

Typological Studies in Language

112

# Indo-Aryan Ergativity in Typological and Diachronic Perspective

*edited by*

*Eystein Dahl and Krzysztof Stroński*

John Benjamins Publishing Company

This volume presents a state-of-the-art survey of synchronic and diachronic dimensions of Ergativity in the Indo-Aryan language family. It contains an introduction drawing on the most important recent typological and theoretical contributions to this field, plus seven papers about the origin, development and distribution of ergative alignment in ancient and modern Indo-Aryan languages written by well-established expert authors. The articles provide detailed explorations of language-specific synchronic systems or patterns of change, and large-scale studies of the distribution of ergative morphosyntax across the Indo-Aryan languages. The papers have a typological-functional approach and are based on thorough fieldwork experience and/or philological investigation. As the Indo-Aryan language family has played a paramount role in recent theories of Ergativity and of alignment typology and change, this volume is highly relevant to experts working on these languages and to scholars interested in grammatical relations and it will figure in all future debates in these fields.

ISBN 978 90 272 0693 0



9 789027 206930

*John Benjamins Publishing Company*

## *Typological Studies in Language (TSL)*

ISSN 0167-7373

A companion series to the journal *Studies in Language*. Volumes in this series are functionally and typologically oriented, covering specific topics in language by collecting together data from a wide variety of languages and language typologies.

For an overview of all books published in this series, please see <http://benjamins.com/catalog/tsl>

### **Editors**

Spike Gildea  
University of Oregon

Fernando Zúñiga  
University of Bern

### **Editorial Board**

Balthasar Bickel  
Zurich

Marianne Mithun  
Santa Barbara

Bernard Comrie  
Santa Barbara

Martin Haspelmath  
Jena

Doris L. Payne  
Eugene, OR

Denis Creissels  
Lyon

Bernd Heine  
Köln

Franz Plank  
Konstanz

William Croft  
Albuquerque

Andrej A. Kibrik  
Moscow

Dan I. Slobin  
Berkeley

Nicholas Evans  
Canberra

František Lichtenberkt  
Auckland

Sandra A. Thompson  
Santa Barbara

Carol Genetti  
Santa Barbara

# **Indo-Aryan Ergativity in Typological and Diachronic Perspective**

*Edited by*

Eystein Dahl

UiT – The Arctic University of Norway

Krzysztof Stronński

Adam Mickiewicz University, Poznań

### **Volume 112**

Indo-Aryan Ergativity in Typological and Diachronic Perspective  
Edited by Eystein Dahl and Krzysztof Stronński

John Benjamins Publishing Company  
Amsterdam / Philadelphia



The paper used in this publication meets the minimum requirements of the American National Standard for Information Sciences – Permanence of Paper for Printed Library Materials, ANSI Z39.48-1984.

## Table of contents

Ergativity in Indo-Aryan and beyond <i>Eysteijn Dahl &amp; Krzysztof Stroiński</i>	1
Looking for ergativity in Indo-Aryan <i>Saartje Verbeke &amp; Eva De Clercq</i>	39
The origin and development of the Old Indo-Aryan predicated <i>-tá</i> construction <i>Eysteijn Dahl</i>	61
On the establishment of ergative alignment during the Late Middle Indo-Aryan period <i>Vit Bubenik</i>	109
Why the ergative case in modal (in)transitive clauses? The historical evolution of aspect, modality, ergative and locative in Indo-Aryan <i>Annie Montaut</i>	133
Ergative alignment in Western New Indo-Aryan languages from a historical perspective <i>Liudmila V. Khokhlova</i>	165
The restoration of the ergative case marking of 'A' in perfective clauses in New Indo-Aryan: The case of the Braj language <i>Andrea Drocco</i>	201
Syntactic lability vs. ergativity in Indo-Aryan <i>Krzysztof Stroiński</i>	237
Language Index	259
General Index	261
Author Index	265

DOI 10.1075/tsl.112

Cataloging-in-Publication Data available from Library of Congress:  
LCCN 2016001802 (PRINT) / 2016016009 (E-BOOK)

ISBN 978 90 272 0693 0 (HB)

ISBN 978 90 272 6716 0 (E-BOOK)

© 2016 – John Benjamins B.V.

No part of this book may be reproduced in any form, by print, photoprint, microfilm, or any other means, without written permission from the publisher.

John Benjamins Publishing Company · <https://benjamins.com>

# The restoration of the ergative case marking of 'A' in perfective clauses in New Indo-Aryan

## The case of the Braj language\*

Andrea Drocco

Ca' Foscari University of Venice

The development of the ergative construction in the New Indo-Aryan period is still not totally clear. In particular we don't know the process of grammaticalization of the new analytical ergative marker, the postposition *ne*, found, among others, in Hindi and Pañjābī. This study tries to demonstrate that it is true that the "macro-history" of this form suggests that the discriminatory function of case marking is clearly important in the beginning of its process of diffusion and stabilization, it is also true that there is no single interpretation as regards its high initial variability. In fact, starting from data taken from prose texts written in the old Hindī literary variety known as Braj-bhāṣā, the full set of conditions on case alternations for A in the perfective aspect is really complex.

---

\* This article grew out of the 6th chapter in my book *Lergatività in hindi. Studio diacronico del processo di diffusione della posizione ne* (2008); Alessandria: Edizioni dell'Orso. My thanks first and foremost to Giuliano Bernini with whom I discussed the issue of ergativity in South Asian languages: he made very helpful comments on earlier drafts and presentations. Thanks also to the audiences in Bergen (on the occasion of the workshop 'Reconstructing Alignment Systems', 14–15 May 2009), Bilbao (on the occasion of the workshop 'EHU International Workshop on Ergative Languages', 4–6 November 2009), Paris (on the occasion of the workshop 'Ergative Markers', 9 November 2009) and Pavia (on the occasion of the workshop 'Sistemi di allineamento in lingue indoeuropee e non indoeuropee dal Vicino Oriente all'India', 20–21 May 2011), where I have presented earlier versions of this work. All errors and inadequacies are my responsibility.

## 1. Introduction<sup>1</sup>

Even if the origins of the ergative constructions in the Indo-Iranian group of Indo-European linguistic family are presently not totally clear, thanks to the works of various scholars we possess many studies concerning this particular topic of research with respect to OIA (e.g. Hook 1992; Klaiman 1978; Hock 1986; Bynon 2005) and MIA (e.g. Bubenik 1996, 1998; Jamison 2000; Peterson 1998). Unfortunately the same is not true for the development of the same construction in the NIA period, especially after the 16th century (a recent exception is Stroński 2011). In this study, that represent a part of an ongoing investigation about the preservation – in some NIA languages – of the ergative-absolutive system of OIA and MIA (cf. Drocco 2008, 2010), I will describe some aspects of this alignment system on the basis of the analysis of a particular old NIA literary variety: the Braj language – also known as Braj-bhāṣā – of the 17th and 18th century. In particular this study attempts to provide some interpretation of the high 'optionality' of *ne* as a restored case-marker for *A* in the perfective clauses of the texts examined, suggesting that its variability in this function is not unsystematic, but, on the contrary, determined by a combination of different principles. I will examine some of these principles, trying to give some indication about the typology of the system of ergative marking in medieval Braj-bhāṣā. The dynamics of this system is largely, if not totally, ignored by textbooks and language studies concerning this language and in general old Hindī literary varieties.

The paper is organized in two parts. In the first one, after having provided an initial overview of the origin of ergativity in IA (§ 2) and its development in NIA (§ 3), I will give some information about the history of the postposition *ne* in Hindī as new ergative case-marker (§ 4). In particular I will try to give some indication about the period in which its use became fixed, the hypothesis concerning its origin and the period approximately when this postposition started to be used as the restored ergative case-marker in old Hindī literary varieties, like Braj-bhāṣā. In the second part (§ 5), after having furnished some information about Braj-bhāṣā (§ 5.1) and its ergative-absolutive system attested approximately around the beginning of 17th century (§ 5.2), I will focus my attention on those two centuries where in this language the ergative case marking of *A* in perfective aspect is realized with

more than one marker (§ 5.3) and where, in the same literary variety, the use of the postposition *ne* as the restored ergative marking of *A* is frequently not still fixed (§ 5.4). The last sections contain a summary of the content (§ 6) and conclusions of this article (§ 7).

## 2. The emergence of the ergative-absolutive system in Indo-Aryan<sup>2</sup>

It is well known that the split alignment system found in many present-day IA and Iranian languages is due to the proliferation, starting from OIA and Old Iranian period, of the perfective clause developed out of the earlier predicative use of a non-finite verbal form, the Indo-Iranian past participle in *-ta* (see, among others, Klaiman 1987; Haig 2008). Focusing the attention to the IA group of languages, this is the result of the fact that one of the salient differences between ancient OIA and MIA syntax was the predilection of the early OIA period for the use of the finite active forms for the expression of perfectivity. These forms are characterised by a nominative-marked *A*, accusative-marked *O* and finite verb in the active voice (Bloch 1934:205–222; Burrow 1955; Bubenik 1996:170; Peterson 1998:202–208; Bynon 2005:6–15): see Examples 1, 2, 3.<sup>3</sup>

Examples 1 + 3: Early OIA

- (1) *prá bāhú*  
 PREVERB ATM:ACC.DUAL  
*asrāk*  
 stretch out:AOR(sigmatic)(*vstr*).3sg.parasmaipada Savitṛ:NOM.SG  
 'Savitṛ has stretched out his arms [...]' (RgVeda IV, 53, 3)
- (2) *agnīm [...]* *dadhire*  
 Agni:ACC.SG put:PERFECT(*vdhā*):3PL.ātmanepada  
*puró jánāh*  
 before people:NOM.PL  
 'The people have put Agni at the first place (lit. before) [...]' (RgVeda III, 2, 5)

2. See also Chapter 1 by Dahl & Stroński in this volume for a detailed summary and additional references.

3. In all examples, for the transliteration of *devanāgarī* script, I use the *International Alphabet of Sanskrit Transliteration* (I.A.S.T.) based on a standard established by the International Congress of Orientalists at Geneva in 1894.

1. The following abbreviations are used in this article: ABL: ablative; ACC: accusative; AOR: aorist; AUX: auxiliary; CAUS: causative; CP: conjunctive participle; DAT: dative; DIR: direct; EMPH: emphatic; ERG: ergative; F: feminine; HON: honorific; IA: Indo-Aryan; IMPF: imperfective; INSTR: instrumental; LOC: locative; M: masculine; MIA: Middle Indo-Aryan; NIA: New Indo-Aryan; NOM: nominative; NT: neuter; OBL: oblique; OIA: Old Indo-Aryan; PART: participle; PTCL: particle; PAST: past; PAST.PART: past participle; PERF: perfective; PRES: present; SG: singular; VOC: vocative.

- (3) [...] *māmakāḥ paṇḍavās* ca [...] *kim*  
 my:NOM.PL Pāṇḍu's son:NOM.PL and what:NOM.SG.NT  
*akurvata* *saṃjaya*  
 do:IMPERFECT(v/kr).3PL.ātmanepada Saṃjaya.VOC.SG.M  
 '[...] what did mine and Pāṇḍu's sons do, oh Saṃjaya?'  
 (*Bhagavad-gītā* I, 1cd)

On the contrary, starting from early MIA, the old verbal system underwent a process of decomposition and thus gradually lost the finite active verb forms for the expression of perfectivity (Pischel 1965; Bloch 1906:93). Perhaps, as a consequence, there was a strong tendency for the use of a construction with the predicative *ta*-participles for the realization of the perfective aspect (Bloch 1934:224; Chatterji 1960:94; Bynon 2005:6–15). During this stage of IA, and in this type of construction, A is expressed either by the instrumental or by the genitive, and O, sharing always the same form of S, was in concord with the verb (Andersen 1986a; Bubenik 1996:170): see Examples 4 and 5 where A is marked by the instrumental.

From the rock edicts of the King Aśoka Maurya:

- (4) *ayarī dhamma-lipi* *Devānāripriyena*  
 3.NOM rescript on morality:NOM Devānāripriya:INSTR.M.SG  
*Priyadasinā* *r[ā]ñā* *l[e]khāpitā* [...]  
 Priyadasi:INSTR.M.SG king:INSTR.M.SG write.CAUS:PAST.PART:NOM

'These rescripts on morality have been caused to be written by king Devānāripriya Priyadarśin [...].'

(Girnār, rock edict XIV; adapted from Hultzsich 1924:25–26; passive interpretation by Hultzsich)

- From the Theravāda Buddhist Canon (*pāli*):  
 (5) [...] *Udenena* *upāsakena* [...]  
 Udena:INSTR.M.SG layman:INSTR.M.SG

*vihāro* *ārāpito* *hoti*  
 monastery:NOM.M.SG build.CAUS:PAST.PART.NOM.M.SG be.AUX:PRES.3SG  
 'The layman Udena has had a monastery built [...].'

(*Mahāvagga* III: 5, 1; adapted from Peterson 1998:93)

However in early MIA, as well as in Classical and Epic Sanskrit (cf. Bloch 1906; Burrow 1955:354), we still find this construction alongside clauses realized by the inherited finite active forms which operate along a nominative-accusative pattern (Peterson 1998:92–96): A and S are treated exactly in the same way, in the nominative, and O is coded differently from both, in the accusative, whereas the verb forms agrees in person and number with A and S as in Examples 6 and 7.

From the Theravāda Buddhist Canon (*pāli*):

- (6) *atha kho bhagavā* *rājānaṃ* *sandassesī*  
 then but Lord:NOM.M.SG king:ACC.M.SG instruct:3SG.AOR  
 'And the Lord instructed [...] the king [...].'

(*Mahāvagga* II: 1, 4; adapted from Peterson 1998:90)

- (7) *nisīdi* *bhagavā* *paññatī*  
 sit:3SG.AOR Lord:NOM.M.SG appointed:LOC.NT.SG

*āsane* *āyasmā* *pi* *kho*  
 venerable:NOM.M.SG seat:LOC.NT.SG and:enclitic but

*Mahākappino* [...] *nisīdi*.

Mahākappina:NOM.M.SG sit:3SG.AOR

'The Lord sat down on the appointed seat, and the venerable Mahākappina [...] also sat down.' (*Mahāvagga* II: 5, 4; adapted from Peterson 1998:90)

The status of this particular construction in OIA (cf. Andersen 1986b; Hock 1986; Bynon 2005) and/or in early MIA (cf. Peterson 1998) has been variously interpreted and unfortunately remains very controversial.<sup>4</sup> However what it is important to point out is that, contrary to OIA and early MIA, in middle/late MIA the perfective clause arising from the predicative use of the past participle in *-ta* became so frequent to be the only available means of expressing all perfective transitive clauses (cf. Bubenik 1993, 1996, 1998, the paper in this volume). At this stage the specific case-marker of A was the instrumental, while the case marking of O and S as well as the verbal concord operates according to an ergative-absolutive system, as in the first period of MIA (cf. Examples 8, 9 and 10).

Examples 8 ÷ 10: Late MIA, i.e. Apabhramśa:

- (8) *kaṃsa* *āitu*.  
 Kaṃsa:NOM.M.SG come:PERF.M.SG  
 'Kaṃsa came.'  
 (Svayambhūdeva, *Ritthāṇemīcarīu*, 4.1.6)

4. Briefly it is possible to say that the majority of scholars advanced the hypotheses that in IA the ergative construction developed out of a passive construction: arguments to interpret this construction as passive are the agent which takes an instrumental case, and the agreement with the patient (cf., among others, Pray 1976; Anderson 1977; Pirejko 1979; Estival & Myhill 1988; Bubenik 1996, 1998). On the contrary Klaiman (1978), Hock (1986) and Peterson (1998) argue that the OIA *ta*-construction should actually itself be regarded as an ergative construction. Recently Bynon (2005) agrees with the fact that the participial construction with *-ta* never had passive status and was in fact ergative already in Sanskrit. Moreover she adds that in Vedic this construction was an intransitive main clause with a noun phrase in the genitive, which encoded the possessor of the O actant of the participle and which could also be read as the agent. For an in-depth discussion about the different hypothesis see Dahl & Stronksi in this volume (cf. also Butt 2006), whereas for Old and Middle Iranian cf. Haig (2008).

- (9) [...] *keṇa* *kaṃṣa* *viṇivātu* [...]   
 who:INSTR.SG *kaṃṣa*:NOM(=ACC).M.SG kill:PERF.M.SG   
 '[...] who killed *kaṃṣa* [...]' (Svayambhūdeva, *Ritthāṇemicariu*, 7.2.2)
- (10) *kaṃṣem* *vuttu* [...] [...]   
*kaṃṣa*:INSTR.M.SG say:PERF.M.SG   
 'Kaṃṣa said [...]' (Svayambhūdeva, *Ritthāṇemicariu*, 4.2.5)

3. The development of the ergative-absolutive system in New-Indo-Aryan

The situation described above is valid up to the end of MIA. What about the (possible) process which lead to the present-day ergative-absolutive system of contemporary NIA languages, in particular of modern Hindī? As regards the first period of NIA, and focusing the attention only on the case marking of A in perfective clauses, the general mechanisms which lead to case syncretism in nominal inflection cause, for the majority of singular nouns, the attrition of the distinction between S and A in the perfective aspect. For example in Old Rājasthānī, an important Western old NIA literary variety, the investigations by Khokhlova (1992, 1995, 2001, the paper in this volume) have ascertained that S and A in perfective clauses are distinguished only with masculine singular nouns ending in -o and with all plural masculine nouns: see Tables 1 and 2.

Table 1. Case distinctions on nouns in Old Rājasthānī (~ beginning of the 17th century): SINGULAR

	M		F
	ending in -o	All other M Nouns	All F Nouns
A in perfective clauses	*ai	---	---
Direct (A in non-perfective clauses & S)	---	---	---

(adapted from Khokhlova 2001: 167)

On the other hand, in the pronominal system S and A in the perfective aspect nearly always show different forms in the singular (Khokhlova 2001: 163), while in the plural they have a strong tendency to share the same form for S and A, especially when they code first and second person pronouns (Tessitori 1916: 52-53), as illustrated in Table 3.

Table 2. Case distinctions on nouns in Old Rājasthānī (~ beginning of the 17th century): PLURAL

	M		F
	ending in -o	All other M Nouns	All other F Nouns
A in perfective clauses	*āñ	*e/*āñ	*i/yāñ
Direct (A in non-perfective clauses & S)	*ā	---	---

(adapted from Khokhlova 2001: 167)

Table 3. Case distinctions on pronouns in Old Rājasthānī (~ beginning of the 17th century)

	SG		PL
1 A in perfective clauses	<i>mhaiñ</i>	<i>mhe</i> (exclusive)/ <i>āmpāñ</i> (inclusive)	<i>mhe</i> (exclusive)/ <i>āmpāñ</i> (inclusive)
A in non-perfective clauses & S	<i>hūñ</i>	<i>mhe</i> (exclusive)/ <i>āmpāñ</i> (inclusive)	<i>mhe</i> (exclusive)/ <i>āmpāñ</i> (inclusive)
2 A in perfective clauses	<i>taiñ</i>	<i>thām</i>	<i>thām</i> the
A in non-perfective clauses & S	<i>tūñ</i>	<i>thām</i>	<i>thām</i> the
3 A in perfective clauses	<i>aṇa/iṇa</i> (OBL 1)	<i>īmyāñ/iṭhām</i> (OBL 1)	<i>īmyāñ/iṭhām</i> (OBL 1)
A in non-perfective clauses & S	<i>o/yo</i> (M), <i>ā</i> (F)		<i>ai/e</i>
3 A in perfective clauses	<i>uṇa</i> (OBL 1)	<i>uvāñ/vām/urāñ</i> (OBL 1)	<i>uvāñ/vām/urāñ</i> (OBL 1)
A in non-perfective clauses & S	<i>ū</i> (M), <i>vā</i> (F)		<i>vai/ve</i>

(adapted from Smith 1975; cf. also Tessitori 1916: 52-54)

As already said, this situation is valid for the first period of NIA, that is for the period before the end of the 16th century, and perhaps in different periods for the majority of early NIA languages.<sup>5</sup> In the following centuries some of these languages abandoned the majority, if not all, the characteristics of the

5. For analogous arguments, but concerning other early NIA varieties, see for example Bloch (1920) as regards Marāṭhī, Chatterji (1926) and Saksenā (1971) as regards, respectively, Baṅgālī and Avadhī.



original ergative-absolutive system (e.g. Oriyā, Bhojpuri and the dialectal varieties under the label of 'Eastern Hindī'), testifying thus the eliminative forces in the history of the IA ergative construction. On the contrary, some others (e.g. Marāṭhī, Kāśmīrī, Sindhī, Gujarātī) display the conservative tendencies of this particular alignment system, especially through the restoration of the ergative case marking of A (cf. Stump 1983; Klaiman 1987; Deo & Sharma 2006; Stroński 2011; Verbeke 2013; see also the paper by Verbeke & De Clercq in this volume). This is the case of (Western) Hindī where the distinction between S and A in perfective clauses is well established, but realized with a restored ergative case-marker – the aforementioned postposition *ne* – used thus for an old function, the ergative case marking of A in the perfective aspect: see Examples 11 and 12. The same is true for Pañjābī (cf. Example 13 vs. Example 14), except for first and second person pronouns (Bhatia 1993: 170–171, 229, 245; Bhardwaj 1995: 90–91, 106–107; Butt 2003: 3), whereas the other modern IA languages realize the same marking of A with another postposition and/or by other means (cf. Klaiman 1987: 67–75).

Hindī

(11) *laṛkā gayā.*

boy:M.DIR.SG go:PERF:M.SG

'The boy went.'

(adapted from Klaiman 1987: 68)

(12) *laṛke ne roṭī khāi.*

boy:M.OBL.SG ERG bread:F eat:PERF:F

'The boy ate (the) bread.'

(adapted from Klaiman 1987: 68)

Pañjābī

(13) *Rām aiā.*

Rām.M come:PERF:M.SG

'Rām came.'

(adapted from Bhatia 2000: 646)

(14) *Rām ne Jān nūm [...] apnī kitāb ditti.*

Rām.M ERG Jān DAT RIFL:F book:F give:PERF:F

'Rām gave John [...] his book.'

(adapted from Bhatia 2000: 658)

#### 4. The history of the postposition *ne* as ergative case-marker

What about the history of the new ergative case-marker in Hindī and western Hindī varieties? Regarding Hindustānī (i.e. Hindī) it is certainly true that from the grammars of John Gilchrist (1796), William Yates (1827), John Shakespear (1813), Garcin de Tassy (1829), and other pioneer scholars of this language (cf., for example, Saulhi & Price 1823; Price 1827–28; Arnot 1831; Ballantyne 1838;

Forbes 1855, 1860; Eastwick 1858; Monier-Williams 1860),<sup>6</sup> we can conclude that *ne* in the first half of the 19th century was used almost exactly as in contemporary Hindī. This is confirmed, apart from a few exceptions not discussed here,<sup>7</sup> by the so-called Hindī/Hindustānī texts composed in the beginning of the 19th century, as the well-known *Prem Sāgar* of Lallūjī Lāl,<sup>8</sup> the *Baitāl paccīsī* of Mazhar 'Alī Khān Whā and Lallūjī Lāl,<sup>9</sup> the *Rānī Ketki ki kahānī* of Imsā Allāh Khān<sup>10</sup> and the portions of texts included in the anthology *Gurkā* of Śiv Prasād Simha.<sup>11</sup>

Thus what about the history of the *ne*<sup>12</sup> postposition before the beginning of the 19th century? As concerns the origin of this particular ergative case-marker, according to Beames (1872–1879: 270) one of the most reliable hypotheses is that the source of this new ergative marker is the Gujarātī and Rājasthānī dative/accusative postposition *ne* (see also Hoernle 1880: 224–225 and Kellogg 1893: 132): however, the exact origin of the latter is not completely clear and thus remains far from satisfactory (cf. Sigorsky 2007; Verbeke & De Cuyper 2009; Stroński 2009). But even if there are other hypotheses about the origin of *ne*, it is important to point out that the majority of scholars who have studied its history have focused their attention only on the etymology of this postposition (an exception is Montaut 2007). Consequently there are not so many studies about the history of the *ne* postposition used as ergative case-marker. Surely thanks to the works of Beames (1872–1879), Hoernle (1880) and Tessitori (1913) we know that the postposition *ne* to mark A in the perfective aspect started to be used in the course of the 17th century. In particular Beames (1872–1879) proposes that the postposition *ne* – [...] hitherto used for the dative [...] (p. 270) – began gradually to be extended to mark subjects of a transitive perfective clause in a dialect of Hindī spoken at the Mughal court (cf. also Hoernle 1880: 219).<sup>13</sup> Starting from these observations taken from reliable studies and primary texts as those mentioned above, it is possible to conclude that the process of restoration,

6. For the study of the Hindī grammatical tradition see Bhatia (1987), whereas for the treatment of transitivity in this tradition see Bhatia (1981).

7. This topic is discussed in Drococo (2008): Chapter 7.

8. Eastwick (ed.) (1851).

9. Eastwick (ed.) (1855).

10. Dās (ed.) (1925).

11. Bābū Śivprasād (ed.) (1870).

12. Other forms of this postposition are *nai*, *neri*, *naimi*. As already seen in this paper, with the exception of the examples, I always mention the form *ne*.

13. Beames' hypothesis has been recently pursued by Butt (2006).

in perfective clauses, of the ergative case marking of A with *ne* is related only to two centuries, the 17th and 18th century. But was this process abrupt or gradual? That is, was the use of *ne* fixed in these two centuries, as in modern Hindi, or variable? It is possible to answer this question on the basis of both considerations of some scholars and on the analysis of some texts of this period, especially prose texts, because more reliable for a linguistic examination. According to the majority of scholars in the beginning the use of a particular postposition to mark A in the perfective aspect in the aforementioned languages was sporadic, but gradually more systematic and regular (e.g. Kellogg 1893: 407; Hoernle 1880: 217–219; Śrīvāstav 1970: Chapter 3; cf. also Nespital 1998: 205 and Balbir 1991: 195). Recently Sigorsky (2007) confirmed that in early Hindi and Braj the breaking down of the case system decreased the distinctiveness of direct marked A and ergative marked A or sometimes eliminated it. Moreover the same author adds (2007: 37) that free alternation (optionality) of direct marked A and ergative marked A with *ne* is observed also in early Braj (see also Liperovskij 2007) and accordingly he explicitly states that “In early Hindi the postposition *ne* is used randomly [...]” (Sigorsky 2007: 37). The initial apparent free-variation of *ne* as a ergative case-marker of A in the perfective aspect is testified from prose texts written in different old Hindi varieties. In fact as we can see from the following examples, taken from the few prose texts available, even if in these texts many constructions look like the classic ergative case system of Modern Standard Hindi (cf. Examples 15, 16, 17, 18, 19 and 20), there is a complication in that not all A in perfective clauses take the ergative marker *ne* as in Examples 21, 22, 23, 24, 25 and 26.

Braj-bhāṣā

(15) [...] *bastubicāra nai kāma kauri maryau.*

Bastubicāra.M ERG Kāma.M DAT/ACC kill:PERF:M.SG

‘[...] Bastubicāra (= investigation into truth, personified) killed Kāma (= love, personified).’

(*Prabodha nāṭaka*, p. 105)

(16) *taba gāḍha nem una ki pukāra suni*

then vulture.M ERG 3PL.OBL GEN:F cry:F hear:CP

*khoḍara teri mūṇḍa nikāsi kahyau,* [...]

hollow ABL head put out:CP say:PERF:M.SG

‘Then the vulture hearing their cry, putting (his) head out of the hollow said [...]’

(*Rāja Nīti*, p. 14)

(17) [...] *desādhipati ne sūradāsa som kahyo,* [...]

Emperor.M ERG Sūradāsa INSTR say:PERF:M.SG

‘[...] the Emperor said to Sūradāsa, [...]’

(*Caurāsī vaiṣṇavana ki vārtā*, vārtā 81, p. 417)

Early Dakkhinī Hindī

(18) *usa ne khela yūm kheliyā.*

3SG.OBL ERG game 3SG.DIR play:PERF:M.SG

‘He played this game.’

(*Sab ras*, p. 3; adapted from Gricourt 1988: 164)

Early Hindī

(19) *yaha javāba pātisāha nai kiyā* [...]

3SG.DIR answer.M Emperor.M ERG do:PERF:M.SG

‘The Emperor made this answer [...]’

(*Kutubāsatakakā vārttika tilaka*, p. 12)

(20) *pātisāha nai hukama kiyā* [...]

Emperor.M ERG order.M do:PERF:M.SG

‘The Emperor ordered [...]’

(*Kutubāsatakakā vārttika tilaka*, p. 10)

Braj-bhāṣā

(21) *rājā bibeka dvārapāla kauri ājñā kari* [...]

rājā.M Bibeka door-keeper DAT order:F do:PERF:F.SG

‘Rājā Bibeka ordered to a door-keeper [...]’

(*Prabodha nāṭaka*, p. 100)

(22) *taba kṛṣṇadāsa śrīgusāmīji komi daṇḍavata*

thus Kṛṣṇadāsa.M Śrī Gusāmīji DAT prostration

*karike yaha pada gāye.*

do:CP 3SG:DIR pada.M sing:PERF:M.PL<sup>14</sup>

‘Thus Kṛṣṇadāsa, having prostrated himself to Śrī Gusāmīji, sang this

*pada*.’<sup>15</sup>

(*Caurāsī vaiṣṇavana ki vārtā*, vārtā 84, pp. 564–565)

(23) [...] *taba yaha desādhipati* [...] *pūchyō,* [...]

thus 3SG.DIR Emperor.M ask:PERF:M.SG

‘Thus this Emperor [...] asked, [...]’

(*Caurāsī vaiṣṇavana ki vārtā*, vārtā 83, pp. 486–487)

(24) *eka dina kāga kahī,* [...]

one day crow.M say:PERF:F

‘One day the crow said, [...]’

(*Rāja Nīti*, p. 20)

Early Dakkhinī hindī

(25) *bādasāha śarāba piyā.*

Emperor.M wine.F drink:PERF:M.SG

‘The Emperor drank wine.’

(adapted from Nespital 1998: 205)

14. In this example the verb shows concord with A (= Kṛṣṇadāsa), here honorific plural.

15. *Pada*: a verse of devotional poetry (especially intended to be sung).

(26) *khudā tuje furasata dīyā hai.*

God.M 2SG.OBL:DAT opportunity.F give:PERF:M.SG be.AUX.PRES.3SG  
'God gave you the opportunity.'

(*Sab ras*, p. 79; adapted from Gricourt 1988: 164)

Therefore this period is marked by a high variability in the presence of *ne* after A in perfective clauses: the result was a case marking system characterized by what McGregor (2009, 2010) classifies as an Optional Ergative Marking (OEM).<sup>16</sup> But even if the aforementioned scholars in their works dealt with the variable presence of *ne* in the beginning of its use, this is the only information we have about the history of *ne* used as ergative marker. As a consequence we do not know, as regards NIA and in particular Hindī and its dialects, the precise details of its initial free-variation, that is the precise details of the process of diffusion and stabilization of this postposition. In particular what were the reasons and the modalities which led to the present use of this case-marker? And what conditions the different case marking of A in the perfective aspect through the presence/absence of *ne* as new ergative marker? If we accept that its use with this specific function is not random, surely it is not easy to answer this question. Some authors, as Pandharipande and Kachru (1977), have stressed the importance a study along these lines would have.<sup>17</sup> In the following pages I try to give some interpretations of the high initial variability of *ne* as a case-marker for A in perfective clauses and to explore some aspects of its gradual spread in this function in Braj-bhāṣā, trying to establish the possible typology of case-asymmetries found in pre-18th century texts written in this old Hindī literary variety. Why this language? Because even if Modern Standard Hindī is based on the so-called Khaṛī-bolī, the real nature of this dialect – or mixed speech of the Delhi region – before the beginning of the 19th century is not totally clear. Moreover according to the most important scholars (cf. McGregor 1974: 67–68; Barz 1982: 12–14; Nespital 1998: 214–215), the Braj language was closely cognate with this pre-19th century mixed speech of the Delhi region and this is the language, thanks also to its rich literature, most representative of what is usually called Old or Medieval Hindī (Busch 2010). Lastly in Braj-bhāṣā are drawn up some of the earliest sample of Hindī prose (McGregor 1968).

16. As regards the presence of this phenomenon in early NIA see also Khokhlova (1995, 2006), Stronński (2011).

17. "It is interesting to investigate how and why the western dialects of the Hindi area, such as Braj, and Western Hindi-Urdu, as well as other cognate languages, [...] developed special markers (such as *ne* in Hindi-Urdu) to mark the ST", Pandharipande & Kachru (1977: 233).

## 5. The use of *ne* as ergative case-marker in Braj-bhāṣā prose

### 5.1 Introduction

Before entering into the analysis of the relevant constructions of Braj-bhāṣā, some general considerations about this language are in order. Today Braj-bhāṣā is mainly a non-literary, rural and household tongue, predominant in the so-called Braj region, that is in the area between the Gaṅgā and Yamunā rivers. However, it should be emphasized that for centuries, until the consolidation of Modern Standard Hindī, the Braj language, now considered a western dialect of Hindī, enjoyed great prestige as the vehicle of the Kṛṣṇa cult literature and for approximately three centuries before the 19th century was one of the most important literary languages of northern India (Busch 2010; see also Varma 1965). Although most of the works written in Braj-bhāṣā were in verse, the present investigation is based primarily on textual instances from a corpus of a few extant prose texts composed between the 17th century and the beginning of the 19th century, in particular from (i) the prose commentary of Indrajit of Orchā on the *Nītiśataka* of Bhartṛhari – composed circa at the beginning of the 17th century – edited and analyzed by Ronald Stuart McGregor (1968), (ii) the *Prabodha nāṭaka* (hereafter PN) of the mahārāja Jasvant Simha, (iii) four hagiographical stories included in the *Caurāsī vaiṣṇavan kī vārtā* (hereafter CVV), (iv) the first two chapters of the *Rāja Nīti* (hereafter RN) of Lallūji Lāl.

### 5.2 The ergative-absolutive system of early Braj-bhāṣā prose

As in Old Rājasthānī (cf. § 3), also in early Braj-bhāṣā the general mechanisms which lead to case syncretism in nominal inflection cause, for the majority of singular nouns, the attrition of the distinction between S and A in the perfective aspect. This is partly demonstrated by the first text of my corpus, the prose commentary of Indrajit of Orchā: here O, in perfective clauses, is in concord with the verbal form, whereas A, substantive or pronoun, appears in the oblique case, sometimes with but often without modification. In Tables 4 and 5 I give the case distinctions on nouns of Braj language according to McGregor (1968).

Regarding first and second person pronouns, in the singular the distinction between S and A is always realized through their instrumental forms *mainī* and *tairī* vs. their nominative forms *haunī* and *tunī* respectively. In the plural they share the same form for S and A, with the extension of the nominative form to A in perfective clauses: see table n. 6.

In this text, according to McGregor (1968), there are not postpositions for A in perfective clauses. Consequently at the beginning of the 17th century Old Rājasthānī and early Braj-bhāṣā – as already seen the latter represented by the

Table 4. Case distinctions on nouns in the Braj language of the text of Indrajit of Orchā: SINGULAR

	M		F
	-au	all others M nouns	all F nouns
Oblique (A in perfective clauses)	*e/*ai	---	---
Direct (A in non-perfective clauses & S)	---	---	---

(adapted from McGregor 1968: 129–130)

Table 5. Case distinctions on nouns in the Braj language of the text of Indrajit of Orchā: PLURAL

	M			F		
	all others M nouns	-au	-ā	-ā	-i	-ī, -u
Oblique (A in perfective clauses)	°ni	*e(ā)ni	°ni	°ni	°ni	°ni
Direct (A in non-perfective clauses & S)	---	*e(*ā)	ai(m)/*erñ	---	(*arñ)	°(y)aiñ

(adapted from McGregor 1968: 129–130)

Table 6. First & Second person pronouns in the Braj language of the text of Indrajit of Orchā

	SG		PL	
	1st	2nd	1st	2nd
A in non-perfective clauses & S	haurñ	turñ	hama	tuma
A in perfective clauses	mairñ	(tairñ)	hana	(tuma)

(adapted from McGregor 1968: 145–146)

prose commentary of Indrajit of Orchā – show the clear diachronic tendency to cancel, rather than to maintain, the S/A opposition in perfective clauses. This is also and especially true because in these languages, and approximately in this

period, there are no traces of any new ergative case-marker for A in the perfective aspect.<sup>18</sup>

5.3 The distribution of ergative case marking in late Braj-bhāṣā prose

Contrary to the prose commentary of Indrajit of Orchā, in the other three Braj prose texts investigated we find clear signs of the restoration of the distinction of S and A in perfective clauses by means of a case-marker new for this function in Braj-bhāṣā, the postposition *ne*. As a first approximation the analysis of the texts taken into consideration here allows us to assume that this postposition is used only as a case-marker of A in the perfective aspect. In this context, however, its use is not systematic and regular, because A is followed by this case-marker about in half of its total occurrences: see Table 7. As a consequence it is not possible to definitively conclude which of the two alternatives was the most frequent option.

The examination of all perfective clauses encountered in the texts here analyzed shows that the use of the postposition *ne* seems to be triggered by the type of nominal in the role of A in the perfective aspect. In fact, as we can see from Table 8, pronouns and nouns show different percentage regarding the presence of *ne*.

18. One anonymous reviewer pointed out that in earlier sources of Braj poetry it is possible to find postpositional marking of A in the perfective and the forms *haurñ* and *mairñ* of the first person singular pronoun often used interchangeably (contrary to what found in the Braj prose texts here analyzed: cf. Note 20). For example – the same reviewer adds – in the *Sūr Sāgar* of Sūrdās *mairñ* can be used as A (in imperfective and perfective), S and O; besides that, *haurñ* can be used as S and A. However I don't consider poems written in the Braj language reliable sources for an historical linguistic analysis. The reason for such a methodological position is the not totally clear manuscript tradition of the edited texts today available and the lack of a good critical edition for the majority of them. This is the case of the different edition of the text of the *Sūr Sāgar*. Hawley, one of the most authoritative scholar on the manuscript tradition of the poems of Sūrdās, clearly said in one of his study: "Like an ocean, [the *Sūr Sāgar*] is composed of numerous drops that form themselves into multiple, complexly related currents. [...] It is likely that already in Sur's own century, the sixteenth, other poet-performers besides the biological Surdas contributed to the corpus bearing his name. Clearly this pattern continued in the centuries that followed, right up to the present moment. Thus *Sur's Ocean* continues to expand, and only a certain proportion of the Surdas compositions that are held dearest by contemporary audiences can be traced back to Sur's own time." (2007: 224). Cf. also Hawley (1979) and (1984) (Chapter 2: "The Growth of the *Sūr Sāgar*").

Table 7. 'A' in perfective clauses

	'A' in perfective clauses				
	without <i>ne</i>		+ <i>ne</i>		Tot.
	N	%	N	%	
<i>Prabodha nātaka</i>	46	62,16	28	37,84	74
<i>Caurāsī vaiṣṇavana kī vārtā</i>	365	36,76	628	63,24	993
<i>Rājā nīti</i>	191	53,95	163	46,05	354

Table 8. Distribution of 'A' in perfective clauses

	Perfective transitive clauses										
	Pronouns			Nouns							
	Without <i>ne</i>	+ <i>ne</i>	Tot.	Without <i>ne</i>	+ <i>ne</i>	Tot.					
N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N			
<i>Prabodha nātaka</i>	15	100	0	-	15	31	52,54	28	47,46	59	74
<i>Caurāsī vaiṣṇavana kī vārtā</i>	31	26,05	88	73,95	119	334	38,22	540	61,78	874	993
<i>Rājā nīti</i>	101	68,71	46	31,29	147	90	43,48	117	56,52	207	354

In particular it is interesting to note that in the PN the optionality of *ne* is found only with nouns, because the pronouns are never followed by it. However this does not mean that all pronouns in perfective clauses share the same form for S and A. In fact in the PN the encoding of A in this context varies according to whether A is a pronoun or a noun, because the first and second person pronouns, in the singular, always show the opposition between S and A through the same suppletive forms found in the commentary of Indrajit of Orchā and not through the addition of any new ergative case-marker:<sup>19</sup> see Example 27 vs. Example 28.

- (27) [...] *mairī suriyau hai* [...] [*Prabodha nātaka*, p. 84]  
 1SG.INSTR hear:PERF:M.SG be.AUX.PRES.3SG  
 '[...] I have heard, [...]

19. I have no data of third person pronouns as regards to PN.

- (28) [...] *haurī [...] rājā bibeka paim*  
 1SG.NOM rājā Bibeka LOC  
*jāta haurī.*  
 go:PART.PRES:M.SG be.AUX.PRES.1SG  
 '[...] I go to rājā Bibeka.'  
 (*Prabodha nātaka*, p. 82)

The situation found in the RN, as regards Speech Act Participants in the singular, is very similar to that of the PN.<sup>20</sup> As regards the first person singular pronoun this is illustrated in Examples 29 and 30.

- (29) *taba mairī vā sorī kaḥyau, [...]*  
 then 1SG.INSTR 3SG.OBL INSTR say:PERF:M.SG  
 'Then I said to him.'  
 (*Rājā Nīti*, p. 56)
- (30) *haurī [...] saba sevaka [...]*  
 1SG.NOM all servant.M  
*leta haurī.*  
 take:PART.PRES:M.SG be.AUX.PRES.1SG  
 'I take all servants [...].'  
 (*Rājā Nīti*, p. 44)

Examples 31 and 32 are related to the second person singular pronoun: in the RN *tairī* is the form for A in perfective clauses (cf. 31), whereas *tū* is normally used for A in non-perfective clauses and for S (cf. 32).

- (31) [...] *tairī ina syārana kaurī adhikāri*  
 2SG.INSTR 3PL.OBL jackal:OBL.PL DAT authority.M  
*kīyau, [...]*  
 do:PERF:M.SG  
 '[...] you have invested these jackals with authority [...]' (*Rājā Nīti*, p. 49)

20. It is noteworthy that, contrary to the PN where *ne* is however present, in the RN this case-marker follows sometimes also the aforesaid instrumental forms *mairī* and *tairī*. It is possible that this is a consequence of the fact that already in the PN, but especially in the RN, the instrumental form *mairī* of the first person singular pronoun, typical for A in the perfective aspect, is also used for A in non-perfective clauses and for S, where the nominative form *haurī* was normally used instead. This process of replacement is more advanced, even if far from being completed, in the RN with regard to the PN, whereas in the four hagiographical stories of the CVV is completed, since in this text the Nominative form *haurī* of the first person singular pronoun is totally absent. The analysis of the same very process of replacement is beyond the scope of the present paper. Cf. Note 18 as regards the fact that in earlier sources of Braj poetry the forms *haurī* and *mairī* of the first person singular pronoun are often used interchangeably.

- (32) *are! tū ko hai?*  
hello 2SG.NOM who be.PRES.2SG  
'Hello! Who are you?'  
(*Rāja Nīti*, p. 31)

In the RN a similar opposition is found with third person plural pronouns when they occur as S and A in perfective clauses. In fact in this context they share not the same form, since A shows the oblique forms *ina* or *una*, the latter also in the allomorphic form *uni*. In almost all cases these forms are used as a honorific plural for singular reference: see Examples 33, 34, 35, 36 and 37.

- (33) *ina kahī, [...]*  
3PL.OBL.HON say:PERF.F  
'He said, [...]'  
(*Rāja Nīti*, p. 41)
- (34) *una kahī, [...]*  
3PL.OBL.HON say:PERF.F  
'He said, [...]'  
(*Rāja Nīti*, p. 11)
- (35) *jaba uni āpanī saba pūrva avasthā*  
when 3PL.OBL.HON his all former circumstances.F  
*kahī, [...]*  
say:PERF.F  
'When he related all his former circumstances [...]'  
(*Rāja Nīti*, p. 46)
- (36) *uni kahī, [...]*  
3PL.OBL.HON say:PERF.F  
'He said, [...]'  
(*Rāja Nīti*, p. 39)
- (37) *itani kahī, uni nija mana mem [...]* *bicāryau*  
this much say:CP 3PL.OBL.HON own mind LOC reflect:PERF.M.SG  
'Having said this much he reflected in his own mind [...]'  
(*Rāja Nīti*, p. 63)

In the RN when third person plural pronouns occur as A in perfective clauses for numerical plural then the above said oblique forms appear with the addition of the suffix *-ni*, as in 38 and 39:

- (38) *[...] unani āpanem doṣa tem dukha*  
3PL.OBL.OBL their fault.M ABL distress.M  
*pāyau, [...]*  
suffēr:PERF.M.SG  
'[...] Those suffered distress from their own fault, [...]'  
(*Rāja Nīti*, p. 53)
- (39) *inani kahī, [...]*  
3PL.OBL.OBL say:PERF.F  
'They said, [...]'  
(*Rāja Nīti*, p. 55)

The same is true for common nouns, but only in the plural, where alongside *-ni* it is possible to find also the allomorphic form *-na*: see Example 40 and Examples 41 and 42 respectively.

- (40) *sevakani kahī, [...]*  
servant:OBL.M.PL say:PERF.F  
'The servants said, [...]'  
(*Rāja Nīti*, p. 50)
- (41) *[...] saba banabāsiyana vā hi*  
all dwellers of the forest:OBL.M.PL 3SG.OBL DAT  
*āśīrbāda diyau.*  
blessings.M give:PERF.M.SG  
'[...] all the dwellers of the forest showered down blessings upon him.'  
(*Rāja Nīti*, p. 57)
- (42) *yaha suni pañchiyana kahī, [...]*  
3SG.DIR hear:CP bird:OBL.M.PL say:PERF.F  
'Having heard this the birds said, [...]'  
(*Rāja Nīti*, p. 7)

It is interesting to observe that *hama* and *tuma*, as respective forms of the first and second person plural pronouns, are used in the RN, with very few occurrences, for singular reference: in these cases, when they appear as A in perfective clauses, the postposition *ne*, or any other suffix, is absent. As a consequence the forms used in these occurrences are the same used in non-perfective clauses but, interestingly, the verbal agreement is in accordance with an ergative-absolutive system: see Examples 43 and 44.

- (43) *maharāja! hama vāhi dekhyau, [...]*  
sire.VOC 1PL.DIR 3SG.OBL.ACC see:PERF.M.SG  
'Oh Sire! I saw him, [...]'  
(*Rāja Nīti*, p. 46)
- (44) *tuma kahyau [...]*  
2PL.DIR say:PERF.M.SG  
'You said, [...]'  
(*Rāja Nīti*, p. 29)

But if the same pronouns are used as A in perfective clauses for plural reference, then the suffix *-ni* is added, as in Examples 45 and 46.

- (45) *mitralābha kī kathā tau*  
acquisition of friends GEN:F narrative.F PTCL  
*hamani sunī, [...]*  
1PL.OBL hear:PERF.F  
'We have heard the narrative regarding the acquisition of friends, [...]'  
(*Rāja Nīti*, p. 35)

- (46) [...] *taba tumani sahāyālā kari una ke*  
 then 2PL:OBL assistance.F do:CP 3PL:OBL GEN:M.PL  
*jīva bacāye.*  
 life.M save:PERF:M.PL

‘[...] then you, rendering assistance, saved their lives.’ (Rāja Nīti, p. 19)

As regards pronouns, there are also some instances, but only in the CVV, of the honorific plural pronoun *āpa/āpu* as A in perfective clauses: nearly always this pronoun occurs without *ne* and in concord with the verb, as in Example 47.

- (47) *taba āpu ājñā kiye* [...]
   
 then HON.PL command.F do:PERF:M.PL

‘Then he commanded [...]’ (Caurāsī vaiṣṇavana kī vārtā, vārtā 82, p. 455)

In some other cases, as in Example 48, the same pronoun is again not followed by the ergative postposition *ne* but, contrary to 47 and concerning verbal agreement, is O and not A in concord with the verb.

- (48) [...] *āpu dasamaskamḍha kī anukramaṇikā*  
 HON.PL dasamaskamḍha GEN:F anukramaṇikā.F  
*kari hatī* [...]
   
 do:PERF.F be.AUX:IMPF(past):F

‘[...] he had done the *Anukramaṇikā* of the *Dasamaskamḍha* [...]’

(Caurāsī vaiṣṇavana kī vārtā, vārtā 81, p. 406)

Sometimes with the same pronoun as A in perfective clauses is not at all clear if the verbal agreement patterns in conformity with an ergative-absolutive system or with a nominative-accusative one. For example in the following example the verb is masculine and plural, but both A and O are masculine and honorific plural.

- (49) [...] *āpa* [...] *śrī Govarddhananātha jī*  
 HON.PL Śrī.HON.PL Govarddhananātha jī.HON.PL  
*ke darasana kiye* [...]
   
 GEN:M.PL darśana.M.HON.PL do:PERF:M.PL

‘He did the *darśana* of Śrī Govarddhananāthajī [...]’  
 (Caurāsī vaiṣṇavana kī vārtā, vārtā 84, p. 485)

As already said, the suppletive forms of pronouns in the PN and in the RN and the addition of the suffix *-na/-ni* in the RN are not the only ergative case-markers found in my corpus: in fact, in these two texts, the distinction between A and S in the perfective aspect is also realized with a third type of ergative marking,

i.e. the postposition *ne*.<sup>21</sup> As regards the use of this new ergative case-marker in Braj-bhāṣā prose texts, I have already observed that in the PN this postposition follows only nouns. As regards the RN the suffix *-na/-ni* is used with plural common nouns and plural pronouns, whereas the postposition *ne* is used especially,<sup>22</sup> and as the only one ergative case-marker, with singular common nouns (cf. Examples 50, 51), proper nouns (cf. Examples 52 and 53) and third person singular pronouns (cf. Example 54):

- (50) *yaha bāta suni kuramga nem ahāra kiyau,* [...]
   
 3SG:DIR talk.F hear:CP antelope.M ERG repast.M do:PERF:M.SG

‘Hearing these words the antelope took (his) repast, [...]’ (Rāja Nīti, p. 26)

- (51) [...] *kacchapa nem mūsā sorī kahyau,* [...]
   
 tortoise.M ERG rat with say:PERF:M.SG

(Rāja Nīti, p. 27)

- (52) *taba mamtharaka nem vā kī pūjā*
  
 then Mamtharak.M ERG 3SG.OBL GEN:F homage.F  
*kari pūchyau,* [...]

do:CP inquire:PERF:M.SG

‘Then Mamtharak, having paid his homage to him, inquired [...]’

(Rāja Nīti, p. 21)

- (53) *viṣṇusarmā nem rājaputrani kaum āsisa dāī* [...]
   
 Viṣṇusarmā.M ERG Princes:OBL DAT blessing.F give:PERF.F  
 ‘Viṣṇusarmā gave the Princes a blessing [...]’

(Rāja Nīti, p. 66)

- (54) [...] *vā nem yā korī āya māryau*
  
 3SG:OBL ERG 3SG:OBL DAT/ACC come:CP kill:PERF:M.SG  
 ‘[...] he came and killed him.’

(Rāja Nīti, p. 26)

On the contrary it is interesting to note that in the CVV the same case-marker follows not only singular common/proper nouns and third singular pronouns as in the RN, but also plural common nouns and other pronouns. Probably this is due to the fact that other means to express A ≠ S in perfective clauses are not used in this text: for example the suppletive forms of Speech Act Participants in the singular. Moreover in the same very text the suffix *-na/-ni* seems to be always

21. Therefore in the corpus analyzed, although not in all texts, the case marking system for A found in perfective clauses is not only an OEM but also, following again McGregor (2009), a Differential Ergative Marking (DEM), that is a system “[...] in which a language shows two or more distinct ergative case-markers” (McGregor 2009: 497).

22. See my remarks in note n. 20.

ineffective and/or not sufficient to express ergative marking for nouns and pronouns: see Examples 55 and 56, 57 respectively taken from the portion of the CVV analyzed.

- (55) *taba una tīnorī bālakana ne*  
 then 3PL.OBL three:OBL.PL boy:OBL.M.PL ERG  
*śrī giradhara jī soṃ kahī [...]*  
 Śrī.HON.PL Giradhara jī.HON.PL INS say:PERF.F  
 'Then those three boys said to Śrī Giradharajī [...]'  
 (Caurāsī vaiṣṇavana kī vārtā, vārtā 81, p. 421)

- (56) *pacherī unane kahī [...]*  
 then 3PL.HON.OBL:ERG say:PERF.F  
 'Then he said [...]'  
 (Caurāsī vaiṣṇavana kī vārtā, vārtā 83, p. 490)

- (57) *[...] hamane [...] koī śrī svāmīnī jī*  
 1PL:ERG any Śrī.HON.PL Svāmīnī jī.HON.PL  
*ko kīrtana nāhīm sunyo, [...]*  
 GEN:M.SG kīrtana.M.SG NEG hear:PERF:M.SG  
 '[...] we have never heard any kīrtana on Śrī Svāmīnījī [...]'  
 (Caurāsī vaiṣṇavana kī vārtā, vārtā 83, p. 499)

But if it is true that the ergative marking with oblique/instrumental forms of pronouns or with the addition of the suffix *-nī* is fixed in the majority of cases encountered in the PN and in the RN, it is also true that the use of *ne* as ergative case-marker of A in perfective clauses in these two texts and in the CVV is extremely variable: in my corpus this is true especially for nouns. I will discuss this topic in the next section focusing my attention on the CVV and the RN.

#### 5.4 The variability of *ne* as ergative case-marker in late Braj-bhāṣā prose

As a first consideration to understand the variability of *ne* with nouns in my corpus I must say that in the RN there are many nouns related, for example but not only, to animals but used metaphorically as humans and thus treated as such in the analysis. In this manner in the texts investigated prevail, in perfective clauses, animate, especially human As: there are only five instances of true animals, all followed by *ne*, whereas there is not a single example of inanimate nouns. Second, starting from a preliminary analysis of the texts I decided to consider, among human nouns, not only the two macro-categories of human proper nouns and human common nouns but at least another category: the category of religious titles, like, for example, *ācārya*, that is instructor, and titles referred to the *avatāra(s)*, "reincarnation", of Viṣṇu, like Kṛṣṇa. In the CVV this kind of titles appears always with the honorific prefix *śrī-* and followed by the honorific suffix

*-jī*. Thus taking into account data illustrated in Tables 9, 10 and 11, it is possible to say that:

- in the CVV, common nouns present a strong tendency to occur as A in perfective clauses with *ne*; in the RN the same tendency is present, but it is not so evident;
- at the opposite pole we find the aforementioned titles;
- in-between there are proper nouns: this kind of participant is that with the higher variability in the use of *ne* and, at least concerning the RN, with similar percentages of instances with both options.

Table 9. Variability of *ne* with titles

	Titles				Tot.	
	without <i>ne</i>		+ <i>ne</i>		Tot.	N.
	N	%	N	%	N	N
<i>Prabodha nāṭaka</i>	6	85,71	1	14,29	7	59
<i>Caurāsī vaiṣṇavana kī vārtā</i>	208	75,64	67	24,36	275	874
<i>Rājā nīti</i>	0	-	0	-	0	207

Table 10. Variability of *ne* with proper nouns

	Proper nouns				Tot.	
	without <i>ne</i>		+ <i>ne</i>		Tot.	N
	N	%	N	%	N	N
<i>Prabodha nāṭaka</i>	21	47,73	23	52,27	44	59
<i>Caurāsī vaiṣṇavana kī vārtā</i>	106	25,42	311	74,58	417	874
<i>Rājā nīti</i>	41	55,41	33	44,59	74	207

Table 11. Variability of *ne* with common nouns

	Common nouns				Tot.	
	without <i>ne</i>		+ <i>ne</i>		Tot.	N
	N	%	N	%	N	N
<i>Prabodha nāṭaka</i>	3	37,50	5	62,50	8	59
<i>Caurāsī vaiṣṇavana kī vārtā</i>	20	10,99	162	89,01	182	874
<i>Rājā nīti</i>	49	36,84	84	63,16	133	207



Therefore the evidence shows that one of the principal factors governing the presence of *ne* in the perfective aspect would seem to be the inherent topicality of the nominal in the role of A. However it is important to point out that, taking into account the CVV, the absence of *ne* with titles is often associated with the presence after them, and only after them, of *āpa/āpu* ‘he/himself’: in these occurrences the verb agrees in conformity to a nominative-accusative system, as in Example 58:

- (58) [...] *śrī ācārya jī āpu*  
 Śrī.HON.PL Ācārya jī.HON.PL he/himself  
*paramānandasvāmī somi ājñā kiye* [...] [*...*]  
 Paramānandasvāmī INS order.F.SG do:PERF.M.PL

‘[...] Śrī Ācāryaji himself commanded to Paramānandasvāmī [...].’

(*Caurāsī vaiṣṇavana kī vārtā, vārtā* 84, p. 494)

In some few cases, even if titles occur followed by *āpa/āpu* and without *ne*, the verb agrees with O and not with A; see Example 59:

- (59) [...] *taba śrī gusāmī jī āpu* [...] [*...*]  
 then Śrī.HON.PL Gusāmī jī.HON.PL he/himself  
*vā rājapūta koṃ nāma sunāyo*.  
 3SG.OBL Rājapūta DAT name.M.SG announce:PERF.M.SG

‘[...] then Śrī Gusāmiji himself [...] initiated that Rājapūta.’

(literal: then Śrī Gusāmiji himself announced the (divine) name to that Rājapūta) (*Caurāsī vaiṣṇavana kī vārtā, vārtā* 83, p. 515)

If it is certainly true that not in all instances of titles without *ne* there is the presence of *āpa/āpu* (see data of column 4 in Table 12 and Example 60), it is also true that if the latter follows this kind of participant, then the ergative case-marker *ne* is always absent (see data of column 3 vs. data of column 5 in Table 12).

- (60) *taba śrī govarddhananātha jī yaha*  
 then Śrī.HON.PL Govarddhananātha jī.HON.PL 3SG.DIR  
*ājñā kiye*, [...] [*...*]  
 order.F.SG do:PERF.M.PL

‘Then Śrī Govarddhananāthaji commanded this [...].’

(*Caurāsī vaiṣṇavana kī vārtā, vārtā* 83, p. 481)

Now, considering also the typology of the predicate, it is possible to conclude, on a first analysis, that some verbs, as *pañhā-* ‘to send’ and *māra-* ‘to hit, to kill’, are more frequently associated with A followed by *ne*, while for others – as *bicāra-* ‘to think, to reflect, to consider’ or *āroga-* ‘to eat’ – we find the opposite situation. But some verbs, which have the greatest number of occurrences, present almost similar percentages of instances with both options: the most important examples

Table 12. *Caurāsī vaiṣṇavana kī vārtā*: titles as A in perfective clauses

Tot. titles as A in perfective clauses	Tot. titles as A in perfective clauses + <i>āpa/āpu</i>	Tot. titles as A in perfective clauses without <i>ne</i>	Tot. titles as A in perfective clauses without <i>ne</i> and without <i>āpa/āpu</i>	Tot. titles as A in perfective clauses + <i>āpa/āpu</i> and + <i>ne</i>
N	N	N	N	N
275	208	102	106	0

of this kind of verbs are *kara-* ‘to do’, *kaha-* ‘to say’, *pūcha-* ‘to ask’. Focusing our attention on these verbs, if we do a cross-check between the type of main verb and the type of A followed or not by *ne*, we can see that, for example, in the CVV the percentage of perfective clauses without *ne* and with *kara-* as the main verb is very high, 80.7% (46/57), if as A in the perfective aspect there are titles (often followed by *āpa/āpu*), while is very low, only the 8.11% (3/37), with common nouns. Proper nouns related to the various followers occur quite often as in A perfective clauses with this case-marker, but the percentage of their occurrences without *ne* (22,89%, 19/83) is higher than that of common nouns. Similarly the same is true for *kaha-* and *pūcha-*.

without *ne* + *ne*

*kara-* ‘to do’

1SG e HON	9 (75 %)	3 (25%)
All others pronouns	5 (19,23%)	21 (80,77%)
Titles	46 (80,70%)	11 (19,30%)
Proper nouns	19 (22,89%)	64 (77,11%)
Common nouns	3 (8,11%)	34 (91,89%)

*kaha-* ‘to say’

1SG e HON	3 (75%)	1 (25%)
All others pronouns	7 (25,93)	17 (62,97%)
Titles	108 (86,40%)	17 (13,60%)
Proper nouns	47 (29,19%)	114 (70,81%)
Common nouns	9 (9,38%)	87 (90,62%)

*pūcha-* ‘to ask’

1SG e HON	0 (---)	0 (---)
All others pronouns	0 (---)	1 (100%)
Titles	16 (84,21%)	3 (15,79%)
Proper nouns	5 (45,45%)	6 (54,55%)
Common nouns	1 (14,29%)	6 (85,71%)

On the other hand, taking into account, for example, the verb *rākha-*, it is possible to say that when this verb appears in perfective clauses, the *ne* postposition is nearly always present with all participants in the function of A. This is also true in the CVV, for titles, even though, as we have seen, the same kind of participant with other verbs, like *kara-*, *kaha-*, *pūcha-*, has a strong tendency to occur without the same case-marker. How can we explain this situation? The lexical meaning of the verb *rākha-* is “to put, to place”: in the CVV it often means “to charge someone with something”, that is “to put, to place, to instruct someone to do something”. With this particular meaning there are in this text five instances in the perfective with titles as A, all followed by *ne*, and with human Os: two not followed by the object marker *koṃi*, but in first position in the sentence, as in Example 62, whereas the other three, of which two are first person plural pronoun, followed by *koṃi* and at the beginning of the sentence, as in Example 61.

- (61) *hama koṃi śrī ācārya jī ne*  
 1PL.DIR DAT/ACC Śrī.HON.PL Ācārya jī.HON.PL ERG  
*śrī govarddhananātha jī kī sevā*  
 Śrī.HON.PL Govarddhananātha jī.HON.PL GEN:F sevā  
*meri rākhe hate, [...]*  
 LOC put:PERF.M.PL be.AUX:IMPF(past).M.PL

‘Śrī Ācāryajī had charged us with the *sevā* of Śrī Govarddhananāthajī, [...]’  
 (Caurāsī vaiṣṇavana kī vārtā, vārtā 84, p. 539)

- (62) *bāṅgālī śrī ācārya jī ne*  
 Bengali(M)(PL Śrī(HON)(PL) Ācārya jī(HON)(PL) ERG  
*rākhe hairi.*  
 put:PERF.M.PL be.AUX.PRES.3PL

‘Śrī Ācāryajī have charged the Bengalis (with the *sevā* in the temple):’  
 (Caurāsī vaiṣṇavana kī vārtā, vārtā 84, p. 533)

The situation showed by *pañhā-* “to send” (cf. 63) – or other verbs occurring with human Os, even if the latter not followed by *koṃi* and/or not in first position in the clause (cf. 64) – is very similar to that of *rākha-*.

- (63) [...] *mathurā teri pañcasau manuṣya*  
 Mathurā ABL five hundred men  
*birabala ne pañhāye [...]*  
 Birabala ERG send:PERF:M.PL

‘[...] Birabala sent five hundred men from Mathurā [...]’  
 (Caurāsī vaiṣṇavana kī vārtā, vārtā 84, p. 561)

- (64) [...] *taba śrī gusāmī jī paṃdraha*  
 then Śrī.HON.PL Gusāmī jī.HON.PL fifteen  
*brajavāsī dorāye.*  
*brajavāsī.M send:PERF.M.PL*  
 ‘[...] then Śrī Gusāmījī sent fifteen *brajavāsī*.’<sup>23</sup>  
 (Caurāsī vaiṣṇavana kī vārtā, vārtā 81, p. 437)

If we do the same cross-check, but with regard to the RN, we can see that the instances of A without *ne* as regards nouns are almost all with the verb *kaha-* “to say” and with similar percentages related to the absence of *ne* for common nouns and proper nouns (cf. the data illustrated in Table 13).

Table 13. *Rājā nīti*: type of main verb/proper nouns, common nouns

	Proper nouns						Common nouns					
	without <i>ne</i>			+ <i>ne</i>			without <i>ne</i>			+ <i>ne</i>		
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
<i>kara-</i> ‘to do’	0	-	1	100	0	-	12	100				
<i>kaha-</i> ‘to say’	41	71,93	16	28,07	43	65,15	23	34,85				
<i>khiā-</i> ‘to eat’	0	-	0	-	0	-	3	100				
<i>da-</i> ‘to give’	0	-	2	100	0	-	4	100				
<i>de-</i> ‘to give’	0	-	1	100	2	50,00	2	50,00				
<i>dekha-</i> ‘to see, to look’	0	-	0	-	0	-	6	100				
<i>pā-</i> ‘to get’	0	-	1	100	0	-	3	100				
<i>pūcha-</i> ‘to ask’	0	-	1	100	1	33,33	2	66,67				
<i>bicāra-</i> ‘to think, to reflect’	0	-	2	100	1	16,67	5	83,33				
<i>māra-</i> ‘to hit, to kill’	0	-	0	-	0	-	4	100,00				
<i>rākha-</i> ‘to put, to place’	0	-	1	100	0	-	3	100				
<i>sunā-</i> ‘to say’	0	-	1	100	0	-	2	100				

In these instances there is always only A with *kaha-* to introduce a reported speech. Moreover this verb is, in all such occurrences, in the feminine form – as typical in Old Rājasthānī and Braj-bhāṣā – probably because in agreement with the feminine noun *bāta* “something said, said statement” not expressed in the construction (cf. Smith 1975; McGregor 1968: 224, Note 3; Snell 1992: 12): see Examples 65, 66, 67 and 68.

23. A *brajavāsī* is a native of the Braj region. A person who is called a *brajavāsī* in the literature of Vallabhācārya’s *sampradāya* is assumed to be a *vaiṣṇava*; cf. Barz (1976: 125, Note 2).

- (65) *syāra kahī kahī [...]*  
jackal.M say:PERF.F  
'The jackal said [...]'  
(*Rāja Nīti*, p. 31)
- (66) *brāhmana kahī [...]*  
brāhman.M say:PERF.F  
'The Brāhman said [...]'  
(*Rāja Nīti*, p. 8)
- (67) *puni rājā kahī [...]*  
again King.M say:PERF.F  
'Again the King said [...]'  
(*Rāja Nīti*, p. 7)
- (68) *citragrīva kahī [...]*  
Citragrīva.M say:PERF.F  
'Citragrīva said [...]'  
(*Rāja Nīti*, p. 6)

On the contrary the other instances where A is followed by *ne* with *kaha-* show a constant correlation: between A and the verb there is, at least, the addressee (cf. Example 69) and/or the conjunctive participle of one or more transitive verbs (cf. 70 and 71).

- (69) *yaha bicāri brāhmana neṁ vā soṁ kahī [...]*  
3SG.DIR reflect:CP brāhman.M ERG 3SG.OBL INSTR say:PERF.F  
'Having thus reflected the brāhman said to him [...]'  
(*Rāja Nīti*, p. 7)
- (70) *kiteka dina pāchai syāra neṁ hirana kauṁ*  
some days after jackal.M ERG antelope DAT/ACC  
*aikalau pāya kahyau*  
alone find:CP say:PERF.M.SG  
'Some days after the jackal, finding the antelope alone, said [...]'  
(*Rāja Nīti*, p. 16)
- (71) *āgai rājā neṁ yaha bicāri, paṁḍatani ko*  
afterwards king.M ERG this think:CP paṇḍita:OBL.PL GEN:M.SG  
*samāja kari kahyau*  
assembly.M do:CP say:PERF.M.SG  
'Afterwards the King thinking this, having made an assembly of paṇḍits, said [...]'  
(*Rāja Nīti*, p. 4)

## 6. Summary

To summarize what has been seen till now, we can provisionally conclude that on the one side in the first period of NIA the distributions of case patterns found in the texts in Old Rājasthānī and Braj-bhāṣā violate the general tendencies existing

in the languages with split nominal systems (cf. Silverstein 1976; Comrie 1978; Dixon 1994). In fact, contrary to these tendencies, in these two linguistic varieties it is possible to find, in the singular, an accusative or neutral paradigm with nouns and an ergative or tripartite one with pronouns; the opposite is found in the plural (see Table 14) (cf. Filimonova 2005 for an in-depth discussion, also to other languages; see also Wierzbicka 1981).

Table 14. Case distinctions in perfective clauses: Old Rājasthānī and Braj-bhāṣā at the beginning of the 17th century

	Old Rājasthānī	Braj-bhāṣā
1-2	SG S ≠ A	S ≠ A
	PL S = A	S = A
3	SG S ≠ A	S ≠ A
	PL S ≠ A	S ≠ A
Nouns	SG S ≠ A (M in -o)	S ≠ A (M in -au)
	PL S = A (M e F)	S = A (M e F)
	PL S = A (F in -ām)	S ≠ A
	S ≠ A (M e F)	S ≠ A (M e F)

(adapted from Drocco 2008: 343)

On the other side, Braj-bhāṣā, contrary to Old Rājasthānī (Smith 1975; Khokhlova 2001: 167), shows, by approximately the 17th century, the tendency to change its previous alignment; perhaps because typologically odd. The change does not result in a nominative-accusative type, but in an ergative one. In particular it seems very likely that what is attested in the PN is a proof of the hypothesis according to which the *ne* postposition has been introduced in the Braj language exactly where the case marking system has the tendency to show the same form for S and A in perfective clauses, that is where the case marking system was not distinctive enough: this is true for the majority of singular nouns. As a result, the restored difference between S and A with the introduction of a new case-marker for A in a specific point of the nominal hierarchy creates gradually, but ever since the first moment, a case marking system that does not contradict the typical split nominal system. As regards nouns and starting from what I said before, if we want to accept the few examples of animates not humans as A in perfective clauses all followed by *ne*, then it seems that the process of spread of the postposition *ne* starts at the right end of the Nominal Hierarchy, but we cannot confirm, due to the absence

in the role of A in the perfective. As a consequence, in spite of the tripartite system now predominant in contemporary Hindi (Comrie 2005), during this gradual process it is interesting to see the appearance of various case marking systems – neutral, ergative, tripartite and also accusative – depending on the position of A in the nominal hierarchy. In particular it seems that, following Haig (2008), also in Braj-bhāṣā one of the most important factor, even if not the only one, that guided the pathways down which the various alignment systems have progressed is the factor of animacy, a powerful force in shaping the outcome of alignment shift.

### Texts

- ṚgVeda* = *Rig Veda: a Metrically Restored Text*, by Barend A. van Nooten & Gary B. Holland, 1994, Harvard University Press. (<http://www.utexas.edu/cola/centers/lrc/RV/RV00.html>)
- Bhāgavad-gītā* = «*Śrīmadbhāgavadgītā*», *padaccheda-anvaya aura Sadharanabhāṣāīkāśahita*, Gorakhpur, Gītā Press, 1974 (1922 1st edn).
- Caurāsī vaiṣṇavana ki vārtā* (CVV) = Gokulanātha. *Caurāsī vaiṣṇavana ki vārtā (tīna janma ki līlā bhāvnā vālī)*, ed. Dvārakādās Parīkh, Mathurā (Śrī Govardhan Granthamālā Kāryālay) VS 2027 (1970).
- Kutubśāstakakā vārttika tilaka* = *Kutubśāstakakā vārttika tilaka*, in *Kutubśāstaka aura usakī hindū*, (ed.) Gupta, Mātāprasāda, Bhāratiya Jñānapīṭha prakāśana 1967, 201–206.
- Rājānīti* (RN) = Lāla, Lallūji. *Rājānīti or tales exhibiting the moral doctrines, and the civil and military policy of the hindoos*. Translated from the original Sunskrit of Narayun Pundit into Brij Bhasha, by Sree Lulloo Lal Kub. Printed under the Sanction of the General Committee of Public Instruction, at the Education Press. Calcutta: 1827, (1809 1st edn).
- Prabodha nāṭika* (PN) = Simha, Jasvanta. *Prabodha nāṭika*, in *Granthāvalī*, 81–111, (ed.) Miśra, V.P., Nāgari Pracārīnī Sabhā, Vārāṇasī 1972.
- Rīṭhāṇemi-carīu* = Svayambhūdeva. *Rīṭhāṇemi-carīu*, (ed.) Jain, D.K., Bhāratiya Jñānapīṭha, Kāshī 1985.

### References

- Andersen, Paul Kent. 1986a. Die ta-Partizipialkonstruktion bei Aśoka: Passiv oder Ergativ? *Zeitschrift für Vergleichende Sprachforschung* 99: 75–94.
- Andersen, Paul Kent. 1986b. The genitive agent in Rigvedic passive constructions. In *Collectanea linguistica in honorem Adami Heinz* [Prace Komisji Językoznawstwa 53], 9–13. Wrocław: Wydawnictwo Polskiej Akademii Nauk.
- Anderson, Stephen R. 1977. On mechanism by which languages become ergative. In *Mechanisms of Syntactic Change*, Charles N. Li (ed.), 317–363. Austin TX: University of Texas Press.
- Arnot, Sandford. 1831. *A New Self-instructing Grammar of the Hindustani Tongue, the Most Useful and General Language of British India, in the Oriental and Roman Character* (With Appendix of Reading Exercises and Vocabulary). London.

of data, that it starts at the lower end, with inanimate nouns. As a consequence of the rare presence of this case-marker with these two kinds of nominals, its high variability in this first period concerns, as I have just noted, only one category of nouns, that is human nouns. But among them, titles, proper nouns and the majority of singular common nouns are all potential and equally candidates to the use of *ne*, because for all the case marking system was not distinctive enough: however the frequency of this postposition with each of them is different. About titles and common nouns it seems that this difference would reflect their diversity in terms of inherent referential characteristics and thus topicality, whereas proper nouns may be ideally placed in an intermediate position, however, closer to common nouns on the use of the ergative case-marker. Even if the data of the transitive perfective verbs confirm that one important factor related to the presence of *ne* in the texts investigated is the type of nominal or pronoun occurring as A in perfective clauses, on the other hand show that the postposition *ne* has the strong tendency to appear, also with those nominal constituents that with other verbs have the opposite tendency, if in the construction there is a human/animate O, sometimes a Speech Act Participant, followed or not by the object case-marker *koṃ* and/or at the beginning of the construction. Therefore, although in the perfective aspect the new ergative case-marker took over first with animate non-human and then to human common nouns, it would appear also to those nouns who are more on the left side of the Nominal Hierarchy, but probably only when their topicality, inherent, due to the context or the construction, is low and/or compromised. It seems thus that for them it was necessary to identify clearly their role within the sentence.

### 7. Conclusion

In conclusion, if it is true that the present-day split non-accusative system of this particular NIA language originates from the progressive use of the perfective clause expressed by the past-participle in *-ta*, it is also true, as we have seen, that this system is the result of a process of restoration of an old function with a new form which started to be used only in the 17th century. On the one side the “macro-history” of this new form as ergative case-marker for A in the perfective aspect suggests that the discriminatory function of case marking is clearly important in the beginning of its process of diffusion and extension in Braj-bhāṣā. On the other side the “micro-history” of *ne* shows that since this process was gradual, the use of this postposition in the texts investigated was surely optional, but only apparently random, as it might appear at first sight, but due, probably, to an interplay of morpho-syntactic, semantic and pragmatic factors, all concerned the nominal

- Balbir, Nicole de Tugny. 1991. De Fort William au hindi littéraire: La transformation de la Khari boli en langue littéraire moderne au XIX<sup>e</sup> siècle. In *Littératures médiévales de l'Inde du Nord*, Françoise Mallison & Charlotte Vaudeville (eds), 187–204. Paris: École française d'Extrême-Orient.
- Ballantyne, James R. 1838. *Grammar of the Hindustani Language, with Grammatical Exercises*. London.
- Barz, Richard K. 1976. *The Bhakti Sect of Vallabhācārya*. Faridabad: Thompson Press India.
- Barz, Richard K. 1982. A beginning in prose: Some steps in the emergence of modern Hindi literature. *South Asia* 5(1): 5–15. doi:10.1080/00856408208723025
- Beames, John. 1872–1879. *A Comparative Grammar of the Modern Aryan Languages of India*. London: Trubner & Co. (reprint 1966, Delhi: Munshiram Manoharlal).
- Bhardwaj, Mangat R. 1995. *Colloquial Panjabi. A Complete Language Course*. London: Routledge.
- Bhatia, Tej K. 1981. The treatment of transitivity in the Hindi grammatical tradition. *Studies in the Linguistic Sciences* 11(2): 195–208.
- Bhatia, Tej K. 1987. *A History of the Hindi Grammatical Tradition. Hindi-Hindustani Grammar, Grammatians, History and Problems*. Leiden: E. J. Brill.
- Bhatia, Tej K. 1993. *Punjabi*. London: Routledge.
- Bhatia, Tej K. 2000. Lexical anaphors and pronouns in Punjabi. In *Lexical Anaphors and Pronouns in Selected South Asian Languages: A Principled Typology*, Barbara C. Lust, Kashi Wali, James W. Gair & Karumuri V. Subbarao (eds), 637–715. Berlin: Mouton de Gruyter.
- Bloch, Jules. 1906. *La phrase nominale en sanskrit* [Mémoires de la Société de Linguistique XIV]. Paris: Honoré Champion.
- Bloch, Jules. 1920. *La formation de la langue marathe*. Paris: E. Champion.
- Bloch, Jules. 1934. *Lindo-aryen du védā au temps moderne*. Paris: Adrien Maisonneuve (English edition largely revised by the author and translated by Alfred Master, Paris: Adrien-Maisonneuve, 1965).
- Bubenik, Vit. 1993. Morphological and syntactic change in Late Middle Indo-Aryan. *Journal of Indo-European Studies* 21: 259–281.
- Bubenik, Vit. 1996. *The Structure and Development of Middle Indo-Aryan Dialects*. Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass.
- Bubenik, Vit. 1998. *A Historical Syntax of Late Middle Indo-Aryan (Apabhraṃśa)* [Current Issues in Linguistic Theory 165]. Amsterdam: John Benjamins. doi:10.1075/cilt.165
- Burrow, Thomas. 1955. *The Sanskrit Language*. London: Faber & Faber.
- Busch, Allison. 2010. Hidden in plain view: Brajbhasha poets at the Mughal court. *Modern Asian Studies* 44(2): 267–309. doi:10.1017/S0026749X09990205
- Butt, Miriam. 2003. Argument realization in Punjabi. Workshop 'Case, Valency and Transitivity': Nijmegen, June 17–19, 2003.
- Butt, Miriam. 2006. The dative-ergative connection. In *Empirical Issues in Syntax and Semantics* 6, Olivier Bonami & Patricia Cabredo Hoffer (eds.), 69–92. The Hague: Thesus.
- Bynon, Theodora. 2005. Evidential, raised possessor, and the historical source of the ergative construction in Indo-Iranian. *Transactions of the Philological Society* 103(1): 1–72. doi:10.1111/j.1467-968X.2004.00144.x
- Chatterji, Sumit K. 1926. *The Origin and Development of the Bengali Language*. London: Allen & Unwin.
- Chatterji, Sumit K. 1960. *Indo-Aryan and Hindi*. Calcutta: Calcutta University.
- Comrie, Bernard. 1978. Ergativity. In *Syntactic Typology*, Winfred P. Lehmann (ed.), 329–394. Austin TX: University of Texas Press.
- Comrie, Bernard. 2005. Alignment of case marking. In *The World Atlas of Language Structures*, Martin Haspelmath, Matthew S. Dryer, David Gil & Bernard Comrie (eds), 398–405. Oxford: OUP.
- Dās, Śyāmasundara (ed.). 1925. *Rānī ketakī kī kahānī* (of Īmśā Allāha Khān). Vārāṇasī: Nāgarī Pracārīnī Sabhā.
- Deo, Ashwini & Sharma, Devyani. 2006. Typological variation in the ergative morphology of Indo-Aryan languages. *Linguistic Typology* 10(3): 369–418. doi:10.1515/LINGTY.2006.012
- Dixon, Robert M. W. 1994. *Ergativity*. Cambridge: CUP. doi:10.1017/CBO9780511611896
- Drocco, Andrea. 2008. *Lērgatīvā in hindī. Studio diacronico del processo di diffusione della posposizione 'ne'*. Alessandria: Edizioni dell'Orso.
- Drocco, Andrea. 2010. La concordanza verbale nelle costruzioni transitive al passato della braja-bhāṣā. In *Tīrthayātrā. Essays in Honour of Stefano Piano*, Pinuccia Caracchi, Antonella S. Comba, Alessandra Consolaro & Alberto Pelissero (eds), 161–185. Alessandria: Edizioni dell'Orso.
- Eastwick, Edward B. (ed.). 1851. *The Prem Sāgar; or the Ocean of Love, Being a History of Kṛishṇa, According to the Tenth Chapter of the Bhāgavat of Vyāsadev, Translated into Hindi from the Braj Bhākhā of Chaturbhuj Misr, by Lalit Lal, late Bhākhā Mūnshī of the College of Fort William, A New Edition with a Vocabulary*. Printed (for the Hon. East-India Company) by Stephen Austin, bookseller, etc., to the East India College, Hertford.
- Eastwick, Edward B. (ed.). 1855. *The Baitāl Pachisi; or, Twenty-five tales of a demon, by Mazhar 'Alī Khāna Whā & Lalijī Lāla*. A new edition of the Hindi text, with each word expressed in the Hindústānī character immediately under the corresponding word in the nāgarī; and with a perfectly literal English interlinear translation, accompanied by a free translation in English at the foot of each page, and explanatory notes: by W. Burckhardt Barker, M.R.A.S., oriental interpreter; and Professor of Arabic, Turkish, Persian, and Hindústānī languages at Eton. Hertford: Printed and published by Stephen Austin. Bookseller to the East India College.
- Eastwick, Edward B. (ed.). 1858. *A Concise Grammar of the Hindustani Language, to which are added Selections for Reading*. (2nd edn, enlarged, with a vocabulary, dialogues, twelve facsimiles of Persian and Devanagari writing, &c. by the Rev. George Small). London: Bernard Quaritch, Oriental Publisher.
- Estival, Dominique & Myhill, John. 1988. Formal and functional aspects of the development from passive to ergative systems. In *Passive and Voice* [Typological Studies in Language 16], Masayoshi Shibatani (ed.), 441–491. Amsterdam: John Benjamins. doi:10.1075/tsl.16.15est
- Filimonova, Elena. 2005. The noun phrase hierarchy and relational marking: Problems and counterevidence. *Linguistic Typology* 9(1): 77–113. doi:10.1515/lity.2005.9.1.77
- Forbes, Duncan. 1855. *A Grammar of the Hindústānī Language in the Oriental and Roman Character, with Numerous Copper-plate Illustrations of the Persian and Devanāgarī Systems of Alphabetic Writing: To Which is Added a Copious Selection of Easy Extracts for Reading in the Persi-Arabic and Devanāgarī Characters, Forming a Complete Introduction to the Totā-Kahānī and Bāgh-o-Bahār, Together with a Vocabulary of all the Words, and Various Explanatory Notes*. London: Wm. H. Allen and Co.

- Forbes, Duncan. 1860. *The Hindūstānī Manual: A Pocket-Companion for Those who Visit India in any Capacity; Intended to Facilitate the Essential Attainments of Conversing with Fluency and Composing with Accuracy in the most Useful of all the Languages Spoken in our Eastern Empire. In two Parts. Part I. – A Compendious Grammar of the Language. Part II. – A Vocabulary of Useful Words, English and Hindūstānī.* (3rd edn, much enlarged and improved). London: Wm. H. Allen and Co.
- Garcin de Tassy, Joseph H. 1829. *Rudiments de la Langue hindoustanie, à l'Usage des Élèves de l'École Royale et Spéciale des Langues Orientales Vivantes.* Paris.
- Gilchrist, John B. 1796. *A Grammar of the Hindoostanee Language, or Part Third of Volume First of a System of Hindoostanee Philology.* Calcutta.
- Gricourt, Marguerite. 1988. *Le Sab Ras de Vājhī (1634/35).* Thèse de nouveau doctorat soutenue à l'Université Paris III (non publiée).
- Haig, Geoffrey L. J. 2008. *Alignment Change in Iranian Languages: A Construction Grammar Approach.* Berlin: Mouton de Gruyter. doi:10.1515/9783110198614
- Hawley, John S. 1979. The early Śūr Sāgar and the growth of the Śūr tradition. *Journal of the American Oriental Society* 99(1): 64–72. doi:10.2307/598950
- Hawley, John S. 1984. *Śūr Dās. Poet, Singer, Saint.* Delhi: OUP.
- Hawley, John S. 2007. Braj: Fishing in Śūr's ocean. In *Krishna. A Sourcebook*, Edwin F. Bryant (ed.), 223–240. Oxford: OUP.
- Hock, Hans Henrich. 1986. P-oriented constructions in Sanskrit. In *South Asian Languages: Structure, Convergence and Diglossia*, Bhadriraju Krishnamurti, Colin P. Masica & Anjani Kumar Sinha (eds.), 15–26. Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass.
- Hoernle, A.F. Rudolf. 1880. *A Comparative Grammar of the Gaudīan (Aryo-Indian) Languages.* Amsterdam: Philo Press.
- Hook, Peter E. 1992. On identifying the conceptual restructuring of passive as ergative in Indo-Aryan. In *Pāṇinian studies. Professor S. D. Joshi Felicitation Volume*, Madhav M. Deshpande & Saroja Bhate (eds), 177–199. Ann Arbor MI: University of Michigan, Center for South and Southeast Asian Studies.
- Hultzsch, Eugen. 1924[1991]. *Inscriptions of Aśoka* [Corpus Inscriptionum Indicarum I]. New Delhi: Archaeological Survey of India.
- Jamison, Stephanie W. 2000. Lurching towards ergativity: Expressions of agency in the Niya documents. *Bulletin of the School of Oriental and African Studies* 63(1): 64–80. doi:10.1017/S0041977X00006455
- Kellogg, Henry S. 1893. *A grammar of the Hindī language*, rev. edn. Delhi: Munshiram Manoharlal. (1990: reprinted for the 2nd edn).
- Khokhlova, Ludmila V. 1992. Trends in the development of ergativity in New Indo-Aryan. *Osmania Papers in Linguistics* 18: 71–97.
- Khokhlova, Ludmila V. 1995. The development of patient-oriented constructions in Late Western NIA Languages. *Osmania Papers in Linguistics* 21: 15–54.
- Khokhlova, Ludmila V. 2001. Ergativity attrition in the history of Western New Indo-Aryan languages. In *The Yearbook of South Asian Languages and Linguistics, Tokyo Symposium on South Asian Languages. Contact, Convergence and Typology*, Rajendra Singh (ed.), 159–184. New Delhi: Sage.
- Khokhlova, Ludmila V. 2006. Sintaktičeskaja evolucija zapadnykh novoiñdijskikh jazykov v15–20 vv. In *Aspekty komparativistiki.* Anna V. Dybo, Vladimir A. Dybo, Oleg A. Mudrak & George S. Starostin (eds), 151–186. Moskva: Rossijskij Gosudarstvennyj Gumanitarnyj Universitet (Orientalia et Classica: Trudy Instituta Vostočnych Kultur i Antičnosti: Vypusk VIII).
- Klaiman, Miriam H. 1978. Arguments against a passive origin of the IA ergative. *Papers from the Regional Meetings of the Chicago Linguistic Society* 14: 204–216.
- Klaiman, Miriam H. 1987. Mechanisms of ergativity in South Asia. *Lingua* 71: 61–102. doi:10.1016/0024-3841(87)90068-4
- Liperovskij, Vladimir P. 2007. Notes on the marking of actants in Braj (in comparison with Modern Standard Hindi). In *Old and New Perspectives on S. Asian Languages: Grammar and Semantics*, Colin P. Masica (ed.), 144–152. Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass.
- Monier-Williams, Monier. 1860. *Hindūstānī Primer; Containing a First Grammar Suited to Beginners and a Vocabulary of Common Words on Various Subjects. Together with Useful Phrases and Short Stories.* London.
- Montaut, Annie. 2007. The evolution of the tense-aspect system in Hindi/Urdu, and the status of the ergative alignment. In *Proceedings of the LFG06 Conference*, Miriam Butt & Tracy Holloway King (eds), 365–385. Stanford CA: CSLI.
- McGregor, William B. 2009. Typology of ergativity. *Language and Linguistics Compass* 3(11): 480–508. doi:10.1111/j.1749-818X.2008.00118.x
- McGregor, William B. 2010. Optional ergative case marking systems in a typological-semiotic perspective. *Lingua* 120: 1610–1636. doi:10.1016/j.lingua.2009.05.010
- McGregor, Ronald S. 1968. *The Language of Indrajit of Orchā. A Study of early Braj Bhāṣā prose.* Cambridge: CUP.
- McGregor, Ronald S. 1974. *Hindī Literature of The Nineteenth and Early Twentieth Centuries.* Wiesbaden: Harrassowitz.
- Nespal, Helmut. 1998. The linguistic structure of Hindāvī, Dakkhinī, Early Urdū and Early Khaṛī Bolī Hindī. *Berliner Indologische Studien* 11–12: 195–217.
- Pandharipande, Rajeshwari & Kachru, Yamuna. 1977. Relational grammar, ergativity, and Hindi-Urdu. *Lingua* 41: 217–238. doi:10.1016/0024-3841(77)90080-8
- Peterson, John M. 1998. *Grammatical relations in Pāli and the Emergence of Ergativity in Indo-Aryan.* Munich: Lincom.
- Pirejko, Ljija A. 1979. On the genesis of the ergative construction in Indo-Iranian. In *Ergativity: Towards a Theory of Grammatical Relations*, Frans Plank (ed.), 481–488. London: Academic Press.
- Pischel, Richard. 1965. *A Grammar of the Prākṛit Languages.* New Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass. (2nd rev. edn, translated from German by Subhandra Jha).
- Pray, Bruce R. 1976. From passive to ergative in Indo-Aryan. In *The Notion of Subject in South Asian Languages*, Manindra K. Verma (ed.), 195–211. Madison WI: Department of South Asian Studies, University of Wisconsin.
- Price, William. 1827–28. *A new Grammar of the Hindoostanee Language, with Selections from the Best Authors, to Which are Added Familiar Phrases and Dialogues in the Proper Character.* London.
- Saksenā, Baburam. 1971. *The Evolution of Avadhī*, 2nd edn. Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass.
- Saulih, Mirza M. & Price, William. 1823. *A Grammar of the Three Principal Oriental Languages, Hindoostanee, Persian, and Arabic, to Which is Added, a Set of Persian Dialogues, Accompanied with an English Translation.* London: Kingsbury, Parbury, and Allen.
- Shakespeare, John. 1813. *A Grammar of the Hindustani Language.* London.
- Sigorsky, Alexander A. 2007. Case, split nominativity, split ergativity, and split accusativity in Hindi: A historical perspective. In *Old and New Perspectives on S. Asian Languages: Grammar and Semantics*, Colin P. Masica (ed.), 34–61. Delhi: Motilal Banarsidass.

- Silverstein, Michael. 1976. Hierarchy of features and ergativity. In *Grammatical Categories in Australian Languages*, Robert, M. W. Dixon (ed.), 112–171. Canberra: Australian Institute of Aboriginal Studies.
- Śivprasād, Bābū. 1870. *Gūṭaka or Selections*. C. S. I. Benares: Printed at the Medical Hall Press.
- Smith, John D. 1975. An introduction to the language of the historical documents from Rajasthan. *Modern Asian Studies* 9(4): 433–464. doi:10.1017/S0026749X00012841
- Snell, Rupert. 1992. *The Hindi Classical Tradition. A Braj Bhāṣā Reader*. New Delhi: Heritage Publishers.
- Śrīvāstāv, Dayanand. 1970. *Historical Syntax of Early Hindi Prose*. Calcutta: Atima Prakashan.
- Stron̄ski, Krzysztof. 2009. On the origin and function of the ergative postposition in Hindi and its varieties. *Rocznik Orientalistyczny* (Annual of Oriental Studies) 62(1): 175–186.
- Stron̄ski, Krzysztof. 2011. *Synchronic and Diachronic Aspects of Ergativity in Indo-Aryan*. Poznań: Adam Mickiewicz University Press.
- Stump, Gregory T. 1983. The elimination of ergative patterns of case marking and verbal agreement in Modern Indic Languages. *Ohio State University Working Papers in Linguistics* 27: 140–164.
- Tessitori, Luigi P. 1913. On the origin of the dative and genitive postpositions in Gujarati and Marwari. *Journal of the Royal Asiatic Society*, 553–567.
- Tessitori, Luigi P. 1916. *Notes on the Grammar of Old Western Rājasthāni with Special Reference to Apabhrāṅca and to Gujarātī and Mārwarī*. Bombay: Printed at the British India Press, Margao. (Reprinted from the *Indian Antiquary*).
- Varma, Dharendra 1965. *La langue Braj* (avant-propos de Jules Bloch). Paris: Maisonneuve.
- Verbeke, Saartje 2013. *Alignment and Ergativity in New Indo-Aryan Languages*. Berlin: Walter de Gruyter. doi:10.1515/9783110292671
- Verbeke, Saartje & De Cuyper, Ludovic. 2009. The rise of ergativity in Hindi: Assessing the role of grammaticalization. *Folia Linguistica Historica* 30: 1–24.
- Wierzbicka, Anna. 1981. Case marking and human nature. *Australian Journal of Linguistics* 1: 43–80. doi:10.1080/07268608108599266
- Yates, William 1827. *Introduction to the Hindustani Language in Three Parts*. Calcutta: The Baptist Mission Press.

## Syntactic lability vs. ergativity in Indo-Aryan

Krzysztof Stron̄ski

Adam Mickiewicz University, Poznań

Contemporary IA languages are considered to be purely nominative at the level of syntax. Ergativity is restricted to the morphological domain. However the scrutiny of certain syntactic constructions such as converbal clause chaining or coordinate conjunction reduction shows that they are not necessarily sensitive to the basic grammatical relations (Bickel & Yādava 2000), in other words, the notion of pivot is not fully operational in the IA languages. The aim of the present paper is to demonstrate that apart from the dominating syntactic A/S pivot early NIA shows: (a) instances of converbs not controlled by the A of the main clause and (b) the dropped element in coordinate or certain subordinate constructions is not always an A/S argument. The alleged syntactic lability will be observed diachronically in four dialectal groups, namely Rājasthāni, Pahari, Western Hindi and Eastern Hindi.

### 1. Introductory remarks

A bulk of studies taking into account morphological, syntactic and even pragmatic factors has been devoted to the problem of ergativity in IA from both diachronic and synchronic perspectives (cf. Pirejko 1968; Bubenik 1989, 1993, 1996, 1998; Peterson 1998; Bynon 2005; Verbeke 2011 to mention just a few). Since IA languages represent a split ergative type the category which appeared to be interesting from the typological point of view was the category of 'subject'. Already in the late seventies there was an attempt to apply the diagnostic tests such as conjunction reduction, reflexivization, Equi NP deletion etc. (cf. Anderson 1977) in order to demonstrate that the syntactic behaviour of the main arguments marked by the ergative case is actually similar to the one observed in accusative languages. It has been almost generally accepted that there is no uniform category of subject in contemporary IA and that the arguments marked by cases other than Nominative show different degrees of subjecthood (cf. Montaut 2001; 2004a,b). The research on the subjecthood in IA has not been constrained to contemporary stage but it has been also extended to earlier stages such as Old Indo-Aryan (OIA) (e.g. Cardona 1976; Hock 1986) and Middle Indo-Aryan (MIA) (Peterson 1998).