

## Chapter 6

### **Morphological Split: Accusative Behaviour of Pronouns**

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As mentioned in the previous chapters, Tongan shows a morphological split based on types of nouns. Specifically, full NP's are divided into ERG and ABS, while pronouns show an accusative pattern: S and A appear as a subject pronoun, while O is realised in a distinct form. We will argue, however, that the accusative pattern does not mean that the pronouns receive NOM in the subject position and ACC in the object position. Rather, it is due to the fact that pronominal subjects are realised as clitics in Tongan. We will argue that the form of a subject clitic reflects the theta-role it bears and not the case. In particular, we will argue that despite the identical phonological form, a subject clitic receives ERG when it refers to A, and ABS when it refers to S.

In §6.1, we will look at the data that demonstrate the apparent accusative pattern, which Tongan pronouns show. Our data demonstrate another peculiar property of the Tongan pronouns, namely, the compulsory word order alternation. In §6.2, we will argue that the SVO order results from the fact that the subject pronouns are clitics attached to T. We will also argue that object pronouns are full pronouns. Object clitics are not part of the lexical inventory of Tongan. In §6.3, we will develop the hypothesis that the subject clitics in Tongan are theta-role absorbers in the sense of Aoun (1985) and therefore, are arguments. This hypothesis explains why the pronouns in Tongan show an accusative pattern. First, pronominal O has a distinct form from that of

pronominal A/S, because the former is a full pronoun while the latter is a clitic. Secondly, pronominal S and pronominal A appear in the identical form because the form of a subject clitic reflects the theta-role it bears, and not the case. It will be shown also that this sensitivity to theta-role is manifested in other syntactic phenomena such as control and raising. Finally, in §6.4, implication of the current analysis with regard to the other instances of the similar type of morphological split will be considered. We will argue that the so-called morphological split is not so much a morphological phenomenon as a syntactic one, namely, a consequence of a syntactic operation of cliticisation.

### 6.1 Accusative pattern of pronouns

As discussed in Chapter 3, in Tongan, a full NP is accompanied by a case marker: the ERG-case marker precedes A, while S/O are preceded by the ABS-case marker, as illustrated in (6.1) below.<sup>1</sup>

- (6.1) a. Na'e 'alu 'a Sione.  
           Pst go ABS Sione  
           “Sione went.”
- b. Na'e kai 'e Sione 'a e ika.  
           Pst eat ERG Sione ABS def fish  
           “Sione ate the fish.”

In contrast, forms of the pronouns show an accusative pattern. S and A are realised as the same pronominal form, while a distinct form is used for O. Let us tentatively call the former “subject pronoun” and the latter “object pronoun”. Compare the sentences

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<sup>1</sup> The ABS-case marker 'a can be, and frequently is, omitted when immediately followed by a definite article *e*. This optional nature of the ABS-case marker will play a significant role in analysing the distribution of the pronouns below.

in (6.2) with those in (6.1).

- (6.2) a. Na'a ne 'alu.  
Pst 3.s. go  
"He went."
- b. Na'a ne kai 'a e ika.  
Pst 3.s. eat ABS def fish  
"He ate the fish."
- c. Na'e kai ia 'e Sione.  
Pst eat 3.s. ERG Sione  
"Sione ate it."

The paradigm of pronouns in Tongan is given in (6.3) below.

(6.3)	Subject (S/A)	Object (O)
1st Excl. s.	te	kita
1st Excl. d.	ma	kimaua
1st Excl. pl.	mau	kimautolu
1st Incl. s.	ou/ku/u	au
1st Incl. d.	ta	kitaua
1st Incl. pl	tau	kitautolu
2nd s.	ke	koe
2nd d.	mo	kimoua
2nd pl.	mou	kimoutolu
3rd s.	ne	ia
3rd d.	na	kinaua
3rd pl.	nau	kinautolu

This accusative pattern may well be considered an instance of a typical morphological split found in the so-called ergative languages: full NP's are treated in an ergative manner, while pronouns are divided on an accusative basis. As discussed in Chapter 2, traditionally, such a morphological split was analysed in terms of the animacy hierarchy (Silverstein 1976, Dixon 1979). However, this approach encounters a number of problems. Furthermore, given the assumption that ERG is a structural case (i.e., the case morphology reflects syntax), we would like to account for the seemingly contradictory phenomenon in terms of syntax rather than semantics, in a more

comprehensive manner. Below, we will argue that the accusative pattern results from the fact that the subject pronouns in Tongan are clitics, and that the subject clitics are sensitive to theta-role rather than case.

The occurrence of pronouns affects the word order. The subject pronouns must appear immediately preceding the verb. As illustrated by (6.2c), the object pronouns appear immediately following the verb. One might speculate that the fact that pronouns in Tongan are required to appear adjacent to the verb suggests that these elements are actually agreement morphemes.<sup>2</sup> However, this analysis is untenable because subject pronouns cannot co-occur with a coreferential subject. See (6.4) below.

- (6.4) a. \*Na'a ne<sub>i</sub> 'alu 'a Sione<sub>i</sub>.  
 Pst 3.s. go ABS Sione  
 "Sione went."  
 b. \*Na'a ne<sub>i</sub> kai 'e Sione<sub>i</sub> 'a e ika.  
 Pst 3.s. eat ERG Sione ABS def fish  
 "Sione ate the fish."

Nor can the object pronouns appear with a coreferential NP in the object position.

- (6.5) \*Na'e 'ave ia<sub>i</sub> 'e Sione 'a Mele<sub>i</sub>.  
 Pst take 3.s. ERG Sione ABS Mele  
 "Sione took Mele."

If these elements were agreement morphemes, they would be allowed to co-occur with the corresponding arguments. Since this is not the case, we conclude that these elements are not agreement morphemes.

Another possibility is to analyse these elements as clitics. It would explain why pronouns may violate the normal VSO order if we assume that the subject clitics

attach to T, and the object clitics attach to V. The ungrammaticality of (6.4) and (6.5) would also be accounted for by stipulating that clitic doubling is not allowed in Tongan. As it will be shown shortly, empirical evidence suggest that the subject pronouns are in fact clitics, but the object pronouns are not. In fact, “object pronouns” are independent pronouns and thus may also be used to refer to A/S. We will consider the relevant properties of the Tongan pronouns in the next section.

## 6.2 Inventory of the Tongan pronouns

We will argue that Tongan has two sets of pronouns: a) subject clitics (henceforth SCL) and b) independent pronouns. It is argued above that the adjacency requirement on the distribution of the Tongan pronouns suggests that these elements are clitics. This is true as far as the subject pronouns are concerned. They cannot appear in any other positions, nor can they be accompanied by a case marker. See (6.6) below.

(6.6) a. \*Na'e 'alu ('a) ne.  
           Pst go ABS 3.s.  
           “He went.”

b. \*Na'e kai ('e) ne 'a e ika.  
       Pst eat ERG 3.s. ABS def fish  
       “He ate the fish.”

However, the distribution of the “object pronouns” is not restricted to the position immediately following the verb. For example, they may appear in a prepositional

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<sup>2</sup> Thanks to Katrina Hayward for pointing out this possibility.

phrase, following a preposition, as illustrated in (6.7) below.<sup>3</sup>

- (6.7) a. 'Oku sai'ia 'a Sione 'iate koe.  
 Prs like ABS Sione in-person 2.s.  
 "Sione likes you."  
 b. Na'e 'omi 'e Sione 'a e tohi kiate au.  
 Pst bring ERG Sione ABS def book to-person 1.s.  
 "Sione brought the book to me."

Sentences in (6.7) suggest that the object pronouns are not clitics, as the object pronoun is arguably not attached to the verb in these examples. In fact, the sentences become ungrammatical if the pronoun appears immediately after the verb.

- (6.8) a. \*'Oku sai'ia koe 'a Sione.  
 Prs like 2.s. ABS Sione.  
 "Sione likes you."  
 b. \*Na'e 'omi au 'e Sione 'a e tohi.  
 Pst bring 1.s. ERG Sione ABS def book  
 "Sione brought the book to me."

This means that the object pronouns can be licensed in this position under some particular circumstances. We will return to this point shortly. In addition, unlike the subject pronouns, the object pronouns may occur in the object position, preceded by the ABS-case marker. See (6.9) below.

- (6.9) Na'e taki 'e Sione 'a kinautolu.  
 Pst lead ERG Sione ABS 3.pl.  
 "Sione led them."

(6.9) suggests that the object pronouns are on a par with full NP's. Furthermore, not only can they appear in the case-marked object position, the object pronouns may also appear in the subject position with the case marker. See (6.10) below.

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<sup>3</sup> The prepositions, 'i ("in"), ki ("to"), and mei ("from") change their forms into 'iate, kiate and meiate, when followed by a pronoun.

- (6.10) a. ‘Oku nofo ‘a kimautolu.  
 Prs stay ABS 2.excl.pl.  
 “We stay.”
- b. Na’e faka’osi ‘e kimoutolu ‘a e vai.  
 Pst finish ERG 2.pl. ABS def water  
 “You finished the water.”

Given examples like (6.10a,b), it is not appropriate to regard these pronominals as “object” pronouns. In essence, these pronouns are used anywhere except for the position immediately preceding the verb, in which the subject pronouns exclusively occur. The above observation leads us to postulate that these pronominals are independent words rather than clitics, and that consequently, they may occur both as an object and as a subject.

There is ample evidence that testifies that the Tongan object pronouns are not clitics. Zwicky (1985) lists a series of tests to distinguish independent pronouns from clitics. The Tongan object pronouns fail these tests. In contrast, the same tests verify that the subject pronouns are indeed clitics. First, some of the “object” pronouns are morphologically too complex for a clitic. Zwicky (1985) notes that clitics are rarely composed of a more than one morpheme. The dual and plural “object” pronouns in Tongan, however, consist of three morphemes: e.g., *kinautolu* can be broken down into *ki-nau*(3.pl)-*tolu*(“three”). These pronouns are more word-like than clitic-like in this respect. In contrast, the subject pronouns all consist of one morpheme. Secondly, clitics, being parts of words, cannot occur with a specifier, modifier, or a conjunction (Zwicky 1985). The Tongan “object” pronouns go against this generalisation as well. For example, they can be freely conjoined with another NP by a conjunction. See (6.11) below.

- (6.11) a. Ko koe mo au.  
 Pred 2.s. and 1.s.  
 “It's you and me.”
- b. Na'e nofo 'a kimautolu mo kinautolu.  
 Pst stay ABS 1.pl.excl. and 3.pl.  
 “We and they stayed.”

On the other hand, conjunction is impossible with the subject pronouns.

- (6.12) \*Na'a mau mo nau nofo.  
 Pst 1.pl.excl. and 3.pl. stay  
 “We and they stayed.”

Thirdly, phonological tests further confirm that the clitic status of the subject pronouns. For example, the subject pronouns trigger an accent shift. Words in Tongan have a penultimate accent. Thus, bisyllabic tense markers, *'oku*, *na'a*, and *kuo* have a stress on the first syllable. However, when followed by a monosyllabic pronoun, the accent is shifted to the second syllable, which effectively is the penultimate syllable of the tense marker + pronoun cluster. That is, the tense marker and the pronoun form a compound that is regarded as one word. See (6.13) below.

- (6.13) a. 'óku --> 'okú ne  
 b. ná'a --> na'á ne  
 c. kúo --> kuó ne

The subject pronouns also undergo some sandhi rules. In the spoken language, some tense marker + pronoun clusters are customarily pronounced in shortened forms when the pronoun is monosyllabic. Some examples are given in (6.14) below.

- (6.14) a. na'a ke -> nake  
 b. na'a ku -> na'u  
 c. na'a ne -> nane  
 d. kuo u -> kou

Data such as (6.13) and (6.14) strongly suggest that these pronominals are clitics attached to T. To summarise, empirical evidence suggests that Tongan has a set of

subject clitics (henceforth, SCL's) and a set of independent pronouns (henceforth, pronouns). Consequently, we assume that by default the pronouns appear in an argument position with a case marker, just like full NP's.

Given the assumption that the object pronouns are not clitics, it is necessary to explain the examples like (6.15), in which the pronoun appears immediately after the verb without accompanying a case marker.

- (6.15) Na'e 'ave au 'e Sione.  
 Pst take 1.s. ERG Sione  
 "Sione took me."

We assume that (6.15) above is derived from (6.16) below.

- (6.16) Na'e 'ave 'e Sione 'a au.  
 Pst take ERG Sione ABS 1.s.

We may conjecture that Tongan has an (optional) rule that moves a pronominal object to right-adjoin to the verb, yielding the structure (6.17) below.

- (6.17) Na'e 'ave au<sub>i</sub> 'e Sione  $t_i$ .

Note that this rule applies exclusively to pronouns that are base-generated in the object position. Thus, full NP's cannot undergo this rule, as illustrated by (6.18).

- (6.18) \*Na'e 'ave Mele<sub>i</sub> 'e Sione  $t_i$ .  
 Pst take Mele ERG Sione  
 "Sione took Mele."

(6.19) shows that the crucial condition is not the case but the grammatical role, i.e., a pronoun must be O in order to undergo this fronting rule. Fronting the ABS-marked pronominal subject yields ungrammaticality.

- (6.19) \*Na'e 'alu au<sub>i</sub>  $t_i$ .  
 Pst go 1.s.  
 "I went."

This could be understood as incorporation of a pronoun into the verb in the sense of Baker (1988).<sup>4</sup> We may conjecture that Tongan optionally allows incorporation of a pronominal O. Note also that when a pronoun is right-adjoined to the verb, the ABS-case marker is obligatorily omitted. We assume that the ABS-case marker 'a is an overt realisation of the feature [ABS] of Agro. Thus, it appears on an argument when the argument checks its case feature in [Spec, Agro]. If we assume that the pronominal O is incorporated into a verb, it can no longer undergo any movement on its own. Accordingly, it cannot move up to [Spec, Agro]. As a result, 'a cannot appear on the pronoun. Let us assume that the case feature [case] of an incorporated pronoun is checked along with the case feature of the verb by adjoining to Agro.

### 6.3 Properties of subject clitics in Tongan

#### 6.3.1 Theories of cliticisation

In this subsection, we will briefly review the various accounts of cliticisation. The most extensively studied are the direct object clitics (henceforth, OCL's) in Romance. Kayne (1975) first proposed the theory that the Romance OCL's are base-generated as the complement of V and subsequently move to attach to the verb. Kayne's movement theory is motivated by the fact that OCL's cannot co-occur with a coreferential NP in the object position. The main argument of this approach is that the position [V, NP] is occupied by a trace, and thus cannot be filled by any other argument. Consider the French example below. As illustrated by (6.20c), the ODL *les* cannot appear if the

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<sup>4</sup> Thanks to William O'Grady for bringing this point to my attention.

coreferential NP is present in the object position. In other words, clitic doubling is not allowed.

(6.20) French

- a. Jean mange les pommes.  
Jean eat-3.s. def.pl. apples  
“Jean eats the apples.”
- b. Jean les mange.  
Jean def.pl. eat-3.s.  
“Jean eats them.”
- c. \*Jean les mange les pommes.  
Jean def.pl. eat-3.s def.pl. apples  
“Jean eats them the apples.”

Some other Romance languages, however, do allow clitic doubling, as illustrated by the Spanish example below.

(6.21) a. Lo veo.

3.s.masc. see-1.s.  
“I see him.”

b. Lo veo a Juan.

3.s.masc. see-1.s. to Juan  
“I see him Juan.”

The phenomenon of clitic doubling gave rise to an alternative account of cliticisation. Specifically, clitics are attached to the host in the base structure (Rivas 1977, Jaeggli 1986b). The position [V, NP] can be filled either by an overt NP or an empty category. Clitic doubling can be explained in this approach by stipulating a language-specific rule. French allows only the latter to generate in this position, while Spanish allows both.

The idea that clitics are base-generated in the clitic position is further developed by Aoun (1981, 1985), who argues that some clitics absorb case. Case absorption renders

the position [V, NP] a non-case position. Overt NP's are excluded from this position due to the Case Filter. Clitic doubling is possible only if the clitic is not a case absorber. Along the same line, Borer (1981, 1983) regards clitics as the spell-out of the case feature, which matches with that of the element, either an overt NP or an empty category, generated in the position [V, NP] in the base structure.

Association of clitics with theta-roles is also proposed in the literature. Aoun (1985), for example, proposes that clitics may absorb not only case but also theta-role. Everett (1986, 1989), following Aoun (1985), postulates four types of clitics based on the features [ $\pm$ C(ase)] and [ $\pm$ A(rgument)]. [+C] clitics require case, [+A] clitics require a theta-role. This paradigm predicts that [+A] clitics render the position [V, NP] a non-argument position, and thereby forbid clitic doubling. Similarly, doubling a [+C] clitic is expected to cause a case conflict.<sup>5</sup> Following Aoun (1985) and Everett (1987, 1989), we will assume that properties of clitics vary cross-linguistically with regard to their requirement of case and theta role. We will argue that SCL's in Tongan are typologically [+A, +C]. As to the derivation, we will assume that SCL's in Tongan are base-generated in the subject position [Spec, VP] and subsequently move to adjoin to T. We assume that the host is T because of the phonological evidence mentioned earlier: T and a SCL behave as a cluster and undergo phonological rules such as accent shift and sandhi. Granted that the movement theory has been rejected for the reasons mentioned above, we argue that the derivation of clitics may also be

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<sup>5</sup> However, Everett (1989) argues that the case conflict does not necessarily prohibit doubling; for example, in Yagua clitics acquire morphological visibility by attaching to the verb, and thus escape the case requirement. Consequently, case conflict is resolved and the case-marked NP may double the clitic.

parameterised. Specifically, derivation of OCL's and that of SCL's need not be the same.

We will verify our hypothesis below.

### 6.3.2 Generation of SCL's in Tongan

Based on the phonological facts, we assume that SCL's in Tongan are attached to T, and not V. As mentioned above, we argue that the Tongan SCL's are [+A, +C]. They are [+A], in that they require a theta-role. To be specific, an SCL must bear the external theta-role.<sup>6</sup> This requirement is crucial to ensure that only the external argument (S/A, but not O) may be realised as a clitic. As we have seen above, pronominal O must always be realised as a pronoun, not as a clitic. These two assumptions together make the base-generation approach infeasible. If we assumed that a SCL is generated attached to T in the base structure, it would not be clear how this SCL receives a theta-role from the verb. Thus, we assume that they are generated in the [Spec, VP] position, where it can be theta-marked by the verb, and subsequently moves up to adjoin to T.<sup>7</sup>

This analysis predicts that the subject of an unaccusative verb cannot appear as a SCL. The subject of an unaccusative verb is generated as an internal argument and thereby does not bear the external theta-role. To verify this prediction, it is necessary to specify the verbs belonging to the unaccusative class. Perlmutter and Postal (1984:

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<sup>6</sup> *Theta-role* here refers to the external/internal theta-role in the sense of Williams (1980, 1981), and not a particular thematic (semantic) role such as Agent, Patient, etc. It is assumed that a verb assigns the internal theta-role to the argument in the complement position and the argument in [Spec, VP] receives the external theta-role from V' by predication.

<sup>7</sup> Manzini (1986) supports the movement theory with regard to SCL's in French. Manzini argues that the French SCL's originate in [Spec, NP] and attach to the verb later.

98-99) propose that the class of unaccusatives typically includes the following predicates: a) adjectives, b) predicates whose initial nuclear term is semantically a patient, c) predicates of existing and happening, d) involuntary emission of stimuli that impinge on the senses, e) aspectual predicates, and f) durative. In Tongan, there is a way to find out whether an argument bears an external theta-role or an internal theta-role. Tongan has two sets of possessive pronouns, alienable and inalienable. The alienable possessive pronouns start with *'e-*, e.g., *'eku* (1.s.), *'ene* (3.s.).<sup>8</sup> The inalienable possessive pronouns, on the other hand, start with *h-*, e.g., *hoku* (1.s.), *hono* (3.s.). The two sets of possessive pronouns are also used with a verb, more or less equivalent to the English possessive + gerund (e.g., “His passing the exam will be a surprise.”). What is very interesting is that the alienable possessive and the inalienable possessive are used in different contexts. When an alienable possessive pronoun precedes a verb, it refers to the subject of the verb (either A or S). In contrast, an inalienable possessive pronoun preceding a verb refers to O. See (6.22) below.

(6.22) a. *'ene tamate'i*  
alienable.poss.3.s. kill  
“his killing (something)”

b. *hono tamate'i*  
inalienable.poss.3.s. kill  
“his being killed (by somebody/something)”

As illustrated by (6.22a), when used with a transitive verb, an alienable possessive pronoun refers to A. In contrast, (6.22b) shows that an inalienable possessive pronoun must refer to O when used with a transitive verb.<sup>9</sup> In other words, possessive

<sup>8</sup> However, note that the second person possessive pronouns are exceptions. The second person alienable possessive pronouns are *ho'o* (2.s.), *ho'omo* (2.d.), and *ho'omou* (2.pl.) as opposed to the second person inalienable possessive pronouns, *ho* (2.s.), *homo* (2.d.), and *homou* (2.pl.).

<sup>9</sup> Based on these characteristics, Churchward (1953) called the alienable possessive pronouns “subjective possessive pronouns” and the inalienable, “objective possessive pronouns”.

pronouns are sensitive to theta-role. Predicates that are categorised as unaccusatives by Perlmutter and Postal (1984) almost invariably take an alienable possessive pronoun. See (6.23) below.

- (6.23) a. 'ene/\*hono faka'ofa'ofa<sup>10</sup>  
 its being beautiful
- b. 'ene/\*hono too  
 its falling
- c. 'ene/\*hono hoko  
 its happening
- d. 'ene/\*hono nanamu  
 its being smelly
- e. 'ene/\*hono toolonga  
 its lasting

As for aspectual predicates, they exhibit peculiar characteristics. First, the subject must be inanimate, as illustrated by (6.24) below.

- (6.24) a. Na'e kamata 'a e lea.  
 Pst begin ABS def speech  
 "The speech began."
- b. \*Na'e kamata 'a Sione.  
 Pst begin ABS Sione  
 "Sione began."

'Osi is another example. See (6.25) below.

- (6.25) a. Kuo 'osi 'a e me'akai.  
 Perf finish ABS def food  
 "The food is already finished."
- b. \*Kuo 'osi 'a Sione.  
 Perf finish ABS Sione  
 "Sione has already finished."

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<sup>10</sup> *Hono faka'ofa'ofa* is acceptable if *faka'ofa'ofa* is taken to be a noun: thus, meaning "its beauty". Same as (6.23d): *hono nanamu* "its odour".

Thus, it is quite likely that the ABS-marked argument in (6.24a) and (6.25) is an internal argument. *Kamata* and *'osi* rarely occur with a possessive pronoun, but if it does, it has to be an inalienable possessive pronoun. See (6.26) below.

- (6.26) (Kuo 'osi 'a e me'akai.) Na'e vave \*'ene/'hono 'osi.  
 Perf finish ABS def food Pst quick its finish  
 “(The food is already finished.) They have gone quickly.”  
 Lit. “its finishing was quick.”

As predicted, the subject of *kamata* and *'osi* cannot be a SCL. Thus,

- (6.27) a. \*Na'a ne kamata.  
 Pst 3.s. begin  
 “It began.”
- b. \*Kuo nau 'osi.  
 Perf 3.pl. finish  
 “They are finished.”

These examples support our hypothesis that the subject of an unaccusative verb cannot be a SCL.<sup>11</sup>

An apparent counter-example is sentences like (6.28) below.

- (6.28) 'Oku nau kamata ngaauhe hiva.  
 Prs 3.pl. begin work def nine  
 “They started to work at 9:00.”

In (6.28), a SCL, *nau*, is used with *kamata* contrary to our prediction. Note, however, that *kamata* is immediately followed by another item, *ngaauhe*. We may assume that *kamata* and *ngaauhe* form a complex verb, *kamata-ngaauhe*, which is derived as follows. Note that *kamata* is also used as a transitive verb.

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<sup>11</sup> On the other hand, one may argue that the sentences in (6.27) are ruled out because the personal pronouns are used to refer to inanimate objects. In other words, the restriction is that personal pronoun cannot be [-animate] rather than a SCL cannot be an internal argument. Even so, our data show that potentially unaccusative verbs, *kamata* and *'osi*, cannot take a SCL as the subject.

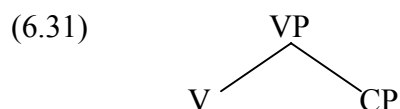
- (6.29) Na'a nau kamata 'a e ngaau.  
 Pst 3.pl. begin ABS def work  
 "They began the work."

Let us assume that *ngaau* in (6.28) is an incorporated object. The complex verb *kamata-ngaau* is a consequence of incorporation in the sense of Baker (1988): the object NP has been incorporated into the verb *kamata* to form an intransitive (unergative) verb of the form *kamata-NP*. Similar object-incorporation is permitted with other transitive verbs: e.g., *inu-pia* ("to beer-drink"), *ifi-tapaka* ("to cigarette-smoke"), and *kai-mango* ("to mango-eat"). In short, *kamata* in (6.28) is not an unaccusative verb, but an unergative derived from a transitive verb by object-incorporation. Thus, the subject can be a SCL because it bears an external theta-role.

Other verbs belonging to the unaccusative class are one-place predicates that take a sentential complement such as the negative *'ikai* and *pau* ("to be determined"). As discussed in Chapter 3 (§3.5.2), these verbs on the one hand allow *pro* to occur in the subject position, and on the other cannot take a thematic subject. We thus assume that these verbs do not assign an external theta-role.

- (6.30) a. 'Oku 'ikai *pro* [ke sai'ia 'a Sione 'ia Mele].  
 Prs not that like ABS Sione in-person Mele  
 "Sione does not like Mele."  
 Lit. "It is not that Sione like Mele."
- b. \*'Oku 'ikai 'a Sione [ke sai'ia 'ia Mele].  
 Prs not ABS Sione that like in-person Mele

Thus, we assume that these verbs are unaccusatives with the base structure (6.31) below.



Verbs of this class cannot occur with alienable possessive pronouns. Furthermore, they cannot take inalienable possessives. See (6.32) below.

- (6.32) Ko e ‘uhinga, ko \*‘ene/\*hono ‘ikai ke ha’u ‘a Sione.  
 Pred def reason, Pred its not that come ABS Sione  
 “The reason is that Sione is not coming.”  
 Lit. “The reason is its being not that Sione come.”

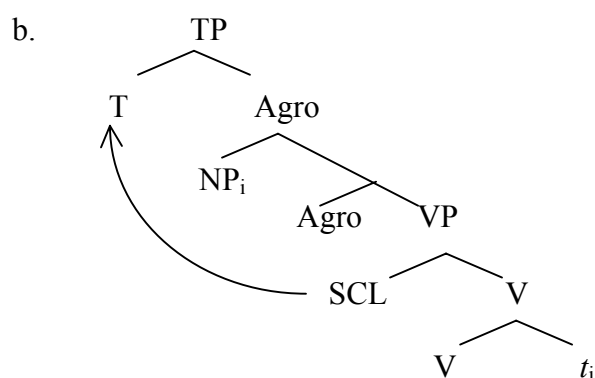
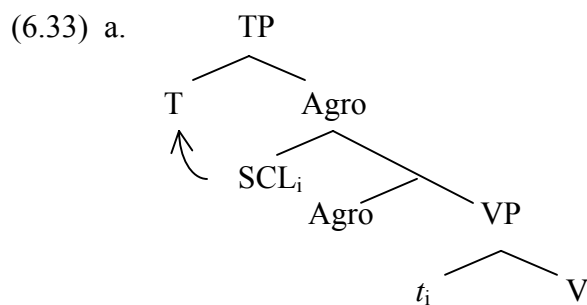
In short, unaccusatives in Tongan are either aspectual verbs or one-place predicates that take a sentential complement. Empirical evidence shows that the internal argument of these verbs cannot occur as a SCL. Thus, we conclude that SCL’s in Tongan must be assigned an external theta-role.

Let us consider how SCL’s in Tongan are generated. As mentioned above, we assume that the Tongan SCL’s are [+C] and [+A]. That is, they must bear a case and a theta-role. Let us assume, following Berendsen and Zonneveld (1984), that clitics are a bundle of features.<sup>12</sup> Specifically, we assume that the Tongan SCL’s bear the case feature and phi-features. In addition, there is a language-specific constraint that requires that a SCL be assigned an external theta-role in the base position. The assignment of an external theta-role is the licensing condition on the SCL’s in Tongan. This is the reason why only the subjects (i.e., external arguments) may be realised as a clitic. A clitic generated in [Spec, VP] receives a theta-role from the verb, while a clitic generated in [V, NP] fails to do so. Note that at this stage, the case feature of

<sup>12</sup> Note that Berendsen and Zonneveld (1984) take the base-generation hypothesis. Thus, it is assumed that the feature bundle is generated as part of the host, i.e., verb. I see no problems in adopting the essence of this proposal in assuming that the feature bundle is generated in the [Spec, VP] in Tongan.

SCL remains unchecked. The case feature can be checked off, by raising the relevant SCL to an appropriate Agr. In other words, we assume that the SCL's in Tongan undergo the same movement as full NP's in order to receive case; SCL's generated as S will move up to [Spec, Agro] and receive ABS, and those generated as A will move up to [Spec, Agrs] and receive ERG. Note that the case-absorption in the sense of Aoun (1981) cannot explain the case assignment of the Tongan SCL's. Aoun proposes that clitics, by attaching to the verb, absorb case in a manner similar to the way that a passive affix absorbs case of the verb (i.e., ACC). However, case absorption cannot work straightforwardly in Tongan because Tongan has an ergative case system. Although SCL's generated as S may absorb case of the verb (ABS), those generated as A could not, as this would leave the complement NP case-less. Given the base-generation hypothesis, the approach regarding clitics as the spell-out of case feature should also be rejected.

As to when cliticisation takes place, we assume that a SCL attaches to T in TP, forming a cluster,  $[_T[_T+SCL]+V]$ . In an intransitive construction, a SCL first moves to [Spec, Agro] and checks off its case feature and subsequently cliticises onto T. In contrast, in a transitive construction, a SCL attaches to T before it moves to [Spec, Agrs]. See (6.33) below. (6.33a) represents an intransitive construction and (6.33b), a transitive.



Thus, in (6.33b), the SCL cannot check its case feature in [Spec, Agrs]. We may assume that the SCL in (6.33b) checks its case feature when the host T moves to adjoin to Agrs. That is, both T and the SCL check their case features by adjoining to Agrs. In this analysis, it is assumed that case is assigned to a SCL although it is not morphologically realised. This contrasts with full NP arguments that are always preceded by a case marker. The fact that case is not morphologically reflected in the form of SCL's may be regarded as an indication that case is a feature of secondary importance to SCL's. On the other hand, theta-role plays a crucial role in realisation of SCL's.

The idea that clitics are somehow associated with theta-role is not novel. Borer (1983), for example, argues that clitics are universally associated with (but not

necessarily assigned) a theta-role, possibly by means of co-indexing. We find a number of examples that support this assumption as well. A type of ergative split, in which clitic pronouns show an accusative pattern as opposed to nominals is commonly found in the Australian languages, Pama-Nyungan family in particular (Blake 1977, Dixon 1979, Hale 1983), Salish languages (Jelinek 1984, 1993) as well as Uto-Aztecan languages. Such a split is not so puzzling if we assume that it is not case, but theta-role that are reflected in the form of clitics. There is another piece of evidence that behaviour of clitics is controlled by theta-role. In languages that have both SCL's and OCL's the clitic must appear in a fixed order: namely, a SCL must precede an OCL. This is the case in Warlpiri (Hale 1983) as well as Kashmiri (Wali and Koul 1994). Kashmiri data is particularly insightful, as the inventory of Kashmiri clitics consists of ERG-CL's and ABS-CL's. Despite the fact that case is the factor that determines the clitic forms, the linear order is nevertheless governed by the theta-role. In the current analysis, Kashmiri clitics are classified as [+A, +C] as the Tongan SCL's. However, unlike Tongan, case is the prevalent feature, suppressing the theta-role feature. As a result, clitic forms show an ergative pattern.

### 6.3.3 Clitic doubling in Tongan

The current analysis of the Tongan SCL's predicts that clitic doubling is not possible in Tongan. Assuming that SCL's are [+A], requiring a theta-role, a sentence with a SCL should not contain a coreferential NP, as this will cause a violation of the Theta Criterion; the doubled NP cannot receive a theta-role from the verb. Moreover, generation of the doubled NP is configurationally impossible. Since it is assumed that a SCL is generated in [Spec, VP] and then moves to attach to T in the course of derivation,

this position is occupied by the trace. Consequently, an NP cannot be generated in this position. Examples below show that this prediction is actually borne out.

- (6.34) a. \*Na'a ne<sub>i</sub> 'alu 'a Sione<sub>i</sub>.  
 Pst SCL3.s. go ABS Sione  
 "Sione went."  
 b. \*Na'a ne kai 'e Sione 'a e ika.  
 Pst SCL3.s. eat ERG Sione ABS def fish  
 "Sione ate the fish."

However, the data such as (6.35) apparently present a puzzle.

- (6.35) a. Te u<sub>i</sub> 'alu au<sub>i</sub>.  
 Fut SCL-1.s. go 1.s.  
 "I will go."  
 b. Na'a ne<sub>i</sub> mohe ia<sub>i</sub>.  
 Pst SCL3.s. sleep 3.s.  
 "He slept."

In these examples, the SCL is arguably doubled by a coreferential pronoun. How can these examples be accounted for?

Interestingly, not all SCL's may co-occur with a coreferential pronoun. As illustrated by (6.36) below, ERG-SCL's cannot accompany a coreferential pronoun, either immediately following the verb (6.36a) or in the base-generated position (6.36b).

- (6.36) a. \*Te u<sub>i</sub> 'ave au<sub>i</sub> 'a Sione.  
 Fut SCL1.s. take 1.s. ABS Sione  
 "I will take Sione."  
 b. \*Te u<sub>i</sub> 'ave 'a Sione au<sub>i</sub>.  
 Fut SCL1.s. take ABS Sione 1.s.  
 "I will take Sione."

The contrast between (6.35) and (6.36) suggests that the pronoun coreferential with a SCL in (6.35) is not doubling the SCL. One possible analysis is that the pronoun in

(6.35) is a kind of resumptive pronoun, an overt realisation of the trace of SCL.<sup>13</sup> However, if it is a resumptive pronoun, there is a puzzling fact. As discussed in Chapter 5, a resumptive pronoun is usually required for the trace of an ERG-argument and not an ABS-argument. In contrast, a coreferential pronoun may occur with an ABS-SCL but not with an ERG-SCL. Let us consider why the trace of an ABS-SCL but not that of an ERG-SCL can be overtly realised as a resumptive pronoun. This difference arises due to the timing of cliticisation. Earlier, we proposed that a SCL attaches to T in TP. Consequently, an ABS-SCL checks its case feature in [Spec, Agro] while an ERG-SCL cannot move to [Spec, Agrs]. The latter checks its case feature when the host T adjoins to Agrs. As a result, an ABS-SCL leaves a trace in [Spec, Agro], but [Spec, Agrs] does not contain a trace of an ERG-SCL. Consequently, it is impossible for [Spec, Agrs] to have a resumptive pronoun, for there is no trace. Thus, the distribution of resumptive pronouns argue for our hypothesis that SCL's have case; more accurately, either ERG or ABS although the morphological form of a SCL does not reflect its case. That the coreferential pronoun in (6.35) is indeed an overt realisation of the trace in [Spec, Agro] is confirmed by the fact that such a pronoun cannot co-occur with pronominal O.

(6.37) \*'E 'ave koe<sub>i</sub> 'e Sione koe<sub>i</sub>.  
 Fut take 2.s.2.s. ERG Sione  
 "Sione will take you."

As discussed above (§6.2), the first *koe* in (6.37) has been incorporated into the verb

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<sup>13</sup> The term "resumptive pronoun" might be misleading. As William O'Grady (p.c.) points out, resumptive pronouns usually do not appear so close to their antecedent. However, note that this is not an instance of *wh*-movement. Resumptive pronouns of *wh*-trace are inserted in many cases in order to avoid violation of the island condition and is therefore obligatory. As for SCL's in Tongan, a coreferential pronoun is optional and the position is vacated by cliticisation, which is arguably not *wh*-movement. Thus, we should not necessarily expect them to be governed by the same constraints and to show similar behaviour.

in the base structure and undergone the V-to-C movement with the verb. Consequently, *koē* does not pass through [Spec, Agro] in this construction. Accordingly, the resumptive pronoun cannot occur. Hence, the sentence is ruled out. To summarise, the pronoun coreferential with a SCL is the spell-out of a trace left in [Spec, Agro] as a result of cliticisation. The above data have shown that our hypothesis is borne out. First, Tongan SCL's have a theta-role (and thereby clitic doubling is not permissible) and second, Tongan clitics bear case (hence the restriction on the resumptive pronouns).<sup>14</sup> The latter in turn suggests that case assignment on SCL's is also ergative contrary to what their superficial forms misleadingly suggest.

On a different note, let us consider some sentences that seemingly present a counter-example for the current analysis. See (6.38) below.

- (6.38) a. Na'e 'alu 'a Sione ia.  
           Pst go ABS Sione 3.s.  
           “Sione went.”
- b. Na'e talamai 'e Sione ia [‘oku ne ‘ofa ‘ia Mele].  
           Pst tell-me ERG Sione 3.s. Prs SCL3.s. love in Mele  
           “Sione told me that he loves Mele.”

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<sup>14</sup> *Pea*-coordination provides additional evidence for the [+C] status of SCL's. As discussed in Chapter 5, in coordinate constructions involving *pea*, ABS-arguments cannot be coreferential with ERG-arguments. Examples below show that SCL's are subject to the same restriction: in (i) the SCL *nau* bears ABS while in (ii) it bears ERG.

- (i) a. Na'a nau<sub>i</sub> pau'u pea taa'i 'e he faiako *pro*<sub>i</sub>.  
       Pst 3.pl. naughty and hit ERG def teacher  
       “They were naughty and the teacher hit (them).”  
       b. \*Na'a nau<sub>i</sub> pau'u pea taa'i *pro*<sub>i</sub> 'a e faiako.  
       Pst 3.pl. naughty and hit ABS def teacher  
       “They were naughty and (they) hit the teacher.”
- (ii) a. Na'a nau<sub>i</sub> 'ave 'a e ta'ahine<sub>j</sub> ki he maaketi pea fiefia *pro*<sub>i\*/j</sub>.  
       Pst 3.pl. take ABS def girl to def market and happy  
       “They took the girl to the market and (\*they/she) was happy.”  
       b. Na'a nau<sub>i</sub> 'ave 'a e ta'ahine<sub>j</sub> ki he maaketi pea fakatau mai *pro*<sub>i/j\*</sub> 'a e kumala.  
       Pst 3.pl. take ABS def girl to def market and buy ABS def sweet potato  
       “They took the girl to the market and bought the sweet potato.”

In (6.38a), the presence of the third person singular pronoun *ia*, presumably coreferential with the ABS-subject, *Sione*, does not rule out the sentence. Moreover, in (6.38b), *ia* co-occurs with an ERG-subject, yet the sentence is grammatical. Examples like these seem to undermine the current analysis. (6.38a,b) should be ruled out if it is assumed that a coreferential pronoun may occur only with a ABS-SCL. Note, however, that *ia* in question appears in an odd position. According to our analysis, the pronoun appears immediately after the verb. However, *ia* in (6.38) appears in the position immediately following the subject NP. It should be noted that putting *ia* in the position immediately following the verb will result in an ungrammatical sentence.

- (6.39) a. \*Na'e 'alu ia 'a Sione.  
           Pst go 3.s. ABS Sione  
           “Sione went.”
- b. \*Na'e talamai ia 'e Sione [‘oku ne ‘ofa ‘ia Mele].  
           Pst tell-me 3.s. ERG Sione Prs SCL3.s. love in Mele  
           “Sione told me that he loves Mele.”

This *ia* can occur with SCL’s whose features are not [3.s.]. See (6.40) below.

- (6.40) a. ‘Alu koe ia.  
           go 2.s. *ia*  
           “(You) go!”
- b. Na’e kei fai ai pee ‘e he ni’ihi ia ‘enau ngaau.  
           Pst still do there only ERG def some *ia* their work  
           “Some kept doing their work”  
           (Churchward 1953: 158)

In (6.40a), *ia* occurs with the second person singular pronoun *koe*. In (6.40b), it occurs with the third person plural subject. Sentences like (6.40a,b) suggest that *ia* occurring immediately after the subject NP is not the third person singular pronoun. Furthermore, *ia* may occur even with a SCL and its resumptive pronoun, as illustrated by (6.41). Obviously, *ia* in this case cannot be interpreted as coreferential with the

subject.

- (6.41) ‘Oku ou<sub>i</sub> taala’a ai au<sub>i</sub> ia.  
 Prs SCL1.s. doubtful there 1.s. *ia*  
 “I am doubtful about it.”  
 (Churchward 1953: 158)

It is most plausible to assume that *ia* in these examples is an emphatic adverb, and not a pronoun. Churchward (1953:157) lists *ia* as a demonstrative, noting however, that it has “a very common idiomatic use in which it may be regarded as adverb, qualifying the whole sentence [as an emphatic]”. Churchward hesitantly adds that *ia* in this context might be a cognate of the Fijian *ia* (“but, however”). Considering the sentences in (6.40) and (6.41), we take that Churchward’s speculation is correct, and assume that *ia* in these sentences is an adverb, an independent lexical item, which happens to be a homonym of the third person singular pronoun. Thus, we have proved that the seemingly counterexamples do not invalidate the current analysis of the Tongan SCL’s.

#### 6.3.4 [+A] clitics and raising in Tongan

Thus far, we argued that SCL’s in Tongan requires both case and theta-role. For this reason, the Tongan SCL’s are generated in the [Spec, VP] position to be assigned an external theta-role by the verb. The fact that the Tongan SCL’s are [+A] correctly predicts that clitic doubling is not allowed in Tongan. A seeming exception is the fact that ABS-SCL may occur with a coreferential pronoun. We argued that the coreferential pronoun in such a case is actually a kind of resumptive pronoun, the phonological realisation of the trace coindexed with the SCL. A study of occurrence

of such a resumptive pronoun has revealed that SCL's bear case, and that ABS-SCL's are distinguished from ERG-SCL's at the level of syntax, despite the fact that the case of a SCL is not morphologically visible. A crucial assumption is that SCL's are more sensitive to theta-role than they are to case. It is the theta-role feature that is responsible for giving rise to the phonological form of a SCL. Case is a secondary condition, which is not reflected in the form of a SCL.

The assumption that the Tongan SCL's are sensitive to theta-role has an interesting consequence. It accounts for a peculiar property of the construction analogous to what has been called raising in Niuean. As we will discuss in full detail in Chapter 7, Tongan permits what appears to be raising with a subset of one-place predicates, e.g., *totonu* ("advisable"). See (6.42) below.

- (6.42) a. 'Oku totonu [ke 'alu 'a Sione].  
 Prs advisable ke<sup>15</sup> go ABS Sione  
 "It is advisable that Sione goes."  
 b. 'Oku totonu 'a Sione<sub>i</sub> [ke 'alu t<sub>i</sub>].  
 Prs advisable ABS Sione ke go  
 "Sione had better go."

Raising in Tongan differs from raising in most other languages in two respects: a) raising is optional, and b) a raised NP is able to receive case inside the embedded clause. In general, raising is motivated by a case-related reason. When an argument fails to receive case clause internally, it is raised to a matrix case position in order to avoid the Case Filter violation. In Tongan, however, the raised NP can receive case within the embedded clause, and therefore, there is no need to raise this argument.

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<sup>15</sup> *ke* is an element that introduces infinitival clauses in Tongan. We assume that *ke* is an example of tense anaphora. See Chapter 10 for discussion.

Such a redundant movement should be prohibited by the Chain Condition (Chomsky 1981, 1986b): a chain may contain a unique case position. Nevertheless, (6.42b) is grammatical. Therefore, we will argue that sentences like (6.42b) are not derived by raising. Rather, the argument in the matrix subject position is base-generated there and is coindexed with the empty element in the embedded clause by an empty operator.

We assume from (6.42b) that the landing site is a case marked position. (6.42a) shows that the same position is not a theta-position, in which a (null) expletive may occur. What is relevant to our current discussion is that a SCL cannot appear in the matrix subject position of such a construction. See (6.43) below.

- (6.43) a. ‘Oku totonu [ke ne ‘alu].  
 Prs advisable ke 3.s. go  
 “It is advisable that he goes.”
- b. \*‘Oku ne<sub>i</sub> totonu [ke t<sub>i</sub> ‘alu].  
 Prs 3.s. advisable ke go  
 “He had better go.”

The ungrammaticality of (6.43b) results from that fact that theta-role is a crucial factor for SCL’s in Tongan. The Theta Criterion requires SCL’s to appear in a theta-position because they are arguments. (6.43b) is ruled out because the SCL appears in a non-theta-position and consequently fails to receive the external theta-role.

#### 6.4 Further implications of the current analysis

The discussion above has shown that the apparent accusative pattern which Tongan pronominals exhibit is only deceptive, and that pronouns, both clitic and independent,

are also treated in an ergative manner. The accusative pattern directly reflects the fact that theta-role is the crucial factor that governs the generation of clitics in Tongan, and that consequently, only those with the external theta-role may be realised as a clitic. External arguments (in effect, S and A) have a clitic form whereas internal arguments (i.e., O) must always be realised as an independent pronoun. Thus, S/A appear in an identical form (SCL) as opposed to O (pronoun), giving rise to a superficial accusative pattern. It should be emphasised that external arguments may also be realised as an independent pronoun, and that in such a case, the ERG-ABS contrast is visible in the morphology, i.e., by the form of case markers. However, external arguments, when pronominal, are rarely realised as an independent pronoun. To conclude, what seems to be a morphological split in Tongan turned out to be nothing more than a consequence of some independent syntactic restrictions.

In this final section, we will consider the application of the current analysis to other instances of the similar type of morphological split. As mentioned above, a split between full NP's and pronouns is commonly found across the so-called ergative languages. Traditional accounts appealed to semantic/pragmatic factors, either postulating the Agency hierarchy (Silverstein 1976, Dixon 1979), or assuming the similar hierarchy of topic-worthiness (Blake 1977, 1986; DeLancey 1981). In the approach developed in the current research, an ergative split of this type is accounted for as a syntactic phenomenon without postulating such a semantic/pragmatic condition.

We have argued above that those pronominals that show an accusative pattern are

clitics, which are, due to their [+A] feature, sensitive to theta-role. As a result, their forms reflect theta-role (i.e., the external theta-role vs. the internal theta-role) instead of case. There are three possibilities: a) a language may have SCL's but not OCL's; b) a language may have OCL's but not SCL's, in which case S/A constantly appear as a pronoun, while O takes a clitic form; and c) a language may have both SCL's and OCL's. In any case, pronominal S will appear in an identical form as a pronominal A, while a distinct form is used for pronominal O. A slightly different situation is where independent pronouns also show an accusative pattern. This is commonly found in Australian languages, in particular, those of the Pama-Nyungan family (Jelinek 1984). Such a case can be explained by assuming that theta-role sensitivity spreads over the whole range of [+pronominal] elements.<sup>16</sup>

Jelinek (1984), rejecting the traditional approaches, proposes an alternative account somewhat similar to the current analysis. Specifically, Jelinek (1984) argues that in those languages that show an accusative case marking on clitic pronouns the clitics are arguments. It is argued that such a clitic argument bears a G(rammatical)-case, which reflects its grammatical function.<sup>17</sup> This is an observation parallel to that of the current analysis; clitic are [+A] and consequently their forms reflect the theta-role.<sup>18</sup>

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<sup>16</sup> This analysis is valid if the accusative pattern is manifested by the form of the pronouns, and not by case markers. If the pronouns are of invariant forms and marked with a case marker, whose distribution shows an accusative pattern, we have a problem. However, we may argue that an element accompanying a pronoun is not a case marker but something else, e.g., definiteness marker. This is the case for the suffix *-ko* in Hindi. Although *-ko* has been traditionally analysed as the ACC-case marker, recent studies on ergativity in Hindi show that *-ko* marks not all ACC arguments, but only those which are [+definite] (Mahajan 1997, to appear). Unfortunately, I have not come across relevant data to test this hypothesis.

<sup>17</sup> On the other hand, ERG and ABS are referred to as L(exical)-case, which appears on the coreferential nominal. Jelinek considers L-case marked nominals are non-argumental (cf. Footnote 18 below).

<sup>18</sup> However, note that Jelinek regards nominals in such a language as non-argumental adjuncts, which are linked with a clitic. This assumption in turn explains the fact that clitic doubling is optionally allowed in such a language. Jelinek proposes that agreement morphemes of the *pro*-drop languages can be analysed

More complicated is a split which differentiates first and second person pronouns from third person pronouns. In such a case, first and second person pronouns (clitic or otherwise) show an accusative pattern, while third person pronouns are marked ergatively. Dyirbal is a famous example of this type of morphological split (cf. Chapter 2, §2.2.1). Again, traditional accounts depend on the semantic/pragmatic aspect, arguing that third person is less likely to be Agent, or topic, than first and second person. Leaving aside the validity of this argument, let us consider whether it is possible to account for such cases solely in terms of syntax. Obviously, appealing to [ $\pm A$ ] distinction would not work. It would be outrageous to claim that in such a language first and second person pronouns are [+A], but third person pronouns are [-A]. Therefore, we assume that there is some independent condition that excludes third person pronouns. Jelinek (1993) proposes that it is the person hierarchy ( $1/2 > 3$ ). We find various instances in which the person hierarchy is manifested. First, third person is arguably less marked than first and second person. For example, third person singular agreement is often realised as a zero morpheme (e.g., Warlpiri (Jelinek 1984), Yoruba (Pulleyblank 1986), and many of the Bantu languages (Givón 1976)). In Tongan, only the arguments with the feature [3.s.] may be realised as *pro*. It should also be noted that expletives in the subject position are universally taken to be third person singular. Furthermore, with regard to definiteness, first and second person arguments are always marked for [+definite], while third person arguments are not necessarily so. As a second, third person is syntactically more restricted than first and second person. Specifically, in Warlpiri and Lummi third person arguments cannot be

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in the similar manner, namely, by regarding agreement morphemes as arguments and the subject NP, which may be optionally present, as a non-argumental adjunction.

the subject unless the object is also third person (Jelinek 1984, 1993). These and other examples show that the person hierarchy to some extent universally governs arguments. Thus, citing Lummi, a Straits Salish language, Jelinek (1993) argues that the person hierarchy, in combination with the language-specific rule that transitive subjects must be [+definite], prevents third person arguments from appearing as a transitive subject. Unlike first and second person arguments that are always [+definite], third person arguments, when occurring as a transitive subject, need be marked for definiteness. This gives rise to an ergative marking on the third person arguments in this language.<sup>19</sup> In short, the clitic forms of the third person pronouns in Lummi (and possibly in other languages that show a similar type of split) show an ergative pattern not because they reflect case rather than theta-role. Rather, the form is determined by syntactic factors, namely the person hierarchy and the definite subject constraint.

To conclude, the current analysis seems to be able to account for the various instances of morphological split of the similar sort. If this hypothesis is to be borne out, then the morphological split can be regarded as nothing but a syntactic phenomenon, rather than a mixed use of two different case systems in a single language. The Tongan data studied in this chapter present a piece of evidence that under the cover of the superficial accusative morphology, the ERG-ABS distinction nevertheless exists and is respected in syntax. This observation leads us to conclude that ERG/ABS case is

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<sup>19</sup> The ABS-marked third person arguments are realised as a zero morpheme in Lummi. This suggests that third person arguments are only marked for the feature [person]. Thus, the ergative marking on the third person arguments does not undermine our assumption that form of a [+A] clitic reflects its theta-role. Pronominal S and pronominal O appears in the same form (i.e., null) not because they bear the same theta-role, but because they need not be marked for definiteness.

not merely a morphological notion, but a syntactic phenomenon.