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# An Ergative Description of Sama Bangingi' by JoAnn Marie Gault

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# RAGIA PROPRINTA

AN ERGATIVE DESCRIPTION OF SAMA BANGINGIV

JoAnn Marie Gault



ERGATIVE
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OF
SAMA
BANGINGI



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OF
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BANGINGI'

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# Linguistic Society of the Philippines

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To

my parents

William and Marie Gault



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# PREFACE

The analysis presented in this monograph is the result of data and knowledge gained during ten years of field work between 1974 and 1986, carried out under the auspices of the Summer Institute of Linguistics. Specific examples have been drawn from ten narrative texts, contributed by eight speakers of Sama Bangingi', four men and four women ranging in age from their early 20s to late 60s (see the appendix for texts and authors). The texts together contain 1,030 sentences, with well over 10,000 words. Eight of the texts are oral, two are written. Many of the language citations in this paper are from these texts; the remainder were generated by the author.

This monograph was originally submitted in 1992 as a thesis in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts in General Linguistics at San Diego State University. Its current form contains a slight reorganization of the sections on verbal syntax with a revision of several paragraphs, a revision of non-verbal syntax, a new section on statives and a rewrite of the section on causation in Chapter 2. A corresponding section on causation was added in Chapter 4, as well as a few additional thoughts on the relationship of ergativity and focus. Several paragraphs were added to the discussion of subject in ergative languages in Chapter 3; a paragraph on cleft constructions was added to the evidence of syntactic ergativity in Chapter 4 and the summary in Chapter 5 was rewritten. Aside from these revisions, the content is essentially the same as that of the original thesis.

Chapter 1 of this monograph is an introduction, explaining briefly the place of Sama Bangingi' in the Austronesian family of languages and the place of Philippine languages in the study of ergativity. It states the thesis of this monograph and several questions of analysis and terminology. Chapter 2 presents the data of the Sama Bangingi' verbal system from the traditional viewpoint of focus orientation. Chapter 3 gives a brief overview of ergativity and discusses the relevance of the term "subject" to ergative languages. Following this is a survey of opinions regarding ergativity in Philippine languages. Chapter 4 is a reinterpretion of the Bangingi' data from an ergative viewpoint and discusses how ergativity and focus interact. Chapter 5 provides a summary and questions for further research.

I wish to express my gratitude to the following people without whom this monograph would not have been possible: Dr. Robert Underhill of San Diego State University, who patiently guided the research and writing of this paper; he is a true teacher who seeks the best both for and from his students; Dr. Jeffrey Kaplan and Dr. Ronald Himes who as members of the thesis committee offered much encouragement and advice; friends and colleagues of the Summer Institute of Linguistics, especially my coworker, Eunice Diment, and Dr. Rodolfo Barlaan who offered advice and Dr. Howard

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# CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 BACKGROUND

Sama Bangingi' (also called Balangingi') is one of several Sama languages which are spoken throughout the Sulu archipelago in the southwestern Philippines. The Bangingi' language is spoken from the Samales Island Group south of Basilan Island north to the coastal areas and islands of Basilan and the southern Zamboanga Peninsula, including the coastal areas of Zamboanga del Sur. It is a member of the Sama-Bajaw subgroup of Western Austronesian, which includes also the Sama-Bajaw languages of Sabah and Sulawesi (Pallesen 1985:2-3).

Since the 1970s, a growing volume of literature has addressed the question of ergativity in Austronesian languages. Philippine languages have been prominent in many of these discussions. The question of ergativity in Philippine languages is not without controversy: first because what constitutes an ergative language is not agreed upon by all linguists, and second, not all agree that Philippine languages are truly ergative.

Minimally (and this is agreed upon), ergativity is a language strategy which treats the undergoer (or patient) of a transitive clause in the same way as it treats the single argument of an intransitive clause. The agent of a transitive clause is treated differently. Ergative strategy thus groups grammatical relations differently than do the Indo-European languages, which treat the transitive agent in the same way as the single argument of an intransitive clause. For example, languages with nominal case marking assign the nominative case to the single argument of intransitive clauses and agents of transitive clauses; undergoer/patients are assigned accusative case. Ergative languages, however, group the single argument of intransitives and the transitive undergoer together and assign them ABSOLUTIVE case. The transitive agent is assigned ERGATIVE case. If the most frequently used constructions in a language display this ergative morphology, that language is considered to be morphologically ergative.

Philippine languages, to a greater or lesser degree, evidence ergative morphology. Complexities in the verbal system, however, make it difficult to assign the ergative label to these languages unequivocally. This verbal system allows arguments other than agent or undergoer to become the surface subject of a sentence. These arguments are most commonly goal (i.e. recipient/beneficiary), instrument or location. Verb affixation differs for each choice of subject. This verbal system is usually referred to as the FOCUS SYSTEM in Philippine languages, as each verb form is said to "focus on" one particular argument. The noun phrase in this special relationship to the verb is called the FOCUSED NP.

Contrary to the expectation based on Indo-European languages that subjects will normally be agents, the most frequent transitive constructions in Philippine languages do not choose the agent as the surface subject. The variety of arguments which may be chosen as the subject plus the relative infrequency of the agent as subject have led many to question the relevancy of the term "subject" for Philippine languages. This issue really involves two questions: What should properly be called the subject in Philippine languages, the agent or the focused NP? And if subject is not the proper term for the focused NP, what then should it be called?

### 1.2 TERMINOLOGY

The difficulty in pinpointing the nature of the subject in Philippine languages has led to a plethora of terms for the focused NP. Beginning with McKaughan (1958), Filipinists have generally referred to the focused NP as the TOPIC OF TOPIC NP. More recently other terms have been suggested, such as pragmatic pivot (Walton 1986, after Foley and Van Valin 1984) and trigger (Cummings and Wouk 1987, and Schachter 1987).

Throughout most of this work, I will use the terms "topic" or "topic NP" for several reasons. They are among the terms most commonly used by Filipinists and have been in use for some time. They also suggest one of the most important characteristics of the focused NP, that of definite reference and given information. In contrast, "focused NP" suggests significant new information in wider linguistic usage. "Pivot" has much to commend it, and I will use this term as the analysis progresses, but like "trigger", it has not yet gained currency. In using the term "topic," however, the Philippine topic must be distinguished from the sentence topic of languages like Chinese, or the pragmatic topic. The Philippine topic is a syntactic term and refers to the noun phrase coded by the verb inflection "as being of greater salience than the others in the clause" (Walton 1986:4).

# 1.3 THESIS AND PURPOSE

This monograph is an examination of the morphosyntax of Sama Bangingi' for evidences of ergativity. It will attempt to demonstrate that Sama Bangingi' possesses ergative morphology, and that the topic NP clearly corresponds to the absolutive NP in ergative languages. Because this morphology is evidenced in the most frequent transitive constructions, Sama Bangingi' can be considered an ergative language. Based on this evidence, I

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> Many have followed McKaughan's lead, including many members of the Summer Institute of Linguistics and Schachter and Otanes (1972). See Walton (1986:10-12) for the development of terminology used in Philippine linguistics. But see also McKaughan (1973) where he gives good reasons for returning to the term "subject" for the focused NP.

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will argue that there is a fundamental division in the verbal system between agent focus constructions and non-agent focus, and that non-agent focus constructions are in fact ergative.

I will also argue that Sama Bangingi' evidences a high degree of syntactic ergativity, based on the centrality of the topic NP in several syntactic processes. Finally, I will suggest that subject properties, as defined by Keenan (1976), can be divided into those controlled by the semantic role of agent, those controlled by the pragmatic topic, and those controlled by the syntactic subject. It is properly only the last division of subject properties which relate to syntactic ergativity. I will also suggest that the only true universal definition of SUBJECT is a syntactic one, and if subject is so defined, then the topic NP in Bangingi' may quite properly be termed the subject.

The Sama Bangingi' language has many affinities both with the Philippine languages to the north and with the Western Indonesian languages to the south. With the former, it shares a well-developed focus system; with the latter, it shares a similar distribution of agents among various transitive constructions and a similar distribution of transitive constructions in discourse. The data will therefore, hopefully, make a contribution not only to understanding ergativity, but also to understanding the interrelationships in Western Austronesian languages.

# CHAPTER 2: SAMA BANGINGI' VERBAL SYSTEM

### 2.1 VERBAL SYNTAX

# 2.1.1 Philippine verbal system

Sama Bangingi', like most languages of the Philippine type, is predicate-initial. Arguments which follow a transitive verb most frequently follow the order agent-undergoer-oblique, although several factors may perturb this order, some syntactic and some functional. One of these arguments will function as the syntactic topic of the sentence. Verb affixation is one indicator of the semantic argument that has been chosen as topic. Most Philippine languages have four or five verbal affixations which may single out as topic either agent, undergoer/patient, goal/recipient, instrument/accessory or location.

These affixations may be thought of as a system of voice oppositions expanded beyond the familiar active and passive, where arguments other than agent or undergoer may become the surface subject. English does something similar when it makes an indirect object the subject, e.g. "Mary was given roses by John." The difference is that while in English, verb inflection is the same whether the direct or indirect object is passivized to subject, in Philippine languages, verb inflection may change to make not only indirect object, but also instrument or location the topic. This verbal system has usually been referred to as the FOCUS SYSTEM of Philippine languages. It must be noted that this use of the term FOCUS has nothing in common with the meaning in wider linguistic usage of "significant new information." In Philippine terminology, it refers to the verbal affixation focusing on a particular noun phrase as the topic.

In most Philippine languages, nominal morphology as well as verbal morphology indicates which argument has been chosen as the topic noun phrase. This morphology differs for full noun phrases and for pronouns. A full noun phrase is marked as topic by a preposed particle. Topic pronouns define a separate set, distinct from non-topic pronouns. In many Philippine languages, a third set of pronouns is used in oblique noun phrases.

The following examples from Tagalog, (taken with slight modifications from Schachter [1976:494-495]) illustrate the focus system and the corresponding choice of topic noun phrase. These first examples are from Tagalog rather than Bangingi' because of the ease in identifying the

topic noun phrase (NP). It is the ang phrase. The topic NP and the corresponding verbal affix are in bold face.<sup>2</sup>

- (1) Mag-aalis ang babae ng bigas sa sako para sa bata.

  AF-will-take-out tm woman rice sack for child

  'The woman will take some rice out of a/the sack for a/the child.'
- (2) Aalis-in ng babae ang bigas sa sako para sa bata will-take-out-UF woman tm rice sack for child 'A/The woman will take the rice out of a/the sack for a/the child.'
- (3) Aalis-an ng babae ng bigas ang sako para sa bata.
  will-take-out-LF woman rice tm sack for child
  'A/The woman will take some rice out of the sack for a/the child.'
- (4)sako Ipag-aalis ng babae ngbigas sa ang BF-will-take-out woman rice sack tm child 'A/The woman will take some rice out of a/the sack for the child.'

The focus inflection on the verb indicates the semantic role of the topic NP. In sentence (1) mag-indicates that the agent 'the woman' is the topic; in

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> The following abbreviations are used in this paper. Upper case (excepting T) indicates predicate affixation in Bangingi' examples; lower case indicates the function of particles and words for which a single gloss may not be adequate. These will be discussed in the text as needed. Hyphens indicate morpheme breaks. A period in the interlinear gloss indicates a portmanteau relationship, e.g. 'UF.buy' under the root billi indicates that the root is the realization of undergoer focus. Many writers use GOAL for this focus. In this paper goal will refer to the recipient/ beneficiary, or in some instances, destination.

abilitative mode	abs	absolutive case
agent focus	agt	agentive particle
beneficiary focus	ap	antipassive
causation	cmp	completive particle
distributive aspect	det	determiner
declarative mode	dm	direction marker
experiencer mode	đр	discourse particle
existential	dscl	disclaimer
instrumental focus	erg	ergative case
imperative mode	ex	exclusive
intransitive	intns	intensifier
location focus	intr	introductory particle
narrative mode	nml	nominalizer
stative	obl	oblique
topic	pm	person marker
undergoer focus	prt	particle
	rf	referential clitic
	tm	topic marker
	agent focus beneficiary focus causation distributive aspect declarative mode experiencer mode existential instrumental focus imperative mode intransitive location focus narrative mode stative topic	agent focus agt beneficiary focus ap causation cmp distributive aspect det declarative mode dm experiencer mode dp existential dscl instrumental focus erg imperative mode ex intransitive intns location focus intr narrative mode mml stative obl topic pm undergoer focus prt rf

sentence (2) -in indicates that the undergoer 'the rice' is the topic; in sentence (3) -an points to the location/goal as topic; and in sentence (4) ipag- points to the beneficiary 'the child' as topic. Each topic is marked by the particle ang.

Semantically, the sentences differ somewhat. Note that the non-topic arguments may be definite or indefinite. The topic argument, however, has been glossed as definite in each case. This is a very important characteristic of the topic in Philippine languages. Typically, only noun phrases with a definite referent may be chosen to be the topic.

# 2.1.2 Sama Bangingi' focus system

Sama Bangingi' has five transitive verb focuses which can be distinguished morphologically. The verbal affixations differ somewhat from Tagalog, but the semantic categories are similar. Agent focus affixation chooses the agent/actor as topic; undergoer focus chooses the patient/undergoer; beneficiary focus chooses recipient/beneficiary or goal; instrument focus chooses instrument or means; and location focus chooses location and sometimes reason, i.e. logical location as well as spatial. The following sentences correspond to those given above for Tagalog and will illustrate in a general way the use of these five focuses. The verbal affix which indicates the focus and the corresponding topic noun phrase are in bold face to indicate they are cross-indexed. These sentences are for illustrative purposes only; in natural speech, clauses rarely contain four arguments. A more detailed description of these affixes and their semantic import will follow below.

# Agent focus:

 $ku^3$ (5) Amilli buwas maka si:n aku para ma T.1s AF.buy for obl money my 'I will buy some rice for Mother with my money.'

# Undergoer focus:

(6)Billi-ku buwas itu ma Ina' maka si:n ku. UF.buy-1s rice this obl pm mother money my 'I'll buy this rice for Mother with my money.'

# Beneficiary focus:

(7) Billi-han-ku si Ina' buwas maka si:n ku.
buy-BF-1s pm mother rice with money my
'I'll buy Mother some rice with my money.'

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> The orthography of Sama Bangingi' used in this monograph is self evident with the exception that two contiguous like vowels will be understood to have a glottal stop between them. Otherwise, glottal stop is symbolized by "'". A colon (:) indicates contrastive vowel length.

## Instrument focus:

(8) Pamilli-ku buwas para ma si Ina' si:n ku.

IF.buy-1s rice for obl pm mother money my

'I'll use my money to buy rice for Mother.'

## Location focus:

(9) Pamilli-han-ku buwas para ma si Ina' tinda itu.

LF.buy-1s rice for obl pm mother store this

'This store is where I'll buy rice for Mother.'

Sentences (5) through (8) contain the same arguments, but in each a different argument is topic. The arguments chosen to be topic correspond to the verbal focus: agent, undergoer, beneficiary and instrument, respectively. In sentence (9), the verb is location focus with a location argument as the topic.

# 2.1.3 Topic morphology

**Pronouns.** There are two distinct sets of pronouns in Sama Bangingi', one used for topics and one used for non-topic agents and possessors. The agent aku 'I' in sentence (5) is a topic pronoun and the topic of the agent focus clauses. The agent ku 'I' in sentences (6) through (9) is a non-topic agent pronoun.

A third pronoun set may be identified which is composed of the oblique marker ma plus the topic pronouns. The fact that speakers of Bangingi' tend to pronounce ma + pronoun as one phonological word supports the establishment of a third set. Further evidence comes from other Philippine languages, e.g. Tagalog, which have three clear sets. Table 1 sets out the two distinct pronoun sets in Bangingi' plus the oblique set. "Agent" means non-topic agent.

Table 1. Sama Bangingi' pronouns

		singul	ar		1	
person	topic	agent	oblique	topic	agent	oblique
1	aku	ku	ma aku	kami	kami	ma kami
1 + 2	kita	ta	ma kita	kitabi	tabi	ma kitabi
2	kaa	na	ma kaa	kaam	bi	ma kaam
3	iya	na	ma iya	sigaam	sigaam	ma sigaam

**Nouns.** Unlike Tagalog, nominal topics in Sama Bangingi' regularly occur without a topic particle. There is an optional preposed topic particle (in) which is characteristic of more formal speech in narratives and exhortations, as in sentence (11). It occurs much less frequently in informal speech. The lack of a preposed particle does not make topic hard to identify; rather, its absence is one identifying characteristic of topic noun phrases. In contrast,

non-topic nominal agents are always marked by the preposed particle e'/ni. Non-topic undergoers may or may not be marked by a particle, depending on the verb, its focus and the degree to which the undergoer is affected by the verb. Even when both the topic NP and a non-topic undergoer occur without a particle, the verb inflection specifies which argument is the topic of that sentence. In the examples above the undergoer occurs without a particle whether topic or non-topic.

# 2.1.4 Topic choice

In Sama Bangingi', as in Tagalog, topic noun phrases are nearly always definite, that is, the referent of the NP is specific and identifiable. The demonstrative itu 'this' was added to the topic noun phrase in sentences (6) and (9) in order to make these NPs clearly definite. Compare this with the indefinite undergoer 'some rice' in (5). The noun phrases 'I', 'Mother' and 'my money' are, of course, unambiguously definite in all of the examples. The statement is often made that non-topic arguments may be definite or indefinite. This may be true in isolated sentences but in the context of a discourse non-topic arguments are more likely to be definite than indefinite, since a limited amount of new information is introduced and once introduced each referent will thereafter be definite. This is especially true for agents. Sama Bangingi' agents, whether topic or not, are nearly always definite. An indefinite entity would normally be introduced in an existential clause (see 2.3.2).

Related to definiteness is the most important characteristic of the topic noun phrase in Sama Bangingi': it almost always represents old information in discourse. This may be given or inferred from the linguistic context (i.e. the referent has been mentioned previously or is inferable from something that has been mentioned, e.g. houses have windows, people have parents, etc.), or the entity may be given in the extra-linguistic context, either in the physical surroundings or in knowledge assumed to be shared between speaker and hearer.

The choice of topic is not arbitrary. Sama Bangingi' has a definite preference for undergoer and beneficiary focus over agent focus especially in the foreground of narrative discourse (other genres have not been investigated sufficiently). Instrument and location focus are less frequent, seem to respond to other (pragmatic) factors, and often pattern as an equative rather than a verbal clause. For this reason the following paragraphs will refer only to the three most common focuses, agent, undergoer and beneficiary.

It is often said of Philippine languages that undergoer focus is the preferred focus if both the agent and undergoer are definite and given. This

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>4</sup> The few observed exceptions in Bangingi' occurred in hypothetical statements, where it might be argued that the speaker treated the entity as definite within the context he created.

is true of Sama Bangingi' also. If the undergoer is given information, then undergoer focus is required in most instances. However, this is not true if a beneficiary is present. If the beneficiary is given information, beneficiary focus seems to be as likely to be chosen as undergoer, even if the undergoer is also given. Thus, sentence (7) above would likely be chosen over (6) even if the undergoer 'rice' were definite (it is not in that example). This may be because beneficiaries tend to be more animate (or more likely "human") than undergoers, and therefore more "topic-worthy" (see Comrie 1981:191-192, for a discussion on the correlation of animacy and topic-worthiness). In any case, this illustrates the frequent observation that direct and indirect objects share many features (e.g. in English, either may be passivized to subject with the same verb form) and are both in fact considered "objects."

Occasionally pragmatic or semantic factors, e.g. a desire to relate partitive action, may override the normally preferred choice of undergoer in favor of agent or other focuses. In general, however, the topic hierarchy seems to be B>U>A. If a beneficiary is present and given, then beneficiary focus is usually chosen. If there is no beneficiary or the beneficiary is new, and the undergoer is given information, undergoer focus is chosen. If the undergoer is new information and the agent is given, agent focus is chosen. If both agent and undergoer are new, as for example at the beginning of a story, the existential clause is commonly used.

# 2.2 VERBAL MORPHOLOGY

Sama Bangingi' verbal morphology is quite complex. In addition to focus, indicative verbs may be affixed for iterative action ("aspect"), relative intention (which I will label "mode"), and causation. The causative affix derives a new stem which may be further affixed for aspect, focus and mode in that order. Sections 2.2.1-2.2.7 will discuss these affixations in transitive constructions. Intransitive constructions will be described in section 2.2.8.

Bangingi' verbs are not inflected for tense. Completed action may be marked by the preposed particle bay. This is not required, however, if the context clearly places the action in the past. Bay may also indicate a state or condition which is no longer in force as well as an action which is no longer proceeding.

Most of the examples below have been taken from texts. The text reference and sentence number follow each citation. Refer to the appendix for the list of texts and their reference number.

### 2.2.1 Declarative mode and Focus

There are four verbal "modes" in Bangingi': declarative, narrative, abilitative and imperative. Briefly stated, declarative mode expresses the

agent's intention to perform a particular act; narrative mode relates the execution of the act; abilitative mode focuses on whether the act has in fact been accomplished or is able to be accomplished; and imperative mode commands that the act be accomplished. Each mode except declarative has a specific affixation associated with it. Declarative (DCL) is the default mode, and is expressed by the various focus affixations without further verbal inflection. Focus affixation is obligatory. Because declarative is the default mode, all examples in the following discussions on focus will be in that mode.

Agent focus. The agent focus is formed with the prefix ang-/an-/. The phonological shape of the prefix varies considerably according to its environment. Generally speaking, the velar nasal is retained before continuants and voiced obstruents but coalesces with voiceless obstruents and /b/ to form a nasal at the corresponding point of articulation.<sup>5</sup>

Agent focus chooses as topic the agent of transitive clauses and the actor of certain intransitives, such as 'sit' and 'stand'. Agent focus transitive sentences are much less frequent than undergoer or beneficiary focus. They occur when the agent is highly thematic, when the undergoer and/or beneficiary is new information, when the action itself is more important than the results of that action or when the action is partitive or unrealized. Non-agent focuses, on the other hand, tend to relate situations where the undergoer is given information and is more completely affected by the action. Sentences (10a,b) below contain two AF clauses. Kuyya' 'monkey' is thematic in both. In sentence (10a), no specific banana is in view; the continual eating of bananas is what is important. Contrast this with (11), where the referent of 'this banana plant' is specific and so UF is used. As with the previous examples, the topic noun phrase and the corresponding verbal affix in the following examples are in bold face.

hinang na amangan sadja saing. work his AF.eat just banana

'Since Monkey was now there at the top of the banana plant, what he did was, (he) just ate bananas.' (KB.27)

aŋ
$$\rightarrow$$
aN<sub>i</sub>/\_C<sub>i</sub> aŋ $\rightarrow$ aŋaN<sub>j</sub>/\_C<sub>j</sub>  $\emptyset \rightarrow$ a/aŋ\_L C<sub>i</sub> $\rightarrow \emptyset$ /aN<sub>i</sub>... where C<sub>i</sub> = {/b/,[+obs,-vd]}, C<sub>j</sub> = {/d/,/g/}, L = {/l/,/h/,/m/,/n/} aŋ+allaŋ  $\rightarrow$  aŋallaŋ; aŋ+bowa  $\rightarrow$  amowa; aŋ+sulat  $\rightarrow$  anulat; aŋ+kehet  $\rightarrow$  aŋehet; aŋ+dakdak  $\rightarrow$  aŋandakdak; aŋ+geret  $\rightarrow$  aŋaŋgeret; aŋ+liŋan  $\rightarrow$  aŋaliŋan; aŋ+hinaŋ  $\rightarrow$  aŋahinaŋ.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>5</sup> The phonological rules plus derivations are:

- b. Insa' iya amuwan ma si Ba'uu.
  not T.3s AF.give obl pm turtle
  'He did not give any to Turtle.' (KB.28)
- (11)Manjari, ivuk si Kuvva' si Ba'uu. "Bahagi'-ta ma so-then UF.divide-1+2s said pm monkey obl pm turtle

na in batang saing itu."

now tm trunk banana this

'So Monkey said to Turtle, "Let us divide this banana plant."'

(KB.6)

Undergoer focus. Undergoer focus in declarative mode is formed with the unaffixed verb root (for a small class of verbs it is root+an). It chooses the undergoer or patient as topic. An agent is obligatory and it must be a non-topic agent pronoun.<sup>6</sup> These pronouns are cliticized to the verb; that is, the verb stem plus pronoun are pronounced as one phonological word.

The use of undergoer focus in declarative mode in Sama Bangingi' is commonly limited to the immediate context of the speaker and hearer, and normally refers to an action just completed or about to be accomplished by one or the other. In narratives it is largely limited to dialogue, while the event line is carried forward by the narrative and abilitative modes (see below). Sentence (11) above illustrates the use of UF in a text; the following examples were generated by the author.

- (12) Bay na bowa-nu daing e' ni luma' dakayu'? cmp now UF.carry-2s fish that to house one 'Have you taken that fish next door?'
- (13) Bowa-ku na Ina'.

  UF.carry-1s now mother
  'I'll take (it) right now, Mother.'

Beneficiary focus. The beneficiary focus is formed with the suffix -an (-han after vowels). It is one of the few verbal suffixes in Sama Bangingi'. It chooses the beneficiary, recipient or goal as the topic. As stated previously, when the beneficiary is given information, it is commonly chosen as topic even if the undergoer is also given. The agent may be overt as in (14) or not as in (15). Pronoun agents of declarative BF are usually the cliticized non-topic pronouns, but this restriction is less binding than it is for declarative UF.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>6</sup> Other languages related to Sama Bangingi' have a similar restriction on the agents of certain undergoer-focus type constructions, among them the Sama languages spoken in areas south of Balangingi' Island (Pallesen 1985:94,98) and Malay (Hopper 1983:69-70).

Non-topic agent pronouns do sometimes occur with the agentive particle. If the agent is a full noun phrase, the agentive particle is obligatory.

(14) ... sakurang-kurang buwan-an-nu aku minsan dakuman please give-BF-2s T.1s even only

dam bigi.
one seed
'... if you will please give me even only one section (i.e. of fruit surrounding a seed).' (KA.16)

(15) Kollo'-an da iya dam bigi, asusa du iya.
remove-BF prt T.3s one seed worried prt T.3s
'(If he) removes-for her one section, he will be worried.' (KA.18)

Instrument focus. The affixation is pag- or pang-, where the velar nasal undergoes the same phonological processes as it does in the AF affix. As the term implies, the instrument focus chooses as topic the instrument used in an action. But the definition of instrument may be expanded to include the manner or means of accomplishing an action as in sentence (19). Pronoun agents are always non-topic, usually cliticized, but may occasionally occur with the agentive particle. Nominal agents must occur with the agentive particle.

With certain trivalent verbs (e.g. 'tell', 'call', 'give'), the IF seems to have taken the place of the UF. For example, the UF form of 'give' is buwan, but in fact it is rarely used. The IF pamuwan is used instead as in sentence (16). The topic of the sentence, singsing ku itu 'this ring of mine,' is more properly the undergoer of the action than the instrument; nevertheless, IF is used. It may be that to the Bangingi', the ring is thought of as that which is used as a gift.

- (16) Pamuwan-ku singsing ku itu ma anak ku.

  IF-give-1s ring my this obl child my
  'I will give this ring of mine to my child.'
- (17) Pag-kehet-ku sayyul itu laring si Ina'.

  IF-cut-1s vegetables these knife pm mother

  'I'll use Mother's knife to cut up these vegetables.'
- (18) Ya pag-kehet-ku sayyul itu laring si Ina'.

  nml IF-cut-1s vegetables these knife pm mother

  'What I'll use to cut up these vegetables is Mother's knife.'
- (19) "Tuwan, sainggahan kono' pangollo'-ku...

  Lord how dscl IF-fetch-1s

  'Your majesty, how can I recover (it)...' (KA.42)

In contrast to (16), the topic of sentence (17) is laring si Ina' 'Mother's knife' and is truly the instrument of the action. The NP sayyul itu 'these vegetables' looks as if it stands in the same relation to the verb pagkehet as 'this ring of mine' does to the verb pamuwan in sentence (16). It does not. Sayyul itu is rather the undergoer of the root kehet 'cut', and would be the topic of the declarative UF clause kehet-ku sayyul itu 'I'll cut up these vegetables.' The IF pag- may be thought of as affixing the entire simple UF clause rather than the verb alone. The topic of this new IF predicate is laring si Ina' 'Mother's knife'. In essence, this construction equates the instrument of the UF clause with 'Mother's knife'.

The addition of the nominalizer ya in (18) completes the derivation of the verbal clause into an equative one. It is in fact more common for instrument focus to occur in equative clauses.

Location focus. The location focus also seems to pattern most often as a noun in an equative clause or, as below, as a (semi)verbal complement to an adjectival predicate. It not only expresses spatial location but underlying grounds or reason. It is formed with the affixation pag-/pang--an.

(20) Na ampa ... pu:'-pu:' Bangingi' inaan, ingga'i tood dp as-for island-island that not intns

to:p pag-lahat-an.
suitable LF-dwell

'Now as for . . . that little island Bangingi', (it) is not at all suitable as a place-to-live.' (N4.56)

(21) Ya bannal na in pu:' ele' ... ahunit pang-atu-han

agbono'. AF.fight

'The truth is, that island . . . is difficult to defend in battle.' (N5.53)

### 2.2.2 Abilitative mode

Sama verbs, as is true of other Philippine languages, may be inflected to indicate relative intention or control. In general, the declarative mode (the morphologically unmarked option) indicates more intention on the part of the agent, but does not necessarily imply that the action of the verb was accomplished. The marked option generally indicates that the action was accomplished, but not necessarily intended. Verbs so inflected have traditionally been translated into English as "was able to do such and such;" hence one of the more common labels for this marked inflection has been "abilitative." I have adopted this term (abbreviated ABL) in this monograph. Compare Pallesen (1985:97-98) where he labels this mode "perfective,"

explaining that the term here is to be understood as indicating action (or a state) which "is seen as accomplished, either through circumstances or the successful effort of the subject". This affixation has two forms: maka- for agent focus and ta- for the various non-agent focuses (ABL BF is more often ka--an).

The semantic distinction between the abilitative and declarative mode seems to accentuate the distinction between agent and non-agent focuses, particularly in regard to the affectedness of the undergoer. This interaction of focus and mode is set out in the four-cell matrix in Table 2. Please note that this table expresses general tendencies and not absolute statements. On the vertical axis is focus. The definiteness of the undergoer represents the relative degree of transitivity. On the horizontal axis is mode. At the low end on a scale of transitivity, declarative agent focus (ang-) expresses an action which has been contemplated or attempted, but not (completely) accomplished. At the high end of the transitivity scale, abilitative non-agent focus (ta-) accentuates the affectedness of the undergoer by expressing action that was able to be completely accomplished, whether or not it was planned. Abilitative agent focus (maka-) expresses the ability of an agent to perform a particular action (whether or not that action is actually performed).

	Declarative	Abilitative		
AF	ang-	ang- maka-		
(-def U)	expresses the intention to perform some action	expresses the ability to perform some action		
-AF	0	ta-		
(+def U)	expresses the intention to affect a definite undergoer	expresses the (successful) transference of an action to a definite undergoer		

Table 2. Focus and abilitative mode

The following self-generated sentences are designed to illustrate these four possible combinations of agent versus non-agent focus, and abilitative versus declarative mode, and how they may be used.

- (22) Pe:' aku amilli daing.
  INT.go T.1s AF.buy fish
  'I'll go and buy some fish.'
- (23) Billi-ku kuhapu itu.
  UF.buy-1s grouper this
  'I'll buy this grouper.'

- (24) Insa' aku maka-billi kuhapu; insa' niya'.
  not T.1s AF.ABL-buy grouper not there-is
  'I was not able to buy grouper; there wasn't any.'
- (25) Sa' ta-billi-ku tangili' itu.
  but UF.ABL-buy-1s Spanish mackerel this
  'But I was able to buy this Spanish mackerel.'

Sentences (22) and (23) are declarative agent and undergoer focus, respectively. They express intended action. Sentences (24) and (25) are abilitative. Planned but unrealized action is usually agent focus. If the ability to carry out the plan is not under the control of the agent, as in (24), abilitative agent focus is used. But if the action is unrealized because the agent changes his plans, declarative agent focus may be used, i.e. the same affix as is used in (22). Sentence (25) is abilitative non-agent focus. It expresses action carried out on a definite undergoer. As is typical with this focus and mode combination, the outcome was not assured.

It is not possible here to describe and illustrate all the nuances which may be conveyed by the abilitative mode. The following sentences, taken from texts, will illustrate a few of them.

(26) Manjari maka-anda' sigaam batang saing pasampig ma so-then AF.ABL-see T.3p stock banana lying obl

bihing umus.

edge sand

'Then they happened to see a banana plant lying by the shore line.'

(KB.3)

Sentence (26) is agent focus, abilitative, and occurs early in the text. The participants have already been introduced and are the topic agents of the clause. They are taking a walk and happen to see a banana plant (new information) on the way.

- (27) Ta-kollo' e' sigaam Sambuwangan ...

  UF.ABL-take agt 3p Zamboanga

  'They (the Spanish) took Zamboanga City.' (N4.24)
- (28) Ta-beya' sigaam ta-bowa sigaam ni baliyu
  UF.ABL-go-along T.3p UF.ABL-carry T.3p agt wind

paitiya' ni kapu:'an Su:k.
come-here dm group-of-islands Sulu
'They were brought along, they were carried by the wind in this direction towards the Sulu archipelago.' (N4.9)

(29) ... ta-anda' e' na sali' manga taga-pali' in nangka'-in.

UF.ABL-see agt 3s like pl have-wound tm jackfruit-rf

'... she saw that it was as if the jackfruit had a wound.' (KA.28)

Sentences (27-29) are all non-agent focus. The abilitative mode is used in (27) to express action which was planned by the agent and accomplished, but whose outcome was not assured when the action began. In (28), the action is happenstance. The "agent" being the inanimate wind, the action is unplanned and completely out of the control of the undergoer. In (29), the abilitative mode expresses an unintended result. The action of "looking" was intentional (the previous sentence in the text expresses this in non-abilitative mode), but what was actually seen was unexpected. An event marked as abilitative may or may not be intentional from the point of view of the agent, but in either case the desired outcome is not at first assured. From the point of view of the narrator (and of the topic undergoer) the event "happened," and therefore merits the abilitative mode.

Note that in the non-agent focus abilitative constructions, nominal agents always occur with the agentive particle and pronominal agents usually do (explained in section 2.2.3).

# 2.2.3 Narrative mode

The narrative mode (NAR), in contrast to the other modes, is limited to non-agent focus. It is formed with the infix -in-, inserted immediately after the initial consonant of the verb stem (it has an allomorph, ni-, which occurs before words beginning with a vowel, /h/ or /l/). In some Sama languages (see Walton 1986:117-118, and Pallesen 1985:98), this affixation seems to operate only on undergoer focus. In Sama Bangingi', however, it has become more productive. It occurs frequently with beneficiary focus and with IF affixation when used for undergoer focus.

Narrative mode contrasts with declarative both formally in its syntax and functionally in discourse. Narrative contrasts with abilitative mode primarily in its semantics. The syntactic difference between narrative and declarative lies in the type of agents allowed. The declarative mode of UF allows and in fact requires overt cliticized pronoun agents and only those (see again sentences (11-13)). The narrative mode freely allows both nominal and pronominal agents, but does not require either. If the agent is overt, it must be marked by the agentive particle e' or ni (the difference is dialectal). Sentence (30) below illustrates the use of the narrative mode with UF (30a) and IF (30b) in a text. Compare (30b) with the declarative IF in (16) above.

(30) a. K-in-ollo'an e' na dam bigi nangka'-in,
NAR-UF.remove agt 3s one seed jackfruit-rf

b. p-in-amuwan e' na ma denda abottong e'.

NAR-IF-give agt 3s obl woman pregnant that

'He removed one section of the jackfruit and gave (it) to the pregnant woman.' (KA. 22)

The functional difference between declarative and narrative modes is seen in narrative discourse. The declarative UF tends to be limited to dialogue. The narrative mode, while also occurring in dialogue, is not limited to it. It, along with the abilitative mode, is the most frequently used construction in foreground material; hence the term chosen here, "narrative mode." Once the setting has been given and the participants introduced in a Bangingi' narrative, nearly all transitive events are non-agent constructions in either the narrative or abilitative modes.

It often happens in Bangingi' narratives that a participant will announce his intention to perform some action in the declarative UF mode, then the narrator will relate that action in the narrative mode. Sentences (31) and (32) are taken from sequential sentences in a narrative. In the first, the protagonist is speaking; he uses the declarative UF. In the second, the narrator relates the subsequent event in narrative mode.

- (31) Iyuk-na, "Bang aku sehean-bi pe:".
  said-3s if T.1s UF.accompany-2p there
  'He said, "Suppose you accompany me there." '(PH.94)
- (32) S-in-ehean kono' iya.

  NAR-UF.accompany dscl T.3s

  '(They) accompanied him.' (PH.95)

Sentences (33) and (34) likewise come from one text, though not sequential. In the first, the protagonist is speaking to his antagonist using declarative BF. In the second, the narrator is relating an event in the narrative mode of the same BF verb. The goal is not overt in (34).

- (33) "Na ba:'-an-ku iya." dm tell-BF-1s T.3s "Now, I told her." (KA.34)
- (34) ... b-in-a:-an e' na sabannal na.

  NAR-tell-BF agt 3s truth 3s

  '... he told (her) the truth.' (KA.31)

The distinction between narrative and abilitative modes is semantic, much the same as that between declarative and abilitative modes, i.e. narrative mode is more intentional; abilitative is less so but implies an accomplished action. These two modes may also be contrasted by comparing

two sequential sentences, shown in example (35) below. The first sentence is in narrative mode and describes an intentional act. The woman chief deliberately looks at the jackfruit. The second sentence is repeated from (29) above. As the woman chief is looking, she sees (abilitative mode) that a section of the fruit is missing. The "looking" was intentional; the "seeing" was not. She did not expect, nor was she pleased, to see that the fruit was flawed.

- (35) a. Ni-anda' na e' datu denda-in in nangka'-in.

  NAR-UF.see prt agt chief woman-rf tm jackfruit-rf

  'The woman chief now looked at the jackfruit.' (KA.27)
  - b. Manjari, ta-anda' e' na manga sali' taga-pali' in so.then UF.ABL-see agt 3s pl like have-wound tm

nangka'-in. jackfruit-rf

'And she saw that it was as if the jackfruit had a wound.' (KA.28)

# 2.2.4 Imperative mode

Imperative mode may be expressed in either agent focus or non-agent focus constructions. Agent focus imperatives and declaratives are syntactically ambiguous, that is, AF morphology is used and the topic agent must be overt as in sentence (36).

(36) Amowa kaa paitu bohe'.

AF.bring T.2s here water

'You bring some water here.'

Non-agent focus imperatives employ a distinct morpheme. Both undergoer and beneficiary focuses have imperative counterparts. If a declarative UF verb has no suffix, the imperative will be formed with the suffix -un as in (37a). If a declarative UF or BF is suffixed with -an, the imperative is formed with -in, as in (37b) and (38). Non-topic agents are deleted if singular (38); overt if plural (37).

- (37a) Bowa-hun bi paitu manga lahing ele'.

  UF.bring-IMP 2p here pl coconut that

  'You (pl) bring those coconuts here.'
- (37b) Kose'-in bi manga lai itu. wash-UF.IMP 2p pl dish this 'You (pl) wash these dishes.'
- (38) Buwan-in aku dam bigi nangka' ilu. give-BF.IMP T.1s one seed jackfruit that 'Give me one section of that jackfruit.'

# 2.2.5 Aspect

Indicative verbs (i.e. excepting imperative mode) may be further marked for aspect. Sama Bangingi' inflects verbs to distinguish between "single" actions that are accomplished once by one actor, and those which are "plural," that is have plural actors, are reciprocal, or are iterative or habitual with a single actor. The "plural" aspect is also used for certain reflexive actions such as 'get a hair cut'. It will be termed here "distributive" (D), i.e. the action is distributed over plural actors or distributed over time. "Single" actions are unmarked; "distributive" actions are marked by the affix pag- in UF and (m)ag- in AF. The (m)ag- affix is possibly the result of the coalescence of the nasal in the AF ang- with the initial /p/ of the distributive affix, followed by the deletion of the initial /a/ of the AF affix. Because the distributive aspect is often concerned with the number of actors, it is far more common in agent focus than in non-agent focuses. Compare sentence (39) below which is speaking of inter-island trade, with (5) above which refers to a single action.

- (39) Na ag-billi aa Dumaget.

  dp AF.D-buy people Dumaguete

  'Now the people of Dumaguete would buy (the tree bark).' (N3.4)
- (40a) . . . p-in-ag-isun-an bang sainggahan kasusahan sin aa

  NAR-UF.D-discuss if how problem of person

### inaan.

that

"... (it) would be discussed what to do about that man's problem" (KA.49)

(40b) Kahemon e' mareyom lahat mag-isun.

all that inside place AF.D-discuss

'All those in the place discussed (it).' (KA.56)

# 2.2.6 Causation

Most Bangingi' verbs may be marked for causation with the prefix pa. This affix derives a new verb stem which may then be inflected as any root for aspect, mode and focus.

Agent focus causative. The causative affix changes the way the semantic roles are encoded, shifting the assignment of topic in order to accommodate the additional argument of causer. The causer is encoded as the agent NP of the causative verb. In agent focus causative (ang + pa [= ama] + root), the causer is the topic. The underlying agent (i.e. the agent of the verb root) becomes the causee of the causative stem and is encoded as an oblique NP. The underlying undergoer appears to remain the undergoer of AF causative.

- (41) Amowa aku sulat.

  AF.carry T.1s letter

  'Pll carry a letter.'
- (42) Ama-bowa iya ma aku sulat.

  AF.CA-carry T.3s obl 1s letter

  'He will send a letter with me.' ('He will cause me to carry a letter.')

Example (42) above is the causative counterpart of the declarative agent focus sentence (41). The underlying topic agent aku from (41) has become an oblique causee ma aku in (42). The underlying non-topic undergoer sulat remains a non-topic undergoer in agent focus causative. The new argument, causer, is the topic agent iva (42).

Undergoer focus causative. In undergoer focus causative (pa + root), there are two options for the assignment of topic. Some UF causative stems will choose the underlying undergoer as topic; but many other roots will choose the underlying agent as topic. A few roots may choose either. When the underlying agent is the topic of UF causative, the underlying undergoer will be focused in one of two ways, depending on the verb. Some verbs will focus the underlying undergoer with IF affixation (pang + pa [=pama] + root). Other verbs will focus the underlying undergoer with BF affixation (pa- + root + -an).

The following discussion and examples will illustrate these options.

(43) Pa-bowa-na ma aku sulat na.

UF.CA-carry-3s obl 1s letter his

'He will send his letter with me.' ('He will cause his letter to be carried by me.'

Example (43) is the undergoer focus causative counterpart of (42). The verb bowa is one which will choose the underlying undergoer (sulat in the above examples) as the topic of the UF causative. Notice that the undergoer has been made specific in (43) to comply with the constraint that topics have a specific referent. The causer in (43) is now the non-topic agent -na, and the causee is oblique. Now compare examples (41-43) above with (44-47) below:

- (44) Anginum aku bohe'.

  AF.drink T.1s water

  'I'll drink some water.'
- (45) Ag-pa-inum iya ma aku bohe'.

  AF.D-CA-drink T.3s obl 1s water

  'He'll give me some water to drink.' ('He'll cause me to drink some water.')

- (46) Pa-inum-na aku bohe'.

  UF.CA-drink-3s T.1s water

  'He'll give me some water to drink.' ('He'll cause me to drink some water.')
- (47) Pama-inum-na ma aku bohe' ilu.
  IF.CA-drink-3s obl 1s water that
  'He'll give that water to me to drink.'

Examples (44,45) are parallel in structure to (41,42). (The distributive aspect in (45) differs from that in (42), but the difference is not germane to this discussion.) The undergoer focus causative in (46), however, is not parallel to that in (43). In (43), the topic is the underlying undergoer, but in (46), the topic is aku, the underlying agent, not the underlying undergoer  $bohe^i$ . Examples (48-51) below are taken from two narrative texts. They illustrate two other causative verbs which focus the underlying agent with UF affixation: paanda' 'cause to see' and pabilli 'cause to buy'. In (48) and (51), the topic pronoun aku in each is clearly the underlying agent.

(48) "... bang," iyuk na, "amayad aku ... lima hatus if said 3s AF.pay T.1s five hundred

pilak, pa-anda' nu aku?"

peso CA-UF.see 2s T.1s

""... if," he said, "I pay 500 pesos, will you allow me to see (it, i.e. the gemstone)?" (PH.102)

(49) Iyuk na, "Aho' ... bang kaa isab amayad da, ... said 3s yes if T.2s also AF.pay prt

pa-anda-an ku ma kaa."

CA-see-BF ls obl 2s

'She said, "Yes . . . if you will pay, I'll show (it) to you." '(PH.103)

- (50) Pa-billi-han na na kono' ya pilun e'.

  CA-buy-BF 3s now dscl det sugar that

  'He would then sell (lit: cause to be bought) that raw sugar.' (PH.10)
- (51) Bang aku ingga'i pa-billi nu, ...
  if T.1s not CA-UF.buy 2s
  'If you will not allow me to buy (it) ...' (KA.16)
- (52) Pa-bowa-han-ta kaa sulat.

  CA-carry-BF-1+2s 2s letter

  'I'll send you a letter.' ('I'll cause you to be brought a letter.')

Beneficiary and instrument focus causative. Causative verbs like painum 'cause to drink', pabilli and paanda', which use UF to focus the underlying agent, must find another way to focus the underlying undergoer. The underlying undergoer is important. Other arguments, even the underlying agent, may be deleted in causative constructions, as in (52), but the underlying undergoer must always be at least implicit in the clause. Since the UF causative focuses the underlying agent, the language makes provision for the underlying undergoer to be focussed by another focus inflection. That provision for some verbs, e.g. inum 'drink', is instrument focus (47). For other verbs, e.g. billi 'buy' and anda' 'see', it is beneficiary focus (49) and (50).

Example sentences (48) and (49) are taken from consecutive sentences of a text. The underlying undergoer is not explicit in either. It is a gemstone which has been the topic of conversation for several sentences. This gemstone is not the grammatical topic in (48), but it is in (49). It is the only possible topic of the BF paandaan, since the causer is ergative and the causee is oblique. In example (50), the underlying undergoer is explicit, ya pilun-e' 'that raw sugar' and it is the topic. In contrast, (52) is an example of a "regular" verb that focuses the underlying recipient with BF affixation. Compare again (43) where the UF of the same causative verb focuses the underlying undergoer.

To conclude this section, there is a class of verbs which, when affixed with the causative pa-, do not choose as topic the argument which might be expected. These verbs, when inflected as undergoer focus causative, choose the underlying agent rather than the underlying undergoer as topic. Moreover, this class of verbs is further subdivided into those which focus the underlying undergoer in causative clauses with instrumental inflection and those which focus the underlying undergoer with beneficiary/goal inflection. Is there a way to account for these apparent anomalies syntactically? A partial answer at least will be given in Chapter 4.

# 2.2.7 Order of affixes

With the exception of BF and imperatives, Bangingi' affixes are prefixed to the root as in Table 3.

Table 3. Order of Sama Bangingi' verbal affixation

mode + focus + aspect + causation + root= verbpangta-0 Ø buwan = tapamuwan'was able to be given' makabowa = makapagpabowa pagpa-'was able to send back and forth' Ø ka--an 0 = kapabowahanpabowa 'was sent-to' -in-Ø 0 = pinagbowa bowa pag 'was carried back and forth'

The matrices in Table 4 give a summary of the most common transitive indicative verbal affixes. The modes are arranged along the horizontal axis under single and distributive aspect. The four focuses are arranged along the vertical axis. Question marks indicate that unambiguous data is lacking for the line below. It is sometimes difficult, for example, to determine if pag-an is distributive aspect beneficiary/goal focus (section 2.2.5) or single aspect location focus (section 2.2.1). The morphology is the same and the semantics are similar. The location, for example, of an action may be thought of as the goal (in terms of destination) of a repeated action (i.e. a market is a place for repeated buying). Location focus was not included in Table 4 because it participates much less frequently in most of the affixation. It can be constructed at any rate from the IF and the suffix -an. Note that IF and LF distributive aspect does not occur. Apparently the morpheme pag- is not allowed to occur twice.

Table 4. Sama Bangingi' verbal affixes

Verb root								
	Si	ngle Aspec	t	Distributive Aspect				
	DCL	NAR	ABL	DCL	NAR	ABL		
AF	ang-		maka-	(m)ag-	_	makapag-		
UF	Ø	-in-	ta-	pag-	pinag-	tapag-		
BF	-an	-inan	taan	?pagan	?pinagan	?tapagan		
			kaan			?kapagan		
IF	pang-	pinang-	tapang-		_	_		

Causative stem									
	DCL	NAR	ABL	DCL	NAR	ABL			
AF	ang+pa-		makapa-	(m)agpa-	_	makapagpa-			
	= ama-								
UF	pa-	pina-	tapa-	pagpa-	pinagpa-	tapagpa-			
BF	paan	pinaan	tapaan	?	?	?			
			kapaan						
IF	pang+pa-	pinama-	tapama-	-	-	_			
	= pama-								

Figure 1 illustrates the relationship and distribution of the causation, aspect, focus and mode affixes in a flow chart. The chart reads from right to left to accord with the order of affixation given in Table 3. Causation and aspect have been labelled in binary fashion as +/-Caus and +/-Dist respectively. In order to save space, only the chart of -Caus has been given in detail. The structure of +Caus would be exactly the same; the affixes would simply be built upon the causative stem of pa-+root.

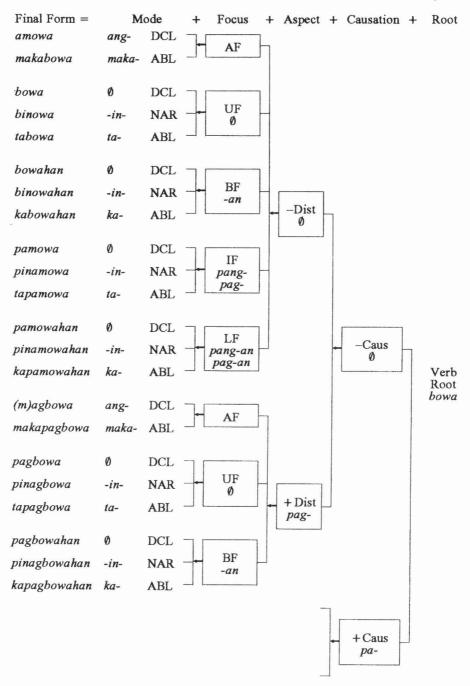


Figure 1. Sama Bangingi' transitive verbal system

## 2.2.8 Intransitive morphology

One-place predicates have only one argument eligible to be topic.<sup>7</sup> This is the core argument, that which is normally called the subject. This argument displays topic morphology. In sentence (53), the topic pronoun aku 'I' is the subject.

(53) Pa-langngan aku ni luma' si Babu'.

INT-walk T.1s to house pm aunt

'I'm walking to Auntie's house.'

Intransitive verb morphology depends on the semantic role of the topic. Generally speaking, if the topic is the actor, the verb displays agent focus morphology as in (54)-(57). If the topic is an experiencer or a patient, the verb displays non-agent focus morphology, usually a stative root with the -in- infix. This is not always the case, however. Occasionally agent focus morphology occurs where non-agent focus might be expected as in (58) below. The semantic role of the subject of 'die' is normally considered a patient, but the morphology in Bangingi' is agent focus.

- (54) Pa-liyu na kami min pu: Sangbay inaan.

  INT-go.beyond prt T.1p from island Sangbay that

  'We passed by Sangbay island.' (N10.15)
- (55) Na pa-tukku' kono' aa-in amikilan.
  intr INT-bow.head dscl man-ref AF.think
  'Now, the man bowed-his-head to think.' (KA.17)
- (56) Maka-liyu na kami pe:'.

  AF.ABL-go.beyond prt T.1p going.there.

  'We had gone beyond it (by sundown).' (N10.16)

If the topic is the actor and the verb is one of movement or body position, the most common affix is the intransitive pa. This is illustrated in sentences (54) and (55). These constructions are considered agent focus because when they are affixed for aspect and mode, they take agent focus affixation, as in

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>7</sup> This is not strictly true. A location or destination of an intransitive sentence may be made the topic, but it is not yet clear whether the morphology which accomplishes this should be considered verbal or non-verbal. Sentence (53) could be restated as follows where the actor is the non-topic pronoun ku and the topic is the destination luma' si Babu'.

 <sup>(</sup>i) Ka-langngan-an ku luma' si Babu'.
 walk 1s house pm aunt
 'Auntie's house is where I'm walking to/Auntie's house is the destination of my journey.'

sentence (56), where the root of (54) *liyu* is now affixed for abilitative mode with the AF maka-.

Some intransitives are formed with the declarative AF ang-. Topics may be actors as with the verbs anengge 'stand' or anengko' 'sit', as in (57). Or they may take the role of experiencer as with amikilan 'think' in (55), or the role of patient as with amatay 'die' in (58).

- (57) Anengko' iya ma bihing lawang.

  AF.sit T.3s obl edge door

  'She was sitting in the doorway.'
- (58)Manjari dakayu' waktu, amatay na in datu sin so-then time AF.die TM T.chief now obl

aa Bangingi' me:'.

people there
'Then one day, the chief of the Bangingi' people there died.' (KA.5)

Non-agent focus intransitives express a state or condition in which the topic is most frequently an experiencer. They often involve the state of the topic's emotional or physical well-being. The form of the verb is usually a stative root with the -in- infix, as in sentence (59).

(59) Ni-haggut aku; so:ng aku ni-ulapay.

EXP-cold abs.1s soon abs.1s EXP-sick

'I'm having chills; I'm coming down with a cold.'

The semantic contrast between agent and non-agent focus in intransitives is illustrated in the following two sentences which use the same verb root, ko:g 'joy'. Sentence (60) is AF. The verb expresses an action and the referents of the topic NPs are actors. Sentence (61) is experiencer mode, expressing a state of mind. The topic is an experiencer.

- (60) Ag-ko:gko:g manga denda me:' mareyom kuta'.

  AF.D-joy-joy pl woman there inside fort

  'The women celebrated there inside the fort.'
- (61) K-in-o:gan denda-in; amangan iya.
  EXP.joy woman ref AF.eat she
  'The woman was happy; she ate.' (KA.23)

#### 2.3 NON-VERBAL SYNTAX

A short discussion of Bangingi' non-verbal syntax has been included here in order to give a more complete picture of the morpho-syntax of a Bangingi' clause. Even though the basic definition of ergativity does not involve non-verbal syntax, it will be seen that Bangingi' non-verbal syntax has implications for syntactic ergativity and subjecthood.

#### 2.3.1 Statives

A stative clause in Sama Bangingi' is composed of a predicate and a subject. The subject is a noun phrase and evidences topic morphology. The predicate may be an adjective phrase or a locative phrase. Adjectives which occur in the predicate are usually marked with the stative prefix a-, as in sentences (62) and (63). Many stative roots occur in a clause structure similar to that of agent focus verbs where the undergoer argument is oblique. Compare the stative clause in (64) with the agent focus clause in (10b).

- (62) A-mehe na goyak-in.

  ST-big cmp wave-rf

  'The waves were big now.' (N10.52)
- (63) Iyuk ku, A-lopas kita.
  said 1s ST-lost T.1+2s
  'I said, We are lost.' (N10.56)
- (64) A-lasa iya ma anak na.

  ST-love T.3s obl child 3s

  'She loves her child.'

The above sentence may be restructured to make anak na the topic NP, as in (65).

(65) Kina-lasa-han e' na anak na.
ka-EXP-love-an agt 3s child 3s
'She loves her child'

Several things must be noticed here. First, the clause structure in (65) is very similar to that of narrative undergoer focus. There is a non-topic "agent" and a topic "undergoer". In (63) and (64), the topic pronouns show clearly that topic NPs occur in statives just as they do in verbal sentences, and that the "subject" of statives is indeed the topic noun phrase. Second, the ka--an affixation is the same as that used in example (i) above (footnote 7), which was derived from an intransitive. This affixation has not yet been analyzed (it appears to be the UF affixation for a small class of verb roots as well); nevertheless it is clear that even statives may be expressed in two types of constructions which correspond broadly to agent focus and undergoer focus. For this reason, statives will be referred to in this paper as stative "verbs".

#### 2.3.2 Existentials

Existential clauses are used to declare the existence (or non-existence) of some entity. That entity may be definite, but is more commonly indefinite and new information. The entity is most often a noun phrase, but may be an adjective or verb phrase. It never occurs with the optional preposed topic marker in. Since topics are almost always given and definite, and the entity of an existential clause is not, that entity cannot be said to be a topic in that sense. Existential clauses, in fact, are the only constructions in Sama Bangingi' which do not contain a topic noun phrase at least implicitly.

The existential morpheme is niya' and it is usually affixed with the stative a-. Of the following sentences, (66) declares the existence of an entity; (67) non-existence. In sentence (68) the entity is a definite NP; in (69) it is a verb phrase.

- (66) Aniya' aa maluwasan.

  EXT person outside

  'There is someone outside.'
- (67) Insa' niya' kasuddahan na.
  not EXT character 3s
  'He has no character.'
- (68) Aniya' lagi' ina' nu?
  EXT yet mother 2s

  'Is your mother still living?' (lit: 'Do you still have a mother?')
- (69) Aniya' ta-kale ku.
  EXT UF.ABL-hear 1s
  'I hear something.' (lit: 'There is [something] I hear.')

The verb phrase in (69) is a "topic-less" clause. Structurally it is identical to a head-less relative clause. Functionally the two clauses are similar also. Both are embedded clauses, but where relative clauses specify a noun, topic-less clauses represent a non-specific and/or new referent.

Existentials are commonly used in narrative text to introduce participants, which at that point are of course new information and indefinite. Once introduced, they are then given information and eligible to become the topic in any subsequent sentence. The following sentences are from the same text and are sequential. Sentences (70) and (71) introduce two of the main participants, a farmer and a woman in existential clauses. Sentence (72) focuses on the woman (now given information) as the topic of an AF clause. Sentence (73) is BF with the man as topic.

(70) Manjari, dakayu' allaw, aniya' aa pahuhuma melleen so-then one day EXT person farmer from-there

min deya, pa-lu:d ni bihing mag-bowa dakayu' from inland INT-descend dm edge AF.D-carry one

nangka' tahak ...
jackfruit ripe
'So then, one day, a farmer from inla

'So then, one day, a farmer from inland came down to the coast carrying a ripe jackfruit . . .' (KA.8)

(71) Sakali ma la:n aniya' isab denda abottong, anengko' so-then obl way EXT also woman pregnant AF.sit

ma bihing lawang.

obl edge door

'On the way, there was also a pregnant woman sitting in a doorway.'

(KA.9)

- (72) Abaya' tood iya amangan nangka' inaan.
  desirous intns T.3s AF.eat jackfruit that
  'She really wanted to eat of that jackfruit.' (KA.10)
- (73) Ni-lingan-an e' na in aa-in ...

  NAR-call-BF agt 3s tm person-rf

  'She called-to that man ...' (KA.11)

# 2.3.3 Equatives

Equative clauses are of two types: identificational and non-identificational. The first identifies a referent specifically and often uniquely; the second does so generally. The two may be illustrated by the English sentences, "That man is my teacher," and "That man is a teacher." The function of the non-identificational clause in Bangingi' is very similar to that of the stative clause. The syntax is also similar except that the predicate nominal is not affixed. Compare sentences (74) and (75).

- (74) A-ha:p denda-in.

  ST-good woman-rf.

  'The woman is good/beautiful.'
- (75) Maestra denda-in.
  teacher woman-rf
  'The woman is a teacher.'

Identificational clauses. The syntax of identificational clauses may be quite complex because they often involve relative clauses and cleft-like constructions. These cleft-like constructions are formed by "clefting out" the topic noun phrase and nominalizing the remainder of the clause. This may be done with both agent focus and non-agent focus constructions. Sentence (77) is the clefted version of the agent focus (76). Sentence (79) is the clefted version of the undergoer focus (78). Ya is the nominalizer.

- (76) Na amansahan si Wahid. intr AF.rudder pm Wahid 'Now Wahid was steering.' (N10.152)
- (77) Sa' si Wahid ya amansahan.
  but pm Wahid nml AF.rudder
  'But the one steering was Wahid.' (N10.142)
- (78) B-in-owa e' sigaam sappit.

  UF-NAR-take agt 3p T.sappit

  'They took a sappit.
- (79) Sappit ya b-in-owa pag-busay-an.
  sappit nml UF.NAR-take LF-paddle
  'That which (they) took as a vessel for travel was a sappit.' (N3.7)

This type of clefting turns a verbal clause into an equative clause and reverses the roles of predicate and topic. Whereas *Wahid* is the topic in (76), 'the one steering' is the topic in (77). The verb phrase has been nominalized and is treated as the most given or predictable of the two noun phrases. It is predictable that someone will be steering the boat. It may not be as predictable who that person may be.

In the examples above, the predicate-topic order is retained, even though the phrases realizing the predicate and topic may be reversed. In text material, however, the order of predicate and topic in equative clauses is more often than not reversed. This is especially true when the equative clause is a cleft-like identification. The nominalized verb phrase, which has become the topic, occurs first in the sentence.

- (80) Ya panabit kami sa:w.

  nml IF-gaff 1p anchor

  'That which we used as a gaff was an anchor.' (N10.68)
- (81) Ya lagi' angahinang tondaan kami e' ... si Baki'.

  nm! yet AF.make trawl 1p that pm

  'The one who made our trawl ... was Baki'.' (N10.69)

(82) Ya manga taba:k e' sigaam me:', manga saing!

nml pl UF.ABL-find agt 3p there pl banana
'What they found there was bananas!' (N10.211)

In each of the above examples, the nominalized verb phrase (in bold face) represents predictable information; thus I take it to be the topic. The context in (80) and (81) is that of catching a tuna. That requires a gaff, but to use an anchor for that purpose is not predictable. A trawl is one way to catch tuna, but it is not predictable from the text that Baki' made it. This is the only time he is mentioned and so he is clearly new information. The context of (82) is a search by the Coast Guard. They were looking for guns. What they found was bananas, again new and unpredictable information.

There may be several reasons for this change in the order of predicate and topic; they deserve further study. Briefly, these reasons may be: 1) Equatives (especially identificational clefts) may have an unmarked order which differs from that of other clause types; 2) predicates and topics may have been reanalyzed, that is, because the nominalized verb phrase looks like a verb, there is a tendency to place it first and consider it the predicate, especially since both sides of the equation may be equally given and it may be difficult to decide which is the topic noun phrase; 3) equatives occur in background material in narrative texts, and there is a marked tendency for the topic noun phrase in both verbal and non-verbal clauses to be preposed in background information; or, alternatively 4) the new, unpredictable or significant information may be postposed, i.e. final position, as well as initial position, may be contrastive.

# CHAPTER 3: ERGATIVITY AND PHILIPPINE LANGUAGES

#### 3.1 GENERAL DISCUSSION OF ERGATIVITY

Ergativity is a language strategy which treats the undergoer of a transitive clause in the same way as it treats the single argument of an intransitive clause. While all languages which have been called ergative use this same basic strategy, the extent and manner in which it is realized in the morphology and syntax varies greatly from language to language. Perhaps as a result of this, the set of criteria used to define an ergative language has varied greatly from linguist to linguist.

The purpose of this chapter will not be to examine all suggested criteria, nor to survey the ways ergativity may be realized in a language (for this, see Comrie 1978, and Dixon 1979). It will be instead to present the criteria for ergativity which are most generally agreed upon along with the examples most often put forth. Then the problem of subjecthood in ergative languages and its relevance to Philippine languages will be discussed. Finally, the question whether Philippine languages in general should be considered ergative will be taken up preparatory to a discussion of the same question in Chapter 4 with regard to Sama Bangingi'.

## 3.1.1 Ergative morphology

Indo-European languages use the familiar nominative-accusative strategy which treats the single argument of intransitive clauses and the agent of transitive clauses alike and assigns them "nominative" case. Undergoers are treated differently and are assigned "accusative" case. English pronouns follow this strategy as the following sentences show. 'She' is the single argument of an intransitive sentence, and 'he' is the agent of a transitive sentence; both are nominative. The transitive undergoer 'her' is accusative.

- (83) She spoke.
- (84) He saw her.

In contrast, a language is said to use an ergative strategy if it assigns the same case to the single argument of an intransitive verb and the undergoer of a transitive verb, and a different case to the transitive agent. The following examples from Tongan, an Austronesian language (cited in Comrie 1978:329) illustrate ergative morphology.

- (85) Na'e lea 'a Tolu.

  Past speak Abs. Tolu

  'Tolu spoke.'
- (86) Na'e tāmate'i 'e Tēvita 'a Kōlaiate.

  Past kill Erg. David Abs. Goliath

  'David killed Goliath.'

Tongan marks the single argument of the intransitive, 'a Tolu and the undergoer of the transitive, 'a  $K\bar{o}laiate$  alike, and differentiates them from the transitive agent, 'e  $T\bar{e}vita$ . Thus the "subject" (i.e. actor/agent) in Tongan does not always have the same appearance: it is marked with the morpheme 'a in one instance and with 'e in another.

This raises questions regarding the concept of subject. Is it a surface phenomenon, i.e. consistently identifiable by morphology or word order or a deeper level universal category such as agent? Is the concept of subject even relevant for languages such as Tongan? These questions remain a matter of some controversy. In order to deal with data from languages such as Tongan, Dixon (1979:60) proposed three neutral categories which he called "universal syntactic-semantic primitives": S (underlying intransitive subject), A (underlying transitive subject, i.e. agent) and O (underlying transitive object, i.e. undergoer, patient, or goal). (See also Comrie 1978:330-334.) These semantic roles are then combined differently in accusative and ergative languages and assigned case accordingly.

An accusative language groups the S and A roles together and assigns "nominative" case to their NPs. The O NP is assigned "accusative" case. An ergative language groups the S and O roles together and assigns the same case to their NPs. This case has been termed "absolutive." The A NP is assigned a different case, termed "ergative." Thus in Tongan above, the 'a marks absolutive case and the 'e ergative case.

Tongan marks both absolutive and ergative cases morphologically. It is often the case, however, that ergative languages mark only the ergative case, while the absolutive case remains unmarked morphologically. This is true, for example, of full noun phrases in Dyirbal (see sentences 92 and 93). In contrast, no ergative language marks only the absolutive case. Rather, if there is only one unmarked case in an ergative language, it will always be the absolutive (Dixon 1979:62).

# 3.1.2 Split ergativity

The phenomenon of ergativity is widespread geographically. Ergative languages are found in most areas of the world. They include Eskimo, Basque, Georgian, Hindi, Tibetan, Mayan, some Polynesian languages, many Amazonian languages, and many Australian languages, including Dyirbal and Walbiri (Dixon 1979:62; Comrie 1978:336,352). However, no language has

been found which can be said to be fully ergative to the same degree as accusative languages are said to be fully accusative. That is, no language has morphology or syntax which consistently operates on an ergative-absolutive basis. This inconsistency is termed "split-ergativity." Furthermore, languages vary greatly in the areas and extent to which their morphology and syntax evidence ergativity. Two of the better known areas will be summarized here.

Split ergativity may be conditioned by the tense or aspect of the verb, that is, noun phrase morphology (or in some cases verb-subject agreement) will be marked as ergative-absolutive for some tenses or aspects, and as nominative-accusative for others. When this type of split occurs, the "ergative marking is ALWAYS found either in past tense or in perfect aspect" (Dixon 1979:95). Many Indo-Iranian languages, Georgian, and Mayan languages evidence this kind of split. The following examples are from Georgian (cited in Comrie 1978:351-352).

- (87) Student-i midis.
  student-nom goes
  'The student goes.'
- (88) Student-i ceril-s cers.
  student-nom letter-acc writes
  'The student writes the letter.'
- (89) Student-ma ceril-i dacera.
  student-erg letter-abs wrote
  'The student wrote the letter.'
- (90) Student-i mivida.
  student-abs went
  'The student went.'

In Georgian, the present (imperfective) tense system is nominative-accusative. The transitive agent 'student' in (88) is marked with -i as is the intransitive subject in (87). The aorist (perfective) tense system, however, is ergative-absolutive. It is now the object ceril 'letter' (89) which receives the -i, being thus aligned with the intransitive subject in (90). The transitive agent is marked as ergative by the suffix -ma. In Georgian (as well as in certain Indo-Iranian languages), the nominative and absolutive cases are marked alike. This is not true in all instances of this kind of split ergativity (see, for example, Comrie 1978: 352). In Georgian, the tense split occurs in transitive sentences. Noun phrases are marked differently as they occur with present or with aorist verbs (compare 88 and 89). In intransitive sentences, noun phrase marking remains the same with either tense (87 and 90). In other ergative languages (e.g. Chol, see Comrie 1978:352-353), the split occurs in intransitive sentences. Intransitive subjects in imperfective sentences are

marked in the same way as are transitive agents. Those in perfective sentences are marked in the same way as transitive objects.

Another common type of split ergativity is that conditioned by the type of NP. Dyirbal is the language cited as the prime example of this. In Dyirbal, full NPs evidence an ergative-absolutive system; independent pronouns are marked according to a nominative-accusative system. Examples 91-96 are from Dixon (1979:61-64).

- (91) numa banaga-nyu.
  father return-tense
  'Father returned.'
- (92) yabu banaga-n<sup>y</sup>u mother return-tense 'Mother returned.'
- (93) yabu yuma-ygu bura-n. mother father-erg see-tense 'Father saw Mother.'

The transitive object yabu 'mother' in (93) is absolutive as are the intransitive subjects in (91) and (92). In contrast, the transitive agent yumaygu 'father-erg' is marked as ergative by the suffix  $-\eta gu$ . The examples below show a different system at work when the NPs are pronouns. The pronoun transitive agent  $n^y ura$  'you' in (96) is unmarked morphologically as are the intransitive subjects in (94) and (95). They are considered nominative. The transitive object  $\eta ana-na$  'us' in (96) is marked with the accusative suffix -na.

- (94) yana banaga-n<sup>y</sup>u
  we return-tense
  'We returned.'
- (95)  $n^y u ra$  banaga- $n^y u$  you return-tense 'You returned.'
- (96) nydura nana-na bura-n you us-acc see-tense 'You saw us.'

# 3.1.3 Antipassive

In accusative languages, the surface subject of a transitive sentence is the agent. A passive rule may then make the undergoer the surface subject (i.e. assigned nominative case) and reduce the agent to an oblique agentive

phrase. A similar rule in ergative languages assigns absolutive case to the agent and reduces the undergoer to an oblique or nondirect noun phrase. This is called an antipassive rule. In effect, the antipassive lowers the transitivity of the verb. In many languages the antipassive is in fact a surface intransitive. In Dyirbal, the verb is affixed to mark this change from transitive to intransitive. The following examples are from Dixon (1979:61, 63).

- (97) yabu ŋuma-ŋgu bura-n.
  mother.abs father-erg see-tense
  'Father saw Mother.'
- (98) yuma bural-ya-n<sup>y</sup>du yabu-gu. father.abs see-yay-tense mother-dat 'Father saw Mother.'

Sentence (97) is transitive; (98) is antipassive and intransitive. The change is indicated in four ways: the ergative yumaygu 'father' becomes the absolutive yuma; the absolutive yabu 'mother' is reduced to the dative yabugu; the detransitivizing suffix -yay occurs on the verb; and the word order changes as the newly made absolutive NP yuma moves to first position.

The antipassive is used in Dyirbal when sentence coordination or subordination would join an intransitive and a transitive clause in which S and A NPs are coreferential. Noun phrase deletion may occur only when both NPs are absolutive. Therefore an ergative A must be made absolutive. In (99) below, sentence (98) has been conjoined to the intransitive 'Father returned'.

(99) yuma banaga-nyu bural-ya-nyu yabu-gu. father.abs return-tense see-yay-tense mother-dat 'Father returned and saw Mother.'

The difference between ergative and antipassive constructions is often semantic as well as structural. The choice of antipassive may depend on the information status of the undergoer, the degree to which it has been affected by the verb, or (related to this) the aspect of the verb. The following discussion is based on Cooreman (1991:2-4; see also Comrie 1978:359-363).

The antipassive is more likely to be chosen when the undergoer is indefinite or non-referential, although the degree of definiteness at which the shift is made varies among languages. In Chamorro, antipassives are obligatory when the undergoer is indefinite. The indefinite undergoer may or may not be referential, and it may be deleted, as in the antipassive sentence (101). Compare the ergative sentence (100), where the undergoer is referential and specific.

(100) Ha-konne' i peskadot i guihan. erg.3s-catch the fisherman the fish 'The fisherman caught the fish.' (101) Mangonne' (guihan) i peskadot.

ap-catch fish the fisherman

'The fisherman caught some fish/(something).'

The use of antipassive also signals an object not completely affected by the verb, i.e. the antipassive verb is less transitive than its ergative counterpart. This distinction holds in Chamorro when the object is definite. The object 'dog' in sentences (102) and (103) is definite. In the first, where the dog is absolutive, it is surely kicked; in the second it is not.

- (102) Un-patek i ga'lago.
  erg.2s-kick the dog
  'You kicked the dog.'
- (103) Manatek hao ni ga'lago. ap-kick abs.2s obl dog 'You kicked at the dog.'

Antipassives may also be used to indicate action which is imperfective, iterative, habitual or the like, as in the following example, again from Chamorro. In such cases, the action is seen as incomplete because it does not describe an event with "a perceptible onset or conclusion" (Cooreman 1991:3).

(104) Mang-galuti gue' ni ga'lago.

ap-hit abs.3s obl dog

'He repeatedly/habitually hit the dog.'

# 3.1.4 Syntactic ergativity and the problem of subject

It was noted above that "subject" is a difficult concept in ergative languages. Whereas subjects are consistently identifiable in accusative languages either by their morphology or word order, in ergative languages the NP realizing the actor/agent (i.e. the unmarked subject in accusative languages) is ergative in transitive clauses and absolutive in antipassives and intransitives. This difficulty has led some to suggest that subject is not a relevant concept for ergative languages. Others suggest that the concept of subject is relevant but must be divided in ergative languages between the ergative agent and absolutive NP; still others suggest that subject should be identified solely with the agent, regardless of its case, or solely with the absolutive NP. The last viewpoint argues that there is no doubt about the subject of an intransitive clause; it is clearly the absolutive NP. If the subject is to be morphologically consistent, then the NP which is absolutive should be considered the subject in all clauses. Thus, the subject of a transitive clause

would be the patient/undergoer, while the subject of intransitives and antipassives would be the actor/agent.

Subjects are not identified solely on the basis of their morphology, however. They also play a vital role in many syntactic phenomena: for example, subjects are always included in the NPs which participate in coreferential NP deletion; they generally control reflexivization and are the most accessible for relativization, among many other such criteria (see Keenan 1976:315-317). In most cases, when ergative languages are "tested" according to these syntactic processes, the NP which is involved is not consistently the absolutive NP. More often it is the NP which realizes the actor/agent, whether that NP is ergative or absolutive. This means that most ergative languages are ergative in their morphology only; their syntax operates on a nominative-accusative basis. Thus, in terms of syntax, ergative languages have subjects just as accusative languages do, and those subjects are normally actor/agents (Anderson 1976:16).

There are some ergative languages, however, which are ergative syntactically as well as morphologically. In Dyirbal, two clauses may be conjoined and the coreferential NP deleted only if that NP is absolutive in both clauses (Dixon 1979:62). Sentences (92) and (93) may be conjoined as follows:

(105) yabu banaga-n<sup>y</sup>u yuma-ygu bura-n mother return-tms father-erg see-tns 'Mother returned and Father saw (her)./Mother returned and was seen by Father.'

The coreferential absolutive NP yabu 'mother' has been deleted from (93). Note that (105) cannot mean 'Mother returned and saw Father,' because yabu can only be understood to be the undergoer, not the agent of the second clause. The conjoining of 'mother returned' and 'mother saw father,' would require transforming the latter from a transitive into an antipassive so that the agent 'mother' would be absolutive in both clauses. When the two clauses are thus conjoined, the resultant coordinate sentence (106) is similar to (99).

(106) yabu banaga-n<sup>y</sup>u bural-ŋa-n<sup>y</sup>u ŋuma-gu mother return-tns see-ap-tns father-dat 'Mother returned and saw Father.'

The rules for coordination in Dyirbal are consistently ergative, even when the NPs are pronouns, even though pronouns in Dyirbal are nominative-accusative morphologically. The following sentence conjoins (94) and (96) (Dixon 1979:64):

(107) yana banaga-n<sup>y</sup>u n<sup>y</sup>ura bura-n. we return-tns you see-tns 'We returned and were seen by you (you saw [us])'. The deleted NP from (96) is yanana 'we/us-acc'. It is not in the same case as the nominative yana in (94), but it corresponds to the absolutive O function and comforms to the same coordination rule that governs full NPs. Similarly, relative clause formation and complement formation also involve the S and O NPs in Dyirbal. Dyirbal syntax is in fact entirely ergative, even though its morphology evidences only a split ergativity (Dixon 1979:65).

If there are languages (albeit few) which are syntactically ergative as well as morphologically ergative (there are no syntactically ergative languages which are not at least partially ergative morphologically), then the difficulty of defining the subject still remains. The term "subject" may be applied consistently to the absolutive NP in these languages, but then "subject" will mean something different than it does in nominative-accusative languages, and that is seen to run counter to the notion of subject as a universal concept.

The difficulty regarding the concept of subject stems from an inconsistent use and sometimes confusion between viewing the subject as a semantic versus a syntactic notion. In generative grammar, the deep structure subject is generally the actor/agent. The surface subject is not so restricted, and it is the surface subject that participates in the various syntactic processes. To avoid confusion, Dixon (1979:120-122) uses the term "subject" to refer only to the deep subject, i.e. the actor/agent. This Dixon considers the universal category. The surface (or more precisely in Dixon's terminology, the "shallow-structure") subject is called the syntactic PIVOT, around which syntactic processes such as coreferential NP deletion revolve.

Thus, for Dixon the term "subject" has relevance in syntactically ergative languages only on the deep level to signify the actor/agent. The absolutive NP is the pivot which triggers or motivates the syntactic processes. On the surface level, the term "subject" has relevance only in languages in which the deep subject is regularly realized on the surface level as the pivot.

In traditional English grammar, we learned that the subject is "what the sentence is about," i.e. the topic. This use of "topic" is pragmatic, i.e. discourse related, and not to be confused with the syntactic "topic NP" of Philippine languages. Comrie has suggested that the prototypical subject is the "intersection of agent and topic" (1981:101). Faarlund (1988:193-194) takes a similar view, seeing the agent as the primary semantic role, and the topic as the primary pragmatic role. Either or both may be encoded as the surface subject. The recognition that the term "subject" has implications on three levels—semantic, syntactic, and pragmatic—is important both in defining the concept of subject and in relating it to ergative languages.

It is not hard to see that even in ergative languages the agent would be more likely than the undergoer to be the pragmatic topic (see the next section for evidence of this in Philippine languages). Agents tend to be more animate than undergoers and therefore more topic-worthy. In nominative-accusative languages, the semantic agent and the syntactic pivot usually coincide. This

increases the salience of that NP and makes it even more likely that it will be the pragmatic topic. Thus the semantic agent, the syntactic pivot and the pragmatic topic usually coincide in the same NP, making it easily identifiable as the "subject."

In syntactically ergative languages, however, the primary semantic role, i.e. the agent, usually does not coincide with the syntactic pivot in transitive clauses. Sometimes the pragmatic topic is encoded in the more animate and ergative agent; sometimes in the syntactically prominent pivot. This makes the identification of the pragmatic topic less consistent, and dependent to a large extent on the context, both linguistic and non-linguistic. Similarly, if the "subject" of a sentence is to be defined as the intersection of semantic agent and pragmatic topic, then it too will be hard to identify if the pragmatic topic coincides with the pivot rather than with the agent.

All this is to say that until the definition of "subject" is agreed upon, there will continue to be discussions on its relevance in ergative languages. But note that there are already terms for the primary semantic role, "agent," the primary syntactic constituent, "pivot," and the primary pragmatic role, "topic." Is there then even a need for the term "subject?" Perhaps its relevance is indeed as a term for the intersection of any or all of the primary roles, particularly where that intersection is signalled by word order or morphology as in nominative-accusative languages, for only in this latter instance is the intersection a discrete category. In ergative languages the category of subject as defined in accusative languages is not discrete. It is not a category that the language itself makes, and therefore, even if the term "subject" is relevant, it is not very useful.

It is this author's opinion that the term "subject" is useful as a universal category only if it is defined solely in terms of the syntax, i.e. as the syntactic pivot. Admittedly, this runs counter both to the prevailing notion based on generative grammar that the deep structure subject is the agent, and to the traditional definition of subject as "what the sentence is about," i.e. the pragmatic topic. In response to this, I offer two comments:

First, it seems to me that the notion of subject is basically a syntactic one. For example, most speakers of English will have no trouble identifying the subject of a sentence, even when the subject is not the agent (e.g. in a passive sentence), or when it is not the pragmatic topic, as for example in the sentence, "As I was walking to town, a car splashed mud all over me." I don't believe it can be said that the main clause of this sentence is about the car. It is about me or what happened to me as I walked to town. Nevertheless, the syntactic subject is "a car," simply because English prefers to express such actions in active clauses.

Second, even though the basic notion of subject may be a syntactic one, it is also true that there is a close association in the minds of English speakers between the notion of "subject" and that of the "doer of the action" (i.e. the agent), and "what the sentence is about" (i.e. the pragmatic topic). The

prototypical subject in English is indeed the intersection of agent and topic. But then we may ask, "Where does this intersection take place?" The answer, of course, is that it takes place at the syntactic relation of subject. It takes place at the NP defined by the phrase structure rules as the "subject." Thus, any intersection of agent and topic must necessarily also involve the syntactic pivot.

It is surely true that for nominative-accusative languages, the deep structure (syntactic) subject is the agent, but this is not necessarily a linguistic universal. In fact, it appears that for syntactically ergative languages at least, the deep structure subject may be the undergoer. This, however, will mean that the syntactic subject (i.e. the pivot) will often fail to coincide with either the pragmatic topic or the semantic agent, or both, since the pragmatic topic is as likely to be the agent as it is the undergoer. This is not very satisfying to English speakers (and linguists) who closely associate the term "subject" with "agent" and "topic." It seems that intuitively the subject "ought" to be the "doer of the action" or "what the sentence is about." But not all languages are like English.

It seems to me that we really have but two options in the use of the term "subject." One is to define it in terms of the intersection or convergence of at least two of the three primary "roles" of agent, pivot and topic. Then, in nominative-accusative languages, the notion of subject would most often be the convergence of all three "roles," and less often the convergence of syntactic pivot and pragmatic topic (as in passive clauses) or pivot and agent (as in the clause "a car splashed mud all over me"). Note that the syntactic pivot is always part of the definition.

In ergative languages, the convergence of all three "roles" would occur only in the antipassive construction, a relatively infrequent construction. In the more frequent ergative constructions, the "subject" would be the convergence of either the ergative agent and pragmatic topic, or the absolutive pivot and pragmatic topic, depending on the context. Interestingly, here it is the pragmatic topic which is always part of the definition. Could this be a significant difference between subjects in accusative and ergative languages, that the syntactic pivot is central to the former, while the pragmatic topic is central to the latter? This would make an intriguing topic for further study.

As intriguing as the possibility is, however, this definition is far from ideal if we want "subject" to represent a linguistic universal. If we do, then the definition of subject should be limited to one and only one of the three primary roles. For reasons discussed above, I believe that if limited in this way, "subject" should be defined solely as the syntactic pivot, allowing the unmarked semantic role (e.g. agent or undergoer) of that pivot to be language specific. Defining the (deep structure) subject as the agent/actor would also allow it to be a language universal, but such a definition would not help us very much. It would simply give us an alternate term for "agent," and, as Dixon himself acknowledges, this would be relevant and useful only for

nominative-accusative languages. Defining the subject as the syntactic NP which is crucially involved in various syntactic processes would be relevant to all languages.

#### 3.2 ERGATIVITY IN PHILIPPINE LANGUAGES

This section surveys some of the more important articles dealing with ergativity and subjecthood in Philippine languages. The question of whether or not these languages are truly ergative is a controversial one. The purpose of this section is to present the major issues raised by those accepting or rejecting ergativity in Philippine languages and to offer a few evaluations of those arguments.

Even before the notion of ergativity began to be applied to Philippine languages in the late 1970s, they had gained some notoriety because of the complex verbal system and the seeming difficulty in classifying the languages according to type. In the late 1950s, Filipinists began to refer to this verbal system as "focus," and the NP which stands in the focused relationship with the verb as the "focused NP" or "topic," essentially rejecting the more traditional terms, "voice" and "subject" as being inadequate to describe Philippine syntax. With the renewed interest in language typology, however, the correlation or lack of it between the Philippine topic and the universal notion of subject began to be reconsidered. Li and Thompson (1976:483), basing their comments on Schachter (1976, and see below), could place Tagalog neither among topic-prominent languages (typified by Chinese extraclausal topics) nor subject-prominent languages (typified by English); instead they placed it roughly in the middle of a continuum between the two.

# 3.2.1 Subjecthood

The discussion on the nature of subject in Philippine languages parallels very closely that on the nature of subject in syntactically ergative languages, i.e. the primary semantic role, agent, is not encoded as the primary syntactic category, pivot, in the majority of cases. In Philippine languages, the syntactic pivot corresponds more closely to the topic NP, that which is in focused relationship with the verb (Foley and Van Valin 1984:135). Philippine topics (hereafter called syntactic topics) are preferentially objects (patient, undergoer or goal) of transitive clauses and actors of intransitives, precisely the syntactic grouping of ergative morphology.

Schachter (1976) in examining the role of subject in Tagalog (though not within the context of ergativity), noticed that some syntactic processes which are associated with subjects in English, such as reflexivization,

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>8</sup> In historical and comparative studies, Austronesian linguists recognize a "Philippine type" which is characterized by a focus system similar to or reminiscent of that of Philippine languages.

imperative formation and co-referential NP deletion, involve the agent in Tagalog, whether it is encoded as the syntactic topic or not. Other processes, such as relativization and "floating quantifiers," involve the syntactic topic only. Thus, properties which are associated with the one category "subject" in subject-prominent languages, are divided in Tagalog between agents and syntactic topics.

Schachter called properties associated with the agent "role-related" subject properties because they involve processes like reflexivization and imperative formation in which the role of actor/agent as controller of the action is important. Properties associated with the topic were called "reference-related" subject properties because they involve processes like relativization in which the qualities of givenness and referentiality are important (1976:514). Thus, there is no single category in Tagalog which motivates all of the syntactic processes associated with the subject of other languages. Some syntactic processes respond to the semantic role agent; some to the topic.<sup>9</sup>

Similar divisions of subject properties have also been noticed in ergative languages. Comrie (1981:110-112) states that certain syntactic processes such as imperative formation will correlate more closely with agent properties because the agent has more control over the situation at hand than the undergoer/patient. Therefore there is a natural tendency for even ergative languages to operate on a nominative-accusative basis when the syntactic process involves a greater degree of control on the part of the agent. Just as a language may evidence split ergativity in its morphology, so it may also in its syntax. Thus, it is appropriate to speak of the degree to which a language's syntax may be described as ergative.

Dixon (1979:129) also is unwilling to insist on a rigid division of languages into ergative or accusative syntax. He says:

Certainly, some languages have a considerable set of well-defined syntactic constraints, which facilitate a clear judgment of their position on the ergative/accusative syntactic scale; but others have more fluid conditions that provide slimmer evidence for judgment. For instance coördination may largely follow semantic, stylistic, or discourse-organization preferences, rather than conforming to any strict syntactic matrix.

Thus it may be that some of the subject properties are not primarily syntactic properties at all. They may be pragmatic or semantic properties and reflect

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>9</sup> Schwartz (1976), however, disagrees. Looking at Ilokano, he views the syntactic processes which involve the agent, plus its referentiality and definiteness whether topic or non-topic and its normal placement early in the clause as conclusive evidence that the agent, which he calls the APE nominal (that which activates/perceives/experiences what the predicates asserts) is the subject.

not so much the syntactic pivot but the semantic agent or pragmatic topic. This argument will be referred to again below and in the next chapter.

## 3.2.2 Arguments for ergativity

Ergativity was first recognized in Austronesian languages other than Philippine languages. In the 1960s, Hohepa described an accusative to ergative drift in some Polynesian languages (Cummings and Wouk 1987:272). In the late 1970s and early 80s, ergative elements began to be described in Western Austronesian languages such as Indonesian (Cartier 1979). Payne (1982) was among the first to apply the term "antipassive" to the agent focus of Tagalog (Cooreman et al. 1984:15).

Payne (1982:77) demonstrated that Tagalog morphology can be described as ergative. The following examples from Tagalog illustrate this.

- (108) L-um-apit ang babae
  INT.past-come abs woman
  'The woman came.'
- (109) B-in-ili ng babae ang baro
  TNS.past-buy erg woman abs dress
  'The woman bought the dress.'

The intransitive subject babae 'woman' in (108) is marked by ang as is the transitive undergoer baro 'dress' in (109). Ang marks the syntactic topic which is here reanalyzed by Payne as the absolutive NP. The agent is signalled by the ergative marker ng (pronounced /ŋəŋ/). The verb binili is undergoer focus. It is considered the primary transitive construction because of the preference for it over agent focus when the undergoer is definite. The functional similarity between the Tagalog agent focus and antipassives is also pointed out by Payne (1982:94-95), showing that the agent focus counterpart of (109) is an antipassive, as in (110).

(110) B-um-ili ang babae ng baro.
TNS.past-buy abs woman obl dress
'The woman bought a/the dress.'

Typically, antipassives detransitivize a clause by decreasing the topicality of the undergoer and increasing the topicality of the agent. The first is achieved by reducing the absolutive undergoer to an oblique, the second by assigning the absolutive case to the agent. This is precisely what has happened in (110). The agent is now marked as is the intransitive subject, by ang. It has become the absolutive NP, and therefore the syntactic topic. Conversely, the topicality of the undergoer has been reduced, being marked by the particle ng, which doubles as oblique marker as well as ergative marker. The information

status of the undergoer has also changed; it has become indefinite. This reduction in topicality and referential status of the undergoer are indications that agent focus is lower in transitivity than undergoer focus. Indeed, the verbal affixation of the agent focus is the same as that of the intransitive (108), indicating that (110) can in fact be considered intransitive. The implications of this will be discussed further in the next chapter.

In addition to case marking morphology, Tagalog also has three sets of pronouns which may be identified as ergative, absolutive and oblique as seen in the following table. The absolutive pronouns always occur as syntactic topics. The ergative pronouns are postposed non-topic agents and possessors. The oblique pronouns occur with the oblique marker sa as non-topic undergoer, goal or direction. They may also occur without the sa as preposed non-topic agents and possessors.

Table 5. Tagalog pronoun sets

		singular			plural		
person	erg	abs	obl	erg	abs	obl	
1 excl	ko	ako	akin	namin	kami	amin	
1 incl				natin	tayo	atin	
2	mo	ka	iyo	ninyo	kayo	inyo	
3	niya	siya	kaniya	nila	sila	kanila	

Gerdts (1988, based on Gerdts, 1980) and De Guzman (1988) argue for an ergative analysis of several Philippine languages from a relational grammar framework. Gerdts compared an ergative analysis of Ilokano with a more traditional active-passive one. Her claim is that while either analysis works for the majority of the data, causatives can be accounted for in a straightforward manner by an ergative analysis without the problems encountered by an active-passive analysis.

De Guzman applies a similar ergative analysis to Tagalog and Kapampangan. She notes several problems with this analysis in the relational grammar framework, one being the necessity of a different case marking system and the need of referring to the transitivity of the verb to determine the label of 1 (i.e. agent) on the final level. Ergative analysis treats undergoer focus as the basic transitive construction, assigning initial 1 to the ergative (agent) NP and initial 2 to the absolutive NP, following Perlmutter and Postal's subject (i.e. agent) > direct object hierarchy. If the final verb is transitive, final 1 remains ergative. If the verb is antipassive (i.e. intransitive), final 1 becomes absolutive.

A second problem is that of extra complexity in the analysis of the antipassive. Initial 1 becomes a 2 in order to push the initial 2 "en chômage," then must become a 1 again (in absolutive case) in the final level to satisfy the Final 1 Law which says that the final level must contain a 1. De Guzman

solves both problems by relaxing the Final 1 Law and allowing both the absolutive agent and the oblique patient to be labelled 2 on the final level, with the second argument being a 2 "en chômage." She justifies this on the basis of the "centrality of patient over agent in transitive constructions" (1988:340). Since term 2 (the absolutive NP) is the primary relation in ergative languages, it is quite appropriate to have an absolutive 2 instead of 1 in the final level.

Even with its problems, De Guzman prefers the ergative analysis and makes an important point, namely that an ergative analysis demonstrates clearly that the major division in the verbal system is between agent focus and non-agent focus. Each division has its own and mutually exclusive set of verbal affixes (1988:339-341).

There is, of course, another way to solve the problems of an ergative analysis within the relational framework. And that is to reverse Perlmutter and Postal's hierarchy as Dixon suggested (1979:123). If the grammar would be allowed to assign 1 to absolutive S/O and 2 to ergative A, then the antipassive would involve a promotion of 2 to 1, with initial 1 becoming a chômeur. An object "en chômage" captures very well what happens to the object in an antipassive construction, i.e. it becomes oblique or is incorporated into an intransitive construction.

An important paper by Cooreman, Fox and Givon (1984) extends the notion of ergativity to discourse using data from Tagalog and Chamorro, the language of Guam and closely related to Philippine languages. Cooreman et al. examine the topicality of agent NPs versus that of absolutive NPs to determine if the discourse of either language can be considered ergative. If the absolutive NP proves to be the pragmatic topic in a majority of instances, the discourse is ergative; if the agent NP, the discourse is nominative-accusative.

To do this Cooreman (for Chamorro) and Fox (for Tagalog) carried out several frequency counts in textual material. Using a method outlined by Givon (1983), they counted the number of clauses between a participant NP and its previous mention (referential distance) and the number of clauses in which the participant NP remains an argument (topic persistence). They also counted the number of zero anaphora and pronouns (both of which show the preservation of a topic) which occur as agent or patient. Coreferential zero anaphora was distinguished from non-coreferential NP deletion. The first indicates high topic continuity; the second, none. These counts were then correlated with the clause types identified in both languages as ergative, passive and antipassive.

The results were similar for both Chamorro and Tagalog. Although the percentages differed, the pattern was similar. Agent topicality was highest in ergative and antipassive constructions, and lowest in passives. A corollary to low agent topicality in passives was the high incidence of non-coreferential agent deletion. Conversely, patient topicality was highest in passive

constructions, second highest in ergatives. It was extremely low, even approaching zero, in antipassives, and patient deletion was correspondingly high.

The conclusions are as follows: the authors consider both Chamorro and Tagalog to be at least surface-ergative by virtue of ergative morphology and the preponderance of ergative constructions among transitive sentences in discourse. To them, this functional criterion is essential. The status of a language as ergative or not cannot be determined without it. If the majority of transitive constructions are nominative-accusative, then the language operates on an active-passive basis. If the majority are ergative, the language is ergative-antipassive.

Chamorro is ergative only on the level of its morphology, while Tagalog is claimed to be syntactically ergative as well (Payne 1982, among others). Cooreman et al. express reservations about such a claim, but allow that a language may be at least partially ergative syntactically. Significantly, their results show that neither the morphologically ergative Chamorro nor the (at least partially) syntactically ergative Tagalog are ergative on the level of discourse. Neither violates "the human universal concerning the higher topicality of human-agent-causer NPs in human communication" (22). This is an important generalization and will be referred to again in the next chapter.

The above discussion reveals an interesting fact: some ergative languages apparently have both ergative and passive constructions. Normally, a passive voice would be thought to have relevance only in reference to an active voice. But here there are two constructions which encode the O role as the absolutive NP. What then is the rationale for describing one as ergative and the other as passive? Comrie (1988:9) offers three criteria for determining in any one language if a particular construction is ergative or passive. Although he is primarily interested in determining if the language in question is ergative or accusative, his criteria will work equally well in distinguishing ergative and passive constructions which occur in the same language.

Comrie's criteria are 1) the distribution of subject properties; 2) the degree of integration of the agent NP into the syntax; and 3) markedness. The prototypical passive construction is one in which 1) a clear majority of subject properties are associated with the O role, 2) the A is minimally involved in the syntax and may even be deleted and 3) the construction is the marked voice, i.e. it occurs less frequently, is more complex morphologically, involves a more limited set of verbs, and/or has a more limited distribution in discourse. The prototypical ergative construction is one in which 1) the subject properties are either shared between the A and O roles, or are associated primarily with the A, 2) the A is therefore maximally involved in the syntax and 3) the construction is unmarked (1988:19-22).

The results that Cooreman et al. obtained accord with Comrie's criteria. Ergatives in Chamorro and Tagalog are characterized by high agent topicality, less complex morphology (in Chamorro) and greater frequency of occurrence.

Passives are characterized by high patient topicality, frequent agent deletion and less frequent occurrence.

Using similar criteria Walton (1986:114-118) distinguishes a passive from an ergative construction in Sama Pangutaran, a language closely related to Sama Bangingi'. Walton claims both morphological and syntactic ergativity for Pangutaran. The following sentences from Walton (1986:114) illustrate the morphology. (The inter-consonantal apostrophe symbolizes the schwa.)

- (111) t'tto na aku.
  laugh now ls.abs
  'I laughed.'
- (112) Ø-k'llo' nu aku.
  UF-fetch 2s.erg 1s.abs
  'You fetch me.'

The pronoun aku is intransitive subject in (111) and transitive undergoer in (112). Pangutaran pronouns are virtually the same as those in Bangingi' and occur in two sets, ergative and absolutive (Walton 1986:7). Aku belongs to the absolutive set and the agent nu belongs to the ergative set.

Walton also discusses several syntactic processes in which the absolutive NP (S/O roles) is clearly the pivot. These processes include relativization, WH-question formation, cleft formation and topicalization of core arguments (1986:115, 123-130). Walton's examples will not be included here since similar ones for Bangingi' will be presented in the next chapter. What is important here is the distinction between ergative and passive.

Sama Pangutaran has an unaffixed undergoer focus which Walton labels ergative, and an affixed undergoer focus which he labels passive. These correspond morphologically to the declarative and narrative modes of the UF in Bangingi' (see Chapter 2). Syntactically, however, there is a significant difference between these constructions in Pangutaran and Bangingi'. The unaffixed ergative UF of Pangutaran has a much wider distribution than the corresponding form in Bangingi'. It may occur with either full NPs or pronouns, while that in Bangingi' may occur only (and obligatorily) with pronouns. The ergative sentence (113) below would be ungrammatical in Bangingi'. The following sentences are from Walton (1986:117-118). The abbreviations (A) and (U) stand for agent and undergoer.

- (113) Ø-b'lla d'nda kiyakan kami.
  UF-cook girl(A) food(U) 1 p.ex
  'The girl cooked our food.'
- (114) b-i-lla uk d'nda kiyakan kami.

  PASS-cook obl girl(A) food(U) 1p.ex
  'Our food was cooked by the girl.'

- (115) k-i-ulamas h'lla na maka jaum uk Putli'.

  PASS-scratch husband(U) 3s obl needle obl princess(A)

  'Her husband was scratched with a needle by the Princess.'
- (116) \*O-kulamas h'lla na maka jaum Putli'.

  UF-scratch husband(U) 3s obl needle princess(A)
- (117) b-i-lla na kiyakan kami.

  PASS-cook now food(U) 1p

  'Our food is already cooked.'
- (118) \*0-b'lla kiyakan kami.

  UF-cook food(U) 1p

  'Cooked our food.'

Passive constructions (114), (115) and (117) are affixed by the infix -i- and differ syntactically from ergatives in one important respect: they change the agent from core to peripheral argument. This is signalled in three ways. The agent is a core argument in the ergative (113) but is oblique in the passive (114). The oblique agent may move to the end of the clause (115), but the ergative agent may not (116). It must follow the verb as in (113). Finally, the oblique agent (117) may be deleted, but the ergative agent may not be (118).

Walton's criteria for distinguishing passive from ergative are fewer than those of Comrie and Cooreman et al., but are in substantial agreement with them. In Sama Pangutaran, agents are more integrated into the syntax of the clause in ergative constructions where they function as core arguments, as opposed to passive constructions where they are oblique and may be deleted.

Thus Walton considers Sama Pangutaran to be ergative syntactically as well as morphologically, and identifies four constructions: intransitive, ergative, passive and antipassive.

# 3.2.3 Arguments against ergativity

One of the main objections to an ergative analysis in Philippine languages is that it is not needed to explain the morphology of the case marking system. In the following example from Tagalog (adapted from Foley and Van Valin 1984:135), the ergative analysis interprets ang as the absolutive marker, ng as the ergative marker and oblique marker, and sa as the marker of peripheral NPs.

(119) B-in-ili ng lalake ang isda sa tindahan.
UF-buy erg man abs fish obl store
'The man bought fish at the store.'

Before the "discovery" of ergativity, however, these particles were more or less adequately described as topic/focused-NP marker, non-topic actor and non-topic object marker, and directional marker, respectively (Schachter 1976:495). The various focus constructions were seen either as equally basic syntactically, or the object focus was viewed as the basic form from which the others could be derived. If the ergative analysis is to be preferred over previous analyses, it must provide more than an alternate labelling system.

Shibatani (1988:97-100) raises another objection to the identification of the ang topic with the absolutive case. He does not consider the role of ang to be comparable to the basic case marking in other languages. Basic case marking is motivated by semantic principles; non-basic by pragmatic considerations. Shibatani considers ang to be a non-basic case marking which has been highly grammaticalized and thus has masked the basic case system. To arrive at the basic case marking he looks for constructions which do not have an ang and finds them in nominalized verb phrases.

- (120) pagka-matay ni Maria
  nom-die (S)
  'the dying of Maria'/'Maria's dying'
- (121) pag-patay ni Maria kay Juan. nom-kill (A) (U) 'Maria's killing of Juan'

This construction reveals that the basic case marking for proper nouns is nominative-accusative, i.e. S and A (ni Maria) are marked alike as opposed to U (kay Juan). For Shibatani, it is this basic case system which must be compared to a similar system in an ergative language, not the surface ang marking. He offers no examples, however, so we are left wondering what such a basic system in an ergative language might be.

The problem with Shibatani's argument is that ergative morphology has never been claimed to be a basic system. It is, in fact, most frequently a surface phenomenon (Dixon 1979:65). Many do maintain that the ang marker operates on a different level than do the other markers (see above and Naylor 1980:46), but it is the relationship between the ang NP and the verb that provides the surface level syntactic framework. And what appears on the surface is what is important in determining whether a language has ergative morphology or not.

It is possible to reanalyze the surface case morphology of Tagalog as ergative. But is it the best analysis? Cooreman, Fox, and Givón suggest that the frequency of constructions in discourse is diagnostic in determining which are unmarked. As regards Tagalog, if agent focus transitive clauses significantly exceed undergoer focus in frequency, then the morphology should be analyzed as accusative. If undergoer focus significantly exceeds agent focus, the morphology should be analyzed as ergative. If the two are

roughly equal, then perhaps Shibatani would be right when he says, "The unique aspect of Philippine languages lies precisely in this aspect; namely both the actor-topic construction and the goal-topic construction are basic clause types both morphologically and functionally" (1988:114).

Various counts have been taken on the relative frequency of the two constructions in Tagalog. The results of Fox's tabulation indicated that 76% of transitive clauses were UF (both ergative and passive; the same focus occurs in both, the formal difference being word order). Naylor (1986) did an extensive count in a variety of genres comparing the use of AF and UF in "introductory" material, i.e. settings, versus "developmental," i.e. everything else. The overall results gave almost equal weight to AF and UF (55% were UF). When divided between introductory and developmental material, however, the figures are quite interesting: 61% of the former were AF and 61% of the latter were UF. New information is typically introduced in settings where AF is frequent. Once the information is given, it is more often conveyed in foreground material in UF constructions.

Other counts mentioned in Gil (1984:91) also showed the two constructions occurring with about the same frequency. Likewise Shibatani's count of Cebuano showed only 46% of transitive clauses were UF. There are, of course, many factors such as genre and individual usage which may affect the count. What is clear is that Tagalog should not be considered an accusative language. Whether Tagalog is ergative or "neutral" is not as clear. Agent focus constructions occur with greater frequency than is typical for antipassives, but that in itself does not rule out an ergative analysis.

Other "markedness" parameters besides frequency would seem to support an ergative analysis. Foley and Van Valin (1984:137) cite data from Cena (1979) which indicate that several predicate classes in Tagalog occur only as undergoer focus. These include "symmetrical" predicates like kasingtaas 'be as tall as'; verbs which take sentential complements, such as hayaan 'let', and pseudo-verbs like gusto 'want, like' which take sentential complements but no focus affixation. Thus there is a wider distribution of undergoer focus than agent focus.

Foley and Van Valin (1984:138) also bring up the most obvious argument against an ergative analysis, but one which surprisingly no one else (that I have come across) has discussed. That is the problem of the other focus constructions, e.g. beneficiary, instrument and location. How do these fit into an ergative analysis? Foley and Van Valin's argument is that these oblique focus types are obviously derived forms. Yet they pattern like undergoer focus. This leads Foley and Van Valin to the conclusion that all non-agent focus constructions (including undergoer focus) are derived from the same basic form which must be the agent focus. If, as an ergative analysis claims, the agent focus is a derived form (the antipassive), then the other focuses should pattern after the agent focus, not the undergoer focus. There is, however, another way to view this. That will be discussed in the next chapter.

Foley and Van Valin present yet more evidence against an ergative analysis of Tagalog (1984:135,138). The following sentences compare the intransitive and agent focus forms.

- (122) B-um-ili ang lalake ng isda...sa tindahan.

  AF-buy tm man (U) fish obl store...

  'The man bought fish at the store.'
- (123) P-um-unta ang lalake sa tindahan.

  INT-go tm man obl store

  'The man went to the store.'

The um- infix occurs with both agent focus (122) and intransitives (123), but not with transitive non-agent focus forms (cf. 119). Thus Foley and Van Valin claim its distribution is accusative rather than ergative (presumably because with this affixation, S and A are both the syntactic topic). However, very commonly the antipassive derivation is said to result in an intransitive clause, one of the reasons being precisely this fact, that the A of the antipassive, like S, is absolutive, and the verb is often affixed as an intransitive. The formal similarity between intransitive and agent focus would then seem to support the analysis of agent focus as an antipassive rather than contradict it.

Morphological evidence regarding an ergative analysis of Tagalog is not conclusive. Alternate analyses are possible and the frequency of undergoer focus relative to agent focus in many counts is not high enough to be decisive. Many factors enter into the choice of focus construction besides the referentiality of the undergoer. These are often discourse factors such as the degree of transitivity, topic continuity, background and foreground information. Any of these factors may increase the incidence of agent focus. Whether or not Tagalog or any other Philippine language is considered as ergative may depend on whether the choice of agent focus is perceived to be determined by syntax or by discourse.

Discourse factors certainly influence whether or not Tagalog syntax is to be interpreted as ergative. Although many syntactic processes may be demonstrated in which the ang topic is clearly the syntactic pivot, the crucial test in previous studies has been coreferential NP deletion, especially conjunction reduction. When this test is applied to Tagalog, the agent as well as the syntactic topic seems to function as pivot. The following examples are adapted from Cooreman et al. (1984:26).

- (124) a. ... p-in-agbintang-an niya ang pagong
  UF-suspect agt.3s tm turtle
  - b. at kaniyang h-in-anap  $\emptyset$ ... and 3s.agt UF-search T.3s
    - '... he suspected the turtle and he looked for (0 = turtle)...'

- (125) a. . . . kinabukasan h-in-anap sila ng kanilang ama next-day UF-search T.3p agt their father
  - b. p-in-apagbihis  $\theta$  sila...

    UF-tell-dress agt.3s T.3p

    '... on the next day their father came looking for them and  $(\theta = \text{father})$  told them to get dressed ...'

In sentence (124a), the topic is 'turtle'. It is gapped in (b) where it is also the topic. Thus the pattern is ergative. In (125), the non-topic agent 'their father' is gapped in (b) where it is also non-topic agent. This pattern is accusative. Either pattern is common. The fact that a non-topic agent may be gapped indicates that Tagalog syntax is at most only partially ergative. However, it is likely, as Cooreman et al. (1984:30) suggest, that the higher discourse topicality of the agent affects the gapping phenomenon in Tagalog.

What may be true for Tagalog, however, must not be extended without investigation to other Philippine languages, for they can vary (sometimes significantly) in morphology and syntax. The form and distribution of the case marking particles can vary greatly from language to language, and as was shown above, even languages as close as Sama Pangutaran and Sama Bangingi' can vary significantly in areas of syntax. Nevertheless, Philippine languages have much in common, most prominently a focus system which prefers to a greater or lesser degree the undergoer over the agent as the unmarked syntactic topic in transitive clauses. In some languages this may have developed into a system which can be called ergative; in others not. In the next chapter we will consider whether Sama Bangingi' has developed such a system.

# CHAPTER 4: AN ERGATIVE INTERPRETATION OF SAMA BANGINGI' DATA

## 4.1 INTRODUCTION

The purpose of this chapter is to evaluate the data of Sama Bangingi' in terms of its morphology and syntax to determine if the language can be considered ergative, and if so, to what extent. Before proceeding with this analysis, however, I will summarize what I accept as the basic notion of ergativity in a language.

I consider a language to be ergative to the degree that its morphology treats the S and O arguments alike and distinguishes them from the A argument in the unmarked transitive construction. The S and O NPs are said to be in absolutive case and the A NP in ergative case. Such a language may also have an antipassive construction which places the A argument in absolutive case and deletes the O argument or reduces it to an oblique. In effect, the antipassive often patterns as a surface intransitive.

Most languages which are ergative morphologically are nominative-accusative syntactically, that is, the S and A arguments function together as the syntactic pivot much as a "subject" does in nominative-accusative languages. Thus, the A argument possesses most—but not all—of the subject properties in ergative transitive constructions, and is more highly topical than the O argument, even though the O is absolutive morphologically. This type of construction has been viewed as prototypically ergative (Comrie 1988:21).

A language which has such a prototypical ergative construction may also have, in addition to an antipassive, a marked construction equivalent to a passive, which increases the topicality of the O and decreases the topicality of the A argument. This construction is still ergative in that the O is absolutive and the A oblique or deleted, but here the O argument rather than the A possesses most or all of the subject properties.

Some ergative languages treat the S and O arguments alike syntactically as well as morphologically, that is, the S and O arguments function together as the syntactic pivot. In these languages, the O argument possesses most of the subject properties in the unmarked transitive construction. Some subject properties, however, may still be controlled by the discourse, or pragmatic, topic. Since agents are more likely than undergoers to be the discourse topic, the A argument may still participate in some subject properties such as zero anaphora and thus have a relatively high degree of topicality even if it is not the syntactic pivot.

If a language has constructions in which the O argument is treated morphologically in the same way as is the S argument, then the diagnostic test

as to whether these constructions should be interpreted as ergative or passive is their frequency and markedness. If they are more frequent and unmarked, they are the basic transitive construction and the language can be considered ergative. If they are marked constructions, then the language is generally considered active-passive.

The following discussions on ergativity in Sama Bangingi' will be organized for the most part around Comrie's criteria (1988) for identifying ergative constructions that were mentioned briefly in the previous chapter. These criteria circumscribe as well as any the basic nature of ergativity as stated above.

To recapitulate, Comrie suggested three criteria by which an ergative construction may be distinguished from a passive: 1) The A argument must share at least some of the subject properties with the O (called by Comrie the P). 2) Related to this, the A must to some degree be integrated into the syntax of the clause, that is, it must function more as a core rather than an oblique argument. In contrast, the O argument in a passive construction is the undisputed subject and the A is either relegated to an oblique case or deleted altogether. 3) The ergative construction is the unmarked transitive construction whereas the passive is the derived, marked construction. The "unmarkedness" of the ergative may be manifested in any or all of the following ways: a verbal morphology which is less complex than the antipassive or passive; a greater degree of productivity, a greater frequency of occurrence and a greater distribution throughout a discourse.

In the following discussion, the nominal morphology of Sama Bangingi' will be examined for ergative marking, then the various verbal constructions will be compared for evidences of marked versus unmarked usage. Finally, the syntactic processes and subject properties in Bangingi' will be examined for evidences of syntactic ergativity.

#### 4.2 NOMINAL MORPHOLOGY

## 4.2.1 Pronouns

It was stated in Chapter 2 that Bangingi' pronouns occur in three distinct sets which were labelled topic, non-topic agent and oblique. These may be easily reanalyzed as absolutive, ergative and oblique. The distribution of topic pronouns is the same as that of absolutive NPs in ergative languages, viz., they occur as the subject of intransitives and as the undergoer in transitives (i.e. non-agent focus). Similarly, non-topic agent pronouns have the same distribution as that of ergative NPs, occurring as agents in transitive constructions. The paradigm of Bangingi' pronouns is repeated here followed by examples of their usage. As before, the topic or absolutive NP is in bold type.

plural singular oblique abs oblique person abs erg erg kami kami ma kami aku ku ma aku 1 kitabi tabi ma kitabi 1 + 2kita ma kita ta ma kaa bi ma kaam 2 kaa kaam nu ma sigaam 3 sigaam sigaam iya na ma iya

Table 6. Sama Bangingi' pronoun sets

- (126) Angallang iya.

  AF.shout 3s.abs

  'He is shouting.'
- (127) Angallang iya ma aku.

  AF.shout 3s.abs obl 1s

  'He is shouting at me.'
- (128) Anda'-ku iya.

  UF.see-1s.erg 3s.abs

  'I'm watching him.'
- (129) Anganda' aku ma iya.

  AF.see 1s.abs obl 3s

  'I am looking at him.'

Sentences (126) and (127) are intransitive with agent focus affixation (section 2.2.8). Both the subject of (126) and the undergoer of the transitive sentence (128) are the absolutive pronoun iya 'he/him'. The agent of (128) is the ergative pronoun ku 'I'. Sentence (129) is agent focus and patterns like an antipassive transformation of (128). The loss of transitivity is signalled in three ways: 1) The ergative agent of (128) has become absolutive in (129), thereby increasing its topicality. 2) The absolutive undergoer has become oblique, decreasing its topicality. 3) The verb affixation has changed to become identical to the intransitive inflection. Structurally, sentence (129) looks exactly like the intransitive sentence (127).

The three pronoun sets in Bangingi' are mutually distinct syntactically and morphologically. The absolutive pronouns occur only as the syntactic topic, i.e. the NP in focused relationship with the verb. The ergative pronouns occur only as non-topic agents, 10 and the oblique set only as non-topic arguments other than agent.

<sup>10</sup> i.e. on the sentence level; on the noun phrase level, ergative pronouns function as possessives.

Relational grammar can describe the occurrence of these pronoun sets if the numbering system is reversed, giving absolutives an initial 1 and ergatives an initial 2 in the basic transitive clause (128). Antipassivization (129) would then promote the 2 to a 1 and demote the 1 to a 1 "en chômage". This captures well what happens as the ergative ku changes its form to the absolutive aku, and the absolutive iya does not change its form but is demoted by the oblique marker to the phrase ma iya.

## 4.2.2 Full noun phrases

Full noun phrases show ergative patterning as well. As was shown in Chapter 2, agent NPs in non-agent focus transitive constructions are obligatorily marked morphologically by a preposed e' or ni, while NPs which function as the syntactic topic are only optionally marked by a preposed in. Intransitive subjects are also only optionally marked by in. They are never marked by e' or ni as are transitive agents. The following examples illustrate this morphology. The transitive verbs in these examples are narrative mode since nominal agents are not allowed in declarative undergoer focus. The syntactic topic is in bold type.

- (130) Ni-anda' na e' datu denda-in in nangka'-in.
  UF-NAR-see now erg chief woman-rf abs jackfruit-rf
  'The woman chief then looked (closely) at the jackfruit.' (KA.27)
- (131) Magtuwi s-in-aggaw na si Ba'uu ni si Kuyya'.
  immediately UF-NAR-snatch now pm turtle erg pm monkey
  'Monkey immediately snatched up Turtle.' (KB.48)
- (132) Magtuwi angallang si Ba'uu.
  immediately AF.shout pm turtle
  'Turtle immediately cried out.' (KB.46)
- (133) . . . in manga karendahan Bangingi', ag-lasig-lasig tm pl women AF.D-be-happy

me:' ma-reyom kuta'...
there obl-inside fort
'... the Bangingi' womenfolk, (they) made merry there inside the fort...' (N5.29)

Sentences (130) and (131) above are transitive. The ergative morphemes, e' or ni are obligatory. The absolutive morpheme in, however, is optional. It occurs in (130) but not in (131). (The in may occur with proper NPs as well as with "common" NPs.) The absolutive morpheme is also optional with intransitive subjects. It occurs in (133) but not in (132). This is

consistent with ergative morphology according to Dixon (1979:62) who states that if only one case in an ergative language is unrealized morphologically, it will be the absolutive case rather than the ergative.

It is clear that the S and O roles in Sama Bangingi' are treated alike morphologically, and the A role treated differently. This is true whether the NPs are nominal or pronominal. Thus, Sama Bangingi' morphology can be reanalyzed as ergative, with syntactic topics the absolutive NPs and non-topic agents the ergative NPs.

#### 4.3 AGENT FOCUS AS ANTIPASSIVE

Agent focus counterparts of sentences (130) and (131) may be constructed in which the agent has been made the syntactic topic and the undergoer reduced to an oblique NP.

- (134) Anganda' in datu denda-in ma nangka'-in.

  AF.see abs chief woman-rf obl jackfruit-rf

  'The woman chief looked at the jackfruit.'
- (135) Magtuwi anaggaw si Kuyya' ma si Ba'uu. immediately AF.snatch pm monkey obl pm turtle 'Immediately Monkey snatched at Turtle.'

The above examples and those illustrating the use of pronouns show the Bangingi' agent focus to be consistent with the antipassive transformation in ergative languages. Structurally, antipassives often pattern as surface intransitives, i.e. the ergative A becomes absolutive, and the absolutive O is reduced to an oblique phrase. Functionally, antipassives serve to increase the topicality of the agent and decrease the topicality of the undergoer (Cooreman et al. 1984:4). The Bangingi' agent focus meets these criteria in three ways: it increases the topicality of the agent by making it the syntactic topic; it decreases the topicality of the undergoer by making it oblique; and it patterns as an intransitive by using the same verbal affixation as many intransitives do.

Many Bangingi' intransitive verbs do form the declarative mode with pa-rather than with ang-, but all will form the abilitative mode with maka-as do the agent focus transitive verbs. Some intransitive verbs employ non-agent focus affixation (see the discussion in Chapter 2), but the overwhelming majority pattern as does agent focus, especially those that express movement or the physical state of the body as opposed to the inner state of the body or mind.

```
(136) ... abaya' tood amangan.

desirous intns AF.eat

'... (she) was really desirous of eating (the jackfruit).' (KA.37)
```

(137) Ingga'i lagi' isab agtuwi manga ag-pa-handa...
not yet also immediately pl AF.D-CA-wife

'(They) did not immediately make-a-marriage-proposal.' (PP.28)

Often the undergoer may be deleted or incorporated into the verb in agent focus constructions resulting in a clearly intransitive clause as examples (136) and (137) show. This is also consistent with antipassives (Comrie 1978:364-365). Sometimes the incorporation of the undergoer into the verb is semantic if not structural, as in aggunting buun 'to have one's hair cut' and anganda' lahat 'to look at the place', i.e. to sightsee.

Other functions of the agent focus in Bangingi' are also consistent with the function of antipassives in many languages, e.g. to indicate an undergoer which is indefinite, non-referential or new information, or to express partitive or incompletive action (Comrie 1978:362, Cooreman 1991:2-4).

In Sama Bangingi', however, the non-topic undergoer of an agent focus verb is not always explicitly marked as oblique. Approximately one-third of agent focus constructions in nine texts occurred with an undergoer which was unmarked morphologically. Of this one-third, however, less than one-fourth, i.e. less than 10% of the total occurrences, represented a realized event with a referential undergoer, and only one undergoer of those realized events could be said to be given information. Most of the occurrences expressed events which did not happen, or were desired or planned. Many were used in background material to set the stage for the action or to describe or give a name to an action, e.g. angollo' aa 'to capture people'. This last is an example of the semantic incorporation of undergoer into the verb as described above.

Thus, even though an agent focus undergoer may not be marked as oblique morphologically, it is clearly very low in topicality. The undergoer may thus be said to be oblique, and the clause therefore intransitive, in the sense that its referent is not, or not yet, affected by the action of the verb, or if it is, the information is given as a description rather than as an event. In the following examples, the agent focus constructions express events that have not yet happened (138, 139) or are part of a background description (140).

- (138) Na, insa' sigaam maka-anda' kappal.

  dp not 3p.abs AF.ABL-see ship

  'Now, they had not seen a ship (before).' (N3.67)
- (139) Ya ta-ba:k pikilan ni si Ba'uu amiha iting.
  nml UF.ABL-find thought erg pm turtle AF.search thorn
  'The decision arrived at by Turtle was to look for thorns.' (KB.35)
- (140) Ag-bowa pitu' hatus pilak.

  AF.D-carry seven hundred peso

  '(He) was carrying seven hundred pesos.' (N8.6)

Occasionally, however, an undergoer seems to be treated as a core rather than oblique argument in agent focus. By core is meant that the undergoer is referential and specific, is unmarked morphologically and is significantly if not completely affected by the action of a foregrounded verb. The topicality of the undergoer need not be as high as the agent to be considered a core argument.

(141) Abaya' iya amilli nangka' inaan.
desire 3s.abs AF.buy jackfruit that
'She really wanted to buy that jackfruit.' (KA. 33)

Undergoers are often core arguments in sentential complements, as in (141), where agent focus is virtually required by the syntax of coreferential NP deletion. This will be discussed further in the next section. Note also that in (141), the action is desired, but not yet realized.

Agent focus is also required when the undergoer is new and/or indefinite information, even if it is referential and completely affected by the action of the verb, as in (28) in Chapter 2, and (142) below.

(142) Maka-ba:k lagi' kami manga bokog.

AF.ABL-find yet lp.abs pl bone

'We were even able to find some bones.' (N4.73)

There are thus other factors, syntactic and pragmatic, in addition to the semantic notions of unrealized or partitive action which may select agent focus. It may be that Sama Bangingi' allows an undergoer in agent focus to be a core argument when the syntax or the pragmatics of the discourse require agent focus where otherwise a non-agent focus construction would be expected. That is, agent focus may be chosen 1) when the syntax requires it, as in sentential complements, or 2) when the discourse requires it, as in the introduction of new information. In these two cases, the undergoer may be treated as a core argument. Otherwise, agent focus is chosen 3) when the topicality of the undergoer is very low or when the action is partitive or unrealized. In these cases the undergoer is usually oblique.

The presence even of relatively infrequent core undergoers may argue against an antipassive analysis. But in fact it does not. Undergoers have special status in Sama Bangingi'. Even in beneficiary, instrument and location focus constructions, undergoer NPs remain unmarked morphologically, even though they relinquish the syntactic topic to the argument "focused" by that verb (this will be discussed further below). All arguments other than undergoer are marked as oblique or ergative when they are not the syntactic topic. Only the undergoer tries to retain its unmarked status. This being the case, the significance of the agent focus is not that it allows an occasional core undergoer, but that it is the only focus in which the undergoer may be realized as an oblique NP. It is the only focus which may significantly reduce the

topicality of the undergoer, and therefore may rightfully be considered an antipassive.

On the basis of the nominal morphology then, it is possible to reanalyze Sama Bangingi' syntactic topics as absolutive NPs and non-topic agents as ergative NPs. Non-agent focus constructions may then be interpreted as ergative, transitive constructions; and the agent focus interpreted as an antipassive. The desirability of such a reanalysis is dependent on the frequency and other features of markedness of these constructions.

#### 4.4 MARKEDNESS OF VERBAL CONSTRUCTIONS

### 4.4.1 Frequency and distribution

To determine the relative frequency of agent and non-agent focus constructions in Sama Bangingi', I selected seven narrative texts, each by a different author, all oral save one, and counted the occurrences of agent focus and non-agent focus constructions, including cleft-like constructions. I chose to include the other focuses (beneficiary, instrument and location) because they pattern and function like undergoer focus in contrast to agent focus (see discussion below). This is especially true of beneficiary focus and of instrument focus when it replaces undergoer focus (see discussion on instrument focus in Chapter 2). I did not include instrument or location focus when they patterned as nouns in other than cleft constructions.

A total of 246 transitive clauses (including agent focus) were counted in the seven texts. Of these, approximately 75% were non-agent focus, and 25% agent focus. In individual texts, the percentage of non-agent focus constructions ranged from a low of 57% to a high of 96%. The remaining percentages were 62, 73, 76, 86, and 87, revealing that the 75% figure is not only the mean, but also close to the median.

These percentages indicate considerable latitude in the choice of focus, depending on the author and on the content and organization of the text. For example, the text with the lowest percentage of non-agent focus is about a journey by boat taken by a group of Bangingi' a few generations ago to another part of the Philippines and what they encountered on the way. Each episode introduces new information, much of which is in agent focus clauses, thus accounting for the higher percentage of such constructions. The text with the highest non-agent focus count is a woman's account of how she was selected as a bride by a relative's family. Most of the information in this text is treated as given. The texts that fall in the mid-range of percentages are for the most part well thought out narratives with a good mix of background and foreground information.

Even though these figures are preliminary and not extensive, it seems clear that non-agent focus occurs much more frequently than agent focus and is therefore unmarked with respect to agent focus in terms of raw frequency counts.

Regarding the distribution of agent focus versus non-agent focus throughout a discourse, the results to this point in the analysis are not as clear as those for Tagalog. The distinction between foreground and background seems to correlate more closely in Sama Bangingi' with the use of verbal versus non-verbal clauses rather than with agent versus non-agent focus. Nevertheless, some generalizations may be made. Undergoer focus (used here as a representative for all non-agent focuses, for they all pattern similarly) requires its undergoer to be given, thus it is less likely to appear in settings where much of the information is new. Undergoer focus also generally requires its undergoer to participate fully in the action of the verb. It is thus more likely to express transitive events in foreground material. On the other hand, agent focus can and does occur throughout a text, but at a much lower frequency and for specific reasons.

The fact that agent focus is used when there is a specific reason to do so is an indication of markedness. The fact that the undergoer focus is the normal one for conveying events when the undergoer is given indicates that it is the "default" mode, i.e. the unmarked construction.

### 4.4.2 Complexity of verbal morphology

The declarative mode undergoer focus is clearly the least complex form morphologically since it is the only focus which occurs with the unaffixed verb stem. The other focus constructions as well as the other modes are formed from it by affixation. The limited distribution of the declarative mode UF, however, poses several problems in considering it the unmarked construction in discourse: 1) its syntactic distribution is limited, occurring only with pronoun agents; 2) its distribution in discourse is limited also, occurring mostly in dialogue; and 3) its frequency is far below that of narrative and abilitative modes. Approximately 15% of non-agent focus constructions in the texts surveyed were in the declarative mode (this includes beneficiary and instrument focus as well as undergoer focus) as opposed to approximately 64% in the narrative mode. The remainder were abilitative. Thus, even though the declarative undergoer focus is the least complex form morphologically, it clearly is not the unmarked construction, at least not in narrative texts. 11 Rather the narrative mode appears to be the unmarked construction in narrative discourse.

It may be that the declarative undergoer focus was at one time the most frequent construction, but its use became more limited as the narrative mode was increasingly used in its place and eventually became the unmarked construction.<sup>12</sup> In any case, the narrative mode is here considered the

<sup>11</sup> The intentive UF may be the unmarked construction in conversation, where it occurs more frequently; this has not yet been investigated.

<sup>12</sup> Another possibility is a convergence of the proto-Philippine perfective \*-in-with the distribution of nominal and pronominal agents in West Indonesian languages such as Malay, which parallel in many ways the distribution of agents in Sama Bangingi'.

unmarked construction, not only because it occurs much more frequently than the declarative mode, but also because it has a wider distribution, occurring with both nominal and pronominal agents, and because it is most frequent in foregrounded material.

It will be remembered that the construction in Pangutaran which is cognate with the Bangingi' narrative mode is called by Walton a passive. Passives are normally considered marked constructions. The Bangingi' narrative mode, even though it seems to have become the unmarked construction in discourse, nevertheless still possesses some properties characteristic of passives, e.g. agent deletion. In order to see if the narrative mode functions in other ways like a passive to increase the topicality of the undergoer, I compared the occurrence of pronouns and zero anaphora as agents and undergoers in narrative mode, non-narrative mode (declarative and abilitative non-agent focus) and agent focus in the seven texts mentioned above, following Cooreman et al. (1984). The results are given in Table 7 below. The non-decimal figures represent the number of clauses which contained an agent and/or an undergoer which were realized by either a pronoun or zero anaphora (a "gap"). Deletions were not counted. For example, out of the 246 transitive clauses in the seven texts, 109 were in the narrative mode. Of these 109 clauses, 43 contained a pronoun or gapped agent; 63 a pronoun or gapped undergoer. The decimal figures represent the corresponding percentages, e.g. 39% of the 109 narrative constructions contained a pronoun or gapped agent; 58% a pronoun or gapped undergoer.

Pronouns and zero anaphora are important, for while nominals tend to introduce new topics, the former carry on old topics. They are thus indicators of topic continuity, since a pragmatic topic in Bangingi' which is continuous over a stretch of text will more likely be expressed by a pronoun or a gap than by a nominal. In general, the longer a topic persists in a text, the more important it is in the whole discourse. Thus a high percentage of pronouns and gaps is one measure of overall discourse topicality.

Table 7. Percentage of high-continuity NPs

	clauses		agents		undergoers	
verbal construction	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
non-agent focus:						
non-narrative	76	.31	65	.86	32	.42
narrative	109	.44	43	.39	63	.58
agent focus:	61	.25	40	.66	14	.23

The results of this table must be taken as only very broad generalizations. As with the percentages of agent and non-agent focus given above, the range of percentages varied greatly among the texts. Some authors used pronouns and zero anaphora very freely; others hardly at all. A much larger corpus of

texts would be necessary for truly accurate percentages. Nevertheless, these figures indicate several tendencies which I believe are significant and correct.

First, the narrative mode in Bangingi' appears to correlate with higher undergoer continuity, but possibly not to the extent that might be expected with a passive (58%, compared with Cooreman's count of 75% for Chamorro). Second, agent continuity was significantly higher in non-narrative modes than in narrative. This is partially a reflection of the restriction of declarative UF to pronoun agents; nevertheless, the much higher percentage of agent over undergoer continuity is an indication that animate agents will be more likely to be the pragmatic topic even when the undergoer is the syntactic topic.

Conversely, agent continuity is much lower in narrative mode than in non-narrative or agent focus, and is lower than undergoer continuity. Again, this reflects the restriction of declarative UF to pronoun agents which in turn forces the narrative mode to be chosen when the agent is a nominal. But it also correlates with the possibility of agent deletion in the narrative mode, and consequent higher undergoer topicality.

Finally, the above figures support the hypothesis that one of the primary functions of the agent focus in Sama Bangingi' is to reduce the topicality of the undergoer, and not primarily to increase the topicality of the agent. The increase of agent continuity is marginal (66% to the combined narrative and non-narrative 58%), but the decrease of undergoer continuity from 42% and 58% (combined 51%) to 23% is significant.

To summarize this section thus far, the narrative mode is considered to be the unmarked transitive construction in Sama Bangingi' by virtue of its frequency, distribution, and function in narrative discourse, even though it shares some properties associated with a marked passive construction such as agent deletion and increased undergoer topicality. Higher undergoer topicality is a characteristic of ergative constructions, particularly those which divide the subject properties between agent and undergoer. This is the case with Bangingi' as will be seen in section 4.7.

The final problem to address in this section is that of the focus system itself, for it appears to be unique to Philippine and related languages. It is not a characteristic of the prototypical ergative language. As mentioned above in Chapter 3, Foley and Van Valin (1984:138) consider the focus system as an argument against an ergative analysis. They argue that the "oblique" focuses, i.e. beneficiary, instrument and location, are clearly derived constructions which pattern like the undergoer focus. Therefore, it is likely they are all derived from the same basic form. The only candidate is the agent focus since it is distinct from the other focuses. Therefore, it must be the unmarked form from which the other focuses are derived. If undergoer focus were the unmarked form, then one would expect the derived oblique focuses to pattern as the derived agent focus. Foley and Van Valin do not say whether each non-agent focus would be derived separately, or whether undergoer focus would be derived first, then the oblique focuses derived from it.

Foley and Van Valin seem to base their argument on the assumption that all focus derivations must move in the same direction, as it were. But there is no reason why this must be so. Assuming for the moment that undergoer focus is posited as the base construction, a derivation of one type may produce agent focus, and a derivation of another type may produce beneficiary, instrument and location focuses. This is what I will propose below.

It has already been demonstrated that agent focus cannot be the unmarked construction in Sama Bangingi'. Although it might be possible to argue for two basic constructions, agent and undergoer, as does Shibatani, I believe the data from Bangingi' clearly show the agent focus to be a derived form. The data also indicate that the declarative undergoer focus is equivalent to the basic form morphologically, with the narrative mode having become the unmarked construction in narrative discourse.

#### 4.5 CAUSATION REVISITED

In section 2.2.6, we saw that there is a class of causative verbs in Bangingi' which choose the underlying agent instead of the underlying undergoer as the topic of undergoer focus. Relevant examples from that section will be repeated here, but the ergative (UF) constructions will be placed first, followed by the corresponding antipassive (AF) construction.

- (143) Pa-bowa-na ma aku sulat na.

  UF.CA-carry-3s.erg obl 1s letter his

  'He will send his letter with me.' ('He will cause his letter to be carried by me.')
- (144) Ag-pa-bowa iya ma aku sulat.

  AF.D-CA-carry 3s.abs obl 1s letter

  'He will send a letter with me.' ('He will cause me to carry a letter.')
- (145) Pa-inum-na aku bohe'.

  UF.CA-drink-3s.erg 1s.abs water

  'He'll give me some water to drink.' ('He'll cause me to drink some water.')
- (146) Ag-pa-inum iya ma aku bohe'.

  AF.D-CA-drink 3s.abs obl 1s water

  'He'll give me some water to drink.' ('He'll cause me to drink some water.')

The two antipassive causative sentences (144) and (146) parallel each other structurally in every way. Each verb is AF; the causer is encoded as an absolutive (topic) pronoun, the causee as an oblique NP and the undergoer as an indefinite NP. But the corresponding ergative constructions differ. The

causer is encoded in each as an ergative pronoun, but the arguments chosen as topic differ. The syntactic topic of the UF verb in (143) is the undergoer sulat na 'his letter'. The syntactic topic in (145) is the causee aku 'I/me'.

If the agent focus construction is considered as the base form, and the undergoer focus the derived form, there is nothing in the structure of the two AF sentences above to explain why the derived syntactic topic should be the causee in one and the undergoer in the other. There may be a semantic reason, but if there is, it is not immediately apparent to me, at least not as I currently understand the language.

If, however, the undergoer focus is chosen as the base form, then each of the two surface manifestations would be a separate underlying form from which the same AF structure would be derived by an antipassive rule. The application of this rule to causative verbs is completely consistent with its application to non-causatives. The ergative causer (the agent of UF causative) becomes absolutive and the syntactic topic of both AF causative derivations. The pragmatic topicality of the undergoer is significantly reduced by either of two strategies. Both are illustrated by these examples. In (143), sulat na 'his letter' becomes indefinite in (144). In (145), the pronoun aku cannot become indefinite; rather, it is reduced to an oblique NP (146).

The causee aku in (145) is considered the surface undergoer since it is the syntactic topic of the undergoer focus causative painum. The notion of a surface undergoer as distinct from the underlying undergoer is supported both by the semantic relationship of the verb and its argument, and by the syntax. Semantically, the causee is the undergoer of the causative stem in that he is affected by the action of causing to do something. Syntactically, it is the surface undergoer aku rather than the underlying undergoer bohe' which undergoes a reduction in pragmatic topicality in the antipassive derivation.

The situation is different with the causative verb pabowa in (143). Here the surface undergoer (i.e. syntactic topic of UF) and the underlying undergoer are the same NP sulat na. It is not yet clear what motivates the different verb-undergoer relationships of these two classes of verbs, or whether the difference can be explained within the ergative theoretical framework. Nevertheless, as far as explaining the relationship between AF and UF, the ergative analysis is preferable to one which sees the AF as the base form. 13

An ergative analysis may also help explain the presence of two apparently absolutive NPs in Bangingi' sentences like (144), (145) and (146). It is not uncommon for two morphologically unmarked NPs to occur in a sentence in ergative languages (Barlaan, personal conversation). In Bangingi', the unmarked NP which is non-topic is always the undergoer. Indeed, undergoers seem to have a special status in Bangingi' (see section 3.2.3). They do not like to lose their "absolutive" status even when they relinquish the syntactic topic to another argument. The UF causative sentence (145) is

<sup>13</sup> Gerdts (1988) has found an ergative analysis to be preferable to a passive analysis for describing causation in Ilokano.

presumably derived from the UF, inum-ku bohe', 'I drink (the) water,' where the undergoer bohe' is the syntactic topic. In (145), it is no longer the topic, but it remains "absolutive". Even in (146), the antipassive transform of (145), bohe' retains the same status. Similarly in (144), the undergoer sulat remains "absolutive" even though it is no longer the syntactic topic and no longer definite. Thus the undergoer in causative constructions behaves very much like the undergoer in beneficiary focus when it gives up its topic status to the beneficiary/goal but remains unmarked morphologically.

#### 4.6 ERGATIVITY AND FOCUS

The thesis put forth in this section is that there is a fundamental division in the Sama Bangingi' verbal system between agent focus on the one hand and non-agent focus on the other, and that all transitive non-agent focus constructions are in fact ergative, with the agent focus an antipassive. The reasons for this analysis are briefly: all non-agent focus constructions are considered ergative because 1) they all pattern as ergatives, i.e. the agent is in ergative case and the undergoer is absolutive, and 2) they all take the same set of verbal affixes, i.e. aspect and mode, and this set is distinct from agent focus morphology.

It has already been shown that the unaffixed undergoer focus is clearly equivalent to the basic form morphologically. The other focus constructions are inflections formed by verbal affixation. In the non-agent focuses, the form of the agent does not change from what it was in undergoer focus; it remains ergative. The NP argument which is selected by the verbal focus does change. It loses its oblique marking, becoming absolutive and the syntactic topic. The underlying undergoer remains unmarked morphologically, even though it is no longer the syntactic topic.

Thus, the syntactic function of the "oblique" focuses—beneficiary, instrument and location—is to make their respective arguments core arguments. Specifically, those arguments become the "undergoer" of their respective verbal focus. That is, an instrument argument is the undergoer of the instrument focus verb; the beneficiary is the undergoer of the beneficiary focus verb, etc.

The various non-agent focuses may be further affixed for aspect or mode by the same set of affixes. Marked aspect (distributive pag-) signals plural agents, reciprocal, durative or habitual action. Marked mode (abilitative ta-) signals action which was accomplished but not necessarily intended by the agent. Narrative mode (-in-), as discussed above, may have originally been a marked construction signalling greater undergoer topicality, but through extensive use has become the unmarked transitive construction in narrative discourse. Imperative mode is marked by the suffix (-un/-in).

Agent focus differs in several respects. It results from an antipassive transformation which significantly reduces the topicality of the undergoer, in many cases reducing it to an oblique NP. The agent becomes absolutive and the syntactic topic, thereby increasing its pragmatic topicality (though perhaps not significantly). The antipassive is used when the "focus" is on the agent

or on the performance of the action, not on the effect produced by the action on a specific and given undergoer.

The agent focus construction is characterized by its own set of affixes. The causative and distributive affixes are indeed shared by both agent and non-agent focuses, but the distributive affix has been modified in agent focus by phonological processes, being realized as mag-. The modal affixes, however, are not shared. Narrative mode does not occur with agent focus. Further, the agent focus abilitative affixation differs from non-agent abilitative in both form and the manner in which it is affixed. Whereas the non-agent focus abilitative ta- is affixed without further change to the verb stem, the agent focus abilitative maka-replaces the declarative agent focus affix.

A distinction between agent and non-agent (specifically undergoer) focuses may also be seen in the morphology of the imperative mood. While undergoer focus imperatives are distinguished by a distinct affixation and the deletion of singular agents, agent focus imperatives are identical morphologically to declaratives. Context alone distinguishes them.

This analysis which views all non-agent focus constructions in Sama Bangingi' as ergative differs considerably from Walton's analysis of Sama Pangutaran (1986:97-133). Walton considers only the unaffixed undergoer focus to be ergative, with the formal equivalent of the Bangingi' narrative mode being considered a passive. Agent focus is analyzed as an antipassive. The other focuses do not appear to be treated within the ergative system.

Briefly, Walton's criterion for identifying the unaffixed undergoer focus as ergative is the greater integration of the agent into the syntax of the clause, i.e. the agent (which in Pangutaran may be either a noun or pronoun) occurs without a preposed marker and it may not be deleted or moved from its position immediately following the verb. In contrast, the passive agent may be deleted or moved, and it occurs with a preposed marker.

The reasons why this analysis can not be applied to Bangingi' have already been stated in some detail. The limited distribution of the unaffixed undergoer focus prevents it from being considered the unmarked construction. True, its limited distribution does not prevent it from being an ergative construction, but if it is the only construction considered ergative, then the Bangingi' language as a whole clearly is not ergative.

To label only one construction as ergative in Bangingi', however, would miss the fact that all non-agent focus constructions pattern alike morphologically and that they pattern differently than does agent focus. It would also miss the fact that agent focus and non-agent focus have different semantic and pragmatic implications as to the givenness and affectedness of the undergoer. It would, in short, miss the fundamental division between agent and non-agent focus which is clearly ergative in nature.<sup>14</sup>

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>14</sup> A similar division between agent and non-agent focus has also been suggested by De Guzman (1988:340-341). Reid (1992:ix) also views all non-agent focuses as "in fact" ergative.

Since all non-agent focuses pattern similarly as ergative constructions, it would be convenient to choose a cover term which would distinguish them from agent focus. The obvious choice, it seems, would be the traditional "object focus." In other literature, "object focus" has been used to specify what has been called here "undergoer focus." But perhaps the term is better suited to refer to all non-agent focuses, for two reasons. One, it is a syntactic term, not a semantic one, thus it can easily incorporate the roles of beneficiary, instrument and location as well as undergoer. Two, it accords (at least superficially) with Dixon's choice of O to designate the underlying object of transitive sentences. Thus, "agent focus" would be the Bangingi' equivalent of antipassive; and "object focus" the equivalent of ergative.

Figure 2 (a revision of Figure 1 offered in Chapter 2) is a flow chart of verbal affixation which illustrates this division between ergative and antipassive constructions. The ergative/antipassive "stage" has been inserted immediately preceding the application of "focus". This stage separates agent focus from the other focuses, and groups these other focuses together as ergative constructions which can be called "object focus" (labelled here in binary fashion as "-AF").

There are several advantages to this presentation. Figure 2 reflects the differences between agent focus and object focuses. The AF affixation is different both in form and application. First, the AF mode morphemes are obviously different from those in -AF. Secondly, there is no affixation associated with AF itself. In contrast to the object focuses which assign affixation at the focus stage (UF is assigned a zero affix), there is no affixation assigned to AF. The so-called "AF affix" ang- is actually assigned at the mode stage. Note that in the object focuses, the mode affixes are appended to the focus affixes. For example, the IF pamowa is further affixed for abilitative mode as ta + pamowa. In AF, however, if we consider ang- as the focus affix, we must say that the AF abilitative affix maka- supplants the focus affix, for the abilitative AF form of bowa is maka + bowa, not maka + amowa or maka + mowa.

These differences are suggested but not explained by Figure 1. They are explained by Figure 2, which posits an ergative/antipassive stage which reflects not an affix assignment (neither -AF nor + AF are assigned affixation) but a choice between an ergative structure (OF) or an antipassive structure (AF). Lastly, Figure 2 clearly represents the unmarked options by the boxes at the top of the chart. The marked options are represented as "diversions" from the "straight path" of the unmarked options.

In summary, Figure 2 illustrates that Sama Bangingi' is a morphologically ergative language which has expanded the ergative constructions by means of the focus system to allow "object" arguments other than the original undergoer to become the syntactic topic. Agent focus allows the agent to be the syntactic topic, both functioning as an antipassive, and structurally looking like one.

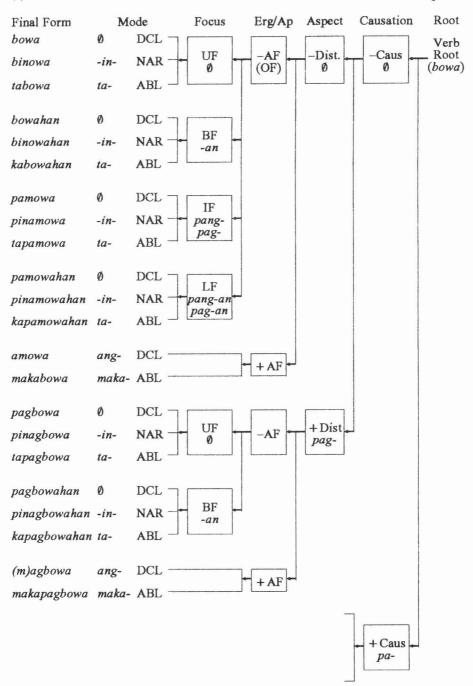


Figure 2. Ergative structure of Sama Bangingi' verbal system

#### 4.7 EVIDENCES OF SYNTACTIC ERGATIVITY

A language is said to be syntactically ergative if the intransitive subject S and the transitive undergoer O function as the syntactic pivot, i.e. the grammatical or "surface" subject. The syntactic pivot is identified as that NP which is crucially involved in various syntactic processes such as relativization, equi-NP deletion in sentential complementation, movement rules, etc. In nominative-accusative languages such as English, these processes involve the subject NP more easily than any other. In a 1976 article, Keenan catalogued an extensive set of properties (not solely syntactic) associated with the notion of subject.

While investigating the notion of subject in Philippine languages, Schachter (1976:514) observed that some subject properties were controlled by the agent and some by the syntactic topic. The former he called role-related properties; the latter reference-related properties. He suggested that such a division of subject properties might be a language universal which Philippine languages conveniently encode in the grammar. This idea has been elaborated on by Faarlund (1988) and Foley and Van Valin (1984), each of whom propose a similar division of subject properties.

This division of subject properties into those controlled by the agent and those controlled by the topic is an important step in the right direction. There are, however, a couple of problem areas in Sama Bangingi' which are not adequately handled by this division. Schachter mentions givenness as an important notion for reference-related properties, one strongly associated with topics (here he seems almost to equate the Philippine syntactic topic with the pragmatic, or discourse topic). But in Bangingi', agents are generally also given, and as was seen in the previous chapter regarding Tagalog and Chamarro, they are also highly topical. Agent and pragmatic topic often coincide. Thus, some of the properties which Schachter identifies as role-related (i.e. controlled by the semantic role of agent) may actually be controlled by the pragmatic topic.

Secondly, this division of subject properties seems to imply that all syntactic processes which manifest these properties are controlled by either the semantic role of agent or by the pragmatic role of topic, leaving out the possibility that some properties may be purely syntactic. That is, some processes may be controlled solely by the syntactic strategy of the language. If the language is accusative, these processes involve the S/A syntactic pivot; if ergative, the S/O syntactic pivot.

As was discussed in the previous chapter, the notion of subject in accusative languages is really an intersection of three other notions: the primary semantic role (agent), the primary syntactic relation (pivot) and the primary pragmatic role (topic). It seems reasonable, therefore, that properties associated with the "subject" might be divided into three categories controlled respectively by the three notions above.

I suggest then a further refinement of the division of subject properties proposed by Schachter and others. I suggest that subject properties may be divided into those controlled by the agent, such as imperative formation and reflexives, those controlled by the pragmatic topic as the most easily recoverable referent, such as coreferential NP gapping or ellipsis, and those controlled by the syntactic pivot. These last include the syntactic processes of embedding and movement, such as relativization, sentential complementation and wh-question formation and movement.

I further suggest that in Sama Bangingi' the subject properties controlled by the semantics of the agent involve the agent whether it is the syntactic topic or not; those controlled by the syntax alone involve only the syntactic topic as the pivot; and those controlled by the pragmatic topic involve either agent or syntactic topic, depending on the role and function of the pragmatic topic in a particular sentence.

I consider the syntactic processes to be the primary factor in determining if a language is syntactically ergative (as opposed to the properties controlled by the semantics or pragmatics). That is, if the NP which the syntax points to as its pivot is the subject in intransitives and the object in transitives, then the language is syntactically ergative. The semantic or pragmatic properties may choose the transitive agent as their primary NP, and this may be evidenced in the syntax by ellipsis or preposing, but it is not ultimately controlled by the syntax and therefore should not be considered as a factor in the identification of the NP which functions as the syntactic pivot. 15

## 4.7.1 Agent-controlled subject properties

Imperatives. We have already seen that the imperative mode in Bangingi' reflects the fundamental division between ergative (object focus) and antipassive (agent focus) constructions. Imperatives may occur as ergative constructions with the agent, i.e. the addressee in ergative case, or as antipassives with the agent in absolutive case. Since the addressee of an

<sup>15</sup> John Verhaar (1988:378) also "defines" syntactic ergativity in terms of syntactic processes but gives examples only of coreferential NP deletion. He explains syntactic ergativity, however, in terms of the pragmatics of the Subject (=pragmatic topic in this paper). The role of Subject and the function of the Object determine syntactic ergativity (if I understand correctly). If the Subject of a clause is the Patient, then it is passive. If, however, the Subject is the Agent, but the "primary clause topic" (=syntactic topic in this paper) is the Patient-Object, the clause is ergative. Under this analysis, then, the narrative mode in Bangingi' would be a passive when the pragmatic topic corresponds to the syntactic topic, and it would be ergative when the pragmatic topic corresponds to the agent. This would help explain how this clause construction which is clearly used for foregrounded events can also retain passive characteristics. Further study is needed to determine if this alone can account for the usage of the narrative mode or if other factors are also involved.

imperative is always the S or A NP, imperatives in Philippine languages have been identified as constructions in which the agent functions as the "subject" whether it is non-topic (ergative) or topic (absolutive) (Schachter 1976:506), indicating that imperatives seem to operate on a nominative-accusative basis even in ergative languages. But this should not be unexpected. By its very nature an imperative is asking or telling someone to do something. And that someone must of necessity be the agent or actor. Comrie (1981:111) states it this way: "For an instruction to be felicitous, the person to whom the instruction is addressed must have control over the resultant situation." We are asking a lot if we demand that an imperative address the undergoer in order to be classed as ergative.

The important question is not who is addressed in an imperative, but the syntactic relationship of the arguments to the verb. In English, the S and A arguments are deleted. The O argument never is. This deletion (plus the mood of the verb, which is always the same regardless of the arguments) is the syntactic process at work in an English imperative, and it operates on a nominative-accusative basis. In Bangingi' there are three syntactic processes involved in the formation of an imperative. Deletion is one. Singular A arguments alone are deleted. S and O arguments never are. If there is a pattern here, it is ergative, although admittedly, the presence of plural A arguments makes the pattern less clear. The second process is verb affixation, Ergative imperatives have a unique affixation. Antipassive and intransitive imperatives do not. The third process involves the choice of syntactic topic in transitive clauses. The same factors that motivate this choice in other modes also motivate the choice in imperatives, that is, the O argument is the unmarked choice if it is specific. In intransitives, the S argument is always topic. The ergative pattern is in evidence in imperatives no less than in the other modes.

**Reflexivization**. Reflexivization is another subject property that has been identified in Philippine languages as being controlled by the agent whether topic or non-topic (Schachter 1976:503-504).

- (147) Ni-anda' e' na baran na.
  UF-NAR-see erg 3s.erg body her
  'She looked at herself.'
- (148) Anganda' iya ma baran na.

  AF.see 3s.abs obl body her

  'She looked at herself.'

Example (147) is ergative with an ergative agent, while (148) is antipassive with an absolutive agent. There is no reflexive pronoun in Bangingi'. The function of reflexivization is expressed by the noun 'body' with a possessive pronoun whose antecedent is understood to be the agent of the clause. To this extent, the agent is the controller of the clause. The syntax, however, does not differ from that of non-reflexive transitives or intransitives.

There is no syntactic process here which involves the S/A as the pivot. Rather, reflexives in Sama Bangingi' evidence the same fundamental division between ergative and antipassive constructions which characterize the syntax as a whole.

#### 4.7.2 Pivot-controlled subject properties

Pivot-controlled subject properties are those manifested by syntactic processes which combine or embed clauses or move elements around within a clause. The NP which is the focal point of these processes is the pivot, or surface subject. These are the processes which are crucial for determining if a language is syntactically ergative.

**Relativization**. Relativization is one of the strongest arguments for syntactic ergativity in Sama Bangingi'. As is true in other Philippine languages (cf. Schachter 1976:500), only the absolutive NP may be relativized. In this respect, Bangingi' behaves much like Dyirbal.

Bangingi' possesses no relative pronoun, though the determiner/nominalizer ya may function in this role. Normally the embedded clause is simply juxtaposed to its noun head and may be translated into English variously as a relative clause, participle or infinitive. The noun head must function as the syntactic topic or absolutive NP of the embedded verb. In the examples below, the syntactic topic (absolutive NP) is in bold face.

- (149) Ta-langpas e' sigaam alta'-in.
  UF.ABL-plunder erg 3p.erg possessions/wealth-rf
  'They plundered the possessions.'
- (150) Ya alta' ta-langpas e' sigaam p-in-a-billi-han.
  det possessions UF.ABL-plunder erg 3p.erg BF.CA-NAR-buy

  'The possessions plundered by them/which they plundered were sold
  (lit. caused to be bought).' (N5.33)
- (151) Angalangpas sigaam alta' aa.

  AF.plunder 3p.abs possessions people

  'They plunder peoples' possessions.'
- (152) \*Ya alta' aa angalangpas sigaam pinabillihan.
  people AF.plunder 3p.abs

  'The peoples' possessions they plunder are sold.'
- (153) So:ng paitu sigaam ya angalangpas-in.
  soon come.here 3p.abs det AF.plunder-rf
  'They who plunder will soon come here.'

- (154) T-in-ambalan si Hajar e' mattoa denda inaan.

  BF-NAR-medicine pm erg elder woman that

  'Hajar is being/will be treated by that older woman.'
- (155) Menggahan si Hajar ya t-in-ambalan e' mattoa where pm det BF-NAR-medicine erg elder

denda-in?
woman-rf
'Where is Hajar who is being treated by that elder woman?'

(156) Ya mattoa denda anambalan ma si Hajar itu det elder woman AF.medicine obl pm this

pag-ji-ji:n-an. LF-jiin 'The older woman who treated Hajar was a medium for a jiin.' (DP.51)

Sentence (149) above is ergative, undergoer focus. It may be relativized (i.e. turned into a relative clause) with alta' as the noun head as in (150) since alta' is in absolutive case. Sentence (151) is antipassive (agent focus with a non-specific undergoer). It may not be relativized with alta' as noun head as the ungrammatical (152) shows, since alta' is the non-topic undergoer and therefore not absolutive. However, (151) may be relativized with the absolutive pronoun sigaam as noun head as in (153). Similarly, sentence (154) may be relativized with the absolutive si Hajar as noun head, as in (155). But in order to make the agent mattoa denda the noun head, the verb must be changed to an antipassive as in (156). Then the agent will be in absolutive case and eligible to be the noun head of a relative clause.

Keenan and Comrie's accessibility hierarchy indicates that if only one constituent type can be relativized, that constituent type must be the subject (cited in Keenan 1976:305). Since the absolutive NP (i.e. the S and O NPs) in Bangingi' is the only constituent type eligible for relativization, it must then be the "subject" in Keenan and Comrie's terms, and the syntactic pivot for the process of relativization.

## Cleft-like constructions

Cleft-like constructions were described in section 2.3.3. The topic (i.e. absolutive) NP is "clefted" out of its clause and equated with its predicate, forming an equative clause which in form is very similar to a relative clause. This "clefting" may be performed on ergative or antipassive constructions, but as sentences (76) through (79) show, only the absolutive NP may be clefted out in this way, further evidence that it is the syntactic pivot.

WH-question formation. WH-question words in Bangingi' which occur sentence-initially are always interpreted as absolutive. To form a WH-question, a question word, ayyan 'what' or sayyan 'who', is substituted for the absolutive NP, then moved to the beginning of the sentence. The argument substituted for must be the absolutive NP in order for it to be moved to the front of the sentence. The interrogative (158) is formed by substituting sayyan for si Ina' 'mother' in (157) and moving it to the beginning of the sentence. Sentence (160) is similarly formed by substituting ayyan for kuhapu 'grouper' in (159).

- (157) Amilli si Ina' daing allaw itu.

  AF.buy pm mother fish day this

  'Mother will buy fish today.'
- (158) Sayyan amilli daing allaw itu?
  who AF.buy fish day this
  'Who will buy fish today?'
- (159) Bay ta-billi e' si Ina' kuhapu.
  cmp UF.ABL-buy erg pm mother grouper
  'Mother was able to buy grouper.'
- (160) Ayyan bay ta-billi e' si Ina? what cmp UF.ABL-buy erg pm mother 'What was Mother able to buy?'
- (161) \*Ayyan amilli si Ina' allaw itu?
  what AF.buy pm mother day this
  'What will Mother buy today?'

Sentence (161) is ungrammatical because the non-absolutive undergoer daing of (157) has been substituted for and moved forward.

Question words may also replace oblique and ergative NPs, but when they do, the question word must be accompanied by the oblique or ergative marker. The oblique NP (including the marker) may be moved to the front of the sentence, as in (165), but the ergative NP may not (163).

- (162) Bay b-in-illi kuhapu itu e' sayyan?
  cmp UF-NAR-buy grouper this erg who
  'This grouper was bought by whom?'
- (163) \*e' sayyan bay b-in-illi kuhapu itu?
  erg who cmp UF-NAR-buy grouper this
- (164) Anulat kaa ma sayyan?

  AF.write 2s.abs obl who

  'You are writing to whom?'

(165) Ma sayyan kaa anulat?
obl who 2s.abs AF.write
'To whom are you writing?'

The goal (indirect object) of the preceding two examples may become the syntactic topic (absolutive NP) by using the beneficiary focus. Sentence (166) is the beneficiary focus counterpart of (164) with a question word substituted for the now absolutive goal. Similarly, the instrument can become the syntactic pivot using instrument focus and then be substituted for by a question word as in (167).

- (166) Sayyan sulat-an nu? who BF-write erg.2s 'Who are you writing-to?'
- (167) Ayyan panulat nu, pensil atawa balpoin?
  what IF-write erg.2s pencil or ballpoint pen
  'What will you use to write with, a pencil or pen?'

In all these examples, in order for an argument to become a question word and be moved to the beginning of the sentence, it must be an absolutive NP. Thus, in WH-question word formation, as in relativization, the absolutive NP functions as the syntactic pivot.

**Pre-predicate attraction.** The unmarked clause order in Bangingi' is predicate-initial. There is, however, a large set of particles, negatives, modals and conjunctions which regularly occur before the verb in what is called the "pre-predicate position." These may draw the absolutive NP forward into the position immediately following the attractor and preceding the verb. This movement occurs regularly when the absolutive NP is a pronoun, less so when a full NP. Ergative and oblique NPs may not be drawn forward in this fashion (compare 171 with 170). Sentences (168, 169, 172, and 173) contain the completive action particle bay, a negative, insa', a modal, subay and the conjunction bang, respectively. Sentences (168) and (169) are intransitive; (172) is antipassive with the absolutive agent drawn forward; (173) is ergative with the absolutive undergoer of a causative verb drawn forward.

- (168) bay aku maka-pe:' ni Bangingi'.
  cmp 1s.abs AF.ABL-go-there to
  'I was able to go to Bangingi' (island).' (N4.59)
- (169) Insa' lagi' jaman Kastila' bay maka-paitu ni not yet people Castilian cmp AF.ABL-come.here to

Pilipinas.
Philippines

'The Castilians had not yet come here to the Philippines.' (KA.1)

(170) Insa' ta-kollo' e' sigaam Bangingi'.
not UF.ABL-take erg 3p.erg
'They were not able to take Bangingi'. (N4.22)

- (171) \*Insa' e' sigaam ta-kollo' Bangingi'.
  not erg 3p.erg UF.ABL-take
- (172) Subay iya mag-kakan nangka' inaan must 3s.abs AF.D-eat jackfruit that 'She had to eat that jackfruit.' (KA.36)
- (173) Bang aku ingga'i pa-billi nu...
  if 1s.abs not UF.CA-buy 2s.erg
  'If you won't sell-to me...' (KA.16)

Since in Bangingi' only the absolutive NP may be moved forward in this fashion, this process also evidences syntactic ergativity.

Equi-NP deletion. Equi-NP deletion is the syntactic process by which the subject of a complement clause is deleted when it is coreferential with the subject of the matrix clause. In Sama Bangingi' the deleted NP must be the absolutive NP of the complement clause.

- (174) Abaya' tood aku amangan sin nangka' u.
  want intns 1s.abs AF.eat obl jackfruit that
  'I really want to eat that jackfruit.' (K.A.13)
- (175) Abaya' tood aku p-in-a-beya' e' sigaam.
  want intns 1s.abs CA-UF-NAR-go-with erg 3p.erg
  'I really want to be included by them.'
- (176) ?Abaya' tood aku kakan ku nangka' u.
  want intns abs.1s OF-eat erg.1s jackfruit that
  'I really desire that I eat that jackfruit.'
- (177) Abaya' tood aku in nangka' itu k-in-akan.
  want intns 1s.abs tm jackfruit this UF-NAR-eat
  'I really desire that this jackfruit be eaten.'

One of the most common equi-NP deletions involves the stative abaya' 'is desirous of' as the matrix verb. The subject of abaya' is in absolutive case. If the coreferential NP is the agent of the complement or lower verb, an antipassive construction must be used so that the deleted coreferential NP is also absolutive. In (174) above, the deleted NP is the absolutive agent of the AF amangan. If the coreferential NP is the undergoer of the complement verb, the appropriate ergative construction must be used. In (175) above, the deleted NP is the absolutive undergoer of the UF pinabeya'. If the complement clause

is ergative with a coreferential ergative agent (a questionable construction), the ergative agent is not deleted (176). If the complement clause is ergative, narrative mode, the agent may be deleted, but the deleted agent is not necessarily coreferential with the subject of the higher matrix verb as in (177).

The higher and lower verbs in equi-NP deletion may or may not be the same focus. In (178) below, they are both intransitive with AF affixation; in (179) the verbs are both undergoer focus, narrative mode. In (180), the higher verb is undergoer focus; the lower verb agent focus.

- (178) Ama'id na sigaam amole'.

  AF.take-leave now 3p.abs AF.go-home

  'They took their leave to go home.'
- (179) S-in-oho' 0 t-in-uran pe:' ni datu' denda-e'.

  UF-NAR-command UF.NAR-take go-there to chief woman-that

  '(They) instructed (0 = the jackfruit section) to be taken to the

  woman chief.' (KA.58)
- (180) S-in-oho' aku angadji' undang-undang.
  UF-NAR-command 1s.abs AF.study Quranic-letters
  'I was instructed to study the Qur'an.' (PP.2)

Sentential complement construction is the functional equivalent in Sama Bangingi' to conjunction reduction (see section following). In it, the absolutive NP clearly functions as the syntactic pivot, indicating that this process is also ergative.

# 4.7.3 Pragmatic topic-controlled subject properties

Coreferential gapping in conjoined sentences is often appealed to as one of the primary tests for syntactic ergativity. In a syntactically ergative language (such as Dyirbal) in order to conjoin the intransitive sentence, "Mother returned," and the transitive sentence "Mother saw Father," it would be necessary to change the normally ergative transitive sentence into an antipassive so that "Mother" would be absolutive in each clause. The resulting conjoined sentence would be "Mother returned and saw Father." When this test is applied to Philippine languages, however, the results are equivocal. As was seen in the preceding chapter regarding Tagalog, both syntactic topics (absolutive NPs) and non-topic agents (ergative NPs) may be gapped in this way.

In Sama Bangingi' also, this type of test is not very productive for at least two reasons. One reason is that sentences are not conjoined in Bangingi' as they are in English and apparently in Dyirbal. The conjoined sentence above with the second clause an antipassive would be in Bangingi' a sentential complement as described in the preceding section. It would mean, "Mother

returned to watch/look at Father." To retain the meaning "saw" would require an ergative, abilitative construction most likely without gapping.

A second reason why a test of coreferential gapping is not productive is the very high incidence of zero anaphora in Bangingi'. Bangingi' usually expresses sequential events by simply stringing together a series of clauses. If an event is transitive and its agent and undergoer are both unambiguous, either the agent or the syntactic topic or both may be represented by a zero, though the syntactic topic (absolutive NP) is gapped in this way more frequently than is the non-topic (ergative) agent. The following examples will illustrate some of the occurrences of zero anaphora.

- (181) a. ... sakali atakka isab halla na ji:n inaan, so-then arrive also husband her jiin that
  - b. agtuwi s-in-ukangan e' halla na Ø, immediately BF-NAR-taboo erg husband her
  - c. e-lemesan  $\emptyset$  si Hajar maka mange'.

    UF-NAR-smear with urine

    '... so then, (when) her jiin husband would arrive, her husband would immediately repel  $(\emptyset = jiin)$ ,  $(\emptyset = her husband)$  would cover Hajar with urine.' (DP.65)

This sentence illustrates that either the absolutive undergoer or the ergative agent may be equally gapped. In (b), the gapped NP is the absolutive undergoer, its referent being the absolutive subject of the preceding intransitive. In (c), the gapped NP is the ergative agent, its referent being the ergative agent of (b).

- (182) a. K-in-ollo'an e' na dam bigi nangka'-in,
  UF-NAR-remove erg 3s.erg one seed jackfruit-rf
  - b. p-in-amuwan e' na Ø ma denda abottong-e', IF-NAR-give erg 3s.erg obl woman pregnant-that
  - c. k-in-akan Ø Ø.
    UF-NAR-eat
    'He removed one jackfruit section, he gave (Ø=jackfruit section) to that pregnant woman, (Ø=she) ate (Ø=jackfruit).' (KA.22)

In (b) of the above example, it is again the absolutive undergoer which is gapped. In (c), both the absolutive undergoer and the ergative agent are gapped, but the gapped agent is not the agent of the previous clause. Rather, the referent is the recipient, the pregnant woman. The discourse context alone can determine this referent.

- (183) a. Na pag-ubus e', p-in-a-inum Ø, dp when-finish that UF.CA-NAR-drink
  - b. p-in-akan na 0, UF-NAR-feed prt
  - c. ama'id na isab Dang Ø amole'.
     AF.take-leave prt also Dear AF.go-home
     'Now after that, (Ø=relatives) were given something to drink,
     (Ø=relatives) were given something to eat, then, Dear,
     (Ø=relatives) took their leave and went home.' (PP.23)

In the above sentences, the gapped NP in all cases is the absolutive NP. In (a) and (b) it is the undergoer; in (c) it is the coreferential intransitive subject. The nearest nominal antecedent for these zeros (an aunt and other family members who have come for a visit) is fourteen clauses away. The aunt remains highly topical in the intervening events, even though she is overtly referred to only by possessive pronouns. Her topicality plus the knowledge that guests are normally entertained, leads her to be identified as the syntactic topic (and absolutive NP) of these clauses. The agents are deleted; it is understood that the host family does the entertaining. Note that except for the vocative, there is no overt noun phrase at all in the above example. This is not uncommon as the following example also shows.

- (184) a. B-in-aan Ø Ø, asusa Ø,
  BF-NAR-tell worried
  - b. ingga'i b-in-aan  $\emptyset$   $\emptyset$ , asusa  $\emptyset$ .

    not BF-NAR-tell worried

    'If  $(\emptyset = \text{farmer})$  tells  $(\emptyset = woman \ chief)$ ,  $(\emptyset = farmer)$  is worried; if  $(\emptyset = \text{farmer})$  doesn't tell  $(\emptyset = woman \ chief)$ ,  $(\emptyset = farmer)$  is worried.' (KA.31)

The pragmatic topic for this stretch of text is the farmer. He is therefore easily identified as the agent of this sentence, especially since he has just been asked a question by the woman chief which has brought on his current dilemma. The farmer is the gapped ergative agent of the verb 'tell' and the absolutive subject of the stative 'worried'. The context identifies the referent of the gapped absolutive goal of the beneficiary verb 'tell' as the woman chief. Thus, in this example, all three of Dixon's semantic primitives, S, A and O, are gapped, and only the discourse context identifies the referents.

It can be seen from the above examples that the gapping phenomenon in Sama Bangingi' is largely determined by what the speaker considers recoverable from the discourse context, and not from the syntax. In particular, the referent of a gapped agent is most likely to be the pragmatic topic (i.e.

thematic participant) of the immediate context. Therefore, since such gapping is controlled by the pragmatic context and not by the syntax, the fact that ergative NPs as well as absolutive NPs may be gapped is not necessarily a counter-example to syntactic ergativity. On the contrary, gapping serves to distinguish subject properties which are controlled by the pragmatic context from those controlled by the syntax.

### CHAPTER 5: CONCLUSION

#### **5.1 SUMMARY**

The re-examination of Sama Bangingi' data in Chapter 4 revealed clear ergative patterning in the morphology. The preponderance of transitive constructions which manifest this morphology indicate that Bangingi' is an ergative language. Its verbal system is more complex, however, than the prototypical ergative language. The focus system allows semantic arguments other than the strict undergoer/patient to be treated as the O argument. The antipassive may also play a larger role in Bangingi' than do corresponding constructions in more typically ergative languages.

Sama Bangingi' is not typical of ergative languages in another way. It evidences a high degree of syntactic ergativity. The absolutive NP functions as the syntactic pivot for several significant syntactic processes such as relativization, cleft-like constructions, WH-question formation, pre-predicate attraction and equi-NP deletion. These processes all involve movement or embedding which clearly involves a syntactic pivot which is always the absolutive NP.

Other processes such as reflexivization, imperative formation and coreferential NP deletion do not involve a syntactic pivot. The first two processes are said to be controlled by the agent, whether topic (absolutive) or non-topic (ergative) because agents are always the addressee of imperatives, and, like proto-typical subjects, are never reflexivized (Schachter 1976:503), while absolutive NPs often are. Even so, in Bangingi' deletion rules and topic choice are motivated by the same constraints as those which motivate the ergative patterning of the language as a whole. Thus, while these two processes may be controlled by the semantic role of agent in Bangingi', the morphosyntax itself is ergative.

Coreferential NP deletion in Bangingi' may involve either the agent or the absolutive NP. The process seems to respond to the relative topicality of the NPs in the discourse, rather than to syntactic constraints. It is noteworthy that the syntactic processes which do not involve a syntactic pivot are ambiguous. They do not show a clear ergative or accusative pattern. The processes which do involve a pivot clearly utilize an ergative strategy. Thus, in determining whether or not the syntax of a language is ergative, it is more appropriate to appeal to those syntactic processes that clearly involve a pivot. These are the processes that are unambiguously motivated by the syntax, rather than by the semantics or pragmatics.

"Subject" properties may also be divided into those motivated by the syntax, the semantics or the pragmatics (Keenan 1976:312). Such a division

brings into clearer focus the difficulty of defining "subject" in ergative languages, especially if the prototypical subject of nominative-accusative languages is taken as a universal norm. A prototypical subject in English is at the same time the syntactic pivot, the agent and the pragmatic topic. If a definition of subject is to encompass such a wide range of properties, it simply will not fit ergative languages because no single NP can manifest all these properties in the majority of transitive sentences. One might choose the NP with the greatest number of "subject properties", but this is hardly desirable. There are too many variables in such an equation. If however "subject" is identified solely in syntactic terms as the pivot NP crucially involved in syntactic processes, then the subject may be easily identified in Bangingi' as the absolutive NP. This definition is desirable because it is morphosyntactically consistent. The undisputed subject of stative and intransitive sentences is the absolutive NP regardless of its semantic role. It is also desirable because it reflects the natural prominence of the syntactic pivot in Bangingi'. The pivot is that NP which is "focussed" by the verb (that is, there is agreement between the semantic role of the pivot and the voice inflection of the verb). This is the absolutive NP.

According to this definition of subject, the crucial difference between subjects in accusative languages and those in ergative languages is the semantic role of the NP which is the unmarked subject. In accusative languages it is the agent/experiencer. In ergative languages it is the undergoer/patient.

An ergative analysis, then, defines categories which are more relevant and useful towards describing Sama Bangingi' morphosyntax and provides appropriate labels for them. It also provides a theoretical framework for the analysis of transitive constructions and the agent focus, and the ways by which they are distinguished. Finally, it provides an unambiguous means of identifying the subject NP, if the notion of subject is defined syntactically.

## 5.2 QUESTIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

Many topics for further study lie in the areas of historical and comparative work. Currently a great deal of attention is being paid to the evolution of the focus system in Philippine type languages, as well as the evolution of ergativity in Austronesian languages as a whole. There is not yet a consensus as to the direction of the "drift", i.e. whether it is towards ergativity or away from it. Perhaps this data from Sama Bangingi' will be a contribution towards solving this problem.

It appears that the more southerly a Philippine language is, the more likely it is to evidence ergative features and lessen its focus orientation (Rodolfo Barlaan, personal conversation). It may be that the Sama languages are "drifting" from a focus orientation to an ergative one. On the other hand, it seems clear that the Sama people migrated into the Sulu Archipelago from

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Malaysia (Pallesen, 1985), and some degree of ergativity has been present in Malay for some time (Verhaar 1988:379). Perhaps the Sama were speaking an ergative language when they arrived, but they have since incorporated into their languages elements of the Philippine focus system. See Drake (1999) for a brief ergative analysis of a Sama language that avoids the focus-system approach. Further study in this area would be an obvious contribution to understanding syntactic change in Austronesian languages.

The geographical and linguistic position of Sama Bangingi', being, like all the Sama languages, in some sense "between" the Philippine languages to the north and the Western Indonesian languages to the south should be a help in the difficult task of sub-grouping. Areas of particular interest to me concern the Sama Bangingi' narrative infix. What is the historical interrelationship of this construction and the unaffixed undergoer focus with its limited distribution of agents? How did the narrative infix develop in Sama Bangingi' from the proto-Philippine perfective infix \*-in-, and what is its relationship on the one hand to undergoer focus in other Philippine languages and on the other to the "passive" prefix di- in Malay and Indonesian?

Many writers, notably Cartier (1979) in Indonesian, Hopper (1983) in Malay, and Du Bois (1987) in Sacapultec Maya, have extended the notion of ergativity to discourse. Hopper distinguishes an ergative construction from a passive in Malay, and correlates them with foreground and background information respectively, using his transitivity parameters as the criteria. The antipassive (called by Hopper "active") occurs often in background but is used also to relate initial events in an episode. Sama Bangingi' and Malay are related languages; preliminary observations indicate that many of Hopper's observations concerning Malay are true also of Bangingi'. This is an area that merits further study.

Du Bois examined the information flow of Sacapultec Mayan texts and found ergative orientation in the distribution of new information. A significant number of new mentions (more than one-half) occurred in S or O NPs (most of the remainder being oblique). Only 3.4% of new mentions occurred as an A NP. Likewise, whereas approximately one-fourth of all S and O NPs were new information, only 3.2% of A NPs were.

Conversely, Du Bois found that "humanness" patterned accusatively. Not surprisingly, S and A NPs were human far more often than the O NPs. This is, of course, why agents are highly topical even in ergative constructions, and why discourse, and particularly the pragmatic topic, influences gapping in Sama Bangingi'. Regarding Du Bois' other findings, a preliminary examination of Bangingi' shows that ergative agents are almost exclusively given, just as absolutive S and O NPs are. Thus, this parameter does not reveal either ergative or accusative patterning in Bangingi'. There may be other parameters of discourse which will reveal one patterning or the other. The discovery and investigation of these parameters is another topic for further study.

# **APPENDIX**

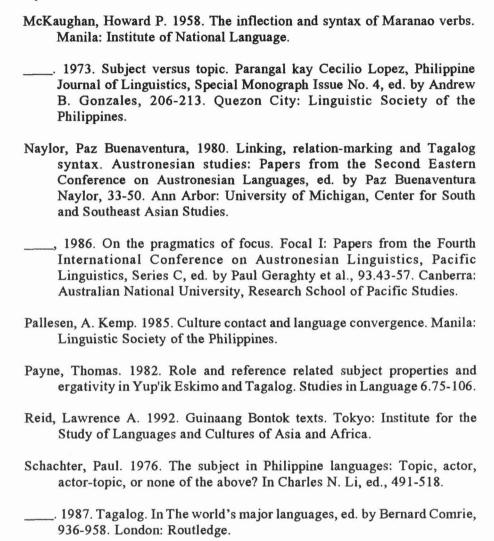
# LIST OF TEXTS AND AUTHORS

N3	Kissa aa masa bay amusay tudju ni Dumaget 'Story of the older generation's trip to Dumaguete,' by Hadji Halima Barhama. (oral)
N4	Kissa Bangingi' 'The Bangingi' story,' by Sulaiman Barhama. (oral)
N5	Kissa Bangingi' 'The Bangingi' story,' by Sulaiman Barhama. (written)
N8	Suwisuwi pasal si Hadji Ibrahim 'The report concerning Hadji Ibrahim,' by Fatima Barhama. (oral)
N10	Kissa pasal ya bay talabay kami magtulak ni Palawan 'Story about our departure to Palawan,' by Sulaiman Barhama. (oral)
PH	Kissa si Palu Hangin 'Story of Palu Hangin,' by Bandeng Usman. (oral)
KB	Kissa si Kuyya' maka si Ba'uu 'Story about Monkey and Turtle,' by Bensalih Barhama. (oral)
KA	Kissa auwal sin Bangingi' makapaitu ni Pilipinas 'Story of how the Bangingi' first came to the Philippines,' by Paraja Timbang. (oral)
DP	Denda pananambal 'The woman healer,' by Attica Timbang. (written)
PP	Kissa pasal pagpahanda 'Story about making a marriage proposal,' by Hadjara. (oral)

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