

Ergatives are special

Parasitic resumptives and the Ergative Extraction Constraint in Samoan

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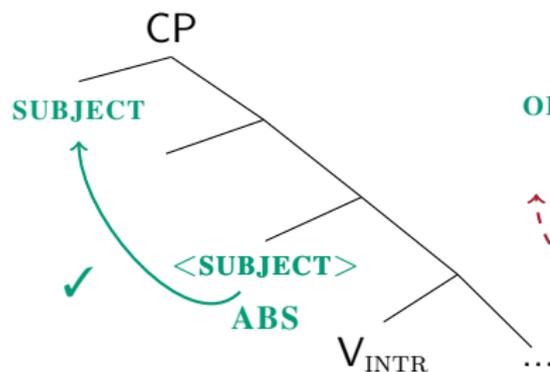
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The Ergative Extraction Constraint

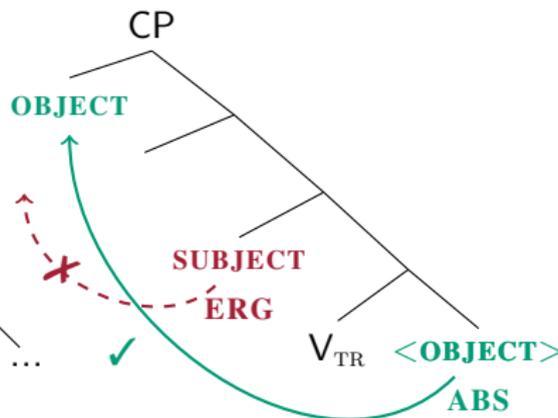
Syntactic ergativity effect:

ban on wh-movement of the ergative agent

Intransitive clause:



Transitive clause:



Dixon (1994); Manning (1996); Aldridge (2004, 2008a); Coon et al. (2014, 2021); Deal (2016); Polinsky (2016, 2017); Tollan and Clemens (2021); Yuan (2022), a.o.

Example: ERG cannot move in Q'anjob'al (Mayan)

* Maktxel max y-il ERG ix ix?
who PFV A3-see CLF woman

Intended: 'Who saw the woman?'

***ERG WH-MOVT**

Maktxel max y-il naq winaq ABS ?
who PFV A3-see CLF man

'Who did the man see?'

✓ABS WH-MOVT

(Coon et al. 2014, 2021; Tollan and Clemens 2021)

- ▶ high absolutive blocks ergative movement

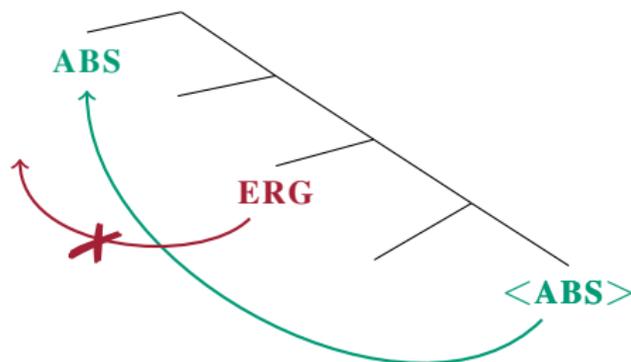
Aldridge (2004, 2008a); Coon et al. (2014, 2021); Tollan and Clemens (2021), a.o.

- ▶ structural or morphological properties of the ergative DP block ergative movement

(Otsuka 2006, 2017; Legate 2012; Deal 2016; Polinsky 2016)

High absolute blocks ergative extraction

- ▶ ABS moves to position above ERG
- ▶ ABS intervenes for ERG movement due to:
 - ▶ Intervention (Aldridge 2004, 2008b; Coon et al. 2014, 2021)
 - ▶ Constraint on Crossing Dependencies (Tollan and Clemens 2021)



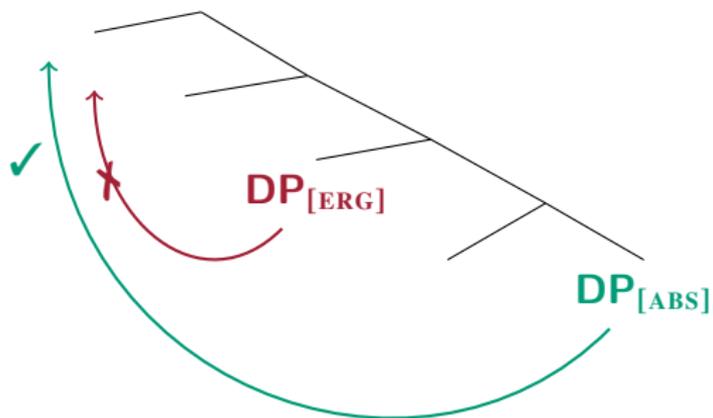
- ▶ high absolutive blocks ergative movement

Aldridge (2004, 2008a); Coon et al. (2014, 2021); Tollan and Clemens (2021), a.o.

- ▶ structural or morphological properties of the ergative DP block ergative movement

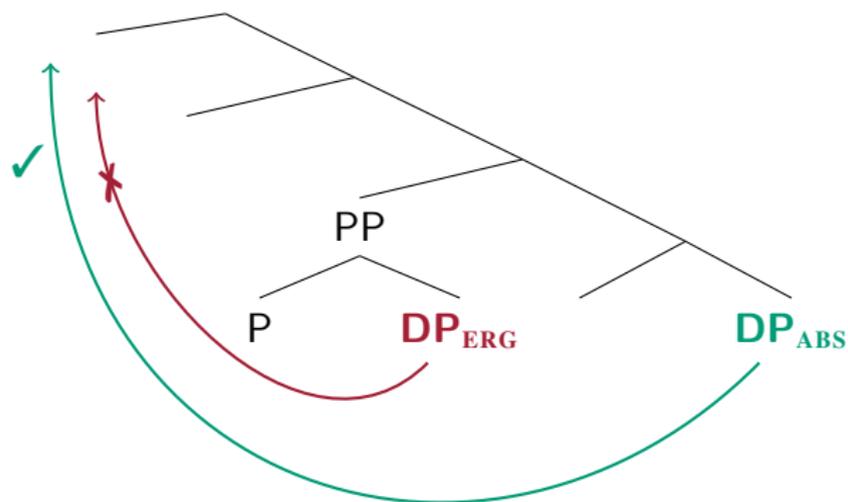
(Otsuka 2006, 2017; Legate 2012; Deal 2016; Polinsky 2016)

Properties of ERG block ergative extraction



(Otsuka 2006, 2017; Legate 2012; Deal 2016)

Properties of ERG block ergative extraction



(Polinsky 2016)

Ingredients of the Ergative Extraction Constraint:

ABS raising

+

structural position of ERG

In Samoan:

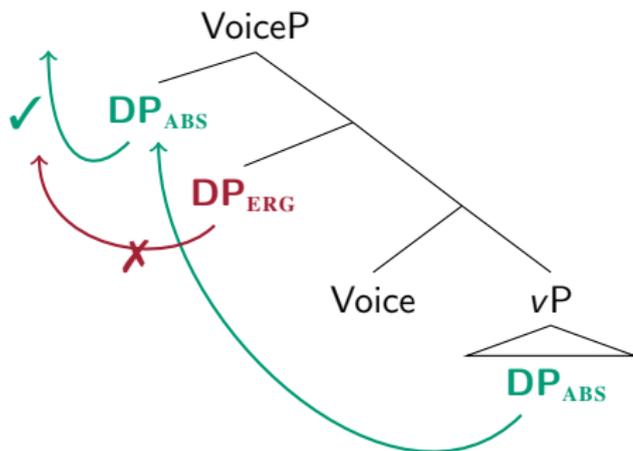
- ▶ ABS raising does not block extraction generally
⇒ properties of ERG block ERG extraction
- ▶ ERG extraction is possible when ABS stays low
⇒ ABS raising + properties of ERG block ERG extraction

Ingredients of the Ergative Extraction Constraint

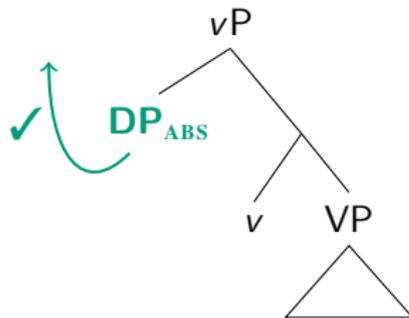
- ▶ **ERG** in Spec, VoiceP cf. unergative **ABS** in Spec, vP
(Massam 2009; Tollan 2018; Tollan and Massam 2022)
- ▶ VoiceP is a phase (e.g. Harley 2014; Legate 2014)
- ▶ **ABS** theme moves to Spec, VoiceP above **ERG**
- ▶ only outer phase edge is accessible for extraction

(Aldridge 2004, 2008b; Bošković 2016; Holmberg et al. 2019)

Transitive verb:



Unergative verb:



Ingredients of the Ergative Extraction Constraint

- ▶ **ERG** in Spec, VoiceP cf. unergative **ABS** in Spec, vP
(Massam 2009; Tollan 2018; Tollan and Massam 2022)
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(Aldridge 2004, 2008b; Bošković 2016; Holmberg et al. 2019)

ERG in Spec, VoiceP + ABS raising to outer Spec, VoiceP



ERGATIVE EXTRACTION CONSTRAINT

Background on Samoan

Parasitic resumptives

The Ergative Extraction Constraint

Conclusion

- ▶ Polynesian < Austronesian
- ▶ **Data** from elicitations with one speaker from Apia, Samoa (study is preliminary)
- ▶ Verb initial
- ▶ Ergative case marking

VERB **SUBJ** **OBJ**
E tausi e le tinā o Natia ia.
PRS care ERG the mother GEN Natia s/he

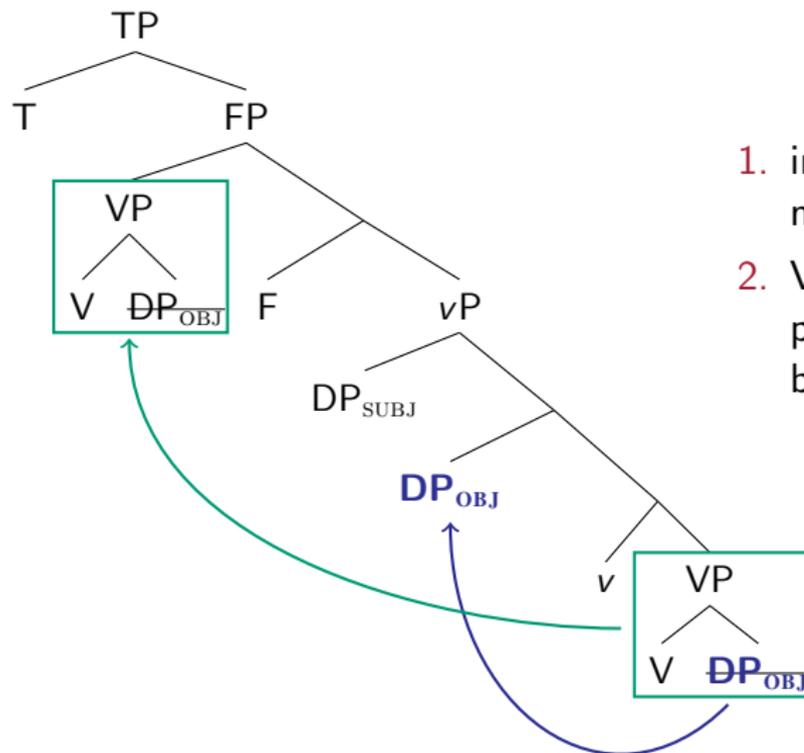
‘Natia’s mother takes care of her.’

VERB OBJ **SUBJ**
E tausi ia e le tinā o Natia.
PRS care s/he ERG the mother GEN Natia

‘Natia’s mother takes care of her.’

Verb initiality by VP fronting

Following Collins (2017):



1. internal arguments move out of VP
2. VP moves to position immediately below TP

Case marking

Na tanu [e le maile] [le pogāivi] i le oneone.
PST bury ERG the dog the bone OBL the sand

‘The dog buried the bone in the sand.’

Na va'ai [ia] [i le tama].
PST see s/he OBL the boy

‘S/he saw the boy.’

E moe [l-a'u maile] i ī.
PRS sleep the-my dog OBL here

‘My dog sleeps in here.’

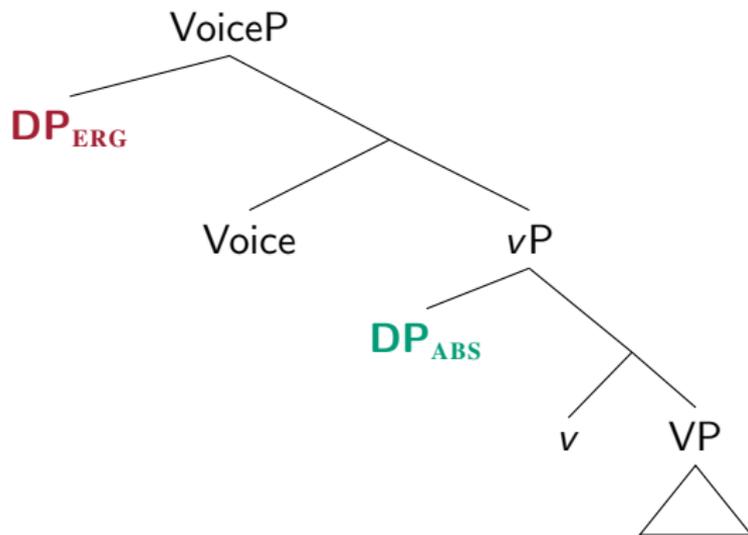
Na **OU_{ABS}** va'ai i le tagata.
PST I see OBL the person

'I saw a person.'

Sa **OU_{ERG}** fafāgā l-a'u maile.
PST I feed.TR the-my dog

'I fed my dog.'

Ergatives are higher



- ▶ **ERG** case correlates with PROTO-HIGH AGENTS
- ▶ **ABS** case correlates with PROTO-LOW AGENTS
- ▶ no **ERG** case in transitivized unergatives

(Tollan 2018; Tollan and Massam 2022)

Ergative is higher

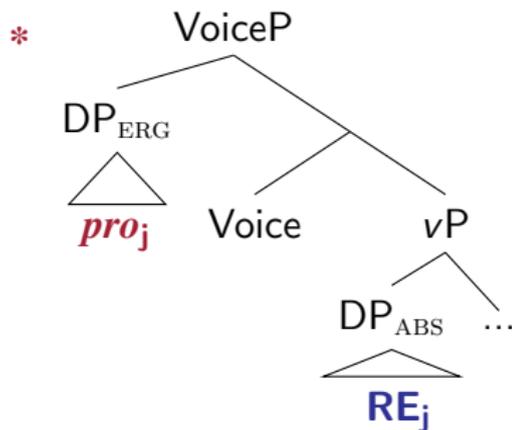
- ▶ Spec, VoiceP associated with proto-high agents
- ▶ Spec, vP associated with proto-low agents
- ▶ Transitive unergatives do not have ERG subjects
 ⇐ unergative subject is in Spec, vP

More evidence:

- ▶ A-scrambling unavailable without ERG subject
 ⇒ driven by Voice_{ERG}
- ▶ ERG cannot license parasitic gaps in vP adjuncts
 ⇒ ERG introduced above vP

Na fafaga **e** **ia_i/*_j** [le maile a Lulu_j].
 PST feed ERG s/he the dog GEN Lulu

'S/he_i/*_j fed Lulu's_j dog.'

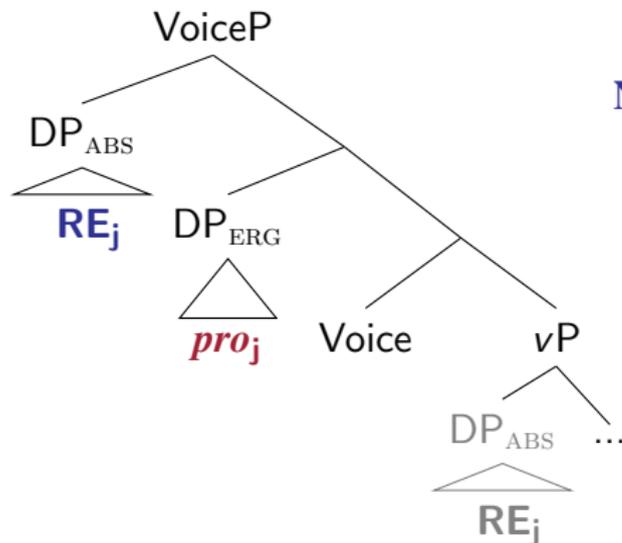


CONDITION C VIOLATION

ABS A-scrambles above ERG

	ABS		ERG	
Na	fafaga	[le maile a Lulu _j]	e	ia _{i/j} t _{ABS} .
PST	feed	the dog GEN Lulu	ERG	s/he

'S/he_{i/j} fed Lulu's_j dog.'



NO CONDITION C VIOLATION
 ⇒ ABS does not reconstruct
 = **A-SCRAMBLING**

- ▶ Voice_{ERG} may trigger A-scrambling of ABS (and OBL).
- ▶ Unergative verbs without Voice_{ERG} cannot trigger A-scrambling.

Background on Samoan

Parasitic resumptives

Background on topicalization

Parasitic resumptives are parasitic gaps

The Ergative Extraction Constraint

Conclusion

- ▶ Topicalized XP appears preverbally with predicative *o*.
- ▶ ABS and ERG optionally resumed with φ -agreeing pronoun.


[O a'u] na (ou) aumai-a l-au tusi.
PRED I PST (I) give-TR the-2SG book

'It was me who brought your book.'


[O matou] sa (matou) nonofo i le taulaga lea.
PRED we PST (we) live.PL OBL the town this

'It was us who lived in this town.'

Phi-deficient resumptives

GEN and OBL DPs are obligatorily resumed with 3SG pronoun regardless of φ -features

E moe l-**a'u** maile i ī.
PRS sleep the-**1SG** dog OBL here

'My dog sleeps here.'


[O a'u] e moe l-**ana** maile i ī.
PRED I PRS sleep the-**3SG** dog OBL here

'It is me whose dog sleeps here.'

Phi-deficient resumptives

GEN and **OBL** DPs are resumed with inanimate 3SG pronoun regardless of φ -features

Na togi [iā te a'u] e le tama le polo.
PST throw OBL **I** ERG the boy the ball

'The boy threw the ball to me.'

[O a'u] na togi **i ai** e le tama le polo.
PRED I PST throw OBL **it(OBL)** ERG the boy the ball



'It was to me the boy threw the ball.'

Resumptive pronouns are movement-derived

φ -deficient resumptives cannot appear in islands:

* [O a'u] na sau le teine
PRED I PST come the girl

[ina ua e vala'au atu i ai].
COMP PERF you call DIR OBL it(OBL)

lit. 'It was me who the girl came when you called __.'

φ -deficient resumptives spell out an \bar{A} -trace.

⇒ can be used as a diagnostic for \bar{A} -movement.

φ -deficient resumptives can be parasitic

E tausi le fafine lea **iā te a'u** [ona e alofa **iā te a'u**].
PRS care the woman this OBL I COMP PRS love OBL I

'This woman takes care of me because she loves me.'

[O a'u] e tausi le fafine lea **i** **ai**
PRED I PRS care the woman this OBL it(OBL)

[ona e alofa **i ai**]
 COMP PRS love **OBL it(OBL)**].

'It's me this woman takes care of because she loves me.'

Parasitic resumptives = parasitic gaps

- ▶ may appear in syntactic islands

E.G. IN ENGLISH:

* [Which articles] did John file the manuscript [without reading __]?



[Which articles] did John file __ [without reading __]?



(Engdahl 1983 *et seq.*)

Parasitic resumptives = parasitic gaps

- ▶ may appear in syntactic islands

* [O a'u] na sau le teine
PRED I PST come the girl

[ina ua e vala'au atu i ai].
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Parasitic resumptives = parasitic gaps

- ▶ may appear in syntactic islands



lit. 'It was me who ___ came when you called __.'

(Engdahl 1983 *et seq.*)

Parasitic resumptives = parasitic gaps

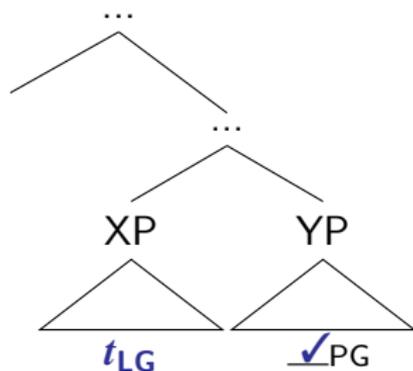
- ▶ may appear in syntactic islands
- ▶ licensed only by \bar{A} -movement (see Appendix)
- ▶ subject to the anti-c-command condition

The Anti-C-Command Condition

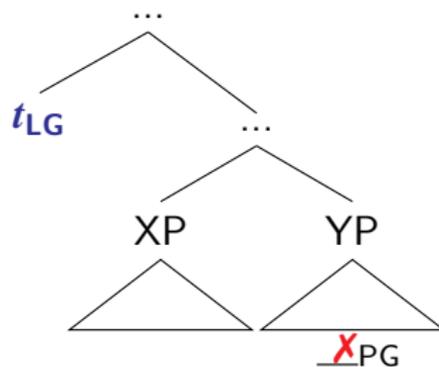
Anti-C-Command Condition (Engdahl 1983:22)

“A parasitic gap may not be c-commanded by the real gap.”

See also Aoun and Clark (1985); Chomsky (1986); Contreras (1987), a.o.



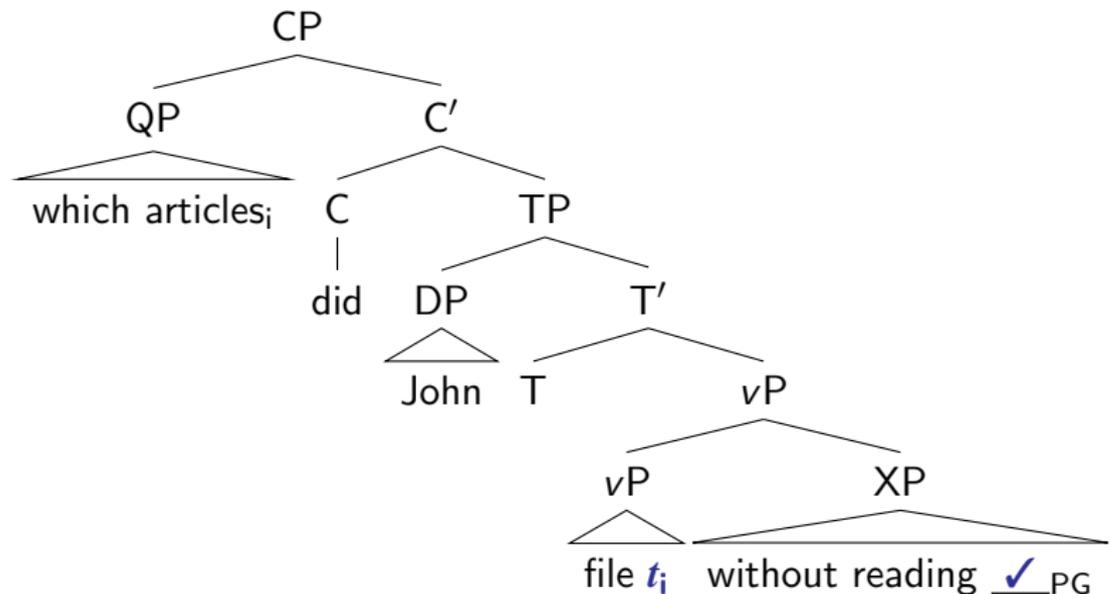
\checkmark parasitic gap



\times parasitic gap

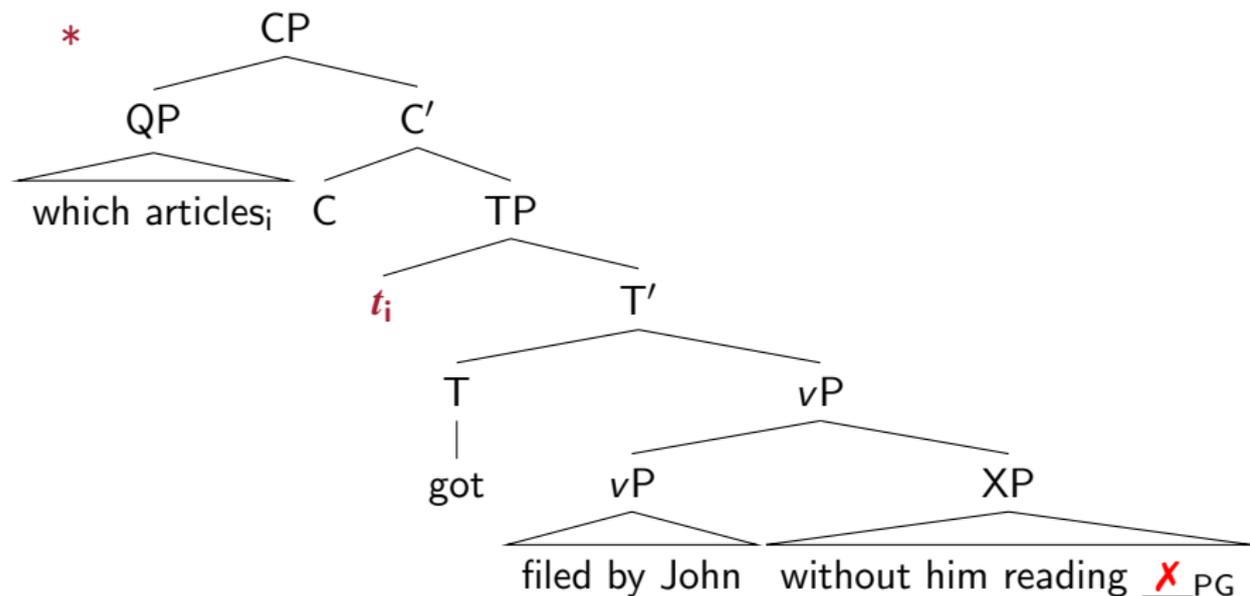
The anti-c-command condition in English

object doesn't c-command adjunct \Rightarrow can license parasitic gap



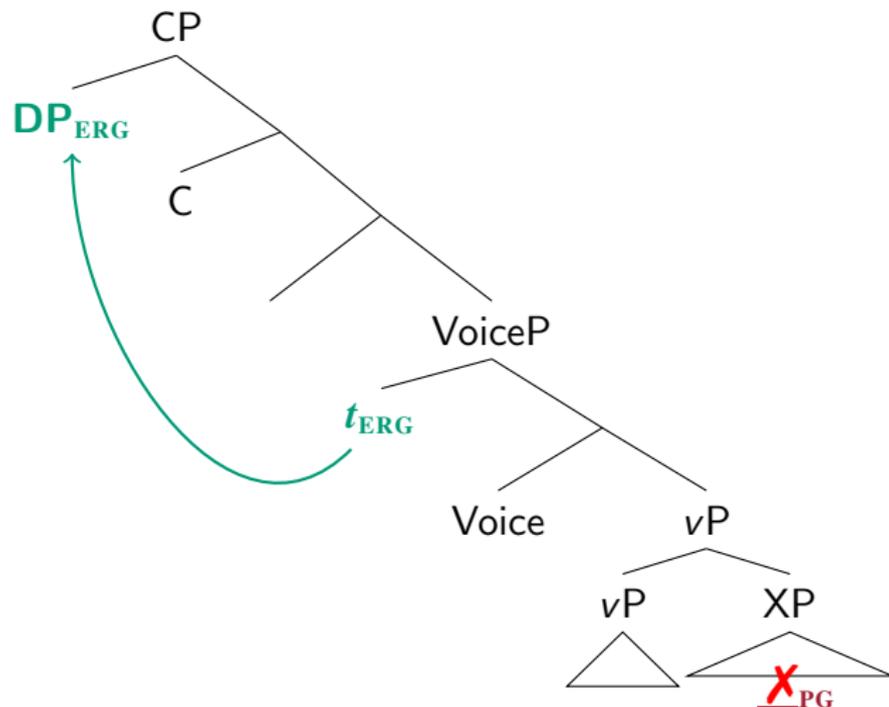
The anti-c-command condition in English

subject c-commands adjunct \Rightarrow cannot license parasitic gap

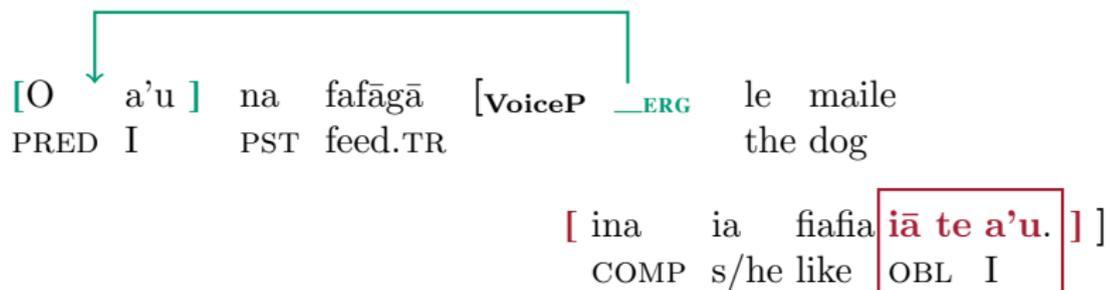


The anti-c-command condition in Samoan

ERG trace cannot license PG in vP adjunct:

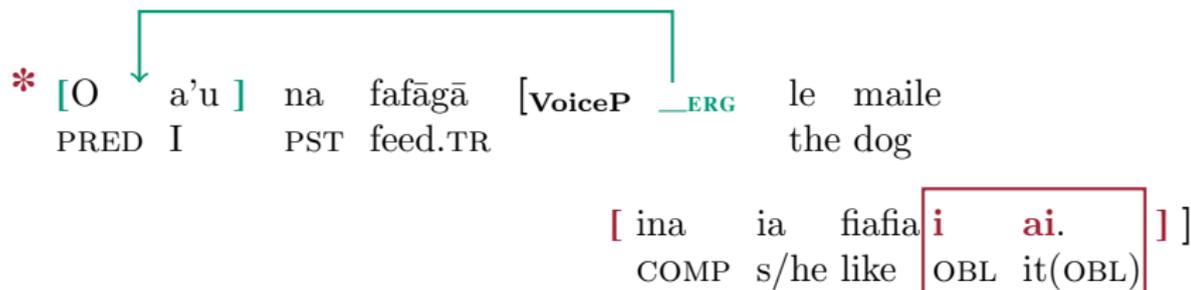


Ergative trace cannot license PG in vP adjunct



'It was me who fed the dog so it would like me.'

Ergative trace cannot license PG in vP adjunct

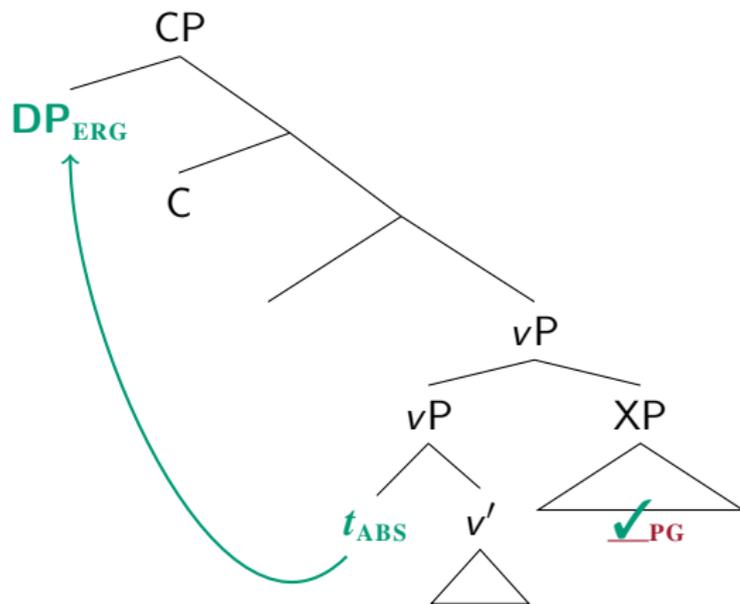


'It was me who fed the dog so it would like me.'

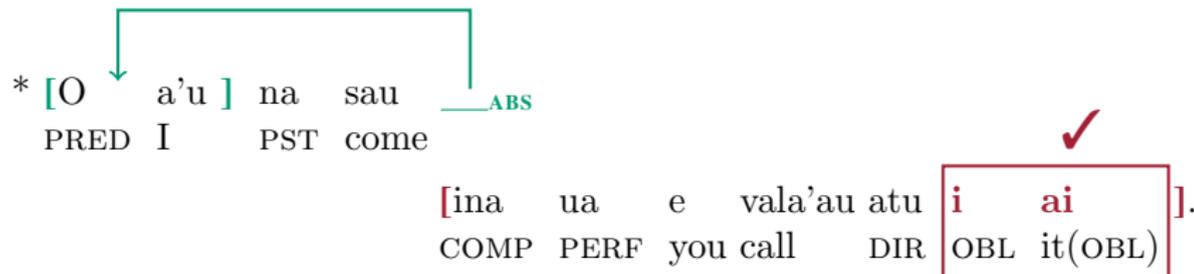
Contrast with:

- ▶ ABS agent of unergative verb
- ▶ ERG in embedded clause

ABS agent can license parasitic gap in vP adjunct



ABS agent can license parasitic gap in vP adjunct



lit. 'It was me who ___ came when you called ___.'

- ▶ φ -deficient resumptives are the surface realization of \bar{A} -traces.
- ▶ Parasitic gaps can be diagnosed with φ -deficient resumptive pronouns.
- ▶ Parasitic resumptives confirm the high position of ERG:
 - ▶ ERG trace cannot license PG in vP -level adjuncts
 \Leftarrow ANTI-C-COMMAND CONDITION
 - ▶ contrast with unergative ABS subject
(and embedded ERG subject)

Background on Samoan

Parasitic resumptives

Background on topicalization

Parasitic resumptives are parasitic gaps

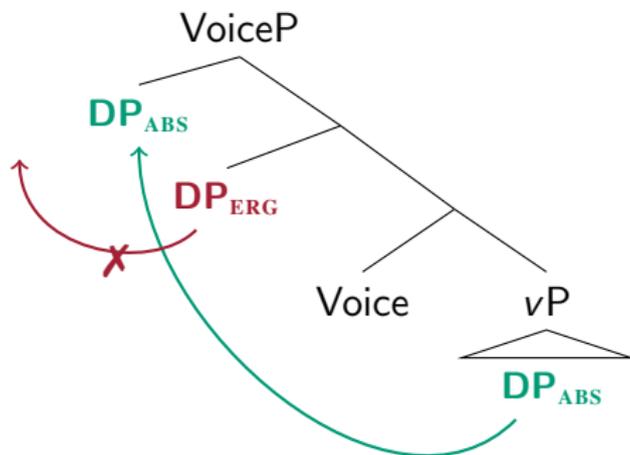
The Ergative Extraction Constraint

Conclusion

The proposal: A-scrambling blocks ERG extraction

- ▶ **ERG** in Spec,VoiceP (Massam 2009; Tollan 2018; Tollan and Massam 2022)
- ▶ VoiceP is a phase (e.g. Harley 2014; Legate 2014)
- ▶ **ABS** theme moves to Spec,VoiceP above **ERG**
- ▶ only outer phase edge is accessible for extraction

(Aldridge 2004, 2008b; Bošković 2016; Holmberg et al. 2019)



A-scrambling blocks ergative extraction

- ▶ ERG extraction is generally grammatical
- ▶ ERG movement is blocked **only if** ABS has A-scrambled to Spec, VoiceP
- ▶ In most sentences with ERG extraction, a parse without A-scrambling is available.
⇒ The Ergative Extraction Constraint is only detectable with parasitic resumptives.

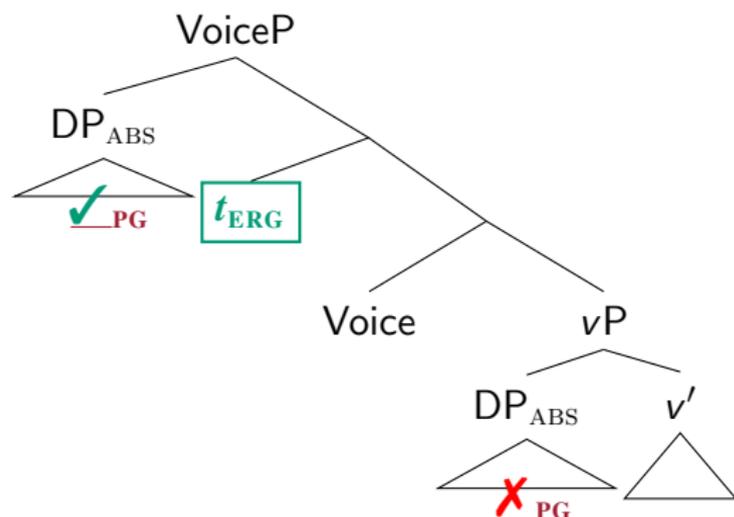
ABS A-scrambling should feed PG licensing by ERG trace

Prediction:

A-scrambling of ABS direct object over ERG subject

⇒ ERG trace can license PG in ABS DP

(Compare with ABS A-scrambling over OBL in Appendix)



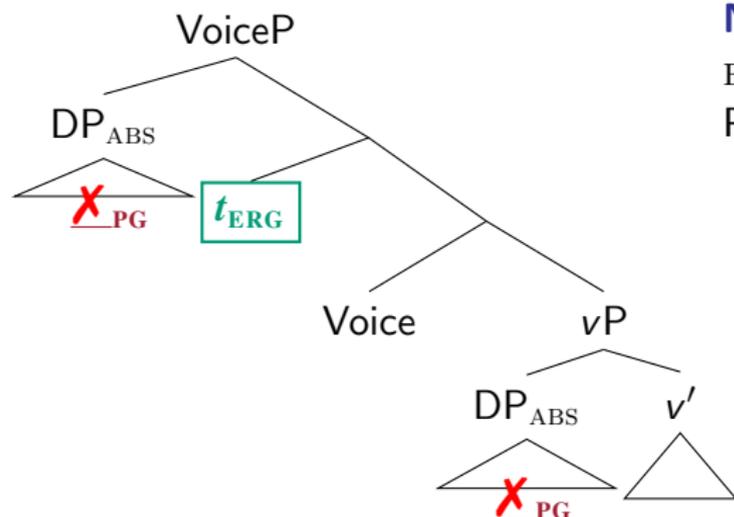
ABS A-scrambling should feed PG licensing by ERG trace

Prediction:

A-scrambling of ABS direct object over ERG subject

⇒ ERG trace can license PG in ABS DP

(Compare with ABS A-scrambling over OBL in Appendix)



Not confirmed!

ERG trace cannot license
PG in ABS DP.

ERG trace cannot license PG in ABS DP

[O a'u] na fafāgā ERG
PRED I PST feed.TR



[tamaiti na aumai-a fugala'au **iā te a'u.**]
child.PL PST give-TR flower OBL I(OBL)

'It was me who fed the kids who brought the flowers to me.'

ERG trace cannot license PG in ABS DP

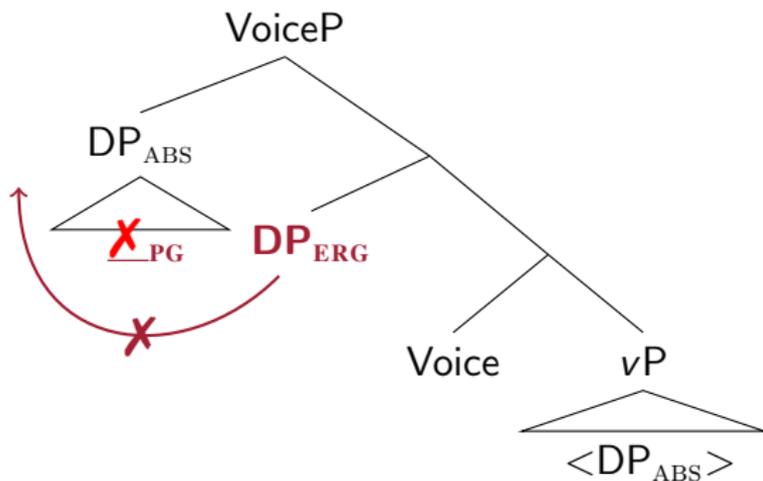
* [O a'u] na fafāgā ERG
PRED I PST feed.TR

[tamaiti na aumai-a fugala'au **i ai.**]
child.PL PST give-TR flower OBL it(OBL)

X

'It was me who fed the kids who brought the flowers to me.'

ABS raising blocks ERG movement



Why ERG cannot license parasitic gaps in ABS

ERG extraction is blocked by raised ABS

⇒ ERG can move only if ABS stays low

ERG cannot license PGs in ABS DP:

- ▶ if no A-scrambling, because ERG c-commands ABS.
- ▶ if ABS has A-scrambled, because high ABS blocks ERG extraction.

EEC = conspiracy between ABS and ERG

In Samoan, \bar{A} -extraction is blocked

1. for ERG in Spec, VoiceP
2. **only if** ABS has A-scrambled to outer Spec, VoiceP

Because A-scrambling is optional, the Ergative Extraction Constraint is detectable **only with parasitic gap licensing**.

Ingredients of the Ergative Extraction Constraint

The Ergative Extraction Constraint is a consequence of:

- ▶ position of **ERG** in Spec, VoiceP
- ▶ **ABS** raising to outer Spec, VoiceP

Neither property alone blocks **ERG** extraction:

- ▶ **ABS** raising does not block extraction of non-**ERG** DPs.
- ▶ **ERG** DP is accessible for extraction if **ABS** stays low.

Properties of **both ABS and ERG**
conspire to derive the ban on ergative extraction.

Thank you!

- ▶ I am grateful to Rev. Tala Faaleava for sharing his language.
- ▶ I also thank Vera Gribanova, Boris Harizanov, David Pesetsky, and the participants of SMircle at Stanford for comments and discussion.
- ▶ This work was funded by the Andrew W. Mellon Fellowship of Scholars in the Humanities at Stanford University.

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Tollan (2018): ERG vs. ABS subjects

Na va'ai [e le fafine] le puleā'oga (i l-ona ofisa).
PST see ERG the woman the principal OBL the-her office

'The woman saw the principal (in her office).'

(the meeting was intended)

ERG = high volitionality

PROTO-HIGH AGENT

Na va'ai [le fafine] i le puleā'oga (i le maketi).
PST see the woman OBL the principal OBL the market

'The woman saw the principal (at the market).'

(the meeting was spontaneous)

ABS = low volitionality

PROTO-LOW AGENT

(Mosel and Hovdhaugen 1992 *via* Tollan 2018)

Tollan (2018): no ERG case with transitivized unergatives

Sā siva [le teine] (i le uosi).
PST dance the girl (OBL the waltz)

‘The girl danced (a/the waltz).’

* Sā siva [e le teine] [le uosi].
PST dance ERG the girl the waltz

Intended: ‘The girl danced a/the waltz.’

**OBL cognate object displays direct object properties:

- ▶ pseudo-noun incorporation
- ▶ quantifier float

(Tollan 2018:7-8)

Parasitic resumptives are only licensed by \bar{A} -movement

E.G. IN ENGLISH:

A-MOVEMENT



* [John] was killed ___ by a tree falling on ___PG.

(Engdahl 1983 *et seq.*)

Raising cannot license parasitic resumptive:

E mafai [ona **ou** sau
PRS can COMP I come

[pe'a e vala'au atu **iā te a'u**]].
when you call DIR OBL I

'I can come when you call for me.'

(Engdahl 1983 *et seq.*)

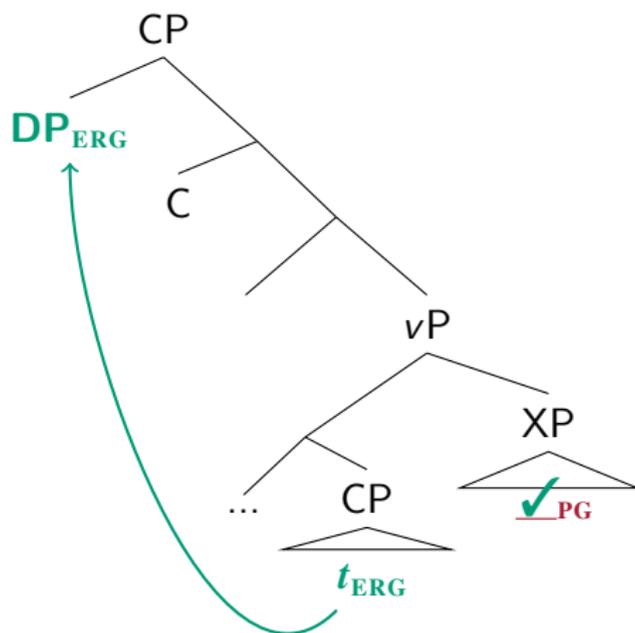
Raising cannot license parasitic resumptive:

* **Ou** te mafai [ona — sau
I PRS can COMP come
[pe'a e vala'au atu **i ai**]].
when you call DIR OBL it(OBL)

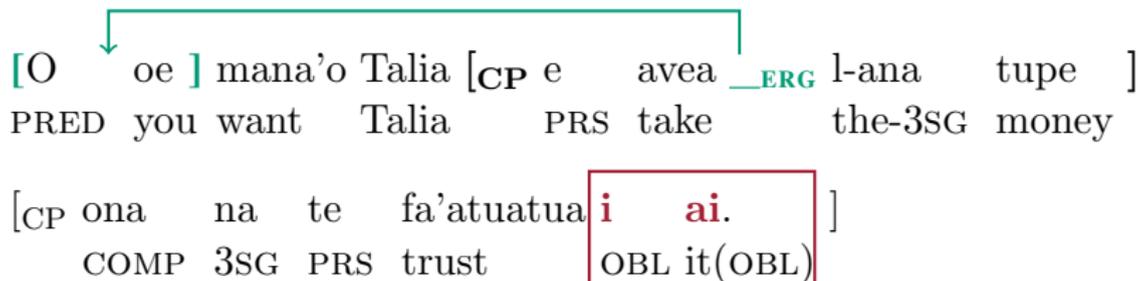
'I can come when you call for me.'

(Engdahl 1983 et seq.)

Embedded ERG can license parasitic gap in vP adjunct



Embedded ERG can license parasitic gap in vP adjunct



'It's you Talia wants to take her money because she trusts in you.'

A-scrambling feeds parasitic resumptives

- ▶ **OBL** indirect object c-commands **ABS** direct object

Na ou aumai-a *pro_j* **RE_{i/*j}**
[le tama teine a Talia_j].
PST I bring-TR OBL s/he the child girl GEN Talia
'I brought Talia's_j daughter to her_{i/*j}.'

- ▶ **ABS** direct object A-scrambles to Spec, VoiceP
⇒ no reconstruction for Condition C

Na ou aumai-a [le tama teine a Talia_j] **RE_j** *pro_{i/j}*
PST I bring-TR the child girl GEN Talia OBL s/he
'I brought Talia's_j daughter to her_{i/j}.'

A-scrambling feeds parasitic resumptives

OBL indirect object can license PG in **ABS** direct object:

→ [O a'u] na aumai e le teine tausima'i
PRED I PST give ERG the girl nurse

✓ [l-ana tama-tama] i ai.
the-3SG child-child OBL it(OBL)

'It was me the nurse gave my son to.'

- ▶ OBL c-commands ABS
⇒ PG in base position of ABS is ungrammatical
(ANTI-C-COMMAND CONDITION)
- ▶ A-scrambling of ABS ⇒ OBL can license PG in ABS

A-scrambling feeds parasitic resumptives

- ▶ IO c-commands ABS
⇒ PG in base position of ABS is ungrammatical
(ANTI-C-COMMAND CONDITION)
- ▶ A-scrambling of ABS ⇒ OBL can license PG in ABS

