Split Ergativity in Faka'uvea

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This study presents the first attempt at treating Faka'uvea in Generative linguistics It addresses complex person-based split ergative patterns through the lens of Minimalism and Distributed Morphology. The patterns described pose a serious problem for a model of grammar which does not include animacy hierarchies such as those proposed in Silverstein (1976). While the analysis provides an epiphenomenal account for the patterns, it cannot do so without some instantiation of an animacy hierarchy. The paper ends by calling for more attention to edge cases like Faka'uvea and for additional data collection. [*]

1. Introduction

This paper provides an initial study of split ergativity in Faka'uvea. Faka'uvea (East 'Uvean/Wallisien) is the Indigenous language of 'Uvea, Wallis and Futuna. It is a Polynesian language, forming a portion of the Other Nuclear Polynesian branch (Wilson 2018). Faka'uvea is spoken natively by about 6800 people on 'Uvea (INSEE 2018) and by large communities in New Caledonia and Metropolitan France. Although Faka'uvea has received recent documentary attention with the creation of grammars (Livingston 2016; Moyse-Faurie 2016a), a dictionary (Moyse-Faurie et al. 2016), a corpus of oral story (Moyse-Faurie 2010), and multiple descriptive articles (Moyse-Faurie 2000, 2002, 2016b, 2019), the language has yet to be addressed in the literature on Generative linguistics

Faka'uvea has a split ergative case alignment which is manifested in word order, pronominal morphology, and case marking. The split is conditioned by person and nominal animacy with first and second person patterning as accusative and third person and nominals patterning as ergative (Livingston 2016). This paper attempts to account for this split using a strict implementation of Minimalism (Chomsky 1993, 1995) and Distributed Morphology (henceforth DM: Halle and Marantz 1993). While the analysis is descriptively adequate it cannot account for the data without stipulating that some pronouns are always foregrounded. I argue that this is explanatorily inadequate and that Faka'uvea cannot be accounted for in these frameworks without an animacy hierarchy. I conclude with a call for more data and specifically more negative data.

[*] I thank the Working Papers team for putting this volume together. For their patience and insight, I would like to thank Dr. Claire Moyse-Faurie, Dr. Phil Branigan, Mark Egelhoff, and Dr. Nicholas LaCara.

MUN Occasional Student Papers in Linguistics 3, ed. S. Abdelhady, A. Cucinelli and T. Fatema
(St. John's: Memorial University of Newfoundland, 2020)

This paper is organised as follows. §2 reviews the literature on split ergativity and presents tests for underlying ergativity. §3 sketches the morphosyntax of Faka'uvea with a focus on case marking patterns. §4 contains a syntactic and morphological analysis. §5 argues that the animacy hierarchy cannot be foregone in this framework. §6 concludes.

2. Ergativity and Split Ergativity

This study makes use of the terms S, A, and O, first introduced by Dixon (1979). These terms refer to the role an argument has in the argument structure of a clause. S is the subject of an intransitive verb. A is the subject of a transitive verb, and O is its object.

Ergativity is manifested in many different ways cross-linguistically. Prototypically, an ergative language is one where the A argument is distinguished from the S and O arguments through case marking. To illustrate, example (1) shows the case marking of first-person affixes in Tzotzil (Mayan). In example (1(1a), there is an intransitive verb marked with /-i-/ for first person. Example (1(1b) shows the first-person object surfacing with the same morph. Example (1(1c), has the transitive first person subject surfacing as <j->. Tzotzil, then, shows an ergative patterning in its pronominal affixes through morphology.

(1) Ergative aligned pronominal affixes in Tzotzil (Haviland 1981)

a. *Ch-i-'abtej* *av-u'un* *ok'ob.*
ICP-B.1.SG-work A.2-RN tomorrow
'I will work for you tomorrow.'

b. *L-i-s-vula'an* *j-me'.*
CP-B.1-A.3-visit A.1-mother
'My mother visited me.'

c. *Ta* *j-maj.*
ICP A.1-hit
'I will strike him/her/it/them.'

This pattern contrasts with the accusative pattern found in Gaeilge (Irish: Indo-European). In this case marking system, the subjects of intransitive and transitive sentences pattern together to the exclusion of the object. The example set (2) shows this pattern with the subject surfacing as <sé> in (2(1a-b) and the object as <é> in (2c).

(2) Accusative aligned pronoun paradigm in Gaeilge

a. *Oibrí-onn* *sé.*
work-AGR 3.SG.M.NOM
'He works.'

b. *D'ith* *sé* *an* *tíogar.*
PST.eat 3.SG.M.NOM DEF tiger
'He ate the tiger.'

c. *D'ith* *an* *tíogar* *é.*
PST.eat DEF tiger 3.SG.M.ACC
'The tiger ate him.'

Not all languages with ergative systems are uniformly ergative and splits are known to occur within aspect and person systems. Splits are argued to be on a continuum of likelihood that either ergative or accusative marking will occur, as in Figure 1 below (Silverstein 1976). These continua are argued to be universal in their directionality but not in where the line is drawn (Dixon 1994).

Figure 1 : Directionality of person-based splits

←	ERGATIVE		NON-ERGATIVE	→
Common Nouns >>	Proper Nouns >>	Demonstratives and 3rd Person Pronouns >>	1st and 2nd Person Pronouns	

Aspectual splits are not found in Faka'uvea and will not be discussed further. Person-based splits are found globally with Dyirbal (Pama-Nyungan: Dixon 1994) being a famous example. Below is a Wangkumara (Pama-Nyungan: Breen 1981) paradigm showing split ergative marking where pronouns are marked with nominative and accusative while nominals are marked with ergative and a null absolutive. In example set (3), the first-person pronoun is <ngaya> in subject position ((1a-b), but <nganha> in object position (c).

(3) First person pronoun case paradigm in Wangkumara

a. *matya* *ngaya* *balganngandala* *yurdi.*
before 1SG.NOM hit.HAB.PST meat.ABS
'I used to kill a lot of kangaroos.' (Breen 1981: 307)

b. *ngaya* *nhunu* *wabanhi.*
1SG.NOM always come.PRES
'I always come here.' (Breen 1981: 306)

c. *matya* *inda* *nganha* *wa:la.*
before 2SG.NOM 1SG.ACC give.PST
'You gave me [money] before.' (Breen 1981: 306)

In example set (4), however, an ergative pattern arises, the nominal <nguda> 'dog' takes the ergative suffix <-nggu> when an A argument as in (4(1a), but is unmarked as the subject of an intransitive or the object of a transitive, as in (4b) and (4c), respectively.

(4) Nominal case paradigm in Wangkumara

a. *nguda-nggu* *yurdi* *gamba:nhi.*
dog-ERG meat.ABS bury.RPST
'The dog buried the meat.' (Breen 1981:307)

b. *nguda* *nguna:labanhi.*
dog.ABS lie.about.PRES
'There's dogs lying around everywhere.' (Breen 1981:323)

c. *nguda* *balga:nhi* *warngulinhi-ngga*
dog.ABS hit.RPST bark.PRES-LOC
'He hit the dog because it was barking.' (Breen 1981:319)

This section has presented an introduction to ergativity and person-based splits in ergativity. The crux of the matter is that ergative languages treat the subject of a transitive differently from the subject of an intransitive or the object of a transitive, as in the examples from Tzotzil. The split ergative patterns were shown to be sensitive to nominal type and person features. The following section will be dedicated to Legate's (2014) tests for underlying ergative case within morphologically accusative paradigms.

2.1. Testing for Underlying Ergativity

Legate (2014) provides three situations – framed as tests – in which an A argument has syntactic [ERG] case despite surfacing with [ABS] case, namely: case agreement, coordination, and syntactic ergativity.

Absolutive marked A arguments can cause ergative marking on elements that agree with the A argument in case. Below, is included a minimal pair from Udi (Northeastern Caucasian: Schulze 2001). While the subject of both examples is <zu>, different agreement morphemes occur with its modifying relative clause depending on whether it is an S argument, as in (5(1a), or an A, as in (5b) (data from Schulze 2001). Case agreement, as a test, is, unfortunately, limited to those languages which have agreement phenomena.

(5) Case agreement in relative clauses in Udi

a. *zu* *kala-o* *damdam* *šähär-ä* *tağ-al-zu.*
1.SG.ABS big-SA.ABS tomorrow town-DAT 1go.FUT-FUT-1.SG.S
'I – being the oldest one – will go to town tomorrow.'

b. *zu* *k'ala-t'-in* *šum-axaq'-sa-zu.*
1.SG.ABS big-SA.OBL-ERG bread-DAT 2eat-PRES-1.SG.A
'I – being the oldest one – eat the bread.'

The second area of divergence is coordination. In coordination structures, one assumes that all the conjuncts in the structure must be in the same syntactic position and so, should be uniform in case (Legate 2014). However, in some split ergative languages, one can have different cases surfacing within a coordination. In Marathi (Indo-Aryan: Dhongde and Wali 2009), first and second person pronouns are in surface accusative alignment while third person pronouns and nominals are in ergative. Dhongde and Wali (2009: 233) state that for a coordination to be grammatical, all members of the structure must be in the same case; as in (6). Despite this "case constraint," a first-person pronoun in surface nominative case

can coordinate with an ergative marked nominal, as in (7). This is predicted if the split in case alignment is due to morphological syncretism, but not under an analysis where the split in case alignment arises from the conjuncts having different positions in the syntax.

(6) *lilil-ni* *mədhu-ni* *aṇi* *mini-ni* *jaǰa-la* *paḷṇ-y-at* *ṭhew-l-ə.*
Lili-ERG Madhu-ERG and Mini-ERG Raja-DAT crib-OBL-P put-PERF-NSG
'Lili, Madhu, and Mini put Raja in the crib.' (Dhongde and Wali 2009: 233)

(7) *liki-ne* *aṇi* *mi* *keḷi* *kha-ll-i.*
Liki-ERG and 1.SG.NOM banana.NPL.NOM eat-PERF-NPL
'Liki and I ate bananas.' (Legate 2014: 194)

The last test site proposed in Legate (2014) is that of syntactic ergativity. Syntactic ergativity is a phenomenon where the grammar places different requirements on the A argument from the S or O arguments. In Dyirbal (Pama-Nyungan: Dixon 1972), nominals are in ergative alignment while first and second person pronouns are in accusative alignment. Dyirbal presents syntactic ergativity such that raising of A arguments out of a relative clause is restricted, while it is not restricted of S or O. To raise A arguments, one needs to antipassivise the lower verb, making the raised argument an absolutive S and the O argument a dative. The minimal pair in (8) below first shows that the O argument in the embedded clause is raiseable without change in the lower verb or in case marking. In (8b), however, raising the A argument requires that the lower verb be put into the antipassive, and the absolutive marking of the A argument.

(8) Case paradigm of nominals under raising in Dyirbal

a. *ŋuma* *banaga-ɲu* *yabu-ŋgu* *buɽa-n.*
father.ABS return-NFUT mother-ERG see-NFUT
'Father returned and mother saw (him).' (Dixon 1994: 12)

b. *ŋuma* *banaga-ɲu* *buɽal-ŋa-ɲu* *yabu-gu.*
father.ABS return-NFUT see-APASS-NFUT mother-DAT
'Father returned and (he) saw mother.' (Dixon 1994: 13)

While first person pronouns are in surface nominal case, they too need an antipassive verb to raise. Example (9(1a) shows that the raising of the first-person pronoun A argument from an embedded clause to a matrix clause is ungrammatical. This ungrammaticality is alleviated when the embedded verb is antipassive and the object is in the dative, despite the pronoun remaining in surface nominative case, as in (9b).

(9) Syntactic ergativity and the first-person pronoun in Dyirbal

a. **ŋaḍa* *bani-ɲu* *balan* *ḍugumbil* *balga-n.*
1.SG.NOM come-NFUT NCII.there.ABS woman.ABS hit-NFUT
'I came here and hit woman.' (Dixon 1972: 132)

b. *ŋaḍa* *bani-ɲu* *bagun* *ḍugumbil-gu*
1.SG.NOM come-NFUT NCII.there.DAT woman-DAT
balgal-ŋa-ɲu.
hit-APASS-NFUT
'I came here and hit woman.' (Dixon 1972: 132)

This subsection has shown that the accusative marked pronominals in some split ergative languages are underlyingly ergative. It has presented the tests contained in Legate (2014), however, her theoretical response to this data will be discussed in §4.1.

3. The Morphosyntax of Faka'uvea

This section will provide an overview of the morphosyntax of Faka'uvea as described in Livingston (2016) and Moyse-Faurie (2016a) with a focus on case-marking.

3.1. Syntax of Nominals

Faka'uvea is uniformly predicate initial. In utterances with a verbal predicate and no pronouns the structure is always Tense V (...) where the ellipsis indicates the multiple orderings of nominals. Nominals are ordered discourse-configurationally and argument drop is licensed by discourse (Livingston 2016). Examples (10) and (11) below show this default ordering and that inversion of the subject and object does not result in a change of interpretation or case-marking. Unlike the transitive subjects in ((10)-(11)), the intransitive subject in (12) does not surface with the case marker /e/; this is an ergative alignment.

(10) *'e* *tā* *e* *Petelo* *ia* *Soane*
NPST hit ERG Petelo HUM Soane
'Petelo hit Soane.' (Livingston 2016: 8)

(11) *'e* *tā* *ia* *Soane* *e* *Petelo*
NPST hit HUM Soane ERG Petelo
'Petelo hit Soane.' (Livingston 2016: 8)

(12) *'e* *moe* *ia* *Petelo*
NPST sleep HUM Petelo
'Petelo sleeps.' (Livingston 2016: 8)

The ergative marker is /e/, as seen in the transitive subjects of (10) and (11). I assume that the absolutive marker is null following Livingston (2016) who describes /ia/ as a marker of non-ergative human nouns as the marker is optional and can co-occur with peripheral cases, as in (13) below, unlike the ergative. In this example, an extended intransitive (see Chung 1978 who calls these middle verbs) requires an oblique marked object. The oblique morpheme /ki/ is phonologically merged with the /ia/ yielding /kia:/.

(13) *'e palalau age ia Pētelō kiā Mōseniolo*
NPST talk DIR HUM priest OBL.HUM bishop
«Le Père s'adresse à l'évêque.»
'The priest addresses the bishop.' (Moyse-Faurie 2016: 129)

Notice that the phrase in (13) has no ergative marked subject. This is true of non-directional extended intransitives as well, as in (14(1a) below. The minimal pair in (14) is included to show that the extended intransitives are formally intransitive despite having two arguments. This is a unique feature of Faka'uvea as the extended intransitives of Sāmoan and Tongan are formally transitive according to Chung (1978) who shows that the object in these languages can pseudo-noun incorporate, there is no data showing this alternation in the texts cited here. Additionally, when the transitivising suffix /-ʔi/, as in (14b), is added to the verb, the agent is in ergative case. I take the fact that the extended intransitives can take transitivising morphology to mean that they are formally intransitive, as this morpheme cannot be affixed to clearly transitive verbs (Livingston 2016: 128).

(14) Extended intransitives are formally intransitive

a. *e sio ia Soane ki te puaka*
NPST see HUM Soane OBL SPEC pig
'Soane sees the pig.' (Livingston 2016: 119)

b. *'e sio-'i e Soane te puaka*
NPST see-TR ERG Soane SPEC pig
'Soane is looking at the pig.' (Livingston 2016: 119)

Examples (13) and (14), when taken together, provide evidence that the absolutive case-marker is strictly null. If extended intransitives are formally intransitive, then the peripheral case-marked nominal cannot be a direct object of a transitive verb and since it is not the subject of the sentence it cannot take absolutive case. However, /ia/ does occur in the peripheral case-marked nominal phrases if the nominal is human, and so /ia/ cannot be the absolutive case marker. I will therefore refer to this morpheme as the human marker.

The human marker forms a class of its own in being the only element which comes after case marking but before articles. Below is a pair showing that ergative marking occurs prior to the definite article and so does the human marker. These examples include a classifier of human plurals /kau/ to show that the human marker is not a classifier. I take this data to mean that the human marker takes a DP complement.

(15) /ia/ takes a determiner phrase complement

a. *Kua la-lahi ia te kau tama*
PRF PL-big HUM SPEC CLF child
'The children have gotten big.' (Livingston 2016: 34)

b. *Kua* *fakatu'u* *te* *fale* *e* *te* *kau* *tagata*
PRF build SPEC house ERG SPEC CLF person
'The men have built the/a house.' (Livingston 2016: 106)

As a final note on nominal case marking, there is a tendency for inanimate agents in transitive clauses to be marked by a lexically determined peripheral case. Below is a paradigm showing that while the human agent receives ergative case, as in (16(1a), an inanimate agent receives a peripheral case, as in (16b). This treatment of inanimate transitive subjects in occurs even if there is no possible human agency behind the subject, as in (16c). I take this to indicate that this case marking pattern is not a ditransitive with a phonologically null, ergative marked human agent.

(16) Agent marking by animacy

a. *ne'e* *'ava-hi* *te* *matapā* *e* *Soane*
PST open-TR SPEC door ERG Soane
'Soane opened the door.' (Livingston 2016: 73)

b. *ne'e* *'ava-hi* *te* *matapā* *'aki/*e* *te* *kalavī*
PST open-TR SPEC door INST/*ERG SPEC key
'The key opened the door.' (Livingston 2016: 73)

c. *ne'e* *'ava-hi* *te* *matapā* *'i* *te* *matagi*
PST open-TR SPEC door LOC SPEC wind
'The wind opened the door' (Livingston 2016: 73)

In this section, it was shown that nominals in Faka'uvea are in an ergative alignment. It was shown that the human marker does not mark absolutive case, but that it takes a DP complement as case markers do. It was also shown that animacy plays a role in how agents are case marked with human nominals being marked with ergative and inanimates being marked with a peripheral case.

3.2. Pronominal Syntax

The pronouns in Faka'uvea inflect for person, number, clusivity, and syntactic role. Below is the full paradigm as reported in Moyse-Faurie (2016: 66).

Figure 2: Fakaʻuvea pronominal morphemes

	CLITIC FORM	INDEPENDENT FORM
1st Singular	au/u	au
1st Singular Inclusive	kita/ta	kita
1st Dual Exclusive	mā	māua
1st Dual Inclusive	tā	tāua
1st Plural Exclusive	matou	mātou
1st Plural Inclusive	tatou/tou	tātou
2nd Singular	ke	koe
2nd Dual	kolua/lua	koulua/kōlua
2nd Plural	kotou	koutou/kōtou
3rd Singular	ina/na	ia
3rd Dual	nā	nāua
3rd Plural	natou	nātou

In addition to morphological form, clitic and independent pronouns differ in their syntactic placement. The paradigm in (17) shows the third person singular in all three roles: A, as in (17(1a), S, as in (17b), and O, as in (17c). The syntactic position of A is pre-verbal while S and O are post-verbal. The split in morphological form is the same, A is <ina>, but S and O are <ia>. This is an ergative pattern spelled out through morphology and syntax.

(17) Case paradigm of the third person singular pronoun in Faka'uvea

a. *Ne'e ina kai taku mo'i laisi*
PST 3SG eat my CLF rice
'She/he ate my rice.' (Livingston 2016: 75)

b. *Ne'e kakau ia*
PST swim 3SG
«Elle/il a nagé.»
'She/he swam.' (Moyse-Faurie 2016: 68)

c. *'E kalamo au 'ilo'i ia*
NPST NEG 1SG know 3SG
«Je ne le sais pas.»
'I don't know (it).' (Moyse-Faurie 2016: 156)

In contrast, the first and second person pronouns show a nominative-accusative pattern in both morphology and syntax; as in (18). The A and S arguments are in the same morphological form and both appear in the pre-verbal position, but the O argument appears in a different morphological form after the verb.

(18) Case paradigm for the first-person singular pronoun in Faka'uvea

a. *Ne'e ke tā ia Soane.*
PST 2SG hit HUM Soane
'You hit Soane.' (Livingston 2016: 66)

b. *Ne'e ke moe.*
PST 2SG sleep
'You slept.' (Livingston 2016: 66)

c. *Ne'e tā (ia) koe e Petelo.*
PST hit HUM 2SG ERG Petelo
'Petelo hit you.' (Livingston 2016: 66)

There are distributional differences between the clitic and independent pronouns. Clitic forms only occur in the space between the TAM marker and the verb. They do not appear in the clitic form in any other syntactic context, including in topic fronting and in clitic doubling, as shown in examples (19) and (20) for topic fronting and clitic doubling, respectively. In both of these cases, the pre-verbal position is filled by the subject pronominal clitic despite the argument also being pronounced elsewhere in the utterance.

(19) *Ko koe ne'e ke inu te fo'i piele.*
PRED 2SG PST 2SG drink SPEC CLF beer
'It's you who is drinking the beer.' (Livingston 2016: 71)

(20) *'E ke ha'u mai-fea koe.*
NPST 2SG come from-where2SG
'Where do **you** come from?' (Livingston 2016: 81)

The clitic pronouns are further distinguished from the independent pronouns in that they cannot take case marking. The pair of examples in (21) show that A role pronouns appear without case marking in the pre-verbal position, as in (21(1a) where the A pronoun is in the subordinate clause, but when they are in an emphatic construction, they must appear as an independent pronoun with ergative case marking, as in (21b).

(21) Clitic pronouns cannot take case marking

a. *Kā kotou omai pea kotou to'o mai*
when 2PL come.PL then 2PL take DIR
ni fo'i pane.
NSPEC.PL CLS bread
«Quand vous viendrez, achetez du pain.»
'When you come, buy some bread.' (Moyse-Faurie 2016: 197)

b. *Ne'e kaiha'a e koulua te tohi*
PST steal ERG 2DU SPEC book
'aē 'e au lolotoga lau.
DEM NPST 1sg PROG read
'**You two** stole the book I was reading!' (Livingston 2016: 81)

This section has provided a sketch of pronominal morphosyntax. It showed that there is a morphological and syntactic distinction between the clitic and independent pronouns and that this split is conditioned by person. Particularly, first and second person A and S arguments are found as clitics in discourse-neutral contexts, while their O arguments are found in independent form; an accusative alignment. Third person had clitics appearing only with the A argument and having S and O pattern together - an ergative pattern.

3.3. Testing for Ergative Case

In light of the work of Legate (2008; 2014) in showing that some split ergative systems are underlyingly straightforwardly ergative and the fact that second person pronouns can occur with ergative case marking, as in (21b), one might ask whether the pronominal case split in Faka'uvea is not what it might seem. This section will address the possibility that the split in Faka'uvea is an artifact of morphology through an application of the tests found in Legate (2014) as outlined in §2.1. The tests will be treated in the order they were presented above, namely: case agreement, coordination, and syntactic ergativity.

Plural marking on verbs is the only agreement phenomena conditioned by case in Faka'uvea. Plural marking occurs on some intransitive verbs and some predicative adjectives when the subject is non-singular, as in example (22). This marking occurs whether the subject is a clitic pronoun, independent pronoun, or nominal. There is no data showing whether a transitivised intransitive will agree with the transitive subject or object. I take this to be inconclusive evidence for any particular underlying alignment.

(22) *Kua olo ona kaume'á.*
PRF go.PL POSS.3SG.SPEC.PL friend
«Ses amis sont partis.»
'Her/his friends have departed.' (Moyse-Faurie 2016: 72)

The test of coordination can be applied to Faka'uvea through *mo* 'and' which can be used for arguments or clauses. Unfortunately, while there is plenty of data showing coordination between intransitive subjects, there is no available data showing that disparately case marked arguments cannot be put into coordination. This test, too, is not possible given the current literature on the language.

The third, and most applicable test, the test of syntactic ergativity, clearly differentiates the A argument from the S and O arguments in Faka'uvea. Regarding *ko*, a topicalising morpheme, a transitive nominal subject requires a resumptive pronoun, as in (23(1a), while the S, as in (23b), and O, as in (23c), arguments do not.

(23) Occurrence of the resumptive clitic pronoun under *ko* predication of nominals

a. *Ko Petelo ne'e na tā ia Soane.*
PRED Petelo PST 3SG hit HUM Soane
'It's Petelo who/that hit Soane.' (Livingston 2016: 159)

b. *Ko Mika ne'e moe.*
PRED Mika PST sleep
'It's Mika who slept.' (Livingston 2016: 118)

c. *Ko Soane ne'e tā e Petelo.*
PRED Soane PST hit ERG Petelo
'It's Soane who/that Petelo hit.' (Livingston 2016: 158)

First and second person pronouns also follow the resumptive pronoun pattern with *ko*. In the paradigm in (24) below, the resumptive pronoun is required with the transitive subject, as in (24(1a), but not with the intransitive subject, as in (24b).

(24) Accusative aligned pronouns have abstract ergative case

a. *Ko koe ne'e ke inu te fo'i piele.*
PRED 2SG PST 2SG drink SPEC CLF beer
'It's you who was drinking the beer.' (Livingston 2016: 81)

b. *Ko tāua kā felāve'i.*
PRED 1DU.INCL FUT.IMM to meet
«Nous allons nous battre.»
'We will fight.' (Moyse-Faurie 2016: 148)

3.4. Summarising the Data and Presenting the Problems

This section has presented the core case marking strategies of Faka'uvea. The system is rather complex and articulated despite being underlyingly straightforwardly ergative. All pronouns show a split between clitic and independent morphs which is reflected in both morphological form and syntactic position. The split occurs in different roles between the first and second person, which are in accusative alignment, and the third person, which is in ergative alignment. Despite this apparent split, raising with *ko* shows that Faka'uvea is uniformly syntactically ergative and that the first and second person must then underlyingly have an ergative feature. The case marking system on nominals has a similar split. Animate subjects of a transitive verb receive ergative case, but inanimate subjects do not, and instead receive a peripheral, lexically-defined case. The data is not available in the literature as to whether peripherally marked agents are underlyingly ergative. The fact that the split occurs in not one but three different locations in the hierarchy is perhaps unique to Faka'uvea, making it a difficult case for Generative Theory.

Case marking on arguments in Faka'uvea presents several interesting problems. First, one must ask how the accusative alignment of first and second person pronouns is derived.

This problem has two possible components: the problem of morphological form and the problem of syntactic distribution. Perhaps relatedly, one must ask how the third person pronouns are split both in morphological form and in syntactic distribution. Also, perhaps related is the issue of inaminate agents resisting ergative case marking. I leave this last problem to future research as the critical data – of topicalisation of an inanimate agent – is not available in the literature. The rest of this paper will be devoted, then, to an analysis of the case-marking of animate arguments in Faka'uvea.

4. Towards an Analysis

This section will provide an argument that the patterns presented in §3, while strictly epiphenomenal, stem from the same featural source. Building on Legate (2014), I argue that the problem of accusative morphological form is driven by a syncretism in the available pronominal forms and that this can be best modelled through the Elsewhere Condition (Anderson 1969; Kiparsky 1973; Halle and Marantz 1993; Halle 1997). I argue that the facts of the syntactic distribution of the pronouns falls out from their respective syntactic identities with clitics being solely ϕ heads and independent pronouns being DPs built from ϕ heads along the lines of Déchaine and Wiltschko (2002) and Moskal (2015).

This section is divided as follows. In §4.1, I make explicit my theoretical apparatus. In §4.2, I provide evidence for the difference in syntactic structures of the pronouns. Following this distinction, in §4.3, I account for the syntactic distribution of pronouns and in doing so present a theory of ergative case assignment in Faka'uvea. In §4.4, I argue for a morphological source of the split in pronominal forms.

4.1. Theoretical Foundations

As noted above, this paper is built on the Minimalist Tradition. I assume the core Minimalist tenets of the Y-shape of the grammar and of restricting syntactic operations to solely MERGE, a copy-based understanding of MOVE, and a probe-based model of AGREE. The model of case assignment will be discussed later.

More specifically, this paper works from the DM tradition. This model assumes two core hypotheses: Syntax-all-the-way-down, and Late Insertion. The first of these posits that there is no difference between the structure-building mechanism which creates sentences and the one which creates words; the engines are the same. The second hypothesis holds that all elements manipulated by the syntactic engine are without phonological content and that this is inserted only at the interface with PF (Marantz 1997). This requires that the Lexicon is distributed into three different places across the grammar. The distribution is into the following portions: an abstract feature and root inventory which is manipulated by the syntax into featural bundles, the Vocabulary which takes these bundles and maps them onto phonological content known as Vocabulary Items, and an Encyclopedia which contains the semantic meaning of a Vocabulary Item and related non/paralinguistic information like idioms. Lexical idiosyncrasies under this view must be explained using the common featural inventory and only the structure-building mechanisms listed above. These theoretical traditions were chosen keeping in mind that the literature has tended to

reject the inclusion of a Silversteinian Animacy Hierarchy as a portion of the Universal Grammar (see Coon, Massam, and Travis 2017) with the intention of keeping the biological endowment of Language as small as possible. As Faka'uvea has a highly articulated instantiation of the Silversteinian Hierarchy – perhaps the most articulated example reported in the literature – the language provides a rare testing grounds for if rich hierarchy effects can be modelled using syntax-only approaches.

To lay the terms of engagement according to the theories adopted here, the analysis in this present study must address the differences in pronominal form and distribution from a featural and structural foundation without appealing to phonology or to lexical entries.

4.2. The Syntactic Shape of Pronouns in Faka'uvea

This section will provide an argument from distributional grounds that there is a structural difference between the independent and clitic pronouns.

To begin, there is a basic difference between the distribution of DPs and bare NPs. The evidence for this difference comes from pseudo-noun incorporation structures which find parallels in related languages such as Niuean (Massam 2001) and Sāmoan (Collins 2017 and citations therein). In pseudo-noun incorporation (henceforth PNI) structures, the direct object occurs as a bare noun and directly follows the verb. No material can intervene between the verb and the incorporate. The subject occurs in absolutive case, there is backgrounding of the object, and the reading of the verb is restricted (Livingston 2016; Moyse-Faurie 2016a). Example (25) below, consists of a minimal pair with a transitive sentence and then a PNI version. In (25(1a), there is an ergative marked subject and a DP object with an overt determiner and a classifier. The incorporated version in (25b) shows the object bare without the determiner elements and the subject has taken absolutive case.

(25) Pseudo-noun incorporation in Faka'uvea

a. *'E gau e Soane te mo'i tō*
NPST chew ERG Soane SPEC CLF sugar cane
«Soane mâche un morceau de canne à sucre»
'Soane chews a bit of sugar cane.' (Moyse-Faurie 2016a: 188)

b. *'E gau tō ia Soane*
NPST chew sugar cane HUM Soane
«Soane mâche de la canne à sucre.»
'Soane chews some sugar cane.' (Moyse-Faurie 2016a: 188)

No pronominals may participate in this incorporation and neither can DPs. Working in a DM model, this distribution can only be accounted for if pronouns are never nominalised, i.e. if they never become nouns by way of concatenating with a little *n* head. I assume that pronouns are not built from √roots but from ϕ (Moskal 2015), a bundling of π person and # number features (Ghomeshi and Massam 2020 and references therein). With nouns and pronouns being built from syntactically different categories, the blocking of pronouns from ever being NPs comes down to a selectional requirement on *n*.

The independent and clitic pronouns still must be distinguished in the syntax. To this end, I argue that independent pronouns are DPs and that clitics are ϕ heads. The critical evidence here comes from the distribution of the two in relation to DPs made from nouns. As noted in §3.1, there are several morphemes which require a DP complement, namely: case markers and the human marker *ia*. That these require a DP complement and only a DP complement means that they may be used as a test for DP status.

Focus and topic marking show that independent pronouns are DPs while clitics cannot be. In DM, the syntactic distribution and the phonological shape (Vocabulary Item) of a given word are driven by its featural-structural composition. In focus and topic marking in Faka'uvea, an argument occurs in a position it would not otherwise occur in. In focus marking, the pronouns which normally occur as clitics are required to occur as independent pronouns, as in (21b). These pronouns are obligatorily marked with case markers despite the fact that they would normally have a syncretism in the case marked clitic form, c.f. *kolua* or *lua*. In contrast, the clitic as an A argument does not occur with the ergative case marker despite being in ergative case, as shown in the minimal pair in (26). In this pair, the transitive in (26(1a) has a clitic pronoun in ACC alignment. Despite this, the *ko* phrase shows that the second person clitic is actually underlyingly in ergative case as it requires a resumptive pronoun when extracted, as in (26b), just like all other ergative subjects.

(26) Second person clitics in transitive clauses are underlyingly ergative

a. *Ne'e ke inu te fo'i piele.*
PST 2SG drink SPEC CLF beer
'You are drinking the beer.' (Livingston 2016: 81)

b. *Ko koe ne'e ke inu te fo'i piele.*
PRED 2SG PST 2SG drink SPEC CLF beer
'It's you who was drinking the beer.' (Livingston 2016: 81)

Ko phrases are in complimentary distribution with case markers in selecting for a DP as opposed to a KP (case marked phrase) or a clitic pronoun. The example in (27), where the expected dative marking does not occur, taken in concert with (26b), where the expected ergative marking does not occur, shows that *ko* cannot co-occur with KPs.

(27) *Ko Falani 'e au 'alu ki ai.*
PRED France NPST 1SG go DAT ANAPH
'It's France that I'm going to.' (Livingston 2016: 159)

Critically, independent pronouns do not appear with overt D heads, and yet are in complimentary distribution with them in that they are able to be the complement of *ko* phrases and case-markers. Under DM, this requires that there is a structural difference between the two pronominals, I assume the following structures in (28). In (28(1a), the ϕ head has copy-moved to the *d* head to form a single featural bundle. I choose to model this as *d* for two reasons. First, *d* was chosen to remain agnostic to the featural content of the

determiner head; it cannot be [± SPECIFIC] as pronouns are always specific and it cannot be [± DEFINITE] as pronouns are always definite. Second, category-forming heads have been argued to be sources of cyclicity (Embick 2010), we will return to this later.

(28) Syntactic structures of pronouns in Faka'uvea
  a. Independent pronouns [$_{DP}$ ϕ+*d* [ϕ]]
  b. Clitic pronouns [ϕ]

4.3. Sketching Faka'uvea Syntax

This section will sketch an analysis of the distribution of clitic pronouns in Faka'uvea. This section will argue for ergative as a dependent case and for clitic raising as a requirement of an EPP (Chomsky 1982) unvalued ϕ feature [uϕ]. While the syntax presented here should be considered a modification of Collin's (2017) treatment of Sāmoan, I do not follow him in assuming a VP-fronting analysis and do not claim any theory of predicate initiality. The evidence for VP-fronting in Sāmoan is in part due to the placement of direction and manner adverbs to the right of the raised verb; predicted if they are merged internal to the VP. Faka'uvea has at least three adverb positions near the raised verb – pre-clitic, post-clitic, and post-verb – and, therefore, the evidence does not transparently support the VP raising approach for Faka'uvea; more descriptive research is needed in this area. Please note that due to the preliminary nature of this work, no syntactic trees will be sketched.

Ergative case as dependant case. I begin with a treatment of ergative case assignment. I assume that all ergative case assignment must occur in the same place in the syntax. Given that clitic A arguments have an underlying ergative feature and that independent A pronouns also have ergative marking, I assume that ergative case is assigned in the vP, i.e. ergative case is low. There are broadly three methods of ergative case assignment which can take place in the vP, namely: inherent, structural, and dependent.

Inherent case assignment proceeds by assigning case to an argument by virtue of its θ-role. For ergative case, the θ-role associated is [AGENT] which is assigned to the argument merged in Spec, vP according to the Uniformity of Theta-Role Assignment Hypothesis (Baker 1988). An inherent approach to ergative case cannot be applied to Faka'uvea as semantic agents can appear without ergative case, as in extended intransitives, as in (14), and in PNI, as in (25); which have absolutive agents.

A structural approach to ergative case requires that the A argument enter into a Spec, Head relationship with a head with that can check for ergative case. Formally, this requires that the argument have an [ERG] feature at MERGE and that this feature must be checked against a head also with [ERG] or the derivation will crash (see Chomsky 1993 for checking approaches). For Faka'uvea, I argue that low, structural ergative case cannot account for the data either. The head which would check for low, structural ergative case is transitive little *v*, which is also responsible for the introduction of the direct object according to Burzio's Generalization (Burzio 1986). The evidence against a structural approach comes from PNI structures. In PNI structures, there must be an argument that is merged at Comp, VP, i.e. a direct object (Massam 2001; Collins 2017), and for there to be a direct object

there must be a transitive *v*P shell where the external argument is merged and so it should have ergative case. This is contrary to the evidence which shows that PNI creates absolutive subjects. The structural account therefore cannot be extended to ergative case in Faka'uvea.

The dependent theory of case assignment holds that marked case – ergative or accusative – is determined by how many non-case marked arguments are present in a given domain (Marantz 1991). Some issues arise if one attempts to adopt this into Faka'uvea without modification. In addressing these issues, I first assume, following Baker (2015), that case assignment occurs as soon as the requirements are met, and, for completeness, I assume that unvalued case [uCase] for absolutive arguments is not checked and instead that absolutive is unvalued Case (Levin 2010). There are then at least two major concerns: what is the relevant phrase for case marking, and the 'blindness' of MERGE.

Case checking could be parameterised to NP or DP. The use of NP over-predicts as it would cause PNI structures to have ergative agents. In DM, the √root is first merged with a categorising *n* head to create an NP. PNI constructions therefore select for an NP in DM and not an N. This has the effect that if the case assignment operation looks for an NP within the c-command domain of the external argument, it will find one and create elicit patterns. In assuming the structure of pronouns above, it cannot be that NP conditions ergative as pronominal direct objects condition ergative despite never being NPs. Instead, I offer that ergative case is conditioned by DPs in Faka'uvea. This analysis has the benefit of ruling out bare NPs and clitic pronouns. Note that extended intransitives are ruled out as goals of the operation as they are already valued for case by their peripheral KPs.

The second issue is more difficult. MERGE is traditionally considered to be a structure-building mechanism that has no way of knowing whether the string resulting from its operation is or will be grammatical (Chomsky 1993, 1995). It merely takes what has been provided to the derivation and combines it exhaustively. Derivations are made grammatical or ungrammatical by features and especially by uninterpretable features which are here formalised as [uF] where [F] is any feature. These features typically must be checked by a corresponding feature somewhere in the derivation or the resulting string is ungrammatical. The issue arising here from MERGE's necessary power is that there is no reason why an NP should not take a DP shell or a ϕ head should not take a categorising *d* head. I propose that this is restricted by a feature checking relationship between D and NP or ϕ, but I refrain from positing an exact value for this feature and instead provide argumentation that the feature could be the same for both NP and ϕ.

My evidence for a shared feature conditioning D shells on NP and ϕ comes from the mirrored distribution of PNI and clitic pronouns. The contrast between PNI and transitive constructions is in the backgrounding of the object in the former, particularly when the object is discourse-old. It cannot be that the object appearing as a DP is focus-marking or topicalisation as these all have separate constructions. The D feature cannot be the Spell-out of non/specificity or in/definiteness as these have associated morphemes. The appearance of clitic pronouns as independent pronouns, as DPs, is conditioned by focus-marking, emphatic-marking, or being discourse-new; the opposite pattern from PNI. While

it is too early to propose a feature, I do suggest that this symmetry could be captured in a model where D has an uninterpretable [uNew] feature which must be checked by a discourse-new item in its complement or else be ungrammatical. I assume throughout the rest of this analysis that the concatenation of D with certain items is blocked through a similar mechanic as outlined here. I return to this assumption in §5 and propose that it is problematic for a hierachy-less model of Faka'uvea grammar.

This section has provided an analysis of ergative as a dependent case based on evidence from constructions in which ergative marking should apply but does not. In this model, ergative case is valued on the transitive subject in its MERGE position, meaning that clitic pronouns cannot move up the syntactic spine for case.

The syntactic distribution of clitics. Having provided a model of ergative case assignment that is uniform in placement and conditioning, I turn to the problem of clitic distribution. Following Collins (2017 and references therein) I assume that some portion of the verbal complex fronts to Spec, TP. How this is achieved is not cirtically important here as there is no analysis where the element that fronts is so large as to contain Spec, vP – where the ergative subject is merged. The clitics must, then, get above the verb by another means.

In surveying the options for raising, assuming the Last Resort condition on Move (Chomsky 1993), it becomes clear that this must be an EPP mechanism. The clitics cannot travel with the verb as there is no principled way of requiring that it be only the clitics that do so. It also cannot be raised to check for case as case is checked low in vP. Additionally, checking for case in a Spec, Head relation with IP/TP would give the clitics uniform nominative case; contrary to the facts of syntactic ergativity in raising. The MOVE from MERGE position must then be motivated by an unvalued feature on IP/TP.

I, therefore, propose that the raising is achieved by the EPP. Specifically, I propose that, similar to Sāmoan where the EPP requires checking of a [uD] feature (Collins 2017), the EPP in Faka'uvea has a [uϕ] feature which must be valued in a Spec, Head relation. Under Collins' (2017) analysis the Probe looks as far as the subject. If it were to look further, it would be able to raise the object. Under the analysis proposed here one does not need to stipulate a maximum distance on the AGREE operation as the Probe is looking for a [ϕ] Goal and the independent pronouns are DPs. However, the AGREE relation could raise the ϕ head and strand the *d*. I argue that this is blocked because *d* categorising heads are cyclic heads and so trigger Spell-Out of their complements (Embick 2010; Moskal 2015), making them invisible to the AGREE operation; as with Phases (Chomsky 2001). Note that the uninterpretable feature on IP/TP cannot be [uParticipant] or another more specific feature than [ϕ] because clitic pronouns are not by their featural make-up a natural class; they only share that they are a simple ϕ head. I assume that the [uϕ] features on the IP/TP Probe and on the pronouns can be shipped to the interfaces without resulting in ungrammaticality as argued in Preminger (2011, 2014). Alternatively, it could be that the *d* head checks for the [uϕ] feature in independent pronouns and they are otherwise checked at IP/TP. I suggest that these would be fruitful avenues for future research.

Summary of the syntax. In this section, ergative case is argued to be dependent and is checked formally only by DPs in Comp, VP which are unvalued for case at the time of MERGE of the external argument. This means that the clitic pronouns cannot be moving for case. I argued that this raising operation must be driven by an EPP requirement parameterised to [uϕ]. This operation is blocked for the independent pronouns by the cycle-inducing head *d*, which is restricted from occurring with the backgrounded clitics through some uninterpretable feature on D. This analysis can derive the syntactic distribution of the pronouns without resorting to non-standard assumptions of the locus of ergative case. Unfortunately, it was necessary to posit a feature licensing the occurrence of D. This feature and its relationship to a Silversteinian Hierarchy will be discussed in §5. The rest of this section will be used to account for the syncretism in pronominal forms.

4.4. Accounting for the Clitics' Forms

This section will provide an analysis of the problem of the morphological form of the first and second person pronouns as a syncretism and not an underlying, featural reality.

To begin, as shown in §3.3, the facts of ergative argument raising show that the accusative aligned pronouns have underlying ergative case. One therefore requires a theory which can derive the syncretism without recourse to case features or to Lexicalist syntax. Legate (2014) provides a DM based account of cross-linguistic, person-based, split-ergative syncretisms such as those in Faka'uvea and those discussed in §2. This section will first summarise her methods and will then apply them to the context of Faka'uvea.

Person-based split ergativity as a morphological phenomenon. Legate (2014) proposes a morphological source of person-based split ergativity through DM. The crux of her argument is that many languages with a split are fully ergative but have a syncretism between the nominative and the ergative case markers in certain contexts. This predicts that a given DP/NP could syntactically have ergative case and so pattern with morphologically ergative DPs/NPs when they are an A argument; as in Faka'uvea. Legate (2014) addresses the data in §2.1 through two different analyses using the available mechanisms of DM namely: the Elsewhere Condition and Impoverishment (Bonet 1991).

The Elsewhere Condition is a manner of organising Vocabulary Insertion such that the most featurally specified lexical item fitting a feature bundle is inserted first, followed by the second most, and so on until the final possible lexical item is the least specified. Under Legate's (2014) analysis of accusative alignment in an ergative system, this final, default insertion is of a single phonological string for both the A argument and the S argument. The split is then an illusion of grammatical accusativity driven by syncretism.

To illustrate, included in (29) below is a partial Vocabulary Insertion list for Kugu Nganhcara (Pama-Nyungan: Smith and Johnson 2000) proposed in Legate (2008: 80). In this language nominals are in ergative alignment and pronouns are in accusative. In this Vocabulary Insertion, there is no absolutive or nominative feature driven insertion, rather these are inserted when no other Vocabulary Item fits. Importantly, the pronoun

Vocabulary Insertion does not have a unique vocabulary item that would distinguish ergative from nominative. Note that some cases have been elided for space considerations.

(29) Vocabulary Insertion for Case Marking in Kugu Nganhcara

a. Nominals
[ergative]↔*-ng(u)*
[dative]↔*-na* / kinship, proper
(. . .)
(elsewhere)↔-Ø
(Smith and Johnson 2000: 389)

b. 3rd Person Pronouns/Determiners
[accusative]↔*nhunha*
[dative]↔*nhingu*
(. . .)
(elsewhere)↔-Ø
(Smith and Johnson 2000: 397)

The Elsewhere Condition analysis has limitations. To make this analysis work one needs morphological suppletion and an argument for an ordering of Vocabulary Insertion rules where both ergative and nominative are unspecified for one set of heads but not for another. This is difficult when a language uses free case markers or when case marking can be distinguished from pronouns. Warlpiri (Pama-Nyungan: Hale 1973) is a language where the split ergative pattern is not parsimoniously analysed with the Elsewhere Condition. In Warlpiri, the nominative and accusative are null while the ergative /-rlu/ occurs optionally on nominals, on non-singular pronouns of any person, and on the singular third person (Legate 2014: 204). The appearance of the ergative in the pronominal series would require two Elsewhere Conditions to work as – under the author's assumed person (Halle 1997) and number (Harbour 2003) features – both third person and non-singular are achieved through negative featural values. Since Vocabulary Insertion is driven by but positively specified features alone, this class cannot be derived using this method.

Legate's (2014) second analysis derives morphological syncretisms through Impoverishment which is used to delete a feature in the presence of certain other features. Drawing from Warlpiri, she proposes that the problem of ergative marking in pronouns is derivable using Impoverishment. The problem is solvable because the class of pronouns which do not take ergative marking is positively definable as [+ Participant, + Singular]. One can then write an Impoverishment rule (from Legate 2014: 205) where ergative deletes when in the presence of these two features, as in (30). Legate (2014: 204) is careful to note that in this situation, the Impoverishment rule must take place after the case agreement takes place so as to be able to give ergative case to those elements which agree, as in example (5) above. The feature deletion would then occur in a post-syntactic morphology.

(30) ERG --> Ø/ [+ Participant, + Singular]

These two analyses are able to model some person-based split ergative languages as being uniformly ergative in syntax, but having a syncretism in their pronominal morphology such that the S argument and the A argument are the same form; surface accusative and underlying ergative. Specifically, the analysis can account for languages which pattern as ergative in case agreement, coordination, and with regards to syntactic

ergativity – despite morphological accusativity – and without resorting to novel mechanics.

Applying Legate's (2014) methods to Faka'uvea. The application of the Elsewhere Condition or Impoverishment in Faka'uvea will be mediated by the analysis of pronominal forms advocated above. Clitics being ϕ heads and independent pronouns being DPs allows for a very simple application of the Elsewhere Condition. This application is formalised in the chart in Figure 3 which gives the two different allomorphs for third person singular.

Figure 3 : The Vocabulary Insertion for third person singular

[D] ↔ /ia/
(elsewhere) ↔ /ina/~/na/

This Vocabulary Insertion works as follows: the feature bundle is shipped to the interface, the Vocabulary Insertion sees that there is a [D] feature on the head and inserts /ia/, otherwise it inserts /ina/~/na/. Case in this view is irrelevant as there is no difference in Spell-Out of the clitics or the independent pronouns. In the latter, case is Spelled-out on KP not on the DP. This method follows from the strictly necessary syntactic structure of the pronouns and does so without applying extra post-syntactic operations.

An Impoverishment analysis, cannot account for the data without fundamentally changing the pronominal structures. If the distinction between clitic and independent pronouns is maintained then one still requires an Elsewhere Condition on pronouns to derive the split as there is no way to positively specify the environment where feature deletion would apply. For example, the first- and second-person clitic pronouns could be specified to delete their case features, but what environment could differentiate them from their clitic doubled or emphatic independent forms? Both the independent and clitic pronouns share the same ϕ features and differ only in that the independent pronouns have D; meaning that the clitics would have to delete their case features when they are [-D]. This is both a non-standard idea of Impoverishment and an unnecessary step given that the Elsewhere Condition can account for the data without adding the Impoverishment layer.

An alternative model could be proposed where all pronouns are DPs. This would explain why some pronouns never appear without D. Under this view, the EPP raises the closest DP with ϕ features, an Impoverishment rule deletes the D feature so that K can never appear, and an Elsewhere Conditioned Vocabulary Insertion ensues. While this analysis does not require that some pronouns not take D and some always take D, it cannot positively specify that Impoverishment occur to the raised pronouns and not elsewhere, as the pronouns would be exactly the same. More damningly still, even if Impoverishment could be positively specified, this account cannot positively specify an Elsewhere Condition as absolutive first and second person pronouns would occur in this slot. Since S and O are not features and accusative is not a feature in the ergative alignment, the Elsewhere Condition would either force both arguments to surface as clitics or force both never to surface. This leaves as viable only the purely Elsewhere Condition driven analysis.

Syncretisms as morphological phenomena. This section argued that the Elsewhere Condition could adequately choose the correct forms using the differentiated pronominal structures supplied from the syntax. It was also argued that Impoverishment could not provide a more parsimonious analysis without altering the underlying case alignment.

5. The Hierarchy Remains

The analysis in §4 has provided a solution to a person-based split ergative system where the split is not only in the shape of morphemes but also in their syntactic distribution. In doing so, it had to be assumed that there is an undefined feature on D which must be checked by its complement. This feature was assumed to be related to information structure on the basis that the forms which appear without D appear with D when they are not backgrounded. While this account is descriptively adequate in deriving the patterns which it purports to deal with, all while not having to propose any non-standard mechanisms, it is not explanatorily adequate. In particular, this analysis cannot explain the unidirectional rigidity of the clitic-independent pronoun distinction.

Clitic pronouns can occur as independent pronouns under some information structural circumstances. This is not true of first- and second-person O arguments or third person S and O arguments. Notice that this is an unnatural class in all ways: the clitics are [ERG, ABS] and independents are [ERG, ABS, PERIPHERAL], in role the clitics are [AGENT, PATIENT] and independents are [AGENT, PATIENT, PERIPHERAL], in ϕ features both sets are equivalent. The distinction also cannot be reduced to markedness even if one were to assume that the first and second person pronouns have accusative syntax and the third person and nominals have ergative. In this view the marked member of the accusatives occurs as an independent and the marked member of the ergatives occurs as a clitic and only if a pronoun. Additionally, a probabilistic model based on perception should not be posited as the conditions for the syntactic distributions are seemingly either-or and not based on probability.

With this in mind, the analysis put forward here is seemingly the best option available within a strict interpretation of Minimalism and DM. Unfortunately, by positing that some heterogeneous set of pronoun-case pairs be obligatorily foregrounded – that is to say the obligatorily independent pronouns – a Silversteinian Hierarchy has been introduced through a backdoor. Given the argumentation presented throughout this paper, I argue that the only possible antidote to this Silversteinian Hierarchy is a more rigorously tested data set with rich negative data. Given the data available, a Silversteinian Hierarchy – however instantiated – is a linguistic reality in Faka'uvea.

6. Future Steps

This paper has attempted to address the person-based split ergative pronominal system in Faka'uvea through a highly restrictive Minimalist Distributed Morphology framework. This system is an interesting case study as it seems to have four different categories of case-marking according to person and nominal status. The model presented was able to provide a descriptively adequate analysis of the phenomena – apart from inanimate ergative marking. The model argues on the basis of syntactic distribution for a basic structural

difference between clitic and independent pronouns. Ergative case is argued to be a dependent case on the basis of case-marking in pseudo-noun incorporation and extended intransitives and is conditioned solely by DPs. Clitic raising is accounted for as a [uϕ] feature on the EPP and the distribution of which pronouns may be clitics is shown to follow from the differentiated pronominal structure and the cyclic nature of categorising heads. Last, the Elsewhere Condition is used to account for the syncretism in clitics and in independent pronouns. This was shown to only be possible under a differentiated pronominal structure. Unfortunately, this analysis fails to be explanatorily adequate as it requires a seemingly unnatural class of pronouns to be always in the information structural foreground. This class is, however, predictable if one assumes an active Silversteinian Person Hierarchy in the Faka'uvea grammar. If the current consensus in Minimalism and DM – that Silversteinian Hierarchies are epiphenomenal – is to be held, then case studies like Faka'uvea are critically important. Moving forward with this particular problem requires a greatly expanded data set and especially one with robust negative data.

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6.1. Appendix: Abbreviations

1	First Person	ERG	Ergative	OBL	Oblique
2	Second Person	FUT	Future	PERF	Perfect
3	Third Person	HAB	Habitual	PL	Plural
A	Mayanist Series A	HUM	Human	POSS	Possessive
ABS	Absolutive	ICP	Incompletive	PRED	Predicative
ACC	Accusative	IMM	Immediate	PRES	Present
AGR	Agreement	INCL	Inclusive	PROG	Progressive
APASS	Antipassive	INST	Instrumental	PST	Past
B	Mayanist Series B	LOC	Locative	RN	Relational Noun
CLF	Classifier	M	Masculine	RPST	Recent Past
CP	Completive	NCII	Noun Class II	SA	Stem Augment
DAT	Dative	NEG	Negative	SG	Singular
DEF	Definite	NFUT	Non-future	SPEC	Specific
DEM	Demonstrative	NPL	Non-plural	TR	Transitiv
DIR	Directional	NOM	Nominative		
DU	Dual	NSG	Non-singular		