_{SUB}   I-DAT

          ~da +g   *+xat'+**es***   *šen*
              2_{OBJ}   you_{SG}-NOM

          ~da   *+xat'+**es***   *is* / *isini*
              he-NOM / they-NOM

'[The] men drew me ~ youSG ~ him/them'.

g. $\boxed{Me}$ ***v** +xat'+av+**Ø***   *mas* / *mat*
    I-NOM   **1**_{SUB} draw PRES **SG**_{SUB}   he-DAT / they-DAT

'I draw him/them'.

(29) h. $\boxed{Me}$ *da+v* *+xat'+e* *+Ø*   *is*   / *isini*
            I-ERG PERF 1$_{SUB}$ draw AOR SG$_{SUB}$ he-NOM / they-NOM
            'I drew him/them'.

The Georgian SyntSubj's privileges are four:

1) It depends only on the MV.

2) It controls the same type of agreement for intransitive and transitive verbs, imposing subject affixes.

3) In a communicatively neutral sentence, it precedes the MV and all the other actants.

4) If the MV is in one of the present series tenses, the SyntSubj is in the nominative: (29a–d); with a transitive MV, the DirO is in the dative: (29c–d). This is the most common nominative construction, such as seen in SAE and many other languages.

If the MV is in an aorist series tense, the case marking of the SyntSubj and the DirO changes to, respectively, the ergative and the nominative as in (29e–f), although their syntactic status does not change. A transitive Georgian MV in an aorist series tense and its two main actants form, of course, an ergative construction. (Just like Hindi, Georgian manifests split ergativity: the ergative construction appears only with aorist series tense forms; elsewhere we have the nominative construction.) In accordance with the convention concerning SyntSubj property violations, the appearance of the ergative instead of the "canonical" nominative does not make the definition of the SyntSubj in Georgian any more problematic.

5) Georgian has a passive (Harris 1981: 103*ff*), which confirms the subjecthood of the ergative SyntSubj:

(30) a. $\boxed{Gogi+m}$ *es*   *st'at'ia+Ø+Ø*   / *st'at'i+eb+i*   *da +c'er+a*
            Gogi **ERG** this paper   SG **NOM** / paper   PL **NOM** PERF write AOR.3SG
            'Gogi wrote this paper/these papers'.

      b. $\boxed{Es\ st'at'ia+Ø+Ø}$ / *st'at'i+eb+i*   *da +c'er +il*   *+Ø+i*
            this paper   SG **NOM** / paper   PL **NOM** PERF write PASS.PART SG NOM

            iq+o   *Gog +is*   **mier**
            be AOR.3SG Gogi GEN **by.means**

            'This paper/These papers was/were written by Gogi'.

In Georgian, the MV does not reflect the plural of an inanimate SyntSubj; that is why *dac'erili* 'written' and *iqo* 'was' are in the singular for both 'paper' and 'papers'.

Thus, Georgian has the ergative construction and the ergative case, but it is not an ergative language.[18]

_____

[18] **Two problematic cases of subjecthood in Georgian**. In this connection, the evidential and the affective verbs, known also as "inverse," should be mentioned.

— Georgian has a group of verb forms (currently called "perfect forms," or "III series forms"), which carry the meaning 'by hearsay' ≈ 'this being second-hand testimony' ≈ 'apparently' (in the gloss, ALTR stands for the grammeme 'for the other' of the inflectional category of version):

(i)   a.   *Bič'+Ø+s*   *gamo+u* *+gzavni*   *+xar+Ø* $\boxed{šen}$
            boy   SG DAT PERF   ALTR send-PASS.PART be-2$_{SUB}$ SG$_{SUB}$ you$_{SG}$
            'Apparently, the boy sent you$_{SG}$'.

      b.   *Bič'+Ø+s*   *gamo+u+gzavni*   *+xar +t* $\boxed{tkven}$
            boy   SG DAT   be-2$_{SUB}$ PL$_{SUB}$ you$_{PL}$
            'Apparently, the boy sent you$_{PL}$'.

Basque. The Basque transitive MV also agrees simultaneously with at least two of its actants.[19] As in Georgian, there are two sets of agreement affixes, the prefixes I_{NOM} cross-referencing the N_{NOM} and the affixes II_{ERG} cross-referencing the N_{ERG}; for the single — nominative — actant of an intransitive MV only the affixes of set I_{NOM} are used. But here comes the important difference with Georgian: with a transitive MV, one of its two actants is always in the ergative — there is no tense-induced ergative split, that is, no nominative construction that helps us identify the SyntSubj. In Basque, we cannot know which affixes are subjectival. Therefore, in the following examples, the boldfaced agreement affixes are specified by the noun they cross-reference: N_{NOM} vs. N_{ERG}; for instance, "3_{NOM}" as a gloss of a marker **m** means '**m** cross-references the N_{NOM}', etc. (In the examples of (31) the clause element that will be eventually identified as SyntSubj is boxed.)

(i)   c.   *Bič'+Ø+s*   *gamo+u+gzavni+a*   *+Ø* $\boxed{gogo+Ø+Ø}$
             boy   SG DAT   be-3SG$_{SUB}$ SG$_{OBJ}$ girl   SG   NOM
             'Apparently, the boy sent [a] girl'.

       d.   *Bič'+Ø+s*   *gamo+u+gzavni+a*   *+Ø* $\boxed{gogo+eb+i}$
             boy   SG DAT   be-3SG$_{SUB}$ SG$_{OBJ}$ girl   PL   NOM
             'Apparently, the boy sent girls'.

       e.   *Bič'+eb+s*   *gamo+u+gzavni+a*   *+t* $\boxed{gogo+Ø+Ø}$
             boy   PL DAT   be-3SG$_{SUB}$ PL$_{OBJ}$ girl   SG   NOM
             'Apparently, the boys sent [a] girl'.

These forms express an evidential, which requires, as is typologically natural, a perfective form. Traditionally, the noun in the dative is considered to be the SyntSubj. However, judging by agreement, it is the N_{NOM} that is the SyntSubj, the N_{DAT} being an IndirO, which is again typologically quite plausible. But, as is typical for a natural language, there is a wrinkle: as seen in (i-d) and (i-e), in the evidential, the SyntSubj of the 3rd person does not agree as expected, since in (i-d) instead of **gamougzavni+arian*$_{3PL SUB}$ we obtain *gamougzavni+a*$_{3SG SUB}$. This minor irregularity, however, should not change our treatment of the SyntSubj.

— Georgian has a significant class of verbs expressing feelings and attitudes whose basic diathesis is converse with respect to the corresponding English verbs — 'I like you' is in Georgian 'You$_{SG}$ are.likable to.me' (verbs similar to Georgian feeling verbs exist in Russian, French, German, etc., where, however, they are rather exceptional):

*mo+**m**+c'on+xar+Ø*
(**mo-** ⇔ 'towards.me', **m-** ⇔ 1SG$_{OBJ}$, **c'on** ⇔ 'be.likable', **-xar** ⇔ 'you.are', **-Ø** ⇔ SG$_{SUB}$);
'You$_{SG}$ are.likable to.me' = 'I like you'.

m+i+qvar+s
(**m-** ⇔ 1SG$_{OBJ}$, **i-** ⇔ FOR.ONESELF [grammeme of version], **qvar** ⇔ 'be.lovable', **-s** ⇔ 3SG$_{SUB}$);
'He/They is/are.lovable to.me.' = 'I love him/them'.

Ø+u+qvar+t
(**Ø-** ⇔ 3$_{OBJ}$, **u-** ⇔ FOR.THE.OTHER [grammeme of version], **qvar** ⇔ 'be.lovable', **-t** ⇔ PL$_{OBJ}$);
'He/They is/are.lovable to.them' = 'They love him/them'.

v+u+qvar+var
(**v-** ⇔ 1SG$_{SUB}$, **u-** ⇔ FOR.THE.OTHER, **qvar** ⇔ 'be.lovable', **-var** ⇔ 'I.am');
'I am.lovable to.him'. = 'He loves me'.

g+ʒul+t
(**g-** ⇔ 2$_{OBJ}$, **ʒul** ⇔ 'be.hatable', **-t** ⇔ PL$_{OBJ}$);
'He/They is/are.hatable to you$_{PL}$'. = 'You$_{PL}$ hate him/them'.

In current view, the SyntSubj is the N_{DAT}. But, as in the case of the evidential, the MV's agreement clearly indicates the N_{NOM} as the SyntSubj (with the same complications).

[19] Again, for simplicity's sake, agreement with the IndirO and the so-called allocutive form are not considered.

(31) Basque (*s* = /ś/, *tx* = /č/, *z* = /s/)

 a. i &boxed;Gizon+a +Ø+Ø *etorri*   *d* +Ø +a

    man DEF SG NOM[20] come-PERF.PART 3_{NOM} SG_{NOM} be

    'The man has [lit. 'is'] come'.

   ii &boxed;Gizon+a +k+Ø *etorri*   *d* +*ir* +*a*

    man DEF PL NOM come-PERF.PART 3_{NOM} PL_{NOM} be

    'The men have come'.

   iii &boxed;Ni+Ø *etorri*   *n* +*aiz*

    I NOM come-PERF.PART 1_{NOM} be

    'I have come'.

 b. i &boxed;Gizon+a +Ø+k *kotxe+a +Ø+Ø* *saldu* *d+Ø* +*u* +*Ø*+*Ø*

    man DEF SG ERG car DEF SG NOM sell-PERF.PART $3_{NOM}SG_{NOM}$ have 3_{ERG} SG_{ERG}

    'The man has sold the car'.

   ii &boxed;Gizon+a +Ø+k *kotxe+a +k +Ø* *saldu* *d+it* +*u* +*Ø*+*Ø*

    man DEF SG ERG car DEF PL NOM sell-PERF.PART $3_{NOM}PL_{NOM}$ have 3_{ERG} SG_{ERG}

    'The man has sold the cars'.

   iii &boxed;Gizon+e +k *kotxe+a +Ø+Ø* *saldu* *d+Ø* +*u* +*Ø*+*te*

    man PL.DEF ERG car DEF SG NOM sell-PERF.PART $3_{NOM}SG_{NOM}$ have 3_{ERG} PL_{ERG}

    'The men have sold the car'.

   iv &boxed;Gizon+e +k *kotxe+a +k+Ø* *saldu* *d+it* +*u* +*Ø*+*zte*

    man PL.DEF ERG car DEF PL NOM sell-PERF.PART $3_{NOM}PL_{NOM}$ have 3_{ERG} PL_{ERG}

    'The men have sold the cars'.

   v &boxed;Ni+k *kotxe+a +Ø+Ø* *saldu* *d+Ø* +*u* +*t*

    I ERG car DEF SG NOM sell-PERF.PART $3_{NOM}SG_{NOM}$ have $1SG_{ERG}$

    'I have sold the car'.

   vi &boxed;Ni+k *kotxe+a +k+Ø* *saldu* *d+it* +*u* +*t*

    I ERG car DEF PL NOM sell-PERF.PART 3_{NOM} PL_{NOM} have $1SG_{ERG}$

    'I have sold the cars'.

As one can see, a transitive MV cross-references its DirO by the same markers as an intransitive MV cross-references its SyntSubj. For this reason, in Basque, the existence of actant-shuffling modifications of the verb is really crucial. The language has two such modifications (Rebuschi 1978: 76–77 and 82–83; Rebuschi 1981: 92, 1982: 299*ff*, 1986; Rebuschi's data are quoted with drastic simplifications): a passive and two detransitivizations, which target the SyntSubj's syntactic position.

 <u>Passive</u>: a diathetic conversion "DirO´ $\Rightarrow$ SyntSubj, SyntSubj´ $\Rightarrow$ AgCo" (the prime means 'initial').

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  [20] The morphic structure of a Basque nominal wordform is a controversial topic. Here I am using my own description, which unfortunately does not meet with Rebuschi's approval.

Basque has a passive, illustrated in (32), where the sentences semantically correspond to the sentences in (31b):

(32) i *Kotxe+a +∅+∅*   *gizon +a +∅+k*   *saldu   +a +∅*   ***d+∅ +a***
      car   DEF SG NOM   man   DEF SG ERG   sell-PERF.PART DEF SG 3_{NOM} SG_{NOM} be
      'The car is sold by the man'.

    ii *Kotxe+a +k+∅*   *gizon +a +∅+k*   *saldu   +a +k*   ***d+ir +a***
      car   DEF PL NOM   man   DEF SG ERG   sell-PERF.PART DEF PL 3_{NOM} PL_{NOM} be
      'The cars are sold by the man'.

    iii *Kotxe+a +∅+∅*   *gizon +e +k*   *saldu   +a +∅*   ***d +∅ +a***
      car   DEF SG NOM   man   DEF.PL ERG   sell-PERF.PART DEF SG 3_{NOM} SG_{NOM} be
      'The car is sold by the men'.

    iv *Kotxe+a +k+∅*   *gizon +e +k*   *saldu   +a +k*   ***d +ir +a***
      car   DEF PL NOM   man   DEF.PL ERG   sell-PERF.PART DEF PL 3_{NOM} PL_{NOM} be
      'The cars are sold by the men'.

    v *Kotxe+a +∅+∅*   *ni+k saldu   +a +∅*   ***d +∅ +a***
      car   DEF SG NOM   I   ERG sell-PERF.PART DEF SG 3_{NOM} SG_{NOM} be
      'The car is sold by me'.

    vi *Kotxe+a +k+∅*   *ni+k saldu   +a +k*   ***d +ir +a***
      car   DEF PL NOM   I   ERG sell-PERF.PART DEF PL 3_{NOM} PL_{NOM} be
      'The cars are sold by me'.

As we see, the auxiliary and the participle agree only with the subject.

<u>Detransitivizations:</u> they result in "SyntSubj$_{ERG}$ ⇒ SyntSubj$_{NOM}$" [21]

Basque has two detransitivizations:

— The progressive construction is marked by the adjective ARI 'being in the process of, doing' and uses the auxiliary IZAN 'be' even for transitive verbs, which become *eo ipso*

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[21] **The Category of Transitivization.** DETRANS(itivizer) is a grammeme of transitivization, an inflectional category of the verb similar to, but different from, voice. It resembles voice in that it impacts the verb's central actants, the SyntSubj and the DirO; it differs from voice in that it does not permute the DSyntAs of the verb with the respect to its SemAs, but only modifies their surface realization (see Mel'čuk 2006: 231*ff*). This category includes at least three grammemes: NEUTRAL ~ DETRANS ~ TRANS(itivizer). Tongan, examples (19)–(21), features the pair NEUTER ~ TRANS. Chukchi has even two detransitivizers: DETRANS-1 and DETRANS-2. DETRANS-1, expressed by the prefix **ine-/ena-**, lowers the Syntrank of the DirO (which becomes an IndirO); DETRANS-2 (the suffix **-tku/-tko**) not only lowers the Synt-rank of the DirO, but it also makes its appearance in the clause undesirable and, at the same time, blocks the expression of all other objects and complements, which are allowed both with the basic form and with the DETRANS-1 form.

(i)   Chukchi
    a. *Ɣəm+nan tə +ret +ərkən+∅*   *kimitʕ+ən*   (*tomɣ+etə*)
        I   INSTR 1SG$_{Sub}$ transport PRES 3SG$_{Obj}$ load   SG.NOM friend   SG/PL.DAT
        'I$_{X⇔I}$ transport a.load$_{Y⇔II}$ (to.a.friend/to.friends$_{Z⇔III}$)'.
    b. *Ɣəm+∅ t +ine +ret +ərkən kimitʕ+e*   (*tomɣ+etə*)
        I   NOM 1SG$_{Sub}$ **DETRANS-1** transport PRES   load   SG.INSTR friend   SG/PL.DAT
        'I$_{X⇔I}$ transport a.load$_{Y⇔II}$ (to. a.friend/to.friends$_{Z⇔III}$)'.
    c. *Ɣəm+∅ tə +ret +ətku +rkən* (*ˀkimitʕ+e*   *ˀtomɣ+etə*)
        I   NOM 1SG$_{Sub}$ transport **DETRANS-2** PRES   load   SG.INSTR friend   SG/PL.DAT
        'I$_{X⇔I}$ transport (a.load$_{Y⇔II}$) (to.a.friend/to.friends$_{Z⇔III}$)'.

(i-a) presents an ergative construction, obligatory in Chukchi for any transitive verb: the SyntSubj 'I' is in the instrumental, and the DirO '[a] load', in the nominative. In (i-b), we find a nominative construction, possible

intransitive (since a transitive verb uses as its auxiliary only UKAN 'have'): the SyntSubj, instead of the ergative, takes the nominative, as an intransitive SyntSubj should; the former DirO remains in the nominative, but loses its status as a DirO, since the verb becomes intransitive; the MV agrees only with the SyntSubj:

(33) a. i | *Gizon+a +Ø +Ø* | *kotxe +a +Ø/k+Ø* | *saltzen* | *ari* | *d +Ø +a* |
           man DEF **SG** NOM   car DEF SG/PL NOM   sell-GER   doing 3$_{NOM}$SG$_{NOM}$ be

           'The man is selling the car'.

      ii | *Gizon+a +k +Ø* | *kotxe +a +Ø/k+Ø* | *saltzen* | *ari* | *d +ir +a* |
           man DEF **PL** NOM   car DEF SG/PL NOM   sell-GER   doing 3$_{NOM}$PL$_{NOM}$ be

           'The men are selling the car'.

— The other detransitivization (called "antipassif" in Rebuschi 1981: 92) produces a resultative construction, in which not only the auxiliary, but also the participle agree with the subject (in the nominative) according to number; the MV is also intransitive, so that the "former" DirO becomes a Quasi-DirO:

(33) b. i | *Gizon+a +Ø +Ø* | *kotxea/k* | *saldu* | *+a+Ø* | *d +Ø +a* |
           man DEF **SG** NOM   car-DEF.SG/PL.NOM sell-PAST.PART DEF SG   3$_{NOM}$SG$_{NOM}$ be

           'The man is having.sold the car'.

      ii | *Gizon+a +k +Ø* | *kotxea/k* | *saldu* | *+a+k* | *d +ir +a* |
           man DEF **PL** NOM   car-DEF.SG/PL.NOM sell-PAST.PART DEF PL   3$_{NOM}$PL$_{NOM}$ be

           'The men are having.sold the car'.

The Basque SyntSubj's privileges are as follows:

1) It depends exclusively on the MV.
2) It is non-omissible.
3) It tends to precede the MV and other actants.
4) Its role is targeted by the passive and is confirmed by detransitivizations.

In conclusion, Basque is a non-ergative language, but it does have an ergative construction (without split) and an ergative case.

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only for an intransitive verb: the SyntSubj, which remains 'I', is in the nominative; the DirO '[a] load' has become an OblO in the instrumental, thus losing its salience; the two OblOs are optional. Finally, (i-c) is again a nominative construction: the two OblOs — 'load' and 'friends' — are incompatible with each other and even less salient than in the preceding sentence; their omission is preferred.

Roughly, sentence (i-a) answers the question 'What are you transporting and to whom?', (i-b), the question 'What are you doing?', and (i-c), the question 'What is your occupation?'

Degrees of transitivization/detransitivization, related to the degree of the impact of the denoted action upon the object, are not a rarity; here is another example — from Warlpiri (Australia):

(ii)   Warlpiri
       a. *Maliki+ḷi ka+Ø +Ø ŋarka+Ø yaḷki+ṇi*
           dog ERG PRES 3SG$_{Sub}$.3SG$_{Obj}$ NEUTRAL man NOM bite NON-PAST
           'The dog is biting the man'.

       b. *Maliki+ḷi ka +ḷa +žinta ŋarka+ku yaḷki+ṇi*
           dog ERG PRES 3SG$_{Sub}$.3SG$_{Obj}$ DETRANS man DAT bite NON-PAST
           'The dog is biting at the man'.

In Warlpiri, DETRANS lowers the transitivity of the verb, turning its DirO into an IndirO; but the verb remains transitive: it still presents an ergative construction, with the SyntSubj in the ergative case.

Subtype 3b. In **L** the MV can agree simultaneously with two actants, and a monoactantial MV features both types of agreement.

Probably the best-known example here comes from Acehnese (Malayo-Polynesian branch of the Austronesian family).

Acehnese (Durie 1985, 1987, 1988). Acehnese has no syntactic processes: no voices, no raisings, no detransitivization, no switch-reference, etc.; word order is extremely flexible. The only reliable syntactic property of actants of the Main Verb that amounts to a privilege is verb agreement — cross-referencing of actants on the MV. The Acehnese MV cross-references two of its actants (only if they are animate): one by a prefixal marker, the other by a suffixal marker. However, in the simplest clauses, which feature a semantically monoactantial verb having just one syntactic actant, both types of agreement occur, which means that in (34a) and (34b), featuring intransitive verbs, we see two different types of actant — one controlling prefix agreement and the other controlling suffix agreement.

(34)   Acehnese (*ê* = /e/, *ô* = /o/, *eu* = /ɯ/, *ë* = /ɤ/, *j* = /ʒ/)

    a.   **Lôn**+*lôp*   and   **Geu**+*lôp*
           1SG   enter   3SG   enter
        'I enter'.   'He enters'.

    b.   *Rhët* +**lôn**   and   *Rhët*+**geuh**
           fall   1SG   fall   3SG
        'I fall'.   'He falls'.

Thus, both these types of actant are privileged in Acehnese, since they, and only they, control the agreement of the MV. Therefore, one of these actants must be the SyntSubj and the other, the DirO. To decide which one of the two is more privileged than the other and thus is the SyntSubj, we need to consider a biactantial verb in a sentence where both types of actant are expressed:

(34)   c.   **Lôn**+*ngieng* +**geuh**   and   **Geu**+*ngieng* +**lôn**
        1SG   see   3SG   3SG   see   1SG
       'I see him/her'.   'He/She sees me'.

Examining sentences with two privileged syntactic actants simultaneously present, we find that:

— The prefixal marker on the verb is obligatory and cannot be linearly separated from the verb (34d-i), while the suffixal marker is not obligatory and can migrate to the end of verbal phrase (34d-ii):

(34)   d.   i   *Gopnyan* **lôn**+*ngieng*   and   *Lôn* **geu**+*ngieng*
            'Him I.see'.   'Me he.sees'.

            vs.
            *Lôn ngieng+**geuh**   and   **Gopnyan ngieng*+**lôn**
            'I see.him'.   'He sees.me'.

       ii *Ka*+*leupah* +**lôn** *u keude baroe*. ≡ *Ka*+*leupah u keude baroe*+**lôn**.
          PAST reach   1SG to town   yesterday
          'I reached the town yesterday'.

— The imperative requires the prefixal marker and does not allow the suffixal one:

(34) e. i **Neu**+*peumeu'ah!*   ~ **Peumeu'ah!*   ~ **Neu+peumeu'ah+**lôn**!*
                2SG   forgive
             'Forgive [me]!'   'Forgive.me!'

      ii **Neu**+*peujêt   ie   nyoe keu jih!*
                2SG   make.drink water this   to   he
             'Make him drink this water!'

To put it differently, only the prefix-referenced actant can be the Addressee of an imperative utterance.

— The prefix-referenced actant, and only this actant, can be introduced by the preposition **lê,** when following the Main Verb:

(34) f. *Gopnyan lôn+tët +rumoh   **lê** lôn*
                he   1SG burn house   I
          lit. 'He I.house.burnt by I'. = 'I burned down his house'.

— Only the prefix-referenced actant controls obligatory Equi-Deletion with the verb meaning 'want', no matter whether the governed verb is intransitive or transitive:

(34) g. i ⎡*Gopnyan*⎤ *geu+têm   jak.* ~ **Gopnyan geu+têm **geu**+jak*
                he   3SG   want go
             'He wants to go'.

      and

      ii ⎡*Gopnyan*⎤ *geu+têm   taguen   bu.* ~ **Gopnyan geu+têm **geu**+taguen bu*
                he   3SG   want cook   rice
             'He wants to cook rice'.

             vs.
             *Gopnyan geu+têm   rhët
                he   3SG   want fall
             'He wants to fall'.

Therefore, the prefix-referenced actant is more privileged in Acehnese: it is the SyntSubj. The other one, suffix-referenced actant, is the DirO. This simply means that in (34b) a literal gloss should be rather 'It.falls me/him'. Durie himself does not name these two actants in this way: he calls them Agent and Undergoer, since 30 years ago the notions of SyntSubj and SyntObj were too vague to be of any use; Durie 1985: 190–191 correctly indicates that none of Acehnese clause elements corresponds to the characteristics of the "syntactic pivot," a moot concept used at the time instead of SyntSubj. However, Durie makes it absolutely clear that "Agent" and "Undergoer" are not genuine semantic relations, but clearly syntactic ones (especially Durie 1987). Therefore, it can be safely concluded that, by calling the prefix-referenced actant the SyntSubj and the suffix-referenced one the DirO, I simply sharpen and, at the same time, generalize the terminology.

What is special about the Acehnese SyntSubj and DirO is their more direct link to semantic roles. In many such languages as English or Russian, a SyntSubj can fulfill various semantic roles: it can express an Agent (**John** *beat up Paul*), a Patient (**John** *got a beating*), a Cause (**John** *really worries us*), an Experiencer (**John** *likes boiled potatoes*), a Property Carrier (**John** *is intelligent*), Time (**The next morning** *saw John in Nevada*), and so on; to a lesser extent, the same is true about the DirO. But in Acehnese, the SyntSubj expresses only the

volitional Actor, and the DirO only the non-volitional Undergoer. The semantic opposition of volitionality is extremely important in Acehnese; the language has special derivational means to change the volitionality of a verb (Durie 1988: 7): *jak* 'go, walk' ~ ***teu***+*jak* 'walk without volition' or *seunang* 'be happy' ~ ***meu***+*seunang* 'make oneself happy, enjoy oneself'. However, such an alignment of syntactic relations to semantic roles does by no means diminish the importance of syntactic relations.

With the proposed terminological change, one can draw an interesting parallel between the Acehnese sentences of (34b) type — that is, sentences with a verb that has a DirO only, but no SyntSubj — and Russian impersonal constructions, in which the only semantic actant of the verb is expressed by a DirO (the verb in these constructions expresses an incontrollable state):

(35) ***Menja***_{ACC} *tošnit/rvët*   lit. '[It] vomits me'.   = 'I vomit'.
  Menja_{ACC} *znobit*   lit. '[It] chills me'.   = 'I have a chill'.
  Menja_{ACC} *trjasët*   lit. '[It] shakes me'.   = 'I shake'.
  Menja_{ACC} *proneslo*   lit. '[It] diarrhea-ed me'.   = 'I had diarrhea'.
  Menja_{ACC} *skrjučilo*   lit. '[It] completely.bent me'.   = 'I was doubled up [in pain]'.
  Menja_{ACC} *razneslo*   lit. '[It] expanded me'.   = 'I got fat'.

I do not see any substantive difference between Acehnese *Sakêt-lôn* lit. '[It] hurts/sicks me'. = 'I am hurting/sick', which is an impersonal construction, and the Russian impersonal construction of the type *Menja lixoradit* lit. '[It] fevers me'. = 'I have fever'. The difference is quantitative: Russian has a score of such impersonal verbs, while in Acehnese there are hundreds of them.[22]

5. SYNTSUBJ PROBLEMS RELATED TO IMPERSONAL CONSTRUCTIONS

On several occasions, the dubious treatment of an actant as the SyntSubj is due to the failure to recognize the presence of a zero dummy subject, a lexeme similar to the expletive and meteorological IT of English, but having an empty signifier. Let me consider two cases, in Icelandic and in Amele.

Icelandic (Andrews 2001). Icelandic has a common type of sentences of the form in (36):

(36) Icelandic

  a. ***Bát***+***Ø*** +***inn*** / ***Bát***+***a*** +***na*** *rak* *á land*
    boat SG.**ACC** DEF / boat PL.**ACC** DEF drift-PAST.3SG to shore
    'The boat/s drifted to shore', lit. '[It] drifted the.boat/s to shore'.

  b. ***Bát***+***i*** +***num*** / ***Bát***+***u*** +***num*** *hvolf*+*di*
    boat SG.**DAT** DEF / boat PL.**DAT** DEF capsize PAST.3SG
    'The boat/s capsized', lit. '[It] capsized the.boat/s'.

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[22] There is also a semantic difference, irrelevant in the present context: in Russian, such verbs denote mostly harmful or at least unpleasant physiological states and processes, while in Acehnese they cover a much larger area of non-volitional propperties, states, events, and processes. A formal difference should also be mentioned: the Russian impersonal construction has a dummy zero SyntSubj, which imposes on the verb the agreement in 3_{SG.NEU(ter)}; in Acehnese, there is no dummy subject (Durie 1985: 180), since the verb does not require automatic subject agreement.

(36) c.   i   *Hann   kasta+ði   stein+i   +num   /   stein+u   +num*
             he-NOM throw PAST.3SG stone SG.DAT DEF   /   stone PL.DAT DEF
             'He threw the stone/s'.

       ii   ***Stein*+i   +*num*   /   ***Stein*+u   +*num*   *var*   *kasta+ð***
             stone   SG.**DAT** DEF   /   stone   PL.**DAT** DEF   be-PAST.3SG throw   PAST.PART
             'The stone/s were thrown'.

According to Andrews 2001, the boldfaced element in the sentences of (36) is the SyntSubj, since its behavior shows at least 13 features that it shares with the behavior of the "canonical" SyntSubjs of Icelandic: it controls coreference with the "subject" of an infinitive and the choice of the reflexive possessive pronoun *sinni* 'self's' (*Rus. svoj*), it can appear between an auxiliary and the past participle of the lexical verb (where only SyntSubjs are admitted), etc. However, "not only are they not nominative in case, but the verb does not agree with them" (Andrews 2001: 93), while normal SyntSubjs in Icelandic control the agreement of the MV and are marked by the nominative. Therefore, I conclude that these suspicious sentence elements are not SyntSubjs — even though they simply behave in many respects as prototypical SyntSubjs sometimes do under specific conditions. Otherwise, it is not clear what Andrews and many others who share his perspective on this issue understand by a subject: by all means, not a sentence element that is the depending member of a particular SSynt-relation.

In reality, the sentences in (36a–b) and (36c-ii) manifest an impersonal construction with a zero subject: in (36a–b), this is the lexeme $\emptyset_{SG}^{\text{«ELEMENTS»}}$, denoting some slightly mysterious nature forces; in (36c-ii), this is the zero dummy subject lexeme $\emptyset_{SG}$, which is semantically empty. These zeroes are equivalent to *Eng*. IT, *Ger*. ES and *Fr*. IL. (Spanish and Russian also have, in such contexts, a zero dummy: for instance, *Sp. Se lee muchas novelas* lit. '[It] reads itself many novels' and *Rus. Zdes´ mnoj siženo* lit. 'Here by.me [it is] sat'.) The correct glossing of (36a), (36b) and (36c-ii) would be 'It drifted the boat/s to the shore', 'It capsized the boat/s' and 'It was thrown with the stone/s'. That is exactly how all these constructions are described in an elementary manual of Icelandic for non-natives (Glendening 1983: 49–50).

As for the SyntSubj's coreferential deletion in Icelandic, does not tell us anything about the subjecthood of the boldfaced clause elements:

(37) Icelandic (Pouplier 2003: 367)
       a.   ***Þeim*   *líkar*   *maturinn*   *og borða*   *mikið***
             they-DAT please-PRES.3SG food-SG.NOM.DEF and eat-PRES.3PL much
             lit. 'To.them pleases the food and [they] eat much'. = 'They like the food and eat much'.

       b.   ***Okkur*   *vantaði*   *peninga*   *og vorum*   *svangir***
             we-DAT lack-PAST.3SG money-PL.ACC   and be-PAST.1PL hungry
             lit. 'To.us [it] lacked money and [we] were hungry'. = 'We lacked money and were hungry'.

In (37), the deletion of the SyntSubj in the second coordinate clause is controlled by semantic properties of the controlling element (a human Experiencer) rather than by its syntactic nature.

In Amele (Roberts 1987, 2001), the MV can simultaneously agree with four types of actant (quadri-personal agreement). Agreement affixes are different for each type of actant; the agreement in the simplest clauses — an intransitive MV and only one actant — al-

lows the researcher to establish the Subject Agreement affix set and thus to identify the SyntSubj without problems: the SyntSubj in an Amele sentence is the noun that imposes the use of these particular agreement affixes

Amele (Roberts 1987, 1988, 2001). A problem concerning the SyntSubj in Amele comes from the category of switch-reference: in case a sentence includes two (or more) verbs, the preceding being subordinated to the following ($V^1 \leftarrow$**synt**$-V^2$), a switch-reference grammeme on V^1 is supposed to indicate whether V^2 has a SyntSubj referentially identical to that of V^1. (For instance, in *John came in and sat down* both verbs have the same SyntSubj; in *John came, and I sat down* the verbs have different SyntSubjs.) Cf. (38):

(38) Amele (Trans-New Guinea family; $q = /\widehat{\text{gb}}/$)

    a.   *Ija*   *hu* +***f***   +*ig*   *mad*+*ig* +*en*
           I   come if-**SAME-SUB** 1SG$_{\text{Sub}}$ speak 1SG$_{\text{Sub}}$ FUT

           'If I come, [I] will.speak'.

           vs.

           Uqa *ho* +***oʔ***   +*b*   *fi* *ija* *mad*+*ig* +*en*
           he   come if-**DIF-SUB** 3SG$_{\text{Sub}}$ if I   speak 1SG$_{\text{Sub}}$ FUT

           'If he comes, I will.speak'.

    b.   *Ege* *wen*   Ø +*g*   +*en*
           we   hunger give 1PL$_{\text{Obj}}$ 3SG$_{\text{Sub}}$.REMOTE.PAST

           'We became hungry', lit. '[It] us hunger gave'.

    c.   *Ege* *ʔo*   +*ʔob* +***ob***   *wen* Ø +*g* +*en*
           we   REAL-GER walk 1PL$_{\text{Sub}}$.**SAME-SUB** hunger give 1PL$_{\text{Obj}}$ 3SG$_{\text{Sub}}$.REMOTE.PAST

           'As we walked, we became hungry', lit. 'We walking, [it] us hunger.gave'.[23]

    d.   *Eu jagel November na* *uqa* *odo*+*ʔo*   +*b*   *ʔul* +*ig* +*en*
           that month   in he   do **DIF-SUB** 3SG$_{\text{Sub}}$ leave 1PL$_{\text{Obj}}$ 3SG$_{\text{Sub}}$.REMOTE.PAST

           lit. 'That in November having done, he left it to.us' [Roberts 1987: 304, (620)].

Now, Amele has an impersonal construction, which expresses physiological and psychological states of a person; the construction has a dummy zero subject $\varnothing_{(3SG)}$, with which the verb agrees; this is shown by the Subject agreement grammeme 3SG on the verb: see (38b). The Experiencer appears as DirO (also identified by verb agreement), and the designation of the state itself (a noun or an adjective) is a quasi-object, very much like the quasi-object noun in Persian

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     [23] Two interesting details about Amele are worth mentioning.

     — The semi-auxiliary (≈ light) verb 'give' has a zero stem, so that its observable forms consist solely of suffixes; see Mel'čuk 2006: 474–475.

     — The meaning 'want to Y' is expressed in Amele by means of an impersonal construction with the light verb 'give' and the imperative form of Y; the literal rendering of 'X wants to Y' is 'It gives to.X: «Y!»' (Roberts 2001: 221):

(i) a.   *Ija* *ma* *j* +*ag* +*a*   Ø +*t*   +*ena*
           I   taro eat 2SG$_{\text{SUB}}$ IMPER   give 1SG$_{\text{OBJ}}$.3SG$_{\text{SUB}}$ PRES

           lit. '[It gives] me «Eat$_{\text{SG}}$ taro!»'. = 'I want to eat taro'.

      b.   *Ege* *ma* *j* +*eig* +*a*   Ø +*g*   +*ena*
           we   taro eat 2PL$_{\text{SUB}}$ IMPER   give 1PL$_{\text{OBJ}}$.3SG$_{\text{SUB}}$ PRES

           lit. '[It gives] us «Eat$_{\text{PL}}$ taro!»'. = 'We want to eat taro'.

     Both sentences in (i) have a dummy zero subject.

verbal collocations; it is not cross-referenced on the verb.[24] As a result, what is found in (38a) seems to be an unproblematic construction similar to Russian impersonal constructions of the type *Nas*$_{\text{DirO}}$ *trjasët* lit. '[It] shakes us'. = 'We are shaking' or *Nas*$_{\text{DirO}}$ *klonit v son* lit. '[It] pushes us into sleep'. = 'We are sleepy', with a dummy zero SyntSubj, cf. above, (9) and (35). So far, so good. But in a two-clause sentence, such as that in (38c), the verb of the first clause, where the SyntSubj is EGE 'we', is marked as having the same SyntSubj as the verb of the second clause, while this latter has a dummy zero subject. This fact makes Roberts to remark that, although 'we' in the second clause is a DirO, it has some SyntSubj properties, in the first place — controlling the feature "same/different subjects" (Roberts 2001: 204). But why do we have to say that the suffix **-ob** signals the same **SyntSubj** in the next clause? Roberts states himself (1988) that the switch-reference in Amele may track the sequence of Themes ("same Theme/different Theme") rather than that of SyntSubjs. The detailed examples given in Roberts 1987: 292–305 also point to rather semantic character of Amele switch-reference: thus, in (38d), the SyntSubj is, of course, the same, but the marker of DIF-SUB signals the change of world setting — a new situation obtains. Therefore, if we accept that switch-reference in Amele marks the preservation/change of Themes (or maybe of situations), the problem disappears. It suffices to replace the names of grammemes SAME-SUB and DIF-SUB must be replaced in (38c–d) by SAME-THEME and DIF-THEME.

6. A DIFFICULT CASE:
THE SYNTACTIC SUBJECT IN LUSHOOTSEED

However, things in general are not as beautiful and well-behaved as the preceding exposition might imply. Let us consider Lushootseed, which has repeatedly been claimed not to have a SyntSubj, but — as Beck 1996 and 2000 convincingly argued — has one after all, although not without a complication.

    Lushootseed. Lushootseed is a "kind of" Type **2** language — it features monopersonal agreement, but only for bi-actantial (≈ transitive) verbs: its intransitive verbs do not show agreement with its actant. Therefore, Lushootseed cannot be considered in parallel with genuine monopersonal agreement languages. Here is a relevant dataset for Lushootseed (borrowed from Beck 2000).

(39)   Lushootseed (Salishan family, Canadian West coast; PUNCT stands for 'punctual aspect', and LS, for 'limited control')

        a.   i   ʔu +ʔəƛ' čəd
             PUNCT come I
            'I came'.

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    [24] These nominal-verbal collocations are also known as complex, or periphrastic, verbs. Here are a few examples (Samvelian 2012; the quasi-object is in boldface):

(i)   *Maryäm otaq+ra*$_{\text{DirO}}$ ***ǯaru zäd***
      lit. 'Myriam room broom hit'. = 'Myriam swept the room'.

(ii)   *Maryäm Omid+ra*$_{\text{DirO}}$ ***šekast däd***
      lit. 'Myriam Omid defeat gave'. = 'Myriam defeated Omid'.

(iii)   *Maryäm Omid+ra*$_{\text{DirO}}$ ***dust dār+äd***
      lit. 'Myriam Omid friend has'. = 'Myriam loves Omid'.

(iv)   *Maryäm Omid+ra*$_{\text{DirO}}$ ***gušt kärd***
      lit. 'Myriam Omid ear did'. = 'Myriam listened to Omid'.

    These collocations are extremely widespread in Persian: in fact, most verbs of SAE languages correspond to V+N collocations in Persian.

(39) a. ii   *ʔu +ʔəƛ̓   čəxʷ*
           PUNCT come you_SG
           'You_SG came'.

       iii   *u +ʔəƛ̓   ti   čʼa čʼas*
           PUNCT come DET child
           'The child came'.

       iv   *ʔu +ʔəƛ̓ $\emptyset_{(3^{rd}\,person)}$*
           PUNCT come he/she/they
           'He/She/They came'.

The only actant of an intransitive verb is expressed by a second-position pronominal clitic, which is a zero lexeme for the 3rd person (singular and plural).

(39) b. i   *ʔu +ʔəyʼ+dxʷ+Ø   čəd   ti   čʼačʼas*
           PUNCT find   LC   ACT   I   the   child
           'I found the child'.

       ii   *ʔu +ʔəyʼ+dxʷ+Ø   čəxʷ   ti   čʼačʼas*
           PUNCT find   LC   ACT   you_SG   the   child
           'You_SG found the child'.

       iii   *ʔu +ʔəyʼ+dxʷ+Ø $\emptyset_{(3.PERSON)}$ ti   čʼačʼas*
           PUNCT find   LC   ACT   he/she/they the   child
           'He/She/They found the child'.

       iv   *ʔu +ʔəyʼ+du+Ø +bš   ti   čʼačʼas*
           PUNCT find   LC   ACT 1SG_OBJ   the   child
           'The child found me'.

       v   *ʔu +ʔəyʼ+du+Ø +bicid   ti   čʼačʼas*
           PUNCT find   LC   ACT 2SG_OBJ   the   child
           'The child found you_SG'.

       vi   *ʔu +ʔəyʼ+du+Ø+bš   čəxʷ*
           PUNCT find   LC   ACT SG_OBJ   you_SG
           'You_SG found.me'.

       vii   *ʔu +ʔəyʼ+du+Ø +bicid   čəd*
           PUNCT find   LC   ACT 2SG_OBJ   I
           'I found.you_SG'.

       viii   *ʔu +ʔəyʼ+du+Ø   čəd / čəxʷ   Ø*
           PUNCT find   LC   ACT I   / you_SG   he/she/they
           'I/You_SG found him/her/them'.

The sentence meaning 'The child/I/You_SG found him/her/them' is impossible to express in Lushootseed, since there is no physical pronominal clitic expressing the 3rd person object; and a sentence of the form in (39b-iii) means 'He/ She/They found the child'. The only way to verbalize the meaning 'The child/I/You_SG found him/her/them' is to turn the Main Verb into the passive, so that 'he/she/they' becomes the SyntSubj:

(39) b. ix   *ʔu +ʔəyʼ+du+b $\emptyset_{(3^{rd}\,person)}$ ʔə   ti   čʼačʼas*
           PUNCT find   LC   PASS   he/she/they   by   the   child

The SyntSubj in Lushootseed has five syntactic privileges out of six priveleges possible for it (since the language has no cases, case marking is irrelevant):

1) The SyntSubj depends exclusively on the MV.

2) It is non-omissible from the SyntS of the sentence.

3) It always precedes another prepositionless actant, which is a DirO.

4) Its syntactic role is targeted by the passive:

(39) c.   *ʔu   +ʔəyʼ+dxʷ+Ø   čəd   ti   čʼačʼas*
           PUNCT find   LC   ACT I   the   child
           'I found the child'.

           vs.

           ʔu   +ʔəyʼ+du+b   čəd ʔə   ti   čʼačʼas
           PUNCT find   LC   PASS I   by   the   child
           'I was.found by the child'.

5) It is the only actant that can be expressed by special subject clitics.

However, it is not the SyntSubj that controls the agreement of the Lushootseed MV, but the DirO. This fact flies in the face of the Eurocentrist conviction that the MV, if it agrees only with one of its actants, must agree with the SyntSubj; but otherwise, it does not undermine our approach to the definition of the SyntSubj as a cross-linguistic phenomenon.

7. THE SYNTACTIC SUBJECT: ITS SYNT-ROLE *VS.* ITS SEM- AND COMM-ROLES

The problem of defining the SyntSubj has arisen in part as a result of the failure to strictly separate, on the one hand, the purely syntactic properties that define a syntactic element, and, on the other hand, some semantic and communicative properties of that same element. It is true that syntactic clause elements encode — in the ultimate analysis — semantic roles of the corresponding meanings and are tightly controlled by communicative factors. This, however, is not a reason for abandoning syntactic relations; and, by all means, this is impossible. We should simply keep in mind that in some languages the alignment of syntactic relations to semantic roles is very intricate; thus, in English, as illustrated above, a SyntSubj can correspond to a large variety of semantic roles. In other languages such alignment is more straightforward: thus, in a basic clause of Archi the SyntSubj cannot be an Agent, an Experiencer or a Cause. But even if in some cases there is a one-to-one correspondence between syntactic and semantic roles, this should not lead to confusing them (remember that a one-element set is essentially different from an element). In some languages, the correspondence between syntactic, semantic and communicative roles is close to one-to-one. Thus, speaking of Lushootseed, Beck (2000: 310) states "that although there is an unusually close "fit" between the semantic structure of an utterance and the syntactic role that each participant … is assigned by the grammar, this fit is not one-hundred percent and so the invocation of a syntactic role … seems justified." This close fit is not at all astonishing: the SyntSubj as the most privileged syntactic actant tends to express the most privileged semantic role of Agent and the most privileged communicative role available to a nominal — that of the Theme, which in its turn, tends to be Given, referential and definite.

8. THE DIRECT OBJECT

Having dealt with the SyntSubj, I can briefly turn to the DirO — in order to round up my presentation and to show how the proposed parameters work on a larger scale. As the reader was warned, this section is limited to a dire minimum and does not include examples (for good linguistic data concerning the DirO, see Plank, ed. 1984). Without further ado, I will sketch below a universal definition of Direct Object.

Definition 2: Direct Object

The DirO is the second most privileged Synt-actant of the transitive verb in any clause that contains such a verb in a non-ergative **L**; the DirO's privileges for **L** must be indicated by a list.

It is immediately clear that the DirO and, respectively, the **direct-objectival** SyntRel are not cross-linguistically universal: according to our definition of ergative language, they are present only in non-ergative languages (barring some exceptional, derived constructions, such as, for instance, the progressive construction in Archi, p. 195) and only in clauses with a transitive MV. The DirO's syntactic privileges are determined using the same definitorial parameters as those of the SyntSubj, but, of course, by different values thereof:

1. The DirO exclusively depends on a verb (the finite form, the infinitive/masdar, the participle, the converb), but not necessarily on the MV.
2. The DirO can be non-omissible from the syntactic structure of the clause.
3. The DirO's linear position is specified with respect to the governing verb and/ or with respect to its other actants.
4. The DirO can have morphological impact on the verb (= agreement L→V): in certain languages, a transitive verb agrees with its DirO.
5. The verbs can also have morphological impact on the DirO (= government L←V); the DirO is quite often marked by a special case: as a rule, the accusative or the nominative (the latter, in an ergative construction).
6. The DirO is involved in actant manipulations: as a result of the verb's inflection, the DirO can be promoted to SyntSubj status (the SyntSubj being demoted to Agent Complement or Oblique Object).
7. The DirO can pronominalize in a particular way.

9. SUMMING UP

My consclusions concern two main aspects of the discussion: establishing and defining particular SSyntRels in particular languages (**9.1**) and their cross-linguistic universality (**9.2**).

9.1. Defining Surface-Syntactic Relations

A SSyntRel **r** in the phrase L_i–**r**→L of language **L** is defined exclusively by a set of parameters concerning the following properties of L_i and L:
    1) the possible range of L_i;
    2) omissibility/non-omissibility of L;

3) possible mutual linear arrangements of L_i and L;

4) L_i and L's morphological properties and morphological interaction;

5) prosodic properties of the phrase L_i–**r**→L.

In this way, all available linguistic expressive means are taken into account. To put it differently, any SSyntRel **r** is defined strictly by statements necessary to implement the abstract phrase L_i–**r**→L in an utterance.

A list of parameters necessary for the definition of SyntSubj — that is, of the **subjectival** SSyntRel — is presented in Subsection **2.3** above. Each SyntRel requires, of course, its own set of defining parameters: thus, prosody is irrelevant for SyntSubj, but it is important for different **appositive** SSyntRels in Russian (*gorod-sad* 'city [which is a] garden' vs. *gorod Sad* 'city [which is called] Sad').

All other properties of a SSyntRel (and of its depending and governing members) are characterizing, or descriptive: they specify the syntactic behavior of the SSyntRel **r** in language **L**, **r** itself being previously established based on its defining properties.

9.2. Cross-linguistic Universality
of Particular Surface-Syntactic Relations

Surface-Syntactic Relations as a linguistic phenomenon are cross-linguistically universal in the following sense: they are present in all languages, appear in all sentences of a language, and involve all lexical units in a sentence.

The universality of SSyntRels is similar to the universality of parts of speech or phonemes (Dryer 1997: 116–119). Major word classes, known as parts of speech, necessarily exist in any language, but this, of course, does not mean that language L_1 has the same parts of speech as L_2: some languages do not have a class of adverbs, some others lack adverbs and adjectives. Now, all languages seem to have verbs and nouns, but this is simply due to the universalist definitions of 'verb' and 'noun': verbs are lexemes that can, without special modification, fulfill the role of the syntactic head of a clause; nouns are lexemes that can, without special modification, fulfill the role of actants of a verb. Here the similarity between the parts of speech of different languages ends: a semantic equivalent of a noun of L_1 is not necessarily a noun in L_2, since, for instance, L_1 can allow for event and property nouns (such as 'arrival' and 'beauty'), while in L_1 such meanings are implemented exclusively by verbs. The same is true about the verbs, etc. An actual part of speech of L_1 must be defined strictly within L_1, but this does prevent L_2 from having the same part of speech, albeit with different elements! Thus, nouns of L_1 do not always semantically correspond to nouns in L_2 (and vice versa), but there is a heavy overlap, and in both languages a noun can fulfill the same general syntactic role—be an actant of a verb.

Another instructive parallel with a particular SSyntRel is the nominative case. It is the case of nomination, and with such a universalist definition, any language that has cases has a nominative. But the nominatives of two languages are, as a rule, by no means fully equivalent: they can play different syntactic roles; however, it is enough that both are used for nomination. In the same vein, the datives of two languages normally are different in their syntactic behavior (consider the Georgian or Hindi dative that is used to mark the DirO with the dative of classical or Slavic languages), yet they are correctly called *datives* because both mark the Receiver actant of the verbs of giving. By the the way, the dative is not cross-linguistically universal; even more than that: no other case but the nominative is, since some case languages have only two cases: the nominative and the oblique; such are, for instance, Old French and Kurdish.

It is easy to multiply the examples: the Russian present tense does not have the same senses and the same syntactic uses as the present tense in German or Japanese, but this does not prevent us from calling all the corresponding grammemes PRESENT, since all of them can designate the coincidence with the moment of speech; the singular in Russian and English does not fully correspond to the Hungarian or Turkish singular; etc.

It is in this sense that some SSyntRels are cross-linguistically universal.

NB: Deep-Syntactic Relations (Mel'čuk 2013: 61–79) are not considered here. The set of DSyntRels is postulated deductively for all languages; it is universal in the sense that it is cross-linguistically valid—it is sufficient for the description of Deep-Syntactic Structures in any language (of course, under the condition that we allow for the use of fictitious lexemes: Mel'čuk 2013: 37–42). A particular DSyntRel may not appear in all languages. The DSyntRels **I**, **II**, **II**$_{dir.sp}$, **III**, **ATTR**, **APPEND** and **COORD** seem to be universal; the DSyntRels **IV**, **V** and **VI** are absent from some languages; I have no solid evidence about **ATTR**$_{descr}$ and **QUASI-COORD**.

A set of SSyntRels is established empirically for each given language **L** (for a tentative list of SSyntRels of English, see Mel'čuk & Pertsov 1987: 85–156 and Mel'čuk 2014: Ch. 18). A particular SSyntRel may or may not be cross-linguistically universal. Thus, the **subjectival** SSyntRel, examined in the present paper, is universal, while the Russian **approximate-quantitative** SSyntRel (present in the phrase *knig*–**approximate-quantitative**→*dvadcat′* lit. 'books twenty' = 'about twenty books') is found only in Russian. The **direct-objective** SSyntRel is widespread, but not universal: ergative languages do not have it. I don't know whether the **indirect-objective** SSyntRel is universal or not; I have doubts even about the **modificative** SSyntRel.

The cross-linguistic universality of the **subjectival** SSyntRel is due, of course, to its universalist definition as the most privileged SSyntRel of **L**.

Acknowledgments

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