

The Luwic Ergative

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Introduction

The Anatolian languages are *split ergative* languages: neuter nouns have a special ending when they are the subject of transitive sentences, here in Hittite from the word *tuppi-* 'tablet':

mahḫan=ta kāš tuppianza anda wemiyazzi

'when this tablet reaches you.'

In Hittite, the singular is *-anza-* (= /-ant^s/?), the plural *-anteš*.

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2. How can we reconstruct the 'ergative' in Proto-Anatolian?
3. How can we account for the the 'ergative' from an Indo-European perspective?

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3. The 'ergative' is actually an inflectional suffix *-ant-*, transforming the word into a common gender noun;
4. There is an actual ergative case with endings *-anza* and *-anteš*.

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Neither of these happen in Hittite or in the other Anatolian languages (where the 'ergative' and ablative are actually distinct), so we may disregard this hypothesis.

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- ▶ A semantic distribution of its use (for example, animacy rather than morphological gender).;
- ▶ Occurrence in other cases than just the nominative.

Inflectional suffix vs case

The difference between these proposals is more subtle. In both cases, the 'ergative' follows a syntactical/morphological distribution. However, we can tell the difference from the following:

	Ergative case <i>-anza</i>	Inflectional suffix <i>-ant</i>
Adjectives	neuter ergative	common nominative
Resumptive pronouns	neuter	common

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Hittite also has a personifying/deifying suffix *-ant-*; Goedegebuure considers this the *only* use of the suffix in OH.

The Luwic languages

Except from Hittite, we find from the 'ergative':

- ▶ 1 attestation in Hieroglyphic Luwian;
- ▶ 7 attestations in Cuneiform Luwian;
- ▶ 2 attestations in Lycian.

Possibly also one attestation in Palaic, but difficult to interpret.

Hieroglyphic Luwian

(“CAELUM”)*ti-pa-sa-ti-sa=pa=wa/i=tu-u* (“TERRA”)*ta-sà-REL+ra/i-ti-sa=ha* ||

CAELUM-*sa=ha*

TERRA-REL+*ra/i-sa=ha* DEUS-*ni-i-zi* LIS-*tà-ti* ||

CUM-*ni* X-*tu*

‘The sky, the earth, and the gods of the sky and the earth must ... him with litigation.’

We find the ergative ending *-a-ti-sa = /-antis/* with both the neutral word *ti-pa-sa* ‘sky’ and the common *ta-sà-REL+ra/i* ‘earth’. Hence the distribution is semantic, so here the suffix has semantic value. Here too it may be a personifying/deifying suffix.

Cuneiform Luwian

Semantic use:

a-a-aš-ša=ti e-el-ḫa-a-du tap-pa-ša-an-ti-iš ti-ya-am-ma-an-ti-iš

'The sky and the earth must wash their mouths'

Cuneiform Luwian

Grammatical:

[š]a-a-an-du=(w)a=ta pár-na-an-ti-in-zi

[h]u-u-um-ma-ti-iš ha-aš-ša-ni-it-ti-iš

hu-wa-aḫ-hur-ša-an-ti-in-zi ti-ya-am-mi-iš

ta?-ru-ša-an-ti-iš ad[-du-wa-al-za ú-tar-ša]

ḫal-li-iš-ša pa-ra-at-ta-an[-za]

pu-wa-ti-il-za [n]a-nu-un-tar-ri-š[a]

ir-ḫu-u-wa-aš-ša pa-ri-it-tar-u-wa-a-aš-š[a]

u-la-an-ta-al-li-ya-an ḫu-it-w[a-li-ya-an]

‘The houses, the pediment, the hearth, ..., the earth, statues, the evil word, sickness, past and present impurity, and ... of animals, mortals and of the living must release them.’

Cuneiform Luwian

Inflectional suffix:

[] SAG.DU-*aš-ši-iš* IGI.HI.A-*wa-aš-ši-iš* GIG-an-te-eš₁₇?

[] X *tar-pí-i-ta*

'Illness of the head and the eye ...'

Lycian

Inflectional suffix / case ending:

s=ene teseti: tubeiti: tr̃mmili

‘and the Lycian oaths will strike him.’

s=ẽne: tesẽti: qãñti: tr̃mmilijẽti

‘and the Lycian oaths will seize him.’

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2. At some point, this suffix was obligatory for neuter subjects in transitive sentences;
3. It lost its semantic value and became an inflectional suffix;
4. It became a proper ergative case.

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3. Neuter nouns were originally precisely those nouns that were inanimate;
4. This distinction was lost in PIE already (**k^wek^wlos* 'wheel').

alignment in PIE

In most IE languages (Common IE) neuter words have the same endings in A, S and P position.

Based on the previous, we may reconstruct the lack of neuters in A position to PIE:

	PAnat.		CIE		PIE	
	m.	n.	m.	n.	m.	n.
S	*-s	*-m	*-s	*-m	*-s	*-m
A	*-s	×	*-s	*-m	*-s	×
P	*-m	*-m	*-m	*-m	*-m	*-m

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- ▶ In this explanation the lack of A neuters in PIE is a relic from PPIE.

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- ▶ This suffix came from a personifying suffix;
- ▶ It was used to give the ability to put a neuter noun in the A position;
- ▶ The lack of neuters in the A position is a relict of the PPIE ergative system.